



2017 OFFICIAL CONTEST RULES

These are the Official Rules for the 2017 edition of the World Championship Old-time Piano Playing Contest and Festival. The “Piano Contest” rules below have been revised, so please read them carefully.

Note: During the Preliminary Eliminations on Saturday, May 27, 2017, Junior and Regular Division contestants play in random order following a drawing.

PIANO CONTEST REGULAR DIVISION

DATES: The two-day competition to determine the 2017 World Champion Old-time Piano Player takes place over Saturday and Sunday of Memorial Day weekend each year. The next contest takes place May 27-28, 2017.

ELIGIBILITY: Pianists ages 18 and older are eligible to compete. Pianists of any age will be eligible to compete in the New Rag Contest and Duet and Cutting contest.

PRELIMINARY ROUND: Contestants must compete in the Preliminary Eliminations (PE’s) on Saturday in order to advance to the Semi-Finals and Finals that take place on Sunday afternoon. The PE’s will begin at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, May 27, 2017 and continue until each contestant has been heard with a lunch break scheduled about 11:30 a.m.

SEMI-FINALS & FINALS: The Semi-Finals will begin at 1:00 pm on Sunday, May 28, 2017 with up to ten (10) Regular Division contestants who have advanced from Saturday’s Preliminary Eliminations. The Semi-Finals will narrow the field of contestants to the final five (5), who will then compete immediately in the Finals to determine the winner and other finishing places.

REPERTOIRE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Contestants need to prepare six different selections written no later than 1939 (no medleys allowed), two of which must be ballads or standard popular songs, and not considered “Ragtime”.
2. The music must be memorized. Two selections are played in the PE’s, and each player who advances into the Semi-Finals on Sunday afternoon will play two more selections that meet contest requirements.
3. Contestants must provide the title, composer and year written for all selections to be played on their official entry blank, and must be prepared to document a composition’s age if challenged.
4. Contestants may change their selections up until the entry deadline of May 15, 2017, when selections must be finalized and after which date no revisions to the play list may be made.

5. Contestants may play their selections in any order from their list with the exception of those who reach the Finals on Sunday afternoon, during which a “color-theme” tune is required.
6. A contestant failing to provide their playlist by the deadline may re-enter with a late fee if space in the field permits.
7. No religious or patriotic selections are allowed, and vocal or instrumental accompaniment is prohibited.
8. On stage, contestants need provide only the title and composer of their selections prior to their playing although additional information may be requested by the contest MC during their on-stage interview. Composer names must appear on each entry.
9. For the purpose of the World Championship Old-time Piano Playing Contest, the following definition of “old-time” music will apply:

The style of piano playing found primarily in public venues of performance between 1890 and 1939, particularly in bars and piano competitions, consisting of popular songs and instrumentals of that era, including ragtime, traditional jazz, novelty, stride, and boogie, but excluding advanced chord progressions more commonly found by 1940 or later in symphonic, modern jazz and be bop music forms. Selections may also include music idiomatic to solo piano performance and popular dance styles.

2017 THEME: Contestants who advance to the Finals on Sunday afternoon will play two (2) additional selections, one of which must contain a color reference in the title. (Numerous tunes include silver, gold, blue, gray, yellow, amber, brown or green in their titles. Gold, if referring to the metal, wouldn't qualify.) Note that the “theme” does not apply to Junior competitors.

SCORING: Point totals are cumulative. Point totals from the PE's determine contestants for the Semi-Finals. Point totals from the Semi-Finals will be added to the point totals from the PE's to determine the top five (5) players who then advance to the Finals, where point totals will again be combined.

JUDGING CRITERIA: Judges will award points in each round based on technique, style and interpretation, showmanship and costume. In the event of a tie in points for any place, that contestant with the higher point total in technique will prevail, with the order of other tie-breaking categories to be: style and interpretation, showmanship, and costume.

TIME LIMIT: For the PE's, Semi-Finals and Finals, a total of eight (8) minutes playing time is allowed for each contestant's performance for both tunes (not including time for audience applause, interview time with the emcee, etc.). Contestants exceeding the time limits will be penalized five (5) points for each fifteen (15) seconds or fraction thereof, of overtime.

COSTUME: Costumes are required, and the judges will award points based on their old-time appearance or authenticity in the PE's, Semi-Finals and Finals. Contestants will declare on the entry form whether their costumes are to be judged as authentic period dress (actual or replica) or theatrical performance-type, and they will be judged accordingly.

CHALLENGES: Challenges to a contestant's selection must be made within five (5) minutes after the playing of the selection has been completed. Other contestants, contest officials and judges may challenge selections for age or other reasons. In the event that a selection does not qualify after it is challenged, the person playing it will be disqualified.

CONTESTANT DRAW: Contestants in both the Junior and Regular Divisions will report to our "Green Room" on Saturday morning at 8:00 a.m. prior to the PE's so lots can be drawn for the order of play, and contestants can receive any last-minute instructions. Contestants not in attendance at this time cannot participate in the contest. **(Please note that contestants should bring their costume with them to this drawing for the order of play on Saturday morning as there will not be time to return to the hotel to get them before the first few contestants are scheduled to compete by 9 a.m. For this reason, a complimentary light breakfast will be available in the Green Room on Saturday morning for contestants for their convenience.)**

During the actual competitions, if a contestant is not on hand when their playing position is called, the contestant will be considered to have withdrawn from competition. Order of play for the Semi-Finals and Finals will be drawn on stage as soon as practical after completion of judging for that round, respectively.

ENTRY FEE: Each entry form must be accompanied by a \$50 entry fee. This is not refundable unless the contest is canceled.

EXPENSES: The World Championship Old-Time Piano Playing Contest and Festival is not responsible for the cost of travel, meals, lodging or other expenses incurred while competing. University dormitory rooms will be available as a less expensive alternative to a local hotel. These dorm rooms will only be available to contestants ages 18 and older. Please contact Ian Hominick at oldtimepianocontest@olemiss.edu for additional information. The light breakfast in the Green Room on Saturday morning was added for those not staying in a hotel that provides a complimentary breakfast.

CONTESTANT TICKETS: The contest will provide each contestant with one (1) complimentary all-event ticket for their use plus one additional ticket for a guest. Contestants should advise when entering the contest if another ticket is needed.

DEADLINE: The total number of contestants is limited to the first 26 paid entries, and each entry form shall list that contestant's music selections, to be updated no later than May 15, 2017, the contest deadline. Entries will be accepted for up to sixteen (16) Regular Division contestants and Ten (10) Junior Division contestants. After the deadline, any remaining slots will be filled from the waiting list on a first-come basis without regard to Division.

ENTRY SUBMISSION: Entries may be sent via U.S. Mail to the Contest Coordinator, Faye Ballard, 1221 Julie Drive, Champaign, IL 61821. She will also answer rule and contestant questions at this address: eballard@illinois.edu. On line entries will be instantly processed through Paypal and will assure your registration. Mailed entries are subject to delays, and no entry will be considered official until the appropriate fee is received, with checks made out to the University of Mississippi – May Piano Contest. Walk-on entries will be accepted on Saturday, May 28, 2017 until the limit of 26 contestants has been reached or the drawing for order of play has begun, whichever comes first. A late fee of an additional \$50 shall apply to entries received after the deadline of May 15, 2017.

PRIZES: The winner will receive \$1,500, a golden medallion and a permanent trophy. Second place will receive \$1,000 and a silver medallion. Third place will receive \$750 and a bronze medallion. Fourth and fifth places will be awarded cash prizes of \$500 and \$300 respectively, and will also receive bronze

medallions. Checks will be mailed to the winners within two weeks of the conclusion of the contest (winners must be sure to complete a W-9 form on site).

ADDITIONAL RULES:

- By competing in the contest, participants agree to allow the use of their photographs and recorded performances to promote the event.
- Disputes arising from the competitions or judging will be resolved by the contest judges, who will make the final decision.
- By entering the competition, the contestant agrees to supply his/her social security number if necessary to comply with United States tax laws.
- Contestants must provide complete information on the contest application including home town media contacts. Each contestant should send 1-2 color photographs (minimum 300 ppi) and a short one-paragraph biography for inclusion in the contest program to Ian Hominick at oldtimepianocontest@olemiss.edu
- The use of alcohol or other controlled substances prior to or during competitions may result in disqualification.

ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS FOR THE JUNIOR DIVISION

* Note: Junior contestants should also read all of the rules above, as many apply to both divisions!

ELIGIBILITY: Junior contestants are defined as those 17 years of age or under on the day of competition. Any contestant winning the Junior Division a total of three (3) times (not necessarily in consecutive years) may no longer compete in the Junior Division. However, the age requirement will be waived for them, and they may then compete in the Regular Division.

FORMAT: Junior Division contestants play only on Saturday, May 27, and the Junior Division champ will be announced at the close of the Saturday competitions. Each Junior Division contestant must prepare two selections, but are not required to play mandatory standard tunes or comply with the “color theme”, as required in the Regular Division.

PRIZES: The Junior Champion is awarded a prize of \$500 and a permanent trophy. A second place prize of \$400, third place prize of \$300, fourth place prize of \$200 and a fifth place prize of \$100 will be awarded. The Junior Division champion is traditionally invited to make a special appearance Sunday afternoon to play a tune on stage prior to the beginning of the competitions.

TIME LIMIT: A total of eight (8) minutes playing time is allowed for each contestant’s performance of both their tunes (not including time for audience applause, interview time with the emcee, etc.). The penalty for playing in excess of the time limit prescribed is five (5) points for each 30 seconds, or fraction thereof, of overtime.

ENTRY FEE: The entry fee for the Junior Division is \$25 with a penalty fee for late entry also \$25. This entry fee is not refundable unless the contest is canceled.

PARENTAL CONSENT: Contestants in the Junior Division must have their entry blank signed by a parent or guardian.