

# COMPETITION RULES FOR ALL PTA COMPETITIONS

IMPORTANT NOTE: This is a general listing of the competition rules. Changes may have been made that are not included in the following.

~Updated Rules as of January 2024~

PARTICIPATION IN ANY PTA COMPETITION GIVES PERMISSION TO THE PTA, PHOTOGRAPHER, AND ITS AFFILIATES THE RIGHTS TO PHOTOGRAPH AND USE PHOTOS OF YOUR COMPETITION ENTRIES IN FUTURE AND ALL PUBLICATIONS.

## CATEGORIES

### Taxidermy

1. Whitetail Deer
  - 1a. Whitetail Open Mouth
  - 1b. Whitetail Closed Mouth
2. Large Gamehead – Larger than a coyote-sized animal, includes 1/2 life-life. (see rules)
3. Small Gamehead – Coyote and smaller, includes 1/2 life-life. (see rules)
4. Large Life-size Mammal – Larger than a coyote-sized animal. (see rules)
5. Small Life-size Mammal – Coyote and smaller. (see rules)
6. Bird (all birds except waterfowl and turkey)
7. Waterfowl (includes Coots, Rails, Gallinules, etc.)
8. Turkey
9. Fish Skin Warm Water – finished on one side. (see rules)
10. Fish Skin Cold Water – finished on one side. (see rules)
11. Fish Skin Warm Water 360° – must be finished on both sides.
12. Fish Skin Cold Water 360° – must be finished on both sides.
13. Fish Repró – must be finished on both sides. (see rules)
14. Reptile & Amphibian Skin
15. Reptile & Amphibian Repró (see rules)
16. Habitat – Judged separate from and will not be influenced by the score of the mounted specimen. \*Not eligible for Competitor's Award.
17. Miscellaneous – anything that doesn't fit in the above categories.  
\*Not eligible for Competitor's Award.

### Wildlife Art (Flora & Fauna)

18. Miniatures – Any Medium  
\*Not eligible for Competitor's Award
19. Flat Original Wildlife Art  
\*Not eligible for Competitor's Award
20. 3-D Original Wildlife Art – Any Medium  
(EX: Carvings, Mannikins, Recreations, Etc.)  
\*Not eligible for Competitor's Award
21. Photography  
\*Not eligible for Competitor's Award

## SPECIAL NOTICE TO ALL COMPETITORS

Taxidermy competitions are intended to be enjoyable learning experiences for everyone involved. While disputes are inevitable in any type of competition they should in no way hamper the competition or distract those in attendance. Any disputes involving judging or the conduct of other competitors should be brought to the attention of the Competition Committee. Please keep in mind that the judges for the PTA competitions are selected based on their knowledge and accomplishments in their particular field. In short, they are judging our competitions because they are the best in the country.

Any competitor who harasses, intimidates or deliberately seeks to embarrass a judge at any PTA competition will be disqualified from that competition and may, upon review by the Competition Committee, be barred from future competitions.

Judges at PTA competitions are usually asked to do a considerable amount of work for a small amount of money. Most judges would much rather be working in their studios but instead they are sharing their knowledge with us. Let them know you appreciate their knowledge by asking for a critique of your work and actually listen! You might be surprised at what you can learn.

## I. Eligibility

- A. The competition will be open to "paid-up" PTA members in good standing. (Individuals must be a current member in good standing of the PTA.)
- B. Participants over the age of 18 must be registered for at least one day of the convention and have paid the competition entry fee in order to compete. Participants must be individuals and not firms.

## II. Divisions of Competition (Art & Taxidermy)

- A. YOUTH PARTICIPATION DIVISION - Open to children 10 years and under who wish to participate at a taxidermy competition. Child's parent/guardian/mentor must be a paid PTA member in good standing. Entry(s) fee is \$10 for each piece and every one will receive a participation ribbon only. In this division, there are not separate categories or a best of division winner, nor are these entries eligible for any other awards. Entry(s) can be anything that the child wishes to create that is wildlife oriented - from a coloring book page to their first attempt at a taxidermy mount and everything imaginable in between.
- B. JUNIOR AMATEUR DIVISION - Amateurs 16 years old and under. Junior amateur award winners will receive "amateur" ribbons. Any Junior amateur who wins a Best of Category at the annual convention competition will have the opportunity to move up to the Amateur Division if the competitor wants to (they don't have to move up to the Amateur Division until they are 17 years old - but they may move up by winning a Best of Category, if they wish to).
- C. AMATEUR DIVISION - An amateur who wins Best of Category at annual convention will move up into the Professional Division.
- D. PROFESSIONAL DIVISION - Licensed taxidermists (Amateurs who have won a Best of Category complete in this division) If you win Best of Category in this division at annual convention competition you will move up to the Masters Division.
- E. MASTER DIVISION - Open to all individuals who feel they are capable of competing at the Master's Level. Once a competitor chooses to compete in the Master Division in a given category, they may not return to the Professional Division in that category. Any competitor who has won Best of Category in the Professional Division at annual convention competition must move up to the Master Division in that category.
- F. COLLECTIVE ARTIST DIVISION - This division is for competition pieces where more than one taxidermist worked on the entry. It can be entered in the name of the studio or each artist can be listed as the creators. In this division, there are not separate categories. There will be only one: First Place, Second Place, Third Place, and Honorable Mention. The winners will receive ribbons. The winner of this category is chosen by all the judges based on their opinion not a score the Judges vote as a group on which piece they like best. Awards are given based on the group's decision. There is no limit to the number of entries a studio or group may enter in this division. Collective artists' pieces are not eligible for any awards determined by score. (ex. Best of Show) This division is nonrestrictive as far as special awards. The whole piece will be judged as one even if it contains a combination of animals. The entry fee covers the entire piece in this division.
- G. COMMERCIAL DIVISION - Open to all types of taxidermy & judged by 1 All-Around Judge - not category or division specific - no best of category - no scoresheets. Judging is done from a distance (no flashlights, magnifying glasses, or touching of the mounts). Critiques are done as a group (times will be posted). All entries will be grouped together in a separate area. Commercial Division entries are not eligible for any awards determined by score, special awards or Competitors Award.

## III. Judging

- A. Judges for PTA competition will be selected by the PTA Board.
- B. All judges will be instructed to judge the final result not the method used to achieve it. It is the hope of the competition committee that this stipulation will

eliminate any possible prejudices some Judges may have concerning freeze-dry specimens.

- C. Score sheet - Each entry is separately scored on a score sheet. You may place with your entry any information regarding originality that you feel the Judge needs to be aware of. Score sheets will be returned to the participants.
- D. Every effort will be made to have our Judges available to discuss/critique your mount(s) on a one-on-one basis. (Please be considerate to other competitors and the Judges by having your piece(s) critiqued as quickly as possible. Most competitors want to talk with the Judges and time is short.)
- E. Decisions of the competition Judges will be final.

## IV. Awards

In the PTA, competition entries are judged on their own merit against a perfect score. (Mother Nature rather than against each other.) Any Entry receiving 90% is awarded a First Place. 80% receives a Second Place and 70% receives a Third Place. Multiple awards are given except the Collective Artist Division.

## V. PTA Competition

- A. TAXIDERMIST BEST OF SHOW - (Judge's Choice) Utilizing the Best of Category winner's from all taxidermy divisions, the judges will select the Best of Show. The winner will receive a ribbon and a check for \$1,000.00 The winner must be present at the banquet to collect prize money.\*\*
- B. TAXIDERMIST OF THE YEAR - (Judge's Choice) Utilizing the Best of Category winners from the Master Division, the judges will select the Taxidermist of the Year. Winner will receive award at the banquet.\*\*
- C. WILDLIFE ART BEST OF SHOW - (Judge's Choice) Utilizing the Best of Category winners from all art divisions, the judges will select the Wildlife Art Best of Show. The winner will receive a ribbon and the Ned Smith Award. \*\*
- D. WILDLIFE ARTIST OF THE YEAR - (Judge's Choice) Utilizing the Best of Category winners from the Master Division, the judges will select Wildlife Artist of the Year. Winner will receive award at the banquet. \*\*
- E. BEST ALL-AROUND TAXIDERMIST - A trophy will be awarded to the individual receiving a ribbon in four categories in any combination of division and collecting the highest point total with those four mounts. The four categories must include: Whitetail or Gamehead, a Bird, Turkey or Waterfowl, a Fish, Reptile or Amphibian, and a Life-Size Mammal (Large or Small).\*\*
- F. TAXIDERMIST CHOICE AWARD - Voted on by the PTA members attending the annual convention. Only 1 winner. \*\*
- G. PEOPLE'S CHOICE - Voted on by the PTA membership and the public in attendance. Each person will select one piece which they have chosen as the best. The entries with the most points will receive ribbons for First, Second and Third Place People's Choice.
- H. PERRY KLEIN MEMORIAL AWARD - Awarded to the 1st Place Collective Artist piece.\*\*
- I. SPECIAL AWARDS - The judges select the best entry for each special award and submit that entry number to the competition chairman based on the award criteria.
- J. BEST OF CATEGORY - In the Jr. Amateur, Amateur, Professional, and Master Divisions, the judges will select the best entry in each division category to receive the Best of Category award. The Best of Category award goes only to the highest scoring First Place/Blue Ribbon entry in each division category.

\*\* Only Awarded at the Convention Competition.

## VI. General Rules

- 1. The PTA Competition Committee reserves the right to restrict, change, or alter specific rules when it is deemed appropriate in order to maintain the high standards of the PTA Competition.
- 2. It is MANDATED by the Competition Committee that individual entries must be completed by the competitor without assistance. This would include finishing and habitat work. Components and supplies utilized in a competitor's piece will be assumed to be purchased unless declared at registration or in a judges note. Collective Artists entries should refer to the guidelines found in Section II Division of Competition (Art & Taxidermy) sub-section F Collective Artists Division.
- 3. PTA Competition Chairperson has the right to restrict or decline from competition the following - power-driven mechanical mounts, projected and boom lighting, and noise-making sensor devices.
- 4. You cannot enter a previously entered piece in a lesser division at any PTA competition. You cannot re-enter a piece in the same competition ever!
- 5. Any competition piece containing a "group" (more than one specimen) must pay an entry fee for each specimen you want judged, otherwise, only one of the

specimens (of your choice) will be judged and only that specimen can receive a ribbon.

- 6. Each competition will advertise their entry fee prices. Habitats are a separate entry in all competitions. Competition pieces that have been entered and paid for but not brought to the competition will not receive a refund.
- 7. The number of entries per category is unlimited.
- 8. There will be pre-registration of competition pieces. (Please mark your calendar! Competition pre-registration must be made by mail. Competition pre-registration will not be accepted by phone.)
- 9. Protected species need proper permits attached to specimens entered.
- 10. Entries contained in cases must have removable top and/or sides for judging.
- 11. Any mount found to be poor in taste, or demeaning to the public or any organization will be removed from the competition (ex: no blood, traps, arrows or kill shots depicted) no refund of competition entry fee.
- 12. FATAL FLAW - Anything deemed as "fatal flawed" and in anyway offensive to the show will be removed. This includes odor. No judge will be forced to judge a piece that is offensive or odoriferous. No refund of competition entry fee.
- 13. Entries must remain for the duration of the Competition. Entries must be picked up only at the posted times and the participants must show their receipt card(s) for each entry. The PTA will not be responsible for any competition piece(s) that are not picked up.
- 14. Any questions arising from the PTA competition will be resolved by the Competition Committee, and their decision will be final.
- 15. Protest Procedure - A written complaint from the competitor to the Competition Chair must be submitted within one hour of the competition room opening. A meeting between the Judge, competitor and Competition Chair will be arranged. If further resolution is needed, the piece can be re-judged for a fee equal to double the competition entry fee. The Competition Chair picks the new Judge, and the new judge cannot be a competitor at that event.

## VII. Category Rules

- A. MAMMALS & GAMEHEADS - Large and Small Lifesize Mammals and Large and Small Miscellaneous Gamehead categories are now determined by BODY SIZE. No longer will Juveniles be judged in the category it would be at maturity. Juveniles or partially-grown species will be judged in the category based on the animal's current size. Small Mammals and Small Miscellaneous Gameheads are coyote size and smaller. (Small Ex: Javelina, Bobcat, Badger, Wolverine). Large Mammals and Large Miscellaneous Gameheads are larger than a coyote. Juveniles of Large Mammals are subject to either category depending on their current size. The PTA Competition Committee and Judges will determine final category placement.
- B. FISH/REPTILE RULES:
  - 1-Sided Fish both Warm and Cold Water categories will be available for Amateurs and Professionals ONLY with Best of Category ribbons awarded. (There won't be a Master Division & you can't earn Master Certificates in the 1-sided categories.)
  - After winning a Blue Ribbon, Best of Category Professional Division in the 1-Sided Fish categories the competitor has shown the understanding of anatomy, methods, painting, etc.... and the competition committee feels the competitor is ready to compete in the "360 degree - finished on all sides" fish categories.
  - Fish, Reptile and Amphibian Repro. Categories are available for all divisions but the following rules apply:
    - In the Amateur and Professional Divisions the entrant may use a commercially purchased reproduction - It must be finished on all sides.
    - In the Master Division the reproduction must be cast entirely by the entrant.
- C. WHITETAILS - Whitetail Subcategories (for Professional and Master only). In the Whitetail category there are now two subcategories: Whitetail Open Mouth and Whitetail Closed Mouth.

There will only be ONE Best of Category awarded in Professional. In the Master Division there will be only ONE State Champion Whitetail. The best blue ribbon Open Mouth and blue ribbon Closed Mouth Whitetail in both Professional and Master will be recognized with a ribbon. From the two subcategories, an overall Best of Category and State Champion will be selected by the Whitetail judges score. Any competitor in the Professional Division who wins TWO best Whitetail in their respective subdivisions (Open Mouth or Closed Mouth) will be awarded their Master certificate and move onto Master without winning a Best of Category.