

# MISSOURI STATE OLD TIME FIDDLERS ASSOCIATION

## Official Contest Rules

### PERFORMANCE RULES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Each fiddler will play **three tunes: a hoedown, a waltz, and a tune of choice (other than a hoedown or waltz)**. The tunes may be played in any order. No contestant may use a tune they have already played in subsequent rounds. Contestants may be limited to two tunes (hoedown and a waltz) at the discretion of the contest administrator.

Tune selection is up to the individual contestants and should be done in the interest of demonstrating the contestant's skill, technical ability, and musicality.

Style of play shall be a consideration in scoring contestants. While all traditional styles are valid in the right context, they may not be judged equally depending on the intent of the contest and the preference of the judges. Generally, traditional fiddle styles and dancing go hand in hand, so tunes played at any Missouri traditional danceable tempo are encouraged. Performances which are not consistent with Missouri old-time dance traditions will not receive the same consideration by the judges. Excessive improvisation is not encouraged and can result in point deduction.

The total performance time, excluding instrument failure or other emergency, generally speaking, should not exceed eight minutes. Excessively long performances, at the discretion of the judges, may be penalized.

There is no restriction on tuning of the fiddle, but no more than four strings shall be allowed. Instruments may not be amplified except by means of a microphone and PA system provided by the contest.

Broken performances (false starts, sound system problems, instrument failure, environmental difficulties, etc.) may be replayed with the express permission of the judges. Only one such restart shall be permitted per performance and it will not be scored. Making a mistake in the middle of a tune, however, is not cause for a restart and such a performance will be scored accordingly.

Clowning, showboating, or excessive vocalizing (other than when traditionally compatible with a particular tune) may result in loss of points. The judges' discretion in this regard is final.

No sheet music or written scores are allowed on stage; all tunes must be performed from memory.

**Orange Blossom Special, Listen to the Mockingbird, and Black Mountain Rag** are expressly prohibited and will result in immediate disqualification.

### ACCOMPANIMENT REQUIREMENTS:

No electronic amplification of instruments will be allowed other than through the provided sound system. However, if no acoustic piano is available, the contest administrator reserves the right to approve the use of an electronic keyboard, which shall be adjusted as far as possible to emulate the sound of an acoustic piano.

A contestant may play alone and unaccompanied. Each contestant will be allowed **no more than two** accompanists.

The intent of this limitation is two-fold:

- a) to prevent a contestant from bringing an entire band on stage and thereby creating an unfair advantage; and
- b) to minimize the time required to make microphone adjustments and get all the performers on and off the stage.

To ensure fairness and consistency in competition, contestants appearing on stage with more than two accompanists will be immediately disqualified.

Accompanists shall not double or harmonize the melody line with the contestant.

## ADMINISTRATIVE RULES:

A contestant's right to view his score sheets after the contest depends on the consensus of the judges and the contest administrator. In general, this is not permitted.

The judges and the contest administrator reserve the right to require call-back (play-off) rounds. Ties or even close scores may be broken by means of call-back rounds or a vote of the judges at the discretion of the contest administrator.

Call-back rounds are scored separately from previous rounds.

Failure to appear within a reasonable time of being called to the stage may, at the discretion of the judges and the contest administrator, result in disqualification.

A contestant who arrives after the close of registration shall be admitted only with the express permission of the contest administrator. Any contestant admitted after the contest has started will be required to compete immediately after the currently performing contestant or be the first contestant in his or her division.

No contestant shall be disqualified from competition for the reason that he earns all or a substantial part of his income from playing the fiddle.

Contestants will exhibit sportsmanlike behavior at all times. Failure to do so may result in disqualification from competition.

Any matter not expressly covered in the foregoing shall be ruled on by the judges, and their decision in such regard shall be final.

