

**COMPETITION  
RULES AND REGULATIONS  
FOR THE  
ONTARIO GUILD OF TOWN CRIERS**



ONTARIO GUILD OF TOWN CRIERS  
COMPETITION RULES AND REGULATIONS

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These Competition Rules and Regulations were assembled by a Committee of Members of the Ontario Guild of Town Criers during the months of February and March 1993, with revisions made in July 1993.

The Committee consisted of:

***David McKee***, Town Crier, City of Brantford  
***Tom Jones***, Town Crier, Town of Richmond Hill  
***Ralph Wilding***, Town Crier, Town of New Tecumseth  
***John Webster***, Town Crier, Town of Markham (ex-officio)

Revisions were made during 2004 and in 2005 for the purpose  
Of clarification and ease of understanding.

# ONTARIO GUILD OF TOWN CRIERS COMPETITION RULES AND REGULATIONS

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PREFACE: The Rules Committee was formed to establish a list of Rules and Regulations concerning Town Crier Competitions to the Membership of the Ontario Guild of Town Criers, and give guidelines and suggestions to the Organisers of Town Crier competitions. To maintain the standard of the Guild, all rules are to be followed at the Provincial Championship and all Guild Sanctioned competitions. If an event is advertised, it is deemed to be a sanctioned Guild event.

ARTICLE A: GENERAL

These are the Competition Rules and Regulations of the Ontario Guild of Town Criers, hereinafter called the Rules. The Rules are set out to provide a standard and framework for the Competitors, Judges, Scorers and Organisers of a Town Crier Competition.

ARTICLE B: ORDER OF CRIES

- B-1 The order of Criers shall be determined by lot, by one of the two methods outlined in sections B-1(a) and B-1(b) below. Although either method is acceptable the Committee recommends method B-1(b) to select the Criers' order.
- B-1(a) The names of the competing Criers are printed on separate sheets of paper and placed in a hat or other suitable container. A neutral party randomly draws the names from the hat or container. The order of selection determines the Criers' positions in the Competition.  
e.g. initial name drawn, position one second name drawn, position two etc.
- B-1(b) The names of the competing Criers are printed on separate pieces of paper and placed in a hat or other suitable container. Numbers corresponding to the number of Criers, are printed on separate pieces of paper, and placed in a second hat or suitable container. One name and one number are randomly drawn from each hat or container by one or two neutral parties, and matched. This procedure is repeated until all the names and all the numbers have been selected. The matched names and numbers determine the Criers' positions in the Competition.  
e.g. Where the first name drawn is matched with the number six, then the Crier is the sixth Competitor.
- B-1(c) The order of the Criers in a multi cry competition will be determined by an independent draw for each competition.

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- B-2 In order to be counted in the final standings, a Crier must compete in all cries. All cries shall be counted.
- B-2(a) All Competitors must be prepared to cry when they are called.
- B-2(a)i Should a Crier not proceed when called, that Crier shall be called again after ten seconds. Should there be no response after a further ten seconds, there shall be a third and final call. If there is no response within ten seconds after the third and final call, that Crier shall forfeit that cry. A penalty of two marks shall be deducted for each additional time the Crier is called. The deduction of these marks shall be the responsibility of the Penalty Judge.

ARTICLE C:            OFFICIATING

- C-1 In the case of a dispute in the interpretation of the rules, the Host Crier shall be the Final Arbitrator.
- C-1(a) The Host Crier shall provide adequate time and instructions to the Judges and Scorers, to verify their knowledge of the Rules, Scoring and Judging Guidelines, as set out herein.
- C-2            Judges and Scorers
- C-2(a) There shall be no fewer than four (4) Judges. All Judges' marks will be counted. One Judge shall be designated as Senior Judge.
- C-2(b) There shall be a minimum of two Scorers. One Scorer shall be designated as Senior Scorer. Each Scorer shall be equipped with a desk sized calculator with a tape printout, and shall calculate the scores on separate accounting sheets, independent of each other. Alternatively, a computer and two spread sheet files may be used. Final tabulations shall be compared for accuracy.
- C-3            Judging
- C-3(a) There shall be no communication between Judges, and between Judges and Scorers, unless that communication is initiated by the Scorers for the purposes of clarification, or in case of a tie score in the final mark.
- C-3(b) The Scorers shall not discuss marks with, nor show marks to any other person other than as noted in C-3(a).

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- C-3(c) There shall be no tie award placements. If the score indicates a tie, the Senior Judge shall make a decision. For purposes of clarity and to prevent misinterpretations, scoring adjustments shall be reflected in all documents. All ties shall be kept confidential. (ref. C-3(b) above)
- C-3(d) No placings are official, even if announced, until verified and confirmed by the Senior Scorer, after which time they shall be published and forwarded to the Competitors.
- C-3(e) During Competitions, Judges must sit apart and out of conversational voice range of each other.
- C-3(f) Judges shall be advised in advance, of the subject or theme of each cry.
- C4 Selection of Judges
- C-4(a) A Judge shall be someone who would like to judge, and to learn the skills necessary to perform the task well. The ideal candidate would be an experienced, proficient, enthusiastic volunteer and someone who is an objective thinker and decision maker.
- C-4(b) To better promote both the event and the Guild, one or two “Guest” Judges of Celebrity status could be included.
- C-5 Scoring
- C-5(a)i The Host Crier shall perform the same number of cries as are required of the Competitors. These cries shall be the, “JUDGES’ BENCH-MARK”, criteria against which all Competitors cries are judged. No comments shall be made about the Benchmark Cry.
- C-5(a)ii Judges shall be instructed both verbally and by a statement on the Score Sheet to leave leeway above and below the Bench-mark scores for a fair assignation of the subsequent Criers’ marks.
- C-5(b)i Each Judge shall have one score sheet per Crier per cry. As each cry is completed and scored, a runner shall take the score sheet to the Senior Scorer. The totals should not be added by the Judges.

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- C-5(b)ii The score sheet shall contain squares large enough that notations or corrections will not jeopardise the clarity and legibility. Additional space on the page for adjudication and comments is necessary.
- C-5(b)iii For purposes of comparison, Judges shall be supplied with a Reminder Sheet, onto which they will transcribe each Crier's marks before handing the score sheet to the Runner.
- C-5(c) Scoring Marks shall be assigned according to the following chart:

<b>MARKS ASSIGNED TO JUDGING CRITERIA</b>		
<b>CRITERION</b>		<b>MAXIMUM MARKS</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>ENTRANCE &amp; EXIT</b>	20
<b>2.</b>	<b>CLARITY &amp; PROJECTION</b>	25
<b>3.</b>	<b>CALL CONTENT</b>	35
<b>4.</b>	<b>PENALTIES</b>	20

- C-5(d)i A bell, or any other article left on stage by a Crier, shall be removed immediately upon completion of the cry. The erring Crier shall be penalised two marks for that cry. The deduction of these marks shall be the responsibility of the Penalty Judge.
- C-5(d)ii One mark, to a maximum of ten, shall be deducted for each time the Crier's voices cracks. The deduction of these marks shall be the responsibility of the Penalty Judge.
- C-5(e) The total marks of all cries shall be added and the Crier with the highest grand total shall be declared the winner.
- C-6 Placing:
- I For a Three Crier Competition  
First Place only shall be awarded.
- II For a Four Crier Competition  
First and Second Places shall be awarded.
- III For a Five Crier or More Competition  
First, Second and Third Places shall be awarded.
- C-7 Appeals shall be directed to the Senior Judge, who, in consultation with the other Judges, and if necessary the Host Crier, shall make a decision.

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ARTICLE D:            LENGTH OF CRY

D-1            The length of a cry shall be from one-hundred words to one-hundred and twenty-five words.

D-2            The number of words shall be counted from the first oral sound to the last oral sound.

D-3            For the purpose of these Rules and Regulations the year shall be counted as one word.

e.g.    1993

          Nineteen Ninety Three

          One Thousand Nine Hundred And Ninety Three etc.

Numbers shall be counted as one word thus \$700,000 is two words as is seven hundred thousand dollars.

Roman numerals shall count as one word. Thus, George III is two words, as is George the Third.

The municipality/historic group the crier represent counts as one (1) word.

e.g.    The Town of Happy Valley counts as four (4) words

          The Town of The Blue Waves counts as four (4) words

          The Village of Green Hills and Golden Vales counts as four (4) words.

Proper names count as individual words.

e.g.    His Worship Mayor Bill Green counts as five (5) words.

          Mayor Helen Brown counts as three (3) words.

          Arthur Redenbacher counts as two (2) words.

D-4            Hyphenated words shall count as one word.

D-5            An individual oral sound shall be considered as one word.

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ARTICLE E:        SUBMITTED CRY

- E-1        All cries shall be submitted for auditing.
- E-2        An additional Judge is required to audit a submitted cry.
- E-3        The cry shall be submitted to the Audit Judge immediately prior to proceeding to the stage.
- E-4        One mark, to a maximum of ten, shall be deducted for each word that violates the set word limits.
- E-5        One mark to a maximum of ten, shall be deducted for each word that deviates from the submitted script.

ARTICLE F:        SUPPLIED CRY

- F-1        Where a cry is supplied by the Host Crier, all Criers, who have not yet performed, must be sequestered out of hearing range of the performing Crier until after they have competed.
- F-2        The Host Crier shall make it known if openings and closings are to be added to a supplied cry. If openings and closings are used, they shall not be any longer than a total of 25 words.

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### ARTICLE G:            GENERAL RULES

- G-1            Uniforms shall not be judged, as there can be no standard criteria for judging.
- G-2            Loudest Cry may only be judged by the use of an electronic decibel level device.
- G-3            Two raised surfaces (e.g. table, stool, etc.) shall be placed on the stage for the convenience of both left and right handed Criers who would prefer not to bend to place the attention getting device on the floor. The use of these surfaces are not mandatory.
- G-4            Criers shall not wear badges, awards, medals, pins. etc. that could by mere display influence Judges. This is to apply, at all times during the Competition, until after the last Crier has completed the last cry.
- G-5            Competing Criers must provide proof of current dues payment to The Ontario Guild of Town Criers.
- G-6            During a competition, introductions of Town Criers must include only names and municipalities represented. Background information may not be introduced.
- G-7            Assistants to the Crier (Escort, Page, Apprentice, bird, animal, etc.) are permitted, but shall not be allowed on stage. Subject to Federal and/or Provincial laws and guidelines and for safety reasons. E.g. Seeing eye dogs, wheelchairs etc
- G-8            The Judges shall be a suitable distance from the criers. Further is better than nearer, but some latitude is given to organizers depending upon local conditions and ambient noise levels.
- G-9            The next crier shall be in the ready stationary position by the start of the preceding crier's cry. Failure to comply with this will result in a deduction of 10 points.
- G-10           In the case of a disruption during the cry, the crier has one (1) of three (3) options to choose from without penalty:
1. Continue on as if nothing has happened.
  2. Stop and wait for a reasonable time to resume from the point of stoppage.
  3. Start the cry from the point of first oral sound after entrance.
- G-11           Any attempt to encourage/or use audience participation will result in a disqualified cry.

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**TO ALL PERSONS WHO ARE JUDGING A TOWN CRIER COMPETITION,  
LET IT BE KNOWN THAT:**

- 1) Each crier will have his/her own unique way of approaching and exiting the stage; use of their attention getting device, whether they ring it a lot or a little, on their way to the stage or from the stage; or in the delivery of their cry, whether they say Oyez or not, or God save the Queen. There is no “correct” or “wrong” way. Whatever is comfortable and suitable for the occasion and crier. What is important is how you as a judge interpret how effective the crier is in getting your attention to let you know that he/she have something to say, how effective they are in making the proclamation, what they say in their proclamation and how clearly you are able to understand the cry. For if a crier cannot do these four things, then the crier is not doing their job.
- 2) Criers are always trying to improve themselves. Therefore, it is very much appreciated and expected that you will put comments down on the score sheets. For the crier, just a mark on the score sheet is not sufficient, if there is no means of showing how the mark was arrived at. It is the host criers’ responsibility to allow you enough time for you to fill out your score sheet.
- 3) When criers look at their score sheets after the competition, they notice a large range of marks from one judge to another. Some judges will always tend to score in the higher range while others score in the lower range. As a judge, it is important to be consistent with yourself in scoring of marks from one crier to another.
- 4) The Crier’s escort (Page, Apprentice, bird, animal, etc.) are not to be judged as part of the crier’s performance.

On behalf of the Ontario Guild of Town Criers, we wish to thank you for taking the time to judge at our competition and helping us to promote and preserve our hobby of the ancient and honourable tradition of town crying. We hope that you will enjoy yourself.

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ARTICLE H:        JUDGING GUIDELINES  
                          {ref. C-5(c) and C-5(d)}

H-1                **Entrance & Exit**

Attention Getting Device:

The Attention Getting Device, whether a bell, drum, horn, gong or any other device, is the first notification that a Crier has a message. Marks should be assigned according to the following criteria:

1.     Effectiveness to attract - How well has the interest of the gathering been aroused?
2.     Suitability to the occasion - For instance a small dinner bell would be inappropriate in most out-door settings.
3.     Originality of style or device - A bell handled in an unusual manner, or the use of an unusual device, should be considered carefully.
4.     Appropriateness of device to Crier - Marks should be discounted if the device appears to be unwieldy or awkward for the Crier.
5.     The ability to use the device - A bell not rung effectively, or a horn not blown well means lack of practice and should be reflected in the marks.

Deportment:

The judging of deportment begins when the Crier is introduced and ends when the Crier has left the stage. (Historically a Town Crier was the Official Representative of the Local Authorities and this should be reflected in the individual's deportment). The following criteria should be considered when marking:

1.     Confidence - A Crier whose presence is positive and self-assured deserves more marks than one who appears shy or unsure.
2.     Appearance - An ill-fitting uniform or ill-suited appearance should be reflected in the score.

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3. Appropriate movement .A Crier dressed as a soldier should move in a Military Manner; a Crier dressed as a gentleman should move as a Gentleman. Whatever image is to be projected should be reflected in the Crier’s movements.
4. Overall image .Even when using the above criteria, deportment is largely subjective and judgmental. The feeling that the Judge senses from the beginning to the end of the cry should weigh heavily.

H-2

**Clarity & Projection**

Clarity:

To be understood, the content must be heard clearly. The following criteria should be taken into account:

1. Enunciation .The slurring of words, or excessive voice affectations, may adversely distort the Crier’s message, and thereby make it difficult to understand.
2. Diction and Phrasing .Well placed pauses or breaths help the flow of the cry and, thus help to clarify its meaning.
3. Loss of Voice or Hoarseness .A Crier must sustain clarity through a complete cry. Signs of strain or over extension of the voice should be reflected in the marking.

One mark, to a maximum of ten, shall be deducted for each time the Crier’s voice cracks. The deduction of these marks shall be the responsibility of the Penalty Judge.

Sustained Volume:

Although the three “Oyez's" may be louder than the body of the cry, it is important for a Crier to be heard throughout the cry. Consistency of volume must be maintained, except where fluctuations have been purposely used for emphasis or style.

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- H-3      **Call Content:**  
The message is the most important part of the cry. The following criteria should be helpful:
1.      Adherence to required subject - The Crier should not digress from the assigned theme of the cry.
  2.      Effective use of appropriate language - Unless otherwise justified by the content, the language should remain consistent and appropriate to the historical period depicted.
  3.      Continuity and flow - The cry should flow smoothly and logically.
  4.      Overall literary effectiveness - The Crier may be given marks for effectively using literary and oratorical devices to arouse the listener's interest in the message.
  5.      Comprehension - The meaning of a cry that is disjointed or is grammatically incorrect, may be lost. The point of the message must be understood and should be marked accordingly.

- H-4      **Penalties – Summarised and Other items not mentioned previously**  
NOTE: FULL MARKS (20) WILL BE SCORED FOR THE CRY UNLESS ANY OF THE FOLLOWING OCCUR:
1.      Voice crack – 1 mark for each crack.  
One mark, to a maximum of ten, shall be deducted for each time the Crier's voice cracks. The deduction of these marks shall be the responsibility of the Penalty Judge.
  2.      Deviation from script of cry – 1 mark for each offence.  
One mark to a maximum of ten, shall be deducted for each word that deviates from the submitted script. The deduction of these marks shall be the responsibility of the Penalty Judge.
  3.      Deviation of set word limit – 1 mark per word to a maximum of 10. The deduction of these marks shall be the responsibility of the Penalty Judge/Cry Auditor.
  4.      Failure to be at designated starting point when name called – 10 marks. The deduction of these marks shall be the responsibility of the Penalty Judge.
  5.      Articles Left on Stage Area – 2 marks  
A bell, or any other article left on stage by a Crier, shall be removed immediately upon completion of the cry. The erring Crier shall be penalised two marks for that cry. The deduction of these marks shall be the responsibility of the Penalty Judge.
  6.      Use of or encouragement of audience participation will result in a disqualified cry.

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### ARTICLE I:      SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following points are not rules, but rather suggestions which, if followed, should facilitate the smooth running of a competition.

- I-1           Escorts should be recognised, especially in major competitions for their contributions, such as dress, participation and public relations. Another option is to present a gift to all participating escorts.
  
- I-2           Organisers should attempt to eliminate stairs, or if stairs are necessary, to provide handrails. Ramps, low stages, graduated risers and curtained waiting areas are other possible solutions to the stair problem.
  
- I-3           Organisers should attempt to eliminate obstacles above Criers' heads.
  
- I-4           Water and cups should be available to Criers prior to each cry.
  
- I-5           The Ontario Guild of Town Criers should compile a roster of Judges to be utilised by Organising Committees when preparing for Competitions. The qualifications of these Judges would be augmented by experience. A method of ranking by either skill or seniority should be adopted.
  
- I-6           Once the order of Criers has been determined [ref. Article B, B-i], the list of names should be posted, or carried by a designated person for access by Criers.
  
- I-7           The Host Crier should provide the names and titles of dignitaries who are anticipated to be present.
  
- I-8           Patio tables with umbrellas are ideal for Judges and Scorers.
  
- I-9           An Assistant is useful to the Host Crier for such items as retrieving articles left on stage, stage set-up, adequate water facilities, posting of lists, etc.
  
- I-10          Where possible, sufficient time and distance should be given to the Crier, so that the Judge may better judge deportment.

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APPENDIX A:

1. Judge's Score Sheet for Entrance and Exit  
To be used by Judge to record scores given to each competitor, transported to Scorers for recording.
2. Judge's Score Sheet for Clarity and Projection  
To be used by Judge to record scores given to each competitor, transported to Scorers for recording.
3. Judge's Score Sheet for Call Content  
To be used by Judge to record scores given to each competitor, transported to Scorers for recording.
4. Judge's Score Sheet for Penalties  
To be used by Judge to record scores given to each competitor, transported to Scorers for recording.
5. Judges' Reminder Sheet  
For use by Judge to keep track of marks given to each competitor.
6. Scorer's Tally Sheet  
Scorer to keep track of competitors' marks and totals for each Cry.
7. Competition Standings Sheet  
A list of marks assigned to each competitor.

## Judge's Score Sheet for Entrance and Exit

Event Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:**

- One sheet for each competitor.
- Judge must sign each sheet before transmitting to scorer.
- Sheet must be transmitted to scorer before next competitor is called.
- All Information on score sheet must be kept confidential.
- Competitors identification and cry number must be entered.
- Judges are reminded to leave leeway above and below benchmark scores for a fair assignation of the subsequent criers' marks.

<b><u>COMPETITOR:</u></b>	<b><u>CRY#</u></b>
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CRITERIA	POSSIBLE MARKS	COMPETITOR MARK	JUDGES COMMENTS
<b>Entrance and Exit:</b> Effective use of attention getting device. Suitability of device for occasion. Originality of use. Appropriateness of device to crier. Ability to use device. Confidence of crier. Appearance. Appropriate movement. Overall image of presentation.	<b>20</b>		
JUDGE #1: (Signature)			
Recorded by Scorer #1 (Initial)	Recorded by Scorer #2 (Initial)		Scorer's Comments:

## Judge's Score Sheet for Clarity and Projection

Event Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:**

- One sheet for each competitor.
- Judge must sign each sheet before transmitting to scorer.
- Sheet must be transmitted to scorer before next competitor is called.
- All Information on score sheet must be kept confidential.
- Competitors identification and cry number must be entered.
- Judges are reminded to leave leeway above and below benchmark scores for a fair assignation of the subsequent criers' marks.

<b><u>COMPETITOR:</u></b>	<b><u>CRY#</u></b>
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CRITERIA	POSSIBLE MARKS	COMPETITOR MARK	JUDGES COMMENTS
<p><b>Clarity and Projection:</b></p> <p>Crier must have clear sound throughout cry.                      Enunciation.                      Diction and Phrasing.                      Loss of Voice or Hoarseness.                      Sustained Volume.                      Volume of Crier – able to hear cry.</p>	<b>25</b>		
<p>JUDGE #1: (Signature)</p>			
<p>Recorded by Scorer #1 (Initial)</p>	<p>Recorded by Scorer #2 (Initial)</p>	<p>Scorer's Comments:</p>	

## Judge's Score Sheet for Call Content

Event Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:**

- One sheet for each competitor.
- Judge must sign each sheet before transmitting to scorer.
- Sheet must be transmitted to scorer before next competitor is called.
- All Information on score sheet must be kept confidential.
- Competitors identification and cry number must be entered.
- Judges are reminded to leave leeway above and below benchmark scores for a fair assignation of the subsequent criers' marks.

<b><u>COMPETITOR:</u></b>	<b><u>CRY#</u></b>
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CRITERIA	POSSIBLE MARKS	COMPETITOR MARK	JUDGES COMMENTS
<b>Call Content:</b> Adherence to required Subject. Effective use of appropriate language. Continuity and flow. Overall literary effectiveness. Comprehension.	<b>35</b>		
JUDGE #1: (Signature)			
Recorded by Scorer #1 (Initial)	Recorded by Scorer #2 (Initial)		Scorer's Comments:

## Judge's Score Sheet for Penalties

Event Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:**

- One sheet for each competitor.
- Judge must sign each sheet before transmitting to scorer.
- Sheet must be transmitted to scorer before next competitor is called.
- All Information on score sheet must be kept confidential.
- Competitors identification and cry number must be entered.
- Judges are reminded to leave leeway above and below benchmark scores for a fair assignation of the subsequent criers' marks.

<b><u>COMPETITOR:</u></b>	<b><u>CRY#</u></b>
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CRITERIA	POSSIBLE MARKS	COMPETITOR MARK	JUDGES COMMENTS
<p><b>Penalties:</b>  <b>NOTE: FULL MARKS (20) WILL BE SCORED FOR THIS CRY UNLESS ANY OF THE FOLLOWING OCCUR:</b>                      Voice crack – 1 mark for each crack.                      Article left on stage – 2 marks.                      Deviation from script of cry – 1 mark for each offence.                      Deviation of set word limit – 1 mark per word.                      Failure to be at designated starting point when name called – 10 marks.                      Encouragement /use of audience participation – disqualification of cry</p>	<b>20</b>		
<p>JUDGE #1: (Signature)</p>			
<p>Recorded by Scorer #1 (Initial)</p>	<p>Recorded by Scorer #2 (Initial)</p>	<p>Scorer's Comments:</p>	





## COMPETITION STANDINGS

	Crier's Name	Cry #1	Cry #2	Cry #3	Total	Standing
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
16						
17						
18						
19						
20						
21						
22						
23						
24						
25						
	<b><u>Totals:</u></b>					

To verify standings, total all columns, add the three cry totals together. This should be the same as the total of the total column.

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