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Official Rules of the Harmony Foundation Youth Barbershop Quartet Contest (YBQC)

I. Purpose and Philosophy of the Harmony Foundation Youth Barbershop Quartet Contest

1. To create barbershop quartet festivals and competitions where young people (ages 25 and under) participate in memorable barbershop experiences that encourage more young people to sing.
2. To provide an equitable contest that supports this aim, provides fair competition in the barbershop style, and recognizes the achievement of newcomers to barbershop harmony. Novice categories are included to recognize this achievement.
3. To maintain and nurture that interest by encouraging participants to continue singing barbershop harmony and to spread that excitement to their fellow students, friends, families and communities.

The rules of the YBQC are simple, but detailed enough to avoid misinterpretation. Should any eligibility or procedural question arise, it will be interpreted by the Outreach Coordinator at the Barbershop Harmony Society (hereinafter Society) office. If you have any questions, please ask the Outreach Coordinator.

II. General Rules

1. **Songs** - Two (2) songs in the barbershop style must be sung in each round of the competition. See Section VI for essential elements of the style. A quartet may use the same two songs at the preliminary contest and the international contest. Some

possible songs may be found at www.barbershop.org/competitions/youth-barbershop-quartet-competition/suggested-song-list.

2. **Copyright Compliance** – All arrangements performed by quartets must be obtained in accordance with international and USA copyright law.

3. **Judges** - Society certified judges, or other judges approved by the Society Contest & Judging Committee, will adjudicate all contests, both preliminary and final, using standard Society contest rules [see Section VII below]. A single panel of judges is acceptable, with a double or triple panel preferred if held in conjunction with a Society contest that is using the larger panel.

III. Eligibility

1. **Male Barbershop Quartet** -The Harmony Foundation Youth Barbershop Quartet Contest is for male quartets, singing in the barbershop style (defined in Section VI).

2. **Age Requirements** - The contest is open to young men who are 25 years of age and under as of the date of the international YBQC (July 5, 2016).

3. **Competition Categories** –The contest categorizes contestant according to **age** (*Junior* and *Varsity*) and **experience** (*Novice* and *Experienced*). A quartet can be:

- Novice Junior
- Experienced Junior
- Novice Varsity
- Experienced Varsity

These terms are defined as:

a. **Age** - based upon the age of the quartet members on the date of the international YBQC in with the quartet plans to compete.

1) Junior Quartet – oldest member under 19 years of age

2) Varsity Quartet – one or more members over 18 years of age and all members under 26. Remember that age is as of July 5, 2016.

b. **Experience** – based on prior experience of quartet members in YBQC or CBQC contests at any level.

1) Novice – no more than one (1) member of the quartet has previously competed in a CBQC or YBQC preliminary or international contest.

2) Experienced – two (2) or more members of the quartet have competed in a CBQC or YBQC preliminary or international contest.

There will be an overall champion at each level of competition. Achievement within each contestant category will also be recognized.

4. **No Membership Requirement** -There is no requirement to be a member in the Barbershop Harmony Society or any recognized affiliate organization. Society registered quartets who meet the age requirements are eligible to compete in the YBQC.

5. **Sing in One Quartet Per Cycle** - An individual can sing in only one YBQC quartet at a time (one per contest cycle). Past CBQC or YBQC champion quartets are not eligible to compete. However, individual quartet champion members may compete in a new

quartet, provided no more than one member from a CBQC or YBQC international champion or Society international quartet medalist is in the quartet.

6. **Quartet Name** – A quartet wishing to participate in the YBQC preliminary and YBQC international contests must have its quartet name approved by the Society Outreach Coordinator.

a. During the registration process contestants will provide three name choices. A YBQC quartet name will not be assigned if it is the name of a past or current Society medalist quartet, a past CBQC or YBQC quartet champion, or a quartet name currently used by a registered Society quartet or, if not current, with a grace period for renewal. A best effort will be made to approve names that can be announced from an international contest stage with pride and without potential embarrassment that could suggest an affront to any participant or listener since some names have a different meaning in another place or society. A name exemplifies the competitors themselves and represents the quartet's affiliated school(s), district, and the Society.

b. Approved YBQC participant quartet names will be reserved for as long as the quartet is an active participant in YBQC contests. A quartet that is not a Society registered quartet and that ceases to be an active participant in YBQC contest may have its name reassigned to a new quartet who requests it.

c. Quartet names of past CBQC or YBQC champion quartets will be retired following the quartet's retirement and will not be available to other YBQC participants or to Society member quartets.

d. A quartet may replace up to 2 members and still be eligible to compete under the same quartet name in a subsequent year.

7. **Home District** - To be eligible to qualify as the quartet's "home district" representative, the quartet must compete in its home District YBQC qualification contest. Quartets may also qualify by competing out of its home district, at a special Society-sponsored contest, or through video submission as noted below.

a. Upon registration for a YBQC preliminary competition, each competing quartet must declare the "home" district that it will represent. The quartet's "home" district is the Society district in which the quartet's educational institution (current school or college) is located, or where the majority of the educational institutions represented by the quartet's members are located, or, if all of the quartet members are not enrolled in an educational institution, the district in which the majority of the quartet's members have permanent residence. Questions concerning home districts should be directed to the Outreach Coordinator at Society headquarters.

IV. Entry and Qualification

1. **How to Participate** - Quartets interested in competing at the international YBQC can qualify in one of 3 ways:

- Entering a YBQC preliminary competition in one of the Society's districts,
- Entering a special competition sponsored by the Society, or
- Submitting a video online to be judged by a Society judging panel.
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Competing in a live district event or Society-sponsored live event has the advantage of providing evaluation and interaction between the judges and the quartet.

These YBQC preliminaries are those listed in the YBQC Preliminary Contests (Site and Dates) schedule online at www.barbershop.org/competitions/youth-barbershop-quartet-competition.

a. Preliminary YBQC Competition – The normal method of qualification is through entry in a designated contest in one of Society's districts or at a special preliminary contest sponsored by the Society (e.g., at the Society Midwinter Convention).

1) Quartets may compete in only one preliminary competition. This includes one qualification opportunity even if its home district has multiple competitions at division conventions or otherwise.

2) Any quartet representing an affiliated organization of the Barbershop Harmony Society may also qualify by competing in a non-Society contest which uses the Society scoring format and scoring the target qualifying score or higher.

b. Video Qualification – In order to permit an opportunity for a quartet unable to compete at a District YBQC preliminary competition, it can submit a video in an attempt to qualify for the international YBQC. This is only an alternative to a live, preliminary contest and not in addition to normal qualification.

1) The video performance must adhere to all of the YBQC general contest rules (section II). The video submission may not be used as a means to qualify as a district representative.

2) This must be recorded in HD in front of a live audience without any edits or production enhancements. The live audience may be at public or private event or performance.

3) The HD video can be posted to YouTube as an unlisted link, or posted (in Windows Media Video or QuickTime/mp4 format) to a link provided to the Outreach Coordinator upon acceptance of an entry. Questions about a submission should be addressed to outreach@barbershop.org.

4) All videos must be **submitted** to the provided link no later than Wednesday, April 27, 2016. [Please note that this is different than the **entry deadline** of April 8, 2016.]

5) The Society Contest and Judging Committee will appoint triple judging panel(s) (based on the number of submissions) and the panel(s) will score the videos. The appointed panel Contest Administrators will compile and submit a report of the video qualification to Society headquarters. A member of the Society staff will distribute scores to video competitors by May 5, 2016.

6) Video submission may not be used by a district as all or part of district qualification; it is a separate preliminary contest.

2. Entry and Entry Deadline - An Official Entry Form must be filed at least 30 days before the date of a selected preliminary contest. The entry deadline for video qualification is April 8, 2016.

a. The Entry Form is available online at www.barbershop.org/competitions/youth-barbershop-quartet-competition/register-online.

b. If any member of the quartet is under 18, the Society will send a form to the quartet contact to obtain parental signature(s) to grant permission for each minor member to enter.

c. There is a \$40.00 USD entry fee. This may be paid online by credit card or PayPal. In unusual cases, arrangement can be made for payment of the entry fee by check payable to "Barbershop Harmony Society."

d. Extenuating circumstances surrounding deadline issues should be discussed with the Outreach Coordinator.

3. *Qualifiers for International YBQC*

a. ***District Representative*** - The highest scoring quartet in the youth preliminary contest of its home district [Section III paragraph 7], and regardless of the quartet classification [Section III paragraph 3], will qualify to represent that district and compete in the international YBQC. If a district has multiple preliminary competitions, at division conventions or otherwise, all such competitions are part of one district contest.

b. ***Other Automatic Qualifiers***— The highest scoring quartet, regardless of the quartet classification [Section III paragraph 3], using the video submission option [Section IV.1.b] will qualify to compete in the international YBQC. Additionally, the highest scoring quartet competing in a special Society-sponsored preliminary competition will qualify to compete in the international YBQC.

c. ***Minimum Score for District Representative or Automatic Video Qualifier*** – In order to *compete* in the international YBQC, an automatic qualifier must receive at least the minimum score¹. Should that qualifier receive less than the minimum score, it will be invited by the Society to participate in special events at the international convention but will not compete in the international YBQC.

d. ***Target Qualification Score*** - All other quartets, regardless of quartet type, scoring the target qualifying score will also qualify to compete in the international YBQC. The target qualifying score is set by the Society Board of Directors and remains in effect until changed by subsequent action by the Society Board of Directors². In the event that a quartet cannot compete in the regularly scheduled preliminary contest in its home district, it may only qualify for the international contest by scoring the target qualifying score or higher in another district's contest or with a video submission.

e. ***CEO Invitation*** - If a total of 30 qualifiers for the international contest is not met, the positions will be filled by quartets invited by the Society CEO. An invitation may be based on achieving a diversity of quartet classifications as defined in Section III paragraph 3 and may not strictly be based of qualifying score.

f. ***Limit of Only One Contest at International Convention*** – A quartet may not compete in the international quartet contest and also in the international YBQC. An eligible Society registered quartet may choose to compete in both a YBQC preliminary competition and a regular international quartet preliminary contest. Should it qualify for both international contests, it will need to choose the contest in which it will compete; i.e., accept an invitation. While an individual member of a quartet may compete in both the international quartet contest and international YBQC, no more than two members of the same quartet can do so and remain eligible for the international YBQC.

¹ Current minimum score for automatic qualifier is average of 61% (366 on a single panel, 732 on a double panel and 1098 on a triple panel)

² Current target qualifying score is average of 73% (438 on a single panel, 876 on a double panel and 1314 on a triple panel)

4. **Replacement of Member After Qualification** - A quartet may replace one, and only one, quartet member between a qualifying YBQC preliminary and the international YBQC. If two or more personnel changes should occur in a qualifying quartet between the qualifying YBQC preliminary contest and the international contest, that quartet becomes ineligible to compete.

5. **Replacement of a Qualifying Quartet**

a. If a district representative withdraws or otherwise becomes unavailable and, as a result, that district would not be represented in the international contest, then the next highest ranking quartet that is available from the same district, that competed in its home district preliminary contest and met the minimum score requirement will replace the quartet that has withdrawn or become unavailable.

b. If a quartet that qualified solely by attainment of the target qualifying score as defined above, or by CEO invitation, withdraws or otherwise becomes unavailable, that quartet will not be replaced, except where the loss of that quartet brings the total qualifiers for the contest below 30.

c. No replacements will be made after June 1, whether or not a district would be left unrepresented and regardless of the number of remaining entries.

6. **Responsibility for Expenses** - Quartets are responsible for their own travel, lodging and other expenses incurred while participating in the competition(s). Some districts or chapters may elect to support a youth quartet financially and with coaching.

V. Scholarships

Upon qualification for the international contest, each of the qualifying quartets will receive an application to apply for need-based scholarship funding to help offset the expenses of competing at the international contest. Any funding received by the quartet singers may be taxable income, and the Society may be required to report the awarded funds to the Internal Revenue Service in accordance with IRS regulations.

VI. The Barbershop Style

Basic characteristics of barbershop harmony:

- Four unaccompanied male voices.
- Melody in the second voice down (lead, or second tenor). The melody lies within the good quality range for the average lead singer and is free of awkward skips that make it difficult to sing accurately.
- Consonant four-part chords on all notes of the melody, almost completely in root position and second inversion.
- Use of embellishments of many kinds, such as swipes, key changes, echoes, bell chords, etc. to enhance the lyric material of the song.
- A predominance of dominant seventh-type (barbershop seventh) chords, revolving around the circle of fifths.
- The use of barbershop sevenths on roots other than I, IV and V.
- Easily understandable lyrics that are in good taste.

VII. Judging Criteria

For information concerning the current judging rules, please refer to the Society **Contest Rules** found in the Document Center on the Society website at www.barbershop.org/files/documents/contestandjudging/CJBook-03_Contest_Rules.pdf.

A chief characteristic of the barbershop style is its wholesome, "G-rated" entertainment values. Disqualification at a contest, though, may result from one or all judges for:

- Anyone other than quartet members appearing on stage during the performance.
- Songs that are primarily patriotic or primarily religious in intent.
- Use of contestant's own electronic sound equipment.
- Instrumental accompaniment, including instrumental introductions, interludes, or conclusions.

For more information, call or write:

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