

# OFFICIAL COMPETITION RULES AND AWARDS

(Revised August 2024)

## I. GENERAL

1. A competition is defined as a judging of photographs of a particular category made by entrants competing at a particular level at the regularly scheduled SSCC meeting for this purpose.
2. Entrants must be members in good standing of SSCC, meaning that, in accordance with the bylaws, annual dues must be paid before participating in any competition.
3. The Competition Chairman (or person acting in his / her stead) is responsible for the administration of these rules and may disqualify and remove any entry not conforming to these rules.
4. It is also the duty of the Competition Chairman to:
  1. instruct the judge(s) in the definitions of subjects and/or techniques; and to
  2. instruct the judge(s) to reject any entry not conforming to an announced subject and/or techniques.
5. Entries for competition must be initially created with light sensitive devices such as film or digital camera, as well as scanned film, enlarger, copier, or flatbed scanner, etc. Images that were not created with a light sensitive device are not photographs and are not permitted. To encourage creativity and exploration of new technologies, there is no restriction on the amount or type of computer or darkroom manipulation performed by the entrant on an image.
6. SSCC assumes no liability for any misuse of copyright and is not responsible for any loss of or damage to any images submitted. By virtue of submitting an entry, the entrant certifies the work as not infringing on anyone else's copyright. With the permission of the photographer, SSCC may reproduce, in printed or electronic form, all or part of the entered material free of charge for publication and/or display in media related to the promotion of the club and to effectively operate and promote its competitions.

## II. CATEGORIES

1. There are two categories of competition: (1) Prints and (2) Projected Images. Each includes monochrome and color images.
2. Entries in all categories must have been created by the entrant.

## III. LEVELS

1. Each category of competition (Prints and Projected Images) has three levels: Novice, Intermediate, and Advanced.
2. A member's level standing in one category has no bearing on that member's standing in any other category.
3. A new member may begin competing at any level of any category and may voluntarily move to a higher level at any time. However, a member who has entered images at a higher level may not thereafter enter at a lower level. It is the member's responsibility to ensure that his/her entries are properly recorded and entered in the correct competition level.
4. The exception to point (3) is that members who have competed at the Advanced level in a given category before the 2024-2025 Club year may choose to compete in the Intermediate level if their point total is less than the Advanced level threshold. Once a member competes at the Advanced level in a given category beginning in the 2024-2025 season, point (3) applies.
5. Whenever there are insufficient entries to hold a Novice competition, a Novice member may choose to enter images in the Intermediate level competition for that competition without affecting his/her status at the Novice level. Any points awarded to the Novice member in that higher level competition will be tallied as Novice level points.
6. Whenever there are insufficient entries to hold an Intermediate competition, an Intermediate member may choose to enter images in the Novice level competition for that competition without affecting his/her status at the Intermediate level. Any points awarded to the Intermediate member in that lower level competition will be tallied as Intermediate level points.
7. Whenever there are insufficient entries to hold either a Novice or Intermediate competition, a Novice or Intermediate member may choose to enter images in the Advanced level competition for that competition without affecting his/her status at the Novice or Intermediate level. Any points awarded to the Novice or Intermediate member in that higher level competition will be tallied as Novice or Intermediate level points, that is, the level at which the entry was originally submitted.
8. Point scores are recorded and tallied by the Competition Chairman and SSCC Historian. A Novice entrant who has accumulated 25 points in a given category (Print or Projected) over any period in SSCC monthly competitions must immediately move to the Intermediate level. An Intermediate entrant who has accumulated 70 points in a given category over any period in SSCC monthly competitions must immediately move to the Advanced level.
9. After receiving the SSCC Master of Photography Award, a member must thereafter compete in the Advanced level in all categories. The move to the Advanced level becomes effective in the club year following the year in which the 300 points total is achieved.

## **IV. PREPARATION OF COMPETITION ENTRIES**

10. For prints (at Novice and Advanced levels), printing must be done by, or under the direction of, the entrant. For film, initial processing of negatives or alternative media

may be done by the entrant or a commercial imaging service. All subsequent custom techniques, including image retouching or manipulation, must be done by the entrant.

11. For projected images, any image editing or manipulation of digital images must be done by the entrant. Images captured on film may be processed and scanned by a commercial lab. Any further steps in the production of an entry must be done under the direction of the entrant.
12. Print entries must be securely attached to either a board or a clean mat, preferably both, so that prints do not come loose. The purpose of this requirement is to effectively present the print, to provide rigidity when on display during the competition, and not to harm the prints above or below it in a stack. Prints must be of a size acceptable for the club's print viewing box (approx. 24" high); total print area may not exceed 16" x 20". A sequence of related prints, mounted on one board, will be considered as a single entry. For both levels, the combined picture area of this sequence may not exceed 16" x 20". Framing is prohibited. There are to be no hooks, substances, or protruding objects on the mount board that might scratch, mar, or otherwise damage other entries.
13. On the back of the print, the following information must be legibly included: The entrant's name and level, the title of the image, the date of the competition in which the image is being entered, and an arrow indicating the top of the print. SSCC will provide a label template so that all members can supply the required information on the back of prints in a consistent way.
14. Digital images must conform to the technical specifications provided by the Competition Chairman and published in the Cable Release as well as in the Members' Handbook and on the SSCC web site.

## V. MONTHLY COMPETITIONS

1. **Competition schedule:** Projected Image (both color and monochrome) and Print (both color and monochrome) competitions are to be held each month during a regular club meeting, September through May, as decided by the Board of Directors, except that one month may be designated for other purposes.
2. **Number of entries that may be submitted:** The maximum number of entries a member may submit in each category is two.
3. **Minimum number of entries to hold a competition:** To conduct a Novice competition, there must be at least four entries by at least three entrants. To conduct an Advanced competition, there must be a minimum of nine entries.
4. **Log-in procedure for prints at competition meetings:** Prior to the competition, each entrant must ensure that his/her name and the title of each of their print entries are recorded in the appropriate competition registers as maintained by the Competition Chairman. Proper submission of digital images generates automatic registration. An Advanced level image entered into a lower level will be disqualified.
5. **Log-in time for prints at competition meeting:** All prints must be logged in no later than five minutes before the starting time of the meeting. If a member is unavoidably delayed, his prints may be included in the competition at the discretion of the Competition Chairman.

6. **Number of times one image may be entered in competitions:** One image may be entered in competitions no more than three times total, across all categories, across all years of membership.
7. **Re-entering a winning image in another category:** No entry that has won an award in an SSCC monthly competition may be re-entered in another category.
8. **What constitutes a repeat image:** Repeat images are identical or nearly identical images. (For example, with the photographer standing in one place, pictures of the same subject may be nearly identical though they will have different file or frame numbers. A previously submitted image can be transformed by cropping, rotating, etc. as to make it a different image.)
9. **Identifying repeat images:** Each photographer is required to check his / her entries for repeat images, whether identical or nearly identical. However, it is up to the Competition Chairman, in conjunction with the SSCC Historian, to identify images submitted more than three times.
10. **Consequences of submitting repeat images:** On the first occurrence of a member submitting an entry more than three times, the entrant is given a warning. Any subsequent submission of the image results in the loss of all points earned by that image.
11. **Awards:** Ribbons are presented in each competition based on the total number of entries in each level. Awards are valued as:
  - 1st Place – 6 points
  - 2nd Place – 4 points
  - 3rd Place – 2 points
  - HM (Honorable Mention)- 1 point
12. **Number of awards given per number of entries:**
  - 4-5 entries: only 1st place
  - 6-8 entries: 1st & 2<sup>nd</sup> place
  - 9-11 entries: 1st, 2nd, & 3<sup>rd</sup> place
  - 12 -14 entries: 1 HM
  - 15 – 24 entries: 2HM
  - 25 – 34 entries: 3 HM
  - 35 – 44 entries: 4 HM
  - 45 – 54 entries: 5 HM

The number of HMs awarded in each category is based on 10% of the total entries in each category rounded up from odd multiples of five. No HMs are awarded in competitions with fewer than 12 entries, no 3rd place with fewer than 9 entries, and no 2nd place with fewer than 6 entries.

13. **Competition topics:** The Board of Directors may assign not more than three of the monthly competitions to a defined subject and/or technique. The October competition is always on the topic of Nature. The May competition is always devoted exclusively to

black and white / monochrome images in both the print and projected categories. All other competitions are open to all subject areas and photographic techniques (i.e., open topic). Assigned topic competitions for the following club year are determined at a Board Meeting in April and announced in the May Cable Release.

14. **Annual Nature competition:** The topic for all October competitions (i.e., Projected Images and Prints) must always be Nature for all levels and in all categories and held on the same meeting night. The Joyce Bayley Award is presented to the "Best of Show" as determined by the Judge. Entries must conform to the SSCC definition of the Nature topic.
15. **Rescheduling competitions:** If a competition is not held, for any reason, it may be rescheduled at the discretion of the President.

## VI. BODY OF WORK COMPETITION

1. The Board of Directors may assign not more than one projection and one print competition each year as a Body of Work competition. For these competitions, there are no level distinctions. Sets of images (intended to tell a story, make a statement, or support a theme) are presented to the Judge as a group. Individual images that have won in prior monthly or inter-club competitions are eligible for inclusion as part of a set, but no image that has been entered in a prior Body of Work competition is eligible. Entry of an image into this competition as part of a set has no bearing on its eligibility for entry into monthly or inter-club competitions. Makers must assign titles to each set entered, not to each individual image.
2. To conduct a Body of Work competition, there must be at least four entries by at least three entrants. No HMs are awarded in competitions with fewer than 12 entries, no 3rd place with fewer than nine entries, and no 2nd place with fewer than six entries.
3. Print Competition: Each member may enter up to two sets consisting of 3 to 5 images in the Print Body of Work competition. Images must be individually mounted. However, multiple images mounted on one board are allowed and are considered a single image.
4. Projected Image Competition: Each member may enter up to two sets, each consisting of 3 or 4 images in the Projected Image Body of Work competition.

## VII. YEAR-END COMPETITIONS

5. Each member may enter a maximum of five images per category in the Year-End competition.
6. Year-end competitions have the same rules as monthly competitions with respect to categories and levels.
7. All entries in Year-End competitions must have been entered in a monthly competition or as an SSCC entry in an inter-club competition during the preceding nine months.
8. No points are awarded.
9. A member who has entered in more than one level of a category during the preceding year may elect to enter either level (but not both) for the Year-End competition. If the

member enters the Advanced level, he or she may submit any entry previously entered regardless of level. If he or she enters the Intermediate level, he or she may submit only entries previously entered in the Intermediate or Novice level. If he or she enters the Novice level, he or she may submit only entries previously entered in the Novice level.

10. Recognition, but not ribbons or points, is determined on the following basis: 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and a variable number of HM's equal to 10% of the total entries in that competition, rounded up from odd multiples of five.
11. The Len Tuchin Award is presented to the creator of the image that, in the opinion of the Judge of the Year-End competition, is considered to be the "Best of Show."

## VIII. PHOTOGRAPHERS OF THE YEAR AWARDS

1. For each level within each competition category, a Photographer of the Year award is presented at the year-end banquet.
2. The awards are determined on the basis of all points earned during the club year just ended. A Photographer of the Year award may not be presented in a level/category if no member has earned at least a total of 15 points in that level/category.
3. Point totals are calculated as follows:
  1. Novice level – All points earned in SSCC monthly competitions in that club year, plus all points earned as an SSCC entrant in Board-approved inter-club competitions in equivalent categories, any level.
  2. Intermediate level – All points earned in SSCC monthly competitions for the Intermediate or Advanced levels in that club year, plus all points earned as an SSCC entrant in Board-approved inter-club competitions in equivalent categories, any level.
  3. Advanced level – All points earned in SSCC for the Advanced level in that club year plus all points earned as an SSCC entrant in Board-approved inter-club competitions in equivalent categories, any level.
  4. If a member moves from Novice to Intermediate or Intermediate to Advanced during a club year – All points earned at the higher level and one half of all points earned at the lower level of the same category in that club year, plus all points earned in Board-approved inter-club competitions in equivalent categories, any level. Such a member may be considered only for a Photographer of the Year award in the higher level.
  5. In the event of a tie for a Photographer of the Year, the winners are determined as follows:
    - First tie-breaker : the most 1st place awards
    - Second tie-breaker: the most 2nd place awards
    - Third tie-breaker: the most 3rd place awards
    - Fourth tie breaker: the most honorable mention awards
    - If a tie remains, there are co-winners.

5. Inter-Club awards earn points toward an SSCC Photographer of the Year award as follows:
  - 1st place – 7 points
  - 2nd place – 5 points
  - 3rd place – 3 points
  - HM – 2 points
  - Runner-up – 1 point
6. In any competition where the HM awards exceed 10% of the total competition entries, an HM only earns one point. Entries accepted for club representation in competitions in which SSCC conducts preliminary qualification judging receive one acceptance point each. Acceptance points are separate from, and in addition to, any points that may be earned in the inter-club competition.

#### **IX. PHOTOGRAPHIC EXCELLENCE AWARDS ON BASIS OF POINTS EARNED**

- ***SSCC Star Merit Award:*** For each 35 points scored in monthly club and inter-club competitions, total accumulation in all levels and categories over any period of time while a member in good standing of SSCC, a member is awarded a Star Merit Award. Stars are awarded up to a maximum of five (for a 175 point accumulation).
- ***SSCC Master of Photography Award:*** Upon accumulating 200 total points in the SSCC Star Award System, an SSCC member is awarded an SSCC Master of Photography plaque.
- ***SSCC Grand Master of Photography Award:*** Upon accumulating 400 total points in the SSCC Star Award System, a member is awarded the SSCC Grand Master of Photography plaque.
- ***SSCC Hall of Fame Award:*** Upon accumulating 800 total points in the SSCC Star Award System, a member is awarded the SSCC Hall of Fame plaque.
- The Competition Chairman and/or the Historian must maintain records necessary for the administration of Photographic Excellence awards.

#### **X. SERVICE AWARD**

7. A Service Award may be awarded to the SSCC member who the Executive Council determines has made outstanding contributions to further the interests of the Club and its membership. The Executive Council makes this determination by secret ballot no earlier than May 1st of the award year. The member must receive a majority of the votes cast; if no majority is reached, there may be up to two additional ballots in an effort to achieve one. If no majority is reached after the third ballot, there is be no award for that year.

## **Competition Chair Discretion Statement, August 2024**

**In the spirit of the Silver Spring Camera Club's Constitution and By-Laws, the Competition Chair has the discretion to reject entries that are deemed unfit for display. If the entrant objects, they may appeal to the Executive Council for the privilege of resubmitting the entry at a subsequent competition. Related sections are Article IV and Article X section 3.**

For example, topics that might be areas of concern are nudity, politics, and religion, among others. It could be politically offensive content that is not documentary in nature; i.e., the image is meant to disparage or offend candidates or parties. The same with religious or cultural content – for example, anti-Jewish or anti-Palestinian content.