

WGUK 2012 *RULES AND REGULATIONS*



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Chairman

Mark Gutteridge
26 Windsor Ave,
Ashton
Preston

Tel: 0845 688 8907

E-mail: chairman@wguk.org.uk

This is an update of the rules and regulations for Winterguard contests as at 29th September 2011.

Any future amendments will be sent to you as an addendum to this booklet, or where any major changes to the rules, a new rules and regulations booklet will be produced and forwarded to each Guard.

Should you require further copies of this booklet please contact the address above or go on-line to the WGUK website <http://www.wguk.org.uk> and go to the "Docs Download" section.

1. ELIGIBILITY

- 1.1** Guard members in 'A' Classes must not be over 25 years of age on the 31st December of the year preceding the competitive circuit. (i.e. not over 25 on 31/12/11 to march in the 2012 circuit)
- 1.2** Guard members in Junior Classes must not be over 17 years of age on the 31st December of the year preceding the competitive circuit. (i.e. not over 17 on 31/12/11 to march in the 2012 circuit)
- 1.3** Guard members in the Cadet Class must not be over 11 years of age on the 31st December of the year preceding the competitive circuit. (i.e. not over 11 on 31/12/11 to march in the 2012 circuit)
- 1.4** There is no age limit in Open Class.

All guards entering the circuit will be required to complete a member's registration form and proof of guard member's ages may be required (see Rule 9. Withholding of Registration).
- 1.5** A person may only march with one guard in any one season.
- 1.6** Guards may compete in any class with a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 30 members including guard captain(s). (The minimum requirement may be waived by the WGUK Contest Referee or by the WGUK Chairman in respect of the season.)
- 1.7** Pre-recorded music shall be on compact disc or MP3. A reserve disc must be available at each contest as a backup.
- 1.8** As a guideline it is recommended that the minimum age for registered marching members should be in line with the school starting age.

2. ARENA SPECIFICATIONS

- 2.1** The minimum Competition Arena size will be 70 feet (front line) by 45 feet (side line). All reference to Competition Arena and/or Arena in this booklet refers to these measurements.
- 2.2** The Arena markings, except where otherwise specified or approved, shall be laid down on the arena with yellow/black adhesive tape and are as follows
 - 2.2.1** Cones may mark the four corners and the centre front line but are not mandatory
 - 2.2.2** Tape will mark the front line boundary and centre line only.
 - 2.2.3** The centre of the Arena will be marked with a cross on its centre line.
 - 2.2.4** The front line will be split into quarters by the use of two further strips of tape 10 inches long (approx.) at right angles to the front line.
 - 2.2.5** The start/finish line will be marked as a vertical line covering the full depth of the centre of the Competition Arena. (See 3.2 below)
- 2.3** All contests must have a professional sound system, with backup, adequate speakers and compact disc players. ALL contests should have provision for MP3 recordings in 2012. A backup CD however is required. Sound systems should be tested on site prior to the start of the contest.
- 2.4** In the event of a mechanical failure with regard to music playback or other unreasonable interference with the performance, a guard may be invited to withdraw and be rescheduled to compete later at the discretion of the WGUK Contest Referee.

3. COMPETITION RULES

3.1 Time limits:

3.1.1 Cadet Class - The maximum time allowed on the Arena (see rule 2.2.5 above) will be 7 minutes. There will be no minimum performance time in this class.

3.1.2 Junior Class - The minimum performance time will be 3 minutes. The maximum time allowed on the arena (see rule 2.2.5 above) will be 7 minutes.

3.1.3 'A' Class - The minimum performance time will be 4 minutes. The maximum time allowed on the Arena (see rule 2.2.5 above) will be 9 minutes.

3.1.4 Open Class - The minimum performance time will be 4 minutes. The maximum time allowed on the arena (see rule 2.2.5 above) will be 9 minutes.

3.1.5 ALL Classes - Any Guard promoted (see rules 8. Promotion System at the end of this booklet) during the season can adhere to the timings of the class they were promoted from.

3.2 Guards total allocated Arena time (as specified above) will be divided into two parts:

a) Arena Entrance Time

Any equipment and/or props may be placed in the Competition Arena by anyone prior to the start of competition. Any non-members involved in set up must exit the Competition Arena prior to the start of performance time. Guards can move onto the floor up to the centre line as the previous guard exits past the vertical centre line. The Arena Marshall will indicate when the guard can begin moving across the centre line or start pre-show music. Timing will NOT begin until the first performer or member of staff setting equipment/props crosses the centre start/finish line or the intro music begins. It stops when the announcer asks "are the judges ready?" This will normally be when the guard and/or their helpers appear to have completed all their preparations and any pre-show music as stopped playing.

b) Performance and Exit Time

The timing for this will start with the first note of music or movement from the guard after the Captain's salute (this does not include any movement made by the Captain in returning to the start position). Timing will cease when all personnel, equipment and/or props have cleared the vertical centre line and any music is completed. For purposes of timing, equipment and props are considered "removed" when they have crossed the vertical centre line and music as ceased. After the equipment/props have crossed this line, they must continue to make forward progress out of the Competition Arena ensuring the whole arena is left in a fit and cleaned state for the next performing unit – the Contest Referee will make any adjudication regarding excessive time (max 30 seconds) to completely clear the Competition Arena.

3.3 Guards will be scheduled to compete on the Arena at intervals of no less than the maximum allowed Arena time for their class (see rule 3.1.1 - 3.1.4 above). Failure to appear at the marshalling area at the allotted time will incur penalties at the discretion of the WGUK Contest Referee.

3.4 Music will be permitted before the Guard Captain's salute and at the end of the show. This music must be controlled by a member of the guards staff and but will be included in the guards set up time and exit times. (see rule 3.2).

3.5 Guards may enter/exit over any boundary subject to the provisions of rule 5.7.

3.6 Any number of non-guard members may assist in setting out equipment prior to the guard's performance and in clearing the arena on completion of the performance. However, only a limited number of passes will be issued by WGUK and all other helpers will be expected to pay for admission and be in possession of a valid ticket.

3.7 A member dropping his/her piece of equipment may retrieve it without assessment of a penalty. A guard may wish to designate one or two (maximum) equipment retrievers. They must not wear guard uniform. These retrievers may return dropped equipment to the performer without gaining a penalty but may not move any other equipment, scenery or props, or bring on new items of equipment, scenery or props, once the announcer has asked "are the judges ready?"

Non-performing personnel may not enter the Competition Arena during the guard's performance time. The only exceptions to this will be in the act of returning dropped equipment, First Aid cases or Health & Safety concerns.

- 3.8 Guards must not cause or risk injury to members of the audience, judges or officials or themselves. Guards should be particularly careful when discarding equipment to ensure that it does not land in the audience or hit a judge or official. Any item of equipment or act of performance which is considered by the Contest Referee to constitute a hazard or risk to any person may be prohibited at the show concerned or at any subsequent show.
- 3.9 All scenery, props and any other equipment used during the show can only be assembled either prior to the start of the competition or after passing the centre start line at the start of the total Arena time allowed. All scenery entering the Arena must be capable of fitting through a doorway 6'6" high by 6' wide at the point of entering the Competition Arena at the beginning and end of the total allowed Arena time. i.e. scenery can only be assembled to a size in excess of the aforementioned during the total Arena time and must be disassembled to the required size before clearing the Competition Arena.
- 3.10 An equipment/scenery storage area will be designated by the Contest Referee prior to the start of the event. This may be inside or outside the main hall. All scenery/equipment removed after a performance must be returned to the storage area immediately after crossing the finish line.
- 3.11 Flooring surfaces must enter the Competition Arena without being in any way unfolded or otherwise prepared and must be immediately capable of storage when they clear the Competition Arena i.e. flooring surfaces cannot be folded once they have cleared the Competition Arena and must therefore be folded to an acceptable state for storage before leaving the Competition Arena.

4. AUTHORISED GUARD EQUIPMENT

- 4.1 The following WILL NOT be allowed on or around the Arena area - pyrotechnics, pressurised canisters, inflammable substances, animals, hazardous chemicals, smoke or dry ice machines, mains electrical operated equipment. Electrical equipment that can run off dry cell batteries (max 9v battery) may be sanctioned but must be **declared to the contest referee** at each and every show for safety approval. Each unit takes full responsibility for the safety of any used equipment.
- 4.2 Guard equipment - general definitions:
 - Flag - Material attached to a pole of minimum length 24".
Minimum flag size - 8" x 12".
National Colours must be a minimum size of 3' x 5'.
 - Rifle - Minimum of 2' in length.
All rifles must be simulated.
 - Sabre - Minimum of 2' in length with a handle or grip.
Sabres must be simulated or rendered safe.

5. PENALTIES

- 5.1 A guard will be disqualified from a competition if found in breach of Rule 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 or 1.4.
- 5.2 Improper use of National Colours will attract a penalty of 1/10 point for each offence. Dropping of National Colours will result in a penalty of one whole point. (National Colours refers to the national flag of any recognised nation. Such flags may not be used for display purposes and must at all times be treated with the dignity which should be afforded to a national flag.)
- 5.3 The use of any illegal equipment will attract a penalty of minimum 1/2 point.
- 5.4 Safety violations will attract a penalty of 1 whole point per member for each offence.
- 5.5 Penalties relating to timing offences will be at the rate of 1/10 point for every 1 second unless otherwise stated (over a maximum or under a minimum timing requirement).
- 5.6 A guard failing to report to the assembly area at the stipulated time will attract a penalty of 5/10 points for each 5 minutes late or part thereof up to the conclusion of the contest at the discretion of the WGUK Contest Referee.

- 5.7 Any infraction of Arena entry or exit rules will attract 1/10 point penalty for each member up to a maximum of 2 whole points for 20 members or more. The front line may only be crossed under the direction of WGUK Contest Referee
- 5.8 Any guard causing or risking injury to any member of the audience, judge, marching member or official will attract a minimum penalty of one (1) whole point for each incident at the referee's discretion.
- 5.9 Any infringement of rules 3.6, 3.8, 3.9 or 3.10 will attract a minimum of 5/10 points penalty
- 5.10 General: Any guard violating any rules, or part of a rule, for which no specific penalty is provided may be penalised for each such violation, not less than 1/10 point nor more than disqualification at the discretion of the WGUK Referee.
- 5.1 All equipment used must be adequately protected to avoid injury to any competitors, officials, audience etc, and to the Arena surface. Poles should have either stoppers fitted or be protected in some other way and rifles/sabres should be rendered safe. Any equipment may be inspected by the WGUK Referee and dangerous equipment may be prohibited from being used.
- 5.12 No show design or floor is to cross the front boundary. The side and back boundary lines are advisory; it must be born in mind that the safety of the audience and participants is paramount. Any designed activity which involves crossing the side and back boundary lines and which is, in the opinion of the WGUK Contest Referee, unsafe or potentially unsafe may attract penalties up to and including disqualification. Designs involving the crossing of side and back boundaries must be reported to the WGUK Contest Referee prior to the competition. In no circumstances must aisles and safety gangway be used or compromised (A 1 Metre minimum clearance must be maintained between any activity and the audience). Fire exits must not be obscured. A penalty, at the discretion of the WGUK Contest Referee, will be given for shows designed to cross the front boundary. If the front boundary line is crossed in error rather than by design then penalties may be given and will be at the discretion of the WGUK Contest Referee.
- 5.13 Any Guard withdrawing from a show following the closing date will attract a minimum penalty of two (2) whole points for the remainder of the season and including the British Winterguard Championships in addition the Guard will be required to pay a penalty prior to being allowed to compete at a subsequent show.

6. SCORING

- 6.1 A full explanation of the current judging system and methods employed for the judging of all Classes is available upon request.
- 6.2 All judges will be located at the front of the Arena.
- 6.3 All aspects will be judged throughout the whole of a guard's performance up to the maximum performance time allowed for each class

7. DISPUTES

- 7.1 Any dispute on the day of a competition shall be referred to the Referee for arbitration and the Referee's decision shall be final and binding on the day
- 7.2 Any dispute regarding the decision of a Referee should be reported immediately to the WGUK Chairman in writing, by post to 26 Windsor Ave, Ashton, Preston. PR2 1JD. Any dispute not lodged within 72 hours, commencing at midnight on the day of the competition, shall be considered void. On receipt of any such dispute the Chairman shall consult with other Referees and/or Board Members to review the decision involved in the dispute. The person referring the dispute will normally be informed of the outcome of the review within 14 days of it being lodged. There is no right of review of a decision reached by this mechanism. If the Chairman is involved in the dispute then the matter will be referred by him to the appointed Deputy for consideration.

8. TIE PROCEDURE

- 8.1 In the past, at the WGUK Championships, if two or more Guards tie for 1st Place then there was a formula, based on captions, to determine which Guard came out on top. For 2008 onwards if there is a tie for 1st Place in any Class then this will stand and joint Champions will be announced.

Supplementary information agreed.

Ties will be permitted for contest positions and champions at any contest including finals. However, should a tie be recorded during a seeding block then the guard with the highest score is deemed the winner. If these scores are the same then the existing contest tie procedure will be used to separate guards during seeding or prelims to ensure accurate performance order. The existing Tie procedure is to be extended to include the Toss of a Coin should no separation be made within the judges scores.

9. SEEDING

- 9.1 Cadet, Junior and A Class guards will have their championships performance order based on an average of their last two scores prior to championships.
- 9.2 Open Class guards will have their Championships prelims score based on the average of their compulsory show score in February and their highest score in March.
- 9.3 The top 3 Junior and A Class guards in Championships will perform in the Class playoffs. Their performance order will be by random draw. No championships scores will be announced prior to the playoffs.
- 9.4 Open Class finals performance order will be based on the scores achieved in prelims. No prelims scores will be announced. Prelims performance order will be based on the seeding from rule 9.2.
- 9.5 The performance order for the first two shows of the season will be based on the date and timing of guard registrations on or after the opening date for the 2012 season registrations.
- 9.6 The performance or for All February and March season shows will be by random draw of entries on the date of the MPAUK AGM or other date declared by the WGUK Board. Any late entries or show contest changes will result in the unit performing first in class.

10. PROMOTION SYSTEM

Cadet, Junior and A Class

Units may choose their class of competition based on the criteria and expectations for that class. The judges will use the criteria reference as the sole basis for assigning scores at any contest.

Promotion from Cadet, Junior and A Class will be automatic should a unit achieve a total score of 90+ before the end of February.

Any guard promoted from Cadet Class to Junior Class, Junior Class to A Class would be allowed to adhere to their performance times and other relevant rules from their previous class. The promotion will last until the end of the season in which promotion took place. For following (and subsequent) seasons Guards can re-classify themselves and enter any class they feel their unit belongs.

It is not the role of WGUK to demote guards – a decision that should not be taken lightly by a Guard and one that should be discussed with WGUK if a guard felt they were misclassified.

11. MEMBERSHIP & CONTEST FEES

- 11.1 Organisations can enrol in membership from the 1st November (at the latest) in the year proceeding the contest calendar.
- 11.2 MPAUK membership fee for 2012 is £50.00
WGUK membership fee for 2011-12 is £50.00
- 11.3 Each Guard must pay a £10.00 fee per contest entered including Championships.
- 11.4 Show Sponsors must pay a fee of £10.00 per guard entered at their show.

12. INDIVIDUAL REGISTRATIONS

- 12.1 A form must be completed for each guard which includes each and every member who is to be registered to march. Registration will only be finalised when ALL elements of the form are completed and the correct registration fee has been received.
- 12.2 Registration fees per marching member are –
Cadets: before 28.02.12 - £10.00
Junior/A/Open: before 1.1.12 - £15.00; between 1.1.12 – 28.02.12 - £20.00 per member.
No members may be registered after 28th February 2012.
- 12.3 Please Note: the number of available staff passes (inc Directors) is as follows:
1 guard = 6 passes, 2 guards = 11 passes, 3 guards = 15 passes and 4 guards = 18 passes
- 12.4 Registration fees per Staff member are -
ALL Classes: before 1.1.12 - £15.00; between 1.1.12 – 28.02.12 - £20.00 per member.
No staff member can be registered after 28th February 2012.

13. WITHHOLDING OF INDIVIDUAL REGISTRATIONS

The Withholding Of Registration (WOR) could apply to members moving either from a WGUK unit to a DCUK unit, from a DCUK unit to a WGUK unit in or WGUK unit to another WGUK unit.

If monies or equipment are outstanding (and no agreement can be reached between the parties for repayment or collection) then a DCUK and/or WGUK registered organisation can request that a WGUK/DCUK Pass be withheld from a member of another unit until such time as the matter is settled.

For a Pass to be considered to be withheld then proof of the debt or outstanding equipment must be provided to DCUK/WGUK together with details of what action has already been taken to recover the monies/items.

Please be aware that it is unlikely that a Pass will be withheld if the person has been allowed to complete the season (i.e. perform at the British Championships event) and the outstanding monies (and possibly equipment if these have been outstanding for a period of time) relate to amounts owed during the season rather than just at the very end.

The WOR is not designed to be a debt collection service and should only be used as a last resort if an agreeable settlement can not be reached.

This is not a rule designed to stop members moving between units – they are still free to do so as long as they clear any debt and return equipment to the unit they are leaving before they move on!

CODE OF CONDUCT

The Board of WGUK and the Trustees of Marching & Performing Arts United Kingdom are concerned with the standard of presentation of sanctioned shows and maintaining a healthy, friendly, competitive spirit between members at all levels. Members of all Guards and their supporters are subject to the following Code of Conduct. Breach of this Code could bring heavy penalties, such as disqualification, financial loss, suspension or even loss of membership of WGUK.

1. When participating in the Olympic Retreat and Award Ceremonies, you should show respect to all other units and not part-take in activities which could be deemed to bring your Guard, the Show Sponsor or WGUK/MPA:UK into disrepute!
2. Obscene language, gestures or other actions to display displeasure with the results of the Contest or any other reason will not be tolerated under any circumstances, either on or off the field.
3. Guard members should vocally warn a judge or member of the public of a possible collision or uncontrolled discard of equipment whilst competing to avoid injury.
4. Should WGUK run Critiques - those attending the critiques must be sure of their facts, listen to the recorded material provided by the judges beforehand, and remember judges are mere human beings. They will not discuss other Guards, nor will they allow the critique to be used as a court hearing. Judges are not there to discuss the results, but to improve your performance by offering their advice. It is for you to decide whether to adopt their suggestions. Judges welcome the opportunity for you to discuss your reasons for doing what you do. In the event of a critique being halted due to unprofessional conduct, the Judges Association will inform the WGUK Chairman in writing of the facts which will be investigated and acted upon and they in turn may involve the WGUK Board or MPAUK Trustees if the need arises.
5. Guard shows survive on money. The seating is for those spectators who have paid to see the show. Guard members are not entitled to a seat in the main stand unless a ticket has been purchased or provided. Please ensure that you do not need to enter the spectators' stand by obtaining items of food, money etc, from your parents before the show commences. Obviously a spectator will not be prepared to support our activity by coming to another show if Guard members interrupt viewing by passing in front whilst another Guard is performing.
6. As a marching member you are one of a cast of hundreds and to organise a show needs everyone to be aware of his/her role. At times it will be necessary for WGUK staff and contest staff to move your Guard from points A to B. Please co-operate without question in order that the show is a success.
7. WinterGuard is a relatively small activity in the United Kingdom and for it to grow and be respected it is necessary that the Board takes action to the benefit of the whole membership. We need to show the public that WinterGuard is something different - not just gimmicks, but a presentation of youth on parade with entertainment at the fore - all done in good taste to a professional standard. YOU are a major part of this building programme.
8. Competition is the lifeblood of the activity but it will only be of benefit when a healthy, friendly spirit of competition exists. Enjoyment is the key word - win or lose we must do without any form of aggravation. It only ruins the day and bitterness will develop which can only end in the Board taking a necessary course in disciplinary action. Friendliness has to exist between directors, staff, marching members and supporters of all Guards. We need to talk to each other and share this wonderful experience of Winterguard. Remember, you should be able to accept defeat before gaining victory.
9. The conduct of anyone associated with a particular Guard (staff, member or supporter) is the responsibility of the Guard Director whose name is nominated on the Registration Form when applying for membership. That person should ensure all are aware that any action, which could bring this activity in disrepute, could, as mentioned above, bring heavy penalties, such as disqualification, financial loss, suspension or even loss of membership of WGUK for themselves and/or the organisation they represent.