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2025 SoundSport™ Rulebook

Challenge Class



SOUNDSPORT®

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INTRODUCTION

Drum Corps International® and SoundSport™

Drum Corps International's mission is to bring the life-enriching benefits of marching music performing arts to more people worldwide. We do this by creating a stage for participating organizations to engage in education, competition, entertainment, and the promotion of individual growth.

Drum Corps International® is the world leader in producing and sanctioning competitive events for World Class, Open Class, and All-Age Class performing ensembles. With the addition of DrumLine Battle™ and SoundSport™, Drum Corps International engages tens of thousands of participants in performance opportunities around the world.

SoundSport Philosophy

SoundSport advances the mission and vision of Drum Corps International by providing exciting performance opportunities for community based musical ensembles of all types, all ages, and all instruments, to encourage the creation of and support for affordable community music-making everywhere.

The adjudication philosophy for SoundSport performances is derived from the diversity of its participants, the varied points of view, the uniqueness of the musical performances, and that there is no required movement (drill) or choreography. Performing ensembles are awarded a Gold, Silver, or Bronze rating corresponding to the numerical score. There may be "best of show", "best of class", and other overall awards and recognition, but there is no ranking, so numerical scores are not announced or released to the public.

Ensembles may choose to be adjudicated or non-adjudicated.

Questions? Contact us!

Our staff is always ready to discuss or clarify the rules and policies of Drum Corps International. For clarification or questions pertaining to adjudication, contact us at SoundSport@dc.org.

SoundSport Event Regulations

I. ELIGIBILITY

- a. SoundSport ensembles may perform with members of all ages.
- b. SoundSport ensembles must consist of five or more members in the performance area at any time during the performance.

II. EVENT SITE

- a. Whenever possible, the event stage shall be in the shape of a rectangle, not less than 30 yards wide and 20 yards deep, with the four corners marked with a visual marker.
- b. Event stages will have markers every five yards around the perimeter but do not guarantee yard lines.
- c. If a venue necessitates a change in the size of the performance stage, participating ensembles will be notified prior to the event.

III. JUDGING

a. ADJUDICATION

- i. Performances are evaluated using the Challenge Class Overall Impression criteria.
- ii. Performances are evaluated as follows:
Subtotal 300 points divided by 3 = Total Score
- iii. Total scores will be rounded to the nearest Hundredth (0.01) point.

b. ADJUDICATION CATEGORIES

- i. Performing ensembles will be assigned to classes using the following criteria:
 - a. Cadet – All performers under 13 years old
 - b. Youth – All performers under 22 years old
 - c. All-Age – Performers are mixed ages with one or more over 21
- iii. SoundSport events will include as few or as many classes as necessary to represent the performing ensembles in each age classification.

c. AWARDS

- i. “Best in Class” may be awarded to the highest scoring ensemble in each class.
- ii. “Best in Show” may be awarded to the highest scoring ensemble regardless of class.
- iii. Other awards may be added.

IV. EQUIPMENT

a. MUSICAL INSTRUMENTATION

- i. Each SoundSport ensemble may include any instrument or implement that is played or struck to create sound in real time including the human voice.
- ii. All equipment requiring wheels must be hand pushed into the performance area. Use of motorized carts is prohibited.
- iii. Wheels must be rubber and 8 inches on all wheeled equipment and props.

b. AMPLIFICATION

i. Use of Amplification

1. The use of self-contained amplification systems is permitted.
2. Venues will provide no less than a single 110V extension cord/receptacle. Performing ensembles should take care not to overload the circuit & should not assume that there will be unlimited circuits for their use.
3. Adaptation to the environment of individual performance locations is the responsibility of the SoundSport ensemble. We will do everything possible to communicate logistical considerations in advance of the event.

c. USE OF ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

i. Terminology:

1. “Music” (or “Musical”) shall be defined as the organization of melodic, harmonic and/or rhythmic sound through time.
2. An “Electronic Instrument” shall be defined as any piece of electronic

equipment that produces “Musical” sound.

3. A “Sequence” or “Loop” shall be defined as “Music” that is pre-recorded or programmed during a performance.

4. “Human Voice” shall be defined as spoken word.

ii. Music from Electronic Instruments is allowed given that the Music is being performed live, in real time during the performance.

iii. Sequenced Music is prohibited.

iv. Musical Loops are prohibited.

v. Pre-recorded Sound Effects and Human Voice may be used.

vi. Permission must be obtained for all copyrighted material.

d. INSTRUCTIONS FOR EVENT HOSTS

i. We require a dedicated electrical outlet providing 110 volts, with at least 15 amperes of current to be located at the stage location for sound reinforcement systems.

ii. All SoundSport ensembles are required to provide a conductors podium for their performance, if desired.

e. MISCELLANEOUS EQUIPMENT

i. No pyrotechnics, discharge of arms, pressurized canisters, water, flammable liquids, and/or hazardous materials (including helium) will be permitted on or around the performance stage. This includes “Silly String” and similar products / gimmicks / effects.

ii. The use of powders or powder-like substances, or anything leaving a residue (like glitter) or residual litter (like confetti) is prohibited on or around the performance stage.

iii. When a natural grass field might be used for a SoundSport event, the use of any type of “floor” cover will be prohibited.

iv. Specific questions regarding equipment limitations should be asked no less than seven days prior to event date. We will make every effort to proactively share information in this regard.

V. COLORS AND STANDARDS

a. The current National Colors of the United States of America, or any previous national colors of the United States, or any national flag of any sovereign country will be treated with proper respect at all times. No national color should in any way be denigrated or used inappropriately or handled controversially.

b. If your ensemble intends to include a national flag in your performance, or if you’d like to place one in the performance area during your performance, you are responsible to adhere to all applicable flag codes and appropriate policies and procedures.

c. The SoundSport performance stage is an inappropriate venue for airing of negative and controversial political statements or hate speech and as such, performances deemed inappropriate by event organizers are prohibited.

VI. CONDUCT OF ENSEMBLES

a. PERFORMANCE TIMES

i. SoundSport ensembles shall be in performance with complete competing personnel not less than 5 minutes nor more than 7 minutes.

ii. All playing and movement must cease when the total time reaches 7 minutes.

iii. An ensemble may conclude its performance while still on the stage/floor/field.

iv. Ensembles will be scheduled to compete at a minimum of ten (10) minute intervals. *An ensemble may utilize any portion of the initial three (3) minutes of their performance interval for entry and set-up. The ensemble may additionally use any audio-visual material, except for those already prohibited for safety reasons and performance surface protection.* This must occur prior to the start of the performance. The ensemble will not be able to enter the stage before the allowed 3-minute *pre-show* time and must exit the stage immediately following the performance with no delay. Any team creating a delay in the schedule will be subject to a penalty determined by the event director.

1. The time schedule may be expanded or be lessened at the option of the event director. However, only if all participating ensembles can be guaranteed the

same amount of time.

b. TIMING AND EVALUATION

- i. Timing of the (10 minute minimum) block will begin at the event director's signal
- ii. Timing and evaluation of the performance (5 minutes to 7 minutes) will start with the first step of a member of the ensemble or with the first note of music, whichever occurs first.
- iii. Timing and evaluation will cease with the last note of music played by any performer on the performance stage.

c. ENTRY TO THE PERFORMANCE AREA

- i. To avoid distracting the performing ensemble on the stage, units should refrain from creating sound as they are entering the stage area including in the tunnel or hallway that may lead to the stage.
- ii. Members of the ensemble may set-up anywhere on or off the stage prior to the commencement of timing and evaluation.
- iii. No performer is allowed forward of the performance area whether through the sidelines or front except to retrieve dropped equipment or props. For the safety of audience members, performance of any kind is prohibited in the area in front of the stage.
- iv. Performers may not enter any viewing area. They must remain on the performance stage (drum majors or conductors excluded).
- v. SoundSport ensembles may need to manage venue logistics or obstacles relative to transportation and setup of props and equipment. Every effort will be made to communicate known / expected challenges no less than seven days prior to event.

d. STAGE EXIT

- i. When leaving the performance area, ensemble members must depart as directed by event staff.
- ii. Once an ensemble's performance concludes, they must proceed from the performance area without delay or further performance.
- iii. The event director may, at his/her option, provide opportunities for audience interaction following a performance at a given venue.

e. STAGE CONDUCT – BOUNDARIES

- i. All musical instruments and implements must be placed within the performance area. Musical instruments that are outside of the performance area may not be played before or during the team's performance.
- ii. Additionally, equipment or props must also be placed within the performance area.
- iii. Should any equipment accidentally leave the performance area, the equipment may be retrieved by any member of the ensemble.
- iv. All grounded or dropped equipment must be retrieved before the ensemble leaves the performance area.

VII. WEATHER, PERFORMANCE, AND EVALUATION

a. WEATHER OR OTHER LIKELY OR UNLIKELY OCCURANCES

- i. When a show experiences inclement weather or another situation that causes the performances to be disrupted, the event director will direct the teams as appropriate.

VIII. COMMENTARY AND RATINGS

- a. Every adjudicated ensemble that completes their full performance and thus has a completed evaluation will receive commentary and a rating.

IX. PENALTIES / RULE ERRORS

- a. GENERAL- Violation any rule, or part of a rule, for which no specific penalty is herein provided, shall be penalized, for each such violation, not less than 1/10th of a point nor more than disqualification, at the discretion of the event director.
- b. Only the event director may assess a penalty. Judges must report all rule violations to the event director. "Rule Errors" will be noted by the chief judge and tabulated as an execution caption. These will not be considered, tabulated, or announced as "penalties".

- c. SECTION IV (Equipment) – A two (2)-point penalty shall be assessed for the use of any illegal equipment, instrument or implement.
- d. SECTION VI (Conduct of Teams)
 - i. A violation of any timing requirements for which no specific penalty is provided shall be penalized 1/10th of a point for every 3 seconds or fraction thereof, over a maximum or under a minimum timing requirement.
 - ii. Failure to report to the ready line for competition at the stipulated time shall be penalized 1/10th of a point for each 1.5 minutes of lateness or part thereof up to the conclusion of the contest.
 - iii. Any infraction of field entry or field exit rules shall be assessed 1/10th of a point rule error for each member of the corps in violation, per offense, to a maximum of two (2) points for twenty (20) members or more.
 - iv. Any infraction of any boundary shall be assessed 1/10th of a point rule error for each member for each offense to a maximum of two (2) points for twenty (20) members or more.

Adjudication Guidelines

While the pursuit of excellence is highly encouraged, the primary responsibility of the SoundSport adjudicator is to recognize and reward creative, innovative, and entertaining performances. Ensembles may present their concept in a variety of ways. Judges provide positive input that reinforces training, encourages ongoing development, and where appropriate, make suggestions for next steps to further develop a concept or skill.

In Challenge Class, SoundSport ensembles receive a numerical score commensurate to their level of achievement corresponding to a rating (Gold, Silver, Bronze). Throughout the performance, adjudicators consider the guiding questions on the worksheet to help determine the numerical score and circle the corresponding rating on the score sheet.

There are three SoundSport judges, each utilizing the same score sheet.

Overall Impression

Adjudicators will assess the extent to which the ensemble achieves the specified criteria and award a corresponding rating (Gold, Silver, Bronze) by responding to the following guidelines:

- The ensemble engages the audience throughout the performance.
- The ensemble is effective and entertaining.
- The ensemble has a clearly developed and coordinated concept.
- The ensemble demonstrates technical and artistic proficiency.
- The program demonstrates creativity and innovation.

The Overall Impression score is out of a total of 100 points. The final score and rating is the average of the scores from the three judges.

At the conclusion of the event, awards may be awarded for Best in Class, Best in Show, etc. A tie for an award will not be broken but rather awarded to the ensembles with a tie in their final score.



Team: _____

Event: _____

Date: _____

Overall Impression

Criteria
Audience Engagement
Effect and Entertainment
Concept and Coordination
Technical and Artistic Proficiency
Creativity and Innovation

Judges will assess the extent to which the SoundSport Team achieves the specified criteria and award a corresponding rating (Gold, Silver, Bronze) by responding to the following guidelines.

- The team engages the audience throughout the performance.
- The team is effective and entertaining.
- The team has a clearly developed and coordinated concept.
- The team demonstrates technical and artistic proficiency.
- The program demonstrates creativity and innovation.

Comments:

SCORE

Sometimes	Consistently	Always
Bronze	Silver	Gold
60-69.9	70-84.9	85-UP

Name

Signature

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Challenge Class

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