

COMPETITION

The purpose of the Houston Photochrome Club Intra club monthly competition is to encourage member participation in club activities and in the process enhance their overall knowledge of and skill in photography. It is an effective learning tool.

WHEN ARE THEY HELD

Competitions are held monthly at the general meeting, the second Thursday of the month.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE

All members are eligible to submit images for competition.

COMPETITION RULES

All competition entries must be the work of the entrant and must originate as photographs (images captured by light sensitivity) made by the entrant on photographic emulsion or acquired digitally. All images modified digitally or included in digitally constructed composites must be the original work of the entrant.

By submitting an image with his or her name on it, the photographer certifies that the work is his or her own and grants permission to use the work for Houston Photochrome Club purposes to include Inter Club competitions, display on the HPC website and inclusion in the Reflex News.

A model release form is recommended when photographing people that you may want to use in print media or competition. Sample forms may be found on the Internet. Google "model release form for photographers." It's a good idea to carry one with you for unexpected shots.

A total of 4 images may be entered each month.

One image only can be entered in the monochrome category.

One image only can be entered in the assignment category. It can be either monochrome or color and must fit the assigned subject.

Two images can be entered in the open category. They must both be color images.

The Categories are:

Assigned	(AS)
Open	(O)
Monochrome	(M)

There are no restrictions on post-processing in any of the above categories. For those Members who may want their images submitted in the Nature category for PSA and GSCCC inter-club competition, they should ensure their images comply with PSA rules.

IMAGE USE LIMITATION

Once an image has been entered in any category of a Houston Photochrome Club regular monthly competition, that same image or a like "in camera" image, or a reproduction duplicate image, may not be reentered in any category of a Houston Photochrome Club regular monthly competition regardless of the title.

Any photo taken at the same time or at the same place will be eligible providing it clearly exhibits a different pose, angle of view, or other distinctly different approach to the subject image.

JUDGING and SCORING

JUDGES

The Intra club Competition Chairman appoints three judges, usually club members. Judges are normally selected from those members who regularly participate in the monthly competition.

JUDGING

Judging of digital images will be done from a PowerPoint slide show ahead of the meeting. The slide show will be presented showing the image and image name only while the scores and comments are recorded by each judge. The scores and comments are forwarded to the Intra-Club Competition Chair who will accumulate the information and consolidate it. A PowerPoint slideshow for the competition meeting will be prepared with the combined score, comments, and image maker's name. For virtual meetings, the slide show will be presented on-screen. For in-person meetings, the slide show will be shown by projecting images on a screen with an electronic projector at a resolution of 1400 (horizontal) x 1050 (vertical) and with a laptop PC using a digital slide show program chosen by the club. Background to the image will be black.

SCORING

The club uses a 15-point scoring system. Each of the three judges awards a score ranging from 1-5 points on each image. The three judges' scores are then totaled which gives the image a combined score ranging from 3-15 points. If an image is made by one of the judges, that judge immediately disqualifies himself by giving it a score of 0. The remaining two judges' scores are then averaged, and this average is used as the score from the disqualified judge. Only titles will be available while the image is being judged. The maker's name will not be revealed until after the image has been scored. All scores are recorded for use in End of the Year Award competition explanatory text at end of document. Points earned in all categories will count toward determining group placement in End of the Year Award competition. (See exception below)

Images for which no scores are received are still eligible for submission to GSCCC and PSA competitions.

A member may, at their sole discretion, request of the Intra-Club Chair that their images not be scored by the judges each month. The scoring sheet will reflect a NS in the score column to indicate that the image is to not be scored. The images will, however, receive judges' comments. The election by the member will be in effect from the time of the request through the end of that year. The member will not be eligible for Photographer of the Year. Images submitted may still be entered into the End of the Year competition. Placement of the member

into Group A or Group B will be at the sole determination of the Intra-Club Chair based on their evaluation of the appropriate group.

See Instructions to Judges at end of document for definitions and discussion of grades.

Competition Groups

There will be only one single group judging for the regular monthly competitions. Competition groups will apply only to End of the Year Award competition. The sole purpose of groups for that competition is to encourage participation and increase opportunities for all members to earn awards.

AWARDS

Photographer of the Year

All points earned in the regular monthly competitions will be used to determine the winner of the Photographer of the Year Award. The highest Average score determines the winner. * The average will be determined by the total points accumulated during the competition year, divided by the total number of images entered.

*To be eligible for the Photographer of the Year Award a member must submit a minimum of 36 of the possible 48 entries, for the year. Tie scores will be decided by who submitted the most photos in the assigned categories during the year.

Image of the Year Awards in Each Category

There will be Image of the Year awards for each category: Assigned, Open & Monochrome. After the November meeting, the Intra-Club Chairman will provide a list to each member of his/her entries during the year. After the December meeting, each member will inform the Intra-Club Chairman which 3 images from that list, (including December entries) in each category that he wishes to be entered in the Image of the Year competition. The member does not need to re-submit the images to the club.

After all images are indicated, depending on the number of photographers entering the competition, the entering members will be divided into two groups, based on their average score for the year, assigning approximately 1/2 of the entering members to each group. The Intra-Club Chairman will make this determination.

The images will then be submitted to a qualified judge who is not a member of the Houston Photochrome Club, selected by the President. That judge will choose a 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winner in each category for Image of the Year competition. Winners will be announced at a meeting designated for this purpose.

CATEGORY DEFINITIONS

Assigned

A category of specific type will be assigned and the image must comply with the definition for

that month. An entry in the Assigned category need not have been taken within the past twelve months prior to the competition date to be eligible. It is strongly encouraged, though, that members submit images within the past twelve months to further members' learning.

Open

Open encompasses all subject matter. They must not include Monochrome images. There is no time of origin requirement for this category.

Monochrome

Monochrome images are digital images that are variations of one color only. They can be black and white (all shades of gray), or shades of any one other color. All monochrome images will be entered in either the Assigned or Monochrome categories. There is no time of origin requirement for this category.

Preparing a Digital Image for Competition

All the rules pertaining to content for Assigned, Open and Monochrome categories as well as their respective assignments and scoring of same, apply. The Interclub Chairman may resize / adjust images for Inter-club competitions if needed. If an entry qualifies as Nature under PSA rules, it may be entered into that category competition by the Inter- Club Competition Chairman.

SIZING & LABELING DIGITAL IMAGES FOR COMPETITION

Image Size

Image size may be any size or shape that does not exceed 1400 pixels horizontally and 1050 pixels vertically.

File Type and Size

The size of the JPEG image is not to exceed 1MB.
(See above for pixel size.)

Color space must be sRGB or Adobe RGB. Resolution setting of 300 ppi is recommended.

File Names

The image file should be named using the following form:

Category_Image Title_Submitter's Name.

Files lacking this information or not named following this format may be omitted from competition.

Example of proper form:

AS_Skimmer in Flight_BrownJ.jpg

AS_Skimmer in Flight_N_BrownJ.jpg should be used to designate a Nature

image, in compliance with the PSA Nature definition.

Categories

AS = Assigned

O = Open

M = Monochrome

DO NOT use first names only, nicknames or initials for identification. Images not easily identified by maker's name will be disqualified.

The image title must be limited to **30** characters including spaces.

It is important that the guidelines for naming files be followed when submitting images for the monthly competitions.

DIGITAL PROCESSING GUIDELINES

Digital post-processing is allowed unless otherwise noted below.

Nature (if designated as Nature image)

Digital post-processing is allowed, and most digital darkroom procedures are permitted. Current **PSA rules must be followed to enter an image into Nature competition in GSCCC or PSA.**

Examples of allowed editing: levels, curves, brightness/contrast, saturation, sharpening, dodging, burning, layer masks-all with the objective of restoring the scene to that which the photographer saw through the viewfinder, or to mimic the look of popular films. Also allowed is cropping of the image to adjust the composition or change the aspect ratio of the final image. Image rotation -to level a horizon, for example-is permitted. Focus stacking and HDR images are allowed.

Assigned, Open and Monochrome

In both Open and Monochrome categories, all photographic adjustments, techniques, and modifications are allowed as long as the original image and the modifications are made by the photographer.

Challenges

Any club member may challenge a competition entry within three days following that competition. A club member may telephone or send a challenge by email to the Competition Committee Chair or committee member within three days of a competition meeting. Club officers, committee chairs, outside judges, GSCCC or PSA also may challenge a competition entry at any time. A challenge is a request for a review and ruling by the club authorities as to the entry's conformation with the rules and procedures of such an entry.

Authorities in this case shall include club officers, Intra -Club and Inter-Club committee members, and any specific others they may wish to include for technical assistance. They may request a copy of the original RAW, TIFF or JPEG image taken by the camera. Failure to provide a requested original file will automatically disqualify the challenged image. The results of the review will be reported back to the maker within two weeks, after which the maker may accept or appeal their findings in accordance with club competition rules. The identity of challenger(s) will not be disclosed beyond the review authority members.

Posting of Images on Web Site

Digital images posted on the club's website will be credited to its maker and will carry a copyright notice and /or copyright symbol.

All club members are encouraged to embed their copyright information in camera at the time the image is taken. The camera's Set Up menu may provide this through a Copyright or Image Comment feature.

Definitions of Terms

Nature Images

In nature photography, the story value of the photograph must be given more weight than the aesthetic value. The object is to advance our knowledge of nature. Human elements shall not be present, except on the rare occasion whose human elements enhance the nature of the story. The presence of scientific bands on wild animals is acceptable.

The judge is instructed to score nature images on these three features, in the following order of importance:

1. Ecological importance or rarity of the subject.
2. Accuracy of reporting-no manipulation or artificiality should be tolerated.
3. Photographic excellence-nature images are to be scored on clarity, sharpness, camera angle and proper exposure rather than "pictorial quality".

PICTORIAL IMAGES

Interest is that quality which captures the attention of the viewer. It can be achieved through any combination of the following factors

1. Impact - Does it immediately "grab" your attention?
2. Appeal - Does it have something to say?
3. Drama - Is it dynamic? Does it have character rather than being just a "record shot"?

Technique is concerned with mechanics. It can refer to pure technical perfection in an image or to intended special effects.

1. Sharpness - Is the picture sharp? If it is not sharp, did the photographer intentionally blur or soften for a special effect? Was the effect achieved?
2. Exposure - Is the image underexposed or overexposed? If it is either, was it done for a reason?

3. Presentation - Does the vertical or horizontal format of the picture fit the subject?
4. Cropping - Was the image properly cropped if necessary to remove distracting or uninteresting elements?

Composition is the arrangement of subject matter in an effective or pleasing manner. Good composition literally makes you see what the photographer intends you to see. The following are factors in good composition:

1. Emphasis - Does the picture have one central subject to which all else is subordinate?
It may have more than one point of interest, but only one main theme. Simplicity of arrangement is the key.
2. Balance - Do lines and masses pleasantly lead the eye to the subject?
Do colors harmonize?
3. Color - Color can be a factor in composition. It can be used to convey a mood or impression, to strengthen the message, or to impress the viewer with a particular sensation.

Criteria for Judging

An image that creates emotion, passion and a lasting impact is much better than one lacking the former but is technically perfect, well composed and in perfect focus and with great color. Images with impact and emotion that might break the standard technical and compositional rules might be better images than those that meet 100% of the normal rules. What the image communicates is more important than the image's content or technical aspects. Static and predictable images rarely become contest winners.

Judging, by definition, is a subjective process with a strong emotional component that involves some objective criteria, which is why we use three judges at each competition.

Three judges will each score the image with a score ranging from 1-5. A combined score could range from 3-15 points.

Instructions to Judges

The judge is instructed to score pictorial images on these three basic elements: **interest, technique, and composition**. Of the three, interest is the most important and more weight is to be given to interest than to technique or composition.

As a suggestion, you may want to use 3 as a starting point (the midpoint between 1 and 5) then add or subtract from that to reflect positive or negative aspects of the image.

The following are scoring guidelines (scoring on a scale of 1 to 5):

1. Poor technical execution - focus not sharp, (unless intentional), poor exposure (badly over or underexposed), composition uninteresting.
2. Somewhat weak photo - but has some positive aspects, has specific shortcomings that keep it from being a good average image.

3. Good average image, technically good, composition good but not outstanding.
4. Better than average - an image that would get your attention but may have some minor flaws.
5. Excellent image-no technical flaws, exceptional impact on viewer.

Again, using 3 as the average good image, here are some reminders of things that:

Raise the Score

Lower the score

Perfect exposure

Poor exposure

Sharp focus

All or some out of focus
(unless intentionally)

Originality

Same old subject & treatment,
uninteresting

Excellent lighting

Flat

Interesting composition

Poor composition

Has immediate impact,
unusually interesting subject

Nothing outstanding

Flaws are minor in nature

Flaws are conspicuous

Subject does not fit assigned Category