

AR River Blues Society, Inc. – 2011 Blues Contest- General Information, Rules, Requirements and Application

The Arkansas River Blues Society (ARBS) is an Affiliate Organization of The Blues Foundation and has been since its inception, as such, are authorized to submit acts to compete in the International Blues Challenge. There are two categories an act can compete in, a band act or a solo/duo act. A band consists of three or more members and a solo/ duo act consists of no more than two members. The winning act in each category will represent ARBS at the IBC in Memphis, TN January 31 – February 4, 2012.

The International Blues Challenge is held annually in Memphis, TN. The 2012 challenge will be held January 31 – February 4, 2012 and is the 28th year for the International Blues Challenge. This event is sponsored by The Blues Foundation. The Blues Challenge cannot be considered purely an “amateur” contest, the goal of the Challenge is to seek out the best- undiscovered blues band and the best-undiscovered solo/duo blues performers in the United States and beyond. To maintain this focus, IBC includes entry restrictions designed to afford the opportunity for discovery to musicians that are truly unknown and unsigned.

IBC Introduction

The dates for the 2012 International Blues Challenge will be January 31 - February 4, 2012. The Blues Foundation will begin the week with the FedEx International Showcase (Jan 31). IBC will move to a four day format. This new format will include 2 days of quarter finals (Feb 1-2), one day of semi-finals (Feb 3) and concluding with finals in the beautiful Orpheum Theater (Feb 4). For More detailed information see blues.org or E-mail joe@blues.org.



The ARBS will hold the 2011 Arkansas Blues Contest on October 29th at the Parrot Beach Cafe located at 9611 Mac Arthur Drive in North Little Rock, AR.

Entry Fees:

Entry Fee for a band is \$60.

Entry Fee for a solo is \$20

Entry Fee for a duo act is \$30.

**INTERNATIONAL
BLUES
CHALLENGE**

Entry Fees are collected to cover the costs associated with the production of this event and the costs to send the winning acts to the IBC. The ARBS will pay a portion of the expenses of the winning acts to attend the IBC. (ARBS will not be responsible for reserving hotel rooms for the winning acts.)

Eligibility:

All Artists, except for an artist whose name has appeared on a final Handy / Blues Award ballot, are eligible to compete. Artists who had peripheral and /or professional contact through performance with a Handy / Blues Music Nominee, including but not limited to touring band members and studio musicians, are deemed eligible for the competition.

A musician cannot compete in both the Band division and the Solo / Duo division.

No other entry restrictions apply. This means that management contract, booking agent contracts, recording contracts; performance contracts (even those that include regular television or radio broadcast) and nationally distributed recordings have no bearing on eligibility.

Entry Rules:

Bands: Submit application, a band bio and a photograph by e-mail to bearden599@aol.com and a check or money order in the amount of \$60 payable to the Arkansas River Blues Society. All entries must be postmarked by October 8th, 2011. No late entries will be accepted.

Solo/ Duo: Submit application, a bio for solo or duo and a photograph by e-mail to bearden599@aol.com and a check or money order in the amount of \$20 for the Solo entry and \$30 for a duo entry payable to the Arkansas River Blues Society. All entries must be postmarked by October 8th, 2011. No late entries will be accepted.

Competition Schedule:

When an artist / band submit their application they are agreeing that they will be available for the date they are assigned for the competition. No dates will be rescheduled for any reason. Artists are expected to check in at the venue at least one hour prior to their scheduled competition time.

A cover charge of \$5 per person will be collected at the door on each night of competition. Competing artists will not pay the cover charge on the night of their scheduled competition. If an artist wants to attend a night of competition they are not scheduled to compete on, they will pay the \$5 entry at the door.

Rules of Competition:

To prepare all competitors for IBC, The Blues Foundations IBC rules will be followed locally. Each act will have 25 minutes to perform. If an act runs over their allotted 25 minute performance time, points will be deducted for every 10 seconds an act runs over.

The Blues Foundation Rules are as follows:

Scoring Criteria

The Blues Foundation recommends that all Affiliated Organizations in their competition use our established scoring criteria. Categories include Talent Vocal, Blues Content, Stage Presence and Originality.

1. Blues Content: Everyone has his or her own interpretation of what is and is not Blues. Thus, any given three-judge panel will include members with varying opinions of Blues, covering the spectrum of Blues whenever possible, from the most traditional to soul/blues and rock/blues. Bands should pick material carefully. At the Memphis semi-finals and finals, the judges are Blues professionals, not a bar crowd, and are likely to be unimpressed with song selections that are uninspired. (Call this--with all due respect to Sir Mack Rice and Wilson Pickett--the "no Mustang Sally rule.")
2. Vocals: The acts vocal skills.
3. Talent: The acts instrumental skills.
4. Originality: Original work is encouraged. Cover tunes are allowed but playing the recorded rendition lick by lick is discouraged; will not be looked upon favorably by the judges; and will be reflected in scoring.
5. Stage Presence: Over the years, the quality of talent has risen so dramatically that we no longer consider this an "amateur" competition. Most contestants have performed on stage enough to know that they are not simply playing music, but putting on a show. This category rates how "sellable" a band may be.

To reflect the relative importance of each category in the success of a band, a band's score in each category is weighted. Raw scores for Blues Content is multiplied by four, Talent and vocals by three and Originality and Stage Presence are multiplied by two. The total in each category represents the Weighted Score for that category. Total possible weighted score is 140.

Penalty Points

A Band is penalized one point from its Total Weighted Score (see below) for each ten seconds that it runs overtime. There is no penalty for using less than the allotted time.

At the producing organization's discretion, a policy of penalty for excessive time loading-in and out will also be applied.

The weighted multipliers will be Blues content (4); talent and vocals (3); originality (2) and stage presence (2).

In addition, IBC participants can lose points for non-compliance with administrative aspects of the competition.

- Application was filled out completely, accurately and before the deadline
- Act photo was supplied by the deadline and in the format and size requested.
- Act bio was supplied by the deadline and in the manner requested.
- Act checked in at Band Check-In on first day of event.
- Act checked in with Venue Coordinator at their venue at the required time.
- Act was in the right venue at the proper time and ready to perform. ***
- Act showed up and on time to Finals orientation.
- Act ready to perform at proper time in finals.

***Venue Coordinators have the authority to act on behalf of The Blues Foundation to insure that the event goes smoothly in their designated venue. In the event that a band scheduled to play in a specific slot is not able to perform for whatever reason, the VC will have the authority to deduct a point from the band's overall weighted score for that night's competition. The next band scheduled to play will be asked to step into that slot. Should that band, for whatever reason, not be able to perform when asked, the VC has the authority to deduct a point from that band, and so on. With that in mind, The Blues Foundation strongly suggests that after a band has met with their VC for their required check-in, they stay in the venue and are available to perform at the VC's direction, regardless of which slot they are scheduled to play. Bands that have missed their designated slot will be allowed to perform later in the night but will still suffer the loss of a point on the weighted score.

These items demonstrate professionalism and seriousness about the competition or the business side of the blues.

SCORING SYSTEM FOR JUDGES

here is the scoring procedure for 2011 IBC.

1. All categories and weightings are as previously stated.
2. Each judge will indicate his or her Raw Score (a whole number between 1 and 10) in each category and turn that information over to the scorekeeper.
 - 1-3 Typical of a beginning blues band.
 - 4-5 Typical of a local weekend band.
 - 6-7 Typical of an advanced local band but not yet ready to headline a major blues club.
 - 8-9 Typical of the quality of blues artists who headline major clubs.
 - 10 Typical of those who play the main stage at major festivals such as Chicago or Arkansas Blues and Heritage.
3. The scorekeeper will multiply the Raw Score in each category by the established multiplier to get each judge's Weighted Score in each category for each act.
4. The Weighted Scores from each category for an act are added together to determine the acts' Total Weighted Score for each judge.
5. Any penalty points will then be deducted to obtain the act's Net Weighted Score for each judge.
6. After all acts have been judged and each act's Net Weighted Score for each judge calculated, each act will then be ranked for each judge based on that judge's order of scores, with the act receiving the judge's highest Net Weighted Score being given a ranking of 1, and so on for that judge. So, in a competition with five acts, for example, each judge ends up with the acts ranked 1 - 5 based on each judge's personal scoring habits. This results in the acts' Final Ranking Number for each judge.
7. Next, the scorer totals the Final Ranking Number from all judges for each act to determine the Gross Final Ranking. That figure is averaged (divided by the total number of judges) to Achieve the Aggregate Act Ranking. For the semi-finals the act in each venue with the best two- day total of Aggregate Act Ranking will advance to the finals. For the finals, the act with the best Aggregate Act Ranking is the top finisher.
8. In the case of a tie, the scorer shall calculate the sum of all Net Weighted Scores from all judges for the tied acts. The band with the higher sum of Net Weighted Scores wins.

ARBS Obligations

The ARBS will be responsible for providing a backline and PA at the competition. Keyboard is not provided. Guitarists bring guitar and amps, harmonica players bring harp amp. Basic drum kit provided, feel free to bring your cymbals, pedal or snare drum.

The ARBS will issue press releases to the media about the results of the competition including information on winning acts.

The ARBS will arrange fundraising events and collect all monies at such events. The ARBS will disperse expense funding to the IBC in Memphis.

The ARBS will pay expenses for artists only, not accompanying spouses, significant others, friends or family. Expenses include lodging, primarily, and any extra money raised will be split between the competitors for food and gas costs. Lodging will include more than one person in a room. ARBS is not responsible for making reservations but will provide information on hotels near the competition. (Note: ARBS has used Ramada Inn in West Memphis and the rates have been half of the cost of what they cost in Memphis.)

The band and solo / duo have read and understand the Arkansas River Blues Society, Inc. rules, regulations and the guidelines. If an artists / act is found to be in violation of the rules, they will be deemed ineligible to participate and will not represent the Arkansas River Blues Society at the International Blues Challenge.

Fundraising / Publicity

Bands and the solo / duo act will agree to participate in fundraising shows and any other publicity events the Arkansas River Blues Society, Inc. schedules. Contact with acts will be the designated contact person only.

As designated representative for _____, my signature below releases the Arkansas River Blues Society, Inc. from an and all injury or injuries, liability, damage of equipment, other damages, loss, costs and expense including attorney's fees for any and all liability or damages arising from or connected with its distribution of entry forms and participation in this contest that might occur during, before, or after the semi-finals and or the final Arkansas River Blues Society's -2011 Blues Challenge and the 2012 International Blues Challenge produced by The Blues Foundation.

I, as designated representative of the act, have read the above and agree to all terms and conditions set forth in this document. I certify that I have the authority to sign this agreement and that my signature is binding in representing the band or solo/duo act.

DATE: _____

PRINTED NAME/ACT

SIGNATURE

Contact person needs to sign this page and return it with the application, entry fee, bio and photograph mailed to The Arkansas River Blues Society, Inc. P.O. Box 128, Alexander, AR 72002. Any questions contact Aaron Crowder at (870) 833-3498.

Arkansas River Blues Society 2011 Blues Contest Application

Applying to compete as a: BAND_____ SOLO/DUO_____

Date: _____ **(ARBS use only) Date Received** _____

Name of Act: _____

Designated Contact Person for Act: _____

Address: _____

Telephone numbers:

Cell: _____ **Home:** _____ **Work:** _____

E-mail address: _____

List members of act and assignment (vocals, bass, and drums)
A band consists of three or more. Solo/duo consists of one or two persons.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

(Attach an extra sheet if more than 6)

