

Arrival Time at Contest Starting Line – Expectations and Penalties

Submitted by WUSPBA Executive Committee

Background

At the 2017 WUSPBA AGM, a motion was introduced to clarify the existing rule addressing the duties of each Band to arrive at the contest starting line on time. The concern expressed by those who administer the timekeeping at the contest was that the existing rule was not precise enough to make a decision on disqualification for tardiness (“subject to disqualification” implies some latitude on the part of Officials). A concern expressed by several Band representatives was that an absolute disqualification over potentially a matter of several seconds seemed draconian. After some debate, the matter was referred to an ad hoc committee of Ken Sutherland and Suzan Karayel to propose a solution at the 2018 AGM.

The current WUSPBA rule requires Bands to be at the starting line at a scheduled time; failing to do so makes a Band “subject to disqualification.” Because the scheduled times are generally given in hours and minutes (e.g., 1:25 pm), one could argue there is a 59 second window of “tardiness” built in. However, there is no guidance provided to the WUSPBA representative monitoring the clock as to when a late-arriving Band should be penalized with disqualification. This has led to frustration and confusion on everyone’s part.

Other North American Pipe Band Associations have rules to address timely arrival at the line; there are some similarities and some differences among the rules:

Assoc.	Requirement	Penalty for noncompliance
WUSPBA	Band must be at the starting line at the designated time.	Band is “subject to disqualification”.
EUSPBA	Band Representative is responsible for having Band at competition area at scheduled time.	Games Committee “will have the power to disqualify” any Band.
BCPA	Band must play within 5 minutes of the scheduled time, or at completion of previous Band’s performance, whichever is later.	Forfeiture of all Grand Aggregate Points that would have been awarded based upon the result of the contest. Band still plays and the sanction does not affect placing in the contest.
PPBSO	Responsibility “rests with each band to be at the starting line as and when required”.	Up to 3 minutes late: Band must play first in the next contest at which it competes. More than 3 minutes late: Band “may be disqualified”.
MWPBA	“Bands shall appear at the Starting Line on time.” However, the rules go on to require that Bands enter a final tuning area and not advance from there to the Starting line until there is a signal from the Steward.	Chief Steward or designee is empowered to bar a Band from the prize list if they are satisfied that a band has violated any of the contest or MWPBA Rules.

The proposal presented here attempts to address the need for relieving the pressure on WUSPBA representatives monitoring the clock to make a judgment call regarding “How late is too late?” It provides a short grace period, recognizing that moving a Band forward can sometimes be like herding cats and this needs to be accommodated. Furthermore, there is a gradation of penalties for late arrival that first punishes but does not disqualify the Band, until a point where the Band’s tardiness truly impacts the judges, the officials, the other Bands, and the games as a whole.

Existing WUSPBA rule (Contest Rules):

9.1 Order of Play

9.2 Competition Area Guideline

9.3 Dress

9.4. Band Representative Duties: A representative shall be held responsible for the prompt attendance of his or her band on the contest field. The first band to compete will be advised at the draw as to the time it must be at the starting point in the contest arena. Thereafter, it is the duty of each succeeding band to move forward as directed by the stewards. Bands that are not at the line at their designated time are subject to disqualification. The officials shall mark off final tuning areas in the closest possible proximity to the contest arena, and bands should move forward to these areas upon request. Stewards may be provided as an aid to bands, but they carry no responsibility for the attendance of any band in the playing area. The final responsibility rests with each band to be at the starting point as and when required, and any band failing to do so and not complying with the official instructions is subject to immediate disqualification.

...

10.1. Determination of Band Contest Results: ...

The Tally Committee will record the rank for each band, from each judge. If the contest uses a single piping judge, the rank will be recorded for both the piping 1 and piping 2 judges. The rank of the two (2) piping judges, the ensemble judge and the drumming judge will be added together. The overall band placement will be determined by the lowest sum to the highest sum of these rankings. If two bands tie after this sum is determined, the result of the tie will be broken by giving preference to the rank given by the ensemble judge.

Band Name	Piping 1 Rank	Piping 2 Rank	Ensemble Rank	Drumming Rank	Sum of Rank	Overall Placement
Band A	4	3	4	4	15	4
Band B	3	4	3	1	11	3
Band C	1	2	2	2	7	2
Band D	2	1	1	3	7	1

Example 1. An example of a judging panel using two piping judges

In Example 1, two (2) piping judges were used. “Band C” and “Band D” are tied with a sum of 7. Using the rank given by the ensemble judge, “Band D” won this contest. “Band C” was the second place band; “Band B” was the third place band; “Band A” was the fourth place band.

Band Name	Piping 1 Rank	Piping 2 Rank	Ensemble Rank	Drumming Rank	Sum of Rank	Overall Placement
Band A	4	4	4	4	16	4
Band B	3	3	3	1	10	3
Band C	1	1	2	2	6	1
Band D	2	2	1	3	8	2

Example 2. An example of a judging panel using a single piping judge

In Example 2, a single piping judge was used, so the rank for the two (2) piping judges is identical. “Band C” has won this contest. “Band D” was the second place band; “Band B” was the third place band; “Band A” was the fourth place band.

Proposed Rule (Contest Rules):

9.4 [Arrival at the Line](#)

It is the duty of each band to plan their progression to the starting line so that they comply with their scheduled performance time as determined by the “Order of Play” process in Section 9.1.

Where final tuning areas have been officially designated, bands should promptly proceed to these areas when directed by the Stewards.

Should there be unforeseen delays in the contest schedule as it progresses, the Stewards will inform the bands of any delay to their scheduled performance times. Bands are still expected to follow the direction of the Stewards to proceed and to comply with any revised schedule.

Bands that are not at the line at their scheduled time are subject to the following penalties, which will be communicated to the band by a WUSPBA official prior to the performance:

Arrive at Starting Line at... (Min:Sec)	But not later than... (Min:Sec)	Penalty
Scheduled time 0:00 or earlier	1:59 after scheduled time	No penalty
2:00 after scheduled time	2:59 after scheduled time	Two points added to Ensemble placement rank
3:00 after scheduled time	3:59 after scheduled time	Four points added to Ensemble placement rank
4:00 after scheduled time	4:59 after scheduled time	Six points added to Ensemble placement rank
5:00 or more after scheduled time		Band not allowed to play in contest

9.4 9.5. Band Representative Duties: A representative shall be held responsible for the prompt attendance of his or her band on the contest field. ~~The first band to compete will be advised at the draw as to the time it must be at the starting point in the contest arena. Thereafter, it is the duty of each succeeding band to move forward as directed by the stewards. Bands that are not at the line at their designated time are subject to disqualification. The officials shall mark off final tuning areas in the closest possible proximity to the contest arena, and bands should move forward to these areas upon request.~~ Stewards may be provided as an aid to bands, but they carry no responsibility for the attendance of any band in the playing area. The final responsibility rests with each band to be at the starting point as and when required, and any band failing to do so and not complying with the official instructions is subject to **immediate disqualification** the penalties stated in Section 9.4.

9.5. 9.6 Judges Duties:

9.6. 9.7 Executive Committee Members' Duties:

9.7. 9.8 Band Officials at Contest:

9.8. 9.9 Protests:

9.9. 9.10 Local Rules:

...

10.1. Determination of Band Contest Results: ...

The Tally Committee will record the rank for each band, from each judge. If the contest uses a single piping judge, the rank will be recorded for both the piping 1 and piping 2 judges. **Any penalty points will be noted in the ensemble column and added to the ensemble judge's ranking.** The rank of the two (2) piping judges, the ensemble judge and the drumming judge will be added together. The overall band placement will be determined by the lowest sum to the highest sum of these rankings. ~~If two bands tie after this sum is determined, the result of the tie will be broken by giving preference to the rank given by the ensemble judge.~~ **Any resulting tie will be broken by first giving preference to any unpenalized band over any penalized band, then giving preference to the rank given by the ensemble judge.**

Band Name	Piping 1 Rank	Piping 2 Rank	Ensemble Rank	Drumming Rank	Sum of Rank	Overall Placement
Band A	4	3	4	4	15	4
Band B	3	4	3	1	11	3
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Example 2. An example of a judging panel using a single piping judge

In Example 2, a single piping judge was used, so the rank for the two (2) piping judges is identical. “Band C” has won this contest. “Band D” was the second place band; “Band B” was the third place band; “Band A” was the fourth place band.

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Band C	1	2	2 +4	2	11	3
Band D	2	1	1 +4	3	11	2

Example 3. An example of a judging panel using two piping judges, in which two bands received 4-point penalties

In Example 3, two (2) piping judges were used. “Band C” and “Band D” were both penalized for arriving 3 minutes late to the line, in accordance with Rule 9.4. This results in a three-way tie between “Band B,” “Band C,” and “Band D,” all with a sum of 11. By first giving preference to the unpenalized band, “Band B” won this contest. The remaining tie was resolved in favor of “Band D,” which had a total ensemble rank of 5 (1+4), over “Band C,” which had a total ensemble rank of 6 (2+4).