

NORTHUMBRIAN PIPERS' SOCIETY COMPETITIONS

General Rules

Wherever small pipes are mentioned, this refers to Northumbrian Small Pipes within the description contained in the society rules - to be found in the Members Handbook. Definitions of these, and Border (or Lowland / Half-Long pipes) are also obtainable from the secretary if required.

Scottish Small Pipes with open chanters; and Shuttle Pipes, which use reed systems not in the Northumbrian tradition, are not accepted.

Entries will be accepted up to the beginning of each class, except for Classes 1-4 & 16. Apart from Class 6 (Smallpipes Novice) all classes are open to both members and non-members of the NPS. The winner of the Smallpipes Open will receive a silver medal. All placed competitors of all other classes will receive certificates.

The judge will award placings to reflect technical ability on the one hand, and musicality on the other. Deciding factors will also include tuning, presentation, and a suitable choice of tunes for the class. If the judge feels that, in any particular class, the standard of entry is not sufficiently high, then the trophy need not be awarded. However, competitors will be placed. The use of music is not prohibited, but the judge may consider that this detracts from the performance. Use of appropriate drone harmonies is to be encouraged.

Except for the **Junior Class** and **Blackthorn Stick**, only one solo class may be entered.

Open class competitors please note: for all classes where variations are required (the specification is 'at least three') consideration needs to be given to whether the tune (theme, or ground) has one or two parts (strains). For two part tunes, the requirement for 3 variations means that a total of at least 8 strains (including the theme) should be played. For tunes having only one theme, or indeterminate, a minimum of six strains in total are required.

Notes applicable to overseas classes.

Classes 1a, 1b, 1c, 2a, 2b, and class 16 are open to those pipers domiciled and ordinarily resident outside the UK, who are unable to attend the competitions. Entries should be sent to: competitionentries@northumbrianpipers.org.uk by the deadline advertised on the NPS website. No late entries will be considered.

Entries may be submitted as mp3 or other sound file attached to an e-mail, or by means of a link to Sound Cloud or similar platform. Please do not submit more tunes than are specified - any extra tunes will be disregarded by the judge.

Classes

Class 1 Overseas – Small pipes

- a) Beginner. For those players not having previously won any competition on Northumbrian small pipes. Two tunes of contrasting rhythms (preferably, a slow air + one of march, hornpipe, jig, or rant). Winners of this class may not re-enter.
- b) Intermediate. For those not having won any Open class on smallpipes, whether as overseas competitors or by attendance at competitions at any venue. Three tunes, one a slow air, + any two of march, hornpipe, jig, rant or reel. Any player winning this class three times, whether in successive years or not, is thereafter barred from further entry.
- c) Open. One tune with at least three variations (see note in general rules), + three other tunes of contrasting rhythms. A key change should be included. Winners in three successive years are barred from entry in the following year (only).

Class 2 Overseas - Border pipes (Half Longs or Lowland pipes)

- a) Beginner / intermediate. For those players not having previously won a competition on Border pipes, except this one. Two tunes of contrasting rhythms. Any player winning this class three times, whether in successive years or not, is thereafter barred from further entry.
- b) Open. A tune with at least three variations (see note in general rules), + two other tunes of contrasting

rhythms. Winners in three successive years are barred from entry the following year (only)

Class 3 Composition

For Bill Cassie trophy. An original tune that must be playable on the Northumbrian small pipes, and must not have won any previous composition competition, at any venue. A manuscript of the tune must be submitted to competitionentries@northumbrianpipers.org.uk **by the deadline advertised on the NPS website**. No competitor may enter more than two tunes. The Society reserves the right to publish any tunes submitted. Winners in three successive years are barred from entry in the following year (only).

Class 4 Composition of Variations

For Sunderland Trophy. A set of at least three variations, to an existing, or original, tune; which must be playable on the Northumbrian small pipes, and must not have won any previous variation or composition competition, at any venue. A manuscript of the set must be submitted to competitionentries@northumbrianpipers.org.uk **by the deadline advertised on the NPS website**. No competitor may enter more than two sets. The Society reserves the right to publish entries. Winners in three successive years are barred from entry the following year (only).

Class 5 Small pipes Novice

For Crystal Bowl donated by Derek Jarvis. Open only to members of the NPS. Competitors must have less than 2 years piping experience of any kind and must not have won any type of bagpiping competition. Two tunes of own choice.

Class 6 Small pipes Junior

For J.K. Stanger plaid and brooch. Open to those who are under the age of sixteen on the day of competition. Two tunes of own choice. Any player winning this class three times (whether in successive years or not) is thereafter barred from further entry.

Class 7 Small pipes Beginners

For Thornton Cup. Open to those who have not won any Intermediate or Open competition, and have not played for more than five years. Two tunes of own choice, of different rhythms. Previous winners of this class may not re-enter.

Class 8 Blackthorn Stick Trophy

Open only to those who started to play pipes after the age of 50. Two tunes of own choice. Any player winning this class three times (whether in successive years or not) is thereafter barred from further entry.

Class 9 Small pipes Intermediate

For Billy Pigg Trophy. Open to those who have not previously won this class, Class 10 Advanced, or an Open competition at any venue. Two tunes selected by the judges from a list of four submitted by the entrant. (1 jig, 1 reel, 1 hornpipe, 1 slow air). Previous winners of this class may not re-enter.

Class 10 Small pipes Advanced

For Forster Charlton Cup. Three tunes, of contrasting rhythms, with at least one key change. Open to those who have not previously won any Open class, at any venue: competitors must have previously won an Intermediate class, at any venue. Judges will include consideration of the player's presentation, and ability to perform to an audience. Any player winning this class three times, whether in successive years or not, is thereafter barred from further entry.

Class 11 Small pipes Open

For Margaret Askew Cup and silver medal. Four tunes, with at least one key change. One tune must have at least three variations (see note in general rules above). Judges will include consideration of the player's choice of programme, presentation, and ability to perform to an audience. Competitors must have previously won an Intermediate class, at any venue. Winners in three successive years are barred from entry in the following year

(only).

Class 12 Duet for Small pipes or Border pipes

For Marjorie Bell Challenge Cup. Two tunes of own choice. Consideration will particularly be given to the competitors' arrangements; and their ability to provide an interesting and well-balanced performance.

Class 13 Mixed Duet

For Pen Bal Crag Trophy. Two or more players - combination of small pipes and/or Border pipes, and/or any other acoustic instrument(s). Two tunes of different rhythms: an interesting and well-balanced performance and arrangement will be looked for. Melody on pipes, with rhythmic accompaniment by one other instrument is not appropriate. Larger groups may naturally include a rhythmic element.

Class 14 Border pipes (Half Longs or Lowland pipes)

- a) Beginner / intermediate. For Bill Stafford memorial trophy. For those players who have not won an Open Border pipe class, at any venue. Two tunes of contrasting rhythms. Any player winning this class three times, whether in successive years or not, is thereafter barred from further entry.
- b) Open. For 'The Northumberland Half-Long Pipes' Cup. One tune with at least three variations (see note in general rules), + two other tunes of contrasting rhythms. Winners in three successive years are barred from entry in the following year (only).

Class 15 Pipe making

For the Bill Hedworth trophy (this trophy was kindly designed, made and donated by Marshall Hughes). A complete set of Northumbrian small pipes or Border pipes that have not previously won this class. Preference will be given to pipes entirely made, reeded and tuned by the entrant. Pipes will be judged on both performance and appearance. Open to both amateur and professional makers, but professional pipe makers, having won the trophy once, are debarred from further entry.

(Please would entrants for this class make every effort to get their entry to the competition venue on the day by 12.30 at the latest)

Class 16 Overseas - duet.

For either two players, or one player by the use of double-tracked recording. Each 'pair' must include either Northumbrian small pipes or Border pipes, and the second instrument may be either another set of pipes – either type - or a different instrument. Two tunes of contrasting rhythms. No individual may contribute to more than two entries.

Class 17 Funky Tune composition

Entries will be accepted at any time before the commencement of the class on the standard NPS competition entry form. The competition is to find an original tune or arrangement of an existing tune in a style which reflects contemporary musical styles and genres outside of the standard Northumbrian pipe repertoire. All tunes entered will become part of a collection of tunes for use by, particularly, young pipers. The class is open to composers of any age or ability and will be judged on the tune being played by the composer or their nominee on the Northumbrian smallpipes. The class will be judged by three young pipers (from the YPG group) encompassing all playing abilities. The entries should be able to be played on the Northumbrian smallpipes with the standard seven keys by a piper at lower intermediate level in the key of G. If an original tune, copyright to be licensed to NPS to ensure widest access at no cost to young people. If an existing tune it must not be in copyright unless the copyright holder has given permission for this tune to be published in NPS publications at no cost.