

PIPE BANDS AUSTRALIA

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Ballot proposals aim for greater international connection

The annual Pipe Bands Australia ballot of bands will commence this week with distribution of proposals by branch secretaries to bands.

The ballot allows direct input by member bands into the development and refinement of regulations affecting the operation of contests.

Acting Principal Rules and Administration Jamie Forsyth has compiled proposals received from branches for contest regulation amendments and drafted proposals on behalf of national management committee.

Key proposals in this year's ballot are:

- To provide clarity and international equity with the Grade 4 MSR requirement, better aligning the definition with those set at major international championships by the RSPBA.

Following the introduction of the Grade 4 MSR, feedback from bands requested a cap on the number of parts a band could perform whilst competing in Grade 4 MSR contests, to ensure the integrity and spirit of a Grade 4 MSR contest remained.

Subsequent changes to the contest regulations inadvertently disadvantaged Grade 4 bands preparing for overseas contests. Therefore, Management Committee and the music Principals have prepared the proposed rule amendment which aligns the Australian Grade 4 MSR playing requirements with RSPBA requirements with more clarity.

The proposal is that music for Grade 4 shall be 4 parts of 2/4 March (may be 2x2 parts), either 2 or 4 parts of Strathspey (may be 2x2 parts) and 2 or 4 parts of Reel (may be 2x2 parts).

- Increasing the size of competition circles to align with the dimensions used by the RSPBA and the RNZPBA
- Adjusting the course for the Drum Major Solo Competition to align with that used by the RSPBA
- A general proposal empowering national management committee and the Principal Rules and Administration to remove gender specific terms in the Contest Regulations of Pipe Bands Australia.

PBA president Chris Earl said the proposals being distributed for consideration by member bands prior to a decision by national council had been drafted to better place Australia in relation to international competition requirements.

"We also believe these proposals will assist the growing number of our bands in domestic competitions as they prepare for participation overseas, particularly at the European and World Championships," he said.

"Our aim is to have a set of rules and regulations that reflect the aspirations of contemporary pipe bands and provide every opportunity to assist our bands in their musical development."

Bands are encouraged to consider each proposal and return their ballot paper before Saturday 18 March.



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