



COMPETITION OVERVIEW

Competition may take place over several weeks depending on the number of competitors entered. Competitors will be contacted by the Awards Chairperson regarding scheduling and details of the competition.

Winners will be announced during the annual Award Show. They will be eligible to represent New Hampshire Country Music Association at the Northeast Invitational Country Showdown, as well as the national North American Country Music Associations, International (NACMAI) competition to be held in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. Winners will hold the NHCMA title for one year.

Rules

1. The Awards Committee of the NHCMA reserves the right to reject any entry deemed not in the best interest of the Association's goals. All entrants must be 21 or older for the adult competition, and all youth ages 3 to 20 years are welcome. All applicants under 21 years of age must have a parent/guardian sign the bottom of the entry form. A parent/guardian must accompany competitors under 18 years of age. **All participants in the competition must be members of the NHCMA.**
2. Competition will be held in as many geographic areas of the state as possible dependent upon the number of applicants.
3. Any one person can enter into more than one category (i.e. vocalist, entertainer), but each category will be performed and judged separately. Once a category is entered, no changes will be made to that entry. There will be no exceptions made to this rule due to our scheduling. Performances may include more than one song as time limits allow.
4. Each competitor will be allowed eight (8) minutes to perform. The time will start at the moment the competitor starts singing or performing. At seven (7) minutes and (30) seconds, the timekeeper will flash a light alerting the performer that thirty (30) seconds remains in their act.

Penalties will be assessed for any performer who goes over their allotted (8) minutes. The penalties will be as follows:

- 5 seconds overtime=1 point
- 6 seconds overtime=2 points
- 7 seconds overtime=3 points
- 8 seconds overtime=4 points

For overtime greater than (8) seconds, an additional total of (1) point will be deducted per second.

5. Performers may choose to either use their band to back them or background accompaniment on a CD without lead vocals on it. Your selected songs should be the only songs in proper order on one CD. All performers who enter as an individual performer will be judged on **ONLY THEIR INDIVIDUAL** performance, not the performance of the band behind them; and are not to interact with the band since the band is not really there in the eyes of the judges.
6. The official NHCMA competition categories in **Traditional, New Country, Bluegrass, and Gospel** music are as follows:
 - Vocal Group of the Year (T,N,B)
 - Female Vocalist of the Year (T,N,B,G)
 - Female Entertainer of the Year (T,N,B,G)
 - Duo of the Year (T,N,B,G)
 - Male Vocalist of the Year (T,N,B,G)
 - Male Entertainer of the Year (T,N,B,G)
 - Band of the Year (T,N,B)
 - Instrumentalist of the Year (T,N,B)
 - Songwriter of the Year (T,N,B,G)
 - Co-Songwriter of the Year (T,N,B,G)
 - CD of the Year (T,N,B,G)
 - All Youth Categories (T,N,B,G)

The categories are officially interpreted and shall mean what the category implies:

Vocal Group of the Year shall mean three or more persons harmonizing/vocalizing. They may use their backup band or recorded music on CD.

Female Vocalist of the Year shall mean one (1) female entrant. She may have backup vocals; and/or use her backup band, or recorded music on CD.

Female Entertainer of the Year shall mean one (1) female entrant. She may sing, play instrument(s), dance and/or dramatize. She may use backup vocals; and/or use her backup band, or recorded music on CD.

Duo of the Year shall mean two (2) people harmonizing/vocalizing. They may have their backup band or recorded music on CD. These individuals cannot compete against themselves (i.e. compete with a different individual as another duo).

Male Vocalist of the Year shall mean one (1) entrant. He may have backup vocals; and/or use his backup band, or recorded music on CD.

Male Entertainer of the Year shall mean one (1) male entrant. He may sing, play instrument(s), dance and/or dramatize. He may use backup vocals; and/or use his backup band or recorded music on CD.

Band of the Year shall mean a group of three or more musicians/vocalists.

Instrumentalist of the Year shall mean one (1) person competing with any instrument without using vocals. He or she may play more than one instrument while competing.

Songwriter of the Year shall mean one (1) person who has written a song, which has not placed in the top 40 of any record charting reports during the past year. Song must be presented on CD for judging in all state and national competitions. Present one song per CD with each entry form. *Song will not be performed live at the competitions.*

Co-songwriters of the Year shall mean the persons who have written a song, which has not placed in the top 40 of any major record charting reports during the past year. The song must be presented on CD for judging in all state and national competitions. Present one (1) song per CD with each entry form. *Song will not be performed live at the competitions.*

Youth Vocalist shall mean one (1) entrant male or female. This category shall be divided by age 3 to 6, 7 to 12, 13 to 16, and 17 to 20 based on age as of April 1 of the current year.

Youth Entertainers shall mean one (1) entrant male or female. She or he may sing, play instruments, and/or dance. This category shall be divided by age 3 to 6, 7 to 12, 13 to 16, 17 to 20 based on age as of April 1 of the current year.

CD of the Year shall mean a country CD that has not appeared in the top 40 of any major record charting reports during the past year. CD must be presented in CD form for judging. Present one (1) CD with entry form. *Songs will not be performed live at the competition.*

7. The Awards Committee will designate the recipient of the Hall of Fame and/or Memorial Awards, which will be given to an individual who has made a significant contribution to Country Music and its associated art forms.
- 8. The decision of the judges will be final.**
9. Awards will be presented to the top performer in each category provided they achieve 75% of the total available point score. The winner's award will be presented to those who qualify. In the case of group competitors, each member of the group will be presented with an award.

Definitions of awards:

"Category" of the Year: This award will be presented to the top performer in the category. This award recipient will represent NHCMA in future competitions for a period of one year.

10. The top performer in each category will be asked to represent the NHCMA at future competitions. Top performers will be contacted by the Awards Chairperson regarding all future competitions and events.
11. It will be the **expectation** of the NHCMA award recipients to make a reasonable amount of appearances at NHCMA events.
12. Any individual, group or band representing NHCMA as an award winner, may not compete or represent any other state in any regional or national competition during their year of holding that title. The timeframe of that year is to mean from Award Show to Award Show.