

The objective of **PLÉARACHA & SCORAÍOCHT** competitions is to provide activity, for as wide as possible a range of branch members, and to encourage initiative in the presentation of Irish Traditional Music, song, dance, Irish language, storytelling and recitation.

The **SCORAÍOCHT** competition was particularly intended for those with a flair for inventive presentation and depends very much on the skill of a producer with knowledge of all principles of stage presentation.

2024.25 Competition Dates and Qualification Procedure

- All Ireland **PLÉARACHA & SCORAÍOCHT** Competitions will be held on **25/26 January 2025 in Cashel**.
- 1st and 2nd Place from each Province will go forward to compete at the All-Ireland Competitions,
- No ties are permitted for 1st, 2nd and 3rd Place.
- There are no recalls in either **PLÉARACHA** or **SCORAÍOCHT** competitions. A collective decision for 1st, 2nd and 3rd Place will be made by the adjudicators.

Competition Procedures

Entry Procedure

- Entries, in Gaeilge if possible shall be submitted to the CCÉ Provincial Secretary not later than five weeks prior to the first day of **PLÉARACHA & SCORAÍOCHT** Regional Competitions. Late entries shall not be accepted after the closing date.
- Participants, confined to registered members of Comhaltas in **PLÉARACHA & SCORAÍOCHT**
- All-Ireland Champions in **PLÉARACHA & SCORAÍOCHT** have the right of entry to the successive **PLÉARACHA & SCORAÍOCHT** All-Ireland Competition.
- In both cases, a group may be drawn from a maximum of three branches within the same county
- Names and Membership number to be submitted on the entry forms.

Age Groups

PLÉARACHA competitions are divided into two categories:

- a. **PLÉARACHA na nÓG:** this is for competitors under 18. Anyone whose 18th birthday or earlier occurs on the 1st January 2024
 - b. **PLÉARACHA:** This competition is for any age however at least four or more members of this group must be over the age of 18.
- ii. **The SCORAÍOCHT** competition is open to any age.

STAGE PRESENTATION

General presentation guidelines should be adhered to:

Talking/Chatting on stage should cease on commencement of the programme

All members of each **PLÉARACHA & SCORAÍOCHT** should give their undivided ^[1]_{SEP} attention to any solo performer. All members should enjoy themselves while onstage and most importantly smile. Mobile phones and other devices are not permitted on stage.

General Rules

The following rules apply to both PLÉARACHA & PLÉARACHA na nÓG competitions:

- Participating Groups will comprise of not less than 12 performers and a maximum of 45 per group. A group may be drawn from a maximum of three branches within the same county.
- The duration of the programme for PLÉARACHA & PLÉARACHA na nÓG will be not less than 25 and not more than 30 minutes max. Penalties of one mark per minute or part thereof for groups who do not meet the lower 25-minute limit or exceed the 30-minute limit.
- An Empty stage to be shown before any group takes to the stage. Once the curtain is closed the teams have a maximum of 40 minutes to set up the stage, perform their PLÉARACHA show and clear the stage after which the blank stage will be shown again. The production adjudicator will monitor this time from empty stage to empty stage and penalties will apply to those who exceed the 40 minute threshold.
 - Props limited to small, hand portable items that can be easily moved on and off the stage. These may include signposts, milk can, flags, emblem etc. which can all be easily transported on and off the stage.
 - Bulky props such as hay bales are not permitted on stage
- As per adjudication section above, a list of music pieces in the order to be played and a list of instruments shall be submitted by each PLÉARACHA & PLÉARACHA na nÓG Producer to the competition clerk prior to the performance.
- Manager/Mentors/Teacher are not allowed to coach groups during their performances
- Programme should try to co-relate music where possible i.e. music/song, music/dance etc.

Presentation Method

- Groups to be encouraged to reflect and promote local music/songs/dances. This is to be factored into the adjudicators marking guidelines. This is to be included on the running order / schedule which is presented to the adjudicator.
- Credit will be given for the inclusion of lesser known tunes, local ballads and songs in the Irish language, step dancing, figure dancing, traditional solo, dancing and sean nós dancing. Lilters and Whistler can be included.

PLEARACHA / PLÉARACHA NA nÓG RULES

PLÉARACHA & PLÉARACHA na nÓG competition will be adjudicated on each of the following areas:

Singing:

- All singing shall be traditional in style. In rhythmic songs more than one voice may be used in the chorus.
- One song must be in Irish at a minimum.
- Harmony is permitted in lively songs only.
- Accompaniment permitted in lively songs only.
- Traditional Sean Nos Style to be encouraged.

The Singing Adjudicator will be asked to adjudicate the performance on the following suggested guidelines some of which include:

Quality of Voice, Song Choice, Phrasing, Tuning/Intonation, Command of Traditional Style, Ornamentation, Diction, Teamwork in the case of group songs, Harmony in the case of group songs

Dancing:

Dancing should include some of the following in the performance:

Sean nós, Céilí, Figure, Set, Step dancing, Two/Three/Four/Eight hand, Old traditional step dancing to be encouraged

The Dancing Adjudicator will be asked to adjudicate the performance on the following suggested guidelines some of which include:

1. Arrangement 2. Teamwork 3. Quality

Tips are not permitted except in the case of solo step dancing

Music:

- All music selected shall be traditional in character and in conformity with the Clár na gComortas.
- Slow airs can be played by a solo performer or group.
- Lilted and Whistling to be considered here.
- Attention should be given to the instrument arrangement and presentation of the music
- Groups are permitted to use céilí drums and electronic piano however no other electronic instruments are permitted.
- Solos, duets, trios, group performances and combinations of each should be considered as part of the performance.

The Music Adjudicator will be asked to adjudicate the performance on the following suggested guidelines some of which include:

Tempo , Rhythm, Phrasing, Tuning/Intonation, Balance/Blend, Style/ornamentation, Arrangement, Teamwork, Choice of tunes, Instrumentation

Tunes selected should include some of the following so as to provide as much variety as possible:

Air (Slow or lively), Reel, Polka, Hornpipe, March, Jig (Double, Single, Slip, Hop), Slide, Set Dance, Mazurka, Planxty, Fling, Barn Dance, Schottische, Waltz, Clan March, Highlands, Germans

Storytelling/Recitation/Poetry/ Scéalaíocht

Appropriate stories to be encouraged which are fitting with the nature of the competition

Adjudicators Marking of PLÉARACHA & PLÉARACHA na nÓG

Each Adjudicator selected to adjudicate either a PLÉARACHA & PLÉARACHA na nÓG competition must apportion their marks as follows:

Music 35%, Singing / Scéalaíocht 25%, Dancing 25%, Production 15%

SCORAÍOCHT Guidelines

The basic principles of good stage presentation apply to SCORAÍOCHT but the following, more detailed instructions will, it is hoped, prove assistance to all participants. There are two distinct methods of approach to presentation of a SCORAÍOCHT each with equal validity:

- The dramatic or script type approach in which the producer chooses his/her theme and writes, a detailed script which identifies each character in the cast whether performer or actor, and by means of the dialogue into which are suitably woven the various items of music, song, dance, story, recitation etc. – the theme is developed to its conclusion
- The approach by which the chosen theme is developed through the medium of the music, songs and dance, stories, recitations etc. In this case the producer apportions his/her allotted time between singing, dancing and music, as distinct from time used to accompany the dancers and having selected the pieces appropriate to the theme and based on the capabilities of the performers, proceed to weld these into a continuous entertainment package with a minimum of dialogue.

Theme to be developed for SCORAÍOCHT competitions by the producer. Sample themes can include:

Fleadh Seisiún, Treshing Day, Fair Day, St. Patrick's Day, St. Stephen's Day (Wren Boys), Emigration, Rambling House, American Wake, Delayed flight, Boat trip, Local Radio Station

Singing, dancing and music details similar to details as in Pléaracha above.

General Rules:

The following rules apply to SCORAÍOCHT competitions:

- Participating Groups will comprise of not less than 12 performers and a maximum of 45 per group. A group may be drawn from a maximum of three branches within the same county.
- The duration of the programme for SCORAÍOCHT will be not less than 30 and not more than 35 minutes max. Penalties of one mark per minute or part thereof for groups who do not meet the lower 30 minute limit or exceed the 35 minute limit.
- An Empty stage to be shown before any group takes to the stage. Once the curtain is closed the teams have a maximum of 50 minutes to set up the stage, perform their SCORAÍOCHT show and clear the stage after which the blank stage will be shown again. The production adjudicator will monitor this time from empty stage to empty stage and penalties will apply to those who exceed the 50 minute threshold.
- Suitable clothing should be used where possible to make the performance and stage as bright and cheerful as possible. No Irish Dancing wigs are permitted.
- The set should be suitably dressed, in accordance with the dictates of the theme.
- Props should be carefully selected bearing in mind transport difficulties and they must be capable of being assembled in 10 min and removed in 5 mins
- As per adjudication section above, A list of music pieces in the order to be played and a list of instruments shall be submitted by each SCORAÍOCHT Producer to the competition clerk prior to the performance.

Presentation Method

- Groups to be encouraged to reflect and promote local music/songs/dances. This is to be factored into the adjudicators marking guidelines.
- Groups are permitted to use céilí drums and electronic piano however no other electronic instruments are permitted.
- Credit will be given for the inclusion of lesser known tunes, local ballads and songs in the Irish language, step dancing, figure dancing, traditional solo, dancing and sean nós dancing.

Each Adjudicator selected to adjudicate either a SCORAÍOCHT competition must apportion their marks as follows:

Music 30%, Singing / Scéalaíocht 20%, Dancing 20%, Production 30%