

NACMAI COMPETITION TIPS

One: How do you know if a song is Traditional or New Country?

This is determined by the music style and instruments used and NOT by how old a song is. There is nothing anyone can do about the fact that some songs fall into that "gray area", where it is hard to determine which category the song fits into. Since Pigeon Forge is a COMPETITION, and you will be scored on "how well your song choice fits your selected category", you need to be quite certain your song fits within the guidelines provided by NACMAI, or select a different song. After all, if you aren't even sure, chances are the judges won't be either and may have no choice but to take off points in this category.

******Example 1:** George Strait is clearly a "traditional artist" however, he releases new songs every year, so the age of the song can NOT be used to determine the style of the song.

******Example 2:** Randy Travis is a "traditional artist" who recorded the song "I Told You So" in clearly a traditional style. Carrie Underwood is a "New Country Artist" yet she also recorded "I Told You So" in a traditional style. Just because she is a new country artist, doesn't make everything she sings automatically "switch" to the New Country style.

DO NOT MAKE THIS MISTAKE when choosing your songs for Pigeon Forge. Pick them by the instruments and style of the song and NOT according to the original artists or one who "re-recorded it".

TWO: COMPETITION PERFORMANCE TRACKS:

A: The rules clearly state you must use "only one" CD for your 2 songs in your Vocal Category, and "only one" CD (or one" CD for your two songs in the Entertainer Category, and "only one" CD for your 2 songs in the Duet Category.

B: Each CD is to have only a 2-4 second delay before the music starts for your first song, and only a 2-4 second blank space before the music starts for your second song. Also, the songs **MUST** be arranged in the order they will be performed.

****In the past, performers have been able to get away with turning in 2 separate CD's for their Vocal Category, 2 separate CD's for their Entertainer, and 2 separate CD's for their Duet Category, and have not been penalized for not following the rules. The CHIEF JUDGE HAS STATED THAT THINGS THAT HAVE BEEN OVERLOOKED by NACMAI IN THE PAST WILL NO LONGER BE OVERLOOKED and WILL NOT BE TOLERATED, so it is probably a good idea for our CMSA chapter to "tighten up" on the rules to avoid unnecessary point deductions.

C: You are only allowed to perform for 8 minutes total in each category. The timer starts as soon as you reach center stage and does not stop until you are completely off of the stage. Therefore, "When timing your songs, make sure you leave enough extra time when you are finished singing to get completely off of the stage before 8 minutes are up." You have a choice of singing only 1 song (which could last 7 minutes 50 seconds) or a maximum of 2 songs that total 7 min. 50 seconds in each category you are performing in. This will allow the remaining 10 seconds left from your allotted 8 minutes for your entry/exit.

THREE: JUDGING CRITERIA:

You will be judged in the following 6 areas:

A. "Quality of Performance": This is based on the overall strength of your vocal or instrumental performance. Some judges may also take into consideration other aspects of your performance that also fall under "stage presence."

B. "Originality of Performance/Arrangement": Don't "force" yourself into a song by trying to perform it "just like" the original artist. Remember: There is only ONE Taylor Swift, so don't try to create another one! Be yourself.

C. "Star Quality": Everything about your performance: vocals, personality, confidence, etc is polished and strong. You are destined to be "A Star"

D. "Tightness of Performance": You are singing with a track and not a live band, so you must try to stay "on beat" with the music. If you are in a duet, make sure you are both synchronized together vocally and musically.

E. "Stage Presence": You are comfortable vocally and exhibit confidence. You know how to properly use a microphone, enter and exit the stage properly, you remember to smile, and you sing to your audience rather than staring into space. You appear to be enjoying performing.

F. "How Well the Material Reflects Selected Music Style": Be confident that your song choices fit the category you are competing in, whether it is Traditional Country, New Country, Traditional Gospel, New Gospel or Bluegrass.

Good Luck to Everyone

Teri Newby

PS: We will let everyone know when their performance times/dates are as soon as we get the info from NACMAI.