



# LAKE MACQUARIE CAMERA CLUB

## PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY OF AMERICA (PSA) INTERCLUB COMPETITIONS 2023-24



Lake Macquarie Camera Club is a member of the Photographic Society of America (PSA) and that allows our club to enter the PSA Interclub competitions. These competitions enable clubs from all over the world to compete against one another in the following digital image categories:

- Pictorial - Colour
- Pictorial - Monochrome
- Nature
- Photojournalism
- Photo Travel

### How the competitions are organised

Clubs from across the world are organised into ranked groups of approximately 25 clubs, with Group A being the highest-ranking clubs. Based on our club's success in previous years, *we are in Group A in all competition sections.*

There are three Rounds in each competition and they occur in November, February and April.

The club entry in *each category* in *each Round* consists of *six* images and they must come from six different club members. Individual club members are permitted to have an entry in more than one category in each Round and ***ALL club members are eligible to enter.***

A call for entries is made in a post on the club website about a month before the entries for each Round have to be submitted. Entries can be submitted on the club web page where monthly competition entries are uploaded. Each club member can submit **one image in each section** in each Round. You do not have to enter all sections.

After entries close the entries are scored by members of the club who are qualified judges. The six highest-scoring images in each section then become the club entry for that section.

***Once an image is included in a club entry it cannot be entered again in any section in any year. It is your responsibility to check that the images you submit this year have not been selected to represent the club in previous years.***

After the images are submitted to PSA by your club representative they are judged in a Group where we are competing against 20-25 clubs from various countries. Scores are given

to each image. There are awards for the highest scoring images and the points for the club accumulate over the three Rounds to determine the best club in the Group (for each section - Nature, etc). The Groups are graded according to the performance of the club over the years in which they compete - it is a league table in which the best-performing clubs in each section get promoted and poor-performing clubs get demoted for the following year's competition.

*Prior to Round 1 of each completion, the club members who wish to participate must sign a **release form** that will permit the PSA to display their images on the PSA website and/or in the PSA Journal. These release forms can be obtained by emailing Roy Killen and must be returned to him before you submit any entries. If you do not sign the release form your images can not be selected to represent the club. Once you submit a release form it remains valid for 3 years.*

**Note:** Some of our club members are also members of other clubs that participate in the PSA Interclub competitions (Wangi club for example). Those members may participate in the PSA Interclub competitions through only ONE club.

## **Why enter?**

There is no fee for entering these competitions. They provide an additional opportunity for club members to share their images and see how the standard of their images compares with the images of other club members across all grades. It is not unusual for B-grade members to have images selected to represent our club.

The primary purpose of the competitions is to provide an opportunity to compare the standard of images in our club with the images produced by clubs across the world.

## **How to enter**

Entries are made on the club website in the same way that entries for normal monthly competitions are submitted. To enter, do the following:

1. Log in to the club website and click on the "Members" button (top right of the home page).
2. Select the competition you want to enter by clicking on the appropriate *green* button on the right half of the page (for example, "PSA Interclub 2023-24 Round 1").
3. Select and upload your images in the same way that you do this for monthly club competitions. The system will allow you to enter only one image in each section of the Interclub competition (Nature, PJ, etc).
4. Your images do NOT have to be ones you have previously entered in club competitions, but images that have received Honours or Merit awards are probably good candidates.

**Image dimensions:** The club entries submitted to PSA have to be no larger than 1920x1080 pixels. You can either submit entries that meet that requirement or submit entries using the dimensions and file size that you use for normal club competitions (maximum of 1920 x

1200 pixels and 2MB). Images that are selected for the club entry will be resized if necessary.

## Judging

The club entries in each Group are judged by a Host Club from another Group. Images are scored from 1 to 5 by each of the three judges (giving a maximum possible total score of 15). 10% of the images in the Group are eligible for Merit awards and a further 10% are eligible for HM awards, based on the highest scores and judges' discussion.

## End of Year

**Top Clubs:** Group Standings are kept and represent a club's total scores from each Round of judging. The top three clubs in every group are determined at the end of the competition season based on these scores. The top-scoring club in each group receives a Plaque. The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place clubs receive a Certificate.

**Best of the Best:** All Merit Images from each round are judged again to determine the Best of the Best for each group. The End of Year Image Awards given are a Gold Medal, Silver Medal and Bronze Medal, with Best of the Best Honourable Mention Images receiving ribbons.

The Best of Show is chosen from all Gold Medal Images from each group and is awarded a Best of Show Certificate.

## Definitions and Special Restrictions

It is very important that all the images you enter meet the following general and specific requirements.

### Image Creation

In all sections of the competition, images must originate as photographs made by the entrant. They may not incorporate identifiable images produced by anyone else (for example: clip art, replacement skies, or stock images). Images created in whole or in part by image creation software (frequently called 'AI' images) are not allowed. Editing or alteration of images is permitted within the limits specified in the relevant section definitions that are available here <https://psa-photo.org/page/division-definitions> (see below).

### Statement on Subject Matter

The fundamental rule that must be observed at all times and **applies to all sections** offered in exhibitions with PSA recognition is that **the welfare of living creatures is more important than any photograph**. This means that practices such as baiting of subjects with a living creature and removal of birds from nests, for the purpose of obtaining a photograph, are highly unethical, and such photographs are not allowed in any exhibition with PSA recognition. Under no circumstances may a living creature be placed in a situation where it will be killed, injured or stressed for the purpose of obtaining a photograph. Images that

show live creatures being fed to captive animals, birds or reptiles are not permitted under any circumstances.

## **COLOUR**

Any photograph that is not monochrome. It includes a monochrome photograph that has been partially toned or had some colour added. The subject content is unrestricted and may include creative images, with all forms of manipulation permitted (subject to the 'image creation' restrictions).

## **MONOCHROME**

An image is considered to be Monochrome only if it gives the impression of having no colour (i.e. contains only shades of grey which can include pure black and pure white) OR it gives the impression of being a greyscale image that has been toned in one colour across the entire image. (For example by Sepia, red, gold, etc.) A greyscale or multi-coloured image modified or giving the impression of having been modified by partial toning, multi-toning or by the inclusion of spot colouring does not meet the definition of monochrome and shall be classified as a Colour Work.

## **NATURE, PHOTOJOURNALISM and PHOTO TRAVEL**

PSA refers to these three categories as 'reality Divisions' and restricts **editing** as follows:

### **Allowed editing techniques:**

- Cropping, straightening and perspective correction.
- Removal or correction of elements added by the camera or lens, such as dust spots, noise, chromatic aberration and lens distortion.
- Global and selective adjustments such as brightness, hue, saturation and contrast to restore the appearance of the original scene.
- Complete conversion of colour images to grayscale monochrome.
- Blending of multiple images of the same subject and combining them in camera or with software (exposure blending or focus stacking).
- Image stitching – combining multiple images with overlapping fields of view that are taken consecutively (panoramas).

### **Editing techniques that are not allowed:**

- Removing, adding to, moving or changing any part of an image, except for cropping and straightening.
- Adding a vignette during processing.
- Blurring parts of the image during processing to hide elements in the original scene.
- Darkening parts of the image during processing to hide elements in the original scene.
- All conversions other than to complete grayscale monochrome.
- Conversion of parts of an image to monochrome, or partial toning, desaturation or over-saturation of colour.

## **PHOTO TRAVEL (Content Guidelines)**

- A Photo Travel image is a portrayal of the real world we live in, as it is found naturally. There are no geographic limitations.
- If the image is predominantly or exclusively a land-, sea- or cityscape, these “scapes” must include characteristic, distinctive and recognizable physical features, although it is not necessary that the image identify the exact location.
- Images that predominantly or exclusively depict people and their activities must illustrate a distinctive culture of a country, region, or continent.
- Images that predominately or exclusively depict animal populations are allowed, if the animals are in their native environment and are characteristic of that country, region, or continent.
- Portraits or other close-ups of people or objects, in addition to meeting the above paragraphs as applicable, must include elements depicting some of the surrounding environment to make it obvious that the image was not taken in a studio setting.
- Images from events or activities arranged for photography, or of subjects directed or hired for photography, are **NOT allowed**.
- Time exposures are allowed, if they do not dominate the image as a special effect (star trails, for example, are a dominating effect).
- Highly distorted images such as those produced by fish eye lenses are **NOT allowed**.

## **NATURE (Content Guidelines)**

- Nature photography records all branches of natural history except anthropology and archaeology. This includes all aspects of the physical world, both animate and inanimate, that have not been made or modified by humans.
- Nature images must convey the truth of the scene that was photographed. A well-informed person should be able to identify the subject of the image and be satisfied that it has been presented honestly and that no unethical practices have been used to control the subject or capture the image. Images that directly or indirectly show any human activity that threatens the life or welfare of a living organism are not allowed.
- The most important part of a Nature image is the nature story it tells.
- High technical standards are expected and the image must look natural.
- Objects created by humans, and evidence of human activity, are allowed in Nature images only when they are a necessary part of the Nature story.
- Photographs of human-created hybrid plants, cultivated plants, feral animals, domesticated animals, human-created hybrid animals and mounted or preserved zoological specimens are not allowed.
- Images taken with subjects under controlled conditions, such as zoos, are allowed.
- Controlling live subjects by chilling, anaesthetic or any other method of restricting natural movement for the purpose of a photograph is not allowed.

## **PHOTOJOURNALISM (Content Guidelines)**

- Photojournalism entries are images with informative content and emotional impact, reflecting the human presence in our world.
- The journalistic (story-telling) value of the image should receive priority over pictorial quality.

- Images that misrepresent the truth, such as those from events or activities arranged specifically for photography, or of subjects directed or hired for photography, are not eligible.

Photojournalism has a sub-category called ***Human Interest***. Those images depict a person or persons in an interactive, emotional or unusual situation, excluding competitive sports action.

If you have any questions about the PSA Interclub competitions please email Roy Killen at [roykillen@mac.com](mailto:roykillen@mac.com)

For more information about the Photographic Society of America, you can visit their website <https://psa-photo.org> PSA offers many benefits for individual members (such as free online courses and study groups) and Roy Killen can give you more information about those benefits.