



Winter Guard Association of Southern California

Color Guard Adjudication Manual



Southern California A – AA (Regional A)

Junior High/Middle School A

WINTER GUARD ASSOCIATION of SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Mission Statement: The Winter Guard Association of Southern California (WGASC) is a non-profit, youth organization, which cultivates personal growth through competitive performance opportunities in an organized forum that promotes self-esteem, education and freedom of creativity.

Competition: The WGASC exists fundamentally for its participants and supporters. The WGASC Board of Directors, Executive Committee, Director of Operations, and Staff make decisions based on this philosophy. The winter color guard division has chosen competitive performance opportunities as its method for promoting self-esteem, education and freedom of creativity. Because of the large number of participants, the WGASC staff reserves the right to control the content at each sponsored performance to uphold a positive and educational image. Therefore, all choreography, soundtracks, thematic and costuming choices must reflect the qualities that would be acceptable for performance at a scholastic venue or suitable for marketing to sponsors. Any breach in the above philosophy could result in performance denial or possible disqualification as determined by the Director of Operations or color guard coordinator in consultation with the Executive Committee. Designated Contest Directors will serve as a liaison to the Director of Operations and color guard coordinator.

Classification: The WGASC offers several classes of competition for winter color guard. Southern California Independent A (Independent Regional A), Southern California Junior and Senior High A/AA (Regional A/AA), Junior High/Middle School A Class exist only within the WGASC. Additionally, there are seven "nationally recognized" classifications: Intermediate A, Scholastic and Independent A, Scholastic and Independent Open and World.

It is extremely important for all guards to place themselves in the proper class. Guards who may be competing in the wrong class could find that the scoring process will isolate them because this criterion is so strongly attuned to the curriculum involved in the developmental process.



WGASC JH/MS, A/AA and Scholastic Classification Matrix

This matrix may be used as a guiding tool to help instructors and directors determine proper classification before the beginning of the season. Please also consult the class descriptions in the manual. While the application of these formulas are intended to help create a general impression consistent with the class descriptions, each unit is different and will rise to its own level of excellence, which will be evaluated at contests without regard to this calculation. **Please do not return this form with your application materials.**

Name of unit: _____ Number of performers: _____

I. PERFORMER PROFILE... # OF

_____ FRESHMEN X 0 = _____
_____ SOPHOMORES X 2 = _____
_____ JUNIORS X 4 = _____
_____ SENIORS X 6 = _____

TOTAL = _____ divide by # performers = _____

II. PERFORMER EXPERIENCE... # OF

_____ 1 YEAR X 0 = _____
_____ 2 YEAR X 3 = _____
_____ 3 YEAR X 6 = _____
_____ 4 YEAR X 9 = _____

TOTAL = _____ divide by # performers = _____

III. DIRECTOR/STAFF EXPERIENCE (DESIGNERS, CHOREOGRAPHERS, TECHNICIANS) # OF

_____ 0-1 YEAR X 0 = _____
_____ 2-3 YEARS X 3 = _____
_____ 4-5 YEARS X 6 = _____
_____ 5-9 YEARS X 9 = _____
_____ 10 YEARS X 12 = _____

TOTAL = _____ divide by # staff = _____

ADD I. + II. + III _____

Less than a score of 7 = So. Cal. A

A score of 7 - 10 = So. Cal. AA

A score of 10 - 13 = INT A

A score of 13 + = SCH A

Classification Committee - The WGASC's Membership Education Coordinator heads the classification committee with four additional appointed committee members to review possibly misclassified color guards. Guards that have scored significantly higher than others have in their class, guards that have reached certain scoring plateaus early in the season for example, likely will get reviewed. Should the committee educationally feel that a reviewed guard is ready for the next class level, the membership education coordinator will contact the instructor and advise them of the appropriate steps. The WGASC will not promote into classes above Scholastic A and will not promote a Junior High or Middle School into any high school classifications nor will a "Southern California" Independent A be promoted to national Independent A. If a unit is promoted, the unit director may submit a letter on the specific circumstances on why this promotion would adversely affect their unit. The committee will assess the circumstances and decide whether the circumstances warrant a reversal of the promotion. A unit director may also submit a letter appeal its circumstances to see if a guard is eligible for re-classification to a lower class. The Classification Committee will formulate its decision and at that time, the decision is final until the following season.

Scoring Philosophy: The WGASC's local color guard division is the largest of its kind in the United States. While proud of its unprecedented 300+ member color guards, its size also presents challenges when working to provide an educationally sound and fair scoring system. To serve its membership, the WGASC has created a unique scoring/adjudication system to work in tandem with the commonly recognized national system. As with the national score sheets, the intent of the WGASC sheets is to encourage and reward creativity, artistry, and performance excellence. The WGASC system acknowledges the joint efforts of designers, instructors, and performers through artistry, design and achievement. Both systems evaluate color guards using a subjective criteria reference in which the criteria sentences describe qualities, which guide judges to specific numerical ranges. The WGASC's educationally based system rewards performers and designers for their accomplishments.

WGASC Adjudication: WGASC judges exist differently than judges in other associations across the country. Most pageantry associations contract with specific judging associations. The WGASC develops a local judge's pool and allows them membership opportunities in the association. The adjudicators take pride in sharing in the growth of the units they adjudicate. The WGASC adjudicators take on a serious responsibility to offer input for improvement over the course of a season.

The structure of the WGASC is special in that it exists with performers in elementary school up through college. Such a diverse range of performers and instructors requires different levels of adjudication. Guards with young inexperienced instructors and performers require judges to be teachers. These guards require judges to be patient. The WGASC judges hope to aid in creating a logical progression of development for them to follow.

At the second level the units who have been around for a few years start to believe after experiencing some success that they are ready to move to a higher classification. At this point we find ourselves in the role of "counselor". This role requires the most patience, the strongest concern and the greatest amount of effort. It is hard to watch units at this level stumble and make mistakes. As judges

encounter their impatience, their frustrations and their absolute conviction that they are misunderstood and not appreciated it is not uncommon for minor confrontations to exist.

Finally, the student designer and now mature performer culminate to the final growth stage and moments of brilliance emerge from their creations and performances. At this time the trained judge simply becomes the critic. The designer has surpassed the teacher, outgrown the counselor and looks to us to be the art critic. At this point, we must challenge them; encourage them to set even higher goals and standards. We must be professional, concerned and supportive.

Judge's code of conduct: Individuals may not judge for WGASC if they are still performing in any color guard. A WGASC judge must disclose any affiliation with any unit based on the following definitions:

- **Primary Affiliation:** Designer, instructor, or manager of the competing unit. A judge with a primary-affiliation may not adjudicate the class where their affiliation exists.
- **Secondary Affiliation:** Any judge who receives compensation from the school, and/or sponsoring organization and any related organization that sponsors or supports the competing unit i.e. an individual who teaches in the school or who might teach or provide other services for the sponsoring organization. Also, any judge who through family, spouse or significant other who has a primary affiliation as described above. A judge with a secondary affiliation may judge in their affiliated class as long as the unit they are affiliated with is not competing at that contest.

** No judge may display interest or preference toward any competing guard they may judge. Wearing a guard hat, t-shirt or other apparel with a guard's insignia is forbidden. Judges are encouraged to give input regarding the ethical standards of the judging community. This should be handled through the Judge Coordinator.

Instructor's code of conduct: WGASC Judges and staff are held to the highest standard of conduct and ethics. The WGASC instructor's must also adhere to a code of ethics for all to exist in a positive environment.

If undue and unfair pressure is directed toward judges through inappropriate behavior, then this places the competitive experience at risk. Examples include, but are not limited to instructors shouting at judges in public, inappropriate conduct of any instructor while accompanying the guard onto the contest floor, inordinate and unauthorized telephone calls to judges. There is also a growing concern about disruptive behavior in the warm up area, and rude behavior from the performers and/or staff of one group towards another. Behavior of this type is intolerable and will result in the loss of the privilege that has been violated. For example, instructors could lose all telephone privileges with judges, they could be barred from the arena floor or contest venue, or lose the right to use the warm up venue. Addressing this important issue must be a priority for every guard.

Judging System - All participants and all program styles start with an equal opportunity to succeed. Scores are assigned based on criteria in each sub-caption. Each caption (IA) EQ, (IA) MV, EA, and GE is judged in the same manner. Two Individual Analysis Judges, one Ensemble Analysis Judge and two General Effect

Judges function with a 20-point sheet, the sum of which will determine the score and placement of each guard.

The Individual Analysis sheets credit the achievement of the movement and equipment choreography by the individual performers. The Ensemble Analysis sheet credits the composing & arrangement of equipment/body/form and the ensemble excellence in the achievement of the composition. The General Effect sheet credits all those elements that combine to display effect.

The criteria reference system requires that ranking and rating be done on a sub-caption basis so that each sub-caption number is a ranking and rating in and of itself. When the totals of the sub-captions indicate a tie in the overall sheet, the judge should re-evaluate his/her sub-caption numbers to see if the tie can be broken. Standards within the application of the Criteria reference are the same in both Scholastic and Independent Classes. A score applied to a high school guard should have relativity, in terms of range, to an Independent guard in the same class (World, Open or A). The five descriptors specify levels of achievement for each sub-caption. The numerical rating of each performance falls within the caption that best describes the level of achievement MOST OF THE TIME. Only the fifth box, with the highest numbers, requires the performance to meet outstanding levels for EVERY ONE of the criteria listed. In the case of World Classes, Box 6 is reserved for units who have set new standards and also fulfilled all aspects of box 5.

Scoring Consistency - Consistent scoring is a major concern to judges and instructors. Some situations can cause numbers to fluctuate. We are sensitive to the impact this has on the performer, and the insecurity it places in the instructor. We have identified several factors contributing to this problem.

- Inconsistent exposure places both judges and guards at a disadvantage. The local judge will be measuring the unit's growth; the traveling judge will be unaware of this factor but will be trying to grade relative to all the other class A or Open guards viewed that season.
- When a large number of guards are very similar to each other, either in program or achievement, judges' rankings may be more at variance resulting in scoring differences. This is why we encourage the guards to establish a personality and program that will help set them apart from their competitors and perhaps offer them a competitive edge.
- The size of the contest can influence ratings significantly as more and more guards come together and must be RANKED. Smaller contests can cause scores to rise higher than is appropriate in light of the fact that shows are often isolation from other like competitors. Subsequent larger contests expose the guards to more like competitors and the process of ranking can lower the earlier score in some cases.

Application of the criteria - Impression is the judge's subjective reaction. Numerically, the function of the impression is to determine a category for any particular sub-caption. The criteria reference system attempts to standardize this process. Analysis is the objective aspect of the evaluation that seeks out reasons to support or modify initial impressions. Numerically the analysis converts the impression category to a specific score within each sub-caption. Comparison requires the judge to look at the number given and compare it to other marks he/she has given in that category not only in that contest but also in earlier contests. Thus, when a judge assigns a number he/she is telling that unit how it stands with other guards in the same class the judge may have seen earlier.

- It is the intent of this system that a number grade is assigned from whichever level of achievement describes the unit's qualities most of the time. Only Box 5 requires the unit to display ALL qualities described to earn the scores available at that level of achievement. In the World Class, Box 6 is reserved for groups who are setting new standards and who have achieved all of the criteria in Box 5.
- In order to provide uniform numerical treatment for subjective judging, judges convert subjective impression into a numerical category and ultimately refine that category to a specific score.

Judge Feedback Form - In an effort to assist instructors in making the most of the Judge Feedback Form, the WGASC Judge's Coordinator has created a guide for instructors containing a list of suggested questions that can be addressed utilizing this form. This tool is intended to clarify dialogue from a judge and/or to inquire about a judge's interpretation and application of the criteria.



Adjudication Evaluation Form

Unit Name _____ Contest Site _____

Contest Date _____ Judge's Name _____

Assess the judge's performance in the following areas as they relate to your unit's performance *at this contest* and the judge's commentary and scoring:

Communication	Assess the level of communication you received from the judge	<u>Satisfactory</u>	<u>Needs Improvement</u>
Commentary	Assess the usefulness and scoring relevance of the judge's tape		
Scoring	Was the score in line with the comments?		
Attitude	Was the judge positive and professional?		
People Skills	Was the manner in dealing with you consistently appropriate?		
Knowledge	Was the judge's knowledge of the system and the activity suitably demonstrated?		

Did you watch your competitors? If yes, where were you sitting?

Please be as specific as possible in the below space as to your concerns at today's contest.

What results are you hoping to achieve by filling out this form?

Name & Position _____

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this form. When I receive your completed form I will contact you as to the next step in resolving any concerns.

Richard Kramer

VP of Adjudication

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A GUIDE TO JUDGING SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA A/AA CLASS - The performers in this class are the youngest or least experienced guards. Age range within this class could be as low as five or seven years of age and range upwards through junior high school into high school age. A multiple of categories could exist within this scoring system. The So. Cal. A Class is open to both Independent and Scholastic groups. The typical group in this class would have limited rehearsal time. Their vocabularies will be at an introductory level with fundamentals as their primary goal.

This area is where the true beginner will be nurtured and developed with the very beginning skills and qualities as their standard. The prime purpose is to develop individual training that will assure each student's technical growth. It is also to focus on logic in programs that will allow the performers to reach high achievement. This is intended to discourage those who overwrite in an attempt to be competitive and whose excessive demand on the performers precludes their proper training and development. This class offers these students an opportunity to take appropriate steps and receive full reward as they evolve toward the level of A Class competition.

Southern California A/AA Equipment - Focus on the training and achievement of the most simple INTRODUCTORY equipment skills. Keep in mind the age of these performers and remember that this is a beginning experience for them. Recognize which principles are essential at a beginning level and train for the excellent demonstration of these skills. It is reasonable to expect the performers to strive for a moderate level of excellence within a specific range of the beginning vocabulary. As performers approach Box 4, they will begin to demonstrate characteristics that indicate their training and development is near ready for National A Class. The purpose of this class is to help the performers grow in the very elementary principles and efforts in handling equipment. Many may use props, small swing flags or other pieces of equipment which can be handled through full arm rotation. Always support proper training and development on whatever piece of equipment is used.

Southern California A/AA Movement - Focus on the training and achievement of the simplest INTRODUCTORY movement skills. Keep in mind the age of these performers and remember that this is a beginning experience for them. Recognize which principles are essential at an introductory level and train for the excellent demonstration of these skills. It is reasonable to expect the performers to strive for a moderate level of achievement within a specific range of the introductory vocabulary. As performers approach Box 4, they will begin to demonstrate characteristics that indicate their training and development is near ready for National A Class. The purpose of this class is to help the performers grow in the very elementary principles and efforts in movement. Always support proper training and development in whatever movement choice the group displays.

Southern California A/AA Ensemble Analysis - Compositional qualities should include logic and presentation with good connections and flow from one single idea to the next. Obvious melodic line reflections will be the choice for most groups in reflecting musical structure. Phrasing and meter are important early components to stress and reward. Focus on the correctness of the basics of composition. As groups approach the box 4 level, they will begin to demonstrate some National A qualities. Here is where vocabulary and design will offer occasional challenges to the students. At an excellence level, definition of forms, timing and accuracy of equipment and movement, and such elements as pulse, in-step and consistent step offs and builds to new sets will be the priorities.

Southern California A/AA General Effect - Design and performance skills will be at a beginning level. The judge should reward correctness in program, logic and presentation in design, and training and accuracy in equipment and movement. It is desirable that students are guided and rewarded for qualities that will lead to their successful performance of beginning skills. As beginners, single efforts and simple responsibilities will occur. The concept of layered skills will probably not exist. Shows will likely "set, move & spin", presenting one skill at a time. Effect will be generated largely through precision and timing. Soundtracks may be a bit more challenging than the groups can fulfill in terms of musical interpretation. Groups must take care not to attempt material that is over their heads or that they do not understand. Achievement is important here. Younger novice/prep age groups will often have a charming program concept, but their skills will still be at a beginning level. In some cases, GE could be their strong suit for that reason. As groups approach the box four level, they will begin to demonstrate some A qualities. Here is where vocabulary and design will offer occasional challenges to the students.

Southern California A/AA Class Score Sheets and Criteria

INDIVIDUAL ANALYSIS: EQUIPMENT

INDIVIDUAL ANALYSIS: MOVEMENT

ENSEMBLE ANALYSIS

GENERAL EFFECT

Introduction and Rationale Junior High/Middle School A Class - During the spring 2005 meeting of the Winter Guard Association of Southern California, the body voted on an amendment to change the number of classes for junior high/middle schools from two to three. A committee was appointed by President Lee Carlson to study the issue and develop an implementation strategy. The conceptual idea was to implement a novice class of guards using modified criteria from the regional 'A' class. Because of the very rudimentary nature of the regional 'A' class criteria in the lower boxes, it was discovered that there would not be enough differentiation in a new criteria to accommodate a completely different class. In addition, the board maintained their position that to place three classes on one criterion was neither feasible nor desirable. So, this plan has been developed to accommodate the regional 'A' class units by offering a classification that is in part based on a modified 'A' class criteria that does two things: one, allows the redistribution of units within the regional 'A' sheet by shifting more advanced units; and, two, offers a scoring rubric specifically for junior high/middle school units with a predominant number of experienced performers.

Junior High/Middle School Class Structure - In order to fully capture the desire of the body to incorporate three classes for junior high and middle school units, a redefinition of the characteristics of each of the three classes must accompany the development of the new class. The comments of the body at the spring 2005 meeting were taken into account to develop the characteristics of these classes. However, it should be noted that in order for this restructuring to work properly, the unit directors must utilize these descriptions in classifying their own groups, so that like units compete within the same class.

Southern California JH/MS A Class (RA JH/MS): This class is designed for the most novice performers of color guard. Units in this class are characterized by membership of no more than $\frac{1}{4}$ of the total number of performers having any dance or guard experience ever. Show design and the generation of effect are very much less important than the development of primary technical skills and the introduction of expression. This class is reserved to allow these performers a positive emerging competitive experience in color guard, and to allow them to develop entry-level skills in a supportive environment. Only groups who are at the very nascent stages of training should declare this class.

Southern California JH/MS AA Class: This class is designed for junior high and middle school units that may have new performers, but also includes more than $\frac{1}{4}$ of the unit with limited dance or previous color guard training. This class is designed for individuals to be somewhat more competitive than the regional 'A' class, but still working on the refinement of entry-level skills. Design and thematic efforts play a more prominent role than in the regional 'A' class, but still are at elementary levels. Groups who have had some exposure but limited training should declare this class.

A Guide To Judging The Junior High/Middle School A Class - This class is designed for junior high and middle school units that may have new

performers, but may also include a majority of returning performers who have had some previous exposure to dance and/or color guard. These units are expanding from entry-level skills, which they are fairly comfortable with, to more of the beginning skills associated with the high school 'A' class. Units that have had moderate exposure and training, are developing performers for further competition beyond junior high school/middle school, who are feeder units for existing competitive programs, or are developing individuals who aspire to national competition levels should declare this class. The performers in this class are among the youngest guards who may have had some prior dance or color guard experience. This class is designed for units to explore the beginning skills associated with the high school 'A' class, yet at an educational and competitive level that is more appropriate for the associated age group (10-14 years). Because there are more natural limits on both physical and mental growth and maturity in this age group, the criteria is broader for the upper boxes, which is designed to offer this group maximum scoring potential through the presentation of beginning skills at an average level through box 4 and a good level in box 5. In addition, the shift of expectation in these boxes prohibits the direct correlation of success with high school 'A' class guards. Individuals in this class enjoy performing, are motivated by competition, and are well supported by training principles as developed by conscientious instructional staff for their unit. This class offers these performers the most expansive opportunity to develop technical and performance skills as they evolve to high school-level competition and beyond.

Junior High/Middle School A Class Score Sheets and Criteria

INDIVIDUAL ANALYSIS: EQUIPMENT

INDIVIDUAL ANALYSIS: MOVEMENT

ENSEMBLE ANALYSIS

GENERAL EFFECT