

THE IJA STAGE CHAMPIONSHIPS: INDIVIDUALS, TEAMS, AND JUNIORS

In addition to the rules and procedures for the IJA Stage Championships, supplemental information can be found on the Stage Championships web page (http://www.juggle.org/stage_championships.php). All questions regarding the IJA Stage Championships shall be directed to the Championships Director. The Championships Director's contact information can be found on the IJA Contact Page.

INTRODUCTION

The goal of the IJA Stage Championships is to reward a stage-performed juggling act that is entertaining and marketable to a broad audience.

There is no limit to the choice of props and the style of manipulation; however, the majority of the act must involve the manipulation of props. Other skills will be judged in so far as they directly enhance the overall entertainment aspect of the routine, or to the extent to which these non-juggling skills, when combined with juggling, increase the difficulty or risk of the juggling.

Competitors are to have a prepared, polished juggling routine, running within the time limits of the competition, with few drops. Competitors are expected to behave in a professional manner, and to inform the Championships Director beforehand of any unusual needs or problems with a routine. Professional practices include knowing the rules; abiding by the schedule; being on time for all registrations, preliminaries, rehearsals, performances and awards ceremonies; respecting the rights of others; and conducting oneself in a gracious manner.

DATES AND TIMES

The IJA Stage Championships are held every year during the annual IJA Festival. Tickets for the final round of competitions will be sold to the public. Deadlines and requirements for preliminary registration can be found on the IJA website.

EVENTS

The IJA Stage Championships consist of three events:

1. Individuals - solo juggling routines
2. Teams - routines involving two or more jugglers
3. Juniors - solo juggling routines for jugglers under 18 years old.

WHO MAY ENTER

IJA competitions are open to all, regardless of race, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, age, etc. The only exception is that entrants in the Juniors event must be under 18 years old the day of the competition, and have neither qualified for nor competed in the Individuals event in past IJA Stage Championships. No one may enter both the Individuals and Juniors events in the same year. No one person may enter as a member of more than one team in any year. Competing in the same year both as a member of a team and as a Junior or Individuals entrant is allowable. All entrants must be IJA members at the time of competition.

REGISTRATION

Registration deadlines will be approximately four to six weeks prior to the festival and will be included in the announcement of other festival details. All registration information and forms will be posted on the Stage Championships page of the IJA website.

QUERIES

All concerns and questions of consequence regarding a specific preliminary or finals event should be addressed to the Championships Director or to an individual designated by the Championships Director, and not to an individual judge or other IJA staff person. Decisions of the Championships Director in all matters regarding the Stage Championships are final.

RULE VIOLATIONS

In the event that any rule listed here is violated, either by a competitor or by anyone else associated with the competitions, the appropriate action to be taken will be decided exclusively by the Championships Director. The Championships Director will also decide the outcome of any dispute that may arise concerning either interpretation of these rules or circumstances not covered by these rules. Decisions of the Championships Director in these matters are final.

DISQUALIFICATION

A competitor may be disqualified by the Championships Director if they fail to abide by these rules, perform in a manner that jeopardizes the safety of the audience or staff, compromises the professional standards of the championships, or performs material that is judged to be dangerous, obscene, profane, overtly political, or offensive to a typical family audience. If the act were a movie, it should be rated "G." Harassment of other competitors or any other behavior that is rude, inappropriate, or that materially affects the operation of the competitions in an adverse way will be considered grounds for disqualification. The IJA Board of Directors will review all incidents of this nature, and may recommend further disciplinary action.

CHAMPIONSHIPS STAFF

The Championships Director will choose all staff for the competition. The staff needed is as follows:

- 5 Preliminary Judges
- 7 Finals Judges
- 2 Timer/Counters
- 1 Scorekeeper
- Stage Hands - number to be determined by the Championships Director.

The Championships Director may appoint additional staff if needed.

JUDGES

A Stage Championships preliminary judge cannot serve as a finals judge for that same year's Stage Championships. The judges should come from a variety of backgrounds

within the entertainment industry. It is not important that judges know all the intricacies of juggling, but they need to understand the value of and have an appreciation for the entertainment of juggling. Judges may include, but are not limited to:

- hobbyist jugglers
- professional jugglers
- former juggling competitors
- entertainment establishment owners
- circus owners
- circus / variety arts entertainers
- juggling prop makers
- local patrons of the arts
- local university theater professors
- booking agents
- talent scouts
- theater producers / directors
- other entertainers associated with jugglers (e.g., musicians, choreographers, costumers, etc.)

As much as possible, the Championships Director should attempt to diversify the panel of finals judges. Judge selection will be made public before the deadline for preliminary entries, and will include judges' names and credentials.

Judges should not have a close personal relationship with the competitors where he or she would not be able to fairly assess the performance of the competitor. If a judge or competitor feels there is a problem regarding this issue, then it is the individual's responsibility to bring it to the attention of the Championships Director.

All judges will receive a compilation of past competition acts that will be used to train judges to think about how the system works and to learn how to score different acts.

GUIDELINES FOR JUDGES

- A judge's primary role is to provide a fair and objective appraisal of the performance viewed.
- Judges are responsible for reading and understanding all rules before the competition.
- Scores should be completely independent from other judges. Judges should not talk to each other during the competition.
- Judges you are to score based on what is seen at the time of judging, not on what they think the competitor is capable of or on what the judges have otherwise observed the competitor doing.
- Judges are to look for both good and bad qualities.
- A judge should never criticize another judge or their scores.
- All scores and comments should be recorded legibly.

- Judges should be honest with themselves and not worry about what others may think or decide. Each judge's opinion is valid.
- Judges should train themselves to be consistent. All competitors should receive the same appreciation and consideration. Marking a score differently than what one really feels (too high or too low) could unfairly affect the final outcome for another competitor.
- It is important to look at the whole and not overemphasize one point so that it becomes the prime issue.
- Judges should make themselves available to competitors after the competition for further explanation and suggestions for improvement.
- Preliminary Judges must keep their opinions and scores confidential until after the competition is complete.
- All concerns and questions of should be addressed to the Championships Director or to an individual designated by the Championships Director.

PRELIMINARY COMPETITION

The maximum number of competitors will be predetermined based on the time and resources of the festival. The Championships Director, in conjunction with the Festival Director, will determine this number before the entry deadline.

The same judging system used in preliminary judging will be used in final competitions. The only difference is that five judges will be used for preliminaries, and seven for the final competition. The top and bottom scores will not be counted. The middle three will be averaged together.

The Championships Director will send all videos of acts to the five preliminary judges. Each judge will evaluate all the acts independently. They will have ten days to complete this process. The preliminary judges will then return all videos and scores to the director, keeping a record of their own scores and keeping their scores and opinions confidential. The Championships Director will then compile scores and the predetermined number of competitors will be chosen based on the top combined scores. The director will then send a letter or email to each of the preliminary judges showing all scores and computations. Once all judges have confirmed the accuracy of their scores, all entrants will be notified of who qualified for the final competition. Acts who do not make the final competition will receive a copy of their scores, as well as their overall placement in the field, cut-off score, and preliminary judges' comments. All results and comments for the entrants who qualify for the final competition will be withheld until after the competition is complete.

Position in the show will be based on the entrants' final scores of their preliminary acts. The competitor with the highest score goes last, second highest goes next to last, and so on.

Upon request, all preliminary videos may be returned to the competitors at the festival or destroyed.

REHEARSAL FOR FINALS

Competitors who advance to the finals must attend rehearsal to review procedures and inspect the performance space. Competitors must make their technical requirements, such as sound and light cues, known to the Championships Director, who will be responsible for communication with the Stage Championships Producer and Stage Manager. The competitor is solely responsible for any errors resulting from a lack of communication with the Championships Director or staff, including errors that interfere with the competitor's performance and/or adversely affect the judging of that competitor's routine. The Championships Director will allow each act an equal amount of time for rehearsal. It is the responsibility of the competitors who qualify for the final competition to know when and where the rehearsals will take place. Competitors who miss their rehearsal time may be disqualified from the championships.

BACKSTAGE ACCESS

Due to insurance requirements and to ensure professionalism, NO ONE is allowed backstage during technical set up, tech rehearsal, dress rehearsal, final performance, or post performance except competitors, their assistants, Championships Staff, production staff, site technicians, performers, and other authorized personnel. Security passes are required for everyone permitted backstage.

ASSISTANTS

A competitor is permitted to have up to two prop assistants. If a competitor requires prop assistants and cannot provide their own, they must inform the Stage Manager who will assign them technicians. Prop assistants are required to be physically involved with the competitor's act. Competitors needing more than two prop assistants may ask the Championships Director for permission.

MUSIC AND SOUND EFFECTS

Music requirements are available on the Championships website. Compliance with the IJA Music Policy is the responsibility of the competitor.

TIME LIMITS

All Juniors performances are to have a maximum time limit of 7 minutes. All Individuals and Teams performances have a maximum time limit of 8 minutes.

TECHNICAL RESTRICTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

To reduce delays in the competitions and minimize the time between performances, all acts must require less than two minutes for set up, starting from an empty stage. To completely clear the stage after the act is complete should require no more than two minutes. Any unique entrances, exits, props, intentional drops, etc., must be discussed with the Championships Director before the competitions begin. Providing special effects, such as strobe, fog, explosives, fluorescents, black lights, etc., is the responsibility of the competitor. All special effects must be cleared with the Championships Director and the facility stage manager.

The IJA will endeavor to provide a high quality stage for the competitions, but no explicit guarantees are made concerning characteristics of the performance area. For example, competitors are advised to provide their own "bounce slabs" for technical bounce tricks, and to be prepared to cope with possibly adverse lighting conditions or uneven ceiling heights.

No object may be intentionally juggled in an unsafe manner or thrown or kicked off the front of the stage. Acts involving fire in any way are not permitted. Acts that damage the performance area in any way are not permitted. Judges, audience members, and all backstage personnel, except those directly involved with an act, may not engage in any behavior that could materially affect an act, other than applauding or otherwise expressing approval in appropriate ways at appropriate times. The Championships Director reserves the right to veto any prop or portion of a routine that may jeopardize the professionalism of the championships or the safety or property of the audience, the championships personnel, or the theater.

JUDGING SYSTEM

The scoring system will be the same for all stage competitions. The Teams competition has the following additional rules:

- (a) Team acts should involve significant juggling and performance interactions among the team members. Significant interactions would include any kind of passing or exchanging of props among members, as well as simultaneous or coordinated juggling among members.
- (b) All team members should make a significant contribution to the act.

If these Teams rules are not followed, the judges' scores should reflect negatively.

Each competition is held separately. For instance, if Teams and Individuals were on the same night, one competition would run in the first half and the other would run in the second half.

Every finals act is required to be as similar as possible to its preliminary act. A competitor who intentionally changes his or her act in a significant way from the preliminary act may be disqualified.

A scale of 0 to 5 is used for judging all competitors:

- 0 = No Achievement or Attempt
- 1 = Very Poor
- 2 = Poor
- 3 = Good
- 4 = Very Good
- 5 = Perfect/Flawless

Decimals to one place are permitted to show more detailed differentiation (e.g., 3.3 or 3.7)

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The following categories are used to determine the final score of each performance. The multiplication factor determines the weight of each category.

Category	Multiplication Factor	Total Possible Points
Execution	4	20
Entertainment Level	4	20
Degree of Difficulty	3	15
Theatrical Framing	3	15
Creativity	3	15
Element of Risk	2	10
Stage Presence*	1	5
Total	20	100

*The Stage Presence category is not included in preliminary judging. Each competitor will automatically be rewarded with five points for Stage Presence in the preliminary competition.

The two timer/counters will count the drop events in each performance. A drop event occurs when a competitor loses control of one or more props and it falls to the floor. Regardless of how many props hit the floor, it is counted as a single drop event.

The two timer/counters' drop event numbers are averaged together to get the drop count. Prior to scoring, the timer/counters give the drop count to the judges for consideration. It is up to the judges to determine how drops affect scores.

Each judge is required to score independently. Judges record their scores and write comments for each act immediately after the completion of the act. All scores are to be turned over to the scorekeeper before the next act begins.

The timer/counters also keep track of the time that each act takes to complete. If the competitor goes over time, the following points will automatically be deducted from the final score. This is a systematic deduction and is not within the responsibilities or control of the judges.

Seconds Over Time	Points Deducted from Final Score
> 0 and ≤ 10	1
> 10 and ≤ 20	4
> 20 and ≤ 30	9
> 30 and ≤ 40	16
> 40 and ≤ 50	25
> 50 and ≤ 60	36
> 60	Automatic disqualification

The lowest and highest scores in each category are thrown out. The remaining five scores are averaged together. This would be the final categorical score.

The scorekeeper enters each score into a spreadsheet during the competition for expediency. Each final categorical score is multiplied by its corresponding factor to figure points. All points are added up to total the final score. The competitor with the highest score wins first place, the competitor with the second highest score wins second place, and so on.

In the event of a tie, the final categorical scores for the competitors with equal scores will be recalculated with all the judges' scores, including the highest and lowest scores that were previously omitted. This recalculation will determine who wins the tie. If the scores are still tied after the recalculation, a tie will be declared and two medals will be awarded for the same place. If there is a medal for the next place, it will not be awarded (e.g. a tie for second place calls for two silver medals, but no bronze medal).

One of the five preliminary judges is needed to be present at the competition to confirm that the preliminary act is very closely the same as the final act. If the preliminary judge feels the competitor has intentionally changed his act between the preliminaries and the finals, the Championships Director will be notified. It is the decision of the Championships Director as to whether or not the competitor will be disqualified. The Championships Director will not have the opportunity to make the decision unless the preliminary judge raises the issue.

Following the competition, the judges may be required to leave the theater to confirm all of their scores are correct. This time is to be used to confirm scores written on judges' scorecards. This time is not to be used to discuss, debate, or change scores. Once all scores are confirmed, the winner will be ready to be announced.

All scores with complete breakdowns may be posted at the festival and on the Stage Championships web page. All competitors will receive a copy of the scorecards for their championship and preliminary acts.

EXPLANATION OF CATEGORIES

Execution: Focuses on how well the competitor performs the routine. High marks should be awarded for completion of tricks without hesitation or difficulty. Competitor's form and technique should be considered.

Entertainment Level: Overall appeal of the act.

Degree of Difficulty: Difficulty of tricks performed, as well as the inherent difficulty of the prop used. Degree of difficulty is determined by the type and number of objects juggled; the speed of the juggling; the types of throws, catches, balances, or other object manipulations; the complexity of combinations of juggling tricks; and the transitions between juggling tricks.

Theatrical Framing: May include but is not limited to overall routine, costume, music, speech, comedy, use of props, and staging. High marks will be awarded for successfully

using theatrical elements to enhance an act. Low marks should be given if theatrical elements are detrimental or distracting to the act.

Creativity: New tricks, props, approaches to performing, and presentations that are performed well will receive high marks.

Element of Risk: The chance of a drop or mistake, and the difficulty of cleanly recovering from a drop or mistake.

Stage Presence: Ability to command an audience with confidence and an impressive style or manner.

AWARDS AND PRIZES

Cash awards are listed on the IJA Stage Championships web page. Winners will also be presented with medals, and the name of the Individuals Gold medal winner will be inscribed on the IJA Stage Championships trophy.

First place: gold medal

Second place: silver medal

Third place: bronze medal

The prize money for teams is to be shared among the team members. For example, a prize of \$500 for a team act means that the team receives \$500, not that each team member receives \$500.

If only two entrants qualify for the finals in any event, then no third place medal or third place prize money will be awarded in that event. If only one entrant qualifies for the finals in any event, then that entrant wins the gold medal and associated prizes, and no second or third place medals and prizes are awarded in that event.