



## The Central Delaware Blues Society

A non-profit arts organization \* Magnolia, Delaware

*You don't play the Blues, you let it out!*

PO Box 155, Magnolia DE 19962 \* [www.centraldelawareblues.com](http://www.centraldelawareblues.com)

### Local Guidelines for The International Blues Challenge (EFFECTIVE 6/2023)

The International Blues Challenge represents the worldwide search for those Blues Bands and Solo/Duo Blues Acts ready to perform on the international stage, yet just needing that extra big break. Each Affiliate of The Blues Foundation has the right to send a band and a solo/duo act to represent its organization at the IBC. Affiliated organizations are required to stage an open, judged, live music competition during the year leading up to the IBC, with the winner of that event representing the organization in the International Blues Challenge held annually in Memphis, TN along historic Beale Street. While Affiliated Organizations are encouraged to follow The Blues Foundation's structure and rules during their local challenges, each organization is free to structure its preliminary rounds as it sees fit, as long as a true challenge between multiple acts takes place resulting in a single band and/or solo/duo act being identified. CDBS has developed a complete set of guidelines for its Local/Regional IBC Challenge, and these guidelines and any updates or additions, are made available to its members and the public via the CDBS Website, social media, newsletters and email blasts, and each entrant to the competition will be provided with a copy of the guidelines upon application to compete. Please see the [BLUES FOUNDATION IBC WEBSITE](#) for complete information on The International Blues Challenge.

#### These Guidelines include:

- The CDBS IBC Band Entry Form and Agreement
- The CDBS IBC Score Sheet for Bands
- The CDBS IBC Score Sheet for Self-Produced CDs
- The Blues Foundation IBC Affiliate Rules and Guidelines
- Judges' Disclosure form

### ***CDBS IBC Guidelines for Bands***

#### **Schedule**

- Publication of CDBS IBC Guidelines, as revised, and CDBS IBC Competition date: **June 2023**
- CDBS IBC Competition Date and location: **Sunday, August 13, 2023, at the Delaware Veterans Post 2, 720 Pear Street, Dover, DE 19904.**
- Application Deadline for Acts: **August 7, 2023**
- Deadline for submission of Acts to The Blues Foundation: As published on their website.

## Eligibility

- This competition is open to Blues Acts.
- Acts must submit the IBC Entry Form and Agreement, along with all required items listed on the Entry Form, by the published deadline. The Entry Form package can be postmarked up until the day of the published deadline.
- At least one member of the Act must be a member of the CDBS prior to submitting an Entry Form package.
- Acts must never have received a Blues Music Award Nomination.
- Acts must be located within a 150-mile radius of the CDBS base of Dover, DE.
- Acts are limited to two (2) consecutive appearances at the IBC in Memphis and must then sit out at least one (1) year before being eligible to compete again. An act under the same name will not be allowed to compete for three (3) consecutive years. No Act may compete more than a total of three (3) years.
- Acts may be invited to participate in the local challenge, but may not be pre-selected, and must compete in open competition.
- An individual may not compete in more than one act in any capacity.
- No other entry restrictions apply. This means that management contracts, booking agent contracts, recording contracts, performance contracts (even those that include regular television or radio broadcasts) and nationally distributed recordings have no bearing on eligibility.

## Submission Requirements (See also the CDBS IBC Entry Form and Agreement)

- A completed, signed “Central Delaware Blues Society International Blues Challenge (IBC) Entry Form” with confirmation that at least one of the band members being in good standing as a member of the Central Delaware Blues Society. All entries must be postmarked by midnight of the deadline date of August 7, 2023.
- \$50.00 band entry fee. Checks or money orders may be made out to Central Delaware Blues Society.
- The official band name and a short band bio (200 words or less)
- A digital color or B&W band photo with a 300-dpi resolution. This may be an Internet link.
- A link to the band’s website or Facebook page.
- A stage plot to assist our sound crew in making a quick and correct setup for your requirements.

Failure to send all the required items may forfeit eligibility.

## Scoring (See also the CDBS IBC Score Sheet)

The Blues Foundation has established a set of criteria by which all acts are evaluated throughout the five days of the IBC. Experience has shown that Acts that have competed under the IBC Rules and Scoring Criteria in their local challenge are better prepared for competing in the IBC. Attached is the local CDBS IBC score sheet utilizing the International Blues Challenge criteria:

1. **Blues Content:** Everyone has his or her own interpretation of what is and is not Blues. Thus, any given judge panel will include members with varying opinions of Blues, covering the spectrum of Blues whenever possible, from the most traditional to soul/blues and rock/blues. Bands should

pick material carefully. At the Memphis semi-finals and finals, the judges are Blues professionals, not a bar crowd, and are likely to be unimpressed with song selections that are uninspired. (Call this - with all due respect to Sir Mack Rice and Wilson Pickett - the “no Mustang Sally rule.”)

2. **Vocals:** The act's vocal skills
3. **Talent:** This category is self-explanatory - the act’s overall vocal and/or instrumental skills.
4. **Originality:** Original work is encouraged. Cover tunes are allowed but playing the recorded rendition lick by lick is discouraged; will not be looked upon favorably by the judges; and will be reflected in scoring.
5. **Stage Presence:** Over the years, the quality of talent has risen so dramatically that the IBC no longer considers this an “amateur” competition. Most contestants have performed on stage enough to know that they are not simply playing music but putting on a show. This category rates how “sellable” a band may be.

### **Weighted Scoring**

To reflect the relative importance of each category in the success of a band, a band’s score in each category is weighted. Raw scores for Blues Content are multiplied by four. Talent is multiplied by three. And Originality and Stage Presence are multiplied by two. The total in each category represents the Weighted Score for that category. Total possible weighted score is 130 per judge. The band with the highest sum of Net Weighted Scores is the winner.

***In keeping with the Blues Foundation IBC Guidelines, participants may request and receive copies of individual score sheets for their act, plus a composite score sheet with the aggregate total of all scores for each category.***

### **Penalty points**

These items demonstrate professionalism and seriousness about the competition. An act will be penalized one point from its Total Weighted Score for each occurrence of each the following:

- Missing the online application deadline, or not completing the online application completely or accurately by the deadline.
- Act is not checked in at the “Band Check-In” counter on or before the final check-in time of 12:30 on the day of the event. All bands must be checked in by 12:30, no exceptions permitted.
- Failing to acknowledge that a song is a cover and/or not giving credit to its originator.
- Every ten seconds that an Act runs overtime during a competition performance.
- Finishing 3 or more minutes before the allotted performance time expires.
- Act is not ready to perform at proper time. In the event that a band scheduled to play in a specific slot is not able to perform for whatever reason, the Central Delaware Blues Society will have the authority to deduct a point from the band’s overall weighted score for that competition. The next band scheduled to play will be asked to step into that slot. Should that band, for whatever reason,

not be able to perform when asked, the CDBS Competition Coordinator (CC) has the authority to deduct a point from that band, and so on. With that in mind, The Central Delaware Blues Society strongly suggests that after a band has met with their CC for their required check-in, they stay in the venue and are available to perform at the CC's direction, regardless of which slot they are scheduled to play. Bands that have missed their designated slot will be allowed to perform later but will still suffer the loss of a point on the weighted score.

## **Judges**

The IBC in Memphis is judged by blues professionals from across the world who have years of experience in listening to, producing, and creating blues music. The CDBS makes every effort to secure the most experienced, knowledgeable, and impartial judges possible from in and around the region. There will be a minimum of three (3) judges and no more than (5) judges for each of the Band, Solo/Duo, and Self-Produced CD Challenges. Where possible, the same judges will be used for each competition. Judges will ***remain anonymous and must sign a disclosure form*** (attached to these guidelines) indicating their credentials for being able to judge a Blues competition, and their relationship to the competitors if applicable. Judges with obvious conflicts of interest such as personal or professional relationships with any act will not be seated to evaluate any of the competitors. Judges are not compensated for their services but may be given a token of appreciation for their time. CDBS aims to keep a list of qualified judges on hand in the event an alternate judge is needed. Judges will be made aware of the scoring criteria in advance. The acts will be evaluated according to the scoring criteria, not compared with the other competing acts.

## **Minimum Number of Acts Required at the Local Level**

The minimum number of Acts required at the local level is **TWO (2)**.

## **The Day of the Competition**

All Acts must check in with the IBC Coordinator no later than 12:30 PM on the day of the competition. The winning Act will be announced at the end of the competition. Each band will have thirty (30) minutes to perform their selections. To assist The Act in their timekeeping, a PC displaying your remaining time will be visible to all band members. It is the Act's responsibility not to run overtime. There is a 15-minute changeover period between sets. (The oncoming band has ten minutes to set up and the outgoing band has five minutes to tear down.) If a band exceeds the 30-minute performance time or the 15-minute changeover a penalty point is assigned for each 10 seconds exceeded. Please see Penalty Points section for more details.

The winning band wins (at least) \$1500.00 to be used toward their trip to Memphis in January, to be paid at the IBC Fundraiser held prior to the IBC. The winning band **MUST** register with the IBC by the deadline published by The Blues Foundation and attend and compete in the IBC in Memphis to receive the award for winning.

## ***CDBS IBC Guidelines for Best Self-Produced CD***

The Blues Foundation established an award for the Best Self-Produced CD, given out at the International Blues Challenge, as part of their mission to celebrate blues recording and to ensure the future of this uniquely American art form and to recognize excellence in independent Blues recordings. As part of its own mission, CDBS has established the following guidelines for its local Self-Produced CD Competition.

### **Schedule**

- Publication of CDBS IBC Guidelines, as revised: **June 2023**
- Submission Deadline for Self-Produced CDs: **Tuesday, October 10, 2023**
- Submission Deadline for Self-Produced CDs to The Blues Foundation: As published on their website.

**PLEASE NOTE: The 2023 CDBS IBC CD competition will be held separately from the band competition and winners will be announced within two weeks of the submission deadline. Artists will be notified directly and then an announcement will be made on the CDBS website and social media pages.**

### **Eligibility**

- This competition is open to Self-Produced Blues CDs.
- Only CDs released between **November 1, 2022, and October 31, 2023**, are eligible for consideration as the 2024 Best Self-Produced CD.
- At least one member of the Performer must be a member of the CDBS prior to making application.
- Performers on the CD must never have received a Blues Music Award Nomination. A CD issued in the name of an otherwise eligible performer which also includes the contributions of a Blues Music Award nominee may be ineligible, depending on the extent of the contribution. Please contact The Blues Foundation directly to confirm eligibility.
- Performers must be located within a 150-mile radius of the CDBS base of Dover, DE.
- Performers may compete in the IBC a maximum of three times and may not participate in more than 2 consecutive years.
- Compilations are not eligible.
- An individual may not compete in more than one act in any capacity.
- No other entry restrictions apply. This means that management contracts, booking agent contracts, recording contracts, performance contracts (even those that include regular television or radio broadcast) and nationally distributed recordings have no bearing on eligibility

### **Submission Requirements**

Central Delaware Blues Society submits one Self-Produced CD to the Blues Foundation for judging annually. Applicants are asked to mail five (5) copies of the Self-Produced CD to CDBS with a written request (no form required) in its official marketing packaging to:

**Central Delaware Blues Society**

**P.O. Box 155**

**Magnolia, DE 19962**

**Scoring (See also the CDBS IBC Score Sheet)**

Experience has shown that Acts that have competed under the IBC Rules and Scoring Criteria in their local challenge are better prepared for competing in the IBC. Attached is the local CDBS IBC score sheet utilizing the International Blues Challenge criteria, with the addition of the category for Originality. CDBS added this criterion in the belief that Originality should be considered specifically, where the Blues Foundation incorporates this item in its overall scoring process. Each category is defined and Scoring and Weighting is explained. In keeping with the Blues Foundation IBC Guidelines, participants may request and receive copies of individual score sheets for their act, plus a composite score sheet with the aggregate total of all scores for each category.

The criteria are in order of importance. A 1 to 10 score rating where 1 is lowest (poor) and 10 is best is utilized.

- (1) Blues Content (is this a Blues Music recording)
- (2) Musical Performance (Musicianship)
- (3) Audio Quality of the Presentation (Production Values, Levels)
- (4) Cover Art and Design (Professional Packaging, Ready for the rack at your music outlet?)
- (5) Credits and Liner Information. (Informative, Professional)

### **Weighted Scoring**

To reflect the relative importance of each category in the success of a band, a band's score in each category is weighted. Raw scores for Blues Content are multiplied by five. Musical Performance, Originality and Audio Quality are each multiplied by four. Cover/Art Design is multiplied by three, and Credits/Liner is multiplied by 2. The total in each category represents the Weighted Score for that category. Total possible weighted score is 220 per judge. The band with the highest sum of Net Weighted Scores is the winner.

### **Judges**

The IBC in Memphis is judged by blues professionals from across the world who have years of experience in listening to, producing, and creating blues music. The CDBS makes every effort to secure the most experienced, knowledgeable, and impartial judges possible from in and around the region. There will be a minimum of three (3) judges and no more than (5) judges for each of the Band, Solo/Duo, and Self-Produced CD Challenges. Where possible, the same judges will be used for each competition. Judges will remain anonymous and must sign a disclosure form (attached to these guidelines) indicating their credentials for being able to judge a Blues competition, and their relationship to the competitors if applicable. Judges with obvious conflicts of interest such as personal or professional relationships with any act will not be seated to evaluate any of the competitors. Judges are not compensated for their services but may be given a token of appreciation for their time. CDBS aims to keep a list of qualified judges on hand in the event an alternate judge is needed. Judges will be made aware of the scoring criteria in advance. The acts will be evaluated according to the scoring criteria, not compared with the other competing CDs.

### **Minimum Number of CDs Required at the Local Level**

There is no minimum number of CDs required for holding a CD competition.