



# **North Carolina Taxidermist Association**

## **INFORMATION & OFFICIAL RULES**

## **NCTA COMPETITION DIVISIONS**

COMPETITION ENTRY FEE: \$25 per entry

COLLECTIVE ARTIST DIVISION: \$50 per entry

### **COMMERCIAL DIVISION**

The mounts will be judged from a distance and the judge will be looking for a good, sound commercial work. There will be multiple, first, second, and third-place ribbons. The entry fee is the same as the other divisions. You may enter a mount in any category but after you receive two 1st place ribbons in an individual category you have to move on to the Professional Division. You will NOT receive a score sheet.

### **YOUTH DIVISION**

No entry fee with a registered adult. This includes any youth 12 years old or younger.

### **AMATEUR DIVISION**

This division is for someone just starting to compete. You are competing against a score sheet, not against another competitor.

90-100 = 1st place 80-89 = 2nd place 70-79 = 3rd place

### **PROFESSIONAL DIVISION**

This division is for someone who has experience but still wants to learn. You are competing against a score sheet, not against other competitors.

90-100 = 1st place 80-89 = 2nd place 70-79 = 3rd place

### **MASTERS DIVISION**

You can enter the Master's Division of your own choosing, but if you have an Award of Excellence in any category or have taken a mount to a higher competition (NTA or World) and have won 1st place, you have to enter into the Master's Division. If you have two mounts in the same category you must enter them into the same division (for example, two shoulder mount whitetails, you cannot enter one into Professional and one into Masters, you have to enter both into one or the other). State Champions will come from this division in each category if there is a mount score 90 or above. Masters Division will be divided into all categories same as Professional and Amateur.

90-100 = 1st place 80-89 = 2nd place 70-79 = 3rd place

### **COLLECTIVE ARTIST DIVISION**

This division has been set up for those taxidermists who want to combine their skills on a certain All taxidermists, Amateur through Masters may compete on a certain piece or pieces. Pieces will

be judged for artistic composition by the judges. Scores will be combined by the number of animals and then divided by that number to determine a final score. Three-ribbon elimination, no multiple ribbons. Scores do not count for points toward your Award of Excellence

## **North Carolina Taxidermists Association**

### **Competition & Convention Rules**

To be eligible, competitors must be NCTA members in good standing (along with VA and SC current members based on reciprocal agreement), and registered for the convention in order to compete.

Any competition pieces mounted in a workshop or competitors assisting other competitors with competition pieces are ineligible to compete in any category other than collective artistry or Challenge of the Art. If the competitor is caught entering a workshop mount....consequences are....suspended for 1 year for 1<sup>st</sup> offense; 2<sup>nd</sup> offense banned from competing at NCTA shows. All entries must be completed from start to finish by the competitor only with no help. (i.e. All taxidermy procedures such as form preparation, skin preparation, sewing, installing of any artificial parts, all mounting procedures, and all finishing procedures must be done entirely by the individual competitor. Excluding tanning or purchasing of tanned skins.)

Unsportsmanlike conduct, excessive foul language, and excessive drunken behavior will not be tolerated and will result in you losing all awards and cash winnings.

All judging will be done behind closed doors and only competition committee members will be allowed in the competition room. The only times the competition room will be open to competitors will be listed in the show schedule.

The NCTA Competition Committee will resolve any questions arising from the NCTA competition and their decision will be final.

Anything judged "Fatal Flaw" will be given a score sheet, but no ribbons or awards will be given. Any mounts with offensive odors will be removed from the competition area and not judged. The NCTA Competition Committee reserves the right to refuse any entry that does not comply with the NCTA Competition Rules or is deemed to be inappropriate or detrimental to the image of taxidermy.

Any infraction of a NCTA competition rule will result in disqualification of the entry and forfeiture of any awards won by that entry. Registration and entry fees will not be refunded.

All competitors must sign a form releasing the NCTA from any liability for mounts entered in the competition. While the NCTA will provide security, everyone knows that accidents are possible and that competitors should purchase insurance if desired on their competition entries through their local insurance agent. The NCTA, its Officers,

Directors or Competition Committee shall not be responsible for any mounts entered in the competition under any circumstances.

Multiple ribbons are awarded in most categories. Any entry receiving 90% of a perfect score is awarded first place, 80% of a perfect score is second place, and 70% of a perfect score is third place. There is no honorable mention.

Half-life size entries will be assigned and compete in the Gamehead category; with exception of whitetail half-life size going into the Whitetail category.

If any entry contains more than one specimen (Example: a pair of wood ducks), an entry fee must be paid for each mount that will be judged. When judging a piece with multiple entries, each individual mount may win its own award. If only one entry fee is paid the competitor must designate which of the individual mounts they wish to have judged. This rule does not apply to entries in the Collective Artists or Challenge of the Art Divisions where an entry containing multiple specimens may be entered as a single piece and judged in its entirety.

At the time of entry, each competitor must identify the species of their mount and state whether it is a tanned skin, commercial manikin, or an altered commercial manikin and whether any reproductions, casts, artificial or freeze-dry parts (heads, bills, feet, mouths, and noses) were commercially purchased, made by the competitor, or a combination of both. The competitor must also specify whether the entry's habitat is to be judged or if the entry is competing for any other special awards. Bonus points may be awarded for made parts in all divisions.

Once you compete in a division, you cannot move back down to a lower division.

Entries in the name of a company are not allowed except in the Challenge of the Art of Taxidermy or Collective Artist Division.

Protected species need proper permits to place with their entry. In some cases, special permits are also required to cross into the U.S. or to cross state lines. The competitor is responsible for knowing and following all such laws pertaining to protected species.

Entries in cases must have removable top and sides for judging and must be removed by competitor before judging begins. Competitors are allowed to bring their own reference material for the judges to examine in correctly determining their scores. Photographs may be placed in an envelope next to the mount and marked "For Judge's Reference." The mount number should also be written on the envelope.

Any names or logos that may reveal the identity of the competitor must be omitted or covered securely.

Entries will only be accepted at the posted times and NO entries will be removed from the competition area before Saturday night after the completion of the banquet. Any entry not picked up by the posted deadline will be left unsecured and unattended.

No mount that has previously been in an NCTA Competition can be entered in an NCTA Competition again.

Any entry may be ineligible if in the opinion of the Competition Committee, too many of the judging criteria are hidden from view or are not included in the mount and it is not in conjunction with another mount that is judgeable. Example: Single wood duck head coming out of a hole in tree.

Habitat entries must be paid for separately and identified as such by the participant at the time of registration. Judges that score the accompanying specimen will judge the habitat if applicable.

There will be one NCTA judge for each category in the Professional and Masters Divisions. There will be a different NCTA judge for each category in Amateur, Youth, and Commercial Divisions. Their decision is final and they alone decide upon the score an entry receives. Each judge will score each entry separately on an approved NCTA score sheet. All scores will be recorded in the NCTA Competition scores notebook with the NCTA paper copy going to the participant.

Any conduct by the competitor that is deemed unsportsmanlike could result in disqualification and forfeiture of any and all NCTA awards. Unruly or disruptive behavior towards judges or show officials will not be tolerated and the individual will be asked to leave without refund and will be barred from future competitions. Any PROTESTS or CHALLENGES are charged a \$25 fee and must be made aware to the competition committee within 1 hour of showing of ribbons. If a competition or judging problem occurs that cannot be resolved by a consensus of the Competition Committee the problem will be elevated and resolved by a majority vote of the NCTA Board of Directors. Any such action taken by the Board shall be publicly disclosed and fully explained to the competitor.

Touching or moving of any mount without express permission of the competitor by anyone other than a Judge and/or the Competition Committee/staff is expressly forbidden and grounds for disqualification and removal from the NCTA Convention.

The Competition Committee will resolve any question concerning the category assignment. Their decision will be final. The above rules are a general overview of the competition rules. The NCTA reserves the right to review and amend these rules at any time deemed necessary.

## **CATEGORIES-**

Selected by which specimen constitutes the major portion of the entry:

Waterfowl

Birds

Fish

Reptile

Life-size Mammals

Gamehead

Whitetail

Original Art

**HABITATS:** Judging of an entry's habitat is optional and **requires an additional entry fee**. Competitors must identify habitat entries at the time of registration. Judges that score the accompanying specimen will also judge the habitat. Unnatural habitats will not receive a ribbon.

**Divisions:**

Masters, Professional, Amateur, Youth, Commercial

**ONCE YOU COMPETE IN A DIVISION (MASTERS, PROFESSIONAL, AMATEUR, OR YOUTH), YOU MAY NOT MOVE BACK DOWN TO A LOWER DIVISION.**

**MASTERS DIVISION ELIGIBILITY:** Open to all NCTA members that are registered for the convention

**CATEGORIES-**Selected by which specimen constitutes the major portion of the entry:

Waterfowl

Birds

Fish

Reptile

Life-size Mammals

Gamehead

Whitetail

Original Art

**JUDGING:** The Master's Division entries will be judged based on the judge's individual merit against a hypothetical "perfect score" rather than against other entries. Judging in this division will be judged exceptionally harder than Professional Division. Judging will be done with use of a flashlight and touching of the mount to check for mount is

anatomically correct in all areas. A score sheet will be provided to comthe petitor, along with the opportunity for the competitor to receive a critique from the judge.

**HABITATS:** In the Master's Division, judging of an entry's habitat is optional and requires an additional habitat entry fee. Competitors must identify habitat entries at the time of registration. Judges that score the accompanying specimen will also judge the habitat.

**AWARDS:** In each of the eight major categories, the Highest Numerical Score WITH a first-place ribbon shall earn the title "North Carolina State Champion". Multiple First, Second, and Third Place Ribbons will be awarded. Competitors are eligible for major awards, specialty awards and People's Choice Awards.

**PROFESSIONAL DIVISION ELIGIBILITY:** Open to all NCTA members that are registered for the convention, but have NOT yet received their Award of Excellence in the particular category they are competing in. Once you receive your Award of Excellence in a category, you must move up to the Masters Division in that category.

**CATEGORIES-**Selected by which specimen constitutes the major portion of the entry:

Waterfowl

Birds

Fish

Reptile

Life-size Mammals

Gamehead

Whitetail

Original Art

**JUDGING:** Judging will be done with use of flashlight and touching of mount to check for mount being anatomically correct in all areas. Score sheet will be provided to competitor, along with opportunity for competitor to receive a critique from the judge.

**HABITATS:** In the Professional Division, judging of an entry's habitat is optional and requires an additional habitat entry fee. Competitors must identify habitat entries at the time of registration. Judges that score the accompanying specimen will also judge the habitat.

**AWARDS:** Multiple First, Second, and Third Place Ribbons will be awarded. Competitors are eligible for Best of Show Professional Award and People's Choice Awards, along with some specialty awards.

**AMATEUR DIVISION:** This division is for beginning taxidermists who feel their skills have not developed enough to compete in the Professional Division. Judges will be more lenient in this division, with the primary emphasis on teaching competitors. Multiple first, second, and third place ribbons will be awarded. Persons entering this level should be more interested in learning than in winning awards. After 2 years in Amateur Division or if you win Best of Show Amateur you will have to move up to Professional Division. Exception: A child under the age of 18 years old may stay in the Amateur Division until they turn 18 OR win Best of Show Amateur, then they must move up to the Professional Division.

**CATEGORIES:**

Waterfowl

Birds

Fish

Reptile

Life-size Mammals

Gamehead

Whitetail

Original Art

**JUDGING:** Judging will be done with use of flashlight and touching of mount to check for mount being anatomically correct in all areas. Score sheet will be provided to competitor, along with opportunity for competitor to receive a critique from the judge.

**HABITATS:** In the Amateur Division, judging of an entry's habitat is optional and requires an additional habitat entry fee. Competitors must identify habitat entries at the time of registration. Judges that score the accompanying specimen will also judge the habitat.

**AWARDS:** Multiple First, Second, and Third Place Ribbons will be awarded. Competitors are eligible for Best Upcoming Amateur, Most Creative Amateur, Amateur Best of Show, and People's Choice Awards.

**YOUTH DIVISION ELIGIBILITY:** Limited to NCTA family member's children present at the convention 14 years of age and under (Ages 15 and up must compete in Amateur Division...and/or once/if the child wins the Youth Challenge Award, they must move up to Amateur Division). The parents/guardians must be registered members of the convention. There is no entry fee.



**CATEGORIES:** All categories that exist in the higher divisions are available for the Youth Division.

**JUDGING:** Youth judging will be done on an approved NCTA score sheet and consideration will be taken into account for the experience of those entering.

**HABITATS:** In the Youth Division, judging of an entry's habitat is optional and requires an additional habitat entry. Competitors must identify habitat entries at the time of registration NCTA.

**AWARDS:** Multiple First, Second, and Third Place Ribbons will be awarded. The entry selected by the judges collectively as the best mount in the Youth Division will win the Children's Challenge Award. All entries in this division are eligible for People's Choice Awards. Since scoring is more lenient entries in this category are not eligible for other major awards.

**ORIGINAL ART DIVISION ELIGIBILITY:** Open to all NCTA members that are registered for the convention.

**CATEGORIES:** Masters, Professional, Amateur, Youth

**Taxidermy Sculptures:** Not limited to manikins or sculptures made specifically for use in taxidermy. The sculptures may be in the form of clay, paper, foam, or some other medium.

**Bronzes or Castings-Limited** to sculptures which have been casted in bronze or some other medium to create a finished piece of art. These items could be bust, miniatures, or life-size.

**Carvings-Limited** to birds, fish, mammals, and reptiles which have been carved from wood or some other medium and finished. These could be busts, miniatures, or life-size.

**Paintings, pencils, pastels, charcoal, etc.-** Limit to flat art only.

**JUDGING:** Score sheet will be provided to competitor, along with opportunity for competitor to receive a critique from the judge.

**AWARDS –** Multiple First, Second, and Third Place Ribbons will be awarded in each division.

**CHALLENGE OF THE ART DIVISION ELIGIBILITY:** This is a judge's interpretation division open to all species collectively. It will be judged for aesthetics, not mechanics. Any species of a bird, fish, reptile, mammal, or a combination of parts thereof can be entered to be viewed and interpreted by the judges without the use of a flashlight. This division is considered a very creative division that allows all work to be judged equally. It

is open to all NCTA members. Entries may be executed by a single or multiple individuals. Company entries are allowed as long as these same rules are followed. This category includes for skull mounts, lamps, gun racks, bear claws, etc. (no points toward Award of Excellence). Any animal freeze-dried in its entirety will be placed in Challenge of the Art Category (velvet antlers and turkey heads will be allowed in their regular animal category).

**CATEGORIES:** It is an open category- First, Second, and Third place plaques awarded overall, no separate divisions (i.e. Masters, Professional, Amateur, Commercial, Youth).

**JUDGING:** Judges will select the winners based upon the overall merit of the entries. No score sheet.

**AWARDS:** A maximum of one First, Second, and Third place plaque will be awarded. Judges Choice.

**COLLECTIVE ARTISTS DIVISION ELIGIBILITY:** This division is for competition entries worked on by more than one taxidermist; all competitors must be identified. Entry requires an additional entry fee. Award of Excellence points will not be credited to any competitor.

**HABITATS:** In the Collective Artists Division, judging of an entry's habitat is optional and requires an additional habitat entry fee. Competitors must identify habitat entries at the time of registration. Judges that score the accompanying specimen will also judge the habitat.

**CATEGORIES:** It is an open category- no separate divisions (i.e. Masters, Professional, Amateur, Commercial, and Youth).

**JUDGING:** Winners are selected by the Judges Choice. Entries are judged from a distance, with no score sheet.

**AWARDS:** A maximum of one First, Second, and Third place will be awarded overall in the Collective Artist Division based on the highest numerical scores. First, Second, and Third place medallions will be awarded. Collective Artists Division entries are not eligible for the "North Carolina State Champion." No points awarded for Certification and/or Award of Excellence.

### **COMMERCIAL DIVISION ELIGIBILITY:**

Open to all NCTA members attending the Convention.

**CATEGORIES:**

Waterfowl

Birds

Fish

Reptile

Life-size Mammals

Gamehead

Whitetail

Original Art

JUDGING: This is a judge's interpretation division open to all species. It will be judged for aesthetics, not mechanics. Competitors should strive to present life-like entries. Any species of a bird, fish, reptile, mammal, or combination can be mounted in a display and entered to be viewed and interpreted by the judges. Judges will judge from 5 feet away. No score sheets.

AWARDS: Multiple First, Second, and Third Place Ribbons will be awarded. No score sheet, no critique, not eligible for any awards or titles. No points awarded for Certification and Award of Excellence.

**North Carolina Taxidermist's  
Association**  
**Award of Excellence Qualifications**

**21 Points Total**

- 1 Blue Ribbon at NC Show
- Blue Ribbon 3 Points
- Red Ribbon 2 Points
- White Ribbon 1 Point

**Masters Qualification**  
**3 Award of Excellence**

Waterfowl

Birds

Original Art and other

Whitetail

Game Heads

Life-size

Fish

Reptiles

Habitat (this category does not count  
toward your Masters)

**NCTA Master Taxidermists**

(Listed in alphabetical order)

- Chris Barnhardt – 2004
- Martin Bess
- Bruce Bolick
- John Cranford – 2011 (Birds, Fish, Reptiles)
- Bob Driver
- Mike Gillis (Whitetail Deer, Life-Size, Reptiles, Game Heads)
- Tommy Hall – 2004 (Whitetail Deer)
- Kevin Hastings
- Justin Hinson
- Chris Horne
- William Lloyd Johnson III – 2006
- Bradley Morgan – 2017
- Page Nethercutt – 2005 (Game Heads, Birds, Small Game)
- Donna Naughton – 2017
- Dennis Smith
- David Strickland
- Darlene Tarlton – 2011
- Steve Tugwell – 2017 (Whitetail Deer, Game Heads)

## **North Carolina Taxidermist Association (N.C.T.A) Certification Program**

On August 2, 2000, the N.C.T.A Certification Program was voted on and approved by the general membership. The qualifications for certification in this program are among the most demanding in the country. The standards were set high but attainable by any member who puts forth the hard work and effort to be the best in their field or fields of choice.



### **Certification Qualifications**

Must be a member in good standing of the NCTA and meet one of the three following qualifications in professional competition.

.

One 1st Place blue ribbon and best of category

One 1st Place blue ribbon plus 5 other points

Two 2nd place red ribbons plus 5 other points

.

### **Point System**

1st place = 4 points

2nd Place = 3 points

3rd Place = 2 points

**These Qualifications must be met in each category being applied ONLY for NCTA members who have met all qualifications can display the following NCTA Certified Taxidermist Logo.**

NC Certified Taxidermist Dues are \$50.00 for first-time Taxidermists  
\$25 for Renewals

Please make checks payable to:  
NC Certified Taxidermist