

Guard Classification Guide

Southern Association for Performance Arts



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Class	Age of Members	Affiliation	Class Criteria	Judging Sheet
Cadet	Middle School or Lower	Members must attend schools that are feeder programs to the same High School	This class is a teaching class designed for the development of beginner level skills and fundamentals. Design should be limited to those aspects. Simple movement and equipment (flag, rifle, sabre) is the basis for this class. A floor cover is optional. Props are not to be used. In order to compete at circuit championships, units must compete in at least one of the 2 nd or 3 rd weeks of competition and attend one additional competition. Promotion to Novice class will occur if units exceed the boundaries of this class. Performance time (minimum 3 minutes, maximum 4 minutes). Cadet Class units are not recommended to attend any WGI regional or national competition.	WGI Regional A Class
Novice	Middle school or Higher	Members must attend the same school or feeder program	This will serve as an entry level class for new, beginning programs that are not ready for the demands of Scholastic A, AA, or AAA. A unit may compete a maximum of two years in this classification. A unit can petition the review committee for permission to remain in the class after a two-year period. Equipment and movement will focus on the training and achievement of the simplest beginning skills. The purpose of this class is to help the performers grow in the elementary principles and efforts in handling equipment and movement. The use of additional props is acceptable (swing flags, etc.) within this class with a reminder to focus on full training with additional props/equipment. In the Ensemble Analysis caption, compositional qualities should include logic and presentation with good connections, and flow from one idea to the next. Obvious melodic line reflections will be the choice for most groups in reflecting musical structure. Focus on the correctness of the basics of composition. At pulse, in-step and consistent step off's and builds to new sets will be the priorities. In General Effect, design and performance skills will be at a beginning level. As beginners, single efforts and simple responsibilities will occur. The concept of layered skill will probably not exist. Shows will likely "set, move, and spin", presenting one skill at a time. Effect will be generated largely through precision and timing. Achievement of simple beginning skills is the focus of this class. In order to compete at circuit championships, units must attend the 1 st or 2 nd week of competition and at least 3 other competitions. Promotion to Scholastic Regional A Class will occur if units exceed boundaries of this class. Performance time (minimum 3 minutes, maximum 4 minutes). Novice Class units are not recommended to attend any WGI regional or national competition.	WGI Regional A Class
Scholastic Regional A	Middle school or Higher	Members must attend the same school or feeder program	This class is designed for units who are competitive but not quite ready for the demands of the A Class sheets. Equipment and movement will focus on the training and achievement of the basic skills. Tosses use a limited variety of release and catch points and typically take place from a stationary position. Weapons will usually toss no higher than triples. Dimensionality is limited and phrases are often very short (16 to 24 counts) with much built in recovery time. Movement is mostly demonstrated by moving from place to place with a good range of gestural qualities being demonstrated. There is usage of simple turns and leaps from performers occasionally exploring level changes around the body. Performers should demonstrate good examples of body awareness (posture, line, shape, weight) with very little change in dynamic qualities. Ensemble Analysis will display a beginning level of artistic effort that focuses on clear staging of the elements, logical progression of ideas (horizontal orchestration) and the basic use of the design elements. The triad is never completely used with the elements most often being presented singularly and occasionally presented two at time. In General Effect, the concept and intent should be clear, consistent and moderately developed. Ideas should move successfully from one to another and the intent of the concept is not totally dependent on the role of the performers. Performer role, character, and emotional development is evident but at a basic level with minimal changes. . In order to compete in circuit championships units must attend the 1 st or 2 nd week of competition and at least 3 other competitions. Promotion to Scholastic A class will occur if units exceed the boundaries of this class. Performance time (minimum 3 minutes, maximum 4 minutes). Time will have to be added to performance if promotion occurs Performance time (minimum 4 minutes, maximum 5 ½ minutes). Scholastic Regional A Class units are not recommended to attend any WGI regional or national competition.	WGI Regional A Class
Independent Regional A	High School	Members do not attend the same high school	This class is designed for units who may not have enough resources from one school to field a unit and are competitive but not quite ready for the demands of the A Class sheets. Equipment and movement will focus on the training and achievement of the basic skills. Tosses use a limited variety of release and catch points and typically take place from a stationary position. Weapons will usually toss no higher than triples. Dimensionality is limited and phrases are often very short (16 to 24 counts) with much built in recovery time. Movement is mostly demonstrated by moving from place to place with a good range of gestural qualities being demonstrated. There is usage of simple turns and leaps from performers occasionally exploring level changes around the body. Performers should demonstrate good examples of body awareness (posture, line, shape, weight) with very little change in dynamic qualities. Ensemble Analysis will display a beginning level of artistic effort that focuses on clear staging of the elements, logical progression of ideas (horizontal orchestration) and the basic use of the design elements. The triad is never completely used with the elements most often being presented singularly and occasionally presented two at time. In General Effect, the concept and intent should be clear, consistent and moderately developed. Ideas should move successfully from one to another and the intent of the concept is not totally dependent on the role of the performers. Performer role, character, and emotional development is evident but at a basic level with minimal changes. . In order to compete in circuit championships units must attend the 1 st or 2 nd week of competition and at least 3 other competitions. Promotion to Independent A Class will occur if units exceed the boundaries of this class. Performance time (minimum 3 minutes, maximum 4 minutes). Time will have to be added to performance if promotion occurs (minimum 4, maximum 5 ½). Independent Regional A class units may not attend any WGI regional or national competition.	WGI Regional A Class

Class	Age of Members	Affiliation	Class Criteria	Judging Sheet
Scholastic AAA	High School	Members must attend the same high school	This class is designed for a unit that has exceeded the criteria of Regional A, but are not ready either through individual performance or design for the demands of AA, A, Open, or World Class. Equipment and movement will still focus on the training and achievement of basic skills but with more variety than the Regional A units. Tosses will begin to display more variety of release and catch points with weapons usually tossing no higher than quads. There is more exploration of basic dimensionality of equipment and some layering efforts is beginning to occur. Phrase length is primarily short (16 to 24 counts) and recovery time is still apparent. In Movement, range of dynamic qualities is expanding. There is also expanded use of torso and level changes. There is more exploration of changes in weight, time, and space, and usage of expressive qualities. Ensemble Analysis shows a program with skills being demonstrated during the program. There is usage of two elements of the triad simultaneously with occasional use of all three. In General Effect, the concept shows use of artistic effort and a variety of methods of creating effect are used. Characterization is more developed. In order to compete in circuit championships units must attend the 1 st or 2 nd week of competition and at least 3 other competitions. Promotion to Scholastic AA Class will occur if units exceed the boundaries of this class. Performance time (minimum 4 minutes, maximum 5 ½ minutes). Scholastic AAA Class units may attend any WGI regional or national competition if they choose. (Understand difference in WGI ability levels for this class)	WGI A Class
Scholastic AA	High School	Members must attend the same high school	This class is designed for a unit that is not ready for the demands of A, Open, or World Class. Equipment and movement will still focus on the training and achievement of basic skills but with more variety than the Regional A units. Tosses will begin to display more variety of release and catch points with weapons usually tossing no higher than quads. There is more exploration of basic dimensionality of equipment and some layering efforts are beginning to occur. Phrase length is still primarily short (16 to 24 counts) with occasional longer phrases (24 to 36 counts) and recovery time is still apparent. In Movement, range of dynamic qualities is still expanding. There is also expanded use of torso and level changes. There is more exploration of changes in weight, time, and space, and usage of expressive qualities is broadening. Ensemble Analysis shows a more developed program with skills being demonstrated more frequently during the program. There is increasing usage of two elements of the triad simultaneously with occasional use of all three. In General Effect, the concept shows a greater use of artistic effort and a variety of methods of creating effect are used. Characterization is more developed and changes in the emotional character are beginning to be explored. The concept does place some demand on the performers to be fully realized. In order to compete in circuit championships units must attend the 1 st or 2 nd week of competition and at least 2 other competitions. Promotion to Scholastic A Class will occur if units exceed the boundaries of this class. Performance time (minimum 4 minutes, maximum 5 ½ minutes). Scholastic AA Class units may attend any WGI regional or national competition if they choose. (Understand difference in WGI ability levels for this class)	WGI A Class
Scholastic A	High School	Members must attend the same high school	This class is designed for a unit that is not ready for the demands of Open, or World Class. Guards in this area are at a level where members and staff have a complete understanding of the basic principles of performance and design. Units here may also occasionally explore more intermediate concepts that encourage performers and designers to broaden their skills. There is moderate rehearsal opportunity and funding to develop this level of competitive program. Units competing in this classification are encouraged to maximize the achievement of the criteria on the A class sheets. In order to compete in circuit championships units must attend the 1 st or 2 nd week of competition and at least 2 other competitions. Performance time (minimum 4 minutes, maximum 5 ½ minutes). Scholastic A Class units may attend any WGI regional or national competition if they choose and are encouraged to do so.	WGI A Class
Independent A	High School or Above	Members do not attend the same school and not exceed the age of 22 at the time of WGI Championships	This class is designed for competitive independent units that are not ready for the demands of Open or World Class. Guards in this class are at a level where there members may be young or less experienced in their equipment and movement skills. In this category, guards will be encouraged to demonstrate skills in movement and equipment handling on both flag and weapon (s). Designers should present imaginative shows with sound and logical designs setting achievable standards for their performers. In order to compete in circuit championships units must attend the 1 st or 2 nd week of competition and at least 2 other competitions. Performance time (minimum 4 minutes, maximum 5 ½ minutes) Independent A Class units may attend any WGI regional or national competition if they choose and are encouraged to do so.	WGI A Class

Class	Age of Members	Affiliation	Class Criteria	Judging Sheet
Independent Open	High School or Above	Members do not attend the same school and not exceed the age of 22 at the time of WGI Championships	This class is designed for a highly competitive unit that is too advanced to find competition in the A Class, but is not ready for the demands of World Class. Guards in this class have a greater experience level. Guards will be challenged to broaden their design and performance skills. Designers and instructors will be challenged to expand their programming, creative, and instructional techniques. In order to compete in circuit championships units must attend the 1 st or 2 nd week of competition and at least 2 other competitions. Performance time (minimum 4 minutes, maximum 6 ½ minutes). Independent Open Class units may attend any WGI regional or national competition if they choose and are encouraged to do so.	WGI Open Class
Independent World	High School or Above	Members do not attend the same school and there is no age limit	This class is designed for the most highly developed independent programs. The designation World Class indicates that the unit is competitive on a national level. This is an area where innovation and setting standards is the goal. This category is open to a guard with the membership talent, design, and instructional staff and budget to place their performers at the challenging level to stimulate growth and development through World Class competition. In order to compete in circuit championships units must attend the 1 st or 2 nd week of competition and at least 2 other competitions. Performance time (minimum 4 minutes, maximum 7 ½ minutes). Independent World Class units should attend any WGI regional and/or national competition.	WGI World Class
Scholastic Open	High School	Members must attend the same high school	This class is designed for a highly competitive unit that is too advanced to find competition in the Scholastic A Classes but is not ready for the demands of the Scholastic World Class. Guards in this class have a greater experience level. Both staff and performers have the talent to grow beyond the basics, exploring a higher level of design and performance techniques. There is sufficient rehearsal opportunity and funding to develop this level of competitive program to benefit the students and broaden their performance skills. In order to compete in circuit championships units must attend the 1 st or 2 nd week of competition and at least 2 other competitions. Performance time (minimum 4 minutes, maximum 6 ½ minutes). Scholastic Open Class units may attend any WGI regional or national competition if they choose and are encouraged to do so.	WGI Open Class
Scholastic World	High School	Members must attend the same high school	This class is designed for the most highly developed high school programs. The designation World Class indicates that the unit is competitive on a national level. This is the most advanced level of scholastic competition for guards with student talent, design, staff, rehearsal time, and budget capabilities to produce challenging and creative programs. Students here will be challenged to expand their technical and performance base to achieve their fullest potential within programs that utilize advanced concepts of design. In order to compete in circuit championships units must attend the 1 st or 2 nd week of competition and at least 2 other competitions. Performance time (minimum 4 minutes, maximum 7 ½ minutes). Independent World Class units should attend any WGI regional and/or national competition.	WGI World Class

*** When choosing a class, unit directors are encouraged to examine the criteria for each class and understand that competing outside of SAPA may result in changes to their classification.