

Cincy Blues Challenge Rules (Last updated 1/1/2017)

Changes for 2017

The following restriction has been **REMOVED**:

“An act that wins first place in our Blues Challenge will be ineligible to enter the competition the following year in the same category.”

The following were added:

All personal equipment must be verified by the stage manager and/or sound techs. i.e. Amps, mics (wired or wireless) , etc.

Entrance Fee includes a band membership to the Cincy Blues Society.

Solo/Duo entrance fee: \$30

Band entrance fee: \$50

Categories:

Band - any act with three or more musicians. Vocalists are counted as musicians for the purpose of this competition. Both electric and acoustic instruments are allowed

Solo/Duo - any act with one or two musicians. Vocalists are counted as musicians for the purpose of this competition. Both electric and acoustic instruments are allowed.

The Challenge is a one day event. The Cincy Blues Society BITS band will open the show followed by up to 24 acts. We have not had to do this in the past, but in the event we have too many entries the following will be used to reduce the number to 24.

1. Any entry that is ineligible to compete in the IBC in Memphis
2. Any non Cincy Blues Society member base on the order they were received
3. In reverse order entries were received

All entries must be received by third Tuesday of April – 11:59PM (April 18, 2017)

Mail/Email Application, Biography & Picture to:

Cincy Blues Society

1623 Dalton Avenue 141080

Cincinnati, OH 45250

Att: Blues Challenge

OR

Email to challenge@cincyblues.org

Bio (max 600 words) and Picture (at least 900 x 600 pixels) are required as part of the application. Email these to challenge@cincyblues.org. These are also required by the IBC and we will use them in our promotions of the Blues Challenge and the Summer Blues Festival for those invited to perform.

Yes, we could probably write a great bio on you ourselves, but would rather it be in your own words or those of your publicist. What are the strengths of your performance? How long have you been together? How'd everyone meet? What makes your act different and special? Please limit your Bio to 600 words. It's not necessary to list the artists since those are listed on the first page and will be included in our program.

Entrance Fee (entrance fee include a one year Cincy Blues Society Band membership)

Solo/Duo: \$30.00

Band: \$50.00

If you need assistance with either the bio or picture, please contact us at challenge@cincyblues.org or call 513-562-0603.

Restrictions:

- No Band or Solo/Duo Performer that enters the Challenge may have been included on a Blues Foundation's Blues Music Award or Handy Award ballot.

- An artist may play in more than one category. In the event that a performer should be in an act that comes in first in both the solo/duo and band category, they will represent us at the IBC with the act in the category that they received the highest final average score. The category with the lower score will be represented by the second place winner.

No other entry restrictions apply. Management contracts, booking agent contracts, recording contracts, and performance contracts (even those that include regular television or radio broadcast) have no bearing on eligibility.

The Cincy Blues Society retains the sole right of discretion for determining the eligibility of an act or musician.

Time Limitation:

Performance time is limited to **15 minutes**. The time starts when the band strikes its first note. Warning cards are held up to the band on stage to inform them that there are 2-minutes, 1-minute, and 30-seconds remaining. They will also see when the time is up. It Is The Act's Responsibility To Plan Their 15 Minute Performance and Look For The Time Warning Cards. Bands are penalized one point from the combined judges' scores for each ten seconds that they run overtime. There is no penalty for using less than the allotted time.

Judges:

An independent panel of judges will be selected to ensure that the decisions will be above-board and indisputable. We recruit professionals in the music industry, such as music critics, club owners, or booking agents to be judges. Several of the judges may be from out of town, to further ensure impartiality. None of the members of the board of the Cincy Blues Society will be judges. If available, five judges will be scoring at all times. All decisions of the judges are final.

Scoring Guidelines:

We are using the same scoring criteria as the Blues Foundation's International Blues Challenge. Your act will be judged on:

1. Blues Content – EXTREMELY IMPORTANT. After all, this is a Blues contest. Many talented acts have lost the competition because of the lack of Blues

content in their performance. Judges have been historically tough on this category.

2. Instrumental Talent – This category is judged on the artists' instrumental skills
3. Vocal Talent – This category is judged on the artists' vocal skill
4. Originality – Original work is encouraged. Cover tunes are allowed but playing the original rendition lick by lick will not be looked upon favorably by the judges and will be reflected in scoring
5. Stage Presence – Most contestants have performed on stage enough to know that they are not simply playing music but putting on a show. This includes how the band dresses. This category rates how "sellable" a band may be.

To reflect the relative importance of each category in the success of a band, the scoring in each category is weighted before final tabulations. Raw scores for Blues Content are multiplied by 4, both Instrumental Talent and Vocal Talent are multiplied by 3 and Originality and Stage Presence are each multiplied by 2 to give weighted scores in each category. [The attached score sheet should demonstrate this clearly.](#)

What the score values represent

score values	what scores represents
1 – 3	Typical of a beginning blues band
4 – 5	Typical of a local weekend band
6 – 7	Typical of an advanced

8 -9	Typical of the quality of blues artists who headline major clubs
10	Typical of those who play the main stage at major festivals such as Chicago or King Biscuits Blues Festivals

The weighted scores of all the judges are averaged in each category to determine the final score in that category for the band. The averaged weighted scores are then added together to determine the band's final judged score. Then, penalty points for time overage are deducted to obtain the final results used in the standings.

Acts are penalized One Point from the combined judges' scores for each Ten Seconds that they run overtime. Timers will hold up warning cards showing 2 minutes 1 minute, 30 seconds and zero when time is up and it's the acts' responsibility to look for the warning cards. There is no penalty for using less than the allotted time.

Acts are penalized One Point from the combined judges' scores if any performer is seen/heard talking to any judge.

Day of Show Check In:

To ensure proper check-in, acts with all members present, need to check-in with Tom Tiem, Stage Manager, no later than one hour before your performance time. We will conduct an orientation session at that time. Failure for all members to check in at the appropriate time may result in a missed performance opportunity. We usually have at least one cancellation, which moves your playing time up a slot. If you're

not ready at the new start time, you will be disqualified. Please share this information with all members of your act.

Performers' Receipt of Scoring Information:

After the competition each act will receive a summarized score sheet of their performance within 2–4 weeks after the competition. This will allow each band to see their “raw score” and to see what kind of impression they made on the judges. Acts will not receive their score sheets on the day of the competition.

Staging:

The Blues Society will provide all backline gear and sound. The setup on stage will include a quality drum kit, guitar and bass amps, keyboard/harmonica amps and microphones. Drummers must bring their own sticks, brass and may bring their own snare if desired. Musicians must include on the application form any additional or special equipment needed. . Musicians must include on the application form any additional or special equipment needed. Competitors are urged not to bring their own amps. If you must bring your “lucky” amp, it must be listed on your application and you must tell the stage manager at check-in. The Cincy Blues Society reserves the right to approve or restrict any and all equipment an entrant wishes to bring on stage. No smoking permitted on the stage at anytime. All wireless mics must be verified with sound techs to be compatible with their system.

Order of Play:

Competition slots are assigned by random drawing with exceptions allowed where special setup or other circumstances are noted on the Application Form. You will be informed of your time shortly after the April 18th deadline

Sound Check:

All set up and tuning is to be done before contest time. A holding area will be provided for tuning up and practicing. No individual sound checks will be done on stage for contestants. All wireless mics must be verified with sound techs to be compatible with their system.

Professionalism:

Every effort has been made to ensure that the competition is run fairly and professionally as possible. We expect the same effort from the participants. The winning blues acts will be representing the Blues Society and the Cincinnati Area Blues Community in Memphis. Several professional careers have been launched by a good showing in the Finals. The Blues Society reserves the right to disqualify and/or strip the prizes from any band whose member(s) behave in an unprofessional manner such as excessively contentious behavior, excessive protestation, drunkenness or violence. Determination of unprofessional behavior is solely at the discretion of the Cincy Blues Society.

Hospitality:

Refreshments and food will be sold at the event and are the responsibility of the consumer.

Admission:

Performers plus one guest each, will not be charged admission. By May 4th we will mail your representative 2 tickets for each member of your act – one for the performer and one for their guest. Please use these for your admissions. No one will be admitted by saying that they're a guest of a band member. We encourage you to invite your fans, friends and family members to attend the Challenge. Tickets at the gate are \$15 per person. Cincy Blues Society and Germania Society

members get a \$5 discount and children under 16 get in free with a paying adult.

We will have a membership table at the entrance. Any new member joining there will get in free – one free admission per any level membership. For a double membership, the 2nd person, if present, will get the member discount.

Other Points of Consideration:

The Cincy Blues Society reserves the right to videotape or otherwise record all Blues Challenge performances.

If you have performance cd's for sale, please bring them along and we'll sell them at our merchandise table. It's your responsibility to pick up your sales money and unsold merchandise before the end of the night.

Have fun and Thanks for Keeping the Blues Alive!