



Northern California Council of Camera Clubs

N4C Interclub Competition Rules

Effective: 1/1/2021

Table of Contents

Part 1: Administrative Rules	2
1.1 Rule Changes	2
1.2 Clarifications	2
1.3 General Rules	2
1.4 Monthly Competition Rules	3
1.5 Annual Competition Rules	4
Part 2: Competitor and Entry Rules	4
2.1 Division Definitions	4
2.1.1 Preamble.....	4
2.1.2 Pictorial Division	4
2.1.3 Creative Division	5
2.1.4 Travel Division	5
2.1.5 Journalism Division	5
2.1.6 Nature Division	5
2.1.7 Nature Sub-Division: Authentic Wildlife.....	6
2.1.8 Sequence Division.....	6
2.2 Format Definition	6
2.3 Level Definition	7
2.4 Competition Definition	7
2.5 Monochrome and Color Definition	7
2.5.1 Monochrome Images	7
2.5.2 Color Images	7
2.6 General Rules – Competition	7
2.7 Entry Rules – General	8
2.8 Entry Rules – Projected Images	8
2.9 Entry Rules – Prints	9
2.9.1 Print Material.....	9
2.9.2 Print Mounting & Matting	9
2.9.3 Print Club Competition Label	9
2.9.4 Print N4C Interclub Competition Label	10
3.0 Supplementary Information	10

N4C Interclub Competition Rules

The purpose of these rules is to offer a common ground for competition among the member clubs of the Northern California Council of Camera (N4C).

Part 1: Administrative Rules

This section encompasses administrative rules that apply specifically to the N4C sponsored interclub competitions. Competitors can skip to Part 2 for essential competition rules.

1.1 Rule Changes

1. Changes in these rules may be made by a 2/3 majority vote at a regular scheduled meeting of the N4C delegates after receiving notice of the proposed changes in writing at least 30 days prior to said vote. (See Article XI of the By-Laws.)
2. All competition rule changes must be completed and approved by the conclusion of the September monthly N4C meeting to allow time for distribution to club members. Note: N4C January competition entries come from local club competitions as early as October.
3. All changes to competition rules will become effective with the next competition year.
4. In the case of multiple change proposals, the President shall appoint an Editor who shall hold copies of the latest version of all proposals. Once all proposals have been either accepted or rejected, the Editor shall prepare a final version of the proposed Rules including all changes approved by the Board and distribute the final version to all Board Members by September 1st.

1.2 Clarifications

1. These rules shall in no way interfere with the right of the member clubs to determine the requirements for participation in their club competitions. However, for images submitted to N4C competitions there are certain requirements for titling that must be fulfilled.

1.3 General Rules

1. Interclub competition shall be held in each Competition Division based on a schedule adopted by N4C at its regular December meeting. Changes in the schedule may be made by a 2/3 vote of N4C.
2. Monthly interclub competitions shall occur at a time and place determined by N4C or by those people involved in a particular judging.
3. All prints and projected images entered shall be entered according to the competition rules of each club. (See By-Laws, Article XI, Paragraph C). It is the responsibility of each club to submit their images to the N4C competition.
4. One or more judges may be used for interclub competitions and the judge(s) may or may not be an active member of a competing club. If the judge(s) has pictures in the competition, the pictures will be removed and judged in the next regular interclub competition.
5. Judges for interclub competitions should not be selected more than twice per calendar year in each Competition Division in which they are qualified. Interclub competition judges shall be selected from the interclub judges' roster by the Judges Chair. The judge(s) so selected

N4C Interclub Competition Rules

for any interclub competition shall be the sole person(s) to critique Projected Images or Prints and to select winners.

6. Judges are selected for the interclub judges' roster by a "judge's selection committee," which can be composed of the entire N4C Board acting as a committee of the whole.
7. Titles of all N4C interclub entries shall be read out loud during all judging, except for monthly projected image competitions.

1.4 Monthly Competition Rules

1. The number of awards in a Competition Division and Level is limited to 1/3 of the total number of entries, rounded up, and a maximum of eight (first through fifth and three honorable mentions).

# Entries	Places Awarded	Honorable Mentions (HM)
1 - 3	1st	
4 - 6	1st, 2nd	
7 - 9	1st, 2nd, 3rd	
10 - 12	1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th	
13 - 15	1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th	
16 - 18	1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th	1
19 - 21	1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th	2
22 and above	1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th	3

2. All those who place at any level and division shall receive a certificate, which shows the winning photo, if the JPEG equivalent of the Print image is provided by the maker.
3. The two best Authentic Wildlife images in the Nature Projected Image Division and the two best Authentic Wildlife images in the Nature Print Division, will receive additional awards. All Nature division entries that are awarded 1-5 place or HM within a format, that are also marked as Authentic wildlife are eligible for Authentic Wildlife awards.
4. *Best of Division* awards are given for each Projected Image and Print division. These are selected from among the first-place winners at each level in that division.
5. One *Image of the Month* is awarded from among all the *Best of Division* Projected Images that month.
6. One *Print of the Month* is awarded from among all the *Best of Division* Prints that month.
7. Any Projected Image or Print which has placed first through fifth or honorable mention in interclub competition may not be reentered in the same Competition Division i.e. same division and same format.

N4C Interclub Competition Rules

1.5 Annual Competition Rules

1. Prior to the annual awards banquet, an annual interclub competition in all levels of each division shall be held in the month of January following that month's N4C meeting. All monthly interclub competition winners, first through fifth and the honorable mention, in all levels of each division, are eligible to be entered in the annual competition.
2. Annual awards shall consist of first through fifth place, plus five honorable mentions in each level of each division, provided there are enough entries.
3. Annual judges shall select a Projected Image of the Year from among all the first-place winners in the Projected Images Divisions. That includes Pictorial, Monochrome, Nature, Journalism, Travel, and Creative.
4. Annual judges shall select a Print of the Year from among the First-Place winners in each Division. That includes Pictorial (Color), Monochrome, Travel, Nature, Journalism, Creative, and Sequence.
5. Awards will consist of special plaques for the Projected Image of the Year and Print of the Year, smaller plaques for the best image in each division, medals for first place in each level of each division, and certificates for the remaining winners.

Part 2: Competitor and Entry Rules

This section encompasses competitor and entry rules.

2.1 Division Definitions

2.1.1 Preamble

1. The following holds for all Competition Divisions. The N4C subscribes to the Ethics Statement of the Photographic Society of America. Consistent with that Ethics Statement, all images submitted for competition in both Print and Projected Image formats, and in all competition divisions shall originate as photographs by the entrant on a light sensitive material or device.
2. By virtue of submitting an entry, the photographer certifies the work as his/her own.
3. No clip art, digital art, or photographs other than those made by the entrant may be used in whole or in part in any portion of the image.
4. Images may only be manipulated as noted in individual division definitions.
5. When divisions allow graphic elements other than photographs to be used in an image, photographic content must still predominate.

2.1.2 Pictorial Division

Pictorial photography is the use of the photographic medium as an art form. The emphasis is on interest, visual impact, composition, and technical excellence. Images in the Pictorial division are not confined to any particular subject, type, or style of photography. Pictorial images may be manipulated in the darkroom, on the computer or in the camera in a manner consistent with the standards stated in the preamble to these definitions

N4C Interclub Competition Rules

2.1.3 Creative Division

Creative photography is producing an image through the use of imaginative skill or originality of thought including the altering of reality. No image should be eliminated from competition simply because it looks realistic, provided it shows originality of concept.

Creative images may include modifications in the darkroom, on the computer, or in the camera, as well as unusual points of view, imaginative use of subject matter or lighting, or any other presentation that begins with the maker's photograph or a collection of photographs.

2.1.4 Travel Division

A Photo Travel image must express the feeling of a time and place, and portray a land, its distinctive features or culture in its natural state. There are no geographical limitations. Close-up pictures of people or objects must include distinguishable environment.

Techniques that add to, relocate, replace or remove any element of the original image, except by cropping are not permitted. All adjustments must appear natural. Conversion to monochrome is allowed.

The title should give the location and complement the travel story.

2.1.5 Journalism Division

Journalism entries shall consist of pictures with informative content and emotional impact, including human interest, documentary and spot news. The journalistic value of the photograph shall be considered over pictorial quality. In the interest of credibility, photographs which misrepresent the truth, such as manipulation of the image, or situations which are set up for the purpose of photography, are unacceptable in Journalism competition. The primary concern is to make story-telling and/or newsworthy photographs.

Sequences in Journalism are permitted and should show a chronology of events or tell a story. A Print Journalism Sequence consists of a series of two or more related images and must have all images printed on the same sheet of paper, or matted in the same mat (composite of multiple- images-in-one). A Projected Journalism Sequence may have a series of up to four images, which count collectively as a single image, and unlike print sequences, no composite of multiple- images-in-one are allowed.

Techniques that add to, relocate, replace or remove any element of the original image, except by cropping are not permitted. All adjustments must appear natural. Conversion to monochrome is allowed. Good titles are important and should add to the photo-story.

2.1.6 Nature Division

Nature photography is restricted to the use of the photographic process to depict all branches of natural history, except anthropology and archeology, in such a fashion that a well-informed person will be able to identify the subject material and certify its honest presentation. The informative and nature story telling value of a photograph must be weighed more than the pictorial quality, while maintaining high technical quality.

Images entered in the Nature division can have landscapes, geologic formations, weather phenomena, and extant organisms as the primary subject matter. This includes images taken

N4C Interclub Competition Rules

with the subjects in controlled conditions, such as zoos, game farms, botanical gardens, aquariums and any enclosure where the subjects are totally dependent on man for food.

However, photographs of human created hybrid plants, cultivated plants, feral animals, domestic animals, or mounted specimens are ineligible. Also human elements shall not be present in the image and are ineligible except: in situations where wild animals have been tagged with scientific bands, tags or radio collars; in situations where nature subjects (e.g. barn owls, storks, eagles etc.) have adapted to an environment modified by humans, and these human elements are an integral part of the nature story; or where those human elements are in situations depicting natural forces, like hurricanes or tidal waves.

Any form of manipulation that alters the truth of the photographic statement is not permitted. This includes techniques that add, relocate, replace, or remove pictorial elements except by cropping. Infrared images (either direct-captures or derivations), are not permitted and are ineligible.

Techniques that enhance the presentation of the photograph without changing the nature story or the pictorial content, or without altering the content of the original scene, are permitted including HDR, focus stacking and dodging/burning. Techniques that remove elements added by the camera, such as dust spots, digital noise, and film scratches, are allowed. Stitching is allowed to complete the natural image. All allowed adjustments must appear natural. Color images can be converted to grey-scale monochrome.

Sequences in Nature are permitted and should show a chronology of events or tell a story. A Print Nature Sequence consist of a series of two or more related images and must have all images printed on the same sheet of paper, or matted in the same mat (composite of multiple-images-in- one). A Projected Nature Sequence may have a series of up to four images, which count collectively as a single image, and unlike print sequences, in projected images, no composite of multiple-images-in-one are allowed.

In Nature competition the title should be factual and descriptive. Scientific names are encouraged but are not required.

2.1.7 Nature Sub-Division: Authentic Wildlife

Authentic Wildlife is defined as one or more extant zoological or botanical organisms free and unrestrained in a natural or adopted habitat. Landscapes, geologic formations, photographs of zoo or game farm animals, or of any extant zoological or botanical species taken under controlled conditions, are not eligible. Wildlife is not limited to animals, birds and insects. Marine subjects and botanical subjects (including fungi and algae) taken in the wild are suitable wildlife subjects, as are carcasses of extant species.

2.1.8 Sequence Division

A sequence consists of a series of related images. A print Sequence must have two or more related images all printed on the same sheet of paper, or matted in the same mat.

2.2 Format Definition

There are two competition formats used. Projected Images which are digital files, and matted or mounted Prints. See Entry Rules below for specific details.

N4C Interclub Competition Rules

2.3 Level Definition

Levels are a measure of competitor proficiency and past competition results. Competition entries for a division are judged and awarded at each level, so competitors compete at similar skill levels. Each competitor has a separate level for each division. Levels are set by the competitor's member-club for each division. There can be up to a maximum of four Competitor/entry levels per division, Basic, Intermediate, Advanced, Masters.

2.4 Competition Definition

A Competition consists of one style of photography or Division, one of the two Formats, and from one to four Levels of entries. Entries at each Level are judged and awarded independently. See General Rules for details.

2.5 Monochrome and Color Definition

2.5.1 Monochrome Images

A monochrome image refers to an image in tones of black and white (grayscale), but also includes images made of tones of a single color. For example, sepia images, which display tones from light tan to dark brown, or cyanotype images (blueprints) are also monochrome.

2.5.2 Color Images

A color image is any image that does not meet the definition of monochrome.

2.6 General Rules – Competition

1. Competitions will consist of the following allowed divisions/subdivision, formats, levels, and acceptable image types.

Competition (Division – Format)	Levels	Color Allowed	Monochrome Allowed	Sequences Allowed
Pictorial (Color) - Prints	B, I, A, M	Yes	No	No
Pictorial (Monochrome) - Prints	B, I, A, M	No	Yes	No
Nature - Prints Subdivision: Authentic Wildlife	B, A	Yes	Yes	Yes
Creative - Prints	B, A	Yes	Yes	No
Travel - Prints	B, A	Yes	Yes	No
Journalism - Prints	B, A	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sequence - Prints	A	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pictorial - Projected Images	B, I, A, M	Yes	Yes	No
Pictorial (Monochrome) - Projected Images	B, I, A, M	No	Yes	No
Nature - Projected Images	B, I, A, M	Yes	Yes	2-4 images

N4C Interclub Competition Rules

Competition (Division – Format)	Levels	Color Allowed	Monochrome Allowed	Sequences Allowed
Subdivision: Authentic Wildlife				
Creative - Projected Images	B, I, A, M	Yes	Yes	No
Travel - Projected Images	B, I, A, M	Yes	Yes	No
Journalism - Projected Images	B, I, A, M	Yes	Yes	2-4 images

2.7 Entry Rules – General

1. The Projected Image or Print Chair may disqualify any Projected Image or Print not conforming to these rules.
2. The N4C does not make any special accommodations for Projected Images or Prints disqualified by N4C. It is solely the responsibility of the member club to resolve if or how the N4C disqualified Projected Image or Print will be resubmitted to an N4C competition.
3. Each member club entering Prints and/or Projected Images in a monthly interclub competition will be eligible to enter a maximum of three Prints and three Projected Images in each competition level in all divisions.
4. All Prints and Projected Images entered in interclub competition must have titles. Competitors should not use the same title more than once. The use of the phrase “Untitled” (or variations thereof, such as “Untitled #2”) as a title is not allowed.
5. The title of any entry must be 200 characters or fewer, including spaces.

The following “special characters” are not allowed in the title		
< (less than)	" (double quote)	/ (forward slash)
> (greater than)	* (asterisk)	\ (backslash)
: (colon)	? (question mark)	(vertical bar or pipe)
~ (tilde)		

6. Projected Images and the front of Prints submitted for competition must be free of any maker identifying information that would be seen during the competition. This includes copyright information, watermarks, logos, maker's name, image title, or date.
7. Any image entered in any competition sponsored by the N4C shall be entered exclusively at the risk of the exhibitor and neither the N4C nor any of its officers or representatives shall be under any liability whatsoever for damage to, or loss of, any image while in their custody. It shall be the responsibility of each member club to inform its members of this condition to participate in N4C activities.

2.8 Entry Rules – Projected Images

1. The image must be in JPEG format
2. Images should be scaled to fit within a maximum of 1920 pixels horizontal and 1200 pixels vertical.

N4C Interclub Competition Rules

3. Sequence entries shall follow the sequence titling format.
<Main Sequence Title > [<Number in Sequence >] <Optional Sub Title >

The image number in sequences shall be between square brackets.

Example: **Skate Board Champion [3] Turning somersault**

2.9 Entry Rules – Prints

2.9.1 Print Material

1. All images must be printed on paper. Images printed directly on metal or plastic, or other materials likely to cause damage to other prints are not allowed.

2.9.2 Print Mounting & Matting

1. A print submitted for competition must be matted or mounted so that it is self-supporting.
2. The mounting or matting must be mat board (made of e.g. alpha cellulose, cotton, or wood pulp), foam core, gator board or similar material. Metal, plastic, dibond, or other material likely to cause damage to other prints is not allowed.
3. Minimum outside measurement is 11×14 inches including matting or mounting board.
4. Maximum outside measurement is 16×20 inches including matting or mounting board.
5. Maximum thickness of the print and board and matting is 5/16 inch.
6. The print itself, inside the mat, may be any size.
7. Prints that are mounted or matted must be securely assembled or they will be rejected.
8. The print should not be framed or enclosed in protective envelope.

2.9.3 Print Club Competition Label

1. Prints entered into competition must have a computer printed label affixed to the back of the print with the following information: title, maker's name, club name, division code, competition level, competition date, and a small picture of the print. See Figures 1 and 2 below for examples.
 - A. The print label division code must be one of the following (letters) corresponding to the division name, (P)ictorial Color, Pictorial (M)onochrome, (N)ature, (T)ravel, (J)ournalism, (C)reative, (S)equence.
 - B. The print label level must be one of the following (letters) corresponding to the level name, (B)asic, (I)ntermediate, (A)dvanced, (M)asters.
 - C. Print labeling must include the division code a hyphen "-" and valid level for the division. For example, a Pictorial image at the Master level would be labeled "P-M". Nature Sub-Division Authentic Wildlife Prints requires an additional (WILD) note.
 - D. [Editor's note: For clubs that use Photo Club Services (A.K.A. Visual Pursuits) to set up competitions, when defining a Competition Type, the "Type Code" must be set to the letter in parenthesis. For example, the Type Code for Pictorial Color Prints is "P". This will cause the appropriate Division to be indicated in the yellow box on the print label.]
2. The label must be placed on the back of each entry in the upper left-hand corner such that the correct orientation of the print is easily determined.

N4C Interclub Competition Rules

3. Any and all labels from previous competitions (if the backing is being reused) must either be removed, covered over, or clearly marked over to not be mistaken as the current label.
4. *(Exception to computer printed label. If a hand-written label is necessary it must be legible to the hosting club or it will be disqualified. In this case a small image is not required.)*

2.9.4 Print N4C Interclub Competition Label

1. Any print submitted to a monthly N4C Interclub Competition shall have their club's N4C Interclub Competition Label affixed below or to the right and in the same orientation as the Club's Print Competition Label. See Figure 3 below for an example.

3.0 Supplementary Information

Helpful information about competing and clarifying the rules can be found on the N4C website <https://N4C.photoclubservices.com>.

1. Please do not login to access this information, it is not necessary
2. Select menu [Organization] > [Documents and Files to Download]
3. Expand item [4.0 Interclub Competition and Judging]
4. For information relevant to competing
 - A. Expand item [4.8 Commentary and Clarification of Competition Rules and Division Definitions]
 - B. Expand item [4.G Instructional Material for Club Members]

N4C Interclub Competition Rules


Figure 1. Club Competition Labels

Valid example from Visual Pursuits

Fremont Photographic Society

Nature Prints
Advanced
 Competition Date: Monday, October 22, 2018

Burrowing Owls (*Athene cunicularia*), a California Species of Special Concern, find rail yards a suitable substitute for their natural habitat

 **John Doe** Wild

Author Id: 123456
 Image Id: 2135825

Score	Award	#	N-A
-------	-------	---	------------

Valid example designed by club

Central Costa Camera Club

Pictorial Prints March 01, 2018

Masters

Rainbow Ladies

AUTHOR: Doe, Jane ID: 3016889



Score	Award	#
P - M		

Figure 2. Invalid Club Competition Label

~~Central Costa Camera Club~~

~~The Fusion of Stone~~

~~Photographer: [Redacted]~~

~~Date: August 26, 2015~~

~~Place: 2ND~~

PS	PA	PA	PA
MB	MI	MA	MA
TS	TA	TS	TA
CS	CA	CS	CA
TS	TA	TS	TA

Figure 3. N4C Interclub Competition Label (from N4C web site)

FR



Date _____ Award _____