

SENIOR COLOR GUARDS – OPEN CLASS

1. PURPOSE:

The intent of this class is to be creative, innovative and entertaining. The National Colors must be an integral part of the performance and must be presented at all times in accordance with The American Legion Competitive Flag Code.

2. TIME AND PLACE:

The contest will be held in the Department Convention City at a time and place selected by the Department Contest Supervisory Committee. The contest will be held outdoors (weather permitting) on a field 40 feet wide by 60 feet long with the 50 yard line being used as the center line.

If only one Senior Color Guard shows up to compete, to be paid first place money, it must place at least with the minimum score of **70 Points**. Otherwise, it will receive third place money and will not receive the recognition and banner as champions.

3. SUPERVISION:

Such competition shall be under the supervision of the Contest Supervisory Committee.

All rulings during the contest or during the preceding representatives or other meetings, made by the Contest Supervisory Committee representative or representatives in charge of such contest or meetings, shall be subject to review and correction by said committee, and upon such review and correction, said committee may take such other action as it may seem proper.

No agreement between contestants, as to the penalty for the violation of any rule or as to the waiver or variation of any rule or requirement, shall have any force or effect without the Contest Supervisory Committee's consent.

4. ENTRY BLANKS:

The Contest Supervisory Committee will mail copies of these rules and regulations, with entry blanks, to the Commander of all color guards on the mailing list in Department Headquarters. A duplicate mailing will be made to the Post Commander.

5. ENTRY:

Each competing color guard shall, not later than forty-five (45) days prior to the Department Convention, forward by registered mail to the Department Adjutant of The American Legion, on the prescribed form, a list of its members, with their membership card numbers for the current year, certified by the Commander and Adjutant of the organization which the color guard represents. Entry

blanks may be delivered in person at Department Headquarters and a receipt showing date and time of delivery will be issued. Entry blanks must be postmarked no later than forty-five (45) days prior to the opening of the Department Convention or the unit will not be permitted to participate in the contest.

Any color guard, may up to fifteen (15) days prior to the opening of the Department Convention, make additions to or deletions from the roster submitted or the entry blank filed 45 days prior to the opening of the Department Convention. Such changes must be postmarked no later than fifteen (15) days before the opening of the Department Convention and shall be certified by the Commander and Adjutant of such organization as aforesaid. No prize will be awarded any color guard until it's eligibility has been approved by the Department Adjutant.

6. ELIGIBILITY:

Only units composed of bonafide members of The American Legion, over 18 years of age, in good standing with a membership card for the current year, shall be permitted to compete. All members must have their membership card on their person and supply their signature at pre-inspection time, at the discretion of the Supervisory Committeeman. If uniform makes this impossible, the Drill Sergeant may have the cards. Each such unit must represent a Ritual Team, Voiture, District, County, City Council or Post organization of The American Legion. No member shall compete with more than one unit or in more than one class.

Color Guard – Open Class contest will be open to all units composed of not less than seven (7) or more than fourteen (14) members including Commanding Officer, Bugler and/or Drummer. The use of recorded or live music is allowed. If live music is used, the number of performers is limited to six (6) and considered as a part of the unit proper.

Inspection will consist of a certification that the required number of personnel are available for competition, that required equipment is being carried on to the field of competition and to insure that basic personal appearances and condition of uniforms and equipment is in accordance with a precise military inspection.

7. PARADE:

All competing personnel of each organization entering such contest must participate in Department Convention parade if one is held.

SECOND UNIFORMS FOR BAD WEATHER WILL CONSIST OF TROUSERS OF NEAR COLOR, SHOES (NO SANDALS), SHAKO OR CAPS ALL THE SAME AND JACKETS. INSPECTION WILL BE MADE AT THE START OF THE PARADE BY A MEMBER OF THE DEPARTMENT CONTEST SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE. ANY INFRACTION OF THIS RULE WILL RESULT IN THE LOSS OF PARADE MONEY.

8. MEETING OF REPRESENTATIVES:

At a time prior to the contest and at a place, both to be designated by the Supervisory Committee, one representative of each competing unit shall meet with the representative of that committee to receive

instructions and transact any business that may properly come before such meeting. Each unit shall be represented **BY A MEMBER OF THE UNIT OR OF THE SPONSORING POST** at the drawing for position in the contest. If unable to appear, it may delegate **IN WRITING** the authority to a member of the Department Contest Supervisory Committee. Failure is cause for a penalty to be assessed. No judges are to be in attendance at this meeting.

A penalty of one (1) point will be assessed for failure to comply with this requirement.

9. JUDGES:

Seven judges will be provided: One Chief Judge, two General Effect Judges, two Marching and Maneuvering Judges, one Timing and Penalty Judge and one Inspection Judge shall be provided by the Contest Supervisory Committee.

10. POINTS:

Awards will be made on the following points:

GENERAL EFFECT:

Performance Effectiveness	15
Repertoire	15
Requirements Effectiveness	10
Effective Use of American Flag Section	10

MARCHING & MANEUVERING:

Execution	
Performance	15
Exposure/Technique	10
Equipment	
Performance	15
Exposure/Technique	10
TOTAL	100

This system has been devised to reward and encourage the continuing development and quality achievement of excellence, taste, style projection, variety and unit uniqueness, as well as innovation, and acknowledges the joint efforts of the performers, designers, and instructors in maintaining the traditional American Flag etiquette and requirements.

11. UNIFORM & EQUIPMENT:

The style and color of uniform will be optional with each unit provided they are within the dignity and propriety required when carrying the National Colors. Head gear is required on the National Color bearer.

Required authorized equipment will consist of National Color* and at least one weapon and one American Legion Organizational Banner. Additional authorized equipment, flags, rifles, sidearm, sabers and swords may be carried. These weapons can be simulated.

DEFINITION – The Institute of Heraldry, Washington, D.C., has specified in Title 4 of the U.S. Flag Code, that the 50-Star American flag is the Flag of our Country (U.S. Color); Therefore, all others shall be treated as banners. All banners and flags shall be dipped at a reviewing stand except the 50-Star Flag of our Country.

Use of National Color staff head finial piece, as defined by flag code, is mandatory. If a directional piece is used, it will be judged on the directions of the bearer, and not the direction of the staff head.

All other staff heads on other banners when used are optional.

Minimum size of U.S. Colors is 3 feet by 5 feet. No flag shall be larger in size than the U.S. Colors.

Rifles are defined as weapons that are hand operated and designed to be fired primarily from the shoulder. The surface of the rifle must have bore lands and grooves to impart rotary motion to the projectile, which conform to the original design of military rifles, past or present. Sights, slings, barrels, trigger and trigger housing are optional. Bolts or simulated bolts are required.

Sidearms are defined as weapons that are hand held and fired by means of a prime, percussion cap or cartridge enclosed igniter.

Sabers (swords) are defined as weapons which are designed to be hand held for cutting, thrusting or slashing an enemy, with either a curved (saber) blade or straight (sword) blade which may be constructed of any material and must have hand guard.

12. CONDUCT OF COLOR GUARD/PENALTIES:

(a). The contest will be held on a field or floor 40 feet wide and 60 feet long with the outside lines and center line marked. A 90 inch (7ft. 6in.) will be marked on each side of the centerline for the Pass-in-Review area.

(b). Performance time shall be not less than five (5) or more than seven (7) minutes. Timing and judging will start for a unit with the first step across the starting line by a member of the unit proper, excluding the Commanding Officer. Timing and all judging will cease when the last member of the unit proper crosses the finish line, including the Commanding Officer.

Any violation of the minimum or maximum times shall result in a 0.1 point penalty for each three- (3) seconds, or fraction thereof.

(c). Each Color Guard will have a designated competition time. Following inspection, the unit will remain available to proceed to the starting line for competition.

The failure of any unit to report at the designated competition time will result in a one-half (0.5) point penalty. For each 15 minutes or part thereof and up to the conclusion of the contest, another one-half (0.5) point will be assessed.

(d). Once a unit reports to the starting official that the unit is ready, the unit must start within sixty (60) seconds or less.

Failure to start within 60 seconds or less will result in a one point (1) penalty.

(e). Each Color Guard shall only enter the floor over the designated “starting line” to the left of the Saluting Point, and exit over the designated “finish line” at the opposite end of the field, to the right of the Saluting Point. After timing has commenced, there will be no penalty for marking time at the starting line. The saluting point shall be the center of that sideline of the floor that is to the right of the traditional starting line. All boundary lines are inviolate at all times except for unit entrance, exit, or for members involved in set up prior to the start of the performance or tear down at the end of the performance.

A one-tenth – (0.1) point penalty will be assessed for each starting line, exit line, or other boundary line violation.

12.1. **REQUIRED MANEUVERS:**

A unit must execute in front of the Saluting Point in any order at least one of the following maneuvers: Pass-In-Review, Presentation of Colors, Post and Retrieve done in accordance with FM-22-5.

PASS-IN REVIEW

The area of Pass-In-Review shall be ninety (90) inches before and ninety (90) inches after the Saluting Point. This area will be clearly marked. The unit shall be in a company front with the placement of the Commanding Officer at the discretion of the unit. Pass-In-Review may be started with the salute or first step over the line of the Pass-In-Review area by all members,

including the Commanding Officer. All members of the unit must render the proper salute by displaying “Eyes Right” except: The U.S. Flag bearer shall not dip, but may at the discretion of the unit, render “Eyes Right”. The extreme right element of the unit renders no eyes right, but does render the proper salute unless it is the Commander, in which case an “Eyes Right” is required.

Any violation of Pass-In-Review shall result in a one- (1.0) point penalty.

PRESENTATION OF COLORS

This maneuver shall be done at a halt, at attention, facing the Saluting Point. The American Legion organization banner shall dip at least momentarily to the Saluting Point. All weapons must render the proper “present arms” at least momentarily. All salutes shall be rendered simultaneously at some point in the presentation.

Any violation of Presentation of Colors shall result in a one- (1.0) point penalty

POST AND RETRIEVE

This maneuver includes the U.S. Flag and American Legion organizational banner. The U.S. Flag is to be posted to the right of the Saluting Point with its front facing the field. Colors must be properly guarded at all times; for guarding purposes, weapons shall at all times be in the possession of the guarding member. During the ceremony of Posting and Retrieving, two (2) salutes are required, to be executed simultaneously by all members; one directly following posting and one salute directly prior to retrieving colors.

Colors must not be posted for more than sixty (60) seconds. Time shall commence upon the release of the first pike and shall terminate upon the grasp of the last pike. A color is deemed posted immediately upon the release of the pike. A color is deemed retrieved upon the intentional grasp of the pike. The U.S. Flag and Banner may be posted simultaneously, if not so posted, the U.S. Flag must be posted last. The U.S. Flag and Banner may be retrieved simultaneously, if not so retrieved, the U.S. Flag must be retrieved first.

The U.S. Flag shall be properly guarded during maneuvers if the guard is within three (3) paces of the U.S. Flag. The U.S. Flag must be guarded at all times.

Any violation of Presentation of Colors shall result in a one- (1.0) point penalty.

- (e). Commanding Officer, Bugler and/or Drummer shall be judged as a part of the unit proper.
- (f). Each Color Guard shall be subject to the rulings of the Chief Judge of Contests with respect to entry on, exit from, conduct on the field, and in the immediate area.
- (g). The Banner of The American Legion sponsor shall be accorded proper respect at all times.
- (h). General Effect judges will use cassettes while judging.
- (i). The current competitive flag code, as adopted by the National American Legion, will be the rules for proper use in all matters not covered herein. A Bugler and/or Drummer will be judged on the proficiency of the playing or drumming under the General Effect caption. Bugling shall be limited to standard bugle calls.
- (j). No pyrotechnic, discharge of arms, pressurized canisters, dangerous materials, inflammable liquids, powders, and live animals will be permitted.

13. OTHER PENALTIES:

- (a). A unit violating any requirement of Rule 6 will be disqualified and its position and standing in the contest will be forfeited.
- (b). A unit violating any rule, or part of a rule for which no specific penalty is provided.

Each violation not less than one-tenth (0.1) point nor more than disqualification, at the discretion of the Chief Judge of Contests

- (c). Any infraction of flag etiquette. The authority adopted for flag etiquette is the “American Legion Competitive Flag Code,” adopted by the American Legion.

One point (1.0) for each offense

- (d). Any unit violating Rule 8.

Assessment is a two point (2.0) penalty

(e). Any unit violating Rule 12, Section (i).

Assessment is a one point (1.0) penalty for each infraction

(f). Each piece of dropped equipment or uniform.

Assessment will be a one tenth (0.1) penalty for each infraction

(g). Retrieval by any member of each piece of dropped equipment or uniform.

Assessment is one point (1.0) for each retrieval of dropped equipment or uniform

(h). Deliberate grounding of equipment is not permitted in this class.

Assessment is a one point (1.0) penalty for each infraction

14. PROTESTS:

Any protest regarding these contests shall be filed in the office of the Department Adjutant at the established headquarters of the Department organization in the convention city not later than 5:00 p.m., of the day following the contest, by which hour copies of the protest must have been given any other units involved or affected. The protesting unit must be represented by a proper officer at the meeting of said committee at 10:00 a.m. of the day following the convention parade, at said established headquarters.

Audio-visual recording equipment may be allowed in the area of competition at the discretion of the Chief Judge of Contests; however, no such evidence will be admissible at a protest meeting.

15. PRIZES:

No prize shall be deemed won or awarded until confirmed by the Contest Supervisory Committee.

- (a). Cash prizes, appropriated from the Department Music and Drill Fund, will be awarded and all competing Color Guards shall participate in the prize fund.
- (b). The winner of first place **Military Class** will be awarded a plaque representing the Department of Michigan Trophy, title to which trophy shall remain in The American Legion, Department of Michigan. They shall be known as the Department of Michigan Championship Color Guard until the following Department Convention contest. They shall also be entitled to carry the Department Colors at the opening session of the Convention on Sunday. In the event there are no Military Class entries, the **Open Class Color Guard** shall be declared Department Championship Color Guard.
- (c). The winner of first place **Military Class** shall also be awarded the championship flag. The championship flag will remain the permanent property of The American Legion, Department of Michigan, and will be awarded from year to year. The flag must be turned in to the Contest Supervisory Committee **FIFTEEN (15) DAYS BEFORE THE COMPETITION** for presentation to the winner at the close of the contests. **COLOR GUARDS AND SPONSORS WILL BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CONDITION OF THE FLAG.**

16. REGISTRATION FOR DEPARTMENT CONVENTION:

All units will pay a minimum **Entry Fee of \$15.00** if they have housing and proper insurance. Any unit that desires insurance or housing shall pay registration fee of **\$2.00** per person. Any person who is a delegate will pay the regular delegate fee and would not be subject to pay an additional two dollars. If any unit fails to register and is not already covered by insurance, they will not be allowed to share in the Music and Drill Fund.

*National Rules adopted by The American Legion, Department of Michigan, Contest Supervisory Committee on 10/07/00.