

OFFICIAL REGULATIONS
for conduct of IPBA-SANCTIONED POETRY BOUTS
and EXHIBITION POETRY BOUTS

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I. Statement of Purpose

Whereas the mission of International Poetry Bout Association, an arm of Lucid Performance LLC, is to expand the audience for poetry, literature and performance by promoting and nurturing the literary and oral traditions, and to foster appreciation of oral poetry by sanctioning official Poetry Bouts and producing Exhibition Poetry Bouts around the United States and the world; therefore does the International Poetry Bout Association, hereinafter the IPBA, promulgate the following regulations for the purposes stated above.

II. Trade names and Trademarks

A. Ownership. Lucid Performance is the sole owner of the trade names and logos herein, including the terms “poetry bout” and “International Poetry Bout Association.”

B. Permission. The term "poetry bout" may not be used without the written permission of the IPBA of Taos, New Mexico, and said permission may be obtained upon payment of any fee or fees that may be established by the IPBA for such use, together with the signing of an agreement to abide by the appropriate provisions of these Regulations.

III. Poetry Bouts

A. Scope of regulations. These Regulations are the official rules covering any and all Poetry Bouts, and are the only such regulations approved by the IPBA and Lucid Performance.

B. Types of Poetry Bouts. Both official IPBA-Sanctioned Poetry Bouts and smaller Exhibition Poetry Bouts are covered by these Regulations.

1. **Sanctioned Poetry Bouts** include a full theatrical poetry show, staged within a mock “boxing ring,” props and officials, and involving well known contemporary poets who “fight” poem by poem for an official Title.
2. **Exhibition Poetry Bouts** are short programs designed to introduce an audience to the Poetry Bout format; they are staged for the bragging rights only.

IV. IPBA-Sanctioned Poetry Bout Requirements

Officially sanctioned Poetry Bouts shall be staged according to the following requirements:

A. Rounds

1. A sanctioned Poetry Bout shall be executed in ten (10) rounds.
2. A round shall consist of the oral presentation of one original poem by each of two participants in turn.
3. No poem presentation shall exceed five (5) minutes in length, including attendant comments.

B. Stage and audience

1. A sanctioned Poetry Bout shall be staged before a live audience.
2. The stage set shall consist of a mock boxing “ring” together with various props.
3. There shall be a ring bell which will be rung to begin each round.
4. There shall be a ring person who will parade across the “ring” between rounds, carrying and displaying the appropriate number for the next round of the Poetry Bout in the manner of a professional “ring girl.”
5. It is the responsibility of the sponsoring organization to promote the event in a manner adequate to provide a good crowd for the venue.

C. Ring Announcer / Bout Referee. One or two officials shall perform the following duties as the Ring Announcer or Bout Referee, and they may be performed by either or both roles, regardless of specific regulations herein:

1. introduce the sponsor(s) and participants,
2. conduct the coin toss to decide the speaking order for the Poetry Bout,
3. attend the tallying of judges’ scorecards,
4. announce the judges scores and the winner at the conclusion of the Poetry Bout,
5. conduct a coin toss in the event of a tie with no declared defending Champion, and
6. generally fulfill the duties of the Ring Announcer/Referee as described below.

D. Timekeeper. There shall be a Timekeeper who will perform the following duties:

1. ring a bell loudly to signify the beginning of each round,
2. strike the bell lightly several times when necessary during the 10th round, in order to indicate to the poet that the end of the 30-second preparation time limit for the *ex-tempore* poem has been reached, at which time the poet shall take the stage, and
3. strike the bell lightly several times when necessary in order to indicate to the poet that the end of the five-minute time limit for the poem has been reached, at which time the poet shall cease speaking.

E. Coin toss. The order of speaking shall be determined by a coin toss executed by the Bout Referee in the presence of the participants, audience and judges; and called by the Defending or Acclaimed Champion poet.

1. The Champ will win the coin toss by calling it correctly, or
2. The win will go to the Challenger.
3. The winner of said coin toss will select the order of speaking by choosing to speak either first or last in each round of the Poetry Bout.
4. This speaking order will be maintained throughout the Poetry Bout.

F. Voice. All rounds shall consist of the oral presentation of poems using only the voice of the individual participant, except for the Seventh round as detailed under subsection G, below.

G. Special rounds. There will be two special rounds as follows:

1. During the **Seventh** (7th) round a participant may augment his or her voice with music or other additional sound, live or pre-recorded, provided the following conditions are fulfilled:
 - (a) the poet is responsible for acquiring any required permissions for use of said musical or sound accompaniment, and
 - (b) the poet is responsible for working with the venue technical staff to arrange for the playing of music or sound accompaniment.

2. The **Tenth** (10th) or final round shall consist of a poem by each poet created *ex-tempore* according to the following procedure:
 - (a) After the beginning bell rings for the final round, the participant who will present first will randomly select a slip of paper from a hat, opaque bowl or other similar vessel, which
 - (i) the Bout Referee offers to said participant, and which
 - (ii) contains several slips of paper prepared in advance by the Poetry Bout sponsor(s), or his/her/their agent, by having one or two words written on each to serve as prompts for the round.
 - (b) After reading the topic to her/himself, said participant shall present the strip of paper to the Ring Announcer/Referee who will then announce the topic to the audience.
 - (c) The participant will then be allowed up to thirty (30) seconds to prepare a poem which he or she shall then present according to the above Regulations.
 - (d) The Timekeeper shall ring the bell, as described above, to signal the poet when the thirty (30) seconds of preparation time is up.
 - (e) The participant will then take the stage and present the poem.
 - (f) The container of topics shall then be offered by the Ring Announcer/Referee to the second participant, who shall follow the same procedure.

H. Judges. There shall be a panel of three (3) lay judges, seated directly in front or just to the side of the participants and visible to participants and audience, who will score each round according to the scoring system detailed below:

1. Judges shall be selected from among the citizens of the community in which the Poetry Bout is held.
2. No writer, editor, publisher or bookseller shall be a judge; nor shall any judge have a financial or amorous interest in, or benefit from, the careers of either of the participants, the sponsorship of or outcome of the Poetry Bout.

I. Scoring. Judges shall use the *Ten Point Must* scoring system:

1. The winning poem, as determined by any standard a judge sees fit, shall be scored at ten (10) points.
2. The other—or runner-up poem—shall be scored at nine (9) points.
3. A judge may not score any one round as a tie, but must determine a winning poem for each round.
4. Each judge will sign his/her scorecard before turning it over to the Poetry Bout sponsor(s) or his/her/their agent.

J. Scorecards

1. The judges' scorecards shall constitute the official results of a sanctioned Poetry Bout.
2. The scorecards shall be collected by the sponsor(s) of the Poetry Bout or by his/her/their agent immediately following the end of the final round.

K. Tallying of results

1. Tallying officials shall consist of a representative of the IPBA, along with the Poetry Bout sponsor(s) or his/her/their agent.
2. The Bout Referee shall witness the official tallying of the scorecards.
3. Results shall be tallied for each judge's scorecard according to the following procedure:
 - (a) Add the column of scores for each poet on one scorecard and write the total at the bottom of the appropriate column.
 - (b) Check that the sum of the totals at the bottom of each column equals 190 for the 10 rounds.
 - (c) Circle the name of poet with the highest total score.

L. Winner. The winner of a sanctioned Poetry Bout shall be the poet whose name is circled as the winner on at least two of the three scorecards.

M. Tie Bout Decision.

1. In the event of a tie in the official score, the defending Champion shall retain the Title.
2. In the event of a tie when there is no declared defending Champion, the winner shall be determined by a coin toss conducted by the Ring Announcer/Referee.

N. Announcement of Bout Decision. The Ring Announcer / Bout Referee shall announce the winner of the sanctioned Poetry Bout to participants, judges and audience.

1. Each individual judge's scores will be announced in the following manner:
 - (a) by the judge's number (one, two, or three),
 - (b) followed by the phrase "scores the Bout,"
 - (c) followed by the score as listed at the bottom of that judge's scorecard,
 - (d) without saying the name of the poet in whose favor the score is.

2. The winner will be announced according in the following manner:
 - (a) Begin with the term “by split decision” or “by unanimous” as appropriate.
 - (b) Then, describe winner as either “still” the Titleholder or the “new” Champion.
 - (c) And finally, announce the winning poet's name.

O. Audience Choice decision. Members of the audience shall be encouraged to keep their own scores during the Poetry Bout, on scorecards provided to them by the show’s sponsor(s).

1. Tallying of audience scorecards shall occur as soon as possible following the end of the final round of the Poetry Bout.
2. Tallying of audience scorecards may be done by any Poetry Bout official, sponsor or sponsor’s agent, whichever is the most convenient.
3. The winner of the unofficial “Audience` Choice” decision shall be announced as quickly as possible following the sanctioned Poetry Bout—at the venue if possible, as well as in follow-up publicity.

P. Title. An official Title for the sanctioned Poetry Bout shall be determined by the sponsor(s) of the sanctioned Poetry Bout, in consultation with the IPBA.

V. Sanctioned Poetry Bout Application

A. Licensing. The IPBA shall license an officially sanctioned Poetry Bout upon the signing of the IPBA-licensing agreement by a representative(s) of the sponsor(s) of the proposed sanctioned Poetry Bout and a representative of the IPBA, which agreement shall include a statement swearing to abide by the appropriate provisions of these Regulations, together with the receipt of any fee or fees that may be established by the IPBA for licensing such event.

B. Tradenames. Upon signing of the IPBA licensing agreement, sanctioned Poetry Bout sponsor(s) will have access to, and be required to use, the official IPBA logo along with the terms "IPBA-Sanctioned," "Sanctioned Poetry Bout" and "Poetry Bout" in all publicity before and after the event, on tickets, marques and banners, fliers and posters, in printed program materials and the like.

1. It is the responsibility of the sponsor(s) to provide for the promotion of the sanctioned Poetry Bout.
2. It is the responsibility of the sponsor(s) to use and protect the official IPBA logo(s) and/or trade name(s) on all promotional materials.

C. Promotion. Good copies of all promotional materials, including those distributed in print and via electronic media, and copies of any press coverage received in print or by electronic media, plus links to any online promotional materials created by sponsor, including using social networking media, shall be forwarded to the IPBA within a reasonable amount of time following the publication of same, and such material will be archived at IPBA headquarters.

D. Notification of winner. Within ten (10) days after the sanctioned Poetry Bout the sponsor(s) of a sanctioned Poetry Bout shall officially notify the IPBA in writing of the winner of said sanctioned Poetry Bout, and will certify that the Poetry Bout was conducted in accordance with IPBA regulations.

E. Video submission. Within thirty (30) days after a sanctioned Poetry Bout the sponsor(s) of said sanctioned Poetry Bout shall deliver to the IPBA a good quality video recording of said Poetry Bout, on DVD or hard drive, for deposit in the IPBA archives.

VI. Exhibition Poetry Bout Requirements

Exhibition Poetry Bouts shall be staged according to the following requirements:

A. Rounds

1. An exhibition Poetry Bout may be as few as three (3) and as many as (5) rounds.
2. A round shall consist of the oral presentation of one original poem by each of two participants in turn.
3. No poem presentation shall exceed five (5) minutes in length, including any attendant comments.

B. Stage and audience

1. An exhibition Poetry Bout shall be staged before a live audience.
2. There shall be no mock boxing “ring” or ring girl, but a ring bell may be used.
3. It is the responsibility of the sponsoring organization to promote the event in a manner adequate to provide a good crowd for the venue.

C. Bout Referee. One official shall perform the following duties as the Bout Referee:

1. introduce the sponsor(s) and participants,
2. conduct the coin toss to decide the speaking order for the exhibition Poetry Bout,
3. elicit the audience's informal choice of a winner by applause,
4. announce the winner of the audience’s decision, and
5. generally fulfill the duties of the Bout Referee as described below.

D. Timekeeper. There shall be a Timekeeper who will perform the following duties:

1. ring a bell loudly to signify the beginning of each round,
2. call out the round number loudly in order to notify both audience and participants, and
3. strike the bell lightly several times when necessary in order to indicate to the poet that the end of the five-minute time limit for the poem has been reached, at which time the poet shall cease speaking.

E. Coin toss. The order of speaking shall be determined by a coin toss executed by the Bout Referee in the presence of the participants, audience and judges; and called by the Defending or Acclaimed Champion poet.

1. The Champ will win the coin toss by calling it correctly, or
2. The win will go to the Challenger.
3. The winner of said coin toss will select the order of speaking by choosing to speak either first or last in each round of the Poetry Bout.
4. This speaking order will be maintained throughout the Poetry Bout.

F. Voice. All rounds shall consist of the oral presentation of poems using only the voice of the individual participant, except for the Seventh round as detailed under subsection G, below.

G. Special rounds. Special rounds are allowed and may be determined by the exhibition Poetry Bout sponsor(s), and should follow the two examples allowed in the official regulations for Sanctioned Poetry Bouts, above.

H. Winner.

1. No formal judging of the exhibition Poetry Bout poems will occur.
2. The Referee will elicit the audience's unofficial choice of a winner by applause.
3. The Referee will decide the winning poet from the relative volume and enthusiasm of the applause received by that poet.
4. The Referee will announce the unofficial decision to participants, judges and audience.
5. There shall be no Title awarded for winning an exhibition Poetry Bout.
6. The winner of an exhibition Poetry Bout nevertheless retains full bragging rights.

I. Decision. The Referee's decision may be a tie.

VII. Exhibition Poetry Bout Application

A. Licensing. The IPBA shall license an exhibition Poetry Bout upon the signing of the IPBA-licensing agreement by a representative(s) of the sponsor(s) of the proposed exhibition Poetry Bout and a representative of the IPBA, which agreement shall include a statement swearing to abide by the appropriate provisions of these Regulations, together with the receipt of any fee or fees that may be established by the IPBA for licensing such event.

B. Tradenames. Upon signing of the IPBA licensing agreement, exhibition Poetry Bout sponsor(s) will have access to, and be required to use, the official IPBA logo along with the terms "IPBA" and "Poetry Bout" in all publicity before and after the event, on tickets, marques and banners, fliers and posters, in printed program materials and the like.

1. It is the responsibility of the sponsor(s) to provide for the promotion of the exhibition Poetry Bout.
2. It is the responsibility of the sponsor(s) to use and protect the official IPBA logo(s) and/or trade name(s) on all promotional materials.

C. Promotion. Good copies of all promotional materials, including those distributed in print and via electronic media, and copies of any press coverage received in print or by electronic media, plus links to any online promotional materials created by sponsor, shall be forwarded to the IPBA within a reasonable amount of time following the event, and such material will be archived at IPBA headquarters.

D. Notification of winner. The sponsor(s) of an exhibition Poetry Bout shall officially notify the IPBA by email or in writing within a reasonable amount of time, of the winner of the Poetry Bout, and will certify that said Poetry Bout was conducted in accordance with IPBA regulations.

E. Video submission. Within thirty (30) days after an exhibition Poetry Bout the sponsor(s) of the Poetry Bout shall deliver to the IPBA a video recording of good quality of said Poetry Bout, for deposit in the IPBA archives.