

Observation sheets – Gateshead 2016

Chorus comments

Sound – Janie Macchiaroli

Vocal skills – always necessary to include posture, breathing, phonation, resonance and articulation.

Performance evaluation – vocal skills are firmly established for the vast majority of choruses, but lower scoring choruses still need more attention on the basics. Posture really is important! It can alleviate some problems and make other aspects easier to accomplish. Clean interval singing was an issue, to some degree, for most choruses. Balance may need some attention in terms of how to achieve it and the factors that influence its achievement. Some singers don't realise that volume is only one factor.

Music – Mary Ashford

Song and arrangement – the majority of arrangements were solid barbershop with only a few where the song was moulded into the barbershop framework.

Vocal skills – from C to A

Barbershop style – most are using the components of tempo, rhythm, musical unity, phrasing, dynamics and musical energy.

Performance evaluation – such a fine arrangement of musical versatility in this region with the majority of the region singing at B, it is obvious the amount of vocal work has been in development here. Continue to reinforce vocal skills. Develop a stronger sense of fine tuning to scrub all chords till they all ring. Increase awareness of breath support and stamina as it applies to ambitious phrase plans and brisk uptunes – including medleys. A small shopping list for a wonderful region so very capable and hungry for barbershop. Barbershop rules forever!

Suitability of songs to performer – there were at least 3 choruses who chose material that presented challenges for the performers.

Thank you for the privilege of judging here – a wonderful experience.

Expression – Betty Clipman

Technical elements

Vocal skills – give more attention to consistent resonance in all vowel sounds.

Dynamics – increase contrast.

Performance evaluation – the chorus competition was a joy to judge. The emphasis on good vocal skills is paying off. Lyrical synchronisation is still a frequent problem. Classes on

techniques to make synchronisation consistent is needed. Lifting the air on every sustained word and phrase ending would be a good start to keeping the chorus together. Keeping the energy consistent at all volume levels is another area for the education to be focussed.

You are doing so many things well in Region 31. I see improvement in all areas since the last time I judged here. Yeah!!!

Showmanship – Renee Porzel

Vocal skills – very good skills!

Characterisation – expand and infuse into every moment.

Costume – so much improvement here!! Yay!!

Performance evaluation – choreography plans well designed and appropriate for choruses. Make up and grooming well done on almost all, and costume fit and design both successful on most. Choruses need to infuse performances with sassy attitude and continuous energy , and would benefit from classes revolving around understanding theatrical performing. Choruses also need further education about facial animation and projecting character fully out to the last row. Continue classes involving choreography design and execution that help members understand how to perform choreography with total abandon while maintaining good vocal production.

Directors – all did a great job today !!

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Quartets

Sound – Janie Macchiaroli

Vocal skills – there is evidence that all the quartet's are aware of this to some degree.

Synchronisation – lack of synch affects accuracy.

Performance evaluation – for many quartets their harmony accuracy will be more consistent when awareness of accurate intervals is heightened and intonation is addressed. Also vowel production needs some attention to keep the singing space open and reduce tension from consonants. Balance and blend are tightly related and the awareness of that relationship will pay dividends. The higher scorers need to understand the impact of artistry and maintaining the unit sound while adding the artistic sound.

Music – Mary Ashford

Song and arrangement – the majority of arrangements sung today were strong barbershop vehicles. There were some that have more than they should of secondary chords that are difficult to ring. One arrangement was wide-voiced resembling a men's arrangement. Females do not have the vocal equipment to resonate and ring two-octave chords.

Vocal skills – doing well here

Harmony accuracy – work here - it's fun!

Barbershop style – yes, you are embracing barbershop!

Tempo and rhythm – pulse , boules, pulse!

Musical unity – work here - it's fun!

Phrasing – more defined and expand

Dynamics – always add more

Musical energy – strive for consistency across all singers

Musical artistry – emerging

Performance evaluation – fine region. Overall vocal skills ranged from C to B+ with the majority being in the B- to B range. Obviously a lot of attention has been spent here. Arrangements were overall solid barbershop. Areas to continue development : 1. Matched vocal resonance to strengthen the chords 2. Uniform approach to vowels to produce a cleaner lock and ring 3. Forward motion layered onto the musical plans 4. Develop larger reservoirs of breath to sustain and support assertive musical plans 5. Embrace the magic of pulse within the defined tempo of uptunes.

A joy to judge here!

Suitability to performers – overall, most singers are picking arrangements that are suited and well suited for them.

Thank you for the privilege of judging in this wonderful region.

Expression – Betty Clipman

Technical elements

Vocal skills – generally good success in this area.

Synchronisation and unity – this is an area that needs strengthening.

Artistic interpretive plan

Dynamics – encourage more contrast

Lyric flow – generally good!

Energy – teach how to keep this consistent

Characterisation and emotional communication – let go on stage

Performance evaluation – your attention to teaching good vocal skills is obvious and paying off !!!

Keep teaching techniques that will improve lyrical synchronisation. Most quartets had their score negatively affected due to synch issues.

Continue to give classes on characterisation and making the lyrics come alive.

The level of achievement of the quartets in this region is quite high. It was a joy to judge this contest.

Showmanship – Renee Porzel

Preparation

Entrance, break and exit – very well planned and rehearsed

Performance evaluation – such a pleasure to see and hear your quartets! They have very good vocal skills and almost all used high energy on their E/B/ E. Obvious attention to pre-stage details by most quartets! Costumes were classy and elegant, and good attention paid to fit ☺!

Almost all need to trust more and bring their “afterglow” personalities to the stage. Their bodies need to move as they sing to create an even more animated and involved overall look. Characterisation needs more facial involvement and variety to make an even bigger impact from the stage. Such fine work going on with quartets in Region 31!