

Revised: June 2023

General Rules

Focus Camera Club, a metro Denver photography club, hosts monthly photographic competitions for its members. The goal of the competition is to help each member improve his or her photographic art, craft, and photography knowledge. Competitions are held on the second meeting of each month. The competition subjects for the upcoming year shall be published on the [Focus Camera Club website](#).

Competitions are held in four media: Monochrome Prints, Color Prints, and Digitally Projected Images (Color or Monochrome). All current Focus members can compete. Guests may enter images one time for critique only. Members may submit up to two entries in each medium, but not more than three images total in each competition.

All entries must be the work of the photographer and must originate from a film or digital camera. Prints may be processed by someone other than the photographer, as can the initial scan or final output of a digital image. Digital image editing/manipulation must be done by the maker.

The Competition Committee shall determine whether digital images or prints shall be shown first for that month. For both prints and digital images, these will be shown in a random order.

A. Competition Classes & Class Assignments

The club has four competition classes:

f5.6 class: all media, beginners and new photographers;

f8 class: all media, intermediate photographers;

f11 class: all media, those who have demonstrated high photographic ability;

f16 class: all media, those exhibiting the highest skill level and who have proven their expertise during 2 years of competitions.

The following are the bases and procedures for assignment to these classes:

1. New Members. When a new member desires to enter club competitions, he or she shall provide a representative sample of their work to the chairman of the Competition Committee. The new member will be placed in a competition class (F5.6, F8, or F11) based on the agreement of at least four members of the Committee. In the event a majority is not reached, the Competition Chair will review all placement suggestions and render a final decision for class placement of the new member.

2. Existing Members. Each year, after the November competition and the computation of the year-end averages, the Competition Committee shall assign club members to each of the competition classes based on member's average scores and Committee's best judgments. A change in classification

status will be across the board. Therefore, if a photographer is promoted in any media, that photographer will also compete in all media commensurate with the change.

3. Changes in Classes and Photographer of the Year (POTY). The overall average score is calculated by dividing the total of the member's scores for all of his or her entries in all media by the total number of entries. If the member enters nine or more competitions during the year, his or her lowest score for one image will be dropped before making the calculation. If the member enters nine or more competitions and 15 images during the year, his or her lowest scores for two images will be dropped in making the calculation. This “adjusted average” calculation will be used for both member promotion and POTY evaluations.

The Photographer of the Year (POTY) for each competition class is the member who meets the following criteria. He or she must have (a) entered at least six competitions during the year with a minimum of 10 images; (b) have the highest overall average score; and (c) must have an overall average score of approximately 8.6 or greater. For members in the f5.6 class this number is 8.2 instead of 8.6, effective January 1, 2021.

Subject to the best judgment of the Competition Committee, members who meet requirements (a) and (c) above will be promoted to the next highest class. To be promoted to the f16 class, a member must have met requirements (a) and (c) above in the f11 class for two years.

4. Petitions for Changes. A new or existing member may petition the Committee to reassign them to a different class. Entering a competition before the Committee has ruled on the petition constitutes an abandonment of the petition for that particular competition. If the Committee grants the petition, the member shall thereafter compete in the class the member requested. Petitions may be made at any time, shall be in writing and delivered, or by email addressed, to the Competition Chair, and shall present argument for the change. All decisions of the Competition Committee shall be at the absolute discretion of the Competition Committee, and final without appeal.

B. Competition Scoring

1. The judge's scores (on a scale of 6 to 10 points) will be accumulated for each competitor and for each class (f5.6, f8, f11 and f16) and medium (color prints, monochrome prints, digital images).

2. Awards: A ribbon award will be given for images scoring a 10.

3. A cumulative average score for each member in each competition class will be tabulated monthly and distributed at least quarterly.

C. Image Re-entry Eligibility

Any image receiving a score of 7 points or lower that has not received an award may be re-entered into future Focus Camera Club competitions.

D. Eligibility of Similar Images

1. Regardless of an image's award status when originally entered, if it was a color image, it may be reprocessed and entered as a monochrome image, and if a monochrome image, it may be reentered as a color image.

2. An image that closely resembles a member's winning photo may not be entered unless:

- a. The winning photo was originally captured in a vertical format and the newly entered image was originally captured in a horizontal format, and vice versa; or
- b. The newly entered image is significantly different from the winning image. Minor changes in cropping do not create a significant difference. However, elements of a previously entered image may be used in a composite that is significantly different from the original. PLEASE NOTE: This rule does not list all of the elements that may create or constitute significant differences. If in doubt, it is highly recommended the image in question not be entered.
- c. If the newly entered image is believed to be too similar to a previously entered image, the member will be asked to show the Competition Committee both images. If the Committee deems the newly entered image to violate these rules, the score of the newly entered image will be reduced to a 5 and any award it received will be voided.

E. Ineligible Images

1. Images generated using AI software or services such as DALL-E, Midjourney, Stable Diffusion, or any derivative or new generative AI service/system that comes about in the next few years will not be eligible for submission to Focus Club competitions. Competition images must originate from a camera (film or digital) and be the original work of the member submitting the image.

2. Images taken in paid professional workshop situations where lights, and/or models, and/or staged settings are provided, and/or not created or secured on your own, are ineligible for competition.

3. Images submitted in any competition other than an Open competition must comply with the competition's theme. One or more members of the Competition Committee will pre-screen entries to check for compliance. In order to effectuate this rule, all printed images must be submitted at least 15 minutes before the beginning of the meeting at which the competition takes place. The member will be asked to withdraw his or her non-complying image prior to the commencement of competition. Failure to do so will result in the image being deemed not entered and any score it receives will be voided.

4. Images submitted for competition will also be pre-screened in all competitions by one or more members of the Competition Committee. Any image deemed by the screener(s) to be offensive, vulgar or inappropriate for presentation to a mixed age group will be removed prior to the competition. The decision of the screener(s) shall be final and not subject to appeal.

5. An image that has been entered as a digitally projected image may not be re-entered as a printed image; likewise a printed image may not be re-entered as a digitally projected image.

F. Media Awards

There are four media – Color digital, Monochrome digital, Color prints and Monochrome prints. Awards are given each year for the highest average score in each of these media (there is no minimum highest score such as there is for Promotions from one classification to the next). Also, in calculating the highest scores, no lowest score for any individual competition shall be deleted as is done for “Photographer of the Year” and “Promotions”. These Media Awards are in addition to the “Photographer of the Year” awards and the competition class “Promotions.”

In order to qualify for a Media Award, you must submit during the year no less than six of any single media – Color digital, Monochrome digital, Color prints or Monochrome prints. And, you must submit each such media in at least four monthly competitions. You cannot combine digitals or prints in order to meet the qualifications – each media stands on it own. It would be possible for someone to win a Media Award in more than one media, if you meet the numerical submission and numerical competition requirements for each of the media that you seek to qualify, and of course, the highest score in that media.

Specific Rules

A. Prints

Prints may be mounted or matted but not framed. It is suggested that the outside dimensions of the board or mat onto which the print is mounted not exceed 16 X 20 inches or be smaller than 11 X 14 inches. It is suggested that the image itself be no smaller than 8 X 10 inches.

Each print must have an official Focus Camera Club entry sticker or a copy of the official entry form placed on the upper left hand corner on the rear of it's mount or mat, identifying the photographer, the title of the print and the date and theme of the competition.

Both forms are available on the club's website on the [Competition Rules page](#).

Each print must also have a clear indicator, such as an arrow, indicating it's top side.

B. Digitally Projected Images

Images for digital projection must not exceed 2560 pixels in width or 1440 pixels in height. Files must be in JPEG format with sRGB color profile embedded. Maximum file size is 2560 KB (2.5 Meg).

File names must start with your initials followed by an underscore. After the underscore, put the image title; but limit the name to 25 characters including spaces. If the “true” filename is longer than 25 characters, abbreviate it to 25 characters and include the full name in the comments section of the Digital Entries Submission form. The member will receive a confirmation that their images have been received.

The submitted images must have the name of the member and the title of the image embedded in the image file metadata. (In Photoshop – Document Title and Author, In Lightroom – Title and Creator) and Instructions on how to do this are on the club’s website on the [Digital Submissions page](#).

Files are due no later than midnight, Mountain Time, on the Saturday night before the competition. Unless some other arrangement is made, entries shall be submitted through the club’s website at <https://focuscolorado.com/digital-submissions/>. This area of the club's website may also be accessed by clicking the “Digital Submissions” item under the Competitions menu item.

A completed entry form must accompany all print entries. (Digitally projected images do not need an entry form.) Entry forms may be downloaded from the club website. ([Direct PDF link here](#))

C. Judging

Each competition will be judged separately by an invited judge or a three-judge panel. The invited judge will either not be a member of the Club, or will be a member who has photographic judging education and experiences.

Focus Camera Club – Competition Rules

In the case an invited judge cannot be secured or if the invited judge does not arrive for the competition, the Competition Chair shall appoint a three-judge panel from the members present or cancel the competition with the consent of the membership present.

When a three-judge panel is used, a commenting judge will be selected from the panel, rotated with each sequential image. Any judge submitting a photograph for competition, or who has assisted the photographer in making the image, must abstain from commenting and from voting for that particular image. It is not necessary for the abstaining judge to announce that the image is his or hers or that they assisted the photographer in making the image. Scoring for a three-judge panel shall be as follows:

1. The judges shall attempt to have a consensus on the score:

2. If a consensus cannot be obtained, then:

- a. If two individual scores are the same, then the final score shall be that score, notwithstanding that the third score is higher or lower than the two individual scores (for example if individual scores are 8, 8 and 10, then the final score shall be 8);

- b. If all three individual scores are different, then the final score shall be the middle score (for example, if individual scores are 7, 9 and 10, then the final score shall be 9);

- c. If one judge abstains from judging his or her own photo(s), of the remaining two individual scores, the final score shall be average of the two scores if the result is a whole number or rounded up to the next whole number.

Judges will not only render a numeric score for an image, but also critique and offer advice to the maker on which elements of the image caused the score and/or can be improved upon. We want our competitions to be an educational experience for members; something to help them improve their work as they are challenged with the various monthly subjects we choose for competitions.

**** Note about “Other People’s Art”**

Since this has come up in past competitions, it must be noted here. One element in the evaluation of image creativity is the degree to which the image incorporates other people’s art, such as graffiti, murals, billboards and signs, photographs or statuary. A competition’s judge may reduce the score of an image to the degree the judge feels it lacks the image maker’s creativity.

For instance, shooting a wall full of graffiti is not creative; you’re just documenting another artist’s work. Including that wall as a contributing element in your image, with other elements and/or creative lighting or post processing to “tell a story” is quite different.