

OFFICIAL RULES

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP HOOP DANCE CONTEST

Revised: April 30, 2019

Heard Museum
Phoenix, Arizona

The annual World Championship Hoop Dance Contest is recognized as the premier competition for the art of Hoop Dance throughout North America. The contest will take place annually at the Heard Museum on the second Saturday and Sunday of February. Rules have been developed with the input of North America's leading experts on Hoop Dance to ensure a fair and competitive event and will be posted on the event website at www.heard.org/hoop.

I. ORDER OF EVENTS

- Online registration will be available on the event website at www.heard.org/hoop prior to the event. Contestants are encouraged to register online in advance of the competition in order to expedite the registration process. Contestants who have registered online may pick up their dancer packets during on-site registration.
- Day-of contestant registration and check in for pre-registration will take place on Saturday morning from 7:30 - 8:45 a.m. No registrations will be accepted after 9:00 a.m. on Saturday.
- There will be a meeting of contestants, judges, and staff from approximately 8:45 – 9:15 a.m. on Saturday, before Grand Entry. Rules will be reviewed and questions regarding the Contest are welcomed during the meeting. **YOU ARE STRONGLY URGED TO ATTEND THIS MEETING!** Lineup for Grand Entry will begin immediately following the meeting.
- Any grievances must be addressed at this meeting. After the meeting, any complaints must be registered with a \$100 fee in order to be considered. Complaints must be filed with the Arena Director who will consult with judges and staff when a complaint is filed. Contestants may not discuss any situation dealing with another contestant or a particular rule during the event. Any contestant who disregards this rule will be immediately disqualified from competition.
- Grand Entry for the event begins promptly at 9:30 a.m. on both days of the competition. Competition begins immediately following Grand Entry.
- Following Grand Entry on Saturday, elimination Rounds will begin for Youth, Teen, Adult, and Senior Division contestants. **All contestants will be called in random order regardless of registration order.**
- The order and timing of competition rounds may vary based on event circumstances or as judges deem necessary and appropriate. The expected order of competition is as follows:
 - Day 1 – Saturday: First Rounds, All Divisions*
 - Tiny Tots Division (0-5 years):* All contestants dance simultaneously. Awards given at end of round.
 - Youth Division (6-12 years):* All contestants will dance in groups of two or more. 5 minute limit.
 - Teen Division (13-17 years):* All contestants will dance individually. 5 minute limit.
 - Adult Division (18-39 years):* All contestants will dance individually. 7 minute limit.
 - Senior Division (40+ years):* All contestants will dance individually. 7 minute limit.

Day 2 – Sunday: Second and Final Rounds, All Divisions

Youth Division (6-12 years): 2nd & Final Round Contestants will dance individually. 5 minute limit.

Teen Division (13-17 years): 2nd & Final Round Contestants will dance individually. 5 minute limit.

Adult Division (18-39 years): 2nd & Final Round Contestants will dance individually. 7 minute limit.

Senior Division (40+ years): 2nd & Final Round Contestants will dance individually. 7 minute limit.

- Depending on the number of registrants or other relevant factors, judges have the discretion to determine that a Second Round in any division may not be required.
- The rankings and winners of Final Rounds will be announced at an award ceremony following the completion of all divisions. Competitors whose ranking qualifies them for a cash award may pick up their prize in the Heard Museum’s Dorrance Education Building following the award ceremony.

II. COMPETITION PROCESS & SCORING

Five judges evaluate the contestants. Each judge is required to provide a score for each of five judging categories (see section III, “Judging Criteria”). Within each of the five categories, scoring will be based on a ten point scoring system. **One** is the lowest score given and **Ten** is the highest possible score that can be awarded by a judge in a particular category. The maximum possible score from each judge is 50, and the total maximum possible combined score from all five judges is 250.

Round 1 – 250 possible points

Tiny Tot Division – Open category – no scores awarded

Youth Division – The top **six** contestants advance to Round 2

Teen Division – The top **six** contestants advance to Round 2

Adult Division – The top **ten** contestants advance to Round 2

Senior Division – The top **six** contestants advance to Round 2

Round 2 – 250 possible points

ALL FINALISTS BEGIN WITH A CLEAN SCORE CARD. Points will not be carried over from Round 1.

Youth Division – The top **three** contestants advance to Final Round

Teen Division - The top **three** contestants advance to Final Round

Adult Division - The top **six** contestants advance to Final Round

Senior Division -The top **three** contestants advance to Final Round

Final Round – Championship Round – 250 possible points

AGAIN, ALL FINALISTS BEGIN WITH A CLEAN SCORE CARD. Points will not be carried over from Rounds 1 or 2.

Final rankings will be determined during this final round of competition.

Youth Division – The top **three** finalists will compete to determine final rankings

Teen Division – The top **three** finalists will compete to determine final rankings

Senior Division – The top **three** finalists will compete to determine final rankings

Adult Division - The top **six** finalists will compete to determine final rankings

Songs for contestants will rotate between the Northern and Southern drums for the first two rounds. You may select either the Northern or Southern drum in the final round or contestants can elect to provide their own singer.

Points and Score Sheets

The Score Sheets for each round represent the total tallies of the judges’ scores for each division and are considered public information. Each contestant may view his or her score after each round. Contestants are not allowed to view individual judges score sheets.

Ties and Tiebreakers

Tied scores in Rounds 1 and 2 do not need to be broken, unless the tiebreaker would determine which of the tied contestants would advance to the next round. When tied scores must be broken to determine which contestant will advance, the lowest judge's score will be dropped and the scores will be recalculated. The contestant with the highest aggregate score based on the four highest scores will be considered the winner. Should the scores remain tied after dropping the lowest score, the judges will convene and select the winner via secret ballot – each judge will vote for one contestant.

In the event of tied scores during the Final Round of competition, the tie must be broken to determine the final rankings. The tie will be broken using the same method described above, except when a tie is between 1st and 2nd place. Should the top-placing contestants in any age division during the Final Round receive tied scores, the winner will be determined by Dance Off. In a Dance Off, the tied contestants will perform again and the judges' scores from the Dance Off will determine the final rankings.

III. JUDGING CRITERIA

As you consider your performance, it is important for all contestants to remember that the annual World Championship Hoop Dance Contest is a celebration of talent and tradition. The event's judges hope that contestants will consider their routines from this perspective. Dancers are encouraged to give careful thought – in attire, personal style, and performance – to the traditions and values represented by this important event. Incorporating contemporary movements that are often “crowd pleasers” (such as moonwalking or motioning to the crowd for applause) are not prohibited, however, they are discouraged. Incorporating non-traditional styles and movements will not add point value to any routine. Judging criteria is based on specific, tradition-based movements, and dancers should pay close attention to the five categories below.

Following are the five categories from which contestants will be evaluated:

1. Precision:

- a) Each dancer must pass through each hoop they bring into the arena at least one time.
- b) Hoops should not unintentionally fall to the ground.
- c) Once a design is complete, it should not fall apart.
- d) Contestants must catch hoops when they are thrown in the air or spun.

2. Timing/Rhythm:

- a) This is a Hoop “Dancing” Contest. Feet should continuously keep time to the drum.
- b) Contestant's movement is essential.
- c) Bells, tinklers or deer hooves help the judges assess your rhythm and, therefore, are required.
- d) Transitions between movements should be smooth.

3. Showmanship:

- a) Presentation should be directed to audience.
- b) Degree of difficulty will be taken into account.
- c) If routine is finished and music continues, dancers should dance to the end of song.

4. Creativeness/Originality:

- a) Points accumulate with more designs.
- b) Points accumulate with designs originated by a dancer and not previously presented.

5. Speed:

- a) This category is related directly to rapid drum and dance coordination.

Dancers will be penalized for going over the time limit. There is NO penalty for going under the time limit.

A large time clock will be visible in the arena.

The judges' decision will be final! Good sportsmanship is expected and appreciated.

IV. CONTESTANTS

Proof of Tribal enrollment is required each year to compete in this event.

All contestants must provide proof of enrollment with a recognized Native Community. If a certified enrollment number or reserve card is not available, a letter confirming your affiliation with a tribal community will be accepted. This letter must be on tribal letterhead and signed by an acknowledged community leader. This is required for all contestants, whether or not you have participated in previous Hoop Dance Contests. **All contestants must bring proof of enrollment at the time of check-in or pre-registration packet pick-up on Saturday morning.**

V. GENERAL RULES

- All dancers must participate in Grand Entry on Saturday and Sunday. Contestant numbers will be checked against the registration list to ensure participation.
- Contestants will NOT be allowed to preset hoop formations or designs before routine begins – this means you cannot preset hoop formations or designs of any kind before you begin your routine. You must have all the hoops you will be using in the arena when you start your routine.
- No taped or mechanical props will be allowed – this means you will not be able to tape your hoops together in any way, shape, or form. You will not be allowed to use streamers, balls, clamps, etc. You will be required to dance using ONLY the hoops you bring into your immediate dance area.
- No eagle whistles – this means you will not be allowed to “blow a whistle” before, during or after your routine. The use of the eagle whistle is considered very sacred to many Native communities and it is the opinion of the judges that the Hoop Dance Contest is not an appropriate place to “blow a whistle.”
- No religious prayer – this means you cannot include prayer before, during, or after your dance routine. It is the opinion of the judges that any prayer, ceremony or ritual may not be performed during your routine.
- During the contest a contestants’ number will be called three times. If you are not in the arena after the third call you will be disqualified. There will be NO exceptions.
- No drugs or alcohol – this means any contestant using drugs of alcohol to “enhance” their performance will be immediately removed from the competition and from the grounds of the Heard Museum. Any violation of the above rules will disqualify you from the entire Hoop Dance Contest.

VI. MISCELLANEOUS

All contestants will be required to sign a photo release form provided in the registration packet. Entry into the contest indicates your permission to allow the Heard Museum to take still photographs, video footage, and/or audio recordings of your performance. This is for exclusive use by the Heard Museum for education and promotional purposes.

Entry into the contest indicates your permission to allow the local media (television, newspapers) to take still photographs, video footage, and/or audio recordings of your performances for publicity purposes.

Entry into the contest indicates your permission to allow private individuals to take still photographs of your performance for their personal use only.