

# **NZTA COMPETITION RULES**

**revised 9<sup>th</sup> December 2013**

## **Eligibility to Compete**

The New Zealand Taxidermy Association competition is open to all financial members of the NZTA including Overseas members. Other Overseas entries will be accepted at the discretion of the Committee and the entry fee to be set by that committee. All New Zealand residents must be a member of the NZTA to compete.

The competition is to be run annually in 5 divisions, Junior, Novice, Open, Masters and Collective Artists. As the competition grows this may need to be reviewed.

Junior/Novice: These two divisions are for the beginning taxidermist or the first time competitor and are more an educational/learning divisions. They are multi ribbon divisions ie. All mounts scoring between 90 and 100 points receive a blue ribbon, those scoring between 80 and 89 a red ribbon and those between 70 and 79 a yellow ribbon. You may stay in this division for as long as you like or until you win Best of Division and then you must go up. Once you go up you cannot return.

Open: This division is for the professional or competent taxidermist. This division is also a multi ribbon division as per the Novice. Judging will be more stringent than the Novice Division. You may stay in this division as per the same rules for the Novice. Best of Division winners must progress to the Masters Division in the category they win in.

Masters: This is for the professional taxidermist who wants more of a challenge. Judging will be tougher than the Open Division. This is also a multi ribbon division as per the others. You must qualify to enter this division. Details in Division Definitions.

Collective Artists: This division is for entries that have been worked on by more than one taxidermist whether they be Junior, Novice, Open or Masters. It is open to all recognized categories with judging done on the same level, with more emphasis being given to artistic presentation and design.

## **Category Definitions**

### **An Explanation of the New Zealand Taxidermy Association's Categories for Competitions.**

At the discretion of the NZTA Committee for any given year's competition, some categories may be deleted from that year's competition. Any decision regarding the cancellation of a category has to be announced at the Annual General Meeting and published in the NZTA newsletter following the AGM so all potential competing taxidermists are aware of the change/s.

At the discretion of the NZTA Committee additional categories may be added either as a permanent category or as a special category for a limited time period. eg. Special Challenge or Sculpting. Any additional Category has to be announced at the Annual General Meeting and published in the NZTA newsletter following the AGM so all potential competing taxidermists are aware of the change/s.

In all categories the entry must depict a natural pose for the mount. No entry will be accepted that depicts an animal, fish or bird other than in a natural pose (either alive or dead) or if that animal, fish or bird in whole or part is used in the construction of any product other than for the display of a trophy mount.

The acceptance of mounts and the allocation of them to a category is at the discretion of the Registrar, who can, if required, take the matter to the full committee for a final decision.

Important Note: You may only enter a piece in the NZTA Competition once. In other words it cannot be improved or changed and entered in any subsequent NZTA Competition.

## **CATEGORIES**

The following categories will be made available in all Divisions:

### **1. Lifesize;**

Any mammal of the size of a fox or larger is eligible for this category providing the size of the species is logistically acceptable.

### **2. Small Mammal;**

Any mammal smaller than a fox can be entered in this category. Domestic pets are not to be entered. Feral cats, when used in a Department of Conservation display, or similar, as part of a Group Category are acceptable.

### **3. Shoulder Mount;**

Game heads and domestic livestock are accepted. Either wall mounted or as a pedestal display. Half lifesize mounts will be entered in this category.

### **4. Bird;**

All species of birds are eligible, there is no distinction between game birds, birds of prey, water fowl, or domestic poultry. Any taxidermist entering a native bird must have the required documentation with the mount. This documentation will accompany the mount during the period of the show.

### **5. Fish (skin mount);**

Fresh and saltwater fish that have been mounted using the original skin. Artificial head and fins are acceptable.

**6. Fish (reproduction);**

All species of fish may be represented in this category. In the Novice Division, commercial fins and eyes may be used. In Open and Master Divisions eyes are the only commercial part allowed.

**7. Crustacean;**

Open to all divisions. Species include all crab, crayfish, etc. Local or imported species are acceptable

**8. Group (single species);**

Birds, fish or mammals may be judged as a group. eg. two birds, or five fish. Each individual mount may be entered in the specific category as well.

**9. Group (mixed species);**

Birds, fish and mammals can be combined in order to be judged as a group. The individual mounts may be entered into their own categories as well. If the competitor is a Open for one species and Master for another species (in the group) the judges scoring each Division will judge the mounts. The score sheets will then be averaged, and the judges may confer.

*Example;*

*A mixed species group of 2 parrots and 3 piglets.*

*The taxidermist is in the Master Division covering the piglets and the Open Division for the birds.*

*He/she may enter the 2 parrots separately, (Open Division, Bird Category), and/or both of them as a group (Single Species). The Open Division judge will judge these.*

*He/she may enter two of the piglets separately, (Masters Division, Small Mammal Category), and or all of them as a group (Single Species). The Masters Division judge will judge these.*

*The judges' score sheets will be averaged and a final score for the Group, Mixed Species, (piglets and parrots) will be allocated.*

**10. Freeze Dry;**

Any species other than domestic pets may be entered this category

**11. Re-Creations;**

These entries must represent a mammal, fish or bird as close as possible to the original species, in all aspects apart from size. They must not use any natural part of the animal portrayed. A re-creation can use natural parts, providing the parts are not from the species being portrayed.

## **12.   Reproduction;**

These entries must represent a mammal or bird as close as possible to the original species, in all aspects. In this category materials other than the original and natural must be used.

## **13.   Reptile**

Open in all divisions. Any reptile that is skin mounted may enter this category. Reptiles that are a reproduction mount will be combined in the Reproduction category.

## **14.   All Round Taxidermist;**

Please note, this category is only available in specific years, to be decided by the committee and announced at the AGM at the preceding competition.

This is a non-Divisional Category. One judge or more will judge all mounts at the same level regardless of the taxidermist's Division in each of the separate categories. If more than one judge presides, the score sheets will be averaged to determine the winning entry. Masters, Open, and Novice will all compete within the same judging criteria.

Any taxidermist can enter this Category but must have at least one (1) mount entered in each of any three (3) categories providing they separately, represent mammal, fish (including crustaceans) and bird. Single mounts (that are not part of a group entry) only may enter. The judges' scores will be averaged to determine the winning entry. This is a single ribbon first, second and third category with the first placed mounts having to achieve 90 points or more. The winning entry will also receive a plaque.

# **Division Definitions**

## **An Explanation of the New Zealand Taxidermy Association's Divisions for competitions.**

The competition will be divided into 5 separate Divisions.

Important Note; Each competitor, depending on the Division he/she enters may be subject to different criteria. If an entry does not meet the criteria for that division, it will not be eligible for the competition. Please refer to both the Competition rules and Category Definitions for all cross-references.

The category/species specific World Show Scoresheets will be used by the judges in our competition.

Remember accept the judges' decision as being final (even though you may not agree with it) or don't enter the competition

## Novice & Junior Divisions;

A Junior Division is a sub-division of the Novice Division. This is for competitors aged less than 13 years old at the time of the competition. All categories will be accepted in the Junior Division. Regulations for this Sub-Division are covered by the same rules as the Novice Division. Judging in this Division emphasises the tuition and encouragement of the competitor with practical ways in which he/she may improve their skills.

1. Who may compete?

In each category these divisions are open to anyone and those under 13 years of age for junior, desiring to enter, providing they have not entered a mount in the same category in the Open Division. It is for beginning taxidermists who feel their skills have not developed enough to compete effectively in the Open Division.

Competitors may enter this division for as long as he/she feels they have not achieved the degree of skill to graduate to the Open Division. However, after a reasonable time in the Novice Division, the committee has the discretion to advance the competitor to the Open Division.

A competitor may elect to progress to the Open Division at any time but may not re-enter the Novice Division once he/she has done so.

If the winner of the Best Novice entry is in their second or third year in this Division they have to progress to the Open Division. They can however, elect to compete in the Open Division after their first year but cannot thereafter return to the Novice Division in the same Category.

2. Judging:

Judges can be more lenient in this division, with the primary emphasis on teaching the competitors. Each entry will be judged separately and independently. The score sheet may only reflect a total score at the bottom with marked areas that need improvement.

3. Awards:

Multiple first, second, and third ribbons will be awarded in each category. However, it must be emphasised that persons entering at this level should be more interested in learning than the winning of awards. The score sheet and the judge's critique should be valued highly. A plaque will be awarded to the Best Novice entry.

Note; The Best of Category and Best of Division awards will only be awarded if the highest score is 90 or more (blue ribbon). Best of Division winners are to be selected from the Best of Category winners.

4. Multiple entries.

There is no limit in any category

5. Individual Work;

All taxidermy procedures must be done by the individual competitor.

## Open Division

1. Who may compete?  
Anyone who desires may enter this open division, providing they have not qualified for same category in the Masters Division. This division is geared toward professional taxidermists.
2. Judging:  
Although the scoring system is the same, judging will be less critical than in the Masters Division. Good professional taxidermy standards will be considered and traditional sportsman-orientated poses will be acceptable. Mounts must be technically correct as to today's commercial standards as interpreted by the judging staff. Each entry will be judged separately and independently.
3. Awards:  
Multiple first, second, and third place ribbons will be awarded in each category.  
  
First place 90 or above. Second place 80 – 89. Third place 70 – 79.  
A plaque will be awarded to the Best Open entry encompassing all categories, providing the winners of those categories have scored over 90 points. The winner of this plaque will be required to compete in the Masters Division within that category in future.  
  
Note; The Best of Category and Best of Division awards will only be awarded if the highest score is 90 or more (blue ribbon). Best of Division winners are to be selected from the Best of Category winners.
4. Multiple Entries:  
There is no limit in any category.
5. Individual Work:  
All taxidermy procedures must be done by the individual competitor.  
A Declaration is not mandatory but if the competitor wishes to let the Judges know if he or she has made any of the artificial parts used in the mount, including the manikin they must fill out and sign a Declaration. If a Declaration is not filled out, it will be assumed by the Judges that all parts used are commercially available.
6. Habitat:  
In this division the habitat is not judged as a separate item but may be used to set the mount in the best situation. It may influence a judge when two mounts have very close scores.

## Masters Division;

1. Who may compete?

The competitor must earn the right to enter this division. To earn this right, you must have won Best of Division in the Open Division at an NZTA competition, or similar in another competition. You will only have to compete in the Masters in the category you won Best of Division in. Once you have progressed to the Masters Division you cannot go back without the committee's consent. The committee will discuss any application from a competitor to go back to the Open Division. A typical application for this would be the competitor who has progressed to Masters, given it a fair and honest attempt but feels they cannot compete at this level. Permission to go back will only be given to any competitor once. This is the toughest level of competition and is for the taxidermist who is prepared for stiff competition.

2. Judging:

Judging in the Masters Division will be very demanding. Mounts must be technically correct as well as artistically orientated and creative. When possible, each entry will be judged by more than one (1) judge on individual score sheets. The scores will be averaged to determine the final score of the entry.

3. Awards:

Multiple first, second and third place ribbons will be awarded in each category. First place 90 or above. Second place 80-89. Third place 70-79. A plaque will be awarded to the Best of Division Masters from all the category winners without reference to the score of those entries, provided the category winners have scored over 90 points.

Note; The Best of Category and Best of Division awards will only be awarded if the highest score is 90 or more (blue ribbon). Best of Division winners are to be selected from the Best of Category winners.

4. Multiple Entries:

There is no limit in any Category.

5. Individual Work & Reproduced Parts:

All taxidermy procedures, such as form preparation, sewing, mounting procedures, and finishing procedures must be done by the individual competitor and certified as such by his or her signature at the time of entering. A Declaration is not mandatory but if the competitor wishes to let the Judges know if he or she has made any of the artificial parts used in the mount, including the manikin they must fill out and sign a Declaration. If a Declaration is not filled out, it will be assumed by the Judges that all parts used are commercially available.

6. Habitat:  
The Masters Division is the only division in which habitat is judged on its own merit and will affect the total score. Information about the habitat will be required, such as if the habitat materials were made or purchased and if the habitat was designed and composed by the taxidermist or a second party.

## Collective Artist Division

### Who may compete?

Any group of two or more taxidermists working on the same entry may compete.  
( Taxidermists may come from any Division and work together )

### What can they enter?

Any mount in an official category can be entered.

### Multiple Entries

There is no limit to entries in any category.

### Judging

Judging in this Division will be done by the principle judge and will be judged using the World Show Collective Artist Scoresheet. Out of a possible 100 points, 25 points are for Craftsmanship and Mechanical Soundness, 25 points are for Anatomical Accuracy and the remaining 50 points are for Artistic Merit. All entries are to be judged at the same level regardless of the Division the entrants are from. Even though this division is judged differently, the winning piece will still be considered for the Best of Show by the judges.

Individual pieces within the Collective Artist entry are not eligible for entry into other divisions.

### Awards

Multiple first, second and third place ribbons will be awarded in each category.  
As well as a Best of Category ribbon.

First place 90 or above, second place 80-89, third 70-79.

A plaque will be awarded to the Best of Division Collective Artists, providing it scores more than 90 points.

## **Judges & Procedures**

The judge/judges are to be appointed by the Executive Committee. An overseas judge when available will preside over all Masters and Open Divisions mounts while a New Zealand based judge may judge the Novice/Junior Divisions.

Judging will be done using the World Show Scoresheets.

Judges will not be in the area of the show during the registration and setting up period and have no contact with any competitor until all judging has been completed.

To maintain the excellent standard of judging some mounts may have to be moved by the Judge. This will be done in the presence of the registrar. Any alteration in the grooming or replacement of the mount will be noted and will not affect the final score.

The judge's will decide the following awards and trophies (together with any cash prizes allocated to those awards) which may or may not coincide with the highest scoring entry.

- a. Best of Division winners
- b. Best of Show
- c. Most Artistic Entry
- d. Encouragement Award
- e. Habitat Award

The judge and one non-biased committee member will select any sponsored trophy. The sponsor may be present but will have no vote regarding the outcome.

All other ribbons are awarded based on the score sheets of the judges.

The judges score sheets will be made available to the competitors prior to the critiques.

The judges have to make themselves available on the Sunday after the awards have been allocated to give individual attention in the form of a verbal critique to each competitor and to answer any questions regarding the mount that the taxidermist has.

If taxidermists, other than the one having his critique, wishes to hear what the judge has to say it is up to the participating taxidermist to grant or deny that request.

In all the Divisions, both for scores and awards, the judges' decision is final.

The only time a complaint will be heard is when an error has been made regarding an award, in other words an administrative error not a judging complaint.

Protests and complaints about another competitor's entry are to be received before the judging starts as per the directions on the entry form.

All complaints must be in writing and will be dealt with by the Executive Committee. (ie President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Registrar) unless one of those is the affected party. Their decision will be final.

1. Novice and Junior Divisions:

It is preferable that a New Zealand judge be involved with the judging of these Divisions. This will benefit both judge and competitor in experience and allow easier future communication between the two if desired. One of the Master taxidermists may be appointed as an assistant to the Novice/Junior Division judge in order that new judges will be coached for future competitions.

2. Open Division:

An independent, neutral judge, with preference for a judge from overseas, will be invited to do so by the NZTA, will judge this division.

3. Masters Division:

An overseas judge when available will judge all mounts in this division.

4. Special Awards:

Note: Before a Best of Category ribbon or a Best of Division plaque can be awarded the competing mount must score higher than 89 points, (a blue ribbon).

Best of Category: (Ribbon)

In every category (within each Division) this award is given based on the score shown on the official score sheet. The registrar audits these Special Ribbons. In the event of two or more entries with the same score that will affect the placing's the judge responsible for that division will decide the final outcome. If required the judge may seek confirmation from another judge.

Best of Division:(Plaque & Trophy)

Because of the variances and diversity of the entries the winner of the Best of Division Plaques will be the judge's choice. This award will be made without due reference to the score received by the entries. Because of this it may not be the highest scoring mount that wins the Plaque. The recipient of the winning plaque may then progress to the next level of competition.

NB. Mounts must score 90 or better to be considered for Best of Division

Best of Show – Judges' Choice :(Plaque, Trophy & Breakthrough Award)

This award is selected by a unanimous decision of all the judges officiating and is chosen from the five divisional winners and must be technically and artistically the best mount entered.

Because of the different grades of judging over the divisions it does not necessarily follow that the highest scoring entry will win this award. eg A Novice entry may score 98 and a Masters entry 96, because the Masters has a much higher level of judging it could well receive the award.

Best of Show – Peoples Choice; - Sika Country Taxidermy Award; (Plaque & Trophy)

This award is voted for by the public for the mount of their choice by entering the entry number in a box. These votes will be counted by the Registrar and one committee member. If there is a tie, two (2) plaques will be given.

Best of Show – Competitors Choice – Great Lake Tannery Award; (Plaque & Artisan Award if a UTA Member)

Chosen from the competitors votes this award is given to the entry with the most votes according to an official count by at least two (2) committee members and the registrar. In the event of a tie the judges will decide from the ties

Most Original Mount - Van Dyke Award; (Van Dyke Plaque)

This award is given to the most original mount pertaining to the way the mount is presented and is not swayed by the species entered. The award is available to all entries over all divisions. The judges decide the award winning entry.

Tinopai Encouragement Shield;

Awarded to a taxidermist in the Novice Division whose work is considered fostering by the judging panel. The Judges will select this trophy. And as with any sponsored award the sponsor may be present but will have no vote regarding the outcome.

Habitat Award; (Trophy)

This is for the most realistic habitat as selected by the judging panel.

General;

Other awards may be offered or become available in the future and it will be at the discretion of the committee as to the acceptance of any new trophy.

The committee will set all cash prizes that will be on offer for all areas deemed required, for each years' competition.

## JUDGING

The judge/judges are to be appointed by the Committee.

Judging will be done using the World Show Scoresheets. The judges are to be available to give critiques after the judging is completed. To maintain consistency, each judge must judge the whole category.

The judges are to decide – Best of Division Winners (Plaque & Trophy), Best of Show (Plaque, Trophy & Breakthrough Award), Most Artistic Entry (Trophy), Habitat Award (Trophy), and the Encouragement Award (Trophy)

Competitors Choice (Plaque and Artisan Award if a UTA Member) The competitors/entrants to the competition vote for a piece other than their own. If there is a tie, the judges will decide the winner from the ties.

Peoples' Choice (Plaque and Trophy) To be judged for by the general public. If there is a tie, 2 plaques are to be given.

The votes in these 2 competitions are by secret ballot with the votes being counted by the Competition Registrar and 1 other Executive Committee member.

## DISPLAYING ENTRIES

The competitor will be directed to the display area by the Display Coordinator, their mounts will be photographed and then they will be given 15 minutes hang/display and groom their mount for judging and a further 5 minutes per entry for any other entries..

They must then vacate the competition area until judging is completed. If the mount needs to be moved for any reason, the competitor must be notified and given a chance to re-groom their mount if they think it is necessary.