



2023 AGO/Quimby Regional Competitions for Young Organists CHECKLIST FOR CHAPTER COMPETITION COORDINATORS

NOTE: All publicity, correspondence, and documentation concerning the competition should use its correct name: **AGO/Quimby Regional Competitions for Young Organists**.

Chapter competitions are to be held **between February 11 and April 23, 2023**. The Chapter Competition Coordinator **must** have regular access to email and be proficient in its use.

Determine the competition venue:

1. Chapters will be included in the listing of Chapter Competitions to be published in the January 2023 issue of *The American Organist* and on the national website.
2. AGO Headquarters will forward all the competitor applications to the appropriate chapter coordinators as they are submitted online. As you receive the applications, contact each competitor separately and confirm the receipt of his or her application. Remind any competitor under the age of 18 that he or she must be accompanied by a parent or guardian at both the chapter and regional competitions as well as the Rising Stars recitals at the national convention.
3. Determine the venue for the competition. The organ must not be one that any of the competitors uses regularly. Ensure the availability of the instrument for both practice and the competition itself. See section 4, *Choosing an Organ for the Competition*, in the *Rules for Chapter-Level Competitions* of the official rules.

One month ahead:

- Schedule practice time. Each competitor must receive a minimum of three hours practice on the competition instrument. Competitors may be given additional practice time, to be divided equally among all competitors. In addition, each competitor must be given thirty minutes on the competition instrument on the day of the competition. Inform the competitors that late arrival will result in forfeiting their full practice time. In every situation, the Coordinator must be fair and equitable to all competitors and should make every effort to accommodate the competitors' schedules within reason. See section 6 of the *Rules for Chapter-Level Competitions* for more information.
- Secure the use of other local organs for any competitor (in or out-of-town) who would like additional practice time. Arrange transportation for those who request it.

- Notify each competitor of the specific details of the competition: date, location, practice schedule and detailed information on the instrument to be used. Include the organ's specifications, manual layout, compass, number and location of pistons for each division, availability of memory levels, and other console accessories. If needed, assist out-of-town competitors in making lodging arrangements.
- Appoint 3 judges and 1 alternate judge in consultation with the Dean of the Chapter, and the program coordinator (or Sub-Dean). If any of these parties has a student that is a competitor, he or she cannot be a judge. Submit the names to your Regional Competition Coordinator at least 20 days prior to the competition. Ensure that no past or present teacher of a competitor, or any other teacher associated with a school attended by a competitor, serves as a judge for that competition.

At least 20 days prior to the competition:

- Regional Competitions for Young Organists (RCYO) competitors are expected to "accompany" (instead of "perform") a hymn in each round. It is important for competition coordinators to encourage adequate audience attendance at the competition rounds, thereby providing a singing "congregation."
- Inform the judges of the works (including editions of Bach works) to be performed. Judges may use their own scores.
- Download from www.agohq.org three copies of each of the hymns chosen by the competitors.
- Secure page-turners/assistants for competitors as requested, using neutral parties from within the local chapter rather than persons known to the competitors. Assistants are prohibited from pulling stops or advising competitors in any way.
- Assign a monitor to be present during the practice sessions. The monitor is **not** the same person as the page-turner/assistant or the competitor's chaperone. The monitor should be stationed in a location that permits observation of the competitors without distracting them.
- Arrange for an instrument to be available for each competitor for warming up prior to their performance. This may be either a second organ or a piano.

Prior to the competition:

- Assign the performance time of competition for each competitor and notify them. Build extra time into the schedule in case emergencies arise.
- Give each competitor a phone number, preferably cell, where you can easily be reached.
- Check the condition of the instrument to be used for the competition and ensure that it has been properly tuned. Report any mechanical problems to the resident organist and judges.

- Learn how the performance venue functions: lights, sound system, keys, signage, locations of restrooms and water fountains, etc.
- Identify and prepare a “green room” space for the competitors.
- Prepare a printed program of the competition performances, omitting the performers’ names.
- Prepare any necessary checks for the judges. See section 14.e. of the rules for details.

During the practice period:

- Supervise the required start and end of each practice time or assign someone else to do so.
- No one is permitted in the room during practice except the competitor, the page-turner/ assistant, and the monitor. Neither the competitor’s teacher nor his/her chaperone may be present during practice.
- If possible, have someone familiar with the competition instrument on site during practice times.
- Assigned memory levels should be confidential. Do not post a list of the assigned levels.
- Encourage competitors to report any mechanical malfunctions. Furnish a notepad for this purpose.
- **Competitors may record their practice time but may not record another competitor’s practice time.**

During the competition:

- Competitors may not be present in the audience at any time.
- Ensure that the judges are positioned where they can best hear the competition instrument yet are not seated immediately adjacent one another. The judges must be screened so they cannot visually identify the competitor; make sure that the screening is tall enough to conceal all the competitors from view. The competitors may be visible to the audience.
- Have at least one alternate judge on site at the competition or readily available to serve if required.
- Make certain that the judges arrive at the competition site at least 30 minutes early to examine the console, play the organ, and acquaint themselves with its sound.
- Provide the judges with a list of any uncorrected mechanical problems.
- Provide judges with the official form to score and rate the competitors (available from www.agohq.org.) A copy of the Official Rules should also be available for their use.
- Instruct the judges to provide signed, written comments to the competitors concerning their performances.
- Make certain that each judge has copies of the works to be performed and a copy of each competitor’s choice of hymn.
- Remind judges of differences in editions.

- Remind judges that the purpose of the competition is to **encourage** young organists. Judging should be based primarily on the differences in the quality of the performance rather than the differences in the difficulty of the work chosen. Even though judges can decide to withhold a prize, they should keep in mind the age of these players and their stage of development.
- Remind judges that this competition concludes at the Regional level, and the first-place winner will compete at the Regional Convention.
- Be responsible for conducting the competition on an efficient schedule.
- Serve as “Master of Ceremonies” for the competition. Use the “script” downloadable from the RCYO link at www.agohq.org.

Immediately after the competition:

- Meet with judges to facilitate their decision-making concerning first- and second-place winners.
- In the event of a tie for first place, places will be determined by the sum of the scores on the 100-point scale (find more information in the judging forms). If this still results in a tie, then the judges will determine the first- and second-place winners by consensus.
- Conclude the competition as “Master of Ceremonies,” using the script cited above.
- Emphasize that the 1st place winner will compete at the Regional level. State the location and dates of the Regional Convention.
- Distribute the judging sheets to the competitors and encourage the judges to speak with the competitors about their performances.
- Give the judges any necessary honorarium checks. See section 14.e. of the rules for details.
- If possible, give the first- and second-place winners their cash awards; otherwise make the appropriate payment arrangements. Prepare a 1099 form for any cash award of \$600 or more.
- Electronically submit the following materials to the Regional Councillor by **April 30, 2023**:
 - Photographs and biographies of the first- and second-place winners.
 - A complete list of all competitors with their updated contact information.

If you have any questions, contact AGO Headquarters, 212-870-2311, ext. 4320 or competitions@agohq.org. **Thank you for volunteering for this important role!**

RCYO Committee

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2023 AGO/Quimby Regional Competitions for Young Organists “SCRIPT” FOR COMPETITION COORDINATORS

Remarks prior to competition performance:

- Welcome to the competition.
- Note the locations of restrooms and water fountains.
- Announce the performance schedule of the competitors without mentioning any competitors’ names.
- Audience members may enter or leave only between pieces, not during playing.
- Generous sponsorship of the AGO/Quimby Regional Competitions for Young Organists comes from Michael Quimby, President of Quimby Pipe Organs, Warrensburg, Missouri.
- RCYO is a two-part process:
 - Each contestant participates in a chapter-level competition held in the Region between February 11th and April 23rd this year.
 - Name the states (and countries, if applicable) included in the Region.
 - First-place winner at the Regional level is invited to perform as a “Rising Star” at the 2024 National Convention in San Francisco, CA. RCYO ends at the regional level, and competitors do not advance to a national competition.
- No recording, photography, or applause is allowed.
- Turn off cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices.
- Judges may not speak to audience members until after the competition results have been announced.
- Each competitor’s program should be announced; for example, “Competitor X will play the following pieces in this order...” Be careful to **not** refer to competitors as he or she.

Remarks after competition has concluded & coordinator is ready to announce results:

- Introduce and thank the judges and competitors.
- Encourage the competitors to speak with judges about their performances.
- Comment sheets will be distributed later by the Competition Coordinator.
- Announce the winners: second place, then first place.
- Reiterate that the first-place winner at the Regional level is invited to perform as a “Rising Star” at the 2024 National Convention in San Francisco, CA.
- Encourage chapters to sponsor the winner of the Regional Competition in recitals throughout the region following the competition. These future recitalists should be remunerated appropriately if they do not have a set fee.

2023 AGO/Quimby Regional Competitions for Young Organists INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE JUDGES

The purpose of this competition is to encourage younger organists to pursue excellence, to gain performance experience, to develop service playing skills, and to receive recognition for their achievements. These competitions begin at the chapter level and conclude at the seven regional conventions. The winner of each regional competition will be invited to perform at the 2024 National Convention in San Francisco, CA. The AGO/Quimby regional competitions for young organists are made possible by a generous grant from Michael Quimby, President, Quimby Pipe Organs, Inc.

Judges' Instructions: Each judge is expected to provide signed comments to competitors concerning their performances. These comments should be of a positive and constructive nature rather than destructive and should in no way ridicule the performer. It is our goal to make these performances both motivating and encouraging – please remember to point out what is done well in addition to what needs work. Judges should allow for a tasteful difference of opinion in matters of style, interpretation, registration, etc. The coordinator will announce the order in which each competitor's pieces will be played before he or she begins. Please write comments for each piece performed. Discussion with the competitors is encouraged at the conclusion of the competition.

As you judge, consider:

- Accuracy
- Rhythmic security and freedom
- Tempo
- Phrasing and articulation
- Registration
- Awareness of stylistic period
- Musicianship and imagination

Assign points for EACH PIECE according to the following guide:

90 – 100	Outstanding performance, with few or no accuracy problems. Excellent sense of tempo, articulation, style, etc. All factors working together!
80 – 89	Very good in most respects, but still needs work in one or more areas.
70 – 79	More problems with accuracy, rhythm, etc.; needs even more work.
60 – 69	Many difficulties.

Remember that outstanding performances can occur at any playing level – points should be given based on the quality of the performance, not the difficulty level of the music. The focus should be on achieving excellence in performance at the level the competitor plays and not the ambition that results in a compromised performance.

**2023 AGO/Quimby Regional Competitions for Young Organists
OFFICIAL JUDGING FORM**

While there is no mandatory method of judging, each judge must be consistent, using the same method of evaluation for all competitors. Each judge is to assign points for each piece, based on the scale in the judges' instructions. Following the competition, the judges will total their points for each competitor and rank them 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc. based on the point totals. The competition coordinator will then total the rankings (not the total points). In the event of a tie for the lowest ranking point total, the judges will decide the winner by consensus. First and second prizes will be awarded according to the order of ranking point totals (lowest to highest) unless the judges decide by consensus to withhold either prize due to lack of merit.

Comments: Each judge is expected to provide written comments to competitors concerning their performance. These comments should be of a positive and constructive nature rather than destructive. Judges should allow for a tasteful difference of opinion in matters of style, interpretation, registration, etc. Comments should be signed by the judges. Verbal discussion after the competition is also strongly encouraged.

Competitor (# in order of appearance): _____

Bach work _____

Points _____

A work composed after 1750 _____

Points _____

A contemporary work published after 1950: _____
Points _____

Hymn (circle one of the following): Helmsley, Regent Square, or Repton

The competitor is expected to introduce the hymn and lead the audience in the singing of all verses; at least the first stanza of the hymn must be played from the version downloaded from Agohq.org. Published or improvised arrangements may be used for the introduction and any subsequent verse if the competitor desires.

Competitors are to prepare the hymn (in matters of registration, tempo, etc.) as though accompanying a normal Sunday congregation for the competition's given building and space. A competitor's performance is evaluated on execution (consistency of tempo, accuracy of notes, etc.) and appropriateness of artistic choices in relation to tune and text. The competitor is not penalized if planned registration choices do not comfortably coalesce with the size of the singing assembly gathered for the competition itself.

Points _____

Signature of Judge: _____

2023 AGO/Quimby Regional Competitions for Young Organists COMPETITION COORDINATOR – INSTRUCTIONS FOR TALLING POINTS

Each judge will award points for each piece performed, on a 100-point scale as indicated in the judging instructions. Following the competition, **each judge will total the points for each performer and based on those totals, rank the competitors 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.**

The Competition Coordinator will tally the **rankings** for each competitor and announce the ranking point totals to the judges. First and second prizes will be awarded according to the order of ranking point totals (lowest to highest) unless the judges decide by consensus to withhold either prize due to lack of merit.

Example:

	Ranking from judge 1	Ranking from judge 2	Ranking from judge 3	Total Ranking points	Prizes
Competitor A	1 st	2 nd	4 th	7	Second Prize
Competitor B	3 rd	3 rd	3 rd	9	
Competitor C	2 nd	1 st	1 st	4	First prize
Competitor D	4 th	4 th	2 nd	10	

Order of ranking points, from low to high:

Competitor C: 4 First prize
 Competitor A: 7 Second prize
 Competitor B: 9
 Competitor D: 10