



HUDSON VALLEY BLUES SOCIETY

NEW YORK STATE

THE HUDSON VALLEY BLUES SOCIETY, an affiliate member of The Blues Foundation, is holding its Annual HVBS “Road to Memphis” Solo/Duo and Band Blues Challenge. Carmine’s Deli in Elmsford, NY will be the host venue.

The Solo/Duo Division Challenge will be held on Saturday, June 8, 2024, from 12:00 pm to 5:00 pm
The Band Division Challenge will be held on Saturday, June 15, 2024, from 12:00 pm to 5:00 pm
(Please note timing can change depending on the number of entrants on each day.)

Each act (Solo/Duo or Band) entered will perform a 20-minute judged and timed set. The HVBS Blues Challenge winners of each act (Solo/Duo and Band) will be sponsored by **HVBS** to participate in the International Blues Challenge (IBC) in Memphis, January 7-11, 2025.

The **HVBS** will work with our winners to help them raise funds for their trip to Memphis. Previous winners of The Blues Foundation's IBC Finals (in Memphis) have received as much as \$2,500, a set-in for major Blues Festivals, as well as an opportunity to perform on the Legendary Blues Cruise (LRBC). There is no entry fee for the HVBS local Blues Challenge or the International Blues Challenge (IBC) in Memphis, but all acts competing must have a current HVBS Membership.

RULES FOR HVBS 2024 Challenge

Eligibility Requirements

- An act competing as a Band for the HVBS Blues Challenge must have a current up-to-date HVBS Band Membership.
- An act competing as a Solo/Duo for the HVBS Blues Challenge must have a current up-to-date HVBS Individual Membership.
- A minimum of 2 solo/duo acts are required to hold the solo/duo competition, and a minimum of 2 band acts are required to hold the band competition.
- All competitors must be 21 years or older.
- Registration for the HVBS Blues Challenge can only be done online. *No walk-ins will be allowed on the day of judging.*
- Under The Blues Foundation rules, Blues Music Award (past or present) nominees are ineligible to compete.
- An act may enter the IBC a maximum of 3 times, after which they are no longer eligible. They may not participate in the IBC in three consecutive years, i.e. there must be a break of at least one year after competing in a first or second IBC.
- A musician may not compete in the band category and the solo/duo category in the same year.
- All performances will be judged by writers, DJs, musicians, and fans active in the Blues community.

Rules and Scoring Criteria

Blues Challenge judges are Blues professionals and aficionados with a deep understanding and historical perspective of all blues forms. Any given panel of judges will include members with varying opinions of Blues, covering the spectrum of Blues from the most traditional to soul/blues and rock/blues.

Scoring Categories and Definitions

- **Blues Content:** The sound and feel of the music should be true to any of the blues sub-categories: traditional blues, country blues, soul blues, blues rock, and/or contemporary blues. Judges will be listening for inspired and original song selections or new takes on blues standards. Creative reach is encouraged.
- **Originality:** Original work is encouraged. Cover tunes are allowed but playing the recorded rendition lick by lick is discouraged, will not be looked upon favorably by the judges, and will be reflected in the scoring.
- **Acts must indicate if their songs are their own original material** (this can be done at the start of the set or before each song as appropriate) and/or identify the covers that they are playing and acknowledge the originator.
- **Vocal Talent:** The act's vocal skills include concepts of tone, musicality, meaning, and expression.
- **Instrumental Talent:** Ability level on all instruments featured within the act.
- **Stage Presence:** This is the ability to command the attention of the audience by the impressiveness of one's manner and appearance on stage. Judges will consider how an act connects with and engages the audience in the music. Proper use of microphones and amplification will be considered.

Basic Scoring Calculation

Judges will score acts on a 10-point scale, with 10 points being the highest score received and 1 point being the lowest. The following weights will be used in calculating final scores:

- Raw scores for Blues Content will be multiplied by four.
- Raw scores for Originality will be multiplied by three.
- Raw scores for Vocal Talent will be multiplied by two.
- Raw scores for Instrumental Talent will be multiplied by two.
- Raw scores for Stage Presence will be multiplied by two.
- The maximum Total Weighted Score an act may receive is 130.

Penalty Points

An act will be penalized one point from its Total Weighted Score for each of the following:

- Failing to acknowledge that a song is a cover and/or not giving credit to its originator.
- Every ten seconds that it runs overtime during a competition performance.
- Finishing 3 or more minutes before its allotted performance time expires.
- Showing up late and/or not being ready to perform on time.

Scoring System for Judges

Each judge will indicate his or her Raw Score, between 1 and 10, in each category and turn that information over to the Scorekeeper using the following scale:

- 1-3 – Typical of a beginning blues band
- 4-5 – Typical of a local weekend band
- 6-7 – Typical of an advanced local band but not yet ready to headline a major blues club.
- 8-9 – Typical of the quality of blues artists who headline major clubs.
- 10 – Typical of those who play the main stage at major festivals

The Scorekeeper

- The Scorekeeper will multiply the Raw Score in each category by the established multiplier to get each judge's Individual Weighted Score in each category for each act.
- The Individual Weighted Scores for each category will be added together to determine each act's Total Weighted Score for each judge.
- Any penalty points assigned will then be deducted from each judge's Total Weighted Score to obtain the act's Net Weighted Score for each judge.
- After all acts have been judged and each act's Net Weighted Score per judge calculated, each act will be ranked by a judge based on that judge's order of scores, with the act receiving the judge's highest Net Weighted Score being given a ranking of 1, and so on for that judge. This will reveal each act's Final Ranking Number for each judge.
- The Scorekeeper then will total the Final Ranking Number from all judges for each act to determine the Gross Final Ranking. This figure is averaged (divided by the total number of judges) to Achieve the Aggregate Act Ranking.
- In the case of a tie, the Scorekeeper shall calculate the sum of all Net Weighted Scores from all judges for the tied acts. The band with the higher sum of Net Weighted Scores wins.

Any questions, please contact Paul Toscano at p.toscano@thehvbs.org or Hillary Fontana at hillfont@thehvbs.org.

You will get some exposure for your band and have some fun! Hope to see you there.

Paul Toscano, *President of The Hudson Valley Blues Society*
Hillary Fontana, *Vice President of The Hudson Valley Blues Society*