



Ben Sandoval Memorial

Fiddle-In Acoustic Band Competition



This is intended to enhance the overall festival experience as well as provide further craft honing and showcase opportunities for the fiddlers and other musicians/performers. The Payson “Fiddle-in” Acoustic Band Competition will once again be intermingled into the 54th Old Time Fiddle & Acoustic Celebration and will be open to the first six bands to register, online, beginning Friday June 28, 2024.

Fiddlers from the Bands competition are eligible to compete in the AZ State Fiddlers Championships, if they are Arizona residents and otherwise eligible; they are not required to do so.

Prize: Winner of the 2024 Band Competition will receive \$1000.

1. Registration: Entry in the Payson Fiddle-in Band Competition is on a first-come, first-served basis and will be limited to six bands. Minimum of three bands required for contest to proceed. Entry fee is \$20.00 for each band.

Registration will be available online prior to the event or in person on the contest day (if competition is not full, cash only on-site). Bands will have to complete the registration/release form listing all members during the registration process. The \$20 registration fee is fully refundable if you notify us that you need to withdraw before September 08, 2024.

Upon registration bands will draw for their place in the lineup, review the rules, and ask any questions pertaining to judging. Contestants must be present and ready to perform at their scheduled time, or they will be disqualified.

Contestants must remain available, in the area in case, of a tie. If a playoff is required and a contestant band is not present, the award will go to the other competitor.

2. Contest procedures: Each band is allotted up to 15 minutes stage time. Stage time begins immediately after the emcee introduces the group. Your score will suffer an automatic 5% reduction if you exceed this time frame. Talking between songs is allowed and encouraged, since it reflects a band's rapport with the audience.

Winners of the band contest will be announced by the conclusion of Saturday night’s festivities.

Accidents beyond the control of the contestant (such as string breakage, etc.) may happen during your performance, just as in any performance. The band will be expected to improvise, recover, and complete the performance within the 15-minute time frame. No time extensions or “re-dos” will be granted for mishaps.

Bands must be ready to take the stage when the previous competition finishes. Absolutely no exceptions will be made to this provision. If you miss your call to the stage, you will not be allowed to compete.

3. Musical Styles, Material and Instrumentation: Each band will play three selections: a slow vocal song, a fast vocal song, and an instrumental number, in any order.

To stay within the “Old Time fiddling” tradition in Payson, any type of traditional acoustic music is allowed in this contest, including Old-Time, Bluegrass, Western, Gospel or Appalachian. However, straying too far from the boundaries of music that is within the genre of “Old Time”, “Traditional”, “Bluegrass,” “Western” & “Gospel” style will affect your score negatively. The judges are not listening for Jazz, Classical, Rock and Fusion. A fancy lick during an instrumental break is GREAT but should be “Genre appropriate”. The judges will ultimately decide if your interpretation crosses over the sometimes-fuzzy boundary into another world of music.

To avoid delays with band setup, all bands must use a single mic. setup provided by Payson Fiddle-in, acoustic Band Competition. A separate bass mic. or amp is allowed and will be provided by the Fiddle-in acoustic bands competition, at the band's preference. While the contest is not restricted to any specific genre of music, contestants must perform with acoustic instruments in this contest; no electrically amplified instruments, pickups, or contact mics., with the exception of electric bass. Minimal percussion instruments, shaker or hand-held drum are allowed.



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4. Band Members: A band will consist of at least three, but no more than seven members. Each Band **MUST have a fiddle in the band**, and, at least, two other **different** kinds of instruments to qualify for this competition. I.E., since a minimum of three members is required, you could compete with a guitar, an acoustic bass, and a fiddle to qualify as an eligible band. With 5 or 6 pieces in the band you could compete with two guitars or twin fiddles on top of the previously mentioned ensemble. You would not be eligible if you had an acoustic bass, and two fiddles. A vocalist that does not contribute instrumentally would **not** be included as one of the “two different instruments.” Songs, material, and attire must be of an appropriate nature, suitable for family entertainment. No band member may compete in more than one band. Any contestant appearing under the influence of alcohol or drugs will not be allowed on stage.

The following performers are ineligible.

Paid performer groups are ineligible **as a band**.

Bands will be ineligible to participate the year following their win. This ineligibility term will only be one year. Winning bands may be invited to participate in the festival in some capacity the following year as performers during their ineligible term of the band competition.

A previous paid performer, or band member of a “fiddle-in band competition” winner may compete with a new group, if they are the only member of the new group that meets the above ineligibility rule.

Members who take part in and/or have an active role that can be categorized as a Payson Old Time Fiddle & Acoustic Celebration organizing committee.

Employees of the Town of Payson Parks and Recreation Dept. and event staff.

5. Judging Criteria: Judges will be selected from paid performers and/or the Old Time Fiddlers contest judge crew. Contestants in the Payson Fiddle-in acoustic Band Competition will be judged as follows:

30% - Material Selection — difficulty, taste, authenticity/originality. You'll get more points for playing a simple tune well than a difficult tune poorly.

50% - General Instrumental Musicianship — rhythm & timing, intonation, expression, for both solos and overall instrumental blend.

10% - Vocal Performance — intonation and overall vocal quality for both leads and harmony singing.

10% - Stage Presence — audience rapport and entertainment value. The highest scores going to bands exhibiting high entertainment qualities, showing comfort with the audience, expertise with and confidence in their musical performance and appropriate stage attire. Shorts and tank tops, flip flops and jeans with holes are discouraged and would result in a loss of potential points.

6. Finality: Decisions by the judges will be final and not negotiable. Contestants may be allowed to view their score sheets, after the contest is over, and judges are encouraged to provide comments to provide constructive feedback for band contestants.

7. Recording Rights: All commercial recording rights are reserved and shall become the property of the Town of Payson. Completion of the A/V Release form, by contestant, acknowledges such recording rights and acceptance of all rules and regulations of the Payson Fiddle-in Acoustic Band Competition.

Prize Money Breakdown: 1st Place: \$1000 / 2nd Place: 500 / 3rd: \$250