



Atendeldt Arts and Sciences

# Judges' Certification Handbook

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Kingdom of Atendeldt Ministry of Arts and Sciences  
Anno societatis xxxvii.

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June, 2007

First printing June 2007  
Corrected printing June 2007

*Cover artwork by Lady Ilsa von Sonnenburg,  
with cover typesetting by WyvernWerkes.*

*Our thanks to Duchess Nichelle Whitewolf for allowing us to include her fine article,  
Ten Tips for Delivering Feedback.*

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# Preface

Atenveldt began with highly skilled and creative people who were looking for a place to escape the humdrum and mediocre in their lives—a place where they could develop their extraordinary abilities in a complex and diverse setting where only their best would be good enough. That place became Atenveldt.

These dream architects designed a magical place populated with medieval fighters, talented artisans, and others whose service of heart and hand have expanded Atenveldt throughout the years. And, growing topsy-turvy with the glory of Atenveldt was the most bizarre and Byzantine bureaucracy ever beheld!

The fighters created an idealized form of chivalry to bring the knightly virtues to their tournaments and wars. The hearts and hands of those who served built sturdy Shires, noble Baronies, and a mighty Kingdom. And, the artisans wove it all into beauty to fill the eyes and hearts of the citizens.

As time passed, the artisans wanted more input. They needed feedback in order to determine how well they were succeeding at creating pre-17<sup>th</sup> century style artifacts. They wanted to know what part of their work could be better, and how they could improve their work in the future.

The artisans wanted to see much of the best work being done throughout Atenveldt, all at one place and time, so they could gather information, ideas, and inspiration for future projects. They wanted the impetus to complete their projects in a reasonable time and a good reason to make each special project to their highest possible standards. And, the artisans also wanted to show off their best work and win bragging rights for having made the best of the best in the greatest Kingdom of the Known World!

And so, they began the Atenveldt Arts & Sciences Competition, an annual extravaganza celebrating the Arts and Sciences within our glorious Kingdom, and the artisans who bring such beauty to life.

Ten minutes later, the first call for judges went out to all Atenveldt...

# Editors' Notes

The abbreviations and/or acronyms used regularly throughout this *Handbook* are as follows:

A&S	Arts & Sciences
KMoAS	Kingdom Minister of Arts & Sciences
SCA	Society for Creative Anachronism

In addition, throughout this *Handbook* the word “Category” is used to indicate “Category and/or Subcategory” as defined in the *Arts & Sciences Competition Rules and Regulations for the Kingdom of Atenveldt* and the *Categories for the Kingdom of Atenveldt Arts and Sciences Competition* documents. These, or their updated equivalents, may be obtained from the KMoAS (or any deputy), or via download from the Atenveldt A&S Website.

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# Training History, Certification, and Prerequisites for Judges

## History of Atenveldt A&S Judging

**In the beginning**, A&S Competition judging in Atenveldt was done by artisans who were not entered in the competition that day, but who were actively participating in the specific art they were to judge. Judging was done, quite simply, by viewing the entries and deciding which entry the judge(s) thought was the best.

The judges did the best they could, but had no training in how to judge and little real consistency in how they went about the judging process. In addition, there were no judging sheets to assist in bringing *objectivity* (concerned with the realities of the entry, dealt with without bias or prejudice, rather than with the feelings or personal opinions of the judges) to the judges' *subjectivity* (concerned with results stemming from the personal feelings or opinions of the judges). As time passed there were more entries to judge, more types of entries to judge, and the same hard-working judges striving to live up to the responsibility of judging. The entrants were also struggling to determine what the judges wanted and trying to understand exactly how the judges made their placements.

Due to the often subjective nature of judging, the variety of judging methods, and the diverse personalities, skills, and communication abilities of individual judges; misunderstandings, hurt feelings, and conflicts often resulted, even among those who did their very best to avoid problems. This situation was made even more difficult because there was no ongoing consistency concerning who set up the competitions, who ran the competitions, and who was in charge of solving any conflicts.

**Over the years**, these developing problems were addressed in piecemeal fashion, as each problem became a threat to the A&S Competitions. But, there were also positive changes that made the Arts & Sciences Competitions grow and these positive changes helped the A&S community develop into one of the major assets of Atenveldt.

One of the early positive changes was the creation of judging sheets in an attempt to bring more objectivity and consistency to the process. The Laurels spent many long hours creating detailed judging sheets to help the overloaded judges. Judging sheets have grown and changed many times over the years, with varying results, and this will continue as long as there are artisans and A&S Competitions.

Another was the creation of a Kingdom-wide Arts & Sciences Office. This office was assigned responsibility for the A&S Competitions, resulting in improved communications, consistency, and continuity in the management of the A&S Competitions and the judges.

Most recently, Her Ladyship Eden Blacksmith, while serving as Kingdom Minister of Arts & Sciences [KMoAS], and a small staff of dedicated artisans created a Judges' Certification Class with a specific curriculum and instituted the requirement of Judging Certification for all Atenveldt A&S Competition Judges. Certification addressed several widespread, ongoing problems, greatly improving the quality of A&S judging in within the Kingdom. Additionally, certification insured that all A&S judges were working with the same consistent information and created a registry with contact information for certified judges that made the job of finding judges for a competition easier.

## Current Needs

Atenveldt needs competent and qualified judges who understand the underlying principles of A&S Competitions within the Kingdom. Judges should understand the

theories and concepts that form the basis of accurate and courteous assessment of each entry. And, judges should be familiar with the mechanics required to translate and quantify these principles, theories, and concepts into consistent, fair, and objective judging of each category. With the recent upsurge in A&S Competition entries, Atenveldt needs to train more judges to lower the workload for those judges who have worked so long and faithfully.

The artisans of Atenveldt need judges who are knowledgeable, fair, consistent, and courteous. The artisans want increased commentary on their judging sheets, written courteously and including ideas for how their entries could be improved.

## Prerequisites for Prospective A&S Judges

To become an A&S Competition judge in Atenveldt it is necessary to be a part of the A&S community. The best judges are active artisans who understand the joys and difficulties of producing performances and items that enhance the SCA experience from their own personal experience and knowledge. It is also helpful (but not required) to have entered one or more A&S Competitions within Atenveldt. It is of added benefit to have been previously involved in some aspect of the preparation and running of A&S Competitions in Atenveldt.

To become an A&S Competition judge in Atenveldt it is necessary to be able to learn to carefully evaluate each entry. A judge must learn to recognize the details that determine the merit or lack of merit of each aspect of the entry and be able to quantify his conclusions on numerical scales. A judge must be able to be impartial in his evaluations and keep personal biases and opinions out of his deliberations.

To become an A&S Competition judge in Atenveldt it is necessary to be able to budget judging time so that the judging assignment can be completed in a timely fashion. Also, the judge must be able to communicate courteously, both in writing on judging sheets and face-to-face with entrants, about an entry.

To become an A&S Competition judge in Atenveldt it is necessary to be willing to spend the time to learn how to judge and to prepare before each competition, so as to have at hand all the tools and information needed for judging. It is also necessary to be willing to continue the learning process after certification by studying additional A&S, judging techniques, and the ongoing revisions to rules, categories, and judging sheets.

## The New Judges' Training & Certification Class

To better serve A&S judges in Atenveldt, we must recognize that judging is a skill that can be learned, much like any other skill. A&S judging can be learned most quickly and easily in a class taught by someone who understands the process. The revised Judges' Training & Certification Class, instituted in February 2007 (CE), includes a handbook that explains the whole process of judging clearly—this should be individually obtained and studied before taking the certification class, and should later be referenced for review before each Arts & Sciences Competition.

The revised Training & Certification Class will teach the basics of how to prepare to judge, how to use the judging sheets, and how to estimate and keep track of time at the A&S Competitions. The class will also include clear information about the mechanics of judging.

Due to the greatly expanded information in the revised certification class, as well as the basic theories that had not been previously available to all judges, all previously certified judges must take this class for certification in order to assure that all Kingdom-level A&S Competition judges have the same information and training. All certified judges are also expected to continue to learn and grow, through ongoing practice and study.

## Atenveldt A&S Judging Certification

To become a Kingdom-level A&S Competition judge in Atenveldt, certification is required. Certification is usually accomplished by taking the Training & Certification Class from an approved instructor.

When THL Eden originally set up the judging certification program, certifications were good for only two years. All original certifications prior to February 2007 (CE) have expired. **The new certifications will have no end date and are intended not to expire.** However, it is possible all judges may, in the future, be asked to take an update class if there are many substantive changes or important issues that need to be addressed. The KMoAS, and/or his Deputy for Judges & Judging Certification, may revoke the certification of a judge; in all probability this will be an extremely rare occurrence.



# The Personal Standard of Perfection

## What is a Personal Standard of Perfection?

In Atenveldt A&S Competitions, all entries are judged on their own merit, and not in comparison to other entries. All judges are expected to be as knowledgeable, objective, fair, consistent, and courteous as possible while judging. The three main tools used to achieve these expectations are a personally developed Standard of Perfection, a personally developed “Spectrum of the Art” (see “The ‘Spectrum of the Art’ in Atenveldt” section of this handbook), and the official judging sheets for each category.

It is extremely difficult to judge an entry or a category accurately, consistently, and fairly without a detailed understanding of an ideal entry for the category. This is why, in Atenveldt, A&S Competition judging is based on personally developed Standards of Perfection. The Standard of Perfection quantifies the individual judge’s knowledge of all the details that create an ideal or “perfect” example of the art or science being judged, as understood by each judge. A Standard of Perfection is an objective, detailed, and specific description of a “perfect” particular art or science item or performance, based on all an individual judge knows about the specific art, as well as how the art was used prior to the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Developing a personal Standard of Perfection and writing it down in an organized fashion for each category you may judge will increase objectivity and make your judging more consistent and fair. Reviewing your personally developed Standards of Perfection just prior to judging individual categories will help you remember all the details you wish to consider while evaluating each entry.

Each judge needs to develop a Standard of Perfection for each category or subcategory he may be asked to judge. Each individual entry in a competition will be compared to the specific judge’s personally-developed Standard of Perfection for the category in which it is entered, and not to other entries in that category. Thus, no judge need try to decide whether apples are better than oranges or bananas.

Atenveldt assigns three judges to each category and each judge uses his own personally developed Standard of Perfection while judging in order to give each entrant the benefit of more than one perspective. This broader field of knowledge, along with the various viewpoints of the multiple judges, expands the information and ideas available to the entrant and, ultimately, can improve future entries throughout the Kingdom.

## Developing a Personal Standard of Perfection

Each judge must develop his own Standard of Perfection for each category he judges. We strongly recommend that you write out each Standard of Perfection that you create. This allows you to review or improve it, and clarify your thoughts. This will help amazingly both while you are preparing for and during the judging process.

The first personally developed Standard of Perfection a judge develops should be for the category the judge knows best. It is easier to develop a first Standard of Perfection if the judge has created items or performances that fit the category and is personally experienced with the specific art or science. The more he has worked with the individual art or science, the better he understands all the aspects of an entry and the materials, tools, techniques, knowledge, and/or skills needed to create it.

Begin by gathering your thoughts about items you have made that would fit into the category for which you are building a personal Standard of Perfection. Also think about other similar items, made by other artisans, which have impressed you.

Using only your own ideas and information, write a list of objective characteristics that could help you determine the quality of an individual item. Then, divide these characteristics into five or six groups, each of which defines a particular aspect of the item (such as workmanship or beauty). For example, consider Bread—here, the characteristics may include such aspects as texture &/or feel, smell, taste &/or flavor, complexity, and visual aspects &/or decoration.

Obtain two items that belong in the category for which you have created your the trial Standard of Perfection. Note that this will work better if you did not make these items yourself. Put one of the items out of sight and focus on only the one visible item.

Ignore the concept of documentation for the moment and work with the physical item. Compare the item to one your groups/aspects. Assign this aspect a value from “1” to “10” based on the item’s merit or lack of merit. Repeat this evaluation for each of your aspects. Total all the aspect scores for this item. Set the item and its evaluation aside. Take a short break and focus your attention on something completely different.

Compare the second item to one of your aspects and assign this aspect a value from “1” to “10.” Repeat this evaluation for each of your aspects. Total the aspect scores for this second item. When you are finished, compare the total scores for each item and see if the two scores reflect your opinion of the relative overall merit of each of the items. Did the evaluations seem complete? Did you miss any important details that could be objectively assessed?

Now, obtain a copy of the Competition Judging Sheet (see “Documents Used by Judges” in this *Handbook*) for the category you are working with. Each judging sheet contains six criteria that are used for all judging at Atenveldt Kingdom-level A&S Competitions. Each criterion is defined, in italics, following the criterion name. The definitions are followed by some questions to help focus your thoughts on the specific category being judged.

Read the section in this Handbook on the Documentation criterion (see “Understanding the Judging Criteria” in this *Handbook*). Then, write a section for your Standard of Perfection about what “perfect” documentation for this category should include, especially concerning the pre-17<sup>th</sup> century examples used to model an entry for the A&S Competition.

Using your own lists, based on your trial aspects for the category and adding ideas from the official judging sheet for the category you have chosen, write an objective, detailed, and specific description of a “perfect” entry for that category. Organize this description in order using the criteria and the criteria order found on the Atenveldt A&S Competition judging sheets for easier use while judging.

This will be your first personally developed Standard of Perfection for a specific category. When judging at an A&S Competition you will need your personally developed Standard of Perfection, in conjunction with the information found on the judging sheets for each entry, to help you focus on all the specific details that will allow you to objectively evaluate, score, and comment on each entry.

Be aware that your personally developed Standard of Perfection for any category will grow and change over time as your experience as a judge and as an artisan increases. When you make these changes be sure to write them into your written Standard of Perfection so they do not get forgotten.

# Documents Used by Judges

In order to have the complete information needed to judge fairly and competently in an A&S Competition, each judge must have access to, as well as familiarity with, the *Atenveldt Arts and Sciences Judges' Certification Handbook*, the current *Arts & Sciences Competition Rules and Regulations for the Kingdom of Atenveldt*, the current *Categories for the Kingdom of Atenveldt Arts and Sciences Competition*, and all *Atenveldt Kingdom Arts & Sciences Competition Judging Sheets* pertaining to the categories he may judge.

The most current versions of any of these documents are made readily available to the general populace of Atenveldt for reference, and may be found on the Atenveldt Kingdom Ministry of A&S Website under "Documents." These may also be obtained by asking the KMoAS or any local A&S Officer (or deputy).

## The Judges' Certification Handbook

The *Atenveldt Arts and Sciences Judges' Certification Handbook* is designed to define the individual parts of the judging process and help judges understand how these parts are interwoven to create a complete and objective evaluation of each A&S Competition entry. The Handbook will help the judge understand how to prepare for judging as well as the mechanics and details of the judging process on the day of the A&S Competition.

In addition, the *Handbook* will help the judge understand what a personally developed Standard of Perfection is, and how to develop his own personally developed Standard of Perfection for each category he may judge. It is also intended to help the judge understand each part of a judging sheet, especially the criteria, numeric scales, and commentary sections.

The *Handbook* is intended to help the judge learn to integrate all the parts of the judging process into the complete procedure needed to judge both objectively and effectively on the day of the A&S Competition. And, it should also help the judge understand the time factors that govern timing at A&S Competitions and the need to keep close track of time on the competition day.

The *Handbook* also includes many optional techniques and tips that will help judges develop skills and increase efficiency while judging.

## The Competition Rules and Regulations

The A&S Competition is delineated and regulated by the *Arts & Sciences Competition Rules and Regulations for the Kingdom of Atenveldt*, which are updated annually several months before the A&S Competition by the KMoAS in consultation with the Crown.

Judges need to review the current *Rules and Regulations* before each A&S Competition in order to keep abreast of recent changes that may directly affect the judging. Judges need to have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and, in particular, the rules pertaining specifically to judges, judging, and scoring. An entire section of the *Rules and Regulations* is devoted to this subject.

Judges will be expected to know what, under the current *Rules and Regulations*, may be grounds for disqualification of an entry, such as an entry with no documentation or an entrant that has entered more than two entries in a single category. Judges also should be aware of the limitations set within the *Rules and Regulations*, such as the 10-page limit on documentation and writing entries, or the time limits for the various performance entries. In all such cases, the judges should notify the head judge of irregularities so problems may be avoided.

## The *Categories* List

All of the categories or Sub-categories open in the Atenveldt A&S Competition are contained in the document *Categories for the Kingdom of Atenveldt Arts and Sciences Competition*. This list is usually revised in concert with the *Rules and Regulations*, and the updated list is made available at [approximately] the same time as the updated *Rules and Regulations*. [Revision of the category list is expected to be a lengthy, ongoing project.]

Judges will be expected to be able to determine if an entry appears to not be appropriate in the category being judged. The head judge should be notified if there is any question about an entry's suitability for the category in which it has been entered.

## The *Competition Judging Sheets*

The *Atenveldt Kingdom Arts & Sciences Competition Judging Sheets* are the primary tool used by Atenveldt judges at the A&S Competition during the judging process. Due to the importance and complexity of the judging sheets, judging sheet elements are addressed separately in detail, as well as referenced, in other sections of the *Judges' Certification Handbook*.

Atenveldt assigns three judges to each category in which there exists at least one entry. Each of the judges assigned to a category receives an individual judging sheet for each entry within that category.

Judges are encouraged to judge and consult together when possible to share their specialized knowledge. **However, the reason for multiple judges is to give each entrant the benefit of more than one perspective.** This broader field of knowledge along with the various viewpoints of multiple judges expands the information and ideas available to the entrant. **Thus, the scoring and commentary must be determined and written individually by each judge, and the judging group should not discuss specific scores and/or content of comments.**

## The *Judge's Notebook*

Throughout this handbook you will find information and tips about items that, while **not required**, may greatly aid you as a judge. A judge's notebook is the most helpful of these items. The construction and maintenance of a judge's notebook could prove of great value to you throughout your judging career. It is useful for keeping all the information you need at your fingertips, as well as serving as a wonderful quick reference while you are judging.

To create your *Judge's Notebook*, start with a sturdy two-inch, three-ring binder. Divide the binder into three sections: Section One is for general reference materials; Section Two is for your personal category-specific information; and, Section Three is for your A&S Competition records and notes.

In **Section One**, keep your current copy of the *Atenveldt Arts and Sciences Judges' Certification Handbook*, the current year's *Arts & Sciences Competition Rules and Regulations for the Kingdom of Atenveldt*, the current year's *Categories for the Kingdom of Atenveldt Arts and Sciences Competition*, and all *Atenveldt Kingdom Arts & Sciences Competition Judging Sheets* pertaining to the categories you feel able to judge. Most of these items will be available in the "Documents" section of the Atenveldt A&S Website, or may be obtained from the KMoAS or any local A&S Officer (or deputy). You should check a few weeks before an upcoming A&S Competition to make sure you have the latest copies of these documents!

In **Section Two**, keep copies of your personally developed Standards of Perfection (see "The Personal Standard of Perfection" section of this handbook) for any categories you feel able to judge. Also, keep your personally developed Documentation Source Prototypes and Comment Prototypes for individual categories (see the "Documentation Source & Comment Prototypes" section of this handbook) here, sorted by category.

In **Section Three**, keep a list of all A&S Competitions you have judged. Be sure to organize these chronologically, with the names of the reigning King and Queen included. Be sure to include: (1) the place the competition was held; (2) the names of categories you judged; and, (3) the number of entries in each category you judged in both Open and Novice Divisions.

Also, in Section Three, keep separate, blank sheets of paper to make quick notes while at the event about comments that were difficult to word and what seemed to be the most common problems for the entrants (use these later to make your Comment Prototypes). Be careful to avoid specific entrant information or details of personal conflicts—remember, this is a notebook that could possibly be viewed by others trying to return it to its owner when misplaced.



# Understanding and Using the Judging Sheets

## Competition Divisions

There are four Divisions of competition in the Atenveldt A&S Competition, these being the Open Division, the Novice Division, the Youth Division, and the Children's Division. The fundamental Division of the A&S Competition is the Open Division, and all other Divisions follow a similar pattern but have additional restrictions of one sort or another.

The **Open Division** has no entry restrictions excepting an age requirement—entrants in the Open Division must have reached 18 years of age on (or before) the A&S Competition date. Anyone, regardless of skill level, quality of piece, or SCA rank may enter in the Open Division of the A&S Competition. Any entry that an artisan wishes to be considered towards the winning of the title Atenveldt Kingdom A&S Champion must be entered in the Open Division. All entries in the Open Division of the A&S Competition will be judged without reference to the skill level or rank of the entrant.

The Open Division is the “standard” of judging in Atenveldt A&S Competitions. All other Division judging is based on the Open Division, and scores or style of commenting are adjusted from that standard.

The **Novice Division** is restricted to entrants who have reached 18 years of age (on, or before, the A&S Competition date) and have never previously entered a Kingdom-level A&S Competition in any Kingdom of the SCA as an adult, regardless of the skill level of the artisan. Those artisans who have never entered a Kingdom-level A&S Competition may, alternately, choose to place their entries into the Open Division.

All entries in the Novice Division of the A&S Competition should be judged with awareness that the entrant may not understand the judging criteria or common ways of presenting such an entry in the Atenveldt Kingdom-level A&S Competition. Often, entries in the Novice Division may be an entrant's first attempt to create an artwork and/or to enter an A&S Competition. When judging Novice Division entries, judges should score each criterion on the judging sheets two (2) points higher than they would give a similar Open Division entry. It is important to remember that Open Division scores cannot be fairly compared to Novice Division scores. Judges should include in their comments praise of what has been done well by the entrant, and spend more time writing gentle, courteous comments and explanations of how to improve future entries for later competitions when judging the Novice Division.

The **Youth Division** is restricted to those who are 12 to 17 years of age on the A&S Competition date. Youth have Youth Division specific judging sheets, and judges require an additional Youth Division Judging Certification to judge this Division. Those interested in judging the Youth Division should consult with the A&S Ministry's Deputy for Judges & Judging Certification.

The **Children's Division** is restricted to those who are 1 to 11 years of age on the A&S Competition date. Children have Children's Division specific judging sheets, and judges require an additional Children's Division Judging Certification to judge this Division. Those interested in judging the Children's Division should consult with the A&S Ministry's Deputy for Judges & Judging Certification.

## Understanding the Judging Criteria

In Atenveldt A&S Competitions, six criteria are used when evaluating each entry. In order to consistently evaluate all entries within a category, each judge must understand the general meaning of each criterion and the individual category-specific interpretation of each criterion.

The A&S Competition judging sheets all show, regardless of category, the name of each criterion and the numeric scale used for scoring that criterion. This is followed by the general definition of the specific criterion. These general definitions are presented in italics on the judging sheets. The names of the six criteria, and their general definitions, are as follows:

1. Documentation: *Includes complete information relating to the pre-17<sup>th</sup> century example(s) used for the entry as well as other information pertinent to the entry for use by judges.*
2. Complexity &/or Difficulty: *Assessment of the scope, ambition, and difficulty of the entry.*
3. Workmanship: *The skills used and the resulting quality of work in producing the entry.*
4. Aesthetic Qualities: *The overall aesthetic effect and appeal of the entry, as perceived by the judges.*
5. Authenticity: *How closely the entrant followed pre-17<sup>th</sup> century techniques and how nearly the entrant achieved a piece that would not have been out of place in a pre-17<sup>th</sup> century cultural setting.*
6. Creativity: *The extent of the entrant's adaptation of materials, tools, methods, processes, &c, in production of the entry, and the entrant's effort to produce a unique entry.*

Each of these criteria should be scored separately, without influence from other criteria (e.g., Workmanship is judged without consideration of the Complexity &/or Difficulty of the entry). Scoring placements are made based on the merit of each individual entry or performance, without reference to other entries in the category.

Each criterion must be judged in reference to the category that is being judged. The judging sheets for each category include, for each criterion, a custom tailored series of questions the help the judge interpret how the criterion relates to entries in that specific category.

**Documentation:** *Includes complete information relating to the pre-17<sup>th</sup> century example(s) used for the entry as well as other information pertinent to the entry for use by judges.*

Documentation seems to be the criterion that both artisans and judges have the most difficulty understanding. Part of the problem is that documentation includes both “complete information relating to the pre-17<sup>th</sup> century example(s) used for the entry” and “other information pertinent to the entry for use by judges.” The information about pre-17<sup>th</sup> century example(s) is what is being judged under the criterion Documentation. The “other information” is used while evaluating some of the other judging criteria.

While judging Documentation, each judge, using information from his individual personally developed Standard of Perfection, must evaluate the information provided by the entrant. In particular, the judge will be looking for references and citations indicating what specific pre-17<sup>th</sup> century examples were models for the entry, as well as what primary or secondary evidence the entrant used to determine that their models were indeed pre-17<sup>th</sup> century.

To write and evaluate documentation provided by entrants in the A&S Competition, the judge must understand the concept of primary and secondary source materials.

Atenveldt uses standard research parameters for determining the value of references and citations because,

“Research gains credibility and respect when it is founded on authentic evidence, empirical data, original documents, rather than on interpretations, explanations and opinions. Interpretations, explanations and opinions may be important in the analysis of a topic. However, in order to trust a study, peers will usually want to see the original evidence or specific data upon which a study is based.”<sup>1</sup>

Two definitions of primary sources, made readily available to those involved in research, are as follows:

“Primary sources are original materials, created at the time of an event or soon thereafter. They are usually created by those who saw an event or collected data themselves... Sometimes, primary sources may be reports of an event from the same time period.”<sup>2</sup>

“In history, a primary source is anything that comes from the period or event under study that will help shed some light, some understanding, onto it. Such a source was created by a person living at the time. These sources are often called ‘original records’ by historians.”<sup>3</sup>

A reasonable definition for SCA A&S Competition use, built from the above definitions and SCA general practices, could be: A **primary source** is an original item, report, or record created by a pre-17<sup>th</sup> century person. For SCA A&S competition use we can add photographs or accurate printed reproductions of pre-17<sup>th</sup> century items that completely cite the originals, as well as reprints or authoritative translations of pre-17<sup>th</sup> century written documents that fully cite the original pre-17<sup>th</sup> century documents.

Two definitions of secondary sources, paralleling those of primary sources (above), are as follows:

“Secondary sources describe, interpret, analyze, evaluate, explain, or comment on a primary source or event. Secondary sources are removed from and are often written after-the-fact, with hindsight.”<sup>4</sup>

“Secondary sources are the work of people writing after the events or the period under study. Essentially, in history, secondary sources are the works of historians. They have examined the primary sources, digested them, and offer an analysis, a chronology, and judgments about the event.”<sup>5</sup>

Again, a reasonable definition for SCA A&S competition use, based upon from the above definitions and SCA general practices, could be: A **secondary source** is one that was written by a recognized authority on the subject, after 1600 AD, and describes, interprets, or comments on the primary source, and carefully cites the primary source material.

It is important to remember that secondary sources are wildly different in validity, scholarship, and quality. A researcher must be able to differentiate fact from opinion, and

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<sup>1</sup> Woolume, Jill L. “Primary & Secondary Sources in Education & Psychology.” Berkeley, CA, 2006 [cited 16 May 2007]. Available at: <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/EDP/primary.html>; INTERNET.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Bélanger, Claude. “Primary Sources in History.” Quebec, Ontario, Canada, 2006 [cited 16 May 2007]. Available at: <http://faculty.marianopolis.edu/c.belanger/quebechistory/primarysourcesinHistory.html>; INTERNET.

<sup>4</sup> Woolume, J., 2006.

<sup>5</sup> Bélanger, C., 2006.

should be able to assess the authority and credibility of secondary source authors. All secondary source information and authors should be carefully scrutinized before being cited in documentation:

“A different kind of caution is exercised when using secondary sources. Students must realize that not everything in print is true or accurate. When a question arises about the authenticity of a secondary source, consider who wrote the materials. Is this a person known to have good historical judgment? Is this person's account accurate and fair? What primary sources did this person use? Historians have found stories full of error repeated over and over in print, with one author after another copying the error from an earlier publication because no one bothered to check back to the primary materials.”<sup>6</sup>

For the Documentation criterion, a low-scoring entry might say in the documentation, for example, “In period the people wore Tunics.” The judge wants to see evidence of the time frame Tunics were worn, and how they were constructed at that time. A long, rambling dissertation with no real primary or secondary evidence, would be equally low scoring.

For this criterion, a high-scoring entry might indicate in the documentation, for example, “The tunic I have entered was based on information found in Else Østergård's book *Woven into the Earth*. (Østergård, Else. *Woven into the Earth: Textiles from Norse Greenland*. Oakville, CT: Aarhus University Press, 2004.)”

The “*other information pertinent to the entry for use by judges*” may include information about pre-17<sup>th</sup> century methods, tools, and design elements used by the entrant to prepare the entry. The judge might use this information while judging the Complexity and/or Difficulty or the Authenticity criteria. Changes the entrant made to pre-17<sup>th</sup> century usage may also be explained in the entrant's documentation. These changes could include substitutions made because pre-17<sup>th</sup> century usage contained poisonous substances or the materials are no longer available. The judge might use this information while evaluating the Creativity criterion.

**Complexity &/or Difficulty:** *Assessment of the scope, ambition, and difficulty of the entry.*

For the Complexity &/or Difficulty criterion, the judge is only concerned with how many parts are involved in the creation of the entry or how challenging or difficult it was to achieve.

For example the 2007 judging sheet for Historic Combat includes the following questions for the Complexity &/or Difficulty criterion:

“Complexity and variety of activity performed. Scope of the research—(i.e., does the entry rely solely on the work of one author or is there background information relating to the historic origins)? Did the entrant develop it from a pre-17<sup>th</sup> century source, use a modern translation, or both? What is the difficulty performing the activity? Thoroughness of presentation (how much did the entrant attempt to cover?) Appropriateness of teaching/training aids/props (to what degree did the entrant attempt to provide authentic props, aids, etc.?)”

While the 2007 judging sheet for Cartography asks,

“What was the variety used and difficulty attempted with respect to media, materials, techniques, design elements, and detail? How complex was the scope (i.e., size of work with respect to amount of detail) of the entry? Did the entrant(s)

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<sup>6</sup> National Archives and Records Administration. “Exploring Primary Sources held at the Hoover Presidential Library.” West Branch, IA, [cited 16 May 2007]. Available at: <http://www.ecommcode.com/hoover/hooveronline/HooverCRB/CRBIntro.html>; INTERNET.

undertake extended techniques (e.g., mixing paints &/or inks using pre-17<sup>th</sup> century pigments/techniques, use of mapmakers' tools, use of quills for calligraphy, etc.)? What form(s) of lettering and decoration were undertaken? What was the difficulty/complexity of the projection used and added elements (e.g., compass, rhumb lines, scale, legend, etc.)”

**Workmanship:** *The skills used and the resulting quality of work in producing the entry.*

For the Workmanship criterion, the judge is only concerned with proficiency and craftsmanship of the entry.

For example, the 2007 judging sheet for Heraldic Display includes the following questions for the Workmanship criterion:

“Did the materials, tools, and techniques used, successfully create a pre-17<sup>th</sup> century style heraldic display? Were the techniques used appropriate to the time frame and region of the model(s)? Was the entry finished appropriately? Is the Heraldic design clearly represented, and is it consistent with the time frame and culture of the model(s)?

While the 2007 judging sheet for Calligraphy & Illumination asks,

“How well did the entrant manage to control the media? Was any use of colour and shading, symbolism, and design elements (by "period" standards) appropriate and well executed? Was any calligraphy consistent throughout with respect to letterforms, ink density, spacing of letters & lines, and evenness? For illumination, was the execution of perspective and proportion with respect to the selected style well done (by "period" standards)?”

**Aesthetic Qualities:** *The overall aesthetic effect and appeal of the entry, as perceived by the judges.*

For the Aesthetic Qualities criterion, the judge is only concerned with how visually attractive, beautiful, or interesting the entry is.

For example, the 2007 judging sheet for Historical Combat includes the following questions for the Aesthetic Qualities criterion:

“Was the performance smooth? If there were any mistakes, was recovery good? Did the entrant use special costuming or props and did they enhance or detract from the performance? Did the performer(s) enjoy themselves? Was the overall effect informative and polished? How well do the separately judged parts of the demonstration fit together? Did the demonstration clearly achieve the intended the overall effect of the pre-17<sup>th</sup> century activity being demonstrated?”

While the 2007 judging sheet for Musical Composition asks,

“Does the work flow appropriately? Would the mood and tone of the work produce any effect(s) intended by the composer? Overall, would the progression and sound of the work have been accepted by trained listeners contemporary to the stated stylistic provenance of the entry?”

**Authenticity:** *How closely the entrant followed pre-17<sup>th</sup> century techniques and how nearly the entrant achieved a piece that would not have been out of place in a pre-17<sup>th</sup> century cultural setting.*

For the Authenticity criterion, the judge is only concerned with how closely does the entry relate in each particular aspect to similar items found in pre-17<sup>th</sup> century cultures.

For example the 2007 judging sheet for Calligraphy & Illumination includes the following questions for the Authenticity criterion:

“Did the entrant use alphabet(s), illumination styles, layout & design elements, illumination style(s), and symbolism appropriate to the entrant's stated time frame &/or culture for the project? Where both calligraphy and illumination are present, are the elements of the illumination appropriate to the subject matter of the text? Is the illumination style appropriate to the calligraphic style (within a pre-17<sup>th</sup> century context)? To what degree did the entrant use pre-17<sup>th</sup> century materials, tools, and techniques to produce the finished work? Overall, to what degree could the entry be mistaken for a fine pre-17<sup>th</sup> century work?”

While the 2007 judging sheet for Musical Composition asks,

“How closely did the entrant make use of appropriate pre-17<sup>th</sup> century musical theory and compositional practices? Do the mode(s), style, range(s) of part(s), proposed tempo(s), text underlay (if any), and harmonic structure of the entry follow pre-17<sup>th</sup> century practices appropriate to the entrant's stated stylistic provenance? Is the composition stylistically appropriate? Overall, would the entry have been accepted by composers &/or theorists contemporary to the stated stylistic origin of the entry?”

**Creativity:** *The extent of the entrant's adaptation of materials, tools, methods, processes, &c, in production of the entry, and the entrant's effort to produce a unique entry.*

For the Creativity criterion, the judge is only concerned with how well the entrant managed to blend his modern skills and artistic abilities with his knowledge of pre-17<sup>th</sup> century artifacts to create an interesting, appealing, and unique entry that would not be out of place in a pre-17<sup>th</sup> century culture.

For example the 2007 judging sheet for Heraldic Display includes the following questions for the Creativity criterion:

“Has the entrant used pre-17<sup>th</sup> century aesthetics, motifs, and SCA-style heraldry together to create an item that will display heraldry that could work in either a pre-17<sup>th</sup> century time and place or in the SCA environment? How well has the entrant used modern materials, techniques, and tools to create a pre-17<sup>th</sup> century effect?”

While the 2007 judging sheet for Cartography asks,

“To what degree has the entrant “personalized” the use of cartographic design elements, calligraphy, and illumination within a consistent pre-17<sup>th</sup> century cartographic style? Has the entrant copied an original map or chart, or has the entrant made a map or chart of a region or area not previously seen (perhaps of use within the “Current Middle Ages”)? How well has the entrant adapted use of modern materials, tools, and techniques towards the production of a pre-17<sup>th</sup> century effect? Overall, is this an “original” work that would have been acceptable within a pre-17<sup>th</sup> century context?”

## Interpreting the Numeric Scales

In the Atenveldt Arts & Sciences Competition we use one-to-ten (1–10) point scales for assigning scores to each of the six criteria (Documentation, Complexity and/or Difficulty, Workmanship, Aesthetic Qualities, Authenticity, and Creativity) on the judging sheet for the category being judged when evaluating an entry. In order to consistently evaluate all entries within a category, each judge must understand how to interpret these scales. Each of the criteria should be scored separately, without influence from the other criteria. Scoring placements are made based on the merit of each individual item or performance without reference to other entries in the category.

**It is important to know that a “10” on the numeric scale does not indicate “perfection.”** A judge will not find an entry that is so “perfect” that it may never be

equaled or surpassed. Every day more information becomes available about the time period covered by the SCA and the construction and use of the articles made during that period. The skill levels of the artisans of Atenveldt continue to improve, and so the bar continues to rise: What was considered a fantastic blackwork favor in AS 7 would probably be considered just average today. A score of "10" indicates a very high evaluation of a criterion, and praise should be given to the entrant(s) via a comment.

**It is equally important to know that a "1" on the scale does not indicate unacceptability.** If an entry appears to have no hope of ever being useful for any purpose, and is so ugly that people are turned to stone by just glancing at it, perhaps it may appear to be unacceptable for entry in the A&S Competition. In such a case the entry (perhaps accompanied by a mirror, for safety's sake) should be brought to the attention of the KMoAS, or his authorized representative, for a decision about the entry's appropriateness in the A&S Competition. In such a rare instance, the appropriateness of the entry in question may need to be discussed with the entrant(s). A score of "1" merely indicates a very low evaluation by a judge for a criterion. In such a case, a judge must be prepared to thoroughly explain this to the entrant(s) via comments.

For each item or performance entered in an Atenveldt A&S Competition, each of the judges of that category is given a separate judging sheet. At the top of each judging sheet is a box with an explanation of the numeric judging scales to be used by the judges while evaluating each criterion for the entry.

## The "Spectrum of the Art" in Atenveldt

The "Spectrum of the Art" in Atenveldt defines the range and midpoint of the spectrum of the art as known and practiced in Atenveldt for placement of the individual entry on the numeric scales of the judging sheet. The full spectrum of any specific art in the Atenveldt Arts and Sciences community runs from the level of knowledge and information available about that art to the beginner through all levels found in the Kingdom up to the level of knowledge and information that the expert has, including all levels of skill used by beginners through experts to create an object or performance based on that art within the Kingdom of Atenveldt.

To build an awareness of the spectrum of any specific art, each judge should try to keep current on what is being done within the Kingdom by looking at as many pieces as he can of work done throughout the Kingdom related to the art, talking to artisans both expert and beginner that work with that art, and maintaining an awareness of new references and documentation about that specific art within the SCA period that come into general use. It may be useful for the beginning or less well-traveled judge to consult with an Atenveldt expert on the specific art to gather more data on the spectrum of the art in Atenveldt. If you need help finding or contacting an expert, try asking the KMoAS or the Deputy for Judges & Judging Certification for possible contacts.

In the weeks before a competition, each judge should consider the full spectrum of the art(s) he may be judging, and determine what is the midpoint of the work in each art so he can use the spectrum midpoint as the midpoint of each individual numerical judging scale when choosing where to place a specific entry on the scales used for judging.

Both a personally developed Standard of Perfection (see "The Personal Standard of Perfection" section of this handbook) and a personally developed Spectrum of the Art in Atenveldt are needed to correctly judge each criterion for each entry in the Atenveldt Kingdom A&S Competition. The Standard of Perfection delineates and depicts in words the individual judge's knowledge of the many details that create an ideal or "perfect" example of the art or science being judged, as understood by each individual judge. The Spectrum of the Art in Atenveldt defines and determines the limits of the range and extent of the art or science as known and practiced by tyros up to experts throughout Atenveldt.

The midpoint of this Spectrum, when quantified and expressed as a number, is the midpoint (i.e., "5") on the numerical scales used for scoring all criteria on the judging sheet.

## Evaluation and Scoring

When judging each criterion, the judge should review the definition given for that criterion and the suggested questions listed on the judging sheet, and then consider where the entered item or performance should be placed on the scale for that criterion. If the entry is evaluated as an average item or performance, based on the midpoint of the judge's current Spectrum of the Art for the category being judged, it should be given a "5." If the entry is clearly better than the midpoint of the current spectrum the number circled for that criterion should range from "6" to "10." If the entry is clearly not as good as the midpoint of the current spectrum, the number circled for that criterion should range from "1" to "4."

While evaluating each individual entry it is of great importance that the judge remains objective. The judge should concentrate on the realities of the entry, based on his knowledge of the art or science, without bias or prejudice, rather than allowing any personal feelings about the entry affect his judgment.

# Judging Sheet Commentary

## Reasons and Requirements

The entrants want input. They want feedback to determine how well they are succeeding at creating pre-17<sup>th</sup> century style artifacts. They want to know where their work could be better and how to improve that work. They have often entered the A&S Competition just because they want to learn where they stand and how to improve.

The judges should try to answer those needs and desires to help the A&S in Atenveldt continue to grow. They must uphold the standards expected of A&S judges—exhibiting fairness and courtesy as well as sharing some of their knowledge. And, they must do this while keeping in mind the passage of limited time.

The *Rules and Regulations* of the Atenveldt A&S Competition (2007) state that, **“All judges must provide written commentary on the judging sheets in all criteria sections.”**

By the time a judge has called on his training as a judge, built his knowledge by developing a personal Standard of Perfection, carefully examined an entry, and determined an appropriate placement on the numeric scales, it is sometimes difficult to then write appropriate commentary, especially within the time constraints of a competition.

## How to Write Comments

Begin by remembering that you represent the A&S community as a judge and must be knowledgeable, fair, courteous, and of noble spirit. If you spend just a moment thinking how you wish to appear to the entrants or others, including the Crown (who may read your comments), you will be in a better frame of mind to write appropriate and courteous comments.

It is a good idea if the first comment in every criterion is a specific mention of what was done well. Remember that the entrant is trying to do their best. Tell them specifically what they did best in the criterion you are judging. Be enthusiastic!

It is also wise not to tell an entrant what they have done wrong; instead, suggest what they could best do to improve in a criterion. Do not write a laundry list of many improvements—it is better to present only the one, or at the most two, suggestions that would most benefit the entry.

Be courteous, giving tactful suggestions instead of comments that may be interpreted as orders. Give constructive and helpful information, but be concise—remember, you must make six comments on each judging sheet. Saying, “See me for comments...” is not a valid comment.

One of the best ways to learn how to make appropriate comments is to practice. Start by taking an item you have created yourself, print out the appropriate judging sheet, and then judge the item as if you were seeing it for the first time. Be sure to write comments carefully. Time yourself and see if you need to adjust for more efficiency. Try the suggestions found in this section of the *Judges' Certification Handbook*. Read your comments over and check to be sure they are objective, constructive, and courteous. Think about what your reaction would be if you read them from a judge of an entry of yours. Then, practice some more.

## Documentation Source and Comment Prototypes

A good suggestion is to personally develop Documentation Source Prototypes. Start with reference lists you may have written in the past and then edit these down to the best two general category references and a specific reference for various eras within our period. For your *Judge's Notebook*, stick to only pre-17<sup>th</sup> century sources, as these are often the hardest to find. For example, as a general cooking reference, you might use: Scully, Terence. *The Art of Cookery in the Middle Ages*. Rochester, NY: Boydell Press, 1995. Include these Documentation Source Prototypes, sorted by categories, in your *Judge's Notebook*. When judging, these may be used as suggested additional references while writing the Documentation criterion comments during the A&S Competition.

Another useful suggestion is to create personally developed Comment Prototypes. There are certain specific comments that could help improve an entry and raise an entrant's future score in competitions, such as how to detect and avoid raw spots in bread, or what would give a more regular appearance to blackwork. These comments often are used year after year, and often more than once in each A&S Competition.

To speed judging times, try to sit down on a day when you have no time constraints and write a courteous, concise, clear, brief explanation to explain these "standard" problem items for a category you judge. Record these comments in a list of Comment Prototypes for that category in your *Judge's Notebook*. On the day of judging, use your Comment Prototypes to help write your commentary.

After finishing judging, jot quick notes about comments that were difficult to write during the A&S Competition. Later, with time and distance from the problem, write a comment that would have worked better and add it to your Comment Prototypes in case you encounter a similar issue at another A&S Competition.

## Tips for Judging & Commentary

Several years ago Duchess Nichelle Whitewolf wrote *Ten Tips for Delivering Feedback*. This was included in the update to the original *Judge's Handbook* used for certification (December, 2004). Her advice is still excellent today, and we thank her for her kind permission to republish it here:

### Ten Tips for Delivering Feedback

Duchess Nichelle Whitewolfe

Looking through some of my documentation at work with regard to training, encouraging and offering employee reviews, I took what I thought was relevant and applied it to SCA A&S judging. These are just some ideas and one way of looking at the process. I know that in management it is necessary to note things as they occur, both good and bad. As a judge, my suggestion would be to track things on a notepad as they strike you, even if your criticisms are extremely harsh. Not ALL of your thoughts need to be delivered and it's OK to deliberate over your own comments and place them on the judging sheet if and when necessary and using a revision to create something constructive. Here are some things I have learned:

1. **Focus on the positive.** Where possible give feedback first and last. Absolutely every item can be commended in one way or another, whether it be choice of materials, the overall look itself, the way the item is displayed, etc. If nothing else one can begin with, "I am glad you chose to enter this category!" and end with, "I look forward to seeing your future efforts."
2. **Be descriptive, not evaluative.** In other words, tell what you've noticed, not what you think of it. Entrants are not always interested in what you personally

think; they are interested in what you KNOW. As a judge in a category you don't know much about, this can be very difficult, but there are particular elements that can be discussed regardless of your personal experience. If you can see pencil lines on a piece of illumination, that is something to point out, if you THINK that shade of blue clashes with the shade of orange... not something to point out.

3. **Where feedback is negative suggest alternatives where appropriate.** Feedback is not an area for open-ended suggestions. "Try something else," doesn't cut it. However, "I have had luck with using dried cranberries instead of raisins, if you like the flavor, try it!"
4. **It is normally useful to give negative feedback only about things that can be changed.** If the cartridge pleating on 12 yards of fabric is already done, don't suggest that it be fixed. The point is to continue to encourage the artist, so try, "When doing your next German skirt, run two needles an inch apart to prevent sagging between pleats."
5. **Commend risk taking and innovating.** If it is clear that someone has tried an experiment according to the documentation, be sure to point out that you have noticed. Make sure that even if the experiment itself didn't work, you encourage the effort: "This was a very logical/creative decision, and I can't wait to see what you try next time!"
6. **When giving constructive feedback, be specific.** Compliments can be generic or specific, but any criticism must be very specific. Do not, under any circumstances, leave a person guessing as to what worked and what didn't. There is an enormous difference between, "If the stitches in the hem are more consistently spaced the finished look of the piece will be tidier." and "The work is sloppy."
7. **Get to the point and avoid beating around the bush. Both negative and positive feedback should be given in a straightforward manner.** Now is not the time for a passive voice. Avoid the need for second-guessing on the part of the entrant. The whole point is to let them know what can be done better to make their pieces stronger for the future—they are counting on you to be direct. Combining your positive feedback and your "needs improvement" critique does not mean couching the words in a way that they won't notice the criticism.
8. **Avoid "need to" phrases, which send implied messages that something didn't go well.** All of your suggestions are exactly that, suggestions. Remember that entrants are not required to agree with you. Replace "should" with "could" and "must" with "may/might." That alone becomes a very different message.
9. **Be sincere and avoid giving mixed signals. Sincerity says that you mean what you say with care and respect. (Mixed messages are "yes, but" messages.)** Remember that your positive and negative messages are two separate and distinct pieces of your judging sheet. There is never a reason to combine both into one sentence. If you have something you want to say that is positive, say it and don't cancel the positive message with a criticism.
10. **When you suggest a change, describe what the result will mean to the other person.** This is very, very important. Why are you suggesting the change? Will it save the person time? Will it give a more authentic look, feel, or taste? Adding context to the suggestion has a significant impact on the person receiving the criticism because it encourages and now makes suggestion for future efforts, rather than "ripping apart" what has already been done.



# A&S Competition Time Considerations

One of the most frustrating problems for Crowns, autocrats, A&S staff, entrants, and the general populace in attendance at the A&S Competitions revolves around the timing issues at the event.

## Why is Opening Court so Late?

Very few sites allow setup the day before the event, so the autocrat staff needs to arrive first to get the basic site setup completed. This includes setting up troll tables before the troll staff can set up the paperwork needed to run troll. Troll needs to be up and running before the A&S or Crown staffs arrive, and these staffs need to arrive early enough to get through troll and set up in time to be prepared to facilitate the arrival of the entrants and general populace.

Autocrat staff must also finish getting basic chairs and tables in place in the competition entry areas and tallying areas before the A&S staff can organize the tables with category labels for placement of entries and chairs for judge and staff seating. The A&S staff must also setup the tally area with all the items needed to do the tallying and keep the completed judging sheets organized and flowing properly.

The autocrat staff also needs to do basic setup on the Royals' ready room, the champion entrant interview area, and the scroll preparation area before the Crown staff, A&S staff, and scroll preparation staff can prepare their areas for use. The autocrat staff also needs to set up the populace room and the Court area before others arrive, bringing into the site items needed for their individual activities that could get in the way of basic site setup.

Once the entrants and general populace arrive, they need to get through troll and entrant or judges' check in procedures, get dressed (if not already), and become prepared for the day's activities. Entrants need to get their entries setup in the entry area. Restricted areas always should have staff in attendance.

The Crown needs to dress for Court, get their personal staff organized, handle Crown business, make any preparations for Court with their heralds, and coordinate the timing and place of the champion candidate interviews.

All of this takes time and needs to be completed before opening Court can happen. Taking into account that many people may have to travel three hours or more just to reach the site, it is no surprise that Court may start as late as 10:00 to 11:00 AM!

Even with a very short Court and a minimum length judges meeting, it can still mean that judging may not start until noon or later. So it is essential that judges are prepared to work efficiently.

## How Long Will Judging Take?

Within the last ten years at an A&S Competition there have been categories with 14 (or more) entries. With an average time of 20 minutes to judge each entry, that one category alone could easily take the three judges almost five hours to judge!

Each judge needs to have awareness of how much time is reasonably available to judge his assigned category or categories on the A&S Competition day. He must be able to estimate how long it will take him to judge the entries assigned to him. He should compare the available time and the estimated time needed to judge and notify the head judge of any problem he foresees.

A judge needs to locate the category entries and ensure that all entries are present and accounted for, as well as checking that each entry has documentation present. Next, the judging sheets must be checked to be sure that the top portions of each judging sheet are correctly filled out. Then the entries have to be divided into Open Division entries, which are judged first, and Novice Division entries that are judged after the Open Division entries.

For each entry the judge must read the documentation, decide on a Documentation score, and provide a written comment about the entrant's documentation. For each of the other criteria, the judge must examine the entry, decide on appropriate scores, and write comments. He must complete all the paperwork by signing the sheet and possibly adding contact information.

A good rule of thumb for Open Division entries is that the bare minimum amount of time an entry can take to judge is 10 minutes, and that the more likely average time probably will be 20 minutes. Add five additional minutes to these times for Novice Division entries because of the need for more detailed comments, requiring a bit more commentary time.

To estimate the time it will take to judge a category, first determine the number of Open Division entries and the number of Novice Division entries. Next, multiply the number of open division entries by 20 (the 20-minute average judging time for Open Division entries). Then, multiply the number of Novice Division entries by 25 (the 25-minute average judging time for Novice Division entries). Finally, add these two numbers together to get the total number of minutes needed, and convert to hours if necessary.

For example, if there are six Open Division entries and two Novice Division entries in a category. Multiplying six entries by 20 minutes per entry gives you 120 minutes. Multiplying two entries by 25 minutes per entry gives you 50 minutes. Adding 120 minutes and 50 minutes gives you a total of 170 minutes, or just under three hours, as estimated judging time for the category.

In the 2006 A&S Competition, 130 entries were pre-registered in 36 categories (an average of 3.66 entries per category). Thus, an average category at that event would take about an hour and 17 minutes to judge. There were 20 Novice Division entries and three Children's Division entries. The largest category was Writing—Non-fiction, which had 11 entries, one of which was a Novice Division entry. This category would take an average of about three hours and 45 minutes to judge. However, this category actually took closer to five hours to judge—as non-fiction writing takes a long time to read, understand, and evaluate, that this category took an extra hour to judge was not at all surprising.

Each judge should be aware of how long his judging is taking and let the head judge know if there may be a delay in finishing. The judge should be especially aware of time if he is scheduled to judge more than one category. Always try to judge the largest category you are assigned first, so that if time becomes a problem your other categories may be reassigned to other judges if necessary. A personal timepiece to keep track of judging time is a good idea for each judge.

## Why does Closing Court Start and End so Late?

The timing of closing Court is closely dependant upon when opening Court began and how long opening Court ran, when judging began, how many entries and judges there were, how long final tallying and scroll preparation took, and what the Crown needed to prepare for closing Court. [Note that there are many other factors involved as well.]

For example, let's assume opening Court is at 11:00 AM and takes one half hour. Following opening Court there is a swearing in of judges and entrants, taking an additional half hour. Judging begins at 12:00 noon and takes five hours overall. Final

tallying, scroll preparation, and scroll signing takes an additional one hour. Assuming the Crown and heralds are ready at that time, then closing court will probably start sometime between 6:00 and 6:30 PM!

This is an important Kingdom event, so closing court is unlikely to be short. All the results must be announced and the Championship must be awarded. The Crown may have awards to give. The KMoAS and the autocrats also have business, such as thanking all the judges, the tallying, and other staff who have worked so hard!



# The Mechanics of Judging

## Preparing to Judge

Before the A&S Competition there are a number of things the judge can do that will improve his judging experience. The judge should decide what categories he may be qualified to judge and create his own personally developed Standard of Perfection for each of these categories.

**About two or three months before the A&S Competition,** judges who can attend the Competition and are willing to judge should contact the A&S Deputy for Judges and Judging Certification and offer to judge at the Competition. A judge should be sure to include his SCA name and contact information and to indicate specific categories he feels qualified to judge. A judge should remember he may not judge categories he is entering. If no reply has been received within two weeks check with the KMoAS to be sure the Deputy for Judges and Judging Certification has not changed from what is listed and that contact information is not out of date.

**One month before the A&S Competition,** each judge should review the *Atenveldt Arts and Sciences Judges' Certification Handbook*, the current *Arts & Sciences Competition Rules and Regulations for the Kingdom of Atenveldt*, the current *Categories for the Kingdom of Atenveldt Arts and Sciences Competition*, and all *Atenveldt Kingdom Arts & Sciences Competition Judging Sheets* pertaining to categories he may judge. Judges should also update their personal *Judge's Notebook* (if created) with any of these documents that have been revised since the last A&S Competition.

The judge should also review and, if necessary, update his personally developed Standards of Perfection, his personally developed Documentation Source Prototypes, and his personally developed Comment Prototypes. These, too, should all be in his *Judge's Notebook*, if he created one.

A month before the Competition is a good time to consider what personal contact information you will give to the entrants on their judging sheets so they may contact you if they have questions. Many judges use their email address. If you have access to a computer you might try preparing and printing out a full page of identical file folder labels with your SCA name and your email address to place beneath your signature on judging sheets. This has the advantage of being both readable and less time consuming at the event.

One week before the A&S Competition is a good time for a judge to start putting together all the things he will need on Competition day. This may include site necessities, appropriate garb, judging supplies, and personal gear. A large pack-basket will hold all these items and keep them together so nothing gets mislaid or forgotten.

Firstly, gather things needed for the trip to the site. Do this first to avoid forgetting something in the rush of leaving. These include the *Southwind* with site information (and hopefully a map), SCA membership cards, money and other things needed *en route*, plus money for the site fee. Put these in the pack basket...

Plan what to wear at the event on the Competition day. Choose garb that is better than field garb and not as fancy as formal court garb. Pay special attention to be sure the garb is more comfortable, has greater ease of movement, and is more resistant to wrinkles or damage than court garb. Choose clothing that is as cool as modestly possible (in case of overly hot judging rooms), and also include layers that may be added, without restricting the movement necessary for examining entries, in case the judging room is chilly. A simple hood and mantle can be amazingly warming! Don't forget accessories

such as belts and footwear. Check to be sure all garb is in good repair, clean, and ironed if needed. Put any items you don't intend to wear en route in the pack basket...

Next, gather your personal judging supplies. These may include your *Judge's Notebook*, a clipboard, blank paper, and writing utensils. Writing implements may include a calligraphy pen and ink, several ink pens with blue ink (this makes recognizing originals as opposed to copies easy), and multiple mechanical pencils. None of the writing supplies are required—pens and pencils are usually supplied; however, you will be surprised at how often you will wish you had brought them. These items, too, go in the pack basket...

Finally, gather those things you wish to bring for personal comfort or happiness. These may include: Medications (headache and allergy remedies are recommended)—don't forget any required prescription medications; personal luncheon gear, including a plate, eating utensils, a non-breakable goblet, and a napkin; at least one quart of bottled drinking water and some snack food; and, any other personal items you might need (hand sanitizer, tissues, etc.). Some handwork or other portable project to keep you occupied while waiting for Court might be relaxing, too. All these items should go into the pack-basket...

Most importantly, try to get a good night's sleep before leaving for the event! Plan to get to the event early so that you need not worry about surprise detours, road hazards, or traffic delays. And, don't forget your pack basket.

## The Day of the Competition

The day of the A&S Competition will be busy and can be confusing for the first-time judge. The most important thing to do is to relax and remember that your job is important and that there are people who are there specifically to help you and answer any questions if you are feeling confused.

The A&S Deputy for Judges & Judging Certification is the main person whose focus is the judges. This individual will, in most cases, be onsite and able to answer any questions you may have.

The Competition Head Judge, who may be the Deputy for Judges & Judging Certification, will be running the judging and will know who is assigned to which categories and where everything needed for judging is to be found.

**Arrival and Check In:** When you arrive at the site, first visit the troll and get your site fee paid and any waivers signed.

Next, check in with the judging staff and get any packet they may have for you. This may include maps of the judging rooms, the time and place of the judges' meeting, judging assignments, and information about where you may stow anything you brought with you.

Find the place where you need to put your personal items, and then take a tour of the site to get yourself oriented (remember to locate the restrooms). Introduce yourself to the Head Judge and ask about any details you may need to know, such as where the entries you are judging will be found and whether you and judging team for each category will be judging in a group or individually. If you have your judging assignments, ask which other judges are judging that category, how many entries are in the category, and, of these, how many are Open Division and how many are Novice Division entries.

**Judges' Meeting:** There will be a judges' meeting with the Head Judge right after opening Court. The Head Judge will use this meeting to address any important information or issues for this A&S Competition, to pass out judging assignments if you do not have them already, and to explain any changes in procedures or rules.

There is usually a judges' luncheon scheduled; if nothing has been mentioned, do ask what lunch or break arrangements have been made. Ask about any concerns you may have or information you may need at this meeting. Judging usually starts immediately following the judges' meeting.

**Preparing to Judge a Category:** Review your judging assignments and estimate the time you will need to complete each assignment (see the "How Long Will Judging Take?" section of the handbook). Notify the Head Judge if there may be a problem. If possible, always start judging with the assigned category that has the most entries. It will be easier for the Head Judge to reassign categories with fewer entries if you cannot finish all your assigned categories.

Find where the entries are located for your first assigned category. Check the entries you see against your listing of entries (or your judging sheets) to make sure they are all present. Check that you have a judging sheet for each one.

Check on each of your judging sheets that the entry is listed as being in the correct category. Separate the entries into Open Division and Novice Division as shown on the individual judging sheets. Make sure that entrant's documentation is present for each entry. If you detect any problems, report this to the Head Judge immediately.

**Judging a Category:** Pick a starting entry in the Open Division (remember, Novice Division entries are judged after the Open Division entries). Check that the entry number and the entrant number are present on the judging sheet and that the entry description seems to match the item you are looking at. If any of these things are missing or seem to be wrong, consult with the Head Judge.

If all is in order, start judging by thoroughly reading the Documentation (see the "Understanding the Judging Criteria" section of this handbook). On the judging sheet, write your comments and then mark your score (see the "Evaluation and Scoring" section in this handbook) for the Documentation criterion. Repeat this process for all the criteria on both sides (or pages) of the judging sheet. Don't forget to sign the judging sheet and be sure to include your contact information (see the "Preparing to Judge" section of this handbook).

Repeat this process for all Open Division entries. Next, review in the *Judges' Handbook* the changes to scoring and commentary that you need to make for the Novice Division entries. Judge all the Novice Division entries in the category.

Finally, check that you have all the entries completed and have signed each of your judging sheets. Turn the judging sheets in to the assigned staff or Head Judge for tallying.

**Finishing your Judging Assignments:** Congratulations!! You have finished your first judging assignment. Now repeat the process until you have finished judging all the categories you have been assigned, and all of your judging sheets have been turned in for tallying.

If a judge misses just one entry in a category and then leaves the site or cannot be found, a new judge must be assigned to re-judge the entire category so that all entrants have a level playing field. Please check back in with the Head Judge so she can check on the status of the tallying of your assignments before you leave the site or disappear.

There are often a number of small categories that need reassignment due to over-scheduled multiple-category judges or judges that, for one reason or another, did not manage to get to the event. If you have the time and energy, you may ask if there are other categories that still need judges; or, just take a well-deserved rest.

Also check with the Head Judge to see if you are expected to stay until about an hour after Court so that entrants who have questions, after reading their judging sheets, have an opportunity speak to you if they wish further information.

**After You have Finished Active Judging:** While you are waiting for final Court is a good time to add notes to your *Judge's Notebook*. Write a short commentary about the event from the standpoint of your judging experience. This history will help you remember and track your judging. This commentary can be used later to prepare a letter to the KMoAS or to the Deputy for Judges & Judging Certification suggesting improvements.

List common improvements you found that entrants could make to their entries and problems you had finding a good way to make your comments both courteous and understandable. These notes can later turn into Comment Prototypes.

Remember that the entire A&S staff really appreciates your gift of service and knowledge. They do know, having judged A&S Competitions themselves, the amount of work you have done and the sacrifices you have made for the A&S community. Please forgive them if they haven't the energy to thank you as well as they should, because they have had a long day too!

# Concluding Words

Arts and sciences competitions throughout the years have contributed significantly to the quality and quantity of the arts and sciences within the Kingdom. Some artisans value the competitions for providing ideas for improvements to their work, while others need an impetus to complete their work. Some use the competition to spur them to excel, while some just want a showcase where others can see the work being done in quiet corners of the Kingdom. There are many ways A&S competitions have increased the skills of artisans, spread new knowledge and new arts throughout the land, and made our Kingdom's beauty shine.

However, A&S competitions cannot exist without judges. Judging requires time and effort on the part of the judge, with little reward but the thanks of people who understand how much service the judge has given and the knowledge that their service will enhance the Kingdom and the lives of all who live within its borders.

Judging A&S competitions is a demanding and complex job. No one is born with all the knowledge and skills needed to judge. This Handbook, along with the Judging Certification Class, was designed to be the easiest and most complete way to quickly learn how to judge fairly, courteously, and consistently. The Handbook includes information about the three most important tools used in judging, as well as how they are interconnected to create a complete evaluation of each entry. The Handbook also explains the three main aids and techniques a judge needs for efficient judging. And, the Handbook tells all the details of the mechanics of judging.

The three most important tools for judging A&S competitions are a personally developed **Standard of Perfection**, a personally developed **Spectrum of the Art**, and the **official judging sheets** for each category. The personally developed Standard of Perfection depicts in words the individual judge's knowledge of the many details that create an ideal or "perfect" example of the art or science being judged. The personally developed Spectrum of the Art defines the range and extent of the art, and the midpoint of the spectrum, when quantified and expressed as a number, is the midpoint of the numerical scales found on the official judging sheets for each category. The official judging sheets for each category are the forms on which judges communicate their evaluation and scoring of each entry and make comments about the entry to help the entrants with future entries. In addition, the judging sheet criteria prompts contain specific questions to help focus the judge's thinking about each criterion. All three of these tools are essential to the process of judging and they always are interconnected during the process of judging.

The three most useful aids to judging are the **documents**, the judge's personally developed **prototypes and templates** for commenting, and the **Judge's Notebook**. The documents include this *Handbook*, the *Competition Rules*, the *Categories* list, and the judging sheets needed for reference while judging. The personally developed prototypes and templates improve the comments written on judging sheets and speed judging time. The valuable, personally developed *Judge's Notebook* organizes and contains most of this information in a single, easy to carry package.

The mechanics of judging describes all the details of how, and when, to prepare for judging. It also explains in detail everything a judge needs to know or do on the day of competition, from arrival through the judging process, and until the end of the day.

And finally, remember this *Handbook* is intended to be used. After certification, it is time to use the skills, try the techniques, and go forth and serve as a judge!

## Afterword

All of this skill and knowledge is worthless  
without people with noble spirits and the will to serve.

The hours of preparation and the judging time spent in willing service  
is what makes an A&S competition, with all its benefits to the Kingdom, possible.

One of the many things that make A&S judges so special  
is the willingness to give this great service  
knowing that often no one will remember to thank them.

Thank you all for taking the time to read this handbook.

Thank you for using the information to prepare to judge.

Thank you for spending your time and energy judging A&S competitions.

Thank you for remembering that every artisan brings life and beauty to our Kingdom.

Thank you for judging, not only with skill and knowledge,  
but also with a tender heart and gentle words.

Thank you.

Please remember these words at the end of a long day of judging.

Know they are heartfelt and true.

And please forgive me for not being with you  
and saying them

when you most need to hear them.

— Hastini