

GEELONG HIGHLAND GATHERING

20 March 2016

Contest Supervisors' Report

General:

The day was clear and pleasantly warm with a slight breeze – a good day for pipes. The crowd was close to the contest and were readily able to enjoy the music and spectacle.

Venue:

Goldsworthy Reserve, Corio (Melways Map 431, K9)

The new venue provided the Gathering Committee with a new set of challenges. Tucked away from a main road it was not too difficult to find.

The committee is to be commended for dealing with the reasonably constant change of venue in a manner which has not diminished the day's activities. It remains as the one gathering with a large variety of highland activities for patrons to enjoy.

Some comment was passed that this smaller ground provided a good atmosphere for the crowd to readily enjoy the activities on offer.

However the smaller arena presented some challenges in terms of band contest set-up. The two circles were sufficiently far apart so as not to impinge on one another. The larger circle size certainly assists with the current much larger band size.

The projected morning re-tune area marked on the layout diagram was unavailable as the vintage vehicles had taken this space. Several other options were discussed but were either too small, too far away, access roped off or too close to dancing platforms. Eventually an area behind the pavilion was used and proved satisfactory although a little bit of a walk. Use of the second circle in the afternoon was satisfactory.

The start line at entry to the circle was marked with flags only.

The march-off area was short (4 metres) and tight for width on the wheel and march to the flag, particularly for larger bands. It was necessary to clear the crowd from this area after each performance. It was also difficult for bands to see the flags due to the crowd moving into this area.

Facilities for the judges were adequate considering the ban on 'holes-in-the-ground' so that the second tent was unable to be erected. The afternoon session was cramped but with the co-operation and understanding of those on duty was managed satisfactorily. A good supply of cold water was available in the tent. The lunch provided was varied and plentiful.

A request was received for announcement of bands as they arrived at the contest arena.

Gate Entry & Official Program:

No problems were reported regarding entry to the venue. However several 'complaints' were received regarding the difference between the times in the printed program and the actual contest appearance of bands – see recommendations.

Band Contest Timetable & Order of Play:

The number of bands and special requests from bands made it necessary to conduct the morning contest on two circles.

The timetable was amended a number of times prior to the contest to accommodate additional requests from bands.

The final circulated draw was not required to be amended on the day. The contest commenced following the preliminary ceremonies conducted by the Gathering Committee.

Perhaps it is time to stop referring to the 'draw' as it is now constructed with so many constraints as to make a true draw impossible and the above 'timetable & order of play' is more appropriate.

Aggregate Contest:

The contest proceeded smoothly thanks to the marshalls ensuring bands arrived on time and bands being prepared to proceed at their allotted time.

Circle A was the arena for the MSR/SOM and March-off performances in the morning and all performances in the afternoon. The contest proceeded without incident other than the crowd movement in the march-off area compounding the already tight layout (see comment in notes re venue), and the early arrival of one band necessitating them waiting for judges before commencing their performance. It was good to hear some bands playing 6/8s for their march-

off performance. There was a comment regarding the tight times on the draw and perhaps the need to allow performances in one circle to be completed before the performance commenced on the other circle.

Circle B was the arena for the Medley and Dress Inspection for morning performances. At 11:30am Supervisor Margaret Johnstone reported to the Geelong Highland Gathering tent regarding a loudly amplified singing performance which prevented judges from hearing the band performances. The matter was finally resolved at 11:50am by the president of the Gathering Committee.

The complexity involved in constructing the draw to allow for the various special requests and to avoid reduction in the regulation time between performances for those competing in more than one grade continues to be an issue and is exacerbated by late requests. For this contest the timetable was amended *at least* 4 times.

Official Opening:

Geelong RSL band provided the required music.

Drum Majors' Contest:

There were 3 competitors in the Drum Majors' Flourish. The course was set up at the conclusion of the band contest by the Marshalls and Dress & Drill judges.

Victoria Scottish was the duty band.

Winner was B Casey, 2nd P Potter, 3rd J Harvey.

Finale Massed Band and Presentations:

This is always one of the highlights of the day the crowd. The 42nd Highlanders volley of rifle fire provided a surprise end to the performance.

Some ingenuity was required to form up and present massed bands for the finale.

PA system 'inadequately' set-up as those in massed bands could not hear results.

Prize moneys were unavailable on the day –posted following day. This should resolve itself now new HG treasurer has some experience of the task.

Victorian Branch Trial Rules:

Circle size –the increased size assisted large bands to work within the prescribed area.

Dual registration –Jeremy Hand from Scotch College competed with Hawthorn City.

Judging dry runs:

Ensemble –Stephen Matthews, Ian Bouch, Tim McLeod

Dress & Drill –John Harvey

Reminders to bands and competitors:

1. Any ***known or possible changes*** to entries should be notified ***as soon as possible*** to avoid constant rescheduling of the timetable and order of play.
2. Bands are reminded that their band rep is responsible for checking for any late changes when signing in and that times as listed at sign-in are always those to be followed.
3. Bands are reminded that they wait to commence their MSR/SOM performance following instructions from the piping/ensemble judge or the contest supervisor who will ensure all judges are in place.
4. Bands making use of the dual registration rule are reminded that both bands should submit in writing the names of players competing under this condition on the day of play.
5. It was apparent that not all bands are familiar with the exact conditions for the March Off. It would be prudent for all band officers to revisit the Rules relating to these matters. **[Rule B.1.13 and B.9.01]**
6. Drum Majors competing in the solo contest are reminded to place entries prior to the day if possible and that any late entries incur an additional fee.

Acknowledgements:

Well done to the Geelong Highland Gathering Association committee for another well-organised day, particularly as this was another new venue which raised its own challenges.

Thank you to all competitors and band officials for their co-operation throughout the day.

Thanks to Marshals Ian and Phil who ensured bands were in the right place at the right time.

The judges were prepared for incoming bands and presented result sheets promptly. Scorers Bev and Damon worked in their usual efficient manner with scores and crit sheets available promptly.

Margaret Johnstone supervised the contest at Circle B in the morning and assisted at Circle A in the afternoon.

Peter McLoughlin's assistance and patience in the preparation of the contest draw prior to the event was greatly appreciated and critical to the success of the contest.

Thanks to all involved –bands, officials, committee -for their co-operation and assistance.

Contest Officials:

Contest officials for the day were as follows:

Piping-John Young, Scott Nicholson
 Drumming-Harold Gillespie, Dougal McConnell
 Ensemble-Nat Russell GC OAM, Rob Bennett
 Dress & Drill-Chris Earl, Geoff Bellis
 Contest Supervisor-Barbara McLeod
 Steward/Supervisor-Margaret Johnstone OAM
 Scorers-Beverley Hayes, Damon Thomson
 Marshals-Ian Clarke, Phil Parsons

Band Contest Results:

	Aggregate Contest	Drum Corps	March Off	Dress
Gr 1	No contest			
Gr 2	1 st Hawthorn City 2 nd Moorabbin City	Hawthorn	Moorabbin	Hawthorn
Gr 3	1 st Scotch College P&D No.1 2 nd Victoria Scottish 3 rd City of Melbourne No.1	Scotch No.1	Victoria Scottish	Scotch No.1
Gr 4	1 st Warrnambool No.1 2 nd Golden City Bendigo 3 rd Geelong RSL	Golden City	Golden City	Old Scotch
Juv	1 st Scotch College P & D No.1 2 nd Scotch College P& D No.2	Scotch No.1	n/a	Scotch No.1

Recommendations:

1. That the start line between the flags be marked.
2. That flags for the March Off are beyond the crowd line (see No.3)
3. That the March Off area be set out to the correct dimensions and more clearly defined to prevent the crowd encroaching on the area –perhaps a defined 'pedestrian walkway' could be roped off and marked with a sign.
4. That sufficient weights (eg. water-filled containers) be provided to enable the second tent to be erected.
5. That consideration be given to announcing bands as they proceed to the contest arena so that the crowd can correctly identify them.
6. That consideration be given to omitting the timetable and order of play from the printed program, which of necessity is prepared some weeks ahead of the gathering, and that a separate sheet with the up-to-date draw be circulated with the program.

Barbara McLeod
Contest Supervisors
 12 April 2016

Margaret Johnstone OAM