

OFFICIAL RULES

German Blues Challenge, Friday, October 30st, 2009
Baltic Blues Challenge, Sunday, October 31st, 2009

At Schlossterrassen, Eutin, Germany

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I. General

As an affiliate organisation of the American Blues Foundation we put on once a year in Eutin two qualifying festivals for the **International Blues Challenge (IBC)** finals in Memphis which are combined together:

1. For German artists ("German Blues Challenge" – GBC)
2. For participants from the Baltic countries ("Baltic Blues Challenge" - BBC).

The winners of both competitions qualify to take part in the IBC finals in Memphis, USA (January 21st – 23rd 2010 plus travelling days). The GBC/BBC will pay for the costs.

The winners of the GBC automatically take part in the BBC next day. In case of winning the BBC too, the second placed participants will be sent to Memphis too.

All Blues musicians from Germany and the whole Baltic region who have not been nominated for the "Blues Music Awards", or it's predecessor, the "Handy Awards" of the Blues Foundation, USA, can take part. The rules for the GBC and BBC correspond to the rules of the Blues Foundation, USA, for the IBC; they are obligatory and cannot be negotiated.

The winners of the GBC and BBC in Eutin commit themselves to take part in the next year's IBC in Memphis, TN, USA, which predictably will take place at the end of January/beginning of February from Thursday to Saturday plus travel days.

The organiser of the GBC/BBC is the Baltic Blues e.V., Eutin, in cooperation with the event organizing agency "kreativ + konkret", Eutin, and the bar-restaurant "Alte Mühle", Eutin.

II. Kategorie

The GBC and BBC will each carry two categories.

1. **Band-** any act with three to five musicians. Vocalists are counted as musicians for the purpose of this competition. Both electric and acoustic instruments are allowed.
2. **Solo/Duo-** any act with one or two musicians. Vocalists are counted as musicians for the purpose of this competition. Both electric and acoustic instruments are allowed.

III. Restrictions

1. Any artist whose name has appeared on a final Handy/Blues Music Award ballot is ineligible. All other

musicians who have had peripheral and/or professional contact through performance with a Handy/Blues Music Award nominee, including but not limited to touring band members and studio musicians, are deemed eligible for the IBC.

2. An individual may not compete in more than one act in any capacity.

3. A musician cannot compete in the Band Division and the Solo/Duo Division, even if that musician represents a different Affiliate in each.

4. If an affiliate does not conduct a competition to determine who it will sponsor but instead appoints a representative, that representative may not include a board member or officer. No other entry restrictions apply. This means that management contracts, booking agent contracts, recording contracts, performance contracts (even those that include regular television or radio broadcast) and nationally distributed recordings have no bearing on eligibility.

IV. Selection of participants

1. German Blues Challenge - GBC

Only musicians from Germany may take part in the GBC. Musicians without German citizenship must be residents of Germany for at least five years. In bands at least half of its members must be German citizens.

a) Pre-selections

German blues experts, whose names will be kept anonymous, will make a pre-selection out of max. twenty acts.

b) Voting

The pre-selected acts will be named in Germany's leading blues magazine 'Bluesnews', who will lead an on-line voting. Each 'Bluesnews' reader has only **one** vote per category. The five band acts and four solo/duo acts who win the most votes will be invited to the GBC in Eutin.

2. Baltic Blues Challenge - BBC

Only musicians from the Baltic Region (Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Russia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Poland and Germany) may take part in the BBC. The participants represent their country. Musicians without the citizenship of the country they represent must have been residents of that country for at least five years. In bands at least half of its members must be citizens of the country they represent.

It is the aim of the BBC promoters to have the pre-selections run by cooperation partners in the countries of the Baltic Region.

a) Pre-selection

Same as for the GBC. In case there should be no cooperation partner available the BBC promoters have the right to nominate the participants themselves.

b) Voting

Same as for the GBC, but limited to one act per category for each country. In case there should be no cooperation partner available the BBC promoters have the right to nominate the participants themselves.

V. Registration of the participants for the GBC/BBC, Eutin

The participants of the GBC/BBC must deliver certain information and data (such as bios, pictures, copy of recent CD) to the promoters eight weeks ahead of the GBC/BBC. Details about that will be given to the participants in time.

The promoters reserve the right to disqualify participants, if they fail to fulfill these requirements in time.

VI. The competition

The Acts will perform live. The order of performance is assigned by a scientific process known as "drawing slips of paper with band names on them out of a hat." The order of time of sound-checks is in opposite order.

A chosen jury (i.e. blues journalists, blues event organisers, blues musicians), will vote the winners. The winners in each category will be sent to the IBC finals. The best performers of both contests in both categories will enter the IBC finals in Memphis, USA the following January/February at the expense of the GBC/BBC directly (without further qualifying). This includes appearances in blues bars in the Beale Street, Memphis, USA, as well as appearances at the International Blues Festival in Eutin in May of the following year. The winners of the BBC will be offered an appearance at the BluesBaltica/Bluesfest in Eutin, May next year.

The winners of the GBC automatically take part at the BBC next day. In case of winning the BBC too, the second placed participants of the BBC will be sent to Memphis too.

1. Band competition-

Every band competition is a one-day competition (GBC Friday / BBC Saturday). All bands are required to play at the same venue. The winners will be sent to the finals in Memphis. Sets will be 25 minutes long. The organizers reserves the right to change this format depending on the number of bands participating.

2. Solo/Duo competition-

Every Solo/Duo competition is a one-day competition (GBC Friday / BBC Saturday). All bands are required to play at the same venue. The winners will be sent to the finals in Memphis. Sets will be 25 minutes long. The organizer reserves the right to change this format depending on the number of bands participating.

VII. Scoring criteria

The Blues Foundation recommends that all Affiliated Organizations in their competition use our established scoring criteria. Categories include Talent, Blues Content, Stage Presence and Originality.

1. Blues content: Everyone has his or her own interpretation of what is and is not Blues. Thus, any given three-judge panel will include members with varying opinions of Blues, covering the spectrum of Blues whenever possible, from the most traditional to soul/blues and rock/blues. Bands should pick material carefully. At the Memphis semi-finals and finals, the judges are Blues professionals, not a bar crowd, and are likely to be unimpressed with song selections that are uninspired. (Call this--with all due respect to Sir Mack Rice and Wilson Pickett--the "no Mustang Sally rule.")

2. Talent: This category is self-explanatory--the act's vocal and/or instrumental skills.

3. Originality: Original work is encouraged. Cover tunes are allowed but playing the recorded rendition lick by lick is discouraged; will not be looked upon favorably by the judges; and will be reflected in scoring.

4. Stage presence: Over the years, the quality of talent has risen so dramatically that we no longer consider this an "amateur" competition. Most contestants have performed on stage enough to know that they are not simply playing music, but putting on a show. This category rates how "sellable" a band may be.

To reflect the relative importance of each category in the success of a band, a band's score in each category is weighted. Raw scores for Blues Content is multiplied by four, Talent by three and Originality and Stage Presence are multiplied by two. The total in each category represents the Weighted Score for that category. Total possible weighted score is 110.

VIII. Penalty points

A Band is penalized one point from its Total Weighted Score (see below) for each ten seconds that it runs overtime. There is no penalty for using less than the allotted time.

At the producing organization's discretion, a policy of penalty for excessive time loading-in and out will also be applied.

In addition, BBC/GBC participants can lose points for non-compliance with administrative aspects of the competition.

1-3 Data entered pre-event

4-6 Entered during Event

1) Online application was filled out completely and accurately. __ yes __ no

2) Act photo was supplied by the deadline and in the jpeg format as requested . __yes __ no

3) Act bio was supplied by the deadline and in the manner requested. __yes __no

4) Act checked in at Band Check-In/Orientation at the proper time. __yes __no

5) Act checked in for sound checks at the required time.(BBC/Saturday) __ yes __ no(GBC/Sunday) __ yes __ no

6) Act was at the proper time and ready to perform.*** (BBC/Saturday) __ yes __ no(GBC/Sunday) __ yes __ no

***Venue Coordinator have the authority to act on behalf of organizers to insure that the event goes smoothly in their designated venue. In the event that a band scheduled to play in a specific slot is not able to perform for whatever reason, the VC will have the authority to deduct a point from the band's overall weighted score for that night's competition. The next band scheduled to play will be asked to step into that slot. Should that band, for whatever reason, not be able to perform when asked, the VC has the authority to deduct a point from that band, and so on. With that in mind, The Blues Foundation strongly suggests that after a band has met with their VC for their required check-in, that they stay in the venue and are available to perform at the VC's direction, regardless of which slot they are scheduled to play. Bands that have missed their designated slot will be allowed to perform later in the night but will still suffer the loss of a point on the weighted score. These items demonstrate professionalism and seriousness about the competition or the business side of the blues.

IX. Scoring system for judges

1. All categories and weightings are as previously stated.
2. Each judge will indicate his or her Raw Score (a whole number between 1 and 10) in each category and turn that information over to the scorekeeper.
3. The scorekeeper will multiply the Raw Score in each category by the established multiplier to get each judge's Weighted Score in each category for each act. The weighted multipliers will be Blues content (4); talent (3); originality (2) and stage presence (2).
4. The Weighted Scores from each category for an act are added together to determine the acts' Total Weighted Score for each judge.
5. Any penalty points will then be deducted to obtain the act's Net Weighted Score for each judge.
6. After all acts have been judged and each act's Net Weighted Score for each judge calculated, each act will then be ranked for each judge based on that judge's order of scores, with the act receiving the judge's highest Net Weighted Score being given a ranking of 1, and so on for that judge. So, in a competition with five acts, for example, each judge ends up with the acts ranked 1 - 5 based on each judge's personal scoring habits. This results in the acts' Final Ranking Number for each judge.
7. Next, the scorer totals the Final Ranking Number from all judges for each act to determine the Gross Final Ranking. That figure is averaged (divided by the total number of judges) to Achieve the Aggregate Act Ranking. The winner is the act with the best total of Aggregate Act Ranking will advance to the finals in Memphis.
8. In the case of a tie, the scorer shall calculate the sum of all Total Weighted Scores from all judges for the tied acts. The band with the higher sum of Total Weighted Scores wins.

X. Band check-in/orientation

The venue (Schlossterrassen, Eutin) ist opened Friday **11.00h (GBC) /Saturday 08.00h (BBC)**. Band check-in time for all the competitors Friday, **12.00-14.00h (GBC) / Saturday, 09.00-11.00h (BBC)**. A 20-minute orientation will be **Friday, 14.00h (GBC) / Saturday, 11.00h (BBC)**. This orientation will review contest rules, introduce key people, and seek to resolve any questions or special problems that contestants may have. Any competitor failing to check in by the orientation without special arrangement **will be disqualified**. After the Orientation the order of appearance on stage will be fixed by drawing.

XI. Staging and equipment

The organizers will provide backline and sound. The setup on stage will include:

- a. Complete mic-set.
- b. Guitar tube amps (Fender or similar)
- c. Bass amp (Ampeg or similar)
- d. Harmonica tube amp (Fender or similar)
- e. Keyboard (Roland/Kurzweil or similar) Keyboard players may bring their own keyboards, and stands will be provided.
- f. Standard-drum kit with snare drum.

Effects racks and other auxiliary equipment are permitted. Musicians must include on their application any additional or special equipment needed. Competitors are prohibited from bringing their own amplifiers. Every effort will be made to provide suitable equipment.

Exceptions to this prohibition may only be granted pursuant to a formal written petition submitted in writing and received via mail, fax, or email to the organizers no less than 30 days prior to the competition. Any petition for an equipment waiver must include a compelling reason for exclusion. The organizer reserves the right to approve or restrict any and all equipment an entrant wishes to bring on stage.

XII. Order of performance

The order of performance is assigned by a scientific process known as "drawing slips of paper with band names on them out of a hat." The order of time of sound-checks is in opposite order.

XIII. Registration to the IBC Memphis, January, 20th – 23rd 2010

The Blues Foundation will ask participants of the IBC in Memphis (Jan., 20th – 23rd, 2010) for certain – maybe different – information and data, too. These must be delivered to the Blues Foundation before a certain dead-line which the Blues Foundation will announce in time.

The Blues Foundation reserve the right to disqualify participants, if they fail to fulfill these requirements in time.

XIV. Costs/hospitality

1. General

If participants of the competitions in Eutin or Memphis, TN, intend to book other travel arrangements than those offered by the promoters, it will be on their own expenses. In case participants are responsible for being disqualified from the competition they have to refund half of the promoters' travel expenses. In case participants are responsible for not making the trip to the competitions in Eutin or Memphis, TN, at all, they have to refund all of the promoters' travel expenses.

2. German Blues Challenge (GBC)

The promoters will provide a hotel room for 2 persons for one night incl. breakfast; resp. for two nights for the winners of the GBC. Additional diner, lunch and drinks at the venue. Any other arrangements will be on the participants' own expenses. The musicians will not be paid for playing the competition.

Refund of travel costs:

The costs of traveling **by car** will be on the promoters' expenses up to 20 Cents per km for one car for solo/duo acts; resp. max. two cars for band acts.

The costs for **public transportation** will be refunded on presenting the tickets etc. There is not refund for additional traveling by car or others.

3. Baltic Blues Challenge (BBC)

The promoters will provide a hotel room for 2 persons for **two nights** incl. breakfast. Additional diner, lunch and drinks at the venue. Any other arrangements will be on the participants' own expenses. The musicians will not be paid for playing the competition.

Refund of travel costs:

Flights: The promoters will pay for the air flights to and from Germany (Hamburg or Lübeck, including transfers in Germany); they will not refund costs for using cars and other transportations in the participants' home countries.

Only Car: The costs of traveling only by car will be on the promoters' expenses up to 20 Cents per km for one car for solo/duo acts; resp. max. two cars for band acts.

Ferries: The costs for ferries will be refunded on presenting the tickets etc.

4. IBC (Memphis, TN), January 20th- 23rd 2010

The costs of travelling to the IBC in Memphis, TN, are on the promoters' expenses as followed: Flights to and from Memphis, TN, transfers to and from hotel, hotel costs (double or triple room, without breakfast) in Memphis, TN, plus \$ 50 per person for four days as costs of living. The promoters will not refund costs for using cars and other transportations in the participants' home country. Any other arrangements will be on the participants' own expenses.

XV. Location of venue

The competition will be held at the 'Schlossterrassen', Schlossplatz, Eutin, Germany. Have a look at our HP [www. bluesfest-eutin.de](http://www.bluesfest-eutin.de), GBS/BBC, Infos Eutin'

XVI. Other points of consideration

The Baltic Blues e.V. will fix a written contract with all the acts who intend to participate in the GBC/BBC or the IBC in Memphis, TN. No act is entitled to take part in the GBC/BBC or IBC in the promoters' name and on their expenses without such a contract which is signed by both parties.

The Baltic Blues e.V. (Eutin) reserves the right to use any contestant's name, voices, pictures, visages and other likeness for the purpose of advertising, publishing and promoting the GBC, BBC and IBC.

The Baltic Blues e.V. (Eutin) reserves the right to videotape or otherwise record all GBC and BBC performances. The Baltic Blues e.V. shall retain total ownership of all recordings and programs, and reserves the right to edit the program, the right to broadcast the program, the right to copyright the program and the right to license others to use these rights.

The Blues Foundation (USA, Memphis, Tenn.) reserves the right to use any contestant's name, voices, pictures, visages and other likeness for the purpose of advertising, publishing and promoting the IBC or The Blues Foundation.

The Blues Foundation (USA, Memphis, Tenn.) reserves the right to videotape or otherwise record all IBC performances. The Blues Foundation shall retain total ownership of all recordings and programs, and reserves the right to edit the program, the right to broadcast the program, the right to copyright the program and the right to license others to use these rights.

XVII. Schedule

Friday / (GBC)

Open door participants: 11.00 h
Check in: 12.00-14.00 h
Orientation: 14.00-14.20 h
Soundchecks: 14.30-16.30 h (15 minutes/act)
Open door audience /: 17.00 h

Competition

18.00-18.40 h Band
18.40-19.20 h Solo/Duo
19.20-20.00 h Band
20.00-20.40 h Solo/Duo
20.40-21.20 h Band
21.20-22.00 h Solo/Duo
22.00-22.40 h Band
22.40-23.20 h Solo/Duo
23.20-24.00 h Band

00.15-00.30 h Winner Solo/Duo
00.30-01.00 h Winner Band
01.00-??h What ever may happen

Saturday (BBC)

Open door participants: 08.00h
Check in: 09.00-11.00h
Orientation: 11.00-11.20 h
Soundchecks: 12.00-14.30 h (15 minutes/act)
Open door audience: 15.00 h

Competition

16.00- 16.40 h Solo/Duo
16.40- 17.20 h Band
17.20- 18.00 h Solo/Duo
18.00-18.40 h Band
18.40-19.20 h Solo/Duo
19.20-20.00 h Band
20.00-20.40 h Solo/Duo
20.40-21.20 h Band
21.20-22.00 h Solo/Duo
22.00-22.40 h Band
22.40-23.20 h Solo/Duo
23.20-24.00 h Band

00.15-00.30 h Winner Solo/Duo
00.30-01.00 h Winner Band
01.00-??h What ever may happen

XVIII. CONCLUSION

The rules and the running of the IBC in Memphis, TN, are similar, but partly different from the ones of the

GBC/BBC. So at the IBC the semi finals will be in on the first two days in clubs on Beale Street, the final competition will be on the third day at the 'Orpheum'. We strongly recommend to all participants to get exact informations on the IBC in advance from the Blues Foundation's home page 'www.blues.org' .

The IBC grows more exciting each year and the competition gets better and better. Currently the Blues Foundation boasts 170 Affiliated Organizations, and more Blues organizations in more areas means that our nationwide search for talent grows more comprehensive each year. If you have questions about the IBC, please do not hesitate to call the Foundation at 901-527-2583 ext 11 or email joe@blues.org .

XIX. Contact

The organiser of the GBC/BBC is the Baltic Blues e.V., Eutin, in cooperation with the event organizing agency "kreativ + konkret", Eutin, and the bar-restaurant " Alte Mühle", Eutin.

Contact for nomination, formalities and traveling

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