

HIGHLAND GAMES BAND SURVEY RESULTS

1. What is your band's rationale for competing at a particular Highland Games? Please check all that apply. (30/30)

Answer Choices –	Responses –
–	80.00%
Distance 24	
–	70.00%
Date (Time of the year of the particular competition) 21	
–	50.00%
Cost (limiting number of games entered because of band's budget, personal outlay) 15	
–	46.67%
Venue 14	
–	40.00%
Number of other bands in attendance to compete against 12	
–	33.33%
Travel money 10	
–	30.00%
Lodging and accommodations 9	
–	30.00%
My band picks and chooses a limited number of contests for travel. 9	
–	26.67%
My band was unable to compete more due to lack of members. 8	
–	23.33%
Prize money 7	
–	20.00%
Accumulating points toward Champion Supreme in our grade. 6	
–	16.67%
My band personnel are unable to negotiate back-to-back weekends. 5	
–	16.67%
Playing requirement (Medley vs. MSR where applicable) 5	
–	13.33%
Champion Supreme Game status (versus non-CS games) 4	
–	10.00%
My band only competes in our local contest. 3	
–	3.33%
My band does not compete. 1	
Total Respondents: 30	

2. What would encourage your band to play more contests? (May through the end of September) (20/30)

More competition (# of bands); more opportunity to compete (2 for 1); proximity
 "It's a matrix of cost/distance(time)/benefit/and the product we can put on the field."

3. Would a monetary prize for Champion Supreme make your band more likely to play at more contests? (29/30)

No	20	69%	Yes	9	31%
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Two added "something to keep"—pin, trinket, etc.

4. What is your feeling about two-day contests? (29/30)

Love them! 0	0.00%--0
–	37.93%--11
Hate them! 11	
–	10.34%--3
Prefer them. 3 It gives us more opportunity to compete for the amount of travel involved.	
–	51.72%--15
Other (please specify) 15	

2 for 1—4; Out of state/if necessary—2; generally no—2; OK/neutral—5

5. Alma Highland Games will be celebrating 50 years in 2017. How does this affect your band's plans? (27/30)

My band is planning on going to Alma as usual.	25.93%--7
—	44.44%--12
My band has not yet decided but will consider attending this milestone year event.	29.63%--8
—	
My band does not plan to attend the Alma Highland Games in 2017.	
Total	27

6. Would you like it if both MSR and Medley were offered at a contest so your band could play twice? (28/30)
(where possible in regards to time)

Yes, and it would increase the likelihood of my band attending such a contest. 15	53.57%
Yes, but playing two competition selections would neither increase nor decrease the likelihood of my band's attendance at such a contest. 10	35.71%
—	10.71%
No. My band prefers only one contest performance per competition day. 3	3
—	0.00%
No, and my band would not attend such a contest. 0	0
Total	28

7. My pipe band would be inclined to compete at more Highland Games if (21/30)

We plan on 4-6 games per year regardless. We choose based on distance, venue, how much fun we have and what bands will be there. We avoid games when members come home saying it was no fun, where games people are unfriendly or where the massed bands are too long. Some games are very band friendly. Others not so much. We do Springfield bc it's closest. Milwaukee is our favorite bc the people are nicest. We hate Chicago but we usually go bc it's the biggest. We skip Waukesha bc they search bags at the gate. Minnesota is a 12+ hour drive which is too far. Alma will be a periodic regular but we try to not take the 3 day weekend every year. St. Louis usually conflicts with local gigs but we're discussing it for next year. We'll always do Columbus and Eminence. We don't like games in the middle of the summer bc the heat.

We had some better players. They didn't have families. We were younger. Nothing much the Association is at fault here.

More drummers.

More bands to compete against.

8. Here is what I believe would increase participation by pipe bands at MWPBA sanctioned contests: (20/30)

Change to MSR hurt, QMM was a nice transition from G5 to G4 competition.

Alma, need the dancing back outside for more people attending the massed bands events etc. Perception of nobody there due to lots of people indoors. people remember stands empty and see games as going downhill when a big amount of people that used to be in the stands now indoors.

Waukesha - lots of people keep bringing up they do not want to go back due to security people harassing them and nothing changes every year. Happened again this year.

Possibly too many small games to choose from now and spreads out the field of bands.

Need to make it interesting for bands to play second half of the season.

Prize money

I'm not sure. Chicago has been really improving every year and I think the new venue, innovative format for medley with concert formation and prize money have a lot to do with that

Having the contests and awards over earlier.

More bands to compete against but I don't have an answer on how to do that.

The bands like ours that always have to drive will go regardless. The key is to get the Chicago bands to travel but I have no clue how. I think attendance also depends on the bands dedication to competition. Our primary purpose is competition so traveling to games takes precedence. I also think rivalries between bands can help attendance. Champion Supreme has only been a driving force for us when we were wanting to move up a grade. Otherwise we don't care.

It would be nice if more Chicago bands would leave the city and attend more games in other cities. These bands are more centrally located and it would be easier for them. This would increase the field in smaller games and make them more attractive. We travel 600+ miles to attend the Chicago Highland Games. General effort by all bands in the MWPBA to support needs to occur or we won't have games to go to. For us, increasing travel money would help greatly especially when we usually bring 2 bands to a games.

If you want to increase attendance at the smaller venues like Kentucky or Columbus, IN, you almost need to make at least one of them for Supreme points. Maybe switching out Waukesha for one of them would work (such as Columbus--decent location). Many games are in the north end which limits some of the southern bands--though that may simply be because there are fewer from the south. If a band is in the running for champion supreme it's a motivator.

Scheduling? Some events such as Alma sometime conflict with Canadian games I think

In my opinion, games should do everything they can to offer max playing - both for soloists and bands. As a P&D organizer, I offered every solo event in all grades but limited the # of entries so we could give the soloists that did compete the best quality experience. The connection with bands is that games should manage the solo schedule so it does not run into an expanded band schedule where bands can play twice - you do that either by hiring more judges (which is probably not fiscally sensible) or by limiting the # of soloists and getting the band contest started maybe by 1pm - start with Gr5 bands playing only once and give the first few bands a bye on opening ceremonies.

Free beer

Travel money. Counter-productive to provide \$100 in travel money and charge a \$75 entry fee.

The MWPBA has good offerings for bands centered in and around Chicago. Our band is Detroit centered, and we're on the edge of 3 pipe band associations and the closest sanctioned games is over 2 hours in any direction.

Perhaps development of intra-regional contests and consider not relying on just one overall championship (which doesn't automatically discount the overall CS award for the year) - solo CS awards could remain intact.

It is always a distance for us, financial incentives help especially when we travel with two bands.

I don't have any really good ideas here. Personally I think it'd be cool if the bands or soloists could get some face time with the judges or other high level pipers/drummers (maybe only for 2 day events) to either have workshops to improve techniques, or get direct verbal feedback on playing quality and ways to improve.

Good luck. I used to think I had ideas. I don't. My ideas now are all along the lines of trying to make attending more fun than they are. Make them "not miss". How do you do that? No clue, but I'm willing to work a few ideas. I hate to lay more at the feet of the games....and it's not the explicit responsibility of the MWPBA to make the band experience "better" beyond the contest itself. But, maybe it behooves us as bands to contribute more directly to the games committees' efforts. In other words, it's real easy for us to say "Hey, you know what would be great at Games A? If they did ____!" Well, maybe we should be doing more of that, only offering to be responsible for making ____ happen. Whatever it may be.

Excellent venues and organization.