

# MISS AMERICA ORGANIZATION

## MECHANICS OF JUDGING FOR 2007 STATE PAGEANTS & 2008 LOCAL PAGEANTS

### Preliminary Competitions

Interview – 25%  
On-Stage Question – 5%  
Talent – 35%  
Evening Wear – 20%  
Lifestyle and Fitness in Swimsuit – 15%

Following the preliminary competitions, Multi-Night State Pageants are required to schedule time with their judges to conduct silent composite scoring for the number of Semi-Finalists they intend to announce for the final night of competition (some states do not have a Top Ten, some have a Top Fifteen, and others may have a Top Seven or Eight). These are the Top \_\_\_ contestants receiving the highest preliminary scores. States with more than 30 Locals will have the option of assigning composite scores to the contestants receiving the top fifteen preliminary scores. Instructions for Composite Scoring are included as Appendix “A”. This composite is scored on a scale of 1 through 10 using whole numbers. Multi-Night State Pageants may not carry forward the Interview score.

Following the Composite Scoring, the state – at its option – may have a Top Ten discussion.

### Judges Discussion

**THE DISCUSSION CANNOT – AND WILL NOT – TAKE PLACE  
UNTIL THE COMPOSITE SCORING IS COMPLETED.**

The judge’s panel is being asked to “hire” the chief spokesperson for the State/Local Organization. This person will be both the face and the voice of the organization for an entire year. In essence, she IS the brand for one year.

Almost all personnel/human resource training material in today’s marketplace includes the necessity to have feedback from all of those involved in hiring process.

The Miss America Organization recognizes the problems that have occurred in previous years, which lead to the dissolution of the practice of conducting a discussion of the finalists moving into the final round of competition. This included pressuring other judges to vote a certain way, undermining contestants (in a way in which they were spoken of) and the colluding of judges to help assure “their” outcome by lowering the scores of those contestants, (who they heard through the discussion) other judges were considering. These are serious potential problems with this concept. To this end, the Miss America Organization requires the following to occur.

**Once again, this discussion cannot – and will not – take place until the Composite Scoring is completed.** Once the Composite Scoring is completed, the judging panel will consider each of the Semi-Finalists, one at a time, and individually answer each of the following three questions.

1. *Do you believe this contestant is able to do this job of Miss State?* This question may only be answered by “yes” or “no” with no further discussion. The head judge will make a list of the contestants who receive at least one “yes” to this question. Those contestants who received all “no’s” to question number one may no longer be discussed.
2. *Do you believe this contestant wants to be Miss State and perform ALL of the job responsibilities that have been set forth?* This question will only be asked of the contestants who received a “yes” to question number one. Again, question number two may only be answered with a “yes” or a “no”. The head judge will then make a list of these contestants who have received at least one “yes” to both questions one and two. These contestants will move to round three.
3. *Do you believe this contestant possesses the personality, temperament and attitude necessary for working with all of the parties she will encounter while performing the job of the titleholder?* Again, this question may only be answered “yes” or “no”. ANY contestant, who has received at least one “yes” to all three of these questions, will then move to the final round of conversation.
4. From this “short list” of contestants, the judges may discuss why they see these contestants before them at that moment (in the discussion) as being capable of doing the job of Miss State. There may not be any comparing of contestants and there may not be any comments made regarding “who I am going for”. Discussion is limited *only* to the contestant’s ability to do the job, wanting the job, and personality/temperament/attitude. This conversation may include discussions of strengths and weaknesses in relation to these three criteria. The contestants should be discussed one at a time in the order in which they are going to compete. Judge Number One should begin the discussion of the first contestant and the discussion proceeds around the judge’s table until all judges have spoken. No judge may speak on any one contestant for more than one minute. The second contestant on this “short list” is discussed next and Judge Number Two begins this discussion. It continues, in turn, until all contestants who have received at least one “yes” to the three vital questions have been discussed.

**There may not be any decisions and/or discussions regarding placement among the judges.**

*The reason for the discussion taking place following the Composite Scoring is so that the discussion actually serves its purpose. It allows judges to learn from one another, but it does not allow the judges to “brow beat” other judges.*

### **Final Night Competition**

Saturday night On-Stage Competitions will be judged on a scale of **6 to 10** using whole numbers.

Composite – 30% (scored on a scale of 1 to 10)

Talent – 30%

Evening Wear – 20%

Lifestyle and Fitness in Swimsuit – 20%

From these scores, the Top Five contestants will be named. All previous scores will be discarded.

### **Top Five Competition**

The Top Five contestants will then compete in a final discussion session. It may be staged so that each contestant receives one question or a group discussion. Each judge will use this final phase of competition to assist him/her in ranking each contestant in order from first to fifth. A first place vote is worth 10 points, second place – 5 points, third place – 3 points, fourth place – 2 points, and a fifth place vote – 1 point.

Only from these votes will the winners and runners-up be selected. Because the points are pre-set, there is no reason to drop highs and lows in this phase of competition.

### **Tie Breakers**

#### **Tie Breaker from Preliminary Nights into Final Night Competition**

Talent (contestant with highest talent points moves on). If still tied:

Interview

Evening Wear

Lifestyle and Fitness in Swimsuit

On-Stage Question

Head-to-Head (If it is still a tie after all phases of competition are considered, the names are placed on a piece of paper and handed back to the judges and each judge circles his/her choice.)

#### **Tie Breaker from Final Night into the Top Five**

(using the same procedure as above)

Composite

Talent

Evening Wear

Lifestyle and Fitness in Swimsuit

#### **Tie Breaker for Tie Within the Top Five**

(using the same procedure as above)

The contestant with the highest number of points from the Saturday night competitions prior to going into the Top Five competition – total of Composite, Talent, Evening Wear and Lifestyle and Fitness in Swimsuit.

Composite

Talent

Evening Wear

Lifestyle and Fitness in Swimsuit

### **Single Night State Pageant**

Competitions scored on a scale of 1 through 10 using whole numbers only.

Interview – 25%

On-Stage Question – 5%

Talent – 35%

Evening Wear – 20%

Lifestyle and Fitness in Swimsuit – 15%

These competitions will select the Top Five. The Top Five will compete in the competitions described above with the same point value for the first, second, third, fourth and fifth place votes on the Final Ballot.

States which do not announce a Top Five may simply hand the five names back to the judges and have each judge rank the contestants with the pre-set scores on the “Final Ballot” form. This scoring would take place during the final production number, farewell, etc. and is appropriate for a state pageant with fewer than 10 to 12 contestants.

### **2008 Local Pageants**

Local Pageants being held to send contestants to the 2008 State Pageant will use the same judging mechanics for the Single Night State Pageant; however, Local Pageants will not announce a Top Five for a Top Five competition. The winner and runners-up will be named from the entire group of contestants. Local Pageants are required to have the auditors hand back to each judge a Final Ballot listing the Top Five contestants in competition order (not by point totals). The judges will then follow the same procedures outlined above. The outcome of the pageant will be determined solely by the results of the Final Ballot.

# **MISS AMERICA ORGANIZATION**

## ***APPENDIX A***

### **COMPOSITE SCORING AND TOP FIVE FINAL BALLOT GUIDELINES**

Composite Scoring allows each judge individually to assess his/her overall opinion of each of the Semi-Finalist's ability to fulfill the job responsibilities and requirements of a state titleholder.

It is preferable that the judges receive the names of the Semi-Finalists in the order in which they will be announced on-stage during the final night of competition. If that is not possible due to production delays, the names must be presented to the judges in a random order. They may not be presented to the judges in contestant order (the order in which they competed in preliminary competitions), by group, or by point totals.

The Composite Scoring procedures should be explained to the judges and time should be allowed for them to ask any questions. They must fully understand the process BEFORE it begins. The only people who should be in the room are the judges, auditors, and the necessary pageant executives. Everyone in the room should be extremely cautious as to any comments they may make. The fewer words spoken the better off everyone will be. Once the Composite Scoring procedure begins, judges and all pageant officials should remain silent.

Once the names of the Semi-Finalists are provided to the person designated to prepare the score sheets, he/she should prepare them for each judge and not expect the judges to write the names of the contestants onto blank score sheets.

Judges should be instructed to have all available notes before them. They cannot discuss any of the contestants prior to or during this process. It is advisable, if the room is conducive to it, to allow the judges to spread out throughout the room and make themselves very comfortable.

Once the Composite Scoring is explained, the job description presented earlier in the week should be reviewed one more time.

When everyone is ready to begin, a designated pageant official should read the first contestant's name, number, and title aloud. Once the name is called, the composite score sheet with the contestant's name on it should be handed to each judge. They will have up to one minute to review all of their notes. He/she awards the contestant a score on a scale of 1 to 10 evaluating her overall ability to perform the job responsibilities required of the titleholder. The judge should ask himself/herself, "On a scale of 1 to 10, what is the contestant's ability to be the beautiful, talented, intelligent, and well-spoken role model this state needs to perform this job?" Once the judge has placed the score on the score sheet, it is folded in half and turned into the judge's chair to give to the auditor. Once all of the score sheets have been collected for the first contestant, the second name on the list is read. The procedure repeats itself until all Semi-Finalists have received a composite score.

States with more than 30 Locals and naming a Top Ten, may at their discretion, have the judges award composite scores to the Top Fifteen Contestants and the TEN contestants with the highest composite score will move into the final night of competition.

Once the Composite Scoring is completed, the State Organization, at its discretion, may proceed to a Semi-Finalist Discussion as prescribed by the Mechanics of Judging.

Remind the Judges that the Composite Score will account for 30% of the contestant's final score before moving into the Top Five Competition. They should also be reminded that the Final Night On-Stage Competitions **MUST** be scored on a scale of **6 to 10**.

### **Final Ballot Explanation**

Once the Composite Scoring and the Semi-Finalist Discussion (if held) are completed, it is appropriate to explain the Top Five Final Ballot Competition. Judges should be instructed well ahead of time that once all On-Stage competitions are completed – Talent, Swimsuit and Evening Wear plus the Composite score – the auditors will determine the Top Five contestants. At this point, all previous points will be discarded and each of the Top Five contestants will have zero points. (Show the judges the Final Ballot so they are familiar with this ballot before it is handed to them during the final moments of the competition, so that they may review it. Obviously, this ballot should be returned to the auditors, before the judges are dismissed.)

Each judge will then be provided a Final Ballot. He/she should then list the contestants in the order he/she believes the contestants should finish. A 1<sup>st</sup> place vote will be worth 10 points, a 2<sup>nd</sup> place vote worth 5 points, a 3<sup>rd</sup> place vote worth 3 points, a 4<sup>th</sup> place vote worth 2 points and a 5<sup>th</sup> place vote worth 1 point. These points will be totaled and these points alone will determine the outcome of the pageant.

Judges must be reminded to vote their conscience and to accurately place the contestants in the order in which they individually believe the contestants should finish without any consideration to any other factors. Typically, any attempts to manipulate the outcome of the pageant can and do result in an outcome unsatisfactory to all parties.

Depending upon the size of the pageant, the Top Five contestants may or may not compete in a Top Five Competition (2008 Local Pageants will NOT have a Top Five Competition). This competition is merely to assist you in placing the contestants in order from 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup>. You are not actually judging the Top Five competition itself. If the pageant has less than 12 or so contestants, pageant officials may choose to not announce the Top Five and may simply give each judge the Top Five names and have the judges place the contestants names/titles on the Final Ballot in the order the judges feels the contestants should place. The winner and runners-up will be announced solely from the results of the Final Ballot.