



World Goldpanning Association **Competition Rules**

The following are the rules of the World Goldpanning Association (WGA) and WILL be used by ALL National Associations and Organisations organising any competition under the banner of the WGA.

CONDITIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE ORGANISER OF GOLDPANNING WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

1. The soil in or near the competition area must contain **alluvial gold**. The general public shall have access to this area as to pan gold.
2. The location or adjoining areas must be known for their **gold history** and the related monuments and places of interest shall be open for public access.
3. Various standards and forms of accommodation from hotels to camping grounds shall be available near or in the competition area.
4. Various forms of catering services, such as restaurants, cafes etc, are required in or near the competitions area.
5. The organiser shall arrange local transportation, parking and other aspects of traffic.
6. The organiser shall provide sufficient financial securities for his ability to carry through the championships.
7. The organiser is responsible for arranging an interesting programme and events – related to gold – for the whole week. Visitors in particular must be offered a chance to get acquainted with local gold history and current activities.
8. **World Goldpanning Championships shall take place at the end of the panning season. However, local climatic conditions shall be considered.**
9. Official languages of the championships are local language and English. It is also recommended to provide programs, posters, announcements etc in so many languages as possible.
10. Applications for the arrangement of Goldpanning Championships shall be delivered a minimum of two (2) years in advance to the President of WGA. He will refer the application in the annual meeting of WGA for the first hearing. The elected organiser shall present the plans and a preliminary program in the annual meeting of WGA one year before the competition.

RULES FOR THE WORLD GOLDPANNING CHAMPIONSHIPS

1. COMPETITION ADMINISTRATION

A. Organising Body

- 1) The Organising Body for any National Goldpanning Championship, European Goldpanning Championship or World Goldpanning Championship held under the rules of the World Goldpanning Association (WGA) shall be:
 - a) A National Association that is a current member of the WGA.
 - b) An Organisation of any country that is recognised by the WGA for the purpose of organising a championship.

B. Announcement of the Competition

- 1) The formal announcement of any competition is the responsibility of the organiser.
- 2) Notification of the World Championships will be made at the World Council meetings after a vote by the members present. It is then the responsibility of the organisers of the successful Nation to announce the event.
- 3) Notification of any National Event (held under these rules) should be sent to the WGA headquarters for inclusion in the WGA newsletter at least 12 months before the event. It should include, Date, Place, Time and registration requirements.

C. Categories of Participants

- 1) Each championship must include the following **official** categories:
 - a) Proficient Men
 - b) Proficient Ladies
 - c) Juniors (Under 16 years at the start of the Junior competition, both sexes)
 - d) Veterans (60 years and over at the start of the Veterans competition, both sexes)
 - e) The National Team event (**one** team only from each Nation)
- 2) As a general rule, a competitor may only compete in on **Official** category apart from the following exceptions:
 - a) Veterans may also participate in the proficient Men/Ladies competition and the National team event.
 - b) Juniors may also participate in the National team event.
 - c) National Team Event
 - i) Competitors may compete for their country (if selected) in the National team event in addition to any other category,
 - ii) Only nations who are members of the World Goldpanning Association can put an official team into the National Team event. This team is selected by the National Association which is current member of the WGA. Only one team can represent each nation.
 - iii) A National Team must contain only panners from that country, no guest panners are allowed.
 - iv) A team consists of five panners and must be split 3 men/2 ladies **or** 3 ladies/2 men.

- 3) At the discretion of the organisers the following categories may be included. These categories must take second place to the Official categories. Generally they should follow the WGA rules but the organisers may adapt them to suit their needs and this information must be published for all to see:
 - a) Beginners Men, panners who have never competed in a World Championship before.
 - b) Beginners Ladies, panners who have never competed in a World Championship before.
 - c) An open team event.
 - d) Fun events at which the organiser produces his own rules.
- 4) Competitors who chose to enter the beginners events will not be allowed to compete in any official category other than the National Team event if selected.
- 5) Any competitor will be allowed to compete in the open team and fun events.

2. THE COMPETITION SITE

A. The Arena

- 1) The panning arena **shall be a man made area**, at ground level with viewing seats for the competitors and spectators. Organisers **must not** use rivers or lakes to site the panning pools.
- 2) The boundary of the actual competition area must be clearly marked and only competitors and officials are permitted to enter this area during the contest.
- 3) The competition area for the World Championships must contain 30 individual panning pools, National Championships must contain a minimum of 10 pools.
- 4) The practice area for the World Championships must contain a minimum of 4 practice pools and for National Championships a minimum of 1 practice pool. The organisers must ensure that these are for competitors only.

B. Panning Pools

- 1) Each individual panning pool must conform to the following measurements:
 - a) Breadth (width) between 90 and 120 cm.
 - b) Length between 140 and 170 cm.
 - c) Depth of water in pool between 20 and 30 cm.
- 2) Each pool must have an area for the competitors to put down their pans and buckets (with racks for the Bateau pans) and a secure place for the tube.
- 3) Each pool must have a permanent number board displaying its number.
- 4) Only the competitor (except in the team event) and if necessary a judge will be allowed in the pool during any competition.
- 5) The movement of water in any pool must not disturb panners in other pools.

C. Practice Area

A minimum of 4 panning pools (World Championships) and 1 panning pool (National Championships) must be in the practice area. These must be near the competition area and should be constructed similar to the individual pools. The sand used in the practice area must be the same as that being used in the competition and these pools must be maintained during the day. These pools are for competitors only.

D. Video

- 1) Each and every round in all the competitions must be recorded on video tape. The picture must record all the competitions and the timing clock. These recordings must be available to the Organisers and Jury should a protest be lodged.
- 2) A copy of the finals tape must be sent to the World Goldpanning Association headquarters after the Championships and may be used by them, to promote the World Goldpanning Association and the Championships.

E. The Timing Clock

A timing clock must be in a location that can be seen by spectators and the video camera. Timing clock is not official. Official time is kept by the board of judges.

F. Competition Gold (Sample)

A sample of the size and type of the gold being used must be clearly displayed for all competitors to see throughout the competition.

G. Notice Boards

- 1) Boards for displaying heats and results must be in a prominent position close to the arena. A separate display board next to the heats/results board should be provided for general information.
- 2) The time-table for heats for each day, which must include all start times, must be published by 0900 hours daily for all to see. Once published, this programme must not be changed, except in cases of emergency.
- 3) The results from a heat must be published within on (1) hour of that heat ending. This must also happen for the remaining rounds.

3. EQUIPMENT FOR THE COMPETITION

A. The Pan

- 1) Each competitor is allowed to use his own pan, but this must conform to the following;
 - a) Maximum diameter of the pan 50 cm.
 - b) Maximum height of the pan 15 cm.
 - c) If there are any internal overhangs or groves in the pan then these must not exceed 15 mm.
 - d) The pan must be a goldpan of traditional design, goldpans that meet items A, B and C, but are not of traditional design must be submitted to the full World Goldpanning Committee for its approval. This committee meets prior to the start of the championships. In an emergency the Chief Justice may make the decision.
 - e) No other equipment belonging to any competitor is allowed.

B. The Sand and Gravel

- 1) The Bucket of Sand/Gravel
 - a) Proficient, Veterans and National Team Event Competitors. A bucket containing between 15 and 20 kg of sand/gravel. The same amount must be used for each round.
 - b) Juniors. A bucket containing between 10 and 12.5 kg of sand/gravel. The same amount must be used for each round.
 - c) Optional categories should conform to the above but 'fun' events are at the organisers discretion.
 - d) The sand/gravel mixture must not contain any native gold except for that placed there by the organisers.
 - e) The recommended mixture of the sand and gravel should be 5 parts sand to 2 parts gravel. (Gravel must not exceed 25 mm in size).

C. The Tube

Note. The tube can be made of either glass or plastic.

- 1) The size of the tube shall not exceed;
 - a) Length up to 9 cm.
 - b) Breadth (width) up to 1.5 cm.
- 2) The tube must have a push-in cap.

D. The Gold

- 1) The carat value of the gold must exceed 18.
- 2) The size of the gold must exceed 0.5 mm.
- 3) The number of flakes for each competitor in a single heat must be the same, the number of flakes between each heat and each round may differ. The number of flakes must be between the following amounts:
 - a) All heats between 5 – 12.
 - b) All finals between 7 – 12.
 - c) National team event between 10 –20.
 - d) Fun events, as the organisers wishes.
 - e) The number of flakes must not be made known until after the round is completed.
 - f) The flakes must be inserted into a firm container such as a plastic bucket (pre-filled with the correct amount of sand/gravel mix) under official supervision. The placing of the gold into the buckets must be done out of sight of any competitor.

E. Clean Water

A container of clean water must be available for the competitors to fill their tubes.

F. Identification

The organiser must provide numbers for the competitors to wear for each heat. These number must be seen from the front and rear and correspond to the pool number that the competitor is in.

4. RULES FOR THE COMPETITION

Note. This is for the Official categories only. Optional competitions should follow these rules but the organisers do have some discretion.

A. Determining the Number of Rounds

- 1) For any category with more competitors than the number of panning pools then more than one round will be organised.
- 2) For every two competitors in a round, **At Least One** (more if the organiser wishes) must qualify for the next round.
- 3) Each heat should have the same number of competitors, + or – one (1) as any other heat in a particular round. This should only happen in the early rounds because the organisers must ensure that from the quarter finals all the pools are full. If there are no shows in a heat these will count as being present for numbers to satisfy this rule.
- 4) All competitors in a heat must compete at the same time and at the same site.

B. The Draw

- 1) The draw for each round must be completely random and all competitors for a round must be part of the draw.
- 2) All heats in a round must be displayed together once drawn.

C. Preliminaries

- 1) The Call: Competitors must listen for the announcement of the heats. Any competitor failing to arrive at the competition place within 2 minutes of being called a second time **may** be disqualified.
- 2) Identification: Each competitor must wear their identification number which will be given to them prior to the start of each heat. These numbers must be seen from the front and rear and correspond to the pool number that the competitor is in.
- 3) Selection of Sand/Gravel: Each competitor will choose a bucket of sand/gravel from those reserved for that heat of the round in which they are competing.
- 4) The Tube: Each competitor will be given a tube with their panning pool number on. They must check that the number is correct and then approximately half fill their tubes with clean water from the water supplied.
- 5) Preparation: The competitor now moves to their panning pool and gets in. They must not be touching their bucket or pan, and the pan must be empty when the start signal is given.

D. The Start

- 1) On the announcement, "take your place" competitors must be in their pool. If you are not you must raise one arm in the air and gain attention of a pool side official.
- 2) Once everyone is in their pool the started will announce, "Get Ready". Competitors at this stage should be ready to start. If you are not ready you must raise one arm in the air and gain attention of a pool side official.
- 3) A signal to start will be given and you are free to touch any of your items and start panning. The competitors may sit or stand.
- 4) The False Start: In the event of a false start and no one has poured any sand/gravel into their pans, the Chief Justice can stop the contest and order a restart. (The competitor(s) responsible for this stoppage will be given a warning. If any competitors gain a second warning at any time throughout the competition they will automatically be disqualified). If any of the other competitors have already started to pour sand into their pans, the competition WILL NOT be stopped but the competitor(s) committing the offence will have three (3) minutes added to their time.

E. The Event

- 1) Using the water in their pools and their pans the competitors will wash the sand/gravel in their buckets to extract the gold flakes as quickly as they can.
- 2) The competitors may transfer the gold flakes from their pan to the tube at any time.
- 3) Sand/gravel already washed into the pool must not be taken back into the pan. Competitors will face instant disqualification for this offence.
- 4) When the competitor has finished panning he must:
 - a) Close the tube by placing the cap on securely.
 - b) Give the finishing signal, which is to raise the pan above the head. (From this time on you must not remove the cap from the tube. Competitors will face instant disqualification for this offence).
 - c) Leave the pool immediately without disturbing the other panners. Should you disturb other panners you could face disqualification.

F. National Team Event

- 1) Only Nations who are members of the WGA can put an official team into the National Team Event.
- 2) A National team must contain only panners from that country, NO guest panners are allowed.
- 3) A team consists of five (5) panners and must either be 3 male / 2 female or 3 female / 2 male.

G. THE National Team Event Rules (Amended 30 August 2000)

- 1). Each team will occupy 1 panning pool. Team members not panning may stay but must not interfere with any other National team. Verbal advice only may be given by the other members of the team.
- 2) Each team member has their own bucket of sand and gravel. They are the only ones responsible for panning the sand and gravel. They are not allowed to pass any, sand and gravel, buckets or gold between team members unless it is in the tube.
- 3) Each team member is responsible for bottling their own gold. If you are passing pans between each team member then the pan will be washed by the panner in the panning pool before it is passed on.
- 4) Under no circumstances is any member of the team other than the one panning allowed to touch, the panning pool or equipment or sand and gravel of the person in the panning pool.
- 5) All team members have their own bucket of sand and gravel. They will pan this down and bottle their own gold. Competitors one to four do not have to place the cap on the bottle. Once a competitors bucket is empty it must be placed on the opposite side of the panning pool to the side that the teams are on. Prior to leaving the panning pool competitors must wash their pans. Competitors may not pass to another team member an unwashed pan.

- 6) The fifth team member (the competitor wearing the number) has their own bucket of sand and gravel that they will pan down and bottle their own gold. When this competitor has finished they must place the cap securely on the tube and give the finishing signal, which is to raise the pan above the head and shout. From this time they must not remove the cap from the tube. When the competitor gets out of the pool he must place the tube in his pan. Only the competitor wearing the number will line up for counting, the other team members must leave the area. The fifth competitor may count the gold in the tube but this must be done within the pan. Teams will face Instant disqualification for removing the cap from the tube once they have given the finish signal.
- 7) Sand and gravel already washed into the pool must not be taken back into the pan. Competitors will face Instant disqualification for this offence. Once finished teams must leave the pool immediately without disturbing the other panners. Should you disturb other panners you could face disqualification.
- 8) On leaving the panning pools the fifth panner must follow the verification clause in the rules at section F. Verification.
- 9). The total time for the team event is thirty (30) minutes.

H. Verification (Amended 29 August 2000)

- 1). On leaving the panning pool the competitor must put the tube into the pan and carry it in that position until they reach the judging area. When they are in line in the judging area they may count the gold in their tube. This is done, by holding the pan in one hand, lifting the tube with the other hand, and, keeping the tube over their pan, they may count the gold. Once the gold is counted the tube must be returned to the pan. The pan with the tube in it must be offered to the scrutineer.
- 2). The competitor must indicate to the scrutineer(s) how many flakes they are claiming. The scrutineer(s) will check the tube and if they agree, this number is recorded and the panner signs against his name. This signature means that he agrees with the count and once signed it is final.
- 3). If the scrutineer(s) disagree(s) with the competitor they will say so and give the competitor the chance to recount the gold in the tube. If after recounting the competitor and the scrutineer(s) now agree this number is recorded and the panner signs against his name. This signature means that he agrees with the count and once signed it is final.
- 4). If there is still no agreement then the Chief Justice and/or a member of the Rules Committee will be called and the tube will be opened and the flakes counted. The panner may also request someone to be present on his behalf. In this case he will be asked to wait whilst the group is summoned. The Chief Justice and/or member of the Rules Committee are responsible for telling the scrutineer(s) how many are recorded. The panner and the Chief Justice and/or member of the Rules Committee signs against the panners name. This decision is final.

- 5). Once an agreement is reached or a decision by the Chief justice is made the panner must sign the sheet. Failure to do so may result in disqualification.
- 6). There **must be more gold** in the tube than any other substance other than water and the water must be clean enough for the judges to see and count the contents.
- 7). For each flake of gold lost a penalty time of five (5) minutes will be added to the competitors finishing time.
- 8). Individual events. If a panner finds more gold than was seeded the heat is declared null and void by the chief justice and it will be re-run as soon as possible. Instead of putting up the results on the notice board the organiser will publish that the heat was void and the time of the re-run. No results for this heat will be published. The names of those finding extra gold will be recorded and if the name appears 3 times in 3 years they will be disqualified from any event organised under the WGA rules for 3 years. Names being recorded will be made known to the WGA council at the next AGM.

Team events. If a team finds more gold than was seeded the team will be disqualified. The names of the team will be logged and if someone from that team finds more gold in an individual event then this event will be registered as one of the 3 times.

- 9). If a panner is caught cheating or is suspected of cheating the Chief Justice will be called immediately, and will suspend the panner pending a hearing. This hearing must be immediate so that if the panner is found to be innocent they may continue in the competition. The Chief Justice will immediately summon a special hearing of the Jury, this time under the chair of the WGA Vice President (or President if the Vice President is absent). They will hear all the evidence. If the charges are proved the panner will be disqualified immediately from any competition organised by the WGA or National Competition organised by a Member Association for 5 years.

5. OFFICIALS AND PROCEDURES

A. Protests

- 1) There are two types of protest:

Protest against a disqualification.

Protest against a published result.

- a) Protest against a disqualification: You may protest in writing to the Jury about a disqualification with thirty (30) minutes of the decision. This will be done by lodging USA Twenty (\$20) dollars (or local equivalent) with the organiser with your letter of protest stating the facts as you see them. If the protest is successful the money will be refunded, if the protest is not successful the money goes to the funds of the WGA.
- b) Protest against a published result: You may protest in writing to the Jury about a published result within thirty (30) minutes of the result being made public. This will be done by lodging USA Twenty (\$20) dollars (or local

equivalent) with the organiser with your letter of protest stating the facts as you see them. If the protest is successful the money will be refunded, if the protest is not successful the money goes to the funds of the WGA.

- c) Once the organiser received the fee and letter of protest he will summon the Jury to discuss the protest.
- d) All protests will be heard in English.
- e) There is no appeal from a decision by the Jury.
- f) The Jury must announce the result as soon as it is reached to the protesting competitor.
- g) This protest procedure does not apply to verification of nugget count in the competitor's tube (see verification "F").

B. The Jury

- 1). The Jury for a World Championship Event will be appointed by the organisers and will be made up of the following members who must be familiar with the WGA rules:-
 - a). 2 male panners from the professional category and from different Nations
 - b). 2 female panners from the professional category and from different Nations
 - c). 2 members of the rules committee
- 2). The Jury for a National event will contain members from the National organising committee. If there is a member of the WGA committee present then they should be consulted.
- 3). The Jury will have two roles:-

Role one is to sit in judgement on all protests

Role two is to perform a running audit on the whole competition.

- a). Role one to sit in judgement.

The number of Jury members required will be one from each group of 1a and 1b and 2 from group 1c. These members must not be from the protesting nation. This will allow for protests from nations who have supplied Jury members. The jury spokesperson will be the member of the rules committee. All jury decisions are final for the current competition but will be put into the competition report and raised at the next WGA AGM.

- b). Role two to perform a running audit on the whole competition.
Members of the Rules committee will be allowed free and full access to all the organisational areas for the purpose of ensuring full compliance with the WGA

rules and to record good practices for the benefit of other organisers. They will also stop instances where the WGA rules are being broken and offer help and advice when requested by either the organisers or a competitor. The organiser will issue to the rules committee members on the Jury passes which will gain them access to all areas of the competition area. If these Jury members find anything wrong they will stop the wrongdoing and immediately inform the Chief Justice who will on taking advice decide the course of action to be followed. A note will be made of the problem for future discussion.

Within 1 month of the competition ending the rules committee will produce a report to the President giving its views on the competition.

C. The Board of Judges

- 1) The following will be appointed by the Organisers and will be the Board of Judges. Their function is to ensure that the rules and spirit of the competition are followed at all times. They have the power to report any competitor to the Chief Justice for a breach of the rules.
 - a) **The Chief Justice.** His decision in all matters is final unless changed by the Jury under a protest. He has the power to discipline any competitor for a breach of the rules.
 - b) **Time keeper(s).** That is the official responsible for the timing of the event.
 - c) **Pool Supervisor(s).** That is the official responsible for the smooth running of the panning pools.
 - d) **Scrutineer(s).** That is the official responsible for the counting of the gold flakes at the end of each heat.
 - e) **Sand Supervisor(s).** That is the official responsible for the preparation and seeding with gold, the buckets of sand which are used in the competition.
 - f) **Number Supervisor(s).** That is the official responsible for the allocation of numbers to the competitors.
 - g) **Tube Supervisor(s).** That is the official responsible for giving out the empty tubes before the start and for the safe keeping of the used tubes.
 - h) **Data Supervisor(s).** That is the official responsible for the output of data and for publishing the heats and results.
- 2) The names of the Board of Judges, the Jury and reserves must be displayed for all to see before competition starts.
- 3) The following members of the Board of Judges are barred from competing, A. D. E. G. of this section.