

KEEP IT SIMPLE SCORING

Given that our revised Bylaws now impose a limit of 3 image submissions per competition per member, we should have more time to spend analyzing, judging, commentating and asking questions about each competition photo submitted for our consideration and edification.

I am proposing that you try this **K.I.S.S.** approach, described below, to make our photo analysis a little more objective without sacrificing all subjectivity. By considering all four essential judging criteria (Interest, Composition, Technique, and Impact) and by not letting Impact alone dictate scores (as often happens when time limitations make scoring a more hurried act), we can thus give justice to all images without personal bias overly affecting our scoring.

K.I.S.S. works like this:

- consider all 4 criteria separately in this order -- Interest, Composition, Technique, and Impact last (lest Impact overshadow the first three criteria),
- give a partial score of 1 (OK, but not great) or 2 (very well done) for each criterion,
- mentally accumulate these four individual values into an overall score,
- finally, add a judge's prerogative bonus of 1 or 2 to that score, if he/she feels the image deserves better because a 2 was just not enough for one or more criteria.

Note:

- a value of 1 (OK, but not great) is the minimum for any criterion, meaning that the total lowest score for an image by a judge would be 4, unless the judge adds a bonus point or two;
- a value of 2 (very well done) is the maximum for any criterion, meaning that the highest score for an image by a judge would be 8, unless the judge adds a bonus point;
- this assures that all criteria are considered for more balanced evaluations without sacrificing the judge's own subjectivity, and yet the resulting scores fit the traditional scoring range we have been using (4-9);
- if anyone chooses to do it their own way in assigning scores to images, no one will know, so using the K.I.S.S. approach will, in that sense, be voluntary.

Let me address some concerns raised about this scoring approach:

- KISS is not being recommended as the only way to judge images, especially if one feels he/she already has a good handle on analyzing and judging. But it may prove useful for the non-professional or beginner among us. I came up with idea originally for my own judging, and I decided to share it with the membership to use or ignore as they see fit.
- It offers a way to insure that all four criteria (Interest, Composition, Technique, and Impact) are considered and provides for assigning value points to each of these, instead of one's being bowled over by Impact alone. That is why I suggested Impact be considered last when ascribing points, even though Impact will hit us in the eye first.
- I haven't seen any images submitted that were really poor, so that a value of "1" (OK) should be given for any one criterion that doesn't merit a WELL-DONE rating of a "2".
- The minimum tallied score (all 1's for each of the four criteria) would thus garner a total of 4 points.
- The maximum tallied score (all 2's for each of the four criteria) would thus be 8 points.
- But the judge might additionally award a bonus point for any criterion he/she deems FANTASTIC (i.e., better than WELL-DONE).
- However, in no case will the net score for any image be recorded with a point value greater than "9", assuming several criteria were given bonus points that could push the net total higher.

KISS may not at first seem to be "simple". But using this approach one can quickly consider each criterion in order, give it a "1" or "2", adding up the tally mentally, and then move on to the next criterion, before reporting a net score.

The following are the **SCORING STANDARDS** that we had been urged to use in scoring images. The only problem with this approach is that it does not provide beginners and less experienced judges with a framework to consider all the important evaluation criteria. Judges comfortable with these SCORING STANDARDS, should continue to do it their way.

<u>Value</u>	<u>Evaluation Principle</u>
3 points	Significant technical deficiencies (e.g., exposure, focus, composition, etc.)
4 points	Generally weak and/or poorly presented
5 points	Some technical deficiencies; not showing any particular skill of the photographer
6 points	Some demonstration of the photographer's use of good technique and recognition of an interesting subject
7 points	Fairly strong in interest, composition and technique; good use of lighting
8 points	Well balanced; strong in interest, composition and technique; excellent use of lighting; image exhibits "artistic" interpretation
9 points	Exceptionally good; has immediate impact together with being high in interest, excellent in composition and photographer has demonstrated a sound understanding of technique and imagination

It is recognized that an image can be so strong in one or two areas that this overrides a weakness in another area. Equally important is that an image should provide "*communication*" between its maker and viewer.

I suggest further that all of us analyze all submitted images, as they are first displayed, using the proposed K.I.S.S. approach to improve how we evaluate images, and then compare our scoring with that of the judges. The reverse side of this sheet gives a score card for your individual usage. Differences from how the commentator saw each image and how the judges scored them may prompt you to pose questions to the image maker or commentator or judges. Doing this cannot but help make us better in analyzing and judging photographic images.

The only other alternative scoring method I could conjure up was to start with a score of "9" for each image and then to subtract from that initial "9" a "1" (or "2") for any of the four criteria that don't measure up to GREAT-ness (i.e., all "9's").

The only constant in life is change. It is not to be feared. Without change everything stagnates. Oh, yes! The changes had better be worth our while. So that's why we need to test them to find out if they are of value. Try this K.I.S.S. approach; if it works for you, GREAT!

(Your reaction, comments and ideas may be sent to Ed Marx at marxbusiness@olympen.com.)