

# **WILDFOWL CARVING CHAMPIONSHIPS**



## **2021 Competitor User Guide**

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## **Website Navigation**

The website navigation is very straightforward. We do not recommend using a smartphone to enter the championships, a laptop or desktop will work best for your entries. Spend time on each of the menu items to learn more about the championships. From rules to requirements, tips to critiques, it is all there waiting for you to explore.

## **Member Registration**

Membership to Wildfowl Carving Championships is free. You must be a member to compete, judge, vote, or bid in the auctions.

**Registration Form**—The registration form asks for the following:

**Username**—Use something you will remember.

**First & Last Name**—This should be your legal name.

**E-Mail Address**—Enter the email address to which you would like to receive notifications. If you have a PayPal account it is recommended that you use the same email address used for PayPal for this membership account. This will make receiving prize winnings faster and easier.

**Password**—Choose a password you will remember. The most secure passwords have a combination of letters, numbers and symbols.

**Website**—If you have a website, you may enter the URL here. Other users will be able to click on this link to visit your website.

**Country**—Select the country you live in from the drop-down menu.

**Biographical Info**—This is optional and can be where you enter a little information about yourself. Don't be shy, let the world know about you as a decoy or wildfowl carver, or as a vendor, a collector, etc.

**Social Media Links**—If you have a Facebook page, a YouTube Channel, or Instagram Page, you may enter the URL to those pages to make it easy for users to connect with you on these other platforms.

**IWCA Membership Number**—Most members of the IWCA are proud of being members of this great organization. If you are a member you have the opportunity to enter your IWCA membership number into your profile. If you include your IWCA membership number, a badge will be placed on your profile indicating you are a member. IWCA Lifetime members receive a lifetime member badge.

## **Login/Logout**

You may choose to remain logged in to the website, or you may logout and login each time you visit.

## **Profile Page Customization**

Much like other social media platforms, such as Facebook, this platform allows you to customize your profile page for others to see.

**Profile Picture**—We recommend choosing an actual photo of yourself, a head shot for your profile picture is preferred. Don't upload photos of your pet, or grandchildren, or artworks for your profile picture. Save those for your profile cover photo. The member profile picture is a photograph of yourself that you would be proud to see representing you and your decoy and wildfowl carvings in Wildfowl Carving Magazine, or on social media websites where you and your art will be promoted.

**Profile Cover Photo**—This is a photo of your choice, and could be your carvings, your company logo, and yes, even your hunting dog if you like. We recommend keeping it tasteful and for all eyes to see. After all, there are Junior carvers to consider.

**Personal Information**—The Personal Information section of your profile page can be viewed by other members. Here you may want to add more details about yourself, as well as a video link to YouTube if you like.

### **Profile Page Sections**

There are several sections to your Profile page. These are the functions and uses of those sections.

**About**—This is where your Personal Details are.

**Groups**—When you become a member of Wildfowl Carving Championships you are given a WCC Member Badge which is displayed on your Profile page, showing you are a member of WCC members group. There are several groups you will see on other members' profile pages, and maybe eventually on your own profile. These are awarded to those members who participate in certain group events, such as Beta Testers, Judges, Contributors, Vendors, Sponsors, Courageous, and Admin. When you see a badge on a member profile, click on the badge to see all the members of that group.

**Messages**—You have the ability to private message members or group message members on this platform, just like Facebook.

**Notifications**—This is where you will see notifications from WCC.

**Friends**—You may choose to solicit friendship with other members of WCC, just like on Facebook.

**Contest Entries**—This is where you can view each entry you have in the current championships, and access the entry for editing.

**Awards**—This will be where all of your award ribbons will be permanently displayed for each one of your wins. Ribbons have the year and division won on each digital ribbon awarded.

## **Preparing for Competition**

These next steps will be critical for all competitors and should be followed carefully to ensure easy entry into the competition, and fast payout of prize winnings.

### **Register**

Competitors must register with Wildfowl Carving Championships to create a membership account. Once you register, you will have your own customizable Profile Page, where you can add a profile photo, a cover photo, information about yourself, link to your website or social media pages, group and private messaging with other members, vendor lists, and much more.

[\*\*Click Here To Register\*\*](#)

### **Create a PayPal Account**

Entry Fees, Prize Money, and IWCA Membership/Renewals, will be handled digitally through PayPal.com. Use the same email address for your PayPal account as you use for registering for membership with Wildfowl Carving Championships. A PayPal account allows you to easily use a credit card or debit card, even your bank account, to securely pay and receive funds related to the championships. If you already have a PayPal account, use the email associated with your PayPal account to register with WCC. [\*\*Click to Go to PayPal\*\*](#)

### **Create a YouTube Account**

Traditional floating decoy divisions require a 30-60 second YouTube video to prove flotation and self-righting of Decoys. Decorative decoy and decorative pair divisions require a 30-60 second YouTube video proving flotation. When creating a YouTube account, a Google Account is automatically created for you, and used to manage your YouTube account. This is because Google owns YouTube. If you already have a Google account, when you go to YouTube you will automatically be logged in to your YouTube account.

[\*\*Click to Go To YouTube\*\*](#)

### **Create Your YouTube Channel**

Once you have created a YouTube account, in order to upload any videos, you must create a YouTube Channel. This is where your uploaded videos will be displayed. To create your YouTube Channel, after logging into your YouTube account, click on the account icon in the far-right upper corner of the screen. A settings menu drops down where you will select Create Channel. It will ask you a few questions; if you want to use your name or if you want to create a name to use for your channel. It can be your name, your company name, whatever you choose. We recommend you be selective; names cannot be changed.

Now that you have created your YouTube Channel, you will be able to click on the CREATE button at the top of the page to upload your videos. Each YouTube video has a unique URL link used for sharing; this will be the link you will submit when the YouTube video is required for the selected division.

## **IWCA MEMBERSHIP**

Intermediate and Novice level carvers interested in competing for IWCA Decorative Carver of the Year, or any IWCA Championship event, will be required to have a current up-to-date IWCA membership. Entries which have been paid for without a current IWCA membership will not be eligible for DCOY points, IWCA sponsored prize monies, ribbons or plaques. Don't miss out! [\*\*Renew or Become an IWCA Member\*\*](#)

### **Preparing to Enter**

To ensure your entry will go smoothly, you will want to have everything ready BEFORE clicking the enter button in the division page you want to enter.

### **Competition Level**

You will need to know the level of competition you are entering, depending upon the division or divisions you have chosen to enter into. Your level of competition is defined below, based upon past competition wins, and age in junior level. A carver may choose to move up a level, such as moving up from novice to intermediate, or moving from apprentice to master levels, but there is no going back on levels.

### **Traditional Division Levels - Master and Apprentice**

**MASTER**—A Master level competitor is a decoy carver whose decoys serve as a model or ideal to Apprentices. Any carver having attained two best of show awards is considered a Master level competitor.

**APPRENTICE**—An apprentice level competitor is a carver who is learning by practical experience under skilled carvers, or as a self-taught decoy carver. Apprentice level decoy carvers will be moved up to the master level after winning two Best of Shows as an apprentice.

### **Decorative Divisions Levels – Open, Intermediate, Novice, and Junior**

**OPEN**—Carvers who have won two Best of Shows in the Intermediate.

**INTERMEDIATE**—Carvers who have won two Best of Shows in the Novice.

**NOVICE**—Carvers who have not won two Best of Shows in the Novice.

**JUNIOR**—Carvers 17 years of age and under.

## Photographing Your Entry

Get your entry photos ready and organized. Be sure you have satisfied all of the photo requirements, including the number of photos (8), photo resolution (minimum 2000 pixels wide and high), photo size (minimum 2MB, maximum 6MB), an entry title, optional entry description, and photo titles ready for each required photo.

### Photo Requirements

Number of Photos—Six (6) required views and two (2) competitor choice close-ups.

### Digital Camera Choices

Both digital cameras and smart phones will be sufficient to photograph your entry. The most important aspect of photographing your own carvings is that you want to do it. You will save time and a lot of money by taking your own professional quality photos. We're going to guide you to doing just that.

**Setting Up to Photograph**—It will be important to designate an area for your photo shoot. This can be indoors or outdoors. You will need a flat surface to place your subject on.

**Back Drops**—There's no need for fancy light boxes to create professional quality photos of your decoys and wildfowl carvings. Placing a backdrop with no lines, such as an unwrinkled (pressed) sheet or large sheet of paper, will remove any distractions.

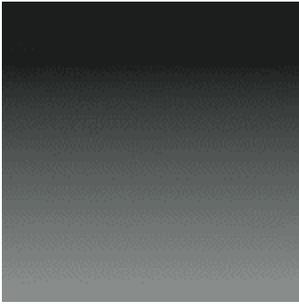
Bath Towels do not offer a professional look for a backdrop because of the texture, and wrinkly unpressed sheets are a distraction for the subject, your carving.

Two swing-arm lamps positioned on either side, each with 100W soft white bulbs, and a handheld digital camera. Very simple.



The second image is the resulting photo, when the camera was moved closer to the subject, so only the gradient background and subject are visible in the view finder or display screen of the camera or smartphone. It is best to move closer with the camera rather than to zoom in on your subject.

**Varitone Graduated Background Paper** is available in a variety of colors in various sizes from the **SetShop.com** on Etsy for \$20.



**Light Boxes**—Neewer sells affordable portable/foldable light boxes in a variety of sizes from 16"x16", 24"x24", 36"x36" and even larger if needed.

**<https://amzn.to/3fOixvh>**



## **Lighting**

If photographing outside you can employ the natural sunlight to light your subject, even on a cloudy day. Direct sunlight is not recommended, but diffused sunlight works great. A flash can help fill in the shadows when outdoors.

Indoor photography will require lighting as well. Using your flash alone will not produce good lighting, generally casting harsh shadows and highlights. One or more light sources will be best, and they don't have to be expensive to work well.

Using a translucent light box like the Neewer, two or three swing arm lights (2 on the sides, 1 above) can be used with various types of light bulbs to get the soft lighting for photographing your three dimensional art work.

## **Digital Cameras for Photos**

There are many digital cameras that will perform well enough if the camera has been set to the right settings. The most important settings will be these, generally found in the MENU of your camera.

**Camera Settings**—The settings of your camera make all the difference between good photos and bad photos. These are the important settings you will do well to check prior to taking your entry photos.

**Image Quality**—Set the camera at the highest image quality (Largest file size) for the best results.

**Light Setting**—Be sure you have the light settings set correctly, depending upon where you are photographing - Indoor (Incandescent/Fluorescent), Outdoor (Sun or Clouds). Scrolling through your choices while looking at the screen of the camera will show how the setting will affect the look of the photo. For instance, if you have the setting on an Outdoor setting, while you are indoors under incandescent/fluorescent lights, your photos will have a yellow cast to them. When switched to indoor settings, the color is corrected.

**Focus**—Auto-Focus works quite well when taking photos from around 8-12 inches, unless you are taking close-up shots of detail. For close-ups you will want to change the focus setting to "Close-up". Your camera might even have an "Auto-Close-up" setting. Another setting you might have is "Macro" which is also for close-up photography. You will have to try all of these to find the setting that best suits how you are photographing your subject, full shots or close-up shots.

**Portrait or Landscape**—Camera orientation will make a big difference. With most cameras defaulting to a landscape (wide) view, changing the camera to accommodate the subject may be necessary and prudent for the best photos. A tall thin wildfowl carving would be best photographed with the camera set up sideways, where a wide or long subject would be best photographed in the landscape position.

**Tripods**—Handheld cameras can produce good photos, however using a tripod to keep it steady will be the best choice. They come in a variety of sizes, some simple, some more complex. The GorillaPod by Joby is sold on Amazon.

### **Creating a Video for Your Entry**

Smartphones and Digital Cameras have video recording capabilities. Most of these devices can create high-definition video (HD) with the right settings. The 4K setting for photos and video is not necessary for you to take high-definition videos. Using the setting of 1080p at 60 frames per second or the equivalent will work for your 30-60 second video submission for your entry.

**Traditional Decoy Divisions**—Many of the traditional decoy divisions will require a 30-60 second video showing the self-righting of the decoy, and the decoy's flotation at approximately 20 feet.

**Decorative Decoy Divisions**—Decorative decoys will require a 30-60 second video showing the flotation from all views.

## **Transferring Photos and Videos**

Now that you have your photos and your video taken it is time to transfer these files onto your pc, mac, laptop, or tablet from your camera or your smartphone.

**Connect to Device**—There are a few different ways to transfer your photo and video files from your camera or smartphone. Digital cameras come with a cord to download photos and video to your computer. Smartphones generally use the same cord used to charge the smartphone for downloading or transferring photos and video to your laptop or tablet.

Cameras come with software that, if installed on your computer, laptop, or tablet, will open when your camera is connected, and ask if you want to import images from your camera. Usually, photos and videos are imported and arranged by date, in the “pictures” folder on your device. You also have the option of choosing where you would like to have those files imported to. You may make a new folder, and name it accordingly, “2021-WCC-Entry-Photos”, or something recognizable like this.

Some cameras and smartphones connect to your device via wi-fi or automatically to cloud-based personal storage. If you are using these options, you probably do not need detailed instructions.

Whichever choice you make, it will be important to remember where the folder of photos is located. It is a good idea to write it down if you are doing this for the first time. Once you have had a little experience with folders on your device you will see it is not as complicated as it may seem when you first begin exploring the file folders on your computer, laptop, or tablet.

## **Create a Folder for Each Entry**

On your device, browse to the folder your entry photos are stored in - “Pictures” is a common name for this folder. If you right click on the Pictures folder, a drop-down menu gives you the option to create a “new” folder and name that folder at the same time. Name the folder according to your entry, e.g., “Redhead Drake Decoy”. If you have more than one entry, repeat the process by right clicking on the “Pictures” folder to create one named folder for each entry.

## **Sort Your Entry Photos into Named Folders**

Now that you have imported your photos and video into your computer, laptop, or tablet, you’ll see the individual folders you created for your entries. Now scroll down to the day the photos were taken. Click (you might need to double click) on the folder to open and show the photos taken on that day.

Here’s a short demonstration video showing how to organize and manage your entry photos’ folders.

**[Click Here for YouTube Video Demo](#)**

If there is more than one entry's photos taken on that day, select each photo taken for an individual entry. To select these photos, hold down the CTRL Key on your keyboard and click on the photo to highlight (select) each photo you would like to copy. When all photos have been selected, right click on one of the highlighted photos and select "copy".

This copies all selected photos to temporary storage called a "clipboard". In the Pictures folder, scroll to the file you created and named for this entry and click on it to open the folder. Right click in the empty area on the right in the folder, and choose "paste" to copy the photos from the clipboard, to the folder. If you see only file names, use the view button in the navigation menu to change to an image view to see photos instead of file names.

If you have more than one entry, repeat the process for each entry. You will then have a folder for each entry and its photos.

### **Create an Entry Title and Optional Description**

Before you will be ready to enter the championships, you will want to create a title for each of your entries, or have a good idea of what you will type in for your entry title. There is also an optional entry description. In the optional "Entry Description" box you may type in more details about your entry which will be seen by the judges, such as age, seasonal plumage, act portrayed, habitat details, country of origin, etc.

*Do not enter your name or any identifying information about yourself in your entries. Any identifying marks (signature, logos, initials, etc.) on your entry must be covered. You must remain anonymous to the judges.*

You might choose to type in your entry title and entry description at the time of entry. You could write these down on a piece of paper and refer to it when creating your entry.

### **Creating a Text File**

Another way to create your entry titles and descriptions is to use your computer, laptop, or tablet, and type them in ahead of creating your entry. Creating a text file using Notepad, Word, even an email draft, will work. Having the text typed into one of these text programs and saved for later gives you the opportunity to not only proofread your text before entering, but you can also easily copy and paste the text into the appropriate places on the entry form.

### **Create Individual Photo Descriptions**

Similar to the entry description, each photo will require you to fill in the description of each photo: left view, right view, front view, back view, bottom view, top view, close-up 1 description, close-up 2 description.

### **Storing Your Photos and Videos**

Storage of your photos and videos is important. One of the best ways is to save the entry folders to a USB (thumb) drive, or a backup hard drive, or even save your folders to Cloud storage.

You should know that your images straight from the camera, when set on high quality, high resolution, or HD settings, will be larger than standard files when transferred to your computer laptop or tablet. You will want to be sure that you have enough storage space to store your files, without compressing or “optimizing” them.

You want to preserve the high-quality photos and videos in your folders. High quality means larger file size, so be sure and check your storage space to make sure you have enough, wherever you choose to store your entry photos and videos.

A USB (thumb) Drive with 60 GIGs of storage space is very inexpensive and could store your photos and videos safely for years to come.

Amazon sells a 128 GIG USB 3.0 Drive for under \$20.00

**[Click here to shop USB Drives](#)**

### **YouTube Video Upload**

For divisions requiring a 30-60 second video showing flotation and self-righting, or flotation only. Earlier steps showed how to create your YouTube account and YouTube Channel.

Once you have created your YouTube Channel, you are ready for uploading your video. Click on the link below to watch how to upload a video to YouTube...

**[How to Upload a YouTube Video](#)**

### **Entering the Championships**

Now that you have organized your photos, video, and text file into individual entry folders you are ready to create your first entry.

### **Login**

Login to the website if you are not already logged in.

### **Compete**

In the main menu, click on “Compete”.

### **Level**

From the drop-down menu, hover over your level of competition to display the divisions within your level.

### **Division**

From the next (sub) menu, click on the division you want to enter.

### **Division Gallery Page**

After clicking on the division you want to enter, once the championships begin, you will be brought to that division’s main gallery page. This is where you will see any previous entries made in the division. If you see no entries, this means you a=will be the first to enter the division.

## **Enter Division**

Click on Enter Division button. This opens the Entry Form pop-up window.

## **Entry Title and Description**

Type in the required entry title and optional description.

## **Add Photo Files**

In the Upload Photos section click on "Add Files", (gif, .jpg, .png). Here you will be selecting the photos you want to upload, after paying your entry fee at PayPal. Browse to the folder you created for this entry. Open the entry folder and select the eight (8) required photos. You may do this by selecting them one at a time, or you may highlight all eight to transfer all in one step. You can drag and drop the photos into the order of appearance you would like them to appear, **select the one you want to be the Main photo** and enter the YouTube Video link URL (if required).

## **Photo Titles**

Type in, or copy and paste from your prepared text file, the required entry title for each photo: "left side view", "right side view", "top view", etc.

## **Join Button**

When you have checked that everything is correct, click on the "Join" button, the Entry Fee window will be displayed, showing the amount required.

## **Pay Entry Fee**

Click on the "Pay with PayPal" button. This opens up a new window asking you to login to your PayPal account. You will need to do this for each entry. PayPal will ask for your authorization to be charged the entry fee. Once it is authorized, the PayPal window closes.

## **Patience**

Once the PayPal fees are paid, your photos will begin to upload, one at a time, in the entry form window. Scroll to see photos uploading. Each photo will take a minute or so to upload. This is because the minimum required file size for each photo is two (2) megabytes, the largest file size allowed is (6) megabytes. Images not within these requirements, will not upload. If this happens, you will see a notice reminding you of the requirements needed. *Check your file dimensions and file size to be sure they are correct.* Larger files take more time to upload. Be patient. When the background area of the photo changes to blue, you will see "Uploaded! You may need to scroll to see photos uploading. Photos upload in the order they are selected.

## **Entry Complete**

When all of the photos have uploaded you will see a confirmation of your entry, and be brought to the gallery page of the division you just entered. Here you will see your entry along with any others entered previous to yours. Don't worry if you are the first to enter a division, there will be more entries to come.

## **Additional Entries**

If you have more entries, you will repeat the process described above for each entry.

### **Viewing Entries on Profile Page**

Once you have completed entering all of your entries, if you go to your Profile page and click on the Contests section you will see each division you have entered. This remains private until after the judging is completed.

### **Editing Your Entry**

While the contest is still open you have the opportunity to edit your entry, in case you want to swap out photos or video submission link, or update the title and descriptions.

### **Post Judging**

When the contest has closed and the private judging is completed, prizes are awarded and prize money is sent out automatically through PayPal. If you placed in any division you will receive an email notification from WCC and an email notification from PayPal letting you know your prize money has been received.

### **Public Voting**

After the private judging is completed, the top three in the Master and Open level divisions (not auction) are opened up to public votes for two weeks for the People's Choice award. Each registered user gets one vote per division. Winners of the public vote will be displayed on the winner's profile page in the awards section. There is no prize money with Public Voting.

### **60/40 Auctions**

There are no entry fees for the auction divisions. Entries in the auction divisions are donations, and will be advertised for the two weeks following the private judging while the public voting for the Ashley Gray Memorial People's Choice Award is open for voting. Competitors receive 60% of the selling price at auction. Auction transactions will be facilitated by Escrow.com.

### **Selling Your Entry**

There will be opportunity to sell your entries, after the championships have ended. Check on the website for upcoming information and news.