

IRISH PHOTOGRAPHIC FEDERATION



ncc

national club championships



HANDBOOK 2026

Table of Contents

	<i>Page</i>
1 INTRODUCTION <hr/>	02
2 THE WEEKEND <hr/>	03
3 THE COMPETITION <hr/>	04
4 ENTERING THE COMPETITION <hr/>	07
5 JUDGING <hr/>	11
CALENDAR <hr/>	12
CHECKLIST <hr/>	13

1. Introduction

I am delighted to welcome you to the handbook for the IPF National Club Championships 2026, which sets out the conditions for entry and provides the information clubs need to take part in this year's competition.

The National Club Championships weekend is one of the most important weekends in the IPF calendar. It is a celebration of club photography, printmaking, creativity and commitment, and it brings together photographers from across the country to showcase the strength of work being produced in our federation of clubs. The Championships are an opportunity not only to compete, but to meet, exchange ideas, see outstanding print work on display and enjoy the company of fellow photographers.

This year's weekend takes place, once again, in Mullingar over Saturday 23rd and Sunday 24th of May. Alongside the Championships, we will hold our May Distinction Sitting on Saturday in the Mullingar Arts Centre, while judging of the Championships will take place in the Atrium, County Buildings. On Saturday afternoon, following the Distinctions sitting, there will be a lecture by Ross McKelvey - *A Passion for Prints* where Ross will share an eclectic mix of award-winning prints across several genres. Afterwards we will all meet up and spend time socialising with friends and colleagues from across the community.

On Sunday morning, we will hold the Annual General Meeting before continuing with judging of the colour panels and concluding with the presentation ceremony. This year's AGM is an especially significant one for the Federation and forms an important part of a weekend that brings together competition, governance, fellowship and the wider life of the IPF.

I want to thank all those involved in organising the weekend, including the National Club Championships team, the Distinctions team, our judges, lecturers, volunteers, and all those working behind the scenes to make the event possible. Events such as this depend on a great deal of voluntary effort, planning and goodwill, and we are very grateful to everyone who gives their time to support the Federation and its member clubs.

I encourage clubs not simply to enter, but to attend and make a weekend of it. There will be much to see, much to discuss, and much to enjoy.

We look forward to welcoming you to Mullingar and wish every club the very best in this year's Championships.

Ita Hegarty

President, Irish Photographic Federation



2. The Weekend

Building a community of photographers since 1977

SATURDAY 23rd MAY

IPF National Club Championships (Day 1)

THE ATRIUM, COUNTY BUILDINGS, MULLINGAR

9:00 AM Clubs put up monochrome panels in The Atrium

11:30 AM Judging of monochrome panels

1:30 PM: Monochrome panels on view

FIAP Biennial panels on display



IPF Distinctions Sitting

MULLINGAR ARTS CENTRE

Distinction Panel Hand-in 9:00 AM

Panel Assessments and Awards 10:00 - c. 3:00 PM



A Passion for Prints by Ross McKelvey MPAGB MFIAP FIPF EFIAP/p FBPE,

Presentation after the distinction sitting

followed by an evening of socialising with clubs

SUNDAY 24th MAY

© ipf AGM

9.30 AM: Áras an Mhuilinn, Mount Street, Mullingar

IPF National Club Championships (Day 2)

THE ATRIUM, COUNTY BUILDINGS, MULLINGAR

9:00 AM Clubs to put up colour panels

11.30 AM Judging of colour panels

1.30 PM: Colour panels on view to the public

2:30 pm (approx.): Results and awards



3. The Competition

Encouraging the highest standards in Irish photography

The National Club Championship is open to all clubs affiliated to the IPF. This year it takes place in the Atrium, County Buildings, Mullingar on the **23rd and 24th of May**.

Opens: April 22st 9 PM

Closes: May 18th 9 PM

The judges this year are:

Anne Greiner, MPAGB

Rod Wheelans, MPAGB, MFIAP, FRPS, FIPF, HonPAGB, HonSPF

Gordon Jenkins, HonPAGB

The Sean Casey Memorial Trophy will be awarded to the club with the highest aggregate total score across the two panels (clubs who enter just one panel are not eligible for this prize).

The overall first place is also awarded a trophy and certificate. Second and third place overall receive a trophy and certificate. Monochrome and Colour panel first, second and third places also receive a trophy and certificate. There are individual gold, silver and bronze medals and two honourable mentions for both monochrome and colour panel entrants.

Competition Rules

- The National Club Championship is a print competition presented as two individual panels of ten images, one monochrome and one colour.
- Clubs may compete in one or two of the categories of monochrome print and/or colour print.
- Of the ten images submitted for each panel, only two images per author are allowed
- No person may represent more than one club in this competition.
- A club cannot use the same image in more than one panel. Images used in any previous National Club Championship competition cannot be used in the current competition.

The Competition

Competition Rules

- Images entered in the competition must be the work of the stated author and must have originated in-camera according to international competition rules. Where the IPF requests proof of authorship, such proof shall be provided without delay.
- Infringement of the rules may cause the relevant image to be disqualified. Depending on the nature of the infringement, a full panel or both panels may be disqualified.
- Completion of the online entry constitutes acceptance of the rules of the competition.

By entering an IPF competition, club members agree to:

- Treat judges, organisers, volunteers, and fellow entrants with courtesy and respect.
- Accept that judges' decisions are final and must not be challenged during or after judging.
- Raise any concerns only with the Competition Coordinator after judging has fully concluded.
- Refrain from gossip, accusations, or personal remarks about officials or competitors.
- Understand that disruptive behaviour may result in warning, disqualification, or removal from the competition.
- AI-generated images, whether wholly or partially generated, are not allowed and will not be awarded marks in any IPF competition. It is the club's responsibility to confirm that there has been no use of AI generated images on their panel/s.
- It is incumbent on all participating clubs to ensure that they have adhered to the rules of the competition and all rules will be enforced on the basis that all competing clubs and club members have taken full cognisance of the rules. It is incumbent on all participating clubs and their member photographers to adhere to the rules and regulations of the competition.
- The Irish Photographic Federation retains the right to reproduce any image entered in the competition in connection with publicising or promoting the competition, the IPF or an affiliated club.

The Competition

- Copyright of the images shall, at all times, remain with the respective authors. The IPF retains the right to store the images in the National Photographic Archive Collection and may use them to create on-line galleries or may display them on the IPF website.
- The IPF retains the right to consider any images entered in its competitions for use in international biennials.
- Objections or complaints relating to an entry, an entrant or a panel, must be made in writing by the club secretary or a member of the IPF Council. Objections from any other source shall not be entertained under any circumstance.
- The objection must state clearly, in writing, the reasons for the objection and must be accompanied by an investigation fee of €50. If the objection is deemed valid, the IPF will refund the investigation fee.
- Any potential conflicts of interest will be managed as per the IPF Code of Conduct for Competitions available on the IPF website.
- The IPF Council's decision in all matters relating to the National Club Championship shall be final.

4. Entering the Competition



Online Competition Management System

- Club entries must be made via the IPF online competition management system at: <https://ipfhost.org/main/main.php>. The system must be used to enter digital copies of each of your printed images to allow scoring on the digital competition system. The digital image will not be used for scoring purposes, it is the printed image that will be judged and scored accordingly. There is no other entry system or process. Printed images are presented on the day.
- You should, however, pay attention to the quality, finishing and layout of the digital images and panel as it is these images that will be used in the digital booklet and social media.
- A club officer (or other assigned member) will upload all the individual images for the club. It is advised to gather these images from the individual members exported in the format set out below in the digital image upload section.
- Club officers who are previous users of the competition management system do not need to register again. Login using the email and password that you previously used. Once logged in you can update your email in the 'edit details' section, if it has changed.
- Club officers who are first time users of the digital competition system are required to register on this site in advance of entering images. It is advised to register and ensure your account is up and running in a separate session from your image upload session. This is the same competition system that has been used for the previous National Photography Competition, National Nature and Wildlife Competition and the National Shield, so you may well be registered already.
- Once you enter the competition system, you select the '**competitions**' tab and select competitions for e.g., 'Galway Camera Club'. This differs from individual competitions where you select your own name.
- Next, please select: 'National Club Championship 2026'.

Entering the Competition

- Once in the competition entry area, you will see two sections, one for colour and one for monochrome.
- You will enter the first name of author number 1, and the system will offer you a drop down list if this author is already registered on the system with your club from previous individual competitions. If s/he is not already registered, just continue with the author's first and surname and the system will automatically register him/her on the system.
- Please enter your 10 individual entries in order.
- The 11th entry should be your panel layout. For the 11th entry, create a name with the first name '**panel**' and the second name, **an** element of your club name, e.g., '**Panel Carrickmacross**'. The system will ask if you want to create a new member, say 'yes'. The 11th image will not be judged and is for display purposes only.
- Entry fees must be paid by PayPal to complete your entry. There is no other payment method available.
- Fees: The entry fee is **€90.00**
- The system allows you to print labels with a barcode that you must place on the relevant physical image prior to presentation of your panel (details below in the printed image section).
- After you pay the fee, if you do not receive notification by email within a few minutes, your entry is not complete, please check that all is in order and try again.
- If you have issues with the entry system, use the 'contact us' button on the top right of the system's page. The competition team will revert ASAP, keeping in mind that support is supplied by volunteers.

Entering the Competition

Digital Image Preparation and Upload

- Please export digital images in the sRGB colour space for upload. This version should not be used to print your images as you should print from the best quality files.
- Individual images should be a maximum of 2,016 KB (2.0 MB).
- Images must be sized correctly in order to be accepted by the online system. Images must be a maximum 1,600 pixels on the long side. They may be smaller on either side.
- These digital uploads are not being judged. Do not place any identifying marks or watermarks on the image, however, as the administration team will see the digital image on their computer screen during judging.
- The 11th image or panel layout should not have numbers placed under the image thumbnails as this image will be used in the digital catalogue after the event.

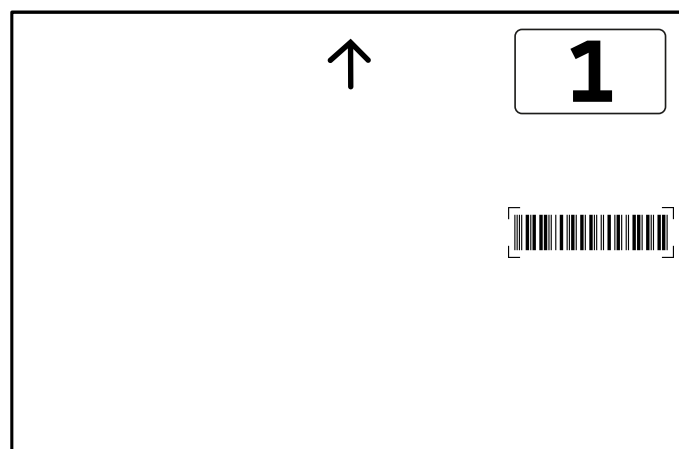
Printed Images Preparation

- Printed images are presented on the day and will be judged individually on a light box, with judges assessing all club number 1 images first, then all the number 2 images, etc. All the number 1 images are further randomised before judging. It is not therefore necessary to 'panel' your images for judging. You may, however, choose to 'panel' your images for display purposes to show your club's work to its best advantage. Judges will not see the panel layout prior to judging.
- Maximum mount size is 50cm x 40cm (20 x 16 inches). Images will be judged individually on a lightbox, so small images and mounts may be at a disadvantage.
- The system provides barcodes printed on a sheet which you can print on sticky labels or on an A4 sheet (cut them out). This barcode must be placed on the relevant physical image prior to presentation of your panel.

Entering the Competition

- After initial upload and completion of your entry, you may re-enter the system again at any time prior to the closing date to print these barcodes (placed top right beside the trolley or cart icon).
- Clubs must place the printed barcode containing numbers and details for the relevant image on the centre right of the back of the print.
- It is preferable to print the labels in draft mode so that the barcode does not smudge. Please do not place the label too close to the edge, mark the barcode/obstruct it with tape as this may prevent the scanner from reading the code.
- If at any point you change or swap out one of your images prior to submission you should re run the barcodes as the new image will have a new barcode.
- Please place the numbers one to ten on a separate label on the top right of the print, along with any direction arrows 'upwards' (where required) to enable correct placement of prints back on the stand after judging.
- Prints should be securely mounted as they will be carried to and from the lightbox, but should not be mounted on block-board, chipboard or similar materials, or be presented in frames, with or without glass. Such prints will not be accepted.
- Clubs will present their ten mono images on the Saturday morning at 9 AM and place them on their assigned stands. The public will view your mono panel before and after judging.
- Clubs will present their ten colour images on the Sunday morning at 9 AM and place them on their assigned stands. The public will view your colour panel after judging.

Back of Print



5. Judging

Encouraging the highest standards in photography

- The IPF Competition Management System will be used to run and score the competition. Judges directly enter their score onto the system using a digital keypad.
- The print images will be viewed under appropriate lighting conditions in an imaging viewing lightbox.
- The judges will view the images in number order per club: All the number one images, all the number two images, etc. Each set of numbered images is further randomised before judging.
- Judging will be anonymous in regard to author and club.
- Each judge will score the image out of five.
- Prize-winning images will be chosen from the top scoring images in each round.
- Results will be based on the aggregate scores given by all judges to each competing panel.
- In the event of a tie the award will be shared jointly.
- Winning club will be announced at the awards ceremony. All results will be posted by email within one day and a digital catalogue of entered images will be available online.
- The judges' decisions are final, and no discussion of such decisions shall be entered into or entertained.
- It is not permissible to publicly dispute the judges' decisions or comments at any time during or after the competition.

Calendar

Opening date for entries	Wednesday 22 April 2026	9 PM
Closing date for entries	Sunday 18 May 2026	9 PM
National Club Championship	Saturday and Sunday 23 rd and 24 th May 2026	The Atrium, County Buildings, Mullingar





Use this checklist to prepare, enter and present your club's National Club Championships panels.

1. Before you enter

- Decide whether your club is entering monochrome only, colour only, or both panels.
- The competition consists of two separate panels of ten images: one monochrome and one colour.
- Check that no author has more than two images per panel.
- Check that no person represents more than one club.
- Check that the same image is not used in both panels.
- Check that no image has been used in a previous National Club Championship.
- Check that all images are the original work of the stated author.
- Check that there is no AI-generated images, wholly or partly.

2. Select the prints

- Choose your 10 monochrome prints and 10 colour prints.
- There is no need to panel for judging: images are judged individually on the lightbox by number.
- You may must still prepare a panel layout for use in the digital booklet and upload it as the 11th image.
- Judges will not see the panel layout before judging.

3. Prepare the digital files

- Export each digital image in sRGB.
- Maximum file size: 2.0 MB.
- Maximum size: 1,600 pixels on the long side.
- Do not add watermarks or identifying marks.
- For the panel layout, upload an 11th image called e.g., "Panel Carrickmacross".
- Do not put numbers under the thumbnails on the panel layout image.

4. Enter on the IPF competition system

- Go to: <https://ipfhost.org/main/main.php>
- Log in with your existing account, or register in advance if you are a first-time user.
- Go to the competitions tab.
- Select your club competition entry, not an individual competition entry.
- Choose National Club Championship 2026.



5. Upload the entry

- Enter the authors for the images in order.
- Upload the 10 individual images for each panel.
- Upload the 11th image as the panel layout.
- Pay the €90 entry fee by PayPal.
- Wait for the confirmation email. If it does not arrive, assume the entry is not complete and check the system again.

6. Print and prepare the barcodes

- Re-enter the system and print the barcode labels.
- Each barcode must be attached to the correct physical print.
- Place the barcode on the centre right of the back of the print.
- Print in draft mode if possible so the barcode does not smudge.
- Do not tape over or damage the barcode.
- If you swap out an image, reprint the barcode: the new image will generate a new code.

7. Label the backs of the prints

- Put the barcode on the centre right of the back.
- Put the image number 1-10 on a separate label at the top right of the back.
- Add an up arrow where needed.

8. Prepare the physical prints

- Prints should be securely mounted.
- Maximum mount size: 50 cm x 40 cm.
- Do not use block-board, chipboard, frames, or glass.
- Remember that smaller prints or mounts may be at a disadvantage on the lightbox.

9. Saturday morning – monochrome

- Arrive at The Atrium, County Buildings, Mullingar.
- Be ready at 9:00 AM.
- Put up your 10 monochrome prints on your assigned stand.
- Judging of monochrome starts at 11:30 AM.
- The monochrome panel is then on view.

10. Sunday morning – colour

- Return to The Atrium.
- Be ready at 9:00 AM.
- Put up your 10 colour prints on your assigned stand.
- Attend the IPF AGM.
- Judging of colour starts at 11:30 AM.
- The colour panel is then on view to the public.

Results

Results and awards are scheduled for approximately 2:30 PM on Sunday.

Results will also be posted by email within one day.

A digital catalogue of entered images will be available online.