

## Chapter 17

## NATIONAL COLOR GUARD COMPETITION

**17-1. General.**

a. This chapter describes the format and procedures for conducting the National Color Guard Competition (NCGC). To be eligible to compete in the NCGC, a team must first be selected by the wing commander and then the region commander. Commanders are encouraged to use these NCGC procedures to select their teams. Region commanders must ensure that a CAPF 7, *Cadet Listing for Special Activities*, listing the NCGC team arrives at HQ CAP/CP no later than 1 November. The CAPF 7 must include name, rank, CAPSN, unit charter number, and home address of the five cadets, the escort(s), the wing representative and the region representative, along with the business telephone numbers of the team escort(s). Copies of the CAPF 7 should also be sent to the appropriate CAP-USAF liaison office.

b. The NCGC is based on traits of leadership and personal responsibility. Any behavior contrary to the highest standards will not be tolerated and may result in an individual team member or an entire team being disqualified.

c. Because the CAP regulations pertaining to the movements and ceremonies associated with color guards are not very specific. AF Regulation 50-14, *Drill and Ceremonies*, CAPR 900-2, *Use of Civil Air Patrol Seal and Emblem: Use and Display of the United States Flag and Civil Air Patrol Flags*, and the attachments to this chapter will be used as the basis of this competition. Judges will use these manuals and the attachments as a basis for Scoring.

**17-2. Participants.**

a. Each color guard team is limited to four primary cadets and one alternate. The color guard will consist of two flag bearers and two guards. All cadets must be listed on the October Monthly Membership Listing (MML) prior to the competition.

(1) A team will ideally consist of two airmen and two NCOs as reflected at the time of the NCGC. Cadets being processed for their Mitchell and cadet officers are not permitted to participate in this competition.

(2) If a color guard member cannot attend the competition, the alternate may fill in for him/her; however, the color guard team commander must notify the project officer prior to the start of competition. Once the competition has begun, no other alternates may be substituted for any reason (unless special permission is granted by the project officer).

b. Each color guard must be accompanied by an escort of the same sex as the cadets on the team. If both male and female cadets are on a team, a male and a female escort must accompany the team.

c. Either the region commander or a representative designated by the region commander should attend the competition. (May be the same member as listed with the NCC team.)

**17-3. Spectators.**

a. All CAP members are encouraged and invited to attend the NCGC.

b. All spectators must make their own arrangements for transportation, lodging, and meals as these will not be provided by National Headquarters.

**17-4. Uniforms.**

a. **Color Guard Uniform.** All uniform items must be worn in accordance with CAPM 39-1, *Civil Air Patrol Uniform Manual*.

(1) The authorized uniform for male cadets is the short-sleeve blue shirt (with epaulets) and blue trousers. For female cadets, the authorized uniform is the short-sleeve blue blouse and blue slacks. Ribbons and white shoulder cord will be worn. The above uniforms are to be worn for the drill portions of the competition, the written exam, and the awards banquet. All members of a team must be in the same style shirts, trousers/slacks and each will wear the same style headgear.

(2) Cadets may wear any other uniform items that pertain to color guards (such as ascots, white gloves, dress boots, helmets, pistol belts, etc.), as long as all team members are uniform and as long as all items being worn are approved by the team's respective region commander. (see CAPM 39-1, Chapter 9-1 through 9-3 for authorized uniform items).

(3) Inoperable marching/parade rifles are required, but will not be provided at the competition.

(4) Each team must bring and carry the United States flag and their respective region flag as they will not be provided at the competition.

b. **Physical Fitness Uniform.** Males will wear athletic shorts, T-shirts, an athletic supporter, running shoes, and socks. Females will wear athletic shorts, T-shirts, undergarments, running shoes, and socks. Teams may choose to wear warm-up suits as outer garments during appropriate events.

**17-5. Events.** The competition consists of five events that are broken into three areas: drill, knowledge, and physical fitness.

a. The drill section of the competition has three parts, an in-ranks inspection, a color guard standard drill competition, and a color guard practical drill competition.

**(1) In-ranks Inspection.**

(a) The color guard will march from the start point onto the drill field from the chief judge's right, in all color

guard accessories with the exception of the flags. The team will halt 12 paces from and centered on the chief judge (guards are at right shoulder arms). The alternate will follow two paces to the rear and centered on the color guard for the inspection. The color guard commander will command, “**Half Left About, MARCH,**” “**HALT,**” and “**Present, ARMS.**” The color guard commander will then report by saying, “Sir/Ma’am, the Region Color Guard reports for inspection.”

(b) The chief judge will return the salute, and the color guard commander will command, “**Order, ARMS.**” The team will then be inspected by the judges.

(c) After the inspection has been completed, the chief judge will inform the team commander, and the commander will command, “**Present, ARMS.**” The judges will return the salute, and the commander will command, “**Order, ARMS**”, “**Right Shoulder, ARMS**” and march the team off the field to the chief judge’s right.

(d) The inspection will be scored on the following criteria:

- Report for inspection
- Grooming standards
- Military bearing
- Proper wear of the uniform
- Cleanliness and neatness of uniforms and color guard equipment
- Correct color guard equipment
- Overall appearance of the team
- Proper execution of movements

(2) **Color Guard Standard Drill Competition.**

(a) The color guard will march from the start point onto the drill field from the judge’s right in all color guard accessories. The team will halt 2 paces from and centered on the chief judge (guards are at right shoulder arms). The color guard commander will command, “Half Left About, MARCH,” “HALT,” and “Present, ARMS.” The color guard commander will then report by saying, “Sir/Ma’am, the \_\_\_\_\_ Region Color Guard reports for drill.”

(b) After the chief judge returns the salute and says, “Continue the drill,” the commander will proceed with the drill routine (see Attachment 5).

(c) The color guard will perform the following commands in order:

Order, Arms - *Flag at Order*  
 Parade. Rest - *Flag at Parade Rest*  
 Attention  
 Port, Arms - *Flag at the Carry*  
 Right Shoulder, Arms  
 Present, Arms  
 Order, Arms  
 Right Shoulder, Arms  
 Forward, March  
 Half Left About, March  
 Half Left About, March  
 Right About, March

Half Right About, March - *[March to far side of drill pad]*

Half Right About, March

Left About, March

Half Left About. March

Eyes. Right – *[For the chief judge]*

Ready, Front - *[March off the drill pad to Starting point –do not report out]*

(d) The color guard standard drill will be scored on precision and execution of movements, cadence, command voice of the commander, military bearing, proper sequencing of the commands, and reverence to the colors.

(e) Each team will have a minimum of 3 minutes and a maximum of 5 minutes for this part of the drill event.

(3) **Color Guard Practical Drill Competition.**

(a) **Indoor Presentation of Colors.**

1. The color guard will form up with all color guard accessories. Then only the color guard commander (without flag) will report to the chief judge and say, “Sir/Ma’am, the \_\_\_\_\_ Region Color Guard reports for the presentation of the colors.” The chief judge will return the salute.

2. The team will then be given a 5-minute period to assess the layout of the room. At the conclusion of this timed period, the color guard will be reformed, and the commander will return to the chief judge and salute. The chief judge will return the salute, and order the posting of the colors.

3. The color guard will post the colors. After the colors have been posted, the color guard will retire to the back of the room. The team commander will then step forward, salute and say, “Sir/Ma’am, the colors have been posted.” The chief judge will return the salute and reply, “Retrieve the colors.” Once the colors have been retrieved, the team will exit the room.

4. There is no limit on the amount of time the color guard has to post and retire the colors.

(b) **Outdoor Presentation of Colors.**

1. The color guard will form up. Then the color guard commander will report to the chief judge by saying, “Sir/Ma’am. the \_\_\_\_\_ Region Color Guard reports for the presentation of the colors.” The chief judge will return the salute and hand the flag to the color guard commander.

2. The color guard will be required to march to the flag pole with the flag cased. They will raise the flag to half-mast, and then lower the flag, following the proper protocol in the aforementioned manuals, with or without music playing.

3. After the flag has been lowered, the team must refold the flag and march to the chief judge. The commander will command, “Present, ARMS” and hand the flag to the chief judge, who will then return the salute. The commander will command, “Order, ARMS” and march off the area designated for this part of the drill event.

4. All four members will participate in the raising and lowering of the flag.

5. There is no limit on the amount of time that the team has to complete this part of the drill event.

b. Knowledge.

(1) This event will consist of a written exam administered to all cadets simultaneously.

(2) The exam will consist of 50 multiple-choice questions selected from the following areas:

(a) Leadership requirements of Phases I and II of the cadet program (*Leadership: 2000 and Beyond*, Volume 1. Chapters 1-4).

(b) General knowledge of the CAP Corporation, its missions, history, color guard movements, commands and procedures (AFR 50-14, CAPR 900-2. CAPR 39-1, CAPM 50-18, *Cadet Physical Fitness Test Manual*, and the CAPM 50-16, Manual of Arms [see Attachment 4]).

(3) All cadets will have a maximum of 45 minutes to complete the exam.

(4) The scoring of this event will be cumulative in order to determine the rank order of the teams.

c. Physical Fitness.

(1) The new Cadet Physical Fitness Test (CPFT) will be used in this event. It consists of timed sit-ups, a timed mile run, and a sit-and-reach test. The CPFT will be administered to all team members. The team placement will be based on the final score, which is a combination of the actual scores attained by the team members versus their required achievement scores. The score for each cadet is the difference between his/her actual score and his/her required achievement score (see CAPM 50-18), and is based on a 300-point scale.

(2) Cadets must be in appropriate physical fitness attire for this event.

(3) See Attachment 6 for the sample color guard competition scoring record.

17-6. Sequencing of the Competition. Prior to the start of the competition, the order of appearance of the regions will be randomly selected by the judges and the project officer.

17-7. Size of the Drill Field. The drill field will be 80 feet by 120 feet, not including the chief judge's position.

17-8. Judging Officials.

a. To ensure the most objective evaluation of all events, a minimum of three judges, to be chosen by the project officer, will be assigned. The project officer will also designate one judge as the chief judge. In no case, will a relative of any participating color guard member, nor any person who has any affiliation with a color guard member or the color guard's unit, be selected.

b. In addition to the three judges, a timekeeper and a recorder will be needed. The timekeeper's sole responsibility will be to time each of the events where time is a factor, and to notify the chief judge of that time.

The recorder is responsible for distributing and collecting the judges' scoring sheets, for tabulating totals, and for ranking the teams at the end of the competition.

c. The judges are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the standards for each event. All judges' decisions are final; they will not be up for debate or negotiation.

17-9. Scoring.

a. Specific methods of scoring each event shall be left up to the project officer and the judges, in relation to the scoring criteria.

b. Each team will be given a place for each event. To determine the winner of the competition, each team's place per event will be ranked, and a final rank order will be determined.

c. In the event of a tie, the tie breaker will be the score from the in-ranks inspection.

17-10. Penalties.

a. Penalties for time three events in the drill area of the competition will be assessed for stepping out of bounds, not meeting the time requirements, performing commands out of sequence, and skipping commands.

b. If a team has fewer than 5 cadets present for the written examination, regardless of the reason, the cadet or cadets not present will receive a score of 10 points lower than the lowest individual score recorded in the written examination.

c. If a team has fewer than 5 cadets present for the physical fitness event, regardless of the reason, each cadet not present will receive a score of 60 points lower than the lowest cadet final score recorded for the CPFT.

17-11. Awards.

a. Competition Awards.

(1) An award will be given to the first place team for each event (in-ranks inspection, color guard standard drill, color guard practical drill, written exam, and physical fitness).

(2) First, second, and third place awards will be given to the teams that place respectively for the entire competition.

b. Individual Awards.

(1) An award will be given to the cadet who attains the highest score on the Cadet Physical Fitness Test.

(2) An award will be given to the cadet who attains the highest score on the written exam.

(3) An award will be given for the "Outstanding Cadet of the Competition." This award will recognize the cadet who demonstrated top leadership qualities, appearance, and attitude throughout the competition.

(4) A "Spirit Award" will be given to the team that demonstrates the best spirit of the competition by displaying exemplary sportsmanship and morale throughout the competition.