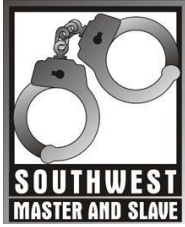


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Contest Handbook for Contestants and Judges For the Southwest Master/slave Contest Produced by Southwest Master and slave Contest Weekend

Originally written by Master Jim and slave marsha, edited by Tomo (2022), and edited by Master Trent and slave kelly (2024)

Basic Philosophy for the Southwest Master/slave Contest and Titles

The Producers of the Southwest Master/slave Contest (Master Trent and slave kelly) are committed to providing the leather/BDSM community with a Southwest Master and a Southwest slave who will represent the Master/slave community and lifestyle with integrity and competence. The holders of the Southwest Master and Southwest slave titles will be spokespersons for the Master/slave community, and as such, one of the most important attributes of the titleholders should be the ability to clearly and effectively communicate what it means to them to live and identify as Master/slave or Owner/property.

It is expected that the holders of the titles will take every opportunity to educate the Kink/Leather/BDSM community on the Master/slave, Owner/property lifestyle and will actively seek out venues that will allow them to speak on issues, whether that be through speeches, seminar presentations, participation on panel discussions, etc.

The Southwest Master and slave titles are not about a particular “look,” dress, body type, gender or sexual orientation. There is no required set of protocols that Southwest Master and slave are expected to follow.

Contestants are not required to have a formal “platform”; however, questions from the judges during the Interview portion of the contest regarding any specific plans or goals the contestants might have should they win the titles are quite appropriate.

Requirements for Contestants

1. A contestant pair must self-identify as Master and slave or Owner and property. Self-identification indicates that the pair live in a 24/7 Authority Exchange Relationship. It does not mean they need to use these specific terms to address each other, for example the Owner may be addressed as Sir or Ms or Ma'am, in place of Master or Owner. These terms are gender-neutral and not indicative of any particular sexual orientation or gender presentation.
2. A contestant pair must have been in a self-identified Master/slave or Owner/property relationship with each other for at least 1 year prior to running for the Southwest Master/slave title.
3. A contestant pair may not be a sponsor of the Southwest M/s Contest or the event hosting the SW M/s Contest.
4. A contestant may not have an active role in producing or running the SW M/s Contest, or the event hosting the SW M/s Contest.
5. A contestant or contestant pair shall not serve as a presenter, facilitator, speaker, Emcee, or any other role not directly associated with the specific components of competing in the SW M/s Contest.
6. A contestant pair must live within the Southwest Region which includes Arizona, Colorado, Hawaii, Nevada, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Southern California, Texas, and Utah and must have established residency a minimum of 6 months prior to the date of the Southwest Master/slave Contest in which they will compete.
7. If a contestant pair lives in the Southwest region, the pair may apply directly to the SW M/s Producers to compete in the Southwest Regional Master/slave Contest. If a state in the Southwest Region has an approved State Master/slave Contest, the contestant pair must have been selected by the State in which they live as the current year's State Master/slave titleholders in order to compete at the Southwest M/s Contest. Currently, Colorado and Texas have Stat M/s contests that feed the SWMSc.
8. Contestant pairs living in Mexico may be eligible to compete at Southwest M/s subject to the following rules:
 - If the contestant pair lives in Mexico, the pair has the option of either: petitioning the International to compete at the International Master/slave Contest or petitioning to compete at the Southwest Contest. International and the Southwest Region have sole discretion in determining whether to accept a petition to compete. The rules governing the petitioning process may be found in the document, "Policies and Requirements for International Master/slave Contestant Pairs from Outside of the United States."
9. Both contestants must be twenty-one (21) or older prior to the Thursday before the beginning of the contest weekend.

10. No contestant may have previously held a Southwest Master or a Southwest slave title at any time.
11. No contestant may hold any other Leather, BDSM, Kink title at the time of the contest or during their title year if they are awarded the title.
12. A pair must compete together for the Master and slave title.

Expectations and Requirements for the Southwest M/s Titleholders

1. In order to serve as the Southwest titleholders, a contestant pair must be willing to attend and travel to, if necessary, a minimum of 5 leather/kink/BDSM group meetings or events to present on Master/slave or Owner/property relationships and/or to represent the titles. One of the 5 events must be next year's Southwest M/s Contest and the second is to compete in the International M/s Contest.
2. The contestants run for and win the Southwest Master and slave titles as a pair. Should one (or both) members of the winning pair become unable to carry out the requirements of the title, the SW M/s Producers will determine in what manner the title will be represented for the remainder of the year in question.
3. The Southwest titleholders are strongly encouraged to attend more than the minimum number of groups/events and to seek out every opportunity to speak on Master/slave or Owner/property relationships.
4. The Southwest M/s titleholders must be willing to speak on Master/slave or Owner/property relationships to all segments of the leather/BDSM community. In addition, the Southwest M/s titleholders are encouraged to select venues and attend events that offer them the opportunity to speak on Master/slave relationships, rather than to simply appear as titleholders.
5. The Southwest M/s titleholders may accept additional monetary support from groups, event sponsors or individuals to cover travel expenses, and may raise additional money to cover travel expenses through fundraising activities. The Southwest M/s titleholders may not receive payment above and beyond actual travel expenses for speaking engagements or other activities performed in their role as Southwest Master and slave during the title year.
6. The Southwest M/s titleholders will be provided with a travel fund in an amount determined by the Owner/Producer.
 - a. The travel fund will be disbursed by the SW Ms Producers to the Southwest M/s titleholders on a reimbursement or advance basis for travel expenses.
 - b. The Southwest M/s titleholders are required to submit to the SW M/s Producers a quarterly financial report with supporting receipts on the use of the travel fund and any other funds

raised or received during the title year to help defray travel expenses. All funds raised must be given to the SW M/s Producers to be deposited into the travel fund for transparency and a clear paper trail.

- c. If the Southwest M/s titleholders are unable to carry out the requirements of the title, any unspent travel funds will be returned to Southwest Master/slave Weekend, along with a financial accounting of funds that have been spent to date.
7. The Southwest M/s titleholders are required to provide the SW M/s Producers with at least a monthly report identifying the speaking engagements they have booked. At a minimum, the report should include the event or group name, location and date of engagement.
8. Master/slave pairs who compete for and win the Southwest Master/slave title must agree not to compete for or hold another title within the leather and/or BDSM community, together or individually, during their regional title year. They do not need to relinquish a State M/s title if one is held from a state feeder contest that overlaps the regional title year..
9. During their title year, the Southwest M/s titleholders may not charge a fee for their personal use for participating in BDSM activity, whether sexual or non-sexual in nature. This does not prevent the Southwest M/s titleholders from engaging in fundraising activities for charities or for the Southwest M/s title that may include BDSM.
10. The Southwest M/s titleholders may not make any representations on behalf of, or purport to bind, the SW M/s Producers or the Southwest Master/slave Contest Weekend Title without the prior consent of the SW M/s Producers.
11. The SW M/s Producers reserve the right to recall the title from current or previous Southwest M/s titleholders if, in their sole judgment, the titleholders have failed to substantially comply with or fulfill the obligations of the title or have in any way damaged the name or reputation of the Southwest Master/slave Contest Weekend title and/or South Plains Leatherfest-International Master/slave Weekend.
12. The Southwest M/s titleholders are representatives of the entire M/s community. As such, the titleholders must protect the title and community from unfavorable publicity or focus. This means titleholders may not be able to participate in activities or take positions that they otherwise were free to do before winning the titles. Examples include appearing as an expert witness in a trial on the issue of what constitutes abuse in the SM community; agreeing to be interviewed by the vanilla media regarding the title and the Leather and/or M/s community; taking a lead position on issues of significant controversy in the Leather and/or M/s community. Any questions regarding whether or not an activity could unfavorably impact the title should be immediately directed to the SW M/s Producers. The decision of the SW M/s Producers will be final on these matters.

13. During their title year, the Southwest M/s titleholders may not engage in interviews with or appear in “vanilla” mainstream media in any way without the specific written consent of the SW M/s Producers. After their title year, the former Southwest M/s titleholders may not identify themselves as former titleholders or display the Southwest M/s logo or patch in interviews with or appearances in “vanilla” mainstream media (whether print, television, film, radio or internet based) without the specific written consent of the SW M/s Producers.
14. The Southwest M/s titleholders are permitted to use the title “Southwest Master/slave [title year]” in perpetuity, with the exception of interaction with “vanilla” mainstream media and provided the SW M/s Producers have not exercised their right to recall the title if, in their sole judgment, the titleholders have failed to substantially comply with or fulfill the obligations of the title or have in any way damaged the name or reputation of the Southwest Master/slave Contest Weekend title and/or South Plains Leatherfest-International Master/slave Weekend. The current Southwest M/s titleholders are permitted to use the Southwest Master/slave logo on business cards and stationery for the term of their title year. Any other use of the title name or the Southwest M/s logo must be approved by the SW M/s Producers in advance. The SW M/s Producers retain the right to review any use of the Southwest Master/slave logo and to rescind permission to use the logo for any reason and at their sole discretion.

About the Contest and Weekend

Competing in a Regional leather contest is an exhilarating – and exhausting experience. It often is helpful for a contestant pair to bring someone with them as a support system/assistant for the weekend. Anyone assisting a contestant pair at Southwest M/s must be registered, at their own expense, for the event weekend. A registered assistant may:

- Accompany the contestant pair to the contestants’ meeting;
- Stay with the contestant pair outside of the interview room during the interviews;
- Stay with the contestant pair outside of the presentation room;
- Assist the contestant pair before the contest in the dressing room. (Due to space constraints and safety issues, assistants are not allowed backstage, if there is a back stage area, with the contestant pairs during the contest.)

Contest Schedule

Contestant pairs must be available to attend all of the following: (specific dates and time may vary from year to year.)

- Contestant Meeting: Friday afternoon.
- Opening Ceremonies/Meet and Greet: Friday evening.
- Interviews: Saturday morning.
- Presentations: Saturday afternoon.
- Contest Finale: Saturday evening.
- Brunch: Sunday morning
- Winner's Meeting with SW M/s Producer: Sunday afternoon
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Expectations of the Judges at the Southwest Master/slave Contest

- Judges are expected to treat the contestants with kindness and respect.
- Please arrive on-time and participate fully in each judging component.
- Please observe the contestants before SW M/s Contest Weekend out and about at other events as well as social media.
- Do some research! Learn about the contestants before you arrive at SW M/s Contest Weekend.
- While discussion is fine, we expect you to make your own decision. Judge collaboration is not advised or encouraged. We asked you to judge because we respect your evaluation and your score.

Judge Schedule

Judges must be available to attend all of the following:

- Judges Meeting: Friday early afternoon
- Opening Ceremonies/Meet and Greet: Friday evening
- Interviews: Saturday morning
- Presentations: Saturday afternoon
- Contest Finale: Saturday evening

The Structure of the Southwest Master/slave Contest

1. The Southwest Master/slave Contest is made up of five judging categories: Interview; Presentation; Speech; Pop Question and M/s Dynamic. Each of these categories is described in greater detail under the “Judging Categories” section of this Handbook.
2. In addition to their performance in the five judging categories, two other aspects of the Southwest M/s Contest will impact a contestant pair’s score:
 - Meeting Contest deadlines/complying with Contest rules: Contestants are required to meet all Contest deadlines, including but not limited to timely submittal of the Contest Application and information on the item the contestants are required to submit for the Silent Auction, and attendance at all required Contest rehearsals and meetings. Failure to comply with any Contest rule or deadline will be reported to the judging panel by the SW M/s Producers. The judges may use this information as a part of the interview of the contestant pairs and may factor this information into their scoring of the contestant pairs at their discretion.
 - During the Friday night Opening Ceremonies/Meet and Greet after drawing their contestant numbers, the contestant pairs will be given the opportunity to introduce themselves on stage. Each pair will have a maximum of 2 minutes total to make their introduction. The form and content of the introduction is up to the contestant pair; however, props or sets of any kind are not permitted.
3. There are seven judges for the Southwest Master/slave Contest. A form of scoring commonly known as “Olympic scoring” is used, i.e., the high score and low score for the contestants in each judging category is thrown out and the remaining five scores are averaged, giving a composite score for each category. The contestants’ composite scores for the five categories then are added to give a final overall score. A perfect overall score would be 500. The contestant pair with the highest overall score using Olympic scoring will be the winner.
4. If a judge becomes incapacitated during the Southwest Master/slave Contest, or if for any reason the SW M/s Producers in their sole discretion determines a judge is unable or unwilling to carry out their duties as a judge, that judge will be withdrawn from the Contest and their scores will be discarded. The remaining 6 judges will continue to score the Contest under the Olympic scoring system, with the high and low scores of the remaining 6 judges dropped from the calculations. The SW M/s Producers reserve the right to define the duties of a judge of the Southwest Master/slave Contest and to determine if a judge is able and/or willing to carry out those duties. The SW M/s Producers further retain the right to remove from the judging panel any judge who in their judgment is unable to carry out those duties.
5. Contestants for the Southwest Master/slave Contest will be given a joint score in all categories, as well as a joint overall score, rather than assigning separate scores for the Master and slave. Thus, the points indicated in parentheses following each judging category described in the next section represent

the total maximum points a Master/slave pair may be awarded in that category, based on the performance of both the Master and the slave. For example, for the On-Stage Pop Question category, the Master and slave contestant pair will receive a single, joint score of up to 75 points based on their responses to the questions they are asked.

6. In the event of a tie score between two or more contestant pairs, the winning pair will be the one with the highest overall score, without using Olympic scoring. Thus, in the event of a tie, the scores of the tied pairs in each of the 5 contest categories will be recalculated, without dropping the high and low scores. The resulting composite scores for the tied pairs then will be averaged, again without dropping the high and low scores. The pair with the highest overall non-Olympic score will be the winner.
7. If there is only one contestant pair running for the Southwest M/s title, the pair must receive a final overall score equal to at least 70% of the total possible. A perfect overall score would be 500; thus, the contestant pair must receive a final overall score of 350 in order to be awarded the title.

Judging Categories

1. Interview with Judges (150 points)
 - Questions should be directed to both the Master and the slave. A single judge does not have to ask both the Master and slave a question, but the judging panel as a whole should endeavor to insure that both contestants are being asked and are answering questions.
 - Given the nature of this title, questions are likely to focus on Master/slave relationships and issues in these relationships. However, questions addressing broader leather/BDSM topics or history are also appropriate.
 - The Judges' Interviews are open to all persons registered for Southwest Master/slave Contest Weekend.
 - Contestants using chairs is permissible and it is never a "trap".
 - Suggested criteria for judging include:
 - Are the contestants able to think on their feet and give a responsive answer to the question asked?
 - Are the answers clear and understandable?
 - Are the answers factually correct? (If applicable.)
 - Does the body language of the contestants reinforce the answer or does it detract from the message?
 - Do the contestants seem reasonably relaxed and engaged in responding to the questions?
 - Do the contestants' answers evidence passion and enthusiasm about the possibility of representing the Master/slave community as titleholders?

- Do the contestants' answers demonstrate that they self-identify as a Master/Owner or a slave/property?
- Remember: a good answer is not necessarily an answer you agree with.

2. Speech (100 points)

- Both the Master and the slave are required to give a short speech (with each speech being 2 minutes or less) on the topic(s) of their choice during the Saturday night contest. The Master and the slave are not required to speak on the same topic or any specific topic.
- If a contestant's speech exceeds 2 minutes, the contestant will be allowed to continue with a live mic and the judges will be notified that the contestant went over time. The judges will not penalize the contestants for going over and will judge them on the quality and content of the speech only. The deduction will be made by the Tally Master to the final composite speech score as follows:

○ Overtime by 1 seconds to 15 seconds	No penalty
○ Overtime by 16 seconds to 60 seconds	5 points deducted per contestant going over
○ Overtime by 61 seconds or more	10 points deducted per contestant going over
- No props or sets may be used during a contestant's speech. However, a contestant may use note cards.
- The contestants are permitted to have helpers in the audience indicating time markers during the speeches. The judges will not penalize the contestants in any way for making use of timekeepers.
- Suggested criteria for judging include:
 - Do the contestants speak clearly?
 - Do the contestants use appropriate gestures and body language that help communicate the message of their speeches?
 - Are the speeches well organized and understandable?
 - Do the contestants demonstrate through their speeches, passion, and enthusiasm about the possibility of representing the Master/slave community as titleholders?
 - If a contestant used note cards, were they distracting from the speech, or flow comfortably?

3. Presentation (100 points)

- The presentation category is designed to judge the contestants' ability to speak in a seminar type format on Master/slave relationships. The contestants are required to make a brief (no more than 10 minute) presentation on any topic relating to Master/slave relationships. Both the Master and the slave must speak during the presentation.
- If the presentation exceeds 10 minutes, the contestant will be allowed to continue and the judges will be notified that the contestants went over time. The presentation will not be interrupted.

The judges will not penalize the contestants for going over and will judge them on the quality and content of the presentation only. The deduction will be made by the Tally Master to the final composite presentation score as follows:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ○ Overtime by 1 seconds to 15 seconds | No penalty |
| ○ Overtime by 16 seconds to 60 seconds | 5 points deducted per contestant going over |
| ○ Overtime by 61 seconds or more | 10 points deducted per contestant going over |

- The contestant pair is permitted to use a device to aid them in keeping time during their presentation and will not be penalized in any way for doing so.
- Before beginning the presentation session, the Head Judge will remind the audience that their questions should relate to the topic of a contestant pair's presentation. At the end of a contestant pair's presentation, the Head Judge will call for questions from the audience and will serve as the "moderator," recognizing audience members to ask their questions.
- Judges will not ask questions of the contestant pairs in this judging category unless there are no questions from the audience. If the judges have the opportunity to ask questions of the contestant pairs in this category, the judges should limit their questions to those relating to the presentation topic. The judging panel may not use this opportunity as additional general interview time.
- The Head Judge will monitor the question and answer time, and his or her decision on the propriety of a question from the audience or judges is final. The time for questions and answers will not exceed 5 minutes for any contestant pair.
- The purpose of allowing audience questions during the Presentation Category is to allow the judges to evaluate the contestants' ability to think on their feet and respond to the kind of questions likely to be asked of the titleholders when they speak on Master/slave relationships to community leather/BDSM groups. It is not intended as an opportunity for the audience to "sandbag" any contestant pair or to attempt to help one contestant pair at the expense of another.

- Contestant pairs are permitted to use handouts, props or other visual aids in their presentations, but are not required to do so. If a contestant pair chooses to use handouts, it is the responsibility of the contestant pair to bring enough copies for at least the judges of the Contest. If a contestant pair chooses to use props or other visual aids, the contestant pair is responsible for obtaining and bringing those items, including any equipment necessary to present the visual aid such as an easel, flip chart, projector, screen, etc. The cost of all handouts, props and other visual aids will be the responsibility of the contestant pairs.
- The Presentation session is open to all persons registered for Southwest Master/slave Contest Weekend.
- Suggested criteria for judging include:
 - Is the presentation organized and understandable?
 - Do the contestants speak clearly and use appropriate gestures and body language to communicate their message?
 - Does the content of the presentation demonstrate that the contestants have given some thought to the message they are trying to communicate?
 - Are the contestants comfortable with answering audience questions and do they give organized and understandable responses?

4. On-stage (“Pop”) Question (75 points)

- Both the Master and the slave will be asked an on-stage or “pop” question, which they must answer during a on stage portion of the contest. These kinds of questions often tend to evoke humorous responses from contestants. The questions will be written and provided by the judges and/or SW M/s Producers of the Southwest Master/slave Contest.
- Suggested criteria for judging include:
 - Do the contestants speak clearly?
 - Do the contestants look comfortable being asked to respond to a question without time to prepare?
 - Do the answers given demonstrate a quality or characteristic that would be an asset to the titleholders, such as humor, logical thinking, knowledge in a particular subject area, etc.?

5. Dynamic (75 points)

- Contestants will be observed by the judges throughout the weekend, both in and out of formal contest events, and will be judged on how they interact and present themselves as Master and slave or Owner and property to the public.

- Judging in this category begins Friday evening, when the contestant pairs introduce themselves and draw their numbers onstage at the Opening Ceremonies/Meet and Greet. The judging sheet for this category will be turned in at the end of the contest on Saturday night, to be tallied with the scores for the other categories.
- No particular protocol or form of dress is considered to be “correct” or “incorrect.”
- Suggested criteria for judging include:
 - Do the contestants appear to be comfortable interacting with each other and the public as Master and slave?
 - Does the dynamic appear to be natural for the contestants, or does it appear to be something created for the contest?
 - This is always the last score sheet to be passed to the Tally Masters.

The SW M/s Travel Fund

- The primary means of fundraising for the Southwest M/s Travel Fund is through the Silent Auction, held over the SW Contest weekend. In support of the Travel Fund, the SW M/s Contestants are required to bring an item to be auctioned off.
- The item may be a single item or a basket made up of several small items on the order of a standard small “gift basket.” The item/basket need not be large or expensive, but instead, should be something that represents the contestant pair, their region, their state or the spirit of their regional contest.
- The SW M/s Producers of the SW M/s Contest will have sole discretion on whether something constitutes a “single item” or appropriate basket under these rules and their decision is final.

Producer's Guarantee for the Titleholders

The SW M/s Producers of the Southwest Master/slave Contest guarantees the titleholders the following:

- Winners' back patches and medallion with lanyard
- A travel fund consisting of all amounts raised from the Silent Auction and any other funds donated by groups or individuals to the SW M/s Travel Fund.
- Weekend Event Package including event provided meals and Play Parties to next year's Southwest Master/slave Contest Weekend.
- Travel and Lodging expenses to next year's Southwest Master/slave Contest Weekend will be provided.
- Travel, Lodging and Registration expenses to next year's International Master/slave Contest at South Plains Leatherfest will be earmarked from the amounts raised for the SW M/s Travel Fund.
- All past Southwest Master and slave title holders in good standing will receive a complimentary registration packet to all future Southwest M/s Contest weekends if Master Trent and slave Kelly are the Producers. Master Trent and slave Kelly cannot guarantee what future producers will or will not do