

Scoring Guide for Photojournalism Competition Juries

Review the 2023 Illustrated PJ Guide to the definition, and direct any inquiries to the PJD Exhibitions Standards Director, pjd-esd@psa-photo.org, or to the PJD Image Evaluator, evaluator-photojournalism@psa-photo.org

A photojournalism image tells a story, and it is intended to be a true record of the scene without interference by the photographer or anyone on his behalf, and without any manipulation that changes anything existing there at the time the image was captured. It must be either full color or full greyscale, and it may not include the name of the photographer, the title or any other text on the image. The story is more important than the pictorial aspects or technical qualities.

(NOTE: the score pertains to a 1-5 scoring range; use the alternate scores for a 1-9 range.)

Score 1: If the image does not show any human influence, it is not appropriate for the PJ category. Any attempt to deceive the viewer that it depicts reality, such as a known set-up or obvious manipulation, is not eligible in PJ and should be scored 1.

In the Human Interest section, sports action is excluded, and should be scored 1 **in that section**. Or if no people are included, the image should also be scored 1 **in that section**.

Score 2 (alt 2-3-4): The image, in your opinion, provides weak or confusing information. Irrelevant details could compete for dominance and obscure the story. The situation could appear to have been set up, due to the subjects acting in unison or dressed inappropriately for that activity, or various other reasons for such suspicion, without proof. Technical flaws, such as poor focus, over-saturation or extreme sharpening, are distracting enough to interfere with the message.

Score 3 (alt 5-6-7): Image complies with the Photojournalism definition. Although it is not exceptional, it tells a story without significant flaws, and it appears to have occurred spontaneously. Importance of the subject matter can compensate for compositional or technical inadequacy.

Score 4 (alt 8): Image complies with the definition and has immediate impact. The story is strong and the technical aspects are good. It is a solid image where the elements work well together, and should be considered for an award.

Score 5 (alt 9): Image is among the best in the competition in your opinion, and definitely deserves an award. It shows an unusual aspect of a situation, perhaps a telling facial expression, an unexpected moment or a unique viewpoint, thus producing an image that differs from those that are seen repeatedly. An outstanding story-telling image.

Notes to judges: Use **all five** of the available scores to rate the images within a group; do not assign just two or three of those numbers to everything. (Alternate scores for a 1-9 system are shown as well.) When using a different scoring system, adjust the scores accordingly to use the entire range.

DQ is reserved for serious and provable violations, and needs to be explained to that entrant. An image with questionable editing or suspected non-compliance regarding arrangement of the content by the maker or anyone on his behalf should be given a low score, not a DQ, without proof.

effective June 1, 2023