

# RMPA Judge Training Recap

The recent RMPA Judge Training, held on Feb 1, 2026, was a success, bringing together all of our local judges for the 2026 season as well as over 20 instructors and prospective judges for a comprehensive overview of what it means to be a judge and some key priorities and strategies. The keynote address by long-time WGI and RMPA Effect-Visual judge Jim Dwyer highlighted his experience crafting his judging expertise and advice for both current and future adjudicators, and included a conversation with fellow WGI judge in Effect-Music, Rich Hammond.

The training covered the following key areas:

- **Rule Updates:** A brief presentation on the minor adjustments and clarifications to the RMPA rules for the current season. Most notably, based on the panel that was convened in the off-season, [Regional A](#) groups will continue to be scored on the same criteria as all A class groups.
- **Adjudication Philosophy:** A deep dive into the philosophy behind becoming a judge and some strategies for improving commentary. Rich Hammond shared that he uses a color-coded list of key words based on the box system (i.e. blue words that indicate 'Consistently', green for 'Frequently', etc.). Jim Dwyer shared a [document](#) he used when beginning to judge that highlights the critical elements of judging: Knowledge, Communication, and Professionalism.
- **Competition Suite Update:** Rich Hammond shared a new feature on Competition Suite that uses AI to analyze commentary and provide a summary and actionable bullet points. It is currently a paid add-on in competition suite (\$5.99/month or \$59.99/year), more details can be found [here](#).

## Goals of the Training:

*"Judge with your head, with your heart, and in a positive, nurturing, and challenging manner as you contribute to the growth and development of this unique activity and its very special participants!"*



**ELEVATE** the standard of local adjudication through consistent, high-level training.



**BROADEN** the recruitment pipeline to build a diverse and sustainable pool of prospective judges.



**NURTURE** high-potential adjudicators who show a long-term commitment to the circuit's growth.



**DEMYSTIFY** the adjudication process for instructors to foster better communication and competitive alignment.

## Next Steps and Resources

RMPA is already at work planning our next in-depth training. The next session will include practical, hands-on learning and real-life examples to break down the sheets and make sure they are being applied effectively and fairly, as well as more discussion and examples relating to classification. We hope to see continued attendance at these sessions as we work together to elevate RMPA!

Interested in the process of becoming an adjudicator for RMPA? Take a look at this [document](#), and reach out to [colin@rmpa.org](mailto:colin@rmpa.org) with any questions.