

41st Sports Emmy Awards Transparency Report Preview

Later on this winter, The National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences (NATAS) will release a comprehensive Transparency Report for the Daytime, Sports and News & Documentary competitions. The goal of the Transparency Report is to provide greater insight into and context around the actions taken by each competition's Administration Team and the National Awards Committee in the effort to adjudicate a fair competition. What follows below is a draft of sports-relevant information that will be included in the upcoming report.

I. Key Statistics

Entries

- 1,083 total entries were submitted into the contest.

Judges

- 472 approved unique judges
- 562 unique panel assignments
- 556 completed ballots

II. Nominees

There were a total of 218 nominees across 42 categories. Each category had five nominees, with the following exceptions:

- Outstanding Live Sports Special (7 nominees)
- Outstanding Esports Coverage (6)
- Outstanding Studio Show - Daily (6)
- Outstanding Short Feature (6)
- Outstanding Sports Personality – Studio Analyst (6)
- Outstanding Post-Produced Graphic Design (6)
- The George Wensel Technical Achievement Award (6)

In all instances, the additional nominee was a result of an unbreakable tie between the fifth and sixth nominees.

III. This year's competition resulted in one Emmy® Award recipient in each of the categories.

IV. Judging Process

All categories are judged by a blue-ribbon panel of both network staff and freelance industry professionals. All judges are conflicted out of scoring entries from networks or production companies with which they are affiliated. More than half (55%) of judges from this past year were conflicted out of scoring at least one entry on their ballot.

Ballot Return Rates

This year's contest featured a 98.9% overall ballot return rate across the contest. Below highlights the return rates by category type.

By Category Type:

- Series/Program – 99.1%
- Personality – 98.5%
- Craft – 99.3%

Category Reassignments

Fewer than 5 entries in the Outstanding Edited Sports Event coverage, Edited Sports Special or Series, Short Sports Documentary, Long Sports Documentary, and Serialized Sports Documentary were reassigned among these categories. This was an improvement over the previous year. Administration believes the splitting of the Outstanding Edited Sports Special or Series and the refinement of the rules will help eliminate confusion among these categories.

Entry Challenges

Outstanding Camera Work

- A submission was disqualified after judging had commenced. The video submitted for Emmy consideration did not reflect footage as it was presented to viewers. The video was raw footage from a master reel. Craft categories are to be judged solely on the content applicable to the category (e.g. audio for Audio, graphics for Graphics) as presented to the viewer in the coverage of the sporting event/series in question.

Outstanding Sports Journalism

- The eligibility of a submission was challenged on the grounds that it did not satisfy the Original Material rule. Sports administration was presented with the claim that the submission relied too heavily on material from previously aired features and was not a 'unique and creative treatment'. After comparing the previously aired material to the current submission, Administration concluded that the submission featured enough new material to satisfy the 'two-thirds' original material portion of the Original Material rule. The submission remained in the competition.

Outstanding Studio Show - Daily

- After judging commenced, Sports Administration discovered that the same excerpt of programming was submitted on the entry videos for submissions in the Outstanding Studio Show - Daily and an Outstanding Studio Show - Limited Run category. The excerpt was eligible to be included on the Studio Show - Limited Run entry. None of the judges in the Studio Show - Daily had begun viewing the panel, so the entrant was permitted to remove the excerpt from the submission, and upload a replacement entry video.

Outstanding Studio Show in Spanish

- Two submissions were disqualified after judging had commenced. A judge pointed out that two submissions featured internal editing within the submitted excerpts. As stated in the rulebook,

“the entry cannot have been re-edited for the purpose of enhancing the submission. An excerpt must be a continuous, commercial-free run.”

Entry Inquiries/Cross-Competition

A feature entry that was submitted in two sports categories this year was also submitted later on in the awards cycle by a co-production partner to another NATAS-administered competition, potentially meeting the criteria for an impermissible cross-competition double dip.

However, the category in the other competition allowed entrants to submit either program excerpts or a single episode as representative of the overall excellence of the show over the course of the eligibility year. The entrant chose to submit the programming that had been submitted in Sports as a single representative episode. While there is precedent for allowing certain forms of feature/program overlap, NATAS refined applicable rules.

From the NATAS General Rules and Procedures (page 12):

The same material, identical start-to-finish, is not permitted to represent an entire submission in both a series and a feature/segment category. If an entrant submits to a series or recurring programming category that allows the option of submitting a single episode to represent the entire series, that submitted episode may not then be submitted as-is to a feature or segment category. Likewise, an episode-length feature submitted in an individual segment category may not be submitted as the representative episode in a program category.

A feature or segment may be submitted to a feature or segment category and remain a component part of a broader program entry only if the segment represents less than fifty percent (50%) of the submitted episode’s total runtime.

V. Upcoming Plans

The Administration Team strives to expand and diversify the judging pool. As part of this commitment, NATAS conducted an optional, anonymous survey of judges across the three competitions administered by NATAS (Sports, Daytime, News & Documentary), in an effort to get a better sense of the demographic makeup of the judging pool. 164 out of 471 Sports Emmy judges responded to the survey, for a completion rate of 34.8%. Below are some key demographic statistics,

- 71% of responding judges identify themselves as male; 22% identify themselves as female; 6% preferred not to answer
- 81% of responding judges identify as white; 4% identify as black or African American; 1% identify as Asian; 2% identify as other; 11% preferred not to answer
- >1% of respondents have 3-5 years of industry experience; 7% have 6-9 years of industry experience; 24% have 10-19 years of industry experience; 35% have 20-29 years of industry experience; 31% have 30+ year of industry experience; 2% preferred not to answer
- 27% responded that this past year was their first time judging

Just over 12% of judges scored the same category that they had judged the previous year. This is an improvement from last year, when the figure was just over 25%. These judges were primarily in the Craft and Spanish language categories. The Administration Team will continue to minimize these repetitions in the future.

Administration continues to work with network partners on the diversity of judges assigned, as well as working to recruit a more diverse group of freelancers from various affinity groups and professional networks.