BRASS BANDS
NORTHERN IRELAND

36 Ramore Park
Belfast
BT10 OFB

BRASS IN CONCERT 2026 – Information & Entry Form

Dear Secretary

I am delighted to provide details of our upcoming Brass in Concert weekend.

The Friday Night

Following the increasing success of previous years, we are delighted to announce that we will once again run our informal concert event on **Friday 27th February 2026** in the Valley Hotel, Fivemiletown. We would appreciate if you could help spread the word to bands who typically would not compete in our contests but would like the opportunity to take part in a "turn up and play" evening, performing to an appreciative audience. There are no player registration rules and performances are not adjudicated. However, we do need to limit the number of bands who can participate due to time constraints of the evening.

The Entertainment Contest

Please find enclosed the entry form for the forthcoming Entertainment Contest which will be held on **Saturday 28th February 2026** in the **Valley Hotel**, **Fivemiletown**.

It is expected that the event will start at 10.00am on the day although final timings, including playing times and running order will be announced once entries are known.

Our adjudicators on the day will be Andrea Price (Music) and Hugo Duncan (Entertainment).

As with previous contests, North of Ireland Bands Association contest rules will apply.

The **closing date** for contest entries will be **Saturday 31st January 2026**.This is to enable any queries to be resolved and the draw to take place at the next Delegate meeting which will take place on **Friday 13th February**. Please note, entries will only be accepted once the completed form and the corresponding payment have been received.

Warm-up facilities will be provided and a room allocation schedule will be notified to competing bands nearer the time. Car & coach parking is available at the hotel.

Please note all relevant NIBA & BBNI affiliation fees must be paid in order to compete in the contest.

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As with our 2025 event, bands will now be timed on their **overall** performance length and not just their playing time. As such bands will now be timed from the moment the **band plays their first note** until the **band plays their final note**.
In order to cut down on the time it takes each band to fully leave the stage, bands are asked that they take all their music and other equipment with them when exiting the stage. To facilitate this, our Entertainment Adjudicator will be asked to start their marking from when the **band enters the stage** until the **band takes their final bow.** Therefore, **bands will not be marked on their deportment when leaving the stage.**

PERFORMANCE times and prizes for individual sections are:

Section	Min Performance Time (mins)	Max Performance Time (mins)	Additional Prizes
Championship	25	30	Best March - Most Entertaining Band - Best Soloist
Grade 2	20	25	Best March - Most Entertaining Band - Best Soloist
Grade 3	20	25	Best March - Most Entertaining Band - Best Soloist
Grade 4	20	25	Best March - Most Entertaining Band - Best Soloist
Grade 5	15	20	Best March - Most Entertaining Band - Best Soloist

Due to excessive delays at previous events, and to keep the event running smoothly, a 10-minute time limit will be enforced on band changeover time. The timer will start when your band members enter the stage to commence setup and stop when your band is onstage ready to play. Bands will be warned at 8 minutes that they are approaching their time limit. Any band exceeding the time limit will be deducted 1 entertainment point for each minute. So that all bands are treated fairly, those who are first to play in the morning or afternoon sessions must wait until the start of the session to enter the stage area to set-up.

For those bands who wish to make use of the AV and lighting facilities at the venue, BBNI will organise a session in the week leading up to the event for participating bands to familiarise themselves with the equipment.

Percussion

As with previous events, percussion will be provided for both the Friday night concert and Saturday contest. Details of supplied percussion will be confirmed to participating bands in due course.

Appeal for Sponsorship

BBNI are seeking **sponsorship** for our events. Contests are expensive to run and any financial assistance, no matter how little, will be gratefully received. Assistance could be through a contribution towards the sponsorship of an individual prize or trophy, help with our event running costs or through taking an advert in our programme (£30 for half page, £50 for full page). If you or someone in your band knows someone who may be interested, we would be grateful if you could pass on their details.

Likewise, please let me know if your band would like to advertise any events in our programme. Adverts placed by bands are free of charge.

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Compère

Bands will have the choice to provide their own compère or use a compère provided by BBNI. Please can bands let us know by **Saturday 14th February** whether they will be using their own compère or not.

In response to feedback from bands, the following paragraph has been added to our 'Guidance for Entertainment Adjudicators at BBNI Contests' (a full transcript of the guidance is included at the end of this letter):

'Bands may choose to provide their own compère on the day, or opt to use a BBNI compère, or have no compère at all. We ask that you consider the content of any announcements rather than who is making the announcements when forming a judgement.'

Perpetual Trophies

In order to allow inspection and any necessary repairs to be carried out, **ALL PERPETUAL TROPHIES** must be returned to a member of BBNI Executive on or before 14th February 2026. It is the responsibility of the band holding any of the trophies to ensure that they are returned in a timely manner. **Any bands that still hold trophies on the 15th February 2026 will be fined £20 per trophy.**

That's all for now. I will be in touch with participating bands with more details in due course.
If you have any queries regarding our event, please contact me at the earliest opportunity.

I look forward to seeing you in Fivemiletown.

Denise Gilchrist
Secretary

Email: secretary@brassbandsni.org
Mob: 07774 377901

BRASS BANDS
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Brass in Concert
Saturday 28th February 2026
Valley Hotel, Fivemiletown

ENTRY FORM

Band name: _____ (PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS)

Section (please tick)	**Championship**	☐	**4th Grade**	☐	**5th Grade / Unaffiliated**	☐
	2nd Grade	☐	**3rd Grade**	☐		

Entry Fee: All sections £60.00

Entry fee enclosed for the amount: £ _____

Electronic Payments to:
Account Name: BRASS BAND NORTHERN IRELAND
Sort Code: 98-00-60
Account Number: 18078113
Please label electronic payments as "Band Name FMT" (e.g. CWA FMT) to make it easier for us to check payments.
All entry fees are non-refundable.

Updated Band Contact Details (only if details have changed)

Secretary's Name _____

Secretary's Address _____

_____

_____

Contact Phone Number(s) _____
(mobile preferred)

Email Address _____

Guidance for Entertainment Adjudicators at BBNI Contests

Thank you for agreeing to take part in our event today.

Through your role as entertainment adjudicator, we would like you to judge the quality of our bands' performances from an entertainment perspective.

Please write your comments on the provided sheets. These will be given to our competing bands at the end of the contest.

Bands should be awarded a placing e.g. 1st, 2nd, 3rd etc. All bands in each section should be placed.

Whilst entertainment can mean different things to different people, we suggest that you consider things such as:

Choice of Music
Presentation & Deportment
Stagecraft & Use of Performance Area
Audience Engagement
Overall Entertainment Factor

Bands may choose to provide their own compère on the day, or opt to use a BBNI compère, or have no compère at all. We ask that you consider the content of any announcements rather than who is making the announcements when forming a judgement.

Unless it impacts on your overall enjoyment of the performance, we ask that you do not be concerned about the musical quality of each performance as this will be judged separately by the Music Adjudicator.

If you have any queries, would like some refreshments or a comfort break, please signal to one of the BBNI executive who will be identifiable by their displayed name badges.

Please note that in order to cut down on the time it takes each band to fully leave the stage, bands have been asked that they take all their music and other equipment with them when exiting the stage. Therefore, please only start marking from when the **band enters the stage for their performance** and stop when the **band takes their final bow.** Bands should not be marked on their deportment when leaving the stage.

We hope you enjoy your day