

Matthewson Trophy

Hello, my name is Brian Harmer. I am a retired academic, a lifelong photography enthusiast and currently president of the Hutt Camera Club. I am a holder of the LPSNZ and am struggling to achieve my "A". I am also training to become an accredited PSNZ judge and my progress is monitored by a highly qualified mentor who does his best to ensure I don't go too far off the rails. I have enjoyed looking at your images and, as requested by the organizer, offering a very brief comment on each of them. Please accept my remarks as you should for all judges, as just one person's opinion, and if I have got something wrong, I hope you will bear with me as I learn. Below are the guidelines I followed:

The 6 images per club are NOT judged as a set but as individual images and we need an overall score for each club to see who is 1st, 2nd and third-the first winning the Trophy.

*You can judge **any way you like** to get the total score. (my emphasis)*

*Some **brief** comments are great which is why it differs from a National or Regional meeting.*

If there is time we read them out or they are given as handouts.

Accordingly, I judged each image on a scale of 1 to 10, using as far as possible, the PSNZ approach to judging, but with a little less verbal analysis than in an ordinary competition.

File name	Image	Assessment
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Open section

01_01_Matthewson_Windswept		Beautifully conveys the power of the ocean swells and the offshore wind ripping the tops off the waves. I like the placement of the horizon and the angle of the breaking wave. There are no blown highlights, but I would have liked more detail in the spray area.	6.5
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01_02_Matthewson_Seal Pup		The photographer introduces us to the irresistible appeal of this seal pup. A nicely chosen angle, and though the right hand side of the image is empty, I think the panoramic approach works well.	7
01_03_Matthewson_Stump		The author seems to be asking questions about the life and journey of these bits of driftwood in what I take to be a beautiful South Island lake. A dramatic sky adds to the image. The Square format and the choice of monochrome all work well to produce a very nice picture.	6

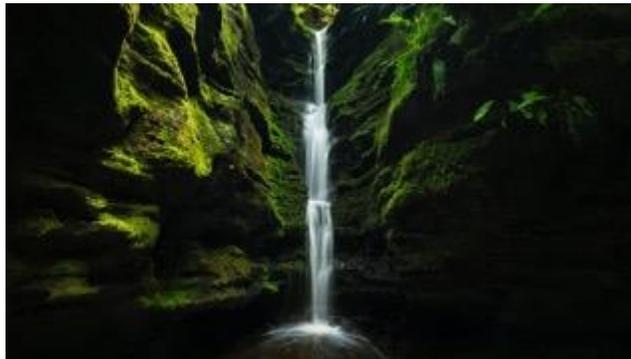
01_04_Bird's Eye View, NZ Tui



Orange pollen on the forehead tells us that this tui has been busy gathering nectar from the flax flowers. Some of the shadow area on the bird's lower body are blocked out but otherwise it is a nice image of New Zealand icons

6.5

01_05_Matthewson_Secret Falls



This picture uses light and a slow exposure to give a beautiful image of a small waterfall. Might a little more space at the bottom give us a sense of where the water goes.

7

01_06_Matthewson_The Dance



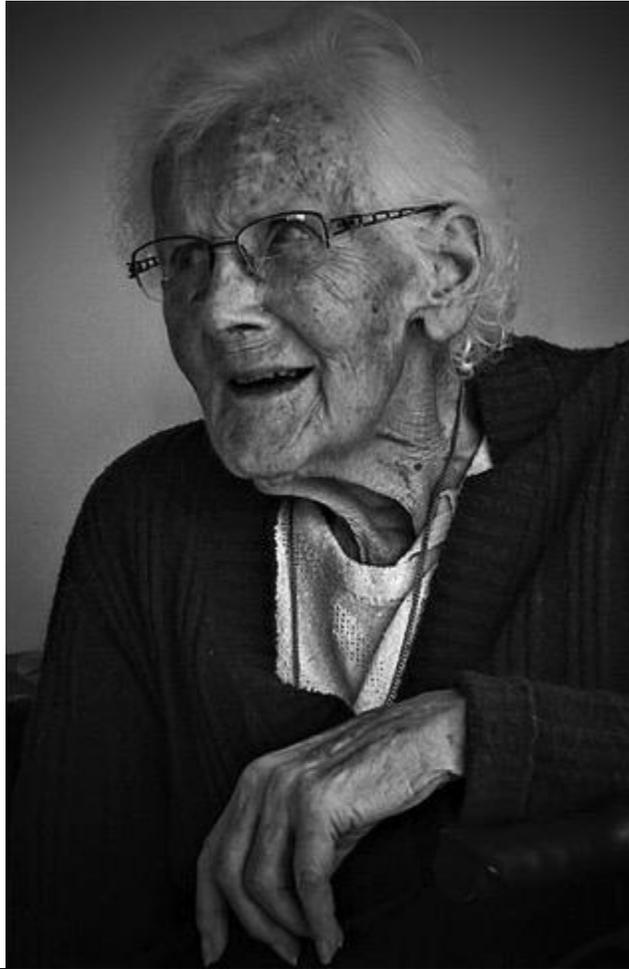
I find this breathtaking. I love the colours and the composition. I have no idea how it was made but the result is very pleasing indeed.

10

<p>02_01_Matthewson_At the start line</p>		<p>Choosing the start line where there is no motion runs the risk of a static image. However, the exhaust smoke in the background and the separation of the subject from the other visible rider give a sense of anticipation to a stationary moment. Well done</p>	<p>7.5</p>
<p>02_02_Matthewson_Finely Honed</p>		<p>This picture captures the mystique of what I presume to be a competition axe man. I think I would have liked to see his hand positioned slightly differently so as to show more of the blade's cutting edge. This is a story well told.</p>	<p>6.5</p>

<p>02_03_Matthewson_Glorious Bird</p>		<p>This bird portrait is very well made. It is beautifully sharp around the eye and the beak, and the softening of the feathers on the wing and the back don't matter</p>	<p>7.5</p>
<p>02_04_Matthewson_Lake Mapourika</p>		<p>Mapourika on a calm clear day is a delight to the eye and the photographer has caught it well.</p>	<p>5</p>

02_05_Matthewson_Mabs



Mabs is clearly a character, and the photographer has caught her mischievous smile very nicely. I wonder if the image would work better if her eyes were coming back towards the camera

5

02_06_Matthewson_Shipwreck



A rocky shore and an apparent shipwreck are worth exploring. Aspects of the hull and the stanchions make me wonder if this is a replica or perhaps a playground rather than an actual shipwreck. The black hull fills almost half the image without providing much information. The clouds enhance the scene.

4

03_01_Matthewson_Yellow Crowned Night Heron Eating Crab



Congratulations on getting so close and catching such a sharp image of this beautiful bird. It shows both the heron and the wind-ruffled water very nicely.

6.5

03_02_Matthewson_Whirl



This is an opportunity well seen and nicely executed. I wonder if the stationary car is the photographers own ride, and if so, whether it might have improved the image to have it parked behind the camera or otherwise out of view.

7

03_03_Matthewson_Washing
Time



This tells a good human interest story. A good sharp image, nicely focused. Would it be improved by swinging a little to the right to eliminate the background beyond the left hand edge of the open door?

6

03_04_Matthewson_Lighting
Up



Beautifully caught character portrait . The lighting is excellent and the skin tones are a delight.

9

03_05_Matthewson_Killing Time



What a well observed and photographed scene. The photographer has done well to expose for both the inside and the outside subjects.

6.5

03_06_Matthewson_Abandoned



The sense of abandonment is well caught. Somehow, the man on the left helps the photographer to tell the story of someone's long abandoned business. Heavy cloud adds to the melancholy of the story.

6

04_01_Matthewson_City Skyview



This image is well composed, but other than the geometry of the negative space, I struggle to find what the photographer wants me to see. The choice of colour for the sky is interesting.

4

<p>04_02_Matthewson_Cortinarius rubrocastaneus</p>		<p>This image tells us a lot about this beautiful fungus and where it lives. I am sure it would do well in a nature competition and is very nice in this open context. It is exquisitely sharp, and nicely exposed.</p>	<p>8</p>
<p>04_03_Matthewson_Patterns and Colour</p>		<p>The patterns and colours are well seen, but I am left with no sense of scale and am unsure whether I am seeing a close-up or a high altitude shot.</p>	<p>4</p>

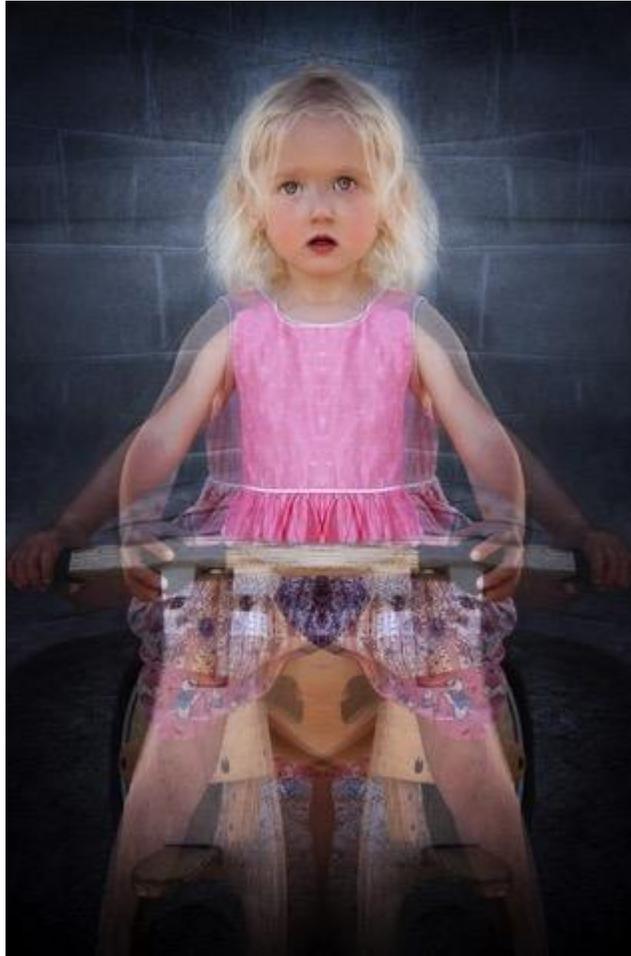
04_04_Matthewson_Cleanskin



This is a real attention grabber. I like the composition, the lighting and the sharpness. The dramatic contrast and the elegant curves are a delight. I am distracted by the smudges in the upper dark area of the bottle. They are too faint to be a deliberate part of the design and too visible to ignore. Perhaps wiping the bottle before the shot might have resulted in a higher score.

8

04_05_Matthewson_Angel on a
Bike



What an interesting image. The photographer has wisely kept the child's face and hair clear and free of the overlay effects. The story I receive is a very nice portrayal of innocence in motion. It is well lit and deliberately central.

7

04_06_Matthewson_Water
Droplet



This photographer has clearly mastered the art of droplet photography. It is sharp, well lit with nicely chosen colours. I am not so fond of the choice of framing.

7.5

05_01_Matthewson_Stroll by the Art Hotel



This image raises many questions about the building, the art, and the young man. It is an intriguing image. The choice of monochrome, and getting all the horizontal and vertical lines properly aligned all add to the picture.

6.5

05_02_Matthewson_Cape Gooseberry



This picture of cape gooseberries works really well. It evokes for me the sights, smells and tastes of my childhood and is visually delightful. Very sharp, beautifully exposed, well placed in the frame.

8

05_03_Matthewson_Katydid Caedicia simplex



Nicely exposed and well placed. The chosen depth of field works well. I would have liked the whole of the antenna in the picture, but that is a minor quibble

7

05_04_Matthewson_Muruia
Falls in Flood



A nicely caught image of the Maruia falls. The long exposure causes my eye to wander from the confused foreground swirl to the falls and back. Might a crop off the foreground resolve this?

5

05_05_Matthewson_Eastern
Barn Owl Tytondate



Nicely captured image of a beautiful bird. Would it be improved by removing some of the uninteresting material on the right. Focus and exposure are nicely managed.

6.5

<p>05_06_Matthewson_State of Decay</p>	 A still life painting featuring a white, faceted vase filled with a bouquet of red and white roses. In the foreground, two yellow pears and several scattered red rose petals are visible on a light-colored surface. The background is a soft, textured grey.	<p>Nicely presented still life with a well chosen background texture. The decay aspect is well caught though not necessarily appealing to every taste.</p>	<p>6.5</p>
<p>06_01_Matthewson_At The Breakwater</p>	 A landscape painting depicting a breakwater in the ocean. A large wave is crashing against the breakwater, creating a massive splash of white foam. A small black silhouette of a gull is captured in flight, just above the water's surface. The sky is a dark, overcast grey.	<p>Beautiful light, and the passing gull is in just the right place</p>	<p>7.5</p>

06_02_Matthewson_Golden
Snub Nosed Monkey



The photographer has us all looking at the face of this delightful monkey. Exposure and differential focus all contribute to make this a fine portrait

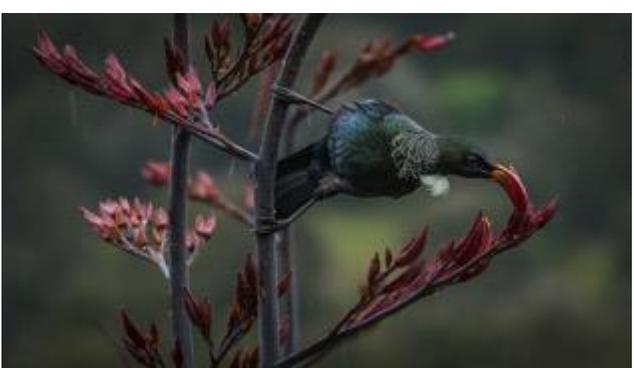
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06_03_Matthewson_Intrepid



What an excellent imaginative flight of fancy. It is one of those creative images that is so well done that it has me asking "how was that done" rather than "why". Superb image manipulation skills.

8

06_04_Matthewson_Kotuku		This is a stunning capture of the kotuku. It is a deceptively simple image. The exposure is perfect, the background is informative without being intrusive.	9
06_05_Matthewson_Marsh Crake		Another delightful capture of a very elusive bird. My attention wanders from the bright eye to the mud-coated foot. The red structure in the background is a distraction.	6.5
06_06_Matthewson_Tui		Flax flowers, raindrops and a perfectly focused tui make this a very fine image indeed. The background is nicely separated.	7

I have no idea whose set is which, but as you will see from the distribution of aggregate scores, each set had some strengths and weaknesses, and the

results show that the participating clubs have fallen very close together. My warmest congratulations to those clubs which attained the highest scores, and my thanks to you all for the privilege of being allowed to judge the competition.

Brian

Set 1	2nd		43.0
Set 2			35.5
Set 3	3rd		41.0
Set 4			38.5
Set 5			39.5
Set 6	1st		46.0