Mounting Prints for Competition

All prints for club or L&CPU competitions should be on mount boards sized 50 x 40 cm. The image size is up to you but avoid too large or too small.

Boards can be bought from art shops or framers but are cheaper if bought in bulk from online retailers. There are many available but a couple of examples are paperspectrum.co.uk or cotswoldmounts.co.uk. Example prices are listed at the end of this document.

There are many colours of mount board available but it is advisable to stick to either off-white (Antique White is a popular choice) or black.

The easiest approach is to stick the photograph directly onto the front of the mount board. Carefully measure the placement and use a pencil to make a small indent at each corner. The photo can then be carefully placed and stuck down using either spray-glue or double-sided tape. The latter is less messy and easy to do – just place some tape at each corner and halfway along each side.

Another way to avoid cutting apertures is to buy pre-cut boards with either A3 or A4 apertures. These cost more but do save on effort.

Otherwise you will need either a sharp blade (Stanley knife or scalpel) for a straight cut or, for a bevelled cut a specialised cutter. The cheapest option of specialised cutter is the Logan 200. There are more fancy alternatives but they are quite expensive. You will also need a cutting mat, pencil and a good metal ruler to measure and use as a cutting edge. The ones found in hardware stores with a handle are good as they need to be held firmly when cutting.

Always work on the back of the board. Carefully calculate and then measure where the aperture should be (usually in the middle but up to you!) and draw guidelines with a pencil. Check and double check

at this point that your photo will fit, with a small overlap so that it won't fall through. Best to be sure before putting blade to board. You may want to draw an 'X' in the centre, to indicate the section to be removed. The cutter should always be placed on this, otherwise the bevel will be the wrong way round.

Line up the ruler against your guideline, press down firmly and guide the cutter against it, carefully noting the start and stop lines so you don't go through the corner. A Stanley knife can be useful for finishing off any rough corners, as can a piece of fine sandpaper.

Once the aperture has been removed, use masking tape to fix your photo to the back of the board. For this use two strips of tape on one edge and for extra security place a second strip across at right-angles to form a hinge. It is not necessary to secure the photo any more than this – if you do it may end up warping within the mount.

All mounts must have a backing the same size (or very slightly smaller) than the board. Pre-cut backing boards are also available on-line. Alternatively, you could use thin card or thick paper and cut it to size yourself.

It is important not to have any glue or sticky tape anywhere on the front or back of the mounted print as this could cause damage to other prints when they are stacked together.

That's it! It's really not that difficult so give it a go!

Approximate Costs:

Mount Board (from Paper Spectrum: £4 delivery charge)

Antique White x10 - £9.98

Backing Board x10 - £7.19

White with Black Core x5 - £12.99

A4 / A3 pre-cut window x5 - £10.99

Other Items:

Sketch Pad (for backing) x30 - £9.99 (Rymans)

Self-healing mat A2 - £13.99 (Rymans)

Logan 200 cutter - £31.50 (Amazon)

Pack 10 Blades - £5.30