



Due to a number of contributing factors, the **2016 HOHNER GOLDEN HARMONICA CHAMPIONSHIPS** will not be going ahead.

The competition was founded in 1982 by my father John Minson, as a means of promoting harmonica playing in Australia and to that end it has been very successful. The list of winners and finalists makes up a 'who's who' of harmonica players in Australia today. Jac and Tricia Smits from Kurt Jacob & Co, Australian Distributors for HOHNER, continued to run the event until I took over about 6 years ago. HOHNER Harmonicas have always been the major sponsor.

The attendance figures have been declining for some time now and despite new sponsors being added, operating costs have increased to the point where it is no longer financially viable. The comp has never been a money making venture, it is all about continuing tradition, recognising excellence, and encouraging the playing of this wonderful instrument. I'm proud to be included in that history.

I have also become very busy in other areas of my career and feel I can no longer give the time that is required for the event to be successfully run.

I hope the comp may be re-vitalised in a bigger market such as Sydney and the format can be expanded to include workshops and a top line concert performance as well as the competition component. This is certainly something to look forward to.

Tamworth loses one of the longest continually running events of the January festival and that is a shame. I hope you will all understand my reasons for this decision and throw your support behind the new venture when it becomes a reality.

Thanks to Jac and Tricia Smits (and family!) for their dedication over the many years. They were there from the very beginning at Peter Harkins' Cheapa Music in 1982.

The cedar trophies were hand crafted and donated by Noel Smith from Tamworth. I will always be grateful for his generosity.

Others such as Ian McDermott, who helped keep the comp running for many years.

I'd also like to thank last year's sponsors Dane Clarke from MandoHarp and Warren Barnes from Harmonica Players Network. Your support was very much appreciated.

On that note, I'd like to thank everyone who competed, watched, promoted, judged, and in any way supported the Hohner Golden Harmonica Championships. It's been a pleasure to know you all.

With much love ☺ Lawrie Minson