

JUDGES REPORT

2026 - August - Theme - Sunrise or Sunset

Judge - Terry Power - Cairns

Image Title	Comments	Score
Sunrise Over the Beach	It is easy to see why being present for the magic colours of the sunrise clouds on this day would have led you to want to photograph them. Your technical decisions seem good. The shutter speed, aperture selection etc. have created a good exposure and allowed you to get a sharp image. I encourage you to think a little more regarding your composition – you could have made your image much more effective by including more of the foreground beach, or by moving closer to the water to enhance the view of the colours reflected on the sand or the pose of the people etc.	6
Sunset on Kgari	The clouds in this scene really do have instant appeal – the beautiful oranges throughout, the feathery textures of the lines of cirrus clouds on the right and contrast given by the dark clouds on the left! Shooting a sunset while the sun is still above the horizon can be challenging as it is so bright – yet you have controlled this quite well and the reduced exposure of the whole scene has boosted the colour saturation. Unfortunately, the sun has still burned a large hotspot in the center of your image where all detail has been lost. Also, I feel that you could have made more of the bottom of the scene – as it is the beach and the passers-by are just a distraction.	7
Sunset Lake Dunn	This is another good example of a sunset that would make one stop to appreciate the beauty and wonder of the orange colours that occur just prior to the sun going down over the horizon. Your composition has also captured the reflections of the colours and the clouds on the water, but I feel that there is still something lacking regarding the overall composition – too much of the upper section and the lower section of the image are just grey and featureless. Some cropping or including some other foreground interest would have been good.	7
Sunset on the Beach	Great colours and good composition. I especially appreciate the banded reflection of the sun's colours and light on the wet sand of the foreground. This image could really be improved by capturing a better moment for the two swimmers – as it is they are just there. Imagine the same picture with one of	7

	them diving in or jumping up or one chasing the other. A little story happening here would really make something more of this beautiful scene.	
Evening Sunset	I really like the variety of colours as you glance upwards – from the reflections in the ocean, the blacks of the distant landform, to the red, orange, yellow and blues of the sky! There is an obvious attempt here to create foreground interest by including the boat and its wake in this capture. I feel however that it is a little too far away to really create sufficient interest. Compositionally I think a little straightening of the horizon and a cropping off a little of the bottom and top to create a panorama, would lift this image substantially.	6
Sunset on the Farm	The sun rays are a nice inclusion, but we seem to have missed out on any significant colours of form in this sunset image. I wonder if the camera failed to capture the real beauty that you saw when you looked at this scene. Left to its own decisions, a camera will select a shutter time to receive an 'average amount of light' and this won't necessarily record the colours of a nice sunset. The tree is a reasonable attempt to create some foreground interest, but I feel you need to be a little more creative with your composition.	5
Sunrise at Kiakora	Once again, we are immediately drawn into the vibrant oranges of sunrise and your decision to include the foreground rocks is commendable. I know that time is of the essence when shooting sunrise shots, but I would encourage you to do two things when trying to select the most effective composition – decide how much of the sky you need to best capture the clouds & colour, and then find some foreground interest (leading lines, reflections, silhouetted items etc.) and then compose accordingly.	7
Sunset at Lake Mourachan	Congratulations on capturing this wonderful image. There are so many things that have come together to make this image really pop – a balanced composition with the beautiful foreground flowers, the slight purple tinge in the top clouds, a lovely interplay between the bright sky and the darker foreground, the proud trees on the horizon, the line of clouds on the RHS that lead us to the sun, the flare of the sun due to your narrow aperture... Well done!	9
Last Rays in Darwin	The colours of sunset and the rays visible in the clouds are nice but there is not enough happening in your image to create sufficient interest and appeal in this composition. There are many factors that contribute to a great sunrise shot, and foreground interest is one of the most important.	5
Sunrise at Lake Tyrrel	I appreciate your compositional decisions with this image – the panorama cropping, the lovely leading line of the shoreline (maybe you could have stepped back one more step and had this run all the way to the LH corner), the almost featureless	8

	water, sand and sky with the pleasant pastel touch of the colours of sunrise. Although you have managed these and your technical decisions well, I don't feel that there is quite enough magic in this sunrise to take this image any further.	
Sunrise Over Uluru	There is an innate interest here due to the impressive nature of Uluru. The red-orange colours of the rock and the weather foreground soils are highlighted in the early morning sun and contrast nicely with the greens of the foreground grasses and foliage. Your composition is effective and the image is beautifully sharp and well exposed.	9
Tropical River Sunset	I love the story told in the movement of the river through the repeated lines of reflected colour and contrast. The sunset makes this image happen, but it is not the only story – well done in capturing this. You have controlled the light and exposure well and your composition is effective.	8
A New Day at Woodleigh Station	This image does a great job of inviting us into this bush scene – I would love to set up camp here! There is a comfortable and peaceful balance here that is supported by the dimmish light, the compositional bands of shrubs, trees and sky, and the colourful and patterned sunrise sky. I also appreciate how the colours of the sky are also picked up in the foreground grasses.	9
Suburban Sunrise	Just beautiful! Your composition has captured this amazing sky and its reflection in the lake! The patterned and colourful cirrus clouds are spectacular and beautifully compliment the golden show on the right as the sun nears its rise. The curve of the shoreline adds nicely to your composition as does the trees. It can be challenging to do justice to a sunrise when in a suburban context, but you have really nailed this!	9
Sunrise Pattern	I like your efforts to capture a sunrise pic with a difference! Using the stark nature of the foreground tree branches has created an effective foreground interest that makes up for the cloudless sky. The trail of light from the sun creates a great beam that showcases the ripple like waves of the ocean and your efforts to stop down and use a fast shutter to reduce the blow out of light from the sun has created an effective silhouette image. I feel you could have improved the final result by moving a step or two to the left so that the thicker branch is not in your composition and we could have less of an interrupted view of the distant landforms.	8
Sunset Shoot	Wow! This sunset is literally on fire! The deep and pervading colour of the sky is awesome. I like the strong contrast created and the leading line of the fence. While including people in this shot can add interest, their postures and the fact that they are standing a few deep means that they obstruct each other and this is distracting. I imagine that the shot that the lady on the right took would have been on the money!	6

End of the Day	You have all the ingredients here for a beautiful silhouette image (lovely light and colours, interesting trees...) however the people are more of a distraction than a positive contribution to the scene – a number of them are only partially visible and they take away from the interesting trunks and branches of the silhouetted trees. Don't be afraid to craft your composition by asking people to pose - imagine this scene with a couple standing hand in hand on the LHS of the trees, gazing toward the sunset!	6
Perfect Day	There are quite a few good elements in this capture – the curve of the Strand beach all the way to Cape Pallarenda, the tall coconut palms, the sunrise colours that seem to be enhanced by a layer of smoke ... You have managed the lighting quite well and the almost silhouette-like nature of this image adds an appeal. I would like to see you play a little more with your composition to make more of your foreground – maybe just pulling back a little or conversely by wandering down closer to the tree line to remove some of the busyness and better capture the curve of the beach.	6
Sentinels to the Sunrise	The structure of these clouds (you can almost feel them) and their beautiful illumination just prior to sunrise makes them great subjects – there are heralding the approaching dawn! Your exposure and shutter speed have caught them very well. I appreciate your efforts to include some of the trees in the foreground, however I feel that the composition is unbalanced and would benefit by including a little more of the lower scene.	6
Sunrise Crowning the Pier	Your subject here, the Fisherman Jetty on The Strand, is beautifully highlighted by the background sunrise! The detail and reality of this significant fishing asset are captured in the people at the end of the jetty – some have lines in the water, others are sitting and watching and others just congregating and talking – a typical fishing scene! The colours and radial looking rays of the sun just peeping over the horizon add beautiful colours and create effective silhouettes of the jetty and the characters.	9
Colours of Sunrise	The vibrant colours really grab the viewer's attention here and I applaud your capturing this scene just prior to sunrise when the saturation of the colours is at its maximum. The fire in the clouds, and their layered curves are beautiful, and you have done well to capture the reflected colours in the lake and on the rocks. I feel as though you have cropped in a little too tightly and would like to see a little more of the foreground rocks to give a more balanced composition.	8
Sunrise at the Pier	This is another appealing image of The Strand. The whole sky is awash with the colours of sunrise and this creates an effective backdrop to the foreground subjects of the Fisherman Jetty and the Ocen Siren statue. The purples of the	8.5

	jetty lights and their reflections in the water create an interesting contrast of colour to the prevailing orange of the sunrise. You have composed well and selected a shutter speed and aperture that has rendered a crisp and well exposed image. If only the distant clouds didn't hide all the interesting roof structure at the end of the jetty.	
Strand Pier Sunrise	This is a great capture of a scene that would be very familiar to locals, and I can imagine hanging a print of this on a living room wall! Your composition and control of light make the most of the sunrise colours and the fishing pier! The low clouds have done you a favour and prevented the sun's light from blowing out, as often occurs once the sun pops over the horizon – great timing of your shooting!	9
Sunrise at Saunders	Nice composition with your foreground interest and clean water and sky! Although there is not much colour and cloud interest in this scene, your decision to close down your aperture to soften just a little of the water movement and has also created the starburst from the sun that is then reflected in the edge of the shore. Flares that result from looking directly at a light source can sometimes be distracting, but in this case, I feel it adds a little interest to this image.	8
Yarramin	The strong colours and contrast in this scene make it worth photographing. I suspect that there was a fairly strong breeze at the time because the image suffers from motion blur in the trees. Have a play with your exposure triangle (ISO, shutter speed and aperture) to capture the light that you see without your image suffering from too long an exposure that leads to such movement. Also be on the lookout for something closer to you that you can include to add some foreground interest.	5
Rays Before the Dawn	I like your decision to leave this as a darkish image – capturing the pre-dawn light as it was, rather than letting the camera revert to an 'average' exposure. This has allowed you to capture the crepuscular rays (the radial like orange rays) boldly and to make the most of the silhouetted scene. The fact that the sun looks as though it is about to rise right at the rear of the waterway is a nice bonus!	8
The Day is Almost Done	This is a gorgeous shot and the clean and colourful sky is fabulous. Your foreground trees (especially the one without leaves) and the bird at the top add real interest to this scene. Your timing, with the sun halfway down behind the soft cloud line, is great. The silhouette lighting is effective. I would like to see if moving a couple of steps to either the left or the right, before shooting, might have boosted your composition by isolating the sun from the branches or even capturing it dead center of the stark tree.	8.5

Image of the Month

Image Title	Reason for Placing
Sunset at Lake Mourachan	There were a handful of worthy contenders for image of the month in this category, however this image stands out. See my comments earlier but further, I add - the author has captured something beyond just the beauty of the colours of the sun/clouds at sunset, but rather has an entire sunset scene that is beautiful! (Kaye Hinds)