



Tennessee State High School Mock Trial Competition

POWER MATCHING EXPLAINED

The Tennessee State High School Mock Trial Competition uses a “power matching” system to determine team pairings for each round of competition, except for the first round, which is determined by random selection. District competitions may use the same or similar power matching system as the state competition, or may decide to structure their competitions differently.

In the state power matching system, attorney volunteers enter raw data from score sheets into a software program that makes the necessary calculations. The software performs three functions: ranking teams, placing teams in brackets and ranking teams within brackets. From these calculations, the power matchers create team pairings for the next round.

Ranking – Three elements are considered when ranking teams after each round. The software program considers them in this order: (1) the win/loss record, or total number of rounds won or lost at that point in the competition; (2) the number of ballots (votes) earned in the round (max of three); and (3) the total number of points accumulated thus far in the competition. Ballots are used solely to break a tie between two teams with identical win/loss records. Points are used solely to break a tie between two teams with identical win/loss records and number of ballots.

Example 1: A team with a win/loss record of 2-0, 4 ballots and 280 points is ranked higher than a team with a win/loss record of 1-1, 4 ballots and 292 points. Although the second team has the same number of ballots and more points, it has a lower win/loss record, which carries more weight.

Example 2: A team with a win/loss record of 4-0, 8 ballots and 1075 points is ranked higher than a team with a win/loss record of 3-1, 9 ballots and 1150 points. Although the second team has more ballots and more points, it has a lower win/loss record, which carries more weight.

Example 3: A team with a win/loss record of 2-0, 5 ballots and 280 points is ranked higher than a team with a win/loss record of 2-0, 4 ballots and 292 points. Although the second team has the same win/loss record and more points, it has fewer ballots, which carry more weight.

Example 4: A team with a win/loss record of 4-0, 11 ballots and 1103 points is ranked higher than a team with a win/loss record of 4-0, 11 ballots and 1066 points. Though the second team has the same

win/loss record and same number of ballots, it has fewer points, which carry more weight.

Bracketing – After teams are ranked by the software, they are placed into brackets based on their win/loss record. For example, all teams with a 2-1 record at the end of the third round are placed together in one bracket. Teams then are ordered within the bracket first by the number of ballots and then by the number of points.

Example 1: 2-0 Bracket

1. Team F	6 Ballots	521 Points
2. Team D	6 Ballots	505 Points

Example 2: 1-1 Bracket

1. Team A	4 Ballots	515 Points
2. Team C	3 Ballots	532 Points

Example 3: 0-2 Bracket

1. Team B	2 Ballots	498 Points
2. Team E	1 Ballot	492 Points

Pairing – The team ranked highest within the bracket will be matched with the team ranked lowest in the same bracket. The next highest team will be matched with the next lowest, and so on, until all teams are paired. If there are an odd number of teams in a bracket, the team at the top of the next lower bracket will be moved into bottom slot of the higher bracket.

General Rule – The ultimate goal of power matching is to maintain bracket integrity. However, the Mock Trial Chair (or local mock trial coordinator in local competitions) is given complete discretion to break bracket/power matching integrity if necessary. This decision is most commonly made to (1) allow each team to alternate between prosecution/plaintiff and defense at least once during the competition, (2) avoid two teams from the same school competing against each other, (3) avoid having a team compete against another team from its district or (4) avoid having a team compete against a team it played in a prior round. For this reason, it is not uncommon for pairings to stray from the general rule in the later rounds.

Final Championship Round – The two schools emerging with the highest ranked teams after four rounds of competition advance to the final round.

Determination of First Place Team – The first-place team is determined by ballots from the championship round only. Win/loss record and total points from previous rounds are not counted when determining the state champion.