

In March or April of each year the Association will host a Championship Tournament. The Tournament Site Subcommittee of the Championship Tournament Committee should take into consideration religious holidays in determining the date and place of the Championship Tournament. The following procedures provide guidelines for conducting the annual NPDA Championship Tournament. Throughout these procedures, two-person teams competing in the tournament are referred to as “teams” and the colleges or universities they represent are referred to as “schools.”

**A. Tournament Staff**

1. The Tournament Director shall be appointed by the President with the approval of the Executive Council and shall serve at the pleasure of the President.

a. The Tournament Director shall oversee all aspects of the tournament, and shall be responsible for administering the tournament according to the Operating Procedures contained within this document and related NPDA By-Laws.

b. In extreme circumstances, the Tournament Director may deviate from the Tournament Operating Procedures when his or her decision to do so is supported by a majority vote of the Executive Council. Any such deviations and the reasons for making them must be reported to the membership of the Association in a timely manner.

c. Tournament personnel should incur no net financial loss by working on the tournament - and personnel may apply to the Treasurer for reimbursement of costs above and beyond those that would have been incurred had they not served on the tournament staff.

d. Members of the tournament staff who may be used as judges in elimination rounds shall appear on the strike sheet as judges.

2. The tournament director shall appoint the staff necessary to administer the tournament.

**B. Entries**

1. No later than two months prior to the tournament, the Tournament Director shall send a tournament invitation to all member schools. The tournament invitation shall announce a deadline for entry that is approximately four weeks prior to the Championship Tournament. The tournament invitation will include a maximum number of teams that each school is allowed to nominate.

2. All schools shall be permitted to nominate no more than the maximum number of teams allowed for each school. The Tournament Director shall note the order in which the nominations are received. A complete nomination must consist of the number of teams, the number of judges, the names of teams and judges (although names may be changed prior to the tournament), and a deposit to be applied to entry fees. Deposits will be returned only in the events that changes are made prior to the entry deadline or if the tournament is unable to accommodate all of the nominations. Otherwise, deposits are nonrefundable.

3. On the date of the deadline for entry, the Tournament Director shall compare the number of teams nominated for the tournament with the maximum number of teams that can be accommodated by the host school. If the number of nominations is equal to or fewer than the maximum number of teams that can be accommodated, the Tournament Director shall enter those teams in the tournament.

4. At the deadline, if the number of teams nominated exceeds the maximum number of teams that can be accommodated, the Tournament Director shall enter the first team from each school, then the second, and so on. Once it is impossible to complete a movement through the list and accommodate at the tournament site, the total number of applicants for slots in the tournament, the Tournament Director will return to the top of the list and count the number of teams at this point. The director will then subtract that number from the total number of slots possible for the tournament. That number of teams will then be selected randomly from a pool consisting of one team from each school still applying for slots. After this process, the Tournament Director will notify all schools of the final number of teams they will be allowed to enter in the tournament and will return deposits for all teams that cannot be accommodated in the tournament. The Tournament Director will then continue the process, to rank the unentered teams in priority for a waiting list.

5. At the deadline, if the maximum number of teams that can be accommodated is not exceeded, the Tournament Director may accept additional teams that may be charged an additional fee for late entry.

#### C. Debater Eligibility

1. All entering schools must be members of the NPDA or must pay membership fees at the time of their tournament registration.

2. Eligibility to participate in the tournament is defined by NPDA By-Law VIII. Each nomination must include a statement by the registrar (or other appropriate university

official) testifying that the debaters are enrolled in the institution as prescribed in NPDA By-Law VIII.

3. Ordinarily a team will consist of two persons from the same school. Hybrid teams (with one member from each of two different schools) are also permitted; although, no school is permitted to have more than one debater participating as a member of a hybrid team. Hybrid teams will not meet teams from either of the two schools in prelims or elimination rounds. Hybrid success will count toward tournament sweepstakes, with each school receiving 50 percent of the total points earned.

#### D. Novice

1. For purposes of the NPDA Championship Tournament, a novice shall be defined as an undergraduate student who is in his or her first year of participation in intercollegiate competitive debate and meets the criteria below:

a. Students with previous competitive experience in high school or intercollegiate debate formats would be ineligible for novice status.

1) High school debate formats include, but are not limited to, Cross Examination (CX) Debate, Lincoln-Douglas (LD) Debate, Public Forum (PF) Debate and Parliamentary Debate.

2) Intercollegiate debate formats include, but are not limited to, Parliamentary Debate (such as NPDA, APDA, CUSID), CEDA/NDT, NFA-LD, NEDA, ADA, BP, IPDA and College Public Forum.

b. Each novice student is eligible for novice standing for no more than one NPDA Championship Tournament.

2. Coaches may identify students who qualify for novice status so that they may be tracked for novice awards.

a. The coach should identify novice competitors and novice two-person teams at the time the entry is submitted to the Tournament Director.

b. In order for a two-person team to qualify for novice status, both members of the pairing must be novice competitors.

3. The tab room staff at each NPDA Championship Tournament will track the performance of novice competitors and novice two-person teams.

a. Certificates, plaques, or other appropriate awards should be given to the top five novice speakers.

1) The speakers should simply be identified from the overall rankings for speaker awards. So, it is conceivable that a novice could receive a regular open division speaker award as well as a novice speaker award.

2) Novice speaker awards will be announced at the normally scheduled awards ceremony.

b. Certificates, plaques, or other appropriate awards should be given to the top three novice two-person teams.

1) Both members of the two-person team must be novice competitors in order to receive a novice team award.

2) The teams should simply be ranked from the overall rankings for team awards. Consequently, if more than one novice team advances to elimination rounds, the awards for top novice teams would be held until those teams are eliminated from competition.

c. To ensure the privacy of the novice status of teams or debaters, the novice status of any two-person team or individual competitor will be only known to the tab room staff, Tournament Director, and other relevant parties associated with tournament administration.

1) Tab room staff and others who may be aware of a team or debater's status will maintain confidentiality with regard to a team or debater's status until awards are announced.

2) The novice status of any two-person team or debater may be included with post-tournament materials such as lists of awards and results.

d. Novice competitors and novice teams will be treated no differently than other teams or competitors for purposes of team and season sweepstakes awards at the NPDA Championship Tournament.

#### E. Accommodations for debates

1. Students and/or judges who need ADA accommodations shall notify the tournament director as soon as possible and preferably at the time of entry whether there will be a need for any accommodations.

2. In consultation with the host, the tournament director shall provide the necessary accommodations. Such accommodations could include rooms near the ballot table and/or topic announcement for both judging and preparation, and/or other reasonable accommodations as defined by the ADA.

3. If an ADA room is necessary for a judge or a debater, preference shall be given to keep the same room for both competition and preparation. ADA requests shall trump any school reserving preparation rooms as part of the tournament.

#### F. Judge Eligibility

1. In order to be an adjudicator at the National Championship Tournament a judge shall meet one or more of the following initial criteria at the time their name is submitted as part of the tournament entry:

- a. they shall have completed a baccalaureate degree;
- b. they shall have exhausted competitive eligibility in all intercollegiate forensics;
- or,
- c. if some eligibility remains, they shall have foresworn any future competition in intercollegiate forensics.
- d. exceptions to the waiver of eligibility can be made on a case-by-case basis by the executive council for undergraduates who have entered debate through non-traditional channels.

2. The judge shall not have competed in intercollegiate debate in the United States after May 1 of the year preceding the National Championships and shall not do so in the period between entry in the tournament and the conclusion of the National Championship tournament.

3. Judges who desire to be hired as a tournament judge at the NPDA Championship Tournament must obtain the sponsorship of a member institution.

- a. No individual against whom a complaint has been made and for whom no verification of clearance has been received, as outlined in Section VI of this document, shall be eligible for such sponsorship or to participate in the NPDA Championship Tournament.
- b. Should a complaint be made against an individual who is listed as a tournament judge prior to the Championship Tournament, NPDA will contact the debate program of the sponsoring institution. At this time, the program may remove their sponsorship of that individual and they will be removed from the judging pool by the tournament director.
- c. If a program elects not to remove sponsorship after notice of a complaint, the NPDA will implement the procedures identified in Section VI.C above. In the event a verification of clearance is not received prior to the commencement of

the National Championship Tournament, the judge will be removed from the pool of potential judges and barred from participation in the tournament.

#### G. Debates

1. There shall be eight preliminary rounds of debate.
2. To the extent possible, all preliminary rounds should be paired to give each team an equal number of rounds on both sides of the motion.
3. Following the preliminary rounds, an appropriate number of single elimination rounds will be held until one team is deemed the champion.
4. Both members of each team must participate in each debate. If one or both members of a team fails to show up for a scheduled debate round, the team will be considered to have forfeited the round.
5. The first speaker for each team will deliver the first constructive and the rebuttal for each side. The second speaker for each team will deliver the second constructive.

#### H. Topics and Topic Announcement

1. In addition to the responsibilities indicated under the Championship Tournament Committee, Subcommittee duties, the Topic Selection Committee shall select an appropriate number of topics to be debated at the tournament. The chair of the topic committee shall solicit topics from the NPDA membership, though the committee should not be limited to only those topics submitted.
2. A different topic will be announced prior to each debate.
3. Debates shall begin a specified number of minutes after the announcement of the topic. The specified preparation and transit time shall be twenty minutes plus the amount of time needed to walk to the furthest building in which debates are being held, as determined by the tournament director. The official start of prep time shall be announced with the topic. Debaters and judges are responsible for starting their time at the time of announcement.

#### I. Scheduling of the Debates

1. Randomly paired debates.
  - a. The first two debates shall be paired randomly.
2. Power-matched debates
  - a. Rounds 3-8 will be power matched based on each team's cumulative record through the previous round.

- b. All power-matched rounds shall be conducted using standard high-low within bracket procedures.
- c. If a record bracket contains an uneven number of teams, the bracket shall be evened by “pulling leftovers up.” The uneven bottom of the upper bracket is moved to the top of the next lower bracket according to opposition record. Care should be taken to avoid second “pull-ups.”
- d. For the purpose of power-matching rounds 3-4, team order shall be determined by the following criteria:
  - 1) Number of Wins
  - 2) Total Speaker Points
  - 3) Adjusted Speaker Points: Adjusted by dropping the high and the low scores
  - 4) Opposition Wins: The strength of the team’s competition as defined by the number of wins earned by the team’s opposition
  - 5) Double-Adjusted Points: Adjusted by dropping the two high and the two low scores
  - 6) Judge Variance: The average number of points that each judge gave the team relative to the number of points the judge gave to all other teams the judge was assigned
  - 7) Random
- e. For the purpose of power matching rounds 5-8, team order shall be determined by the following criteria:
  - 1) Number of Wins
  - 2) Adjusted Speaker Points: Adjusted by dropping the high and the low scores
  - 3) Total Speaker Points
  - 4) Opposition Wins: The strength of the team’s competition as defined by the number of wins earned by the team’s opposition
  - 5) Double-Adjusted Points: Adjusted by dropping the two high and the two low scores
  - 6) Judge Variance: The average number of points that each judge gave the team relative to the number of points the judge gave to all other teams the judge was assigned
  - 7) Random

### 3. Tab Room Disclosure.

After tabulating the results of each preliminary round 1-8 and releasing the pairings for the subsequent round, the tabulation staff will post the results of the previous round by highlighting the team that won in a common area accessible to all tournament participants or by electronic dissemination.

### 4. Scheduling elimination rounds

a. All teams with winning records (5-3 or better) will advance to the single-elimination rounds. The initial seeding order of teams advancing to elimination rounds will be determined by the following criteria:

- 1) Number of Wins
- 2) Adjusted Speaker Points: Adjusted by dropping the high and the low scores
- 3) Total Speaker Points
- 4) Opposition Wins: The strength of the team's competition as defined by the number of wins earned by the team's opposition
- 5) Double-Adjusted Points: Adjusted by dropping the two high and the two low scores
- 6) Judge Variance: The average number of points that each judge gave the team relative to the number of points the judge gave to all other teams the judge was assigned
- 7) Random

b. If more teams have winning records than can be accommodated with a standard elimination round, a partial elimination round will be held to determine seedings for the subsequent elimination round.

c. Those teams with the lower records will debate in the partial elimination round for seedings in the subsequent elimination rounds. Those teams with better records will receive an automatic bye into the next elimination round.

d. In the event that two teams from the same school meet in elimination rounds, the Tournament Director or his/her staff will break brackets according to the following criteria:

- (1) protecting the higher seed;
- (2) changing the fewest number of brackets;
- (3) preserving original bracket order

e. Sides in the elimination rounds will be reversed if the teams have met in the preliminary rounds. If the teams have not met before, sides will be determined randomly until the quarterfinal round. Starting with the quarterfinal round, a coin toss will determine sides. The team listed first will call the side in the coin toss.

#### J. Judge Assignment

1. Each preliminary round should be adjudicated by one judge. Each elimination round prior to the quarter final round will be adjudicated by no fewer than three judges. The quarter final and semi finals will be adjudicated by no fewer than five judges. The final round will be adjudicated by no fewer than seven judges. At the discretion of the Tournament Director, each team in the semifinal and final round of debate may be allowed to remove one or more judges from a tentative panel. In this case, the Tournament Director has the right to name one or more judges who cannot be removed by either team. The team will be given up to three minutes to return the judge strike card or forfeit their right to strike judges. From the remaining potential judge panel, the tab room will randomly assign judges to the debates. The final judge panel will then be announced to the teams debating.
2. All strikes and constraints that have been received by the deadline shall be administered by the tabulation staff and Tournament Director before the start of round one. The number of allowed strikes for each individual team shall never be less than 15% of the entire judging pool.
3. No team will be judged by someone associated with either member of the team or the team's school for the past four years. All teams and judges registered for the tournament should note such conflicts on their entry. At registration, judges will be provided a team list to return to the tab staff marked with any teams they feel they should be constrained against. Any constraints entered by a team in effect for the tournament will need to be justified and accepted by the Tournament Director based on the following categories: former coaches, former team members, romantic relationships.
4. All judging assignments will be made at random from a pool. Judges and program directors should identify obvious conflicts of interest and exclude those judges from judging teams impacted by that conflict
5. All judges are committed to judge two rounds past the elimination round of their last competing teams. Judges who wish to remain in the pool past their obligation should notify the tournament director. The Tournament Director will publicly post a list of the judges being used for morning elimination rounds.

6. All judges are required to monitor postings and ballots (whether paper or electronic) and judge any debate that they are assigned to. A financial penalty of fifty dollars for each preliminary and 100 dollars for each elimination round will be imposed against any and all judges who fail to be available to judge all rounds for which they are obligated.

Fines must be paid promptly, as determined by the tournament director.

a. Teams from schools who have not paid penalties for their judges failing to pick up assigned and/or pushed ballots will not be allowed to advance to elimination rounds.

b. Until fines are paid, the judge's affiliated or hiring school will be suspended from NPDA membership.

c. All fines are subject to appeal to the National Championship Tournament Ombudsperson on the basis of extenuating circumstances.

7. Judges shall arrive at their debates on time. A financial penalty of fifty dollars for each preliminary and one hundred dollars for each elimination round will be imposed against any and all judges who fail to be available to judge all rounds to which they are obligated.

a. Debaters shall be afforded the opportunity to inform the tab room of judges who are late to their rounds. The Tournament Director shall have the discretion of imposing penalties, equivalent to those imposed for a missed round, for lateness.

b. Until fines are paid, the judge's affiliated or hiring school will be suspended from NPDA membership and denied participation in elimination rounds.

c. All fines are subject to appeal to the National Championship Tournament Ombudsperson on the basis of extenuating circumstances.

8. Judges should strive to judge debates on the basis of student performance, avoiding rendering decisions based on the judge's personal prejudices.

#### K. Enforcement of Tournament Rules

1. Enforcement of Section 4 of the NPDA Tournament Rules (section entitled "During the Debate") shall be the province of the judge(s). In the case of a dispute regarding a judge's interpretation of the rules, enforcement of the rules, or adhering to the procedures of the tournament, one or both debate teams may appeal a judge's decision regarding sanctions to the tournament ombudsperson for a final decision. All judges adjudicating at the Championship Tournament shall affirm, that they have read, understand and agree to abide by the NPDA rules and guidelines for judging, including

the Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Policy, prior to submitting their required judging philosophy.

2. In addition to enforcing Section 4 of the NPDA Tournament Rules, the judge(s) shall be responsible for declaring a forfeiture to a team not showing up for a debate.
  - a. Teams that arrive more than three minutes after preparation time has elapsed shall forfeit the debate.
3. All appeals pertaining to tournament rules in a particular round must be made before the topic is announced for the subsequent round.
4. Enforcement of all other sections of the NPDA Tournament Rules shall be the providence of the Tournament Director in consultation with the Championship Tournament Committee.
5. Appeals of decisions made by the tournament director will be directed to the National Championship Tournament Ombudsperson.

#### L. Awards

1. Each debater advancing to elimination rounds will receive an award. Each member of the team will receive an award appropriate to their placing in the tournament (Quarterfinalist, Semifinalist, etc.).
2. The top twenty speakers at the tournament will receive an award as determined by the speaker points assigned to them in the preliminary rounds. Speaker order shall be determined by the following criteria:
  - a. Adjusted Points: Speaker points after dropping high and low scores
  - b. Total Points: Total speaker points
  - c. Double-Adjusted Points: Speaker points after dropping the two highest and the two lowest scores
  - d. Judge Variance: The average number of points greater or fewer that each judge gave the speaker relative to all other speakers to which the judge assigned points
  - e. Number of Wins: The speaker's number of wins in the preliminary rounds
  - f. Opposition Wins: The strength of the speaker's competition as defined by the number of preliminary round wins earned by the speaker's opposition
  - g. If all the speakers involved in a tie are indistinguishable based on all of the above criteria, then an "unbreakable tie" will be declared.
3. All teams, both members of which are novice (no more than one semester of interscholastic high school debate experience, in their first year of intercollegiate debate

competition with a year of competition being defined as two tournaments in each of two semesters), will be eligible for the Top Novice Team award. The top three novice teams will receive awards. The top novice teams are also eligible for regular team awards.

- a. Placing will first be determined by a team's placing in elimination rounds.
- b. If a tie still exists, the seeding of the tied teams after preliminary rounds will determine placing.

4. All novice debaters (no more than one semester of interscholastic high school debate experience, in their first year of intercollegiate debate competition with a year of competition being defined as two tournaments in each of two semesters) will be eligible for the Top Novice Speaker award, regardless of the status of the person with whom they debate. The top five novice speakers will be recognized. The top novice speakers are also eligible for regular speaker awards. Speaker order shall be determined by the following criteria:

- a. Adjusted speaker points
- b. Total speaker points
- c. Double adjusted speaker points
- d. Judge variance

5. Tournament Sweepstakes

a. Championship Tournament Sweepstakes

- 1) All schools participating in the tournament will be eligible to receive a Championship Tournament Sweepstakes Award.
- 2) The top twenty schools competing will receive Championship Tournament Sweepstakes Awards.
- 3) Sweepstakes points will be accumulated from a combination of preliminary and elimination round records from the top four teams from a school during the competition. Ordinarily, the records of the four teams from each school with the highest number of preliminary round wins will be awarded two points for each preliminary round. An additional two points will be awarded per team per elimination round won (including advancement by a bye) by the four teams accumulating the most elimination round points. These may not necessarily be the same four teams that accumulated the most points in preliminary rounds. The National Champion will receive an additional two points for its school in addition to any elimination round points earned.

4) The order of Championship Tournament Sweepstakes Awards will be determined using the following criteria, listed in order of importance:

- a) The greatest cumulative number of preliminary and elimination round points as enumerated in 5. a. 3)
- b) The greatest number of teams advancing to the first elimination round. When the first elimination round is a partial elimination round, this tie-breaker is the greatest number of teams advancing to elimination rounds, including both those teams participating in the partial elimination round and those teams receiving a bye into the second elimination round.
- c) The greatest number of teams advancing to the second elimination round.
- d) The greatest number of teams advancing to the third elimination round.
- e) The greatest number of teams advancing to the fourth elimination round.
- f) The greatest number of teams advancing to the fifth elimination round.
- g) The greatest number of teams advancing to the sixth elimination round.
- h) The greatest number of teams advancing to the seventh elimination round.
- i) If all of the schools involved in a tie have at least four teams whose records are used in calculating sweepstakes awards, then the greatest cumulative number of preliminary round wins for those teams after each school's best and worst team's preliminary round records are thrown out ("adjusted").
- j) The lowest cumulative speaker award placings for the school's four highest placing individual speakers.
- k) If the schools involved in a tie are indistinguishable based on all of the above criteria, then an "unbreakable tie" will be declared.

b. Two-Year College Tournament Sweepstakes

- 1) Those schools designated as two-year colleges that participate in the Championship Tournament will be eligible to receive a Two-Year College Championship Tournament Sweepstakes Award.
- 2) The top five two-year colleges competing will receive Two-Year College Championship Tournament Sweepstakes Awards.
- 3) Ordinarily, the records of the four teams from each school with the highest number of preliminary round wins will count toward the determination of sweepstakes awards. However, in the event that all schools wishing to enter four teams at the Championship Tournament cannot be accommodated, the maximum number of teams that count for tournament sweepstakes will be set at the number of teams that every school was allowed to enter.
- 4) The order of Two-Year College Championship Tournament Sweepstakes Awards will be determined using the following criteria, listed in order of importance:
  - a) The greatest cumulative number of preliminary round wins of up to four teams.
  - b) The greatest number of teams advancing to the first elimination round. When the first elimination round is a partial elimination round, this tie-breaker is the greatest number of teams advancing to elimination rounds, including both those teams participating in the partial elimination round and those teams receiving a bye into the second elimination round.
  - c) The greatest number of teams advancing to the second elimination round.
  - d) The greatest number of teams advancing to the third elimination round.
  - e) The greatest number of teams advancing to the fourth elimination round.
  - f) The greatest number of teams advancing to the fifth elimination round.
  - g) The greatest number of teams advancing to the sixth elimination round.

- h) The greatest number of teams advancing to the seventh elimination round.
- i) If all of the schools involved in a tie have at least four teams whose records are used in calculating sweepstakes awards, then the greatest cumulative number of preliminary round wins for those teams after each school's best and worst teams preliminary round records are thrown out ("adjusted").
- j) The lowest cumulative speaker award placings for the school's four highest placing individual speakers.
- k) If the schools involved in a tie are indistinguishable based on all of the above criteria, then an "unbreakable tie" will be declared.

**6. Season Sweepstakes**

- a. Both Overall Season Sweepstakes and Two-Year College Season Sweepstakes will be determined by the criteria outlined in the NPDA By-Law IV.
- b. The top twenty schools shall receive awards in the Season Sweepstakes competition.
- c. The top five two-year colleges shall receive awards in the Two-Year College Season Sweepstakes competition.

**7. Results Appeals**

All appeals of awards presented at the Championship Tournament (including season-long sweepstakes), such as appeals based on tabulation error, debater eligibility or inconsistency with governing documents, must be made within 30 days of the conclusion of the Championship Tournament, unless information for the appeal was not available in that timeframe, in which case an appeal must be made within 30 days of that information coming available.