

North Florida Catholic Forensic League
Minutes of the Fall Meeting, August 25, 2001
Academy of the Holy Names, Tampa, Florida

Schools attending: Buchholtz, Celebration, Colonial, Cypress Creek, Lake Brantley, Lake Highland, Oak Hall, Ridgeview, Sandalwood, Timber Creek, Trinity, Winter Park, Winter Springs

Copies of the agenda were sent to all members. These should be referenced for more complete information.

The tournament schedule was adopted as presented.

- In congress, when breaking ties, judge preference is to be considered first, followed by recipricals.
- Late entry drops prior to tournaments are an inconvenience for host coaches and executive committee members alike. Such drops necessitate the re-pairing of events before the tournament can start, sometimes causing significant delays. Accidents and sickness are unavoidable, but too frequently in the past have inconsiderate contestants, judges and/or coaches caused delays that could have been avoided. As a result, the following sanctions will be enforced:
Drops called in to the tournament host after Monday registration but before Wednesday at 10pm will result in forfeiture of the entry fee and lunch fee. (\$10.00) Between 10p.m Wednesday and Friday at 5pm, drops will result in forfeiture of the entry and lunch fees and a five dollar penalty charge will be collected. (\$15.00) Drops after 5 pm Friday evening will result in a \$10.00 hassle fee on top of the previous fines and forfeitures. (\$25.00) These costs are per entry.
It is the responsibility of the coach to assure that his/her students are aware of the penalties for drops. Some teams penalize drops by restricting a guilty student from six weeks of tournaments. Some teams charge students for drops after the fact. Some teams collect drop fees before a tournament and return the money the day of the tournament when they show up on time.

Apropos the same issue: Schools having transportation problems which prevent them from making the 8am registration the day of the tournament may be dropped (accruing the above penalties for the whole team.) This is not an attempt to punish the kids, but to put irresponsible coaches on notice that it is their responsibility to do all that they can to fulfill their obligation and not to inconvenience all the other coaches and students who were capable of meeting their commitment. The executive committee will use their discretion where this sanction is concerned.

- * There was a feeling that tab room leaks occurred last year because students knew beforehand the result of previous rounds. Tab room leaks did not in fact occur because the previous slate of officers did not share results of rounds with their students prior to awards. If students "knew" results, that came from a combination of judge disclosures (to someone at the tournament) and good guesses. Tab room staff in the NFCFL is committed to non-disclosure on the grounds that knowing one's record can dishearten new students.

To omit writing comments on round four ballots in order to speed up the tournament was considered counter-productive to the purpose of the activity, which is to give feedback to performances. If we are able to start on time and finish without undo delays, then there ought not be any late-running tournaments. (Educators are eternal optimists, after all.)

- Traditionally, the president of the NFCFL has done a brief (20 minute) judge instruction session at the first tournament of the year. It was suggested that, because we bring new judges to each of the tournaments, such a training session at each tournament would be helpful. A panel of coaches (George Clemmens, Pat Fallon and Beth Eskine) will work up a draft copy of these instructions to be modified as needed by the executive committee and presented by an available coach at each tournament before rounds begin. This draft should be presented to the president by September 26.

Future NFCFL schedules are to be determined and published no later than August 15 of each year.

- A scholarship to honor past NFCFL officers will be established to provide money for one student each year to be used either to defray college costs summer forensics camp costs. The executive committee will determine the amount which the league can afford to dedicate to this end. They will appoint a committee of coaches to establish criteria for determining the recipient.
- In debate events at Grand Finals with fewer than eighteen contestants, no elimination rounds or back brackets will be held. Instead, the ones to qualify will be determined using the same method currently used to determine places in debate at tournaments without finals rounds. Additionally, in rounds 3-5, brackets will remain unbroken. Should students from the same school meet, they must debate. There can be no forfeiture or coach advanced decisions.
- Policy debate entry fees are to be increased from \$10.00 to \$20.00 per team, the additional money being placed in a pool to be used to hire additional, competent policy judges for the season. Coaches are to submit the names and telephone numbers to Dean Rhoads at 407-677-8951 or 407-671-4140, ex. 441, or at rhoadsd@trinityprep.Org. Judges will be hired at the rate of \$10.00 per round. Coaches should realize that these judges are not meant to replace the quota already established for policy judges. They are in addition to the ones coaches are required to provide. The president, whose team doesn't do policy debate, is to get as wide a sample of judges as is possible (as opposed to hiring the judges from only one or two coaches.) However, availability is unpredictable; the greater the number of names provided by the greatest number of coaches, the more the likelihood that I will be able to get a wide variety of competent judges.
- Oral critiques, especially in policy debate, by judges are meant to be educational and provide immediate feedback to debaters as the tournament progresses. However, some judges have given ego-crushing comments to rank novices who then wanted to quit the tournament and event forever. In other cases, judges have given extensive 30-45 minute commentaries, holding up the tournament after each round. Other coaches mentioned that oral critiques are often used as a substitute for written commentary, and so they never get to see a judge's comments, period. The result of this discussion was to see oral critiques as more trouble than they are worth, and so the following sanctions are to be instituted and enforced: Judges who give oral critiques will be removed from the judging pool and their school will be charged the equivalent of \$10.00 per round missed as a penalty and will not be allowed to judge at any subsequent NFCFL tournament in that school year. If the judge in question is hired, they will not be paid and will not be re-hired to judge in that school year.