

MSHSL Speech Advisory Committee

MINUTES

May 25, 2010, 9:00A.M.

MSHSL Office Conference Room

In Attendance:

Advisory Committee Members:

Rick Purrington, Marshall HS; Ceil McDonald South St. Paul HS; Jason Olson, Adrian HS; Jenn Baese, Lakeville North HS; Cliff Janke, Fairmont HS.

MSHSL Representatives:

Dave Stead, Director of the MSHSL; Chris Franson, Assistant Director of the MSHSL; Barb Seng and Mike Tillmann, MSHSL Speech, Debate, and One Act Play Consultants

Other coaches in attendance who contributed to discussions at the meeting:

At 9:00A.M.: Randy Holland, Chair of MSCA State Tabulation Committee

At 1:00 P.M.: Scott Sieling, Bloomington Jefferson HS; Mark Quinlan, Centennial HS

Proposals to Revise State Tournament Tabulation

Proposal #1 Revise Preliminary Round Tiebreak Rules at State.

Currently Reciprocals are used 1st, Opponents Ranks 2nd, then a tie is considered unbreakable.

ADVISORY ACTION

The Advisory Committee passed this proposal 5-0.

NEW TIEBREAKS AT THE STATE TOURNAMENT:

- 1ST TIEBREAK Head-to-Head matchups
- 2ND TIEBREAK Opponents' Ranks
- 3RD TIEBREAK Reciprocal Fractions

While Section and Sub-Section tournaments would not be required to implement these new tie-breakers at their tournaments, it was recommended by the Advisory Committee that Section Tournament managers receive instructions as to how to calculate "Opponents' ranks."

Purpose of new procedure: Improve logic and fairness when breaking ties.

Proposal #2 Return to only "ranking out" to 5 (judges would still fully rank out to help break ties). Adjusted rank would be used first, actual rank would only be used in case of a tie.

ADVISORY ACTION

After much discussion, it was determined by Advisory that ranking completely out is more mathematically logical and fairer for all competitors. Adjusting ranks 6,7, and 8 illogically ignores a judges' "bad" ranks but accepts a judge's "good" ranks. This proposal failed after it never received a "second."

Proposal #3 Do not include prelim ranks in the finalists' total-score at the State Tournament.

ADVISORY ACTION

The Advisory Committee passed this proposal 5-0.

Purpose: Improve the overall logic and fairness of the 4-room-format's scoring-math by acknowledging the evidence that suggests unbalanced prelim room difficulty. Implementing this proposal will reduce the occurrence of state champion "switches" where a competitor can win the state championship solely on strong prelim ranks.

Proposal to Revise the Penalty for Rules Violations for Speech

Revised 5-25-10

ADVISORY ACTION

The Advisory Committee passed this proposal 5-0.

Currently the rules' violation penalty for Speech events reads:

D. Disqualification The committee in charge of the tournament, along with members of the Rules Interpretation Committee, must automatically disqualify any student for violation of any rules including time limits. In the event that a student is disqualified, the Tabulating Committee, upon being notified of the disqualification, will record (1) no ranking number in that round nor (2) total score of said contestant on the score sheet. "DQ" will be written in the appropriate box of competition on the score sheet. Any previous round scores earned by the contestant prior to the violation, shall remain on the score sheet. The Tabulating Committee will adjust the rankings for the other contestants on the specific judge ballot(s) as though the disqualified contestant had never competed.

Proposed change:

In the paragraph above change "Disqualification" to "Penalty for Rules Violations." Change "automatically disqualify" (in line 2) to "penalize" and delete the words "including time limits" (lines 2-3).

Insert the following prior to "In the event a student is disqualified."

If the best credible evidence presented in a timely manner to the Rules Committee demonstrates that a student has committed a violation, the committee must disqualify the student unless the violation is one of the six exceptions listed below. The following violations must result in the competitor's rank being adjusted to last in the round.

Exceptions to the disqualification penalty:

1. **Violation of time limit or grace period.**
2. **Violation of Extemporaneous Reading teaser rule.** For example, if a reader chooses to use a teaser before the introduction and does not repeat it after the introduction, the penalty is to adjust the reader's rank to last in the round.
3. **Violation of Extemporaneous Reading cutting rule.** For example, if a reader cuts a line or paragraph or rearranges the draw in any fashion, the penalty is to adjust the reader's rank to last in the round.
4. **Violation of Extemporaneous Speaking notes limit.** For example, if a speaker exceeds the word/character limit, the penalty is to adjust the speaker's rank to last in the round.
5. **Violation of the following Storytelling rule:** "The contestant must not add subplots that change the original plot or violate the story's style, intent, and mood." For example, if it is determined that a storyteller has added a sub-plot to the drawn story, the penalty is to adjust the storyteller's rank to last in the round.
6. **Violation of the script as a prompt rule.** For example, a contestant who starts his/her speech without a manuscript and then proceeds to return to his/her desk to get the manuscript, the penalty is to adjust the contestant's rank to last in the round.

Rank Adjustment Clarifications:

A contestant cannot be dropped lower than the lowest possible rank in the round.

The drop in rank will be communicated to the tabulators by the Rules Committee. The tabulators will adjust the rankings for all contestants on each judge's ballot for the round in which the violation occurred.

If a contestant is found to have violated any rule and is tied with a contestant who has not violated a rule, the ruling on the tie must always fall against the violator. A rule violator cannot win a tie.

If the violation occurs early in the tournament, it is not the Rule Interpretation Committee's responsibility to warn a contestant who has violated a rule. The coach of the contestant must be notified of the rule violation before finalists are posted or, in the case of a violation during the final round, before contest results are announced.

If there are more than one rank adjustment violations in the room, all violators must have their ranks adjusted. For example, if there are two violators in one room of six, then both violators will receive the rank of 6 and the lowest-ranked non-violator will receive a rank of 4.

"Lowest Possible Rank" Clarification:

Some Section Tournaments have judges rank "all the way out" but then the tab room adjusts the ranks to a "5" and only look to the actual rank in the case of a tie. In this case, the "lowest rank" would mean the lowest possible rank according to that tournament's tabulation rules. This means that if a student breaks a rule in a round of 7 contestants, s/he would be given an actual rank of a 7. And for those tab rooms that adjust the ranks, this actual rank should be adjusted to a 5 and the 7 should only appear if a tie needs to be broken.

In the event that a student is disqualified, the Tabulating Committee, upon being notified of the disqualification, will record (1) no ranking number in that round nor (2) total score of said contestant on the score sheet. "DQ" will be written in the appropriate box of competition on the score sheet. Any previous round scores earned by the contestant prior to the violation, shall remain on the score sheet. The Tabulating Committee will adjust the rankings for the other contestants on the specific judge ballot(s) as though the disqualified contestant had never competed.

Purpose:

Rules are meant to keep one contestant from gaining an unfair advantage over another. A penalty is meant to ensure that if the rule is not followed, an unfair advantage will not be allowed to the rule breaker; a penalty should take away the unfair advantage. However, a penalty should not be unnecessarily punitive. If a basketball player commits a foul, he is not immediately ejected from the game, but the player he fouls gets to shoot free throws or the fouled player's team gets to keep the ball. The unfair advantage is nullified, but the offending player is allowed to continue. Certainly, no speaker should gain an unfair advantage by going longer than the time allowed or by purposely cutting sections from extemporaneous reading cuts. These are good rules, but the disqualification penalty is unnecessarily severe. Dropping a speaker to the lowest rank in the round ensures that any unfair advantage would be nullified. The harshness of the current disqualification penalty makes many rules committees hesitant to enforce it. For example, a speaker at sections had "unintentionally" missed a word in Extemporaneous Reading at his/her subsection contest, but was only given a warning. This action, which is very well-intended, demonstrates the fact that if the punishment is too harsh, too many do not enforce the rule because the punishment goes beyond fairness. We need fair consequences for our fair rules and this proposal seeks to have the severity of the punishment fit the severity of the violation.

Other items that were discussed
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The limitation on singing rule also applies to Extemporaneous Speaking. It was an oversight to not include Extemp Speaking when the rule was first implemented.

Jason Olson offered a proposal that would allow for unlimited singing in all events. This proposal will be up for discussion at this fall's CTAM Conference.

According to MSHSL Assistant Director Chris Franson, Chanhasen High School, Lakeville North High School, and Gustavus Adolphus College are the contenders at this time for the 2011-12 State Speech Tournament site. Lakeville North has not yet formally completed the necessary paperwork to be in the running, however.

Lyric novels are a confusing genre regarding what category they ought to be placed in. In order to make genre rulings easier to enforce, Mike Tillmann suggested we call them "novels in verse" in our rules.

MSHSL Director Dave Stead met with the Advisory Committee along with Scott Sieling and Mark Quinlan. Mr. Stead indicated that the MSHSL Board would not be willing to adjust their ruling on State Tournament alternates and that MSCA would be best served to concentrate on other issues. Perhaps when the current Board's term of office is up in a couple years a new Board would be willing to listen to our concerns on this issue.

Mr. Stead was not willing to discuss the issue of not offering State judging contracts to Sieling, Quinlan, and Anker. MSHSL Assistant Director, Chris Franson, articulated that the action taken by the League to not offer contracts to these popular judges this year was within the League's authority but was also regrettable and should have been handled better by the League. The MSCA asked for and received assurance from Chris Franson that this type of situation would not occur in the future.

The MSCA received in writing a State Tournament Speech Judge Hiring Process that the League will follow. Having the process in writing was welcomed by the MSCA and the specific process will be reviewed further by the MSCA.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by Rick Purrington, MSCA President and Advisory Committee Member