



# NCFCA

## Debate Qualifying Tournament Tabulation Guidelines

### I. Mission Statement

The National Christian Forensics and Communications Association (NCFCA) believes that competitive forensics provides a means for homeschooled students to learn and exercise analytical and oratorical skills in addressing life issues from a Biblical worldview in a manner that glorifies God. NCFCA shall facilitate Qualifying Tournaments and host a National Tournament to provide this opportunity to homeschooled students.

### II. Tournament Set-Up

#### A. Teams

1. **Policy Team.** A Policy Debate Team will consist of two people.
2. **Lincoln Douglas Team.** A Lincoln Douglas Debate Team will consist of one person.

#### B. Number of Preliminary and Elimination Rounds

1. **Preliminary Rounds.** Each team shall debate six preliminary rounds in the tournament. In the event that an odd number of debate teams are competing, one team per round shall receive a bye, which is recorded as a win.
2. **Elimination Rounds.** The level of outrounds to be held shall be determined primarily by the level of tournament and the number of teams competing in that style of debate.
  - a. Qualifiers shall hold the following outrounds.
    - i. Finals - 4 to 6 Teams
    - ii. SemiFinals - 7 to 14 Teams
    - iii. QuarterFinals - 15 to 27 Teams
    - iv. OctaFinals - 28 to 55 Teams
    - v. Double OctaFinals - 56 or more Teams
  - b. Regional Invitationals shall hold the following outrounds.
    - i. Finals - 4 to 6 Teams
    - ii. SemiFinals - 7 to 14 Teams
    - iii. QuarterFinals - 15 to 27 Teams
    - iv. OctaFinals - 28 to 55 Teams
    - v. Double OctaFinals - 56 or more teams
  - c. National Opens and the National Championship shall hold outrounds sufficient to advance all teams with winning records.

## C. Pairing Debate Teams in Preliminary Rounds

### 1. Side Constraints.

- a. *Three Rounds on Each side.* Each team shall debate three rounds on the affirmative side and three rounds on the negative side. Teams that receive a bye shall debate three rounds on one side and two rounds on the other side.
- b. *Side Balance.* Side balance is normally accomplished by each team having the same number of rounds on each side (affirmative and negative) at each even numbered round. (i.e., In Round Two, every team should have one affirmative and one negative round. In Round Four, every team should have 2 affirmative rounds and 2 negative rounds. In Round Six, every team should have 3 affirmative rounds and 3 negative rounds.)
- c. *Same Side Prohibition.* A team shall not debate the same opponent on the same side more than once in preliminary competition.

### 2. Club Protection

- a. *Club Protect Teams.* Teams from the same club are normally protected from debating each other in preliminary rounds, if possible. Each debate team may declare one club allegiance for protection purposes in preliminary rounds.
- b. *Power Matching Conflict.* In some circumstances, power matching, club constraints, and other constraints cannot all be accomplished together. In this case, power matching will take precedence over club protection.

### 3. Power Matching.

- a. *Pre-set Rounds.* The initial rounds of the tournament shall be randomly paired.
- b. *Power Matching.* Power matching normally begins in Round 3 and continues for the remainder of the Preliminary competition. Pair each round based on the results of the previous round(s), taking into consideration the constraints of the tournament. The method of power matching is to be "high-low within brackets." (i.e., At the end of Round 2 all the teams with a record of 2/0 shall be ranked by speaker points. The 2/0 team with the highest combined speaker points shall debate the 2/0 team with the lowest combined speaker points in Round 3. The next highest team shall be paired against the next-to-lowest team, etc. Continue to pair the teams until that bracket is paired. Follow the same steps with each win/loss bracket.)
- c. *Byes.* In the event that an odd number of debate teams are registered in the tournament, six teams shall receive a bye. During the first two rounds, the bye will be randomly determined. During subsequent rounds that are power matched, the debate team with the lowest record who has not already received a bye shall receive the bye for that round, taking into consideration the constraints of the tournament.

### III. Preliminary Round Tabulation

#### A. Recording Ballots

1. **Official Ballots.** Debate ballots for use in NCFCA tournaments are available on the NCFCA website.
2. **Ballot Recording.** Record each ballot by entering a win or loss for each team, each competitor's individual speaker points and rank.
3. **Team Speaker Points.** To determine the team speaker points and ranks, add the speaker points and ranks from both team partners for each round.
4. **Recording Byes.**
  - a. If there is a bye in the round, record a win for the team that received a bye.
  - b. Do not record any speaker points or ranks for the team assigned the bye until the end of the six preliminary rounds. At that point, average the speaker points and ranks from the other 5 rounds to determine the speaker points and ranks for the "bye" round.

#### B. Ranking Teams

1. **Rankings.** Teams shall be ranked by win/loss record.
2. **Breaking Ties.** When two or more teams have the same win/loss record, the following methods shall be used in the specific order listed, to break the tie:
  - a. *Adjust for High-Low Team Speaker Points.* Omit the ballot with the highest total team speaker points and the ballot with the lowest. The points from the remaining ballots are totaled, and the team with the highest total wins the tie break.
  - b. *Total Speaker Points.* Add the speaker points from all rounds. The team with the highest number wins the tie break.
  - c. *Adjust for Double High-Low Team Speaker Points.* Omit the ballots from the rounds with the two highest and the two lowest team speaker points, totaling the speaker points from the remaining ballot(s). The team with the highest number wins the tie break.
  - d. *Speaker Rank.* The team with the best (lowest) combined speaker ranking from all rounds shall win the tie break.
  - e. *Head-to-Head.* If two teams faced each other in preliminary competition before this point, the team which won shall win the tie break.
  - f. *Schedule Difficulty – Opponent Wins.* The team whose opponents won the most rounds up to this point shall win the tie break.
  - g. *Schedule Difficulty – Opponent Speaker Points.* The team whose opponents earned the highest combined speaker point total up to this point shall win the tie break.
  - h. *Adjusted High-Low Speaker Rank.* Omit the rounds with the highest and lowest team speaker rank and total combined speaker

ranks from the remaining rounds. The lowest combined total shall win the tie break.

- i. *Coin Toss*. When all the above methods fail to resolve the tie, a coin toss may be used to determine which team wins the tie break.

### **C. Determining Which Teams Advance**

#### **1. Qualifiers.**

- a. Tournaments will advance the highest ranking teams from the preliminary rounds to the elimination rounds determined in Section II.B.2.a.
- b. Completely fill the prescribed bracket starting with the highest ranked teams. Break-even teams are allowed to clear, if necessary, to fill the bracket. Teams with losing records will not advance.
- c. Dependent on the number of competitors, some teams with winning records will be stranded and may not be needed to fill the prescribed bracket. These teams will not advance to elimination rounds.

#### **2. Regional Invitational.**

- a. Tournaments will advance the highest ranking teams from the preliminary rounds to the elimination rounds determined in Section II.B.2.b.
- b. Completely fill the prescribed bracket starting with the highest ranked teams. Break-even teams are allowed to clear, if necessary, to fill the bracket. Teams with losing records will not advance.
- c. Dependent on the number of competitors, some teams with winning records will be stranded and may not be needed to fill the prescribed bracket. Advance stranded winning teams with a partial bracket, if possible.

#### **3. National Opens & National Championship.**

- a. All teams with winning records will advance to the elimination rounds at National level tournaments. Teams with break-even or losing records will not advance to outrounds at National level tournaments.
- b. Brackets shall be established based on the number of teams advancing to outrounds. This may necessitate holding a partial round.

## **IV. Elimination Round Matching and Tabulation**

### **A. Matching Teams**

1. **Ranking and Seeding.** Elimination round pairings shall be established in accordance with each team's preliminary ranking. The highest ranking teams shall meet the lowest ranking team, the second highest shall meet the second lowest, etc. Sample seeding brackets are available on the NCFCA website.

2. **Locked Sides.** If the two teams have faced each other once in preliminary rounds, the teams shall switch sides for outround competition.
3. **Flip for Sides.** If the two teams have faced each other twice in the preliminary rounds, or have never met, a coin toss shall determine which side each team shall take.

## B. Scoring

### 1. Number of ballots per match.

- a. Each outround shall be at least triple-paneled.
- b. Each outround shall be decided by an odd-numbered panel of judges.

### 2. Entering ballots.

- a. For each outround, record each ballot as a win or loss for each team.
- b. The team who wins the majority of judge votes in that round is the winner of the match.
- c. Speaker points and ranks are not calculated in outrounds.

## C. Advancing through Outrounds

1. **Partial Brackets.** In the case of a partially filled bracket, the top team(s) which do not have an opponent in the round will advance to the next outround without debating.

2. **Advancing.** Teams will continue to advance through the bracket until they lose a round.

# V. Determining Final Standings and Awards

## A. Debate Teams

1. **Champion.** The team that does not lose an outround wins the tournament.
2. **Finals.** The team that loses the Final round finishes in 2<sup>nd</sup> place.
3. **SemiFinals.** The teams that lose in the SemiFinal round shall take 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> places. The final placing shall be determined by which team had the higher placing in preliminary standings. (i.e. - the team that placed higher in the preliminary competition shall take 3<sup>rd</sup> place and the remaining team shall finish in 4<sup>th</sup> place.)
4. **Outrounds.** Follow the above procedure for each outround until all teams that advanced to outrounds have been placed.
5. **Awards.** Each debate team which advances to the elimination rounds will receive an award.

## B. Debate Speakers

1. **Speaker Awards.** A tournament shall recognize the same number of speakers as the number of teams advancing to outrounds. (For example, if a tournament broke to QuarterFinals, the tournament would recognize the top 8 speakers.)

2. **Speaker Ranking.** Adjusted high-low speaker points shall be used to determine individual speaker ranking. This is calculated by omitting the rounds with the highest and lowest speaker points, and totaling the scores from the remaining four rounds. The highest adjusted speaker point totals receive the highest awards.
3. **Breaking Speaker Point Ties.** If the high-low speaker points calculation results in ties between one or more speakers, the following methods shall be used, in the order listed, to determine which speaker will be ranked higher:
  - a. *Total Speaker Points.* Total the speaker points from all six rounds.
  - b. *Double High-Low Speaker Points.* Omit the rounds with the two highest and two lowest scores, totaling the scores from the remaining two rounds.
  - c. *Speaker Rank.* Total individual speaker ranks from all six rounds. The speaker with the lowest total ranks higher.
  - d. *High-Low Speaker Rank.* Omit the highest and lowest speaker rank of each speaker and total the remaining four rounds. The lowest speaker total ranks higher.
  - e. *Head-to-Head.* If two speakers met in the preliminary rounds, the speaker with the higher ranking in that round shall receive the higher speaker award.