



Speech Contest Judging

District 6 Toastmasters

Jim Kickul



Agenda

- ▶ A Fair Contest
- ▶ You're the Judge
- ▶ Chief Judge
- ▶ Questions



What is the Purpose of the Contest for Toastmasters????



The Contest

- ▶ Toastmasters speech contests have three purposes:
 1. Provide competitive speaking experience for Toastmasters members
 2. Provide interesting educational programs for members and the public
 3. Provide the audience an opportunity to learn by observing proficient speakers Toastmasters speech contests



Contests

- ▶ It's important that all speech contests are conducted properly and good judging is vital to this. Good judging imparts a feeling of fairness to contestants and the audience and that the right choice was made.



When You're the Judge

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JUDGES' OBLIGATIONS

- ▶ Contestants are entitled to a truly professional performance by each judge
- ▶ Biased or unfair judging creates animosity and demeans the contest, the officials, and our leaders
- ▶ The audience deserves a good speech contest
- ▶ As a Toastmaster, judges have made a personal commitment to self-improvement that includes being dedicated to making the correct decision when judging a contest



Confidentiality of Judging

- ▶ Judging is not evaluating
- ▶ Goal is to pick a WINNER!
- ▶ No provide feedback to contestants
- ▶ DO NOT discuss results with anyone
- ▶ Dispose the top portion of the ballot away from the contest venue



Good Judges Are...

- ▶ Accurate
- ▶ Fair
- ▶ Trustworthy
- ▶ Knowledgeable
- ▶ Good listeners



Barriers to Objectivity

- ▶ Speaker position – First or Last Speaker is Best
- ▶ Champion the underdog
- ▶ Halo effect
- ▶ Reverse halo



Barriers to Objectivity (Continued)

- ▶ Second time around & Give someone else a Chance
- ▶ Club Norms
- ▶ Personal prejudice & preference
- ▶ Unfamiliar Judging forms



THE JUDGE'S GUIDE AND BALLOT

- ▶ There are two sections to the form. The top portion is a guide judges can use to help them select a winner and will not be turned in to the counters with the ballot. The bottom portion is the official ballot.
- ▶ If any portion of the ballot is not complete or is unreadable, the chief judge will discard the ballot.



Judge's Code of Ethics

- ▶ Avoid bias in selecting winners
- ▶ Do not time speeches or consider time when making selections
- ▶ KNOW contest rules
- ▶ DO NOT reveal scores



Chief Judge

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Recruiting Voting, Chief, and Tiebreaking Judges, Timers and Ballot Counters

▶ Judges

- Minimum 5 at Club and Area
- Minimum 7 at Division and District

▶ Timers (Chief Judge)

- Two required for each contest

▶ Ballot counters (Chief Judge)

- Three required for each contest



Recruiting Voting, Chief, and Tiebreaking Judges

- At Area/Division/District contests, voting judges must be Toastmasters in good standing for a minimum of six months and have completed at least six Competent Communicator projects.
- Tiebreaking judge (does not attend the judges' briefing) name is only known by the chief judge



Contest Forms

- ▶ The Contest Forms can be downloaded from the Toastmasters International web site.



Timer's Briefing

- ▶ Review the timing sequence for the contests
- ▶ When does timing begin?
 - First definite verbal or non-verbal communication
 - Or sound effects
 - Or actions
- ▶ If a contestants is disqualified for time – Note the disqualification on the timing sheet.



Counter's Briefing

- ▶ Review procedure for collecting ballots
- ▶ Review procedure for counting ballots
- ▶ Transparency – everyone checks the process
- ▶ Las Vegas Rule – What happens in the counting room stay in the room. Never under any circumstances discuss anything that is said or written (i.e. results) in the room with anyone



Judges' Briefing

- ▶ Review and collect the signed Judge's Certification of Eligibility and Code of Ethics forms
- ▶ Verify the eligibility of each contestant (Contest Chair)
- ▶ Verify the eligibility of each Voting Judge (Chief Judge)



Judges Briefing

- ▶ Distribute forms to functionaries
 - Including ballot envelopes to voting judges
- ▶ Advise voting judges – “Judge all contestants”
- ▶ Ask voting judges to print and sign name on ballot
- ▶ Separate ballots from voting judging guides



Judges' Briefing

- ▶ Brief voting judges on the speaking area
 - Contestants are no longer required to stay within a designated area
- ▶ Judging guidelines
 - *Emphasize content and objectivity*
- ▶ Do not consider timing lights
- ▶ Ballots discarded if
 - Incomplete, illegible, or unsigned
 - 1st, 2nd and 3rd place contestants are not listed
- ▶ Speeches must be substantially original
 - Speakers can only quote, paraphrase, or reference 25% of their material
 - Protest Procedure (limited to eligibility and originality), only voting judges and contestants can protest.
 - **Lodge protests with the chief judge and/or contest chair.**



Protests

- ▶ Voting judges {and contestants} may protest on the basis of originality
- ▶ All protests must be lodged before announcement of results
- ▶ Write “PROTEST” on the ballot
- ▶ If a protest is called, the Chief Judge will bring all judges to the briefing area to discuss the protest
- ▶ The contestant will be called to respond to the protest
- ▶ A majority vote will decide the outcome of the protest



During Contest

- ▶ Spot check timers – time one or two contestants to ensure proper timing
- ▶ Assist timers with equipment malfunctions
- ▶ Personally collect tiebreaker judge's ballot (Do Not collect the top portion of the ballot)
- ▶ Monitor ballot collection process
- ▶ Signal Contest Chair when all ballots have been collected (it's okay to ask if all the ballots have been collect)



Determining Results

- ▶ Guide the counters through the process of reading, recording and verifying ballots
- ▶ Use the Counter's Tally Sheet
- ▶ Resolve any protests
- ▶ Tiebreaking Judge's ballot are ONLY used to break ties.
- ▶ List all speakers' names on the Notification of Winners form

Determining Results

- ▶ Award Winner, and 2nd Place at Area level
- ▶ Award Winner, 2nd Place, and 3rd Place at Division level
- ▶ Record voting results
 - Quality Check – Double check math, names, and order of placement
 - Clearly marked Winner/2nd Place (Area) or Winner/2nd Place/3rd Place (Division) on index card

Determining Results

Insert results in envelope

Fill out Notification of Winner form with all the contestants names

- ▶ Deliver results to Contest Chair
- ▶ Retain all
 - Ballots
 - Timer's records
 - Tally Sheets
- ▶ Destroy these records after contest conclusion at another location

Disqualifications

- ▶ Notify the contest chair of the disqualification
- ▶ Announcement:
 - “There has been a disqualification due to timing / eligibility.”
- ▶ Instruct all contest functionaries to never discuss disqualification or contest results with anyone
- ▶ Do not release the name of the disqualified contestant



Contest Results

- ▶ Deliver forms to the next contest level
 - Certificate of Eligibility & Originality
 - Biographical Information for each winner and alternate
 - Notification of Contest Winner (for each contest)
 - **All contestants must be listed in rank order**



Discussion Topics

District 6 Toastmasters

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DISCUSSION TOPICS

Q. What are the reasons for which a contestant may be disqualified?

- A. - Eligibility
- Originality
 - Timing



DISCUSSION TOPICS

- Q. What happens if: Four judges sign and print their names on their ballots. One judge only prints his name on his ballot, but does not sign it. One judge neither signs nor prints his name on his ballot. One judge only signs her name on her ballot.
- A. Only five of the seven ballots will be counted. The ballots that were not signed must not be counted.



DISCUSSION TOPICS

Q. What happens if one judge leaves the blank for the third-place winner's name empty on her ballot?

A. The ballot is not counted. Ballots cannot be counted if they do not contain complete information regarding the ranking of contestants.



DISCUSSION TOPICS

- Q. What is the appropriate action to take if a member approaches a contest official and asks to see the points awarded to contestants?
- A. All contest forms are confidential, including ballots. Judges are not to explain their decision to contestants, or tell contestants how they could improve. After the contest, the ballots are to be disposed of. They cannot be made available to contestants or other individuals. (This is true for timing reports as well.) The appropriate response would be to politely explain the policy of confidentiality regarding judges' decision and all information on official contest forms (counter's tally sheet, timer's record).



DISCUSSION TOPICS

- Q. What is the appropriate action for the following situation? Contest results are announced and the contest meeting is adjourned. After this an individual from the audience complains that judging was unfair.
- A. Protests are limited to contestants and judges and may regard eligibility and originality only. Audience members are simply observers and have no rights to protest. Valid protests, from judges or contestants, must be lodged prior to that announcement before the meeting at which the contest took place is adjourned. After that, all judging decisions are final.



DISCUSSION TOPICS

Q. During a contest, what is the procedure for addressing a protest regarding the originality of a speech?

A. When a contestant's speech is thought to be unoriginal, any judge or contestant may protest to the chief judge and/or contest chair before the announcement of the winner and alternates. The contest chair notifies the judges, who then gather together with the chief judge to discuss the speech in question. The judges must call in the contestant to discuss the allegations. After the contestant leaves the room, the judges should discuss the situation again and then vote. If the majority votes to disqualify the contestant on the basis of originality, the contest chair will notify the contestant of the disqualification prior to that announcement before the meeting at which the contest took place is adjourned. All decisions of the judges are final.



DISCUSSION TOPICS

- Q. What is public domain? How does it affect speech originality?
- A. Generally speaking, in the United States a work becomes part of the public domain when the copyright of that work expires. Many jokes, stories, and anecdotes have been around a long time. They appear in many places and have been told many times by many people. Such jokes, stories, and anecdotes are considered to be in the public domain, and their sources cannot be cited. However, if a contestant relates one of these stories, jokes, or anecdotes, even though the exact source is not known the speaker still must acknowledge that it comes from another source.



DISCUSSION TOPICS

- Q. The speech contest rules state that all contestants will speak from the same area designated by the contest chair. If a contestant steps out of the designated speaking area, is he or she disqualified for this rule violation?
- A. No. Judges cannot disqualify the contestant for the rule violation. (Remember, contestants can only be disqualified for eligibility, originality, and timing.) However, judges may take this rule violation into consideration and award lower marks for that contestant.



DISCUSSION TOPICS

Three members compete at an area contest. One contestant is disqualified for speaking overtime. The two announced winners are not able to compete in the division contest. Can the disqualified contestant compete in the division contest?

No. The disqualified contestant may not compete under any circumstances. If the winner and alternate are unable to attend the division contest, no one else may take their places. The area will go unrepresented.



DISCUSSION TOPICS

Just before an area International Speech Contest begins, you find out a contestant has completed only five projects in *Competent Communication*. The contest speech will be his sixth speech.

The International Speech Contest rules state that a contestant must have completed at least six speech projects in the *Competent Communication* manual. This requirement must be met before the contestant entered the club contest. The contestant does not meet this requirement so he is not eligible to compete and must be disqualified. However, a charter member of a club chartered since the previous July 1 is permitted to compete without having completed the first six speeches in *Competent Communication*. The club must be officially chartered before the area contest.

Always check contestants' eligibility at every contest level.



Questions???

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