

Wisconsin Debate Coaches Association

Minutes

September 10, 2011
Sun Prairie High School

Schools represented: Mukwonago, West Bend, Appleton East, Brookfield East, Sheboygan North, Marquette, Middleton, Madison Memorial, Waukesha South, La Crosse Central, Golda Meir, Bradley Tech, Rufus King, Whitefish Bay, Cedarburg, Homestead, Janesville Parker, Nicolet, Veritas

Also present were Dave Denomie from Marquette University, Paige Pritchard and Joni Chmiel of the MDL, and Chuck Malone and Kay Neal of the WHSFA.

The meeting was called to order by President James Hoggatt at 9:19 a.m.

Secretary/Calendar

Brian Devine moved approval of the spring meeting minutes, and the motion was seconded. There being no objection, the minutes were approved.

The floor was opened to discussion of calendar changes. Mary Wacker indicated she that the southern NFL district was considering moving their qualifier to December 10 and 11, possibly to run concurrently with the Marquette University invitational. Considerable discussion followed as to whether the December or January date for NFL would be better.

Mike Traas suggested that the southern NFL members should make the decision and that WDCA would accept whatever that decision is. Mary added that either way, there would be an open invitational offered concurrently and that all debate events would be held on the same dates (not separated into separate weekends as in the past).

James asked that the southern NFL members present indicate their preferences. 5 members favored changing the date to December, while 7 favored keeping the date in January. Mary indicated that she would take this preference to the NFL district committee.

Nick requested that if the tournament was going to remain in January, it be held at Middleton so he could offer his invitational that day as well. Mary responded that Middleton was a location that would require most schools to spend more money. Nick responded that this raised a problem for his ability to offer his invitational. James asked whether any southern NFL team would in fact object to having the tournament at Middleton, and no one responded.

Representatives of Rufus King, Bradley Tech, and Nicolet indicated they would all participate at an NFL qualifier at Middleton and that they would make sure that any MPS schools needing help getting there would get it.

James indicated to Mary that he regarded it as settled that the WDCA would not object to the NFL southern qualifier remaining on the January date.

Justice Platt suggested allowing the NFL qualifier to serve as a leg for the state tournament. Nick Bubb responded that this would be a substantial change to qualifying rules and should not be done on the fly.

Nick announced that Dave Henning has indicated that Sheboygan South will be hosting an invitational on January 14.

Shawn Matson announced that the October PF topic would be used at the Whitefish Bay meet on September 24.

Treasurer

A treasurer's report was distributed by Steve Sexton. He announced a deficit of \$81.25 and explained the special circumstances at the state tournament that made cost and revenue accounting especially difficult. Overall, the tournament did make money, but the membership dues were not enough to cover the operating costs of the organization. He mentioned that the recent increase in dues should take care of this problem.

It was moved and seconded to accept the report. There being no objection, the report was accepted.

Past President

Doris Sexton announced that the deadline for scholarship applications and coach of the year nominations would be moved to December 15. Everything should be sent to her at West Bend.

Doris announced the induction of former Cedarburg coach Peg Erbes into the WDCA Hall of Fame.

President-Elect

Mike Traas announced that the fall workshop would be held next Saturday at West Bend. He mentioned that only one school has registered and asked that registrations be in by Tuesday. He also requested additional presenters for next Saturday and also students to model debating. Mike responded to a number of questions about the workshop's content and logistics.

Novice Packet Committee

Dan Hansen announced that the novice packet has been placed on the WDCA web site. He explained that he would have a guide for coaches posted on the web site by Monday. He discussed the thinking that went into the set-up of this year's packet and responded to questions.

Dan recognized the very good work of the members of the Novice Packet Committee.

Dan reviewed the novice rules for the benefit of new coaches.

Standards and Ethics Committee

Dan requested that new judges be sent to the session at next Saturday's workshop. He reported that the video that was attempted last year did not turn out but would be tried again.

New Coaches Committee

Dave Denomie reported that a new coach at Laconia has contacted him and that she will be attending next week's workshop.

Dave introduced Lauren Oswald, the new coach at Homestead.

He further requested that all coaches reach out to new coaches and support them.

Justice introduced Nasif Rogers, the new coach at Nicolet.

Jason Chapman announced he is now coaching at Veritas.

We were also introduced to Joni Chmiel, the new director of the Milwaukee Debate League.

A 10 minute break was taken at 10:25 a.m.

Tournament Practices and Procedures Committee

Nick reminded us that the state tournament was going to be held on January 21 and 22 at UW-Whitewater. A box lunch will be available for pre-purchase when registering, and other lunch alternatives will also be available.

Since Wisconsin Forensics Daily no longer exists, the list of qualifiers will be maintained on Joy of Tournaments. Hosts of invitationals were reminded to get meet results to Nick as soon after their meets as possible.

Old Business

Nick reviewed the standing rules changes discussed at the spring meeting.

Eliminating the middle school division

- Article C, Section I – revise the division list to the following: “Policy Debate: Varsity two-person, Varsity four-person, and Novice; Lincoln Douglas Debate; and Public Forum Debate.”
 - Delete Article C, Section XIV Middle School Policy Debate in its entirety.
 - Add to Article C, Section XIII Novice Policy Debate, Paragraph A, Qualification Procedures the following language as item number 4. “4. Middle Level Schools who have not qualified at least one team for the Novice Policy Division, may enter one team in the Novice Division at the Wisconsin State Debate Tournament.”
 - Renumber the current item number 4 to number 5.
- Delete all other references to the Middle School Division

This proposal was moved and seconded. Cheryl Bachtell offered her opposition on the basis that it would end middle school participation in the WDCA. Ernest Chomicki also spoke in opposition, pointing out that middle schools are an important way to build up debate in Wisconsin.

Mike Traas mentioned that nothing precluded middle school students from participating in other forms of debate such as PF. Cheryl responded that students can do that now, but that she coaches policy debate.

Tim Scheffler pointed out that while it might be desirable to keep the middle school division in some way, it has not been a workable division in recent years at state, with the trophies costing more than the money collected from entry fees. Cheryl suggested reducing the number of trophies awarded.

Jason Chapman pointed out that the elimination is only from the state tournament and that the division could still exist at invitationals. On the other hand, he said, not having specific recognition at the state tournament may prevent growth in programs that could feed the future of the WDCA.

Miloren Robinson indicated that she has worked with middle school students who consider a point of pride to compete against high school students and sometimes defeat them.

Nick explained that the objective of the proposal is to avoid having middle school as a required division at state when it does not appear to be meeting the needs of very many schools. He pointed out that some sort of middle school competition could still occur at the time of the state tournament, but it would no longer require the purchase of a considerable number of trophies. Tim suggested that the Middle School Committee might be able to work out an alternative approach. Cheryl responded that the Middle School Committee does not seem to exist.

Ernest suggested keeping the division but making changes in procedures to deal with the concerns about such things as trophies. He stated that middle school students should be able to compete at state without the intimidation of having to debate high school students.

James indicated that the proposal is not meant to end middle school debate. Rather, it is designed to provide more flexibility to meet the needs of the WDCA as it currently is, with only a few middle schools. The standing rules could be changed to once again accommodate a middle school division if the numbers grew substantially in the future.

Dan shared that he no longer supports the proposal because he sees it as ending needed support for middle schools in WDCA. He suggested placing a contingency plan in the standing rules to address the concerns that have been stated. Nick responded that middle school is treated completely differently already.

It was moved and seconded to call the question. The motion to call the question **passed by voice vote**. The main motion then **failed on a 4-10 vote**.

Eliminating Independent Tournament Director

- Revise Article C, Section II – Tournament Director and Organization, Paragraph A to read as follows:

The Wisconsin State Debate Tournament will be run by a three-person committee consisting of ~~an independent~~ Tournament Director, who is the Chair of the Tournament Practices and Procedures Committee, to be approved by the Executive Committee with consultation from the Wisconsin High School Forensic Association, the Host, and the Operations Director, ~~who will be the chair of the Tournament Practices and Procedures Committee~~ is appointed by the Tournament Director with consultation from the Executive Board and the Wisconsin High School Forensics Association. The Tournament Director may name members of the Executive Committee, members of the Tournament Practices and Procedures Committee, or former WDCA/WHSFA coaches to assist in running the state tournament. Individuals named to the state Tournament Committee should be published two weeks prior to the tournament and will be approved by the Executive Board.

- Revise Article C, Section II – Tournament Director and Organization, Paragraph B – Tournament Director as follows:

The responsibilities of the Tournament Director shall include: recording and verifying all qualifiers and entrants; coordinating and distributing all tournament information, including judge preference statements; making tab room assignments; covering tab room workers' judging assignments; coordinating and conducting the awards ceremony; publishing results; running the computer operation securing a computer program to do adequate and independent scheduling of rounds and judges in the two and four speaker divisions; obtaining and organizing a qualified and adequate judge pool for preliminary and elimination rounds; screening judge qualifications (experience, years out, number of rounds, etc) and making adjustments to individual assignments where necessary;

~~coordinating and centralizing all postings; coordinating all results; maintaining a round-by-round “paper trail”; and disk backup of pairings and results; etc~~

- Revise Article C, Section II – Tournament Director and Organization, Paragraph D – Operations Director as follows:

~~The responsibilities of the Operations Director include ordering awards, recording and verifying all qualifiers and entrants; coordinating and mailing all tournament information, forms, judge qualification/strike forms; assisting with the judging pool; assembling a panel for elimination rounds; screening judge qualifications (experience, years out, etc.) for appropriate pools; etc running the computer operations (securing a program to schedule rounds and judges), coordinating and centralizing all postings; maintaining a round-by-round paper trail and back up of pairings and results; etc.~~

Nick reviewed the current and proposed language, which was discussed at length at the spring meeting.

It was moved and seconded to pass the motion.

Kay Neal stressed the issue was never one of competence, only of independence.

The motion then **passed on a 15-1-1 vote.**

There was an additional motion to clarify that the previous language explaining the duties of the tournament director and operations director (indicated above) was to be re-inserted.

The motion **passed without objection.**

Formalize local leagues

- Add to Article C, Section I – Eligibility:
Teams may use local league or conference competitions to satisfy one qualification leg, provided teams satisfy the remaining qualification requirements. Local league or conference competitions must submit their results to the Tournament Director, in order for schools to claim a leg from these competitions

The motion **passed by voice vote.**

Judge preferencing backup plan

- Add to Article C, Section XII – Varsity Divisions a new paragraph, (paragraph D) that reads as follows:
D. Judge Preferencing – when a school compromises 40% of the teams in any division and the tournament director determines that judge preferencing for that division to be unworkable, the tournament director, with the approval of the executive board, may replace judge preferencing with a judge strike system for that division at the Wisconsin State Debate Tournament.

The motion **passed by voice vote.**

New Business

Nick proposed adoption one of these options.

1. That all varsity policy divisions have 8 minutes of prep time at the state tournament.
2. That the VSS division (only) have 8 minutes of prep time at the state tournament.

John Knetzger mentioned that judges' disregard for the rules should not be the basis of changes.

The question was called.

It was moved and seconded to adopt the first option. It passed by **voice vote.**

Nick proposed that for V4, power pairing begin after round II rather than after round III.

John explained that it reduces the role that luck plays in a team's opponents and that it puts V4 in parity with other divisions.

Kay raised the questions as to whether this would be practical in cases of a small V4 division. She said that it might result in the last round becoming very random because of the limited number of teams still available as opponents.

Considerable discussion ensued.

The question was called.

The motion **failed on a vote of 5-6-5.**

Nick proposed moving the workshop duties from the President Elect to the President:

- Revise Article III Section I of the Constitutional Bylaws to read:

SECTION I – PRESIDENT

The President shall preside at all general and special meetings and shall be the chairperson of the Executive Committee. The President shall have the authority to appoint committee chairs and shall become an ex-officio member of all committees. The President shall conduct the fall workshop. After completing the term of office, the President shall become the Past-President.

- Revise Article III Section II of the Constitutional Bylaws to read:

SECTION II – PRESIDENT-ELECT

The President-elect shall assume the duties of the President in case of the absence of the President. The President-elect shall assist the President in his/her duties. ~~The President-elect is the chairperson of the Fall Workshop Committee.~~ The president elect shall organize the spring and fall general meetings. After completing the term of office, the President-elect shall become the President.

It will be voted on at the spring meeting.

Nick brought up the question of establishing a standing Novice Packet Committee, with a permanent chair. Doris explained that it had become clear to her than we should not be switching people on this committee every year because we will not get a consistent product. This change will be voted on at the spring meeting:

- Revise Article III Section III of the Constitutional Bylaws to read:
SECTION III – PAST-PRESIDENT
The Past-President shall serve as the chairperson of the Awards and Nominations Committee ~~and Novice Topics Committee~~, and actively seek nominations for the WDCA Hall of Fame, WDCA Coach of the Year and the WDCA Scholarship. The Past-President shall as well as appoint and oversee the webmaster for the WDCA website.
- Revise the beginning of Article VI of the Constitutional Bylaws to read:
ARTICLE VI – COMMITTEES
The WDCA shall have the following standing committees: Executive, Awards and Nominations, Handbook, History, Judging Standards and Ethics, Media Communications, Middle School, New Coaches, Novice Packet Topics, and Tournament Practices and Procedures.
- Add Section IX to Article VI, to read:
SECTION IX—Novice Packet
The Novice Packet Committee shall consist of a chairperson, appointed by the President, and at least two members appointed by the chairperson. The committee shall research and produce the Novice Packet for use in policy debates.

Ernest raised the possibility of eliminating the packet and just having novice topic areas. John pointed out that the packet had been changed so dramatically this year that it would be worth giving it a try this year and then looking at feedback and continuing the discussion.

Tim presented a proposal to change the wording regarding the middle school division to make the division more workable.

- Add a sentence to Article C Section XIV Part A so that it reads:
A. Qualification Procedures
Any WDCA member schools that offer middle level grades, grades 6-8, will automatically qualify two four-person teams to compete in the middle school division. Students need to be entered in appropriate levels of competition. Trophy hunting is not

looked on favorably. No teams comprised of students from multiple member schools shall be permitted to compete.

- Revise Article C Section XIV Part B so that it reads:
B. Format
~~The middle school division will be a one day, four round tournament. A random draw will determine competition. Teams from a school, however, may not meet another team from that school. The length of the tournament may be reduced to three rounds if necessary.~~ The format of the tournament shall be determined by the Tournament Practices and Procedures Committee at the time the invitation is posted. With the concurrence of the Executive Committee, the format may be altered if deemed necessary.

Nick offered this friendly amendment to the motion, which Tim accepted:

- Revise Article C Section XIV Part D so that it reads:
D. Awards
~~Team and individual trophies will be presented to the first through fifth place teams. In addition, a trophy will be awarded to the top speaker in each division. Awards will be announced in the building, but the awards will be presented at the tournament-ending awards assembly.~~ Team and individual trophies will be presented to the top team. Additional trophies will be presented up to five places, to no more than half of the teams entered in the division. Individual trophies will be presented to the top speaker in each position.

The previous question was called.

The motion **passed by voice vote.**

Kay Neal requested that tournament hosts hire her students as judges for novice, PF, and LD rounds.

There was a motion and second for adjournment. The motion **passed by voice vote.**

The meeting adjourned at 11:44 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Devine
WDCA Secretary

