

# Wisconsin Debate Coaches Association

## Minutes

May 4, 2013

West Bend West HS Library

**Schools represented:** Mukwonago, West Bend, Muskego, Appleton East, Middleton, Janesville Parker, Homestead, Waukesha South, Sheboygan South, Sheboygan North, Whitefish Bay, Rufus King

We were joined by Bill Altorfer and Joni Chmiel from the MDL.

The meeting was called to order at 9:12 a.m. by President Mike Traas.

### Secretary's report

Brian Devine moved acceptance of the fall meeting minutes. It was **approved by voice vote**.

Brian indicated that Nick Bubb had been working with people to put a tournament schedule together. A copy of the proposed schedule was distributed, and Nick went through it with us.

Whitefish Bay was switched to November 16. Sheboygan was switched to December 14. Madison Memorial has requested to go opposite Waukesha South on November 9. Steve Goetsch objected to this, as his program relies on the income from this tournament. Nick pointed out that the Big 8 Conference meet was held opposite Waukesha South, and Steve responded that he was displeased with that as well. John Knetzger pointed out that other tournaments are opposite national circuit meets. Steve responded that it is a different matter when the opposite tournament is in-state. Shawn suggested that Madison Memorial should consider September 21. Nick expressed concern that there is a Badger home football game that day which could present problems for lodging, and he reiterated that he felt it was not unreasonable to have two in-state meets on a weekend. Steve responded that he understood Madison Memorial would have a meet that day, but that he is opposed to that. He indicated that he may offer a second meet, possibly opposite an existing meet.

Nick pointed out that last year's workshop was canceled and wondered if there should be a tournament in conjunction with a workshop. Mike pointed out that the expanded season may have resulted in schools being unable to afford the additional trip to the workshop. He suggested that the workshop could be held after a tournament on September 21, if one were to be held. John suggested that the workshop might be more successful a week later (on September 21) to give coaches time to get their teams going. Discussed ensued regarding the value of the workshop given the vast amount of similar information available online. Doris Sexton pointed out that participation in the workshop has plummeted in recent years. Stephanie King suggested having a longer

lunch break following an icebreaker tournament which would make workshop-type lectures/discussions available. Shawn Matson suggested having a novice-only tournament and having varsity students judge. Lauren gave a tentative commitment to hosting a novice tournament for policy and PF, with varsity debaters serving as judges.

There was discussion whether the prohibition of high school student judges would be violated. Doris Sexton moved to suspend the rules to allow high school student judges at the Homestead meet. The motion was seconded. Linda Suprenant asked about the issue of not having an adult in each room. Discussion followed. John Knetzger made, and then rescinded a motion to table Doris's motion. The motion to suspend the rules and permit student judges at Homestead **passed by a voice vote**.

There was discussion as to whether to move the date of the fall coaches' meeting. Doris Sexton moved to have the fall meeting on September 7. The motion was seconded. The motion **passed by a voice vote**.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Steve Sexton was unable to be with us today but sent word that there is about \$2,000 in the check and that up to half of that will be needed to pay for expenses related to fall meetings and other items. In response to a question from Mike, Doris explained that \$775 was given to Whitewater for meals and that we were about \$75 short on our meal receipts. It was not Doris's impression that we lost money overall on the state tournament, but she was not able to verify that. There was additional discussion on recent trends in terms of WDCA income and cash balances.

It was moved and seconded to accept the treasurer's report. The motion **passed by a voice vote**.

### **President Elect**

Brian Devine agreed to be re-nominated for Secretary. It was moved and seconded to re-elect Brian Devine as Secretary, and the motion **passed by voice vote**.

Stephanie King agreed to be nominated for President Elect. It was moved and seconded to elect Stephanie King as President Elect, and the motion **passed by voice vote**.

### **Past President**

Mike explained that James Hoggatt was unable to be with us, and that we do not know the results of the selection process for the Hall of Fame. This will be addressed at a future date.

Nick presented proposals for changing the standing rules.

**1. Delete Article B, Section I, Paragraph C:**

~~C. Non-sanctioned Divisions~~

~~Debaters competing in divisions not sanctioned on the WDCA Calendar will not be qualified to compete at the WSDT. The only exception to this would occur if consolidation were necessary to run a division~~

**2. Modify Article B, Section III, Paragraph E:**

E. A judge is expected to adapt expectations and award speaker points appropriate to the level of debate being judged. A judge should not give speaker points lower than ~~18~~ 20 in policy debate and below the respective minimums for Lincoln Douglas and Public Forum.

**3. Delete Article C, Section VIII. Modify Article C Section VII**

~~SECTION VII – STUDENT PARTICIPATION~~

- ~~A. Any debater who qualifies for the Wisconsin State Debate Tournament in either varsity policy division and has competed in the varsity policy division at three or more tournaments during the season is not eligible to compete at any other policy division of the Wisconsin State Debate Tournament.~~
- ~~B. Debaters may enter into a division higher than the division they earned a qualifying record in.~~
- ~~C. In team events, one substitution or additional debater per division is allowed provider the debater attended two or more sanctioned tournaments in any division and the substitute fits the criteria for the division (e.g. a novice substitute meets the novice definition).~~

~~SECTION VIII – SUBSTITUTIONS~~

- ~~A. In the event a single member of a four-person team is unable to participate, a single substitution for each team will be allowed. The substitute member must fit the division entered (i.e., only novice debaters may be novice substitutes). Eligibility of individual students will be verified upon registration.~~
- ~~B. In the two-person varsity division, a school will be allowed only one substitute regardless of the number of teams entered. The substitute must have competed twice in-state in varsity level competitions.~~

**4. Where needed in Article C, Section XII – Varsity Divisions, modify the judge preference order to: AA, BB, CC, AB-BA, BC-CB, AC-CA.**

[Explanation: BC-CB is missing from the preference order. We previously decided that it should come before AC-CA because it is only one-off, rather than two.]

Adds to: C, XII, A, 2, b, iv.  
C, XII, A, 3, b, vii  
C, XII, B, 2, e, v

**5. Where needed in Article C, Section XII – Varsity Divisions, delete references to when elimination rounds begin.**

[Explanation: All teams with a winning record clear to elimination rounds.]

C, XII, A, 2, g: ~~Elimination rounds in VSS will be offered on the following basis:~~  
i. ~~Up to 14 entries – elimination rounds begin at semi-finals~~  
ii. ~~15 to 31 entries – elimination rounds begin at quarter-finals~~  
iii. ~~32 entries and over – elimination rounds begin at octa-finals.~~

C, XII, B, 2, b. (same language).

C, XII, C, 2, b. (same language).

**6. Add this language to PF/LD. Sections are specified below:**

C, XII, B, 2, b

C, XII, C, 2, b.

All teams with a winning record are eligible to compete in elimination rounds. If the bracket is incomplete as a result, higher seed teams are advanced without debating in order to preserve the integrity of the competition.

[Explanation: Despite it being current practice and being passed at several meetings, this language isn't in the PF/LD rules. ]

**7. Delete Article C, Section XIV – Middle School Policy Debate.**

[Explanation: The WSDT hasn't offered Middle School over the last two tournaments. We expect that this will continue.]

**8. Delete Triple High/Lows from the WSDT Speaker Tie Breaks.**

Affects: C, XII, A, 2, b, vi

C, XII, A, 3, b, ix

[Explanation: These tie-breakers are meaningless. A triple high low over six rounds renders a “zero” for all participants. As a result, they don't break any ties. We haven't needed to use these criteria – likely ever.]

**9. Delete the following instruction:**

Article C, Section XIII, Paragraph B, Sentence 4:

~~4. Awards for Novice shall be announced in building, but awards will be~~

~~presented at the tournament ending awards assembly.~~

[Explanation: This is not consistent with past-practice. Additionally, we don't need a rule for when/where novice awards should be. ]

## 10. Delete the following language in Article C, Section I

### SECTION I – ELIGIBILITY

Schools whose dues are up to date in either the WDCA or the WHSFA as of December 1 and have met the qualification procures for any of the WDCA sanctioned divisions of competition (Policy Debate: Varsity two-person, Varsity four-person, Novice, and ~~Middle School~~; Lincoln Douglas Debate; and Public Forum Debate) are eligible to compete in the Wisconsin State Debate Tournament. 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.

[Explanation: Our partnership with the WHSFA over the state tournament has ended. The language should reflect that.]

It was moved and seconded to adopt all but item # 3. The motion was passed **on a voice vote**.

Brian proposed:

~~Delete Article B, Section I.A.7: Schools that conduct unsanctioned tournament events during the sanctioned event season shall be subject to disciplinary action by the Tournament Practices and Procedures Committee. Penalties may include: \$100 fine to be paid to the school(s) effected by the unsanctioned tournament, disqualification of the violator from the next year's calendar, and disqualification of violating schools teams from the Wisconsin State Debate Tournament for that year.~~

and renumber paragraph 8 as paragraph 7.

It was moved and seconded to make this change. The motion **passed by voice vote**.

## Novice Packet Committee

Dan Hansen indicated that Nick wished to introduce a proposal. Nick proposed to return to Novice Topic Areas, similar to Washington State. This proposal would: Eliminate the Novice Packet. Replace the Novice Packet with topic areas. Eliminate the counterplan restriction. Require the Novice Topic committee to approve one counterplan to be debate during the course of that year.

Constitutional By-law changes: to Article VI change the following:

## SECTION IX – NOVICE ~~PACKET~~ TOPICS

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~~ Novice Topics for use in policy debates.

Standing Rules Changes: to Article B, Section III, Paragraph N.

Novice limited topics and a ~~no counter plan~~, no kritik rule are in effect for all WDCA sanctioned events throughout the entire season including the Wisconsin State Debate Tournament.

Also, delete Article B, Section VII – Novice Policy Debate Argument limits.

Under this proposal, the Novice Topic committee would determine the salient affirmatives and a single salient counter plan for use in novice policy debate. For example, for this year the committee might have said that the salient affirmatives were: high-speed rail, port security, and inland water ways and the salient counter plan was the states' counter plan.

Since this involves a constitutional change, it needs to be presented at a meeting before it is voted on. The earliest this change could be implemented is for the Fall of 2013.

It was moved by Dave Henning to approve the proposal. The motion was seconded. Doris expressed a preference for the current system because it provides more guidance and instruction to new debaters and new coaches. It was moved and seconded to separate the issues of novice topic areas and counterplans. The counterplan issue was addressed first. Steve Goetsch expressed concerns that we would lose novices if counterplans were allowed in novice. Dave countered that his novices wish they could use counterplans. Mike explained that the change would not require the use of a counterplan in novice but simply permit its use. Dan expressed a concern that novices should not be running counterplans at the beginning of the season and suggested a compromise of allowing a single counterplan starting in November, and that the text should be included in the packet. Discussion focused on when such a counterplan would be released, either when the packet is released or at a later date. It was moved and seconded to amend the motion to allow for a counterplan, with a date of allowed use to be determined by the Executive Committee. It passed **by a voice vote**. The counterplan proposal as amended then **passed by a voice vote**.

Discussion then turned to the other division of the original motion, the return to novice topic areas rather than the currently used packet. The proposal **failed by a voice vote**.

Dan indicated he was open to specify normal means in the novice packet if there was an interest on the part of the group. There has been confusion at state regarding whether funding is part of plan text. There was a consensus that this could be done and did not require a vote.

Dan mentioned he was interested in having volunteers join the Novice Packet Committee.

## **Judging Standards and Ethics**

There was no report from Tim Scheffler, who was unable to be with us today.

## **TPP**

Nick reported there was an issue with LD pairings at the state tournament. Nick had determined prior to state there that could be a problem with LD if one school surpassed 50 percent of the pool. We came very close with Brookfield East but did not quite hit 50 percent. Based on the issues that came up at state, Nick said he would be interested in setting the bar at a lower percentage for the Tournament Director to set up the division so that the school in question (that exceeded the percentage) would be split into two schools but would be given school protection for the first two rounds. Nick will put a specific proposal together for the fall meeting on this issue.

Two proposals have been put forward regarding substitutions for the state tournament:

### **1. Goetsch proposal:**

CURRENT RULE:

#### SECTION VIII – SUBSTITUTIONS

A. In the event a single member of a four-person team is unable to participate, a single substitution for each team will be allowed. The substitute member must fit the division entered (i.e., only novice debaters may be novice substitutes). Eligibility of individual students will be verified upon registration.

PROPOSED Rule:

#### Section VIII –SUBSTITUTIONS

A. In 4 speaker divisions, substitutions are allowed to fill a single 4 speaker team when a school's qualifiers do not fill a 4 speaker squad. Schools are allowed to fill only 1 squad in each 4 speaker division in this manner.

### **2. Bubb proposal:**

Proposal number 3 from Nick's original list of standing rule clean-ups:

## **11. Delete Article C, Section VIII. Modify Article C Section VII**

#### SECTION VII – STUDENT PARTICIPATION

A. Any debaters who qualifies for the Wisconsin State Debate Tournament in either varsity policy division and has competed in the varsity policy division at three or

- more tournaments during the season is not eligible to compete at any other policy division of the Wisconsin State Debate Tournament.
- B. Debaters may enter into a division higher than the division they earned a qualifying record in.
  - C. In team events, one substitution or additional debater per division is allowed provided the debater attended two or more sanctioned tournaments in any division and the substitute fits the criteria for the division (e.g. a novice substitute meets the novice definition).

#### SECTION VIII—SUBSTITUTIONS

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- ~~B. In the two-person varsity division, a school will be allowed only one substitute regardless of the number of teams entered. The substitute must have competed twice in state in varsity level competitions.~~

The Goetsch proposal was discussed first. Steve told us the circumstances his team faced this year at state and how his proposed change would have provided a better resolution.

Nick explained why the rules were set up the way they were and how they allowed for Steve's students to participate, although in different divisions (VSS instead of V4, V4 instead of novice, for example).

Steve pointed out that the rules affect 4-person debate disproportionately and did not match up to how VSS is affected by substitutions. Nick responded that this changes the policy of qualification following the student rather than the team. Steve spoke to the benefit to participation and to state tournament attendance if we were adopt his proposal.

John moved adoption of the Bubb proposal. Nick read his proposal to the membership (see above). The motion was seconded. The motion **passed by a voice vote**.

#### **Old Business**

John had distributed a proposed policy ballot to all of us and explained its development. A number of suggestions were taken for cosmetic and clarity/utility-related improvements, which were accepted by the designers. Dave expressed concern about how unreadable the duplicate copies are. John responded that it is getting harder to access copy machines. Dave and Lauren both asked about finding a more readable duplicate ballot. John and Doris both expressed the value of using a writing utensil that leaves a decent impression on the second copy. Nick acknowledged that the third copy is not strictly necessary.



It was moved and seconded to approve the format of the ballot with the agreed-upon improvements. The motion **passed by a voice vote**.

Nick brought up that we had approved at the last meeting speaker points for PF, to take effect once new ballots were obtained. Doris indicated that we would run out of the old PF ballots during the course of the upcoming season. John distributed two possible ideas for new PF ballots. Discussion then took place regarding the relative advantages and disadvantages of the ballot designs. Shawn suggested taking the policy ballot and making very minor adjustments to make it suitable for PF. This was largely agreed to. It was moved and seconded to have an ad hoc committee to draft such a ballot for the fall meeting. The meeting **passed by voice vote**.

On the issue of the web site, Nick reported that there have been some obstacles to getting the process completed, but that he and Lauren feel they are getting closer to a resolution. He expressed the goal of having the web site functional before the time of the fall meeting.

Mike turned the meeting over to our new President, John Knetzger.

## **New Business**

Lauren offered to work with a more experienced coach to write up a judge training document. There was discussion about resources that are available and how this could be brought together for judges. There was additional discussion on how judging philosophies enter into policy debate and how this would be reflected in such a document.

Dan suggested that we all submit teaching materials we use for our judges to Tim, who could determine what materials could go into a document of the type Lauren is asking about. Stephanie offered to set up a drop box and to invite all to participate. This offer was accepted.

Nick has proposed the following to expand novice at the state tournament:

The Standing Rules for the Novice tournament would be written as follows:

### SECTION XIII – NOVICE POLICY DIVISION

#### A. Qualification Procedure

1. Teams shall qualify for the novice policy division by obtaining a better than .500 record in the preliminary rounds at two or more sanctioned tournaments in the novice division. Qualification runs with the debater, not the pair or foursome.
2. Schools may qualify an unlimited number of debaters in the novice division.
3. Schools who have not qualified at least one four-person novice team for the Wisconsin State Debate Tournament, may qualify two teams in the novice

division by that team (comprised of the same four students) obtaining an even (.500) win/loss record or better at any two WDCA sanctioned tournaments in the entered division.

4. A Novice is defined as a high school student debating his or her first resolution.

#### B. WSDT Operations Procedure

1. The novice division will be a two-day, six round tournament. Teams will compete as individual teams and not as a school. Teams from a school, however, may not meet another team from that school. The novice tournament shall consist of two randomly paired rounds followed by four power-paired round. These rounds will be paired according the procedures described in the Varsity Switch Side Division.
2. Teams will be made up of two students who will defend both sides of the resolution.
3. If there are less than 40 teams, elimination rounds start at quarterfinals. If there are more than 40, elimination rounds start at octafinals.
4. If the Novice tournament would run substantially longer than the Varsity tournament, the WSDT Committee is empowered to modify the length of the tournament by curtailing preliminary rounds or elimination rounds.
5. Team tie-breakers will be consistent with the Varsity Switch Side Division
6. Speaker tie-breakers will be consistent with the Varsity Switch Side Division
7. No strikes or judge preferencing will be used for this division.

Nick indicated that while he prefers replacing N4 completely with NSS, he would be amenable to adding it instead. Dave spoke in favor of Nick's proposal for logistical reasons and in opposition to having a separate N4 division. Linda Suprenant asked if N4 could be expanded, to make it parallel to V4. Nick said it could, but that switch-sides would provide more educational opportunities.

Nick moved to adopt his plan. The motion was seconded. Dave spoke of the benefit of having elimination rounds for novice. Steve spoke of the power-paired rounds in the current V4 as functioning well. Considerable discussion continued. Doris moved to substitute to offer NSS in addition to the N4 division. The motion was seconded. It was clarified that Doris's substitute would keep N4 as a 4-round tournament, in addition to implementing Nick's plan for N4. **The substitute lost on a vote of 4-5-1.** We then returned to the main motion. Doris expressed the feeling that there would be strong resentment from 4-person coaches. **The motion passed on a vote of 5-4-1.**

Mike moved to have both an N4 and NSS division at state. The N4 would be a one-day 4-round tournament. Steve offered a friendly amendment to change N4 to 6 rounds over two days to mirror V4 (other than as regards judge preferencing). Dave expressed opposition on the basis that not having N4 helps with the educational value of debate and transitioning toward all switch-sides. After some clarification and discussion, the vote to add N4 as a 6-round 2-day event was taken. **The motion passed on a voice vote.**

Mike addressed the discussion among coaches on the WFCAs calendar change proposal. He indicated the change would not happen, and that there would be strong opposition from the WFCAs membership to any such suggestion. The tournament that appeared on Speechwire for the fall turns out to have been a misunderstanding and has now been taken down. Dave mentioned that he still likes the idea of expanding both the forensics and debate seasons, but that it appears that is not going to happen any time soon.

It was moved and seconded to adjourn. There being no objection, we adjourned at 12:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Devine, WDCAs Secretary