

Wisconsin Debate Coaches Association

Minutes

September 12, 2015

Appleton East High School

Voting Schools represented: Appleton West, West Bend, Bradley Tech, Sheboygan South, Sheboygan North, Waukesha South, Janesville Parker, Brookfield East, Appleton East, Muskego, Madison Memorial, Neenah, Hamilton, Riverside, Appleton North, Madison West, Middleton, Rufus King, Mukwonago, Homestead, Marquette, Golda Meir, North Division

The meeting was called to order at 9:11 a.m. by President Shawn Matson.

President

Shawn reported that the issues that were to be addressed this summer did not get addressed. He indicated that we will be moving forward with these issues and invited all coaches to get involved in that effort.

Past President

Stephanie King was not able to be here. Shawn shared that all information about awards is on the website, including all deadlines.

Secretary

Brian Devine opened discussion of the calendar. The following changes and clarifications were made:

Whitefish Bay is replaced by Golda Meir on October 24.

Sheboygan North will host on December 12.

Appleton West will host on October 3.

October 9 and 10 are two separate tournaments at Waukesha South.

On Monday, November 9, there will be a Fox Valley Association tournament.

On October 31, there will be a Novice Policy Tournament at Appleton West.

On October 31, there will be an MDL open tournament at Rufus King.

The Northern CFL qualifier will be held January 9 at Appleton West.

Dave Henning said he would be willing to host a meet on December 19.

September 19	Sheboygan South at Lakeland College
26	Rufus King
October 3	Mukwonago
	Appleton West
9/10	Waukesha South
16/17	Brookfield East
24	Golda Meir
30/31	La Crosse Central
31	Appleton West (Novice Policy)
November 7	West Bend
9	Fox Valley Association
13/14	Middleton/JMM "Badgerland"
21	"No Frills" at West Bend
December 4/5	Appleton East
12	Sheboygan North
	WHSFA State Tournament at Ripon College
19	Sheboygan South
January 9	Southern NFL*
	Northern NFL*
16	Southern CFL at West Bend*
	Northern CFL at Appleton West*
23/24	WSDT at West Bend*

*not sanctioned meets, but included for informational purposes

Ernest Chomicki asked why the schedule was not posted on the web site until very recently. Shawn responded that it was simply not done, and that he will strive to make sure that does not happen again.

Brian moved to approve the spring minutes, which were emailed to all coaches. The motion was seconded and **approved by voice vote**.

President Elect

Miloran Robinson proposed having the spring meeting on April 23. David Umstedt offered to host the meeting at Golda Meir, pending approval of his school.

Treasurer

Nick Bubb has decided to stop working on the effort to obtain 501c(3) organization status. It was not really needed, and there are other matters more pressing.

Nick has set up a Google account to handle organizational documents. The membership form is online which streamlines the process of renewing memberships and keeping track of it. He will use a ledger to provide better accounting documentation.

The account has \$6387.67, not including transactions that occurred in the very recent past.

The spring meeting in the Madison area turned out to be very expensive, but we saved money by holding the summer meeting on Skype. We covered part of the cost of sending Stephanie as a representative to the national topic selection meeting. We are in discussion with WHSFA to get them to pay for part of this in future years.

Nick is working on a document to track the money involved in the state tournament.

TPP

Tim Scheffler reported that Tabroom will be used for the state tournament to the extent possible. Mike Traas pointed out that since the Badgerland meet will be using Tabroom for preferencing, it will be a chance for coaches to experience the process before using it for state.

Brian moved that the standing rule requiring the use of TPRC be waived this year in order to pilot Tabroom. The motion was seconded and **approved by voice vote**.

Doris has sent out information on hotels for state. She encouraged to book rooms early.

Judging Standards

Emily Summers invited more people to join the committee.

New Coaches

The following new coaches were introduced: Marshall Zemplinsky at Mukwonago, Anton Shircel at Sheboygan North, Matt Cekanor at Marquette, Brittany Newman at Middleton, and Rachel Davids at Hamilton and Riverside.

Novice Topics

Dave Henning explained that instead of a novice packet, there are now three affirmative areas, some disadvantages, and a counterplan. The committee worked with the MDL on this.

Nick pointed out that the novice topics have not been approved at the membership. Currently, the committee has worked on war on drugs, FISA, undocumented immigrants, with a presidential counterplan.

Nick emailed a Proposal :

1. Modify the Surveillance State Repeal Plan Text to the following:

The United States federal government should prohibit federal intelligence agencies from engaging in bulk searches and/or seizures of Americans' electronic communications without obtaining an individualized warrant based on a judicial determination of probable cause.

Rationale:

Just framing the issue as 702 of FISA has a number of issues:

First, any affirmative that calls for doing anything more than modifying 702 is extra topical.

Second, this is overly technical for novice debaters and novice judges. Third, a broader definition allows teams to talk about broader conduct that is authorized in other areas. Fourth, limiting the scope of FISA can only be achieved through legislation - eliminating the XO counter plan.

He explained that this would broaden the plan. Considerable discussion ensued.

Secondly,

2. Modify the Counter plan to say:

The President shall sign an executive order to reduce....

Rationale:

It's an XO counterplan. It needs to say President needs to sign an XO in order to have the debate about XO versus normal means (legislation).

And,

3. Add the following Plan Text to the list:

The United States federal government should prohibit federal agencies from requiring or compelling private entities to design or alter their commercial information technology products for the purpose of facilitating domestic surveillance

Rationale:

There's no reason why we have to be limited to three particular areas. In the past when we had a list, there were four. This new area would still link to the Counterplan, so it doesn't skew the negative ground. This affirmative is a core topic area. The negative positions that link to this topic area also link to the Surveillance State Repeal topic area. And this area also has a better discussion of economics, which is not advantage that prominently features in the other advantage areas. This is also one of the GFCA files - there's a bunch of evidence for it.

Question arose about the need or wisdom for adding a fourth topic area.

Matt pointed out that the drug war plan text is extratopical. He suggested it be replaced by:

"The USFG should substantially reduce/curtail the war on drugs."

Ernest pointed out that it is fine to have an extratopical plan because it teaches novices how to debate topicality.

Mike Traas moved for a 10 minute recess. This was seconded and **approved by voice vote**.

Following the recess, Nick introduced a five-part modification of his proposal from a caucus of coaches:

1. Modify the 702 area to the broader repeal act "The United States Federal Government....."
2. Modify the counterplan text to say "The president...."
3. Modify the war on drugs area to say "The United States....."
4. Modify the immigration area to remove "intended for deportation" "The United States federal...."
5. Introduce the secured data act as a novice topic area beginning November 1.

Nick moved passage of the proposal, and the motion was seconded. The motion **was approved by voice vote**.

Old Business

Brian moved to add to standing rule 330.40(2)d.

i. Each school will be allowed four judge strikes. The words "first year" will appear behind the name of each first year judge on the strike sheet.

with the subsequent subsections of 330.40(2)d renumbered accordingly.

and the motion was seconded. Tim Ernst offered a friendly amendment to change "school" to "team." The friendly amendment was accepted. The motion was then **approved by voice vote**.

New Business

Steve Goetsch addressed his concern about using coaches using their judges for getting information, indicating that he and probably other coaches do this all the time. He questioned why we have a rule against it. He also asked about our policy regarding student observes in rounds. He called for clearer rules about what is and is not allowed.

Mike expressed support for observers being allowed provided that debaters still active in the tournament be the exception to this. He pointed out that anything said in a round basically becomes public information right away.

Matt said it really makes no sense to try to restrict the sharing of information because it is not reasonable to expect that to happen.

Dave suggested the rule ought to be eliminated outright.

Ernest shared an experience in which an observer was seen always helping the two debaters he was shadowing, making the round essentially three against two. He pointed out that fairness needs to be as objective as much as education does. Steve Goetsch responded that this was a bad thing, but it was not the object of his expressed concerns.

Doris expressed that the issue is really one of intent. Talking about an observed round is one thing, but coaches sitting in rounds to scout is completely different.

Matt pointed out that scouting can lead to better research and better debating overall.

Zack Vrana acknowledged that scouting can be a dirty thing, as when judges share flows with students, but that it would not be a good thing to eliminate the educational opportunities that observing and subsequent discussing offers.

Rachel likened debate to sports and emphasized that the occurrence of scouting is not the issue, but rather good sportsmanship and good intent in how observation and discussion is done.

Ernest replied that scouting really just shows a fear of losing, and that he allows his students to observe when they are not debating only if it is going to serve an educational purpose.

Anton pointed out that people are gaining advantages mid-tournament, including going on the internet and sharing information learned in observed round.

Dave responded that the reality of how debate works has changed in the many years since these rules were adopted, and that adapting as information about other teams' strategies becomes available is now the reality. Steve Sexton pointed out that this is exactly what happens in sports. Tim E. agreed, saying it leads to a stronger debate community and stronger teams as debaters learn new things and then research them. He urged that our rules and their enforcement be clear, fair, and consistent.

Steve Goetsch moved to replace I. ~~During the course of a tournament, judges and observers shall not disclose specific information, flows, or evidence pertaining to any other teams in the tournament without the permission of the involved team(s).~~
Observers are allowed unless one of the teams objects.

The motion was seconded. Emily pointed out that this could lead to students sharing information electronically during or after a round. Tim S. responded that the paperless guidelines cover this.

Dave moved to substitute a simple elimination of Section I. The motion was seconded and **failed by a vote of 6-12-3.**

Steve S. moved to amend Steve Goetsch's amendment to read **Observers are allowed unless one of the teams objects. A coach of one of the teams may always observe.** The motion was seconded. Steve S.'s amendment **passed 18-0-2.**

Discussion resumed on the main motion as amended. Zack expressed concern that this was taking us away from making debate more open and visible to all as public speaking.

Nick clarified that this would only be binding only on the state tournament. Tournament directors could still run an open tournament format where outside observers are welcome.

Tim S. pointed out that this would allow debaters to ask all observers to leave even a state final round. Matt added that it could become a particular school's policy to always close rounds to certain other schools' observers.

Steve Goetsch responded that it is not fair to assume students would abuse this rule and that he does not anticipate that it will be used a lot. Shawn responded that it does happen more than some might think.

Dave withdrew his support of the amendment in light of Tim S.'s point about the final round of state.

Ernest suggested that this amendment would help when observers are abusing the privilege and when judges do nothing about it. He pointed out that this is the target of the need for this, not the final round of state. Mike expressed doubt that it would happen in the final round at state because of the red flags it would raise.

Zack expressed dislike for allowing this because it will become a strategic weapon.

Shawn expressed a concern that students will make this decision, but their coach will be the one considered at fault.

Matt pointed out that there is no way to register a complaint that sending observers out is being used strategically.

Doris called the question, and it was seconded. The **motion to call the question passed by voice vote.** The **main motion then passed 10-6-3.**

Mike moved to add to I: **Active participants cannot observe a round in their division.**

The motion was seconded.

Matt pointed out that watching teams you are going to compete against could be a legitimate way of prepping during a bye.

The motion **passed 10-3-4.**

Nick suggested we may want to adopt Georgia's novice packet, which is used by several southern states. There may be a cost, but it would bring us back to having a novice packet without all the practical difficulties of producing one.

In response to a question from Miloran, Nick explained that there would be no time commitment, and that the information is currently being put online for free, but that if we use it as an institution, we could offer a fair amount in support of Georgia's efforts. He pointed out that former coach Bill Batterman of Marquette is heading up this effort at Georgia.

Ernest suggested waiting until spring after seeing how things go this year.

Dave recommended going with the packet because of the high quality of Bill's work and that it would be worth paying for.

Nick responded that waiting until next year to do this was what he had in mind. He explained how Georgia does their roll-out, and that we could negotiate a plan with them for how we would get the packet.

Tim S. moved to table this issue until the spring meeting. The motion was seconded. There was **no objection to tabling.**

Ernest asked for clarification on texting by judges in rounds. He moved that the standing rules be amended to say that judges are not allowed to use electronics except for timing or flowing. The motion was seconded.

Matt expressed sympathy with Ernest's concerns but stressed that there is not an effective way to police this. David pointed out that problems can come up during a round that may require action, such as a debater getting sick.

Zack asked what will happen if a student accuses a judge of texting in round.

Nick pointed out that the market takes care of some of this because coaches may not rehire judges who are always using their electronic devices during rounds.

Ernest pointed out that it seems there are many excuses made for judges texting. He explained that there are ways of handling all situations without having to be texting in round.

Shawn responded that tab rooms need to have close communication with judges when necessary and that being able to text a judge can keep a tournament running smoothly.

Anton pointed out that while he is against adding this rule, he would at least want it to see such a restriction limited to speech time and not prep time.

Ernest recalled that before the advent of cell phones, communication was possible and tournaments were able to run effectively.

Matt questioned whether we should have a rule for every judge behavior someone does not like.

Miloran called the question and this was seconded. **The motion to call the question passed.**

The main motion failed on a voice vote.

Tim S. told us that St. Ambrose and Edgewood High Schools might combine to form a Madison Catholic debate team. Dave questioned what the policy would be for small public charter schools who want to combine, with their own districts' permission. Zack pointed out that if a joint team paid one membership fee, they would get one vote.

Brian pointed out that in the past, if both administrators and the WDCA all approve, we do allow such arrangements. Shawn expressed a sense of the Executive Board to continue this practice.

Tim S. moved to permit St. Ambrose and Edgewood to function a single team, pending administrator approval. The motion was seconded. It then **passed on a voice vote.**

Matt asked that the rule against recording rounds be amended to allow coaches to record their students' speeches with parental permission. Shawn suggested that Matt join Emily's committee to work on this.

There being no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 12:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Devine, WDCA Secretary