

NITOC 2013 Debate Format

Exciting changes are being planned for debate at NITOC 2013. There are three major driving forces necessitating this year's changes.

1. The first is that Parliamentary Debate is a NITOC event for 2013. The inclusion of Parli into the NITOC schedule requires some changes to the way in which Lincoln Douglas and Team Policy debate will be competed. Previously, LD and TP required 15 rounds of debate to complete the Double Elimination format. The addition of Parli means that there must be fewer rounds of LD and TP debate. The Stoa Board did not like the option of decreasing the break from Triple Octofinals to just Double Octofinals. Although this would allow fewer Double Elimination Outrounds, it would have occurred at the expense of not advancing some students/teams with 4-2 records. The Board desires that all students/teams with a 4-2 or better record should break at Nationals. Double Elimination Outrounds cannot be successfully run with partial breaks, so the bracket has been filled at previous NITOCs with a significant percentage of the 3-3 students/teams advancing. Experience at NITOC has shown that 3-3 students/teams can advance to finals and win the National Championship. These students/teams are excellent debaters; sometimes they are the best debaters. No one would argue that these students/teams were not deserving of their Championship Awards. So the Board has made the bold decision to adopt a new outround protocol that requires fewer debate rounds but advances all LD/TP students/teams with a 3-3 or better record to Outrounds at NITOC 2013!

2. The second driver of change is the community judge pool. The Triple Octofinal, Double Elimination format places a heavy strain on the judge numbers. Our previous NITOCs have enjoyed excellent support from community judges as these competitions have taken place in areas with a rich heritage of Christian homeschool forensics. Although Siloam Springs is welcoming us to their city with open arms, we will be introducing Christian homeschool forensics to the community for the first time. Since we don't know what the level of community involvement will be, we must plan accordingly. Therefore, we have implemented a debate format that utilizes fewer judges than our previous method.

3. The last factor which is driving this change is the need to simplify the outround tabulation process. As our numbers of competitors and events has grown, the workload placed on the Tab team has increased while the time available to do that work has tightened. Our previous Double Elimination outround protocol was very labor intensive, and a change was necessary in order to help keep NITOC on schedule and reduce the burden on Tab.

Consequently, for LD and TP debate, NITOC 2013 will be a Quadruple Elimination tournament! The Board believes this will meet the unique needs at this year's NITOC. Basically, a LD/TP student/team must lose four times before they are eliminated from this year's National Championship. The Board is confident that debaters and their families will embrace this exciting new format.

NITOC 2013 Lincoln Douglas/Team Policy Debate Tournament Protocol

- All students/teams will compete in six Preliminary debate rounds
 - Even those students/teams accumulating four losses will be assured six rounds of debate
 - There will be no announcements concerning records or Outround advancement during these six rounds
- **Prelim Rounds 1 and 2** will be Power Protected (using Speechranks data) and State Protected as has occurred at all previous NITOCs
 - Each student/team will debate one affirmative and one negative round
 - The exception being if the top seed is assigned a Bye
- **Prelim Rounds 3 through 6** will be Power-Matched - Hi/Lo within brackets (Win/Loss record)
 - This is the standard Power Matching used at all NITOCs and tournaments throughout the season
 - Aff/Neg side balance will continue
 - No State or Club protections apply
 - Prior opponent protection will apply
 - This means students/teams will not debate an opponent more than once during these first six rounds
- **Speaker Awards** are based on results from Prelim Rounds 1 – 6
 - Judges will continue to award Speaker Points and Speaker Ranks in Outrounds (Rounds 7 -10) for purposes of Power Matching these rounds
- After the six initial Prelim rounds all students/teams with a 3-3 or better record will advance to Outrounds
 - If the total number of students/teams with a 3-3 or better record is an odd number, then the highest ranked student/team with a 2-4 record will also advance to the next round, so that no Bye is given (This is explained in greater detail later in the protocol)
- **Outrounds - Rounds 7 through 10** will continue the same Power Matching as with prior rounds
 - No State or Club protections apply
 - A second prior opponent protection will apply
 - This means students/teams may debate a prior opponent a second time, but not a third time
 - If a prior opponent debate occurs, sides will be locked opposite of the first debate
 - All students/teams with three losses or less will continue competing through Round 10
 - Typically half of the students/teams with three losses will accumulate their fourth loss each round and will drop out of the tournament

- **Outrounds - Rounds 11, 12 and 13 will be Quarters, Semis and Finals**
 - The top 8 students/teams will advance to the Quarterfinal Round (Round 11)
 - This is regardless of the number of students/teams with three or less losses after Round 10
 - Breaks to Quarters will be determined first by Win/Loss record and then by an even blending of Stoa's usual tiebreaking methodologies of Speaker Points, Speaker Ranks, and Strength of Schedule
 - This is a superior means of breaking ties within the same Win/Loss record compared to the usual serial method of tiebreakers
 - No State or Club protections apply
 - If a student/team has a Win/Loss record superior to their opponent, the student/team with the superior record will be given the choice of sides (Aff/Neg) in the debate
 - This applies even if the student/teams have previously debated
 - This process helps level the playing field for those students/teams with superior records who now are at risk for tournament elimination without the benefit of an equivalent number of losses afforded to students/teams with inferior records
 - If a student/team has the same Win/Loss record as their opponent then:
 - If students/teams are meeting a second time, sides will be locked opposite of the first debate
 - If the students/teams are meeting for the first or third time, the debate will be flip for sides
 - Tab will specify if a student/team has a choice of sides
 - Win/Loss records will not be revealed until the Awards ceremony
 - The Quarterfinals seedings are as follows:
 - #1 vs. #8
 - #2 vs. #7
 - #3 vs. #6
 - #4 vs. #5
 - #1 and #2 will be in opposite brackets
 - #4 will be in the bracket with #1
 - # 3 will be in the bracket with #2
 - Students/teams will advance through their respective brackets
 - No re-seeding will occur
 - A loss during the Quarters, Semis or Finals eliminates a student/team from the tournament

- **Judges**

- Rounds 1 through 8 will be single paneled (one judge)
 - If enough community judges register, Rounds 7 and/or 8 will be triple paneled (three judges)
- Rounds 9 will be triple paneled (three judges) if at all possible
- Round 10 will be triple paneled (three judges)
- Quarterfinals will be paneled with at least 5 judges (odd number required)
- Semis will be paneled with at least 7 judges (odd number required)
- Finals will be paneled with at least 9 judges (odd number required)

- **Special Notes**

- **Note to students/teams with three losses**
 - There are compelling reasons to have these students/teams debate in Outrounds
 - Experience from previous NITOCs demonstrates that some of these students/teams are the best debaters in the tournament
 - There is the distinct possibility that some of these students/teams will compete for the National Championship
 - Mathematically there is the likelihood that 1, 2, or even 3, three-loss students/teams will advance to Quarters
 - There is no guarantee that any student/team with three losses will continue debating after the tenth round, as only the top 8 students/teams will advance to Quarterfinals
 - Most three-loss teams will finish their competition with the completion of the tenth round
 - The three-loss students/teams are all debating for their final place of finish at NITOC
 - It is definitely preferable to have students/teams debate to determine their place of finish at Nationals
 - This is superior to the computer figuring out where students/teams finish
 - These students/teams are afforded extra debates at Nationals against some of the best debate competition in the country

- **Preventing Byes in Outrounds - Rounds 7 through 10**
 - An even number of students/teams are needed in Rounds 7 through 10 to prevent Byes
 - There is no way to fairly allow one student/team to have a Bye during these Outrounds
 - In the event that there are an odd number of three-loss or better students/teams, the top four-loss student/team will be included in the following debate round
 - There are compelling reasons to advance this one student/team
 - It allows for the necessary even number of debate students/teams
 - The student/team has the opportunity to advance their place of finish at Nationals
 - If they win their debate round they will be assigned the better record that they have attained
 - As top student/team in the four-loss bracket, they will have better tiebreakers than the lower students/teams in the three-loss bracket above
 - This means they will place higher in the final standings
 - The top four-loss student/team will continue to compete in each round in which a student/team is needed to even the brackets
 - These students/teams are afforded extra debates at Nationals against some of the best debate competition in the country

NITOC 2013 Parliamentary Debate Tournament Protocol

- All teams will compete in six Preliminary debate rounds
- **Prelim Rounds 1 and 2** will be Power Protected (using Speechranks data) and State Protected as has occurred at all previous NITOCs in LD and TP debate
 - Each team will debate one Government and one Opposition round
 - The exception being if the top seed is assigned a Bye
- **Prelim Rounds 3 through 6** will be Power-Matched - Hi/Lo within brackets (Win/Loss record)
 - This is the standard Power Matching used at all NITOCs and tournaments throughout the season
 - Gov/Opp side balance will continue
 - No State or Club protections apply
 - Prior opponent protection will apply
 - This means teams will not debate an opponent more than once during these first six rounds
- **Speaker Awards** are based on results from Prelim Rounds 1 – 6
- **Outrounds - Rounds 7, 8 and 9 will be Quarters, Semis and Finals**
 - The top 8 teams will advance to the Quarterfinal Round (Round 7)
 - Breaks to Quarters will be determined first by Win/Loss record and then by an even blending of Stoa's usual tiebreaking methodologies of Speaker Points, Speaker Ranks, and Strength of Schedule
 - This is a superior means of breaking ties within the same Win/Loss record compared to the usual serial method of tiebreakers
 - No State or Club protections apply
 - If a team has a Win/Loss record superior to their opponent, the team with the superior record will be given the choice of sides (Gov/Opp) in the debate
 - This applies even if the teams have previously debated
 - This process helps level the playing field for those teams with superior records who now are at risk for tournament elimination without the benefit of an equivalent number of losses afforded to teams with inferior records
 - If a team has the same Win/Loss record as their opponent then:
 - If teams are meeting a second time, sides will be locked opposite of the first debate
 - If the teams are meeting for the first time, the debate will be flip for sides
 - Tab will specify if a team has a choice of sides
 - Win/Loss records will not be revealed until the Awards ceremony

- The Quarterfinals seedings are as follows:
 - #1 vs. #8
 - #2 vs. #7
 - #3 vs. #6
 - #4 vs. #5
 - #1 and #2 will be in opposite brackets
 - #4 will be in the bracket with #1
 - #3 will be in the bracket with #2
 - Teams will advance through their respective brackets
 - No re-seeding will occur
 - A loss during the Quarters, Semis or Finals eliminates a team from the tournament
- **Judges**
 - Rounds 1 through 6 will be single paneled (one judge)
 - Quarterfinals will be paneled with at least 3 judges (odd number required)
 - Semis will be paneled with at least 5 judges (odd number required)
 - Finals will be paneled with at least 7 judges (odd number required)

The preceding protocols will be performed to the best of Tab's ability. No guarantee is made to any student/team that every procedure described above will be followed without exception. Circumstances may arise that require some small deviation from the protocol. Any changes will be made openly and with transparency.