JUDGES INSTRUCTIONS

Impartial judging in all contests is the key to fairness and success of the Oratorical Contest program which results in the selection of a National Champion.

Each contest shall have five judges who shall reach a combined decision, with each judge having equal involvement in determining the contest placing. Judges will be seated in different locations (areas) in the auditorium and each judge shall render his final decision without consultation with other judges or individuals.

The contest is conducted in two phases. The contestants will all appear a first time to present their prepared orations and then appear a second time for their assigned topic. This allows the judges an opportunity to re-evaluate and reconsider “first impressions” and compare each speaker with the others.

Pencils with erasers will be provided and should be used to make the initial entries on the scorecards. Following conclusion of the assigned topic presentations, the pencil entries should be covered in ink.

Judges should carefully study and possess a thorough understanding of the scorecard and scoring system. This is to include all areas under, and including (A) Content, and (B) Speaking Skills, on the scorecard. A judge having any questions concerning the scoring system should consult with the contest chairman prior to the contest.

As a guideline, judges are encouraged to award to their top choice (speaker) approximately 90 points with others proportionally lower. This is particularly important should a tie exist in the record-of-choice totals.

Lack of emphasis in the prepared oration and the assigned topic on the attendant duties and obligations of a citizen must result in the judges downgrading the contestant involved. Judges may downgrade a contestant up to a total of ten points for failure to speak on the Constitution. The individual conducting the contest will announce any violation of time for each contestant. A penalty of one point for each minute, or fraction thereof, shall be assessed against the contestant’s total score.

The judges, tabulators and timers, following the last assigned topic, shall, if directed by the contest chairman, proceed to a private room for final review of scorecards and the tabulation process.

Each judge shall insert the total number of points credited to the contestant and also insert in the record-of-choice column his choice of placement for each contestant in accordance with the highest total point scores. If a tie exists in the total point scores on a judge’s scorecard, the judge must make adjustments in his scoring of the tied contestants so that no two contestants have the same total point score. This will enable the judge to rank one contestant above the other in the record-of-choice column.

Judges shall refrain from discussing any phase of the contest or their judging methods with contestants, coaches, escorts or others, except the contest chairman, following the contest. Chairmen and tabulators are not permitted to divulge the judge's scorecard at the site of the contest. Persons interested in the scoring for professional reasons may, upon written request, be mailed at a later date copies of the scores with the names of the judges omitted.
It is suggested that prior to the contest, each judge should carefully study the point scoring system in relation to the factors to be considered during the presentation of the prepared oration and the "assigned topic" discussion by each contestant, namely, content of oration and speaking skills. Listed below you will find items which should be given attention in specific areas. (See listing of point values on official Score Card.)

A. CONTENT
1. Originality, freshness, directness, applies knowledge on topic.
   Is there an original and fresh approach to the topic?
   Does it relate directly to the subject?
   Is information applied to aspects of the subject?
   Does the information flow directly to the audience?
   Does the speaker stay on the topic?
   Does the "assigned topic" discourse appear to be "canned"?
2. Skill in selecting examples, description, analogies, specific data
   Are examples applicable?
   Do the illustrations appear as an "axe to grind" not exactly related to the subject?
   Is adequate information provided on examples or descriptions to inform the audience fully on the points?
   Is proper credit given to quotations or subject matter borrowed from authorities?
3. Logic (Correctness of inference)
   Are illustrations supported by logic or facts?
   Are conclusions properly drawn?
   Are there inconsistencies in the use of an application of the logic?
   Are inferences made without proper support or logic?
4. Comprehensiveness of knowledge; knows subject matter.
   Is plagiarism involved?
   Does the speaker show a broad grasp of the subject?
   Does the overall speech effectively demonstrate comprehensiveness and unity of thought or thoughts?
   Is the topic significant when viewed as a whole?
   Does the overall impression outweigh the component parts?
   Does the "assigned topic" discourse appear to be memorized to the point where its discussion value is lost?
   Is the total speaking information and educational for the audience?
   Is an overall humbleness (or respect) evident in both the prepared and "assigned topic" speeches?

B. SPEAKING SKILLS
1. Voice and Diction
   Does the voice use detract from the content? Pitch?
   Nasal quality?
   Is proper inflection utilized?
   Does the speaker use the proper volume for the physical conditions which surround him?
   Do the words and sentences run together? Articulation?
   Are there errors in pronunciation?
2. Style: Language use, word arrangement, transition, word selection
   Is the language use appropriate?
   Are the sentences succinct?
Are the sentences involved to the point that immediate interpretation is not easy? Grammar?
Does the speaker get lost with many extraneous clauses or phrases?
Are the words easily identifiable for meanings? Do they fit?
Is sentence and paragraph transition smooth and continuous?
Is there a proper introduction, a main body of the speech and a summary or conclusion.

3. Body Action: Poise, eye contact, posture, gestures
Is the speaker at ease?
Does the speaker have eye contact with all of the audience so that he appears to be speaking to all of them?
Is his posture of an alert nature?
Do his movements and gestures enhance or detract from the content and deliver?
Is the speaker too dramatic?
Does the speaker's body action and delivery give the appearance of cockiness or "know-it-all" attitude?

Be sure also to note this provision of the rules, "LACK OF EMPHASIS IN THE PREPARED ORATION AND THE "ASSIGNED TOPIC" DISCUSSION ON THE ATTENDANT DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS OF A CITIZEN MUST RESULT ON THE JUDGES DOWGRADING THE CONTESTANT INVOLVED IF THEY SUSPECT PARTS OF THEIR "ASSIGNED TOPIC" DISCOURSE HAVE BEEN MEMORIZED."

C. OFFICIAL JUDGING OF SCORE CARD

1. The method of judging and scoring and the point values indicated on the Score Card were devised especially for this contest.
2. These were devised to provide judges with criteria to select fairly and adequately the best contestant of the contest.
3. To attain this objective, judges must become familiar with all factors involved.

Quotations are to be indicated as such, and if the quotations are more than ten(10) words in length, the name of the author must be given. The penalty for plagiarism is disqualification.

At the close of the contest, judges should be sure to fill out the Score Card completely in accordance with the contest rules, total all columns and affix signatures.

Tabulators will collect Score Cards from judges at the close of the contest and tabulate the results under the supervision of the Chairman.

At the proper time, in accordance with contest rules, the Chairman, or his representative, will announce the results of the contest and introduce the judges to the contestants and audience.

JUDGES ARE REQUESTED NOT TO DISCUSS ANY PHASE OF THE CONTEST OR THEIR JUDGING METHODS WITH CONTESTANTS, COACHES, ESCORTS OR OTHERS OUTSIDE OF THE CHAIRMAN FOLLOWING THE CONTEST. Previous experience has proven this to be an unwise practice and usually results in criticism of judges.

Chairmen and tabulators are not permitted to divulge the judge's Score Cards at the site of the contest. Persons interested in the scoring for professional reasons may, upon written request, be mailed at a later date copies of the scores with the name of the judges omitted.