

## **BRIEFING THE JUDGES, TIMERS, COUNTERS**

The purpose of this document is to guide the Chief Judge through the steps for briefing the judges, timers and counters.

If you are conducting the briefing, review this document prior to the contest and be sure you are comfortable with all the information.

This document includes the following sections:

- Preparation
- Tiebreaker Judge Briefing
- Assemble the Judges, Timers and Counters
- Timers Briefing
- Counters Briefing
- Voting Judges Briefing
- Counters Briefing (Pre-Ballot Counting)
- Chief Judge Contest Checklist

### **PREPARATION**

Confirm the following with the Contest Chair:

1. The location of a private room where the briefings can take place.
2. The location of a private room where the ballots can be counted.
3. The location of the speaking area.
4. The location where contestants will be seated (usually at the front of the room, so the judges can be sure to sit separately.)

Bring the following items to the briefing:

1. A copy of this “Briefing the Judges, Timers, Counters” script.
2. Forms in a folder prepared for each judge. (These forms may be provided by the Contest Chair. Before arriving at the contest, communicate with the Contest Chair to clarify who will bring the folders and forms.

Each folder must contain the necessary Judges Guides and Ballots: one ballot per contest:

- International Speech (Form 1172)
- Table Topics (Form 1180)
- Humorous Speech (Form 1191)
- Evaluation (Form 1179)
- Tall Tales (Form 1181)

3. Forms in a folder prepared for the tiebreaker judge.
  - International Speech (Form 1188)
  - Table Topics (Form 1180A)
  - Humorous Speech (Form 1191A)
  - Evaluation (Form 1179A)
  - Tall Tales (Form 1181A)
4. Blank Judge's Certification of Eligibility forms (Form 1170)
5. A copy of the Speech Contest Rulebook (Form 1171)
6. Notification of Contest Winners forms (Form 1182), one per contest
7. Counter's Tally Sheets (Form 1176), three per contest
8. Time Record Sheets (Form 1175), one per contest
9. Results form (Form 1168), one per contest
10. A list of all the contest officials and their contest information
11. Extra pens

#### TIEBREAKER JUDGE BRIEFING

The Tiebreaker Judge must be briefed separately from the other contest officials. Aside from the Chief Judge, no one should know who the Tiebreaker Judge is.

1. Give a folder to the Tiebreaker Judge with the necessary forms.
2. Collect a signed Judge's Certification of Eligibility form (Form 1170) from the Tiebreaker Judge.
3. Instruct the Tiebreaker Judge to rank each contestant in order. For example, if there are 10 contestants, the Tiebreaker Judge must rank each contestant in 1st place through 10th place.
4. Review the remaining items in the Judges Briefing section of this document with the Tiebreaker Judge.
5. Ask if there are any questions or if anything needs to be clarified.

#### ASSEMBLE THE JUDGES, TIMERS AND COUNTERS

1. Assemble the judges, timers and counters together in a private room.
2. Confirm the contest officials on your list are in attendance.
3. Do not delay the briefing if any contest officials are late. Replace absent contest officials with other qualified members.

Each contest must have the following:

- a. Two (2) timers for Club, Area and Division
- b. Ballot counters
  - i. Three (3) ballot counters for District contests

- ii. Two (2) ballot counters for Club, Area and Division contests
- c. The number of judges required varies depending on the contest level:
  - i. Club: At least five (5) judges
  - ii. Area: At least five (5) judges
  - iii. Division: At least (7) seven judges. NOTE: The chief judge, voting judge or tiebreaking judge must not be a member of any club in which a contestant is a member.
  - iv. District: At least (7) seven judges. NOTE: The chief judge, voting judge or tiebreaking judge must not be a member of any club in which a contestant is a member.
- 4. There may be exceptions to each of the above. Reference the Speech Contest Rulebook, Section 5.A for details.

#### **TIMERS BRIEFING**

- 1. Instruct the timers they will be briefed first so they can attend the contestant briefing.
- 2. Select one timer to record the speech times and one timer to display the timing signals.
- 3. Ensure the timers have a stopwatch and a backup timing device.
  - a. If timing lights are used, instruct the timers to have timing cards available as backup in case the timing lights malfunction.
- 4. Instruct the timers the timing lights or cards, if used, must be in full view of each contestant.
- 5. Instruct the timer with the timing device:
  - a. Maintain a written record of the elapsed time of each speech on the Time Record Sheet (Item 1175). This is the official time.
  - b. If a stopwatch is used, know how to stop, start and reset the time on the device.
  - c. If a smart phone is used, place the phone in airplane mode to ensure timing is not interrupted.
  - d. Use one Time Record Sheet per speech contest.
- 6. Instruct the timer who will be displaying the timing lights or cards:
  - a. Test the timing lights prior to each contest to ensure they are working properly.
  - b. Ensure contestants can see an accurate green, yellow or red signal at the appropriate times during the speech.
  - c. You must display green, yellow and red signals at the following times:
    - i. International: Green at 5 min; Yellow at 6 min; Red at 7 min.
    - ii. Table Topics: Green at 1 min; Yellow at 1:30 min; Red at 2 min.
    - iii. Evaluation: Green at 2 min; Yellow at 2:30 min; Red at 3 min.
    - iv. Humorous: Green at 5 min; Yellow at 6 min; Red at 7 min.
  - d. Keep the green signal displayed until it is time to display the yellow signal.

- e. Keep the yellow signal displayed until it is time to display the red signal.
- f. Keep the red signal displayed until the speaker has concluded his/her speech.
- g. Do not give any indication a contestant has exceeded his/her time.
- h. Record the speech time in case of a failure with the first timer's device.

7. Inform the timers the Contest Toastmaster will ask for one minute of silence between contestant speeches.

- a. Instruct the timers to determine:
  - i. Who will time the minute of silence
  - ii. Who will notify the Contest Toastmaster
  - iii. How the notification will be given (raised hand, green light/card, etc.)

8. Inform the timers that after the last contestant has finished and as the judges are completing their ballots, I will come by and collect the Timer Record Sheet. Report any problems with timing the speeches to me when I collect the Timer Record Sheet.

9. Ask if there are any questions or if anything needs to be clarified.

10. Release timers to attend the contestant's briefing.

#### COUNTERS BRIEFING

1. Review the process for collecting the ballots from the voting judges.
  - a. At the end of the contests, the voting judges will raise their ballots for collection.
  - b. Space yourselves around the room and collect the ballots from the voting judges.
  - c. We will coordinate to collect ## ballots (## = the number of voting judges).
  - d. When all the ballots are collected, hand them to the Chief Judge.
  - e. We will leave the room to count the ballots.
  - f. Are there any questions regarding the process for collecting ballots?
2. Review the process for counting the ballots.
  - a. Show the ballot counters the Counter's Tally Sheet (Form 1176).
  - b. Inform the counters that after the contest, we will leave the room and complete the tally sheets to determine the contest winners. Instructions for counting the ballots will be given at that time.
3. Any questions?

#### VOTING JUDGES BRIEFING

1. Give a folder to each judge with the necessary forms.
2. Collect a signed Judge's Certification of Eligibility form (Form 1170) from each judge.
3. Instruct judges to remain anonymous and not tell anyone about their role as a judge, other than the officials in this contest.
4. Describe the speaking area.
5. Review the Speech Contest Ballots:

- a. Instruct the judges their ballots will only be counted if they include their printed name and signature on every ballot. Ask the judges to sign their ballots now.
  - b. Instruct the judges they must select winners (1st, 2nd, and 3rd).
  - c. Explain the Judging Criteria listed on the ballot is the only criteria to be used in judging the contestants. Past contest performance, Toastmasters experience, norms from a specific club, speaker position (first/last versus middle) or any factors aside from the criteria listed should not be considered.
  - d. Ask the judges if they have any questions about the judging criteria.
  - e. Identify the Code of Ethics on the back of the ballot.
  - f. Ask the judges if they have any questions about the ballots.
6. Ensure judges understand the procedure to be followed during the contest:
  - a. Judges should not sit next to a contestant.
  - b. After the Contest Toastmaster announces the speaking order, write the contestant names across the top of the ballot.
  - c. At the conclusion of a speech, you will be given one minute of silence to score the contestant based on each criterion, then add up the scores.
  - d. After the last speech, the Contest Toastmaster will ask for silence to allow you to score the last contestant and to write down your 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners in the Ballot section of your ballot. No ties – break your own ties as promptly as you can.
  - e. You are not required to award placement based on your numerical scores.
  - f. Separate the Judge's Official Ballot from the bottom of the ballot form. Place completed ballot in the envelope and hand to a ballot counter.
7. Ensure judges understand the procedure to be followed after the contest:
  - a. Do not discuss your notes or decisions with anyone.
  - b. Destroy the top part of the Judge's Guide and Ballot after the contest. **Do not** throw away within the contest location.
  - c. Please refrain from public criticism of the contest.
8. Ensure judges understand the protest process:
  - a. Judges can protest based on eligibility, originality or a contestant referencing another contestant or another contestant's speech during their speech at the same contest in which they are competing. Quoted material may be used but it must be identified.
  - b. If a contestant does not give credit to quoted sources, this is grounds for protest.
  - c. If a speech is more than 25% non-original AND credit is given to the source, this is grounds for a protest.
  - d. Protests must be lodged prior to the announcement of winners. Write PROTEST clearly on your ballot slip and envelope before handing it to a Ballot Counter.

- e. The Chief Judge will convene a protest hearing:
  - i. Before a contestant can be disqualified on the basis of originality or referencing another contestant's speech during the contest, the contestant must be given an opportunity to respond to the voting judges.
  - ii. After the protested contestant makes his/her case, the voting judges will discuss and vote. A majority of the voting judges must agree with the decision to disqualify. The decisions of the judges are final.
- f. The Contest Chair shall notify the contestant of a disqualification regarding originality or eligibility prior to the announcement the meeting is adjourned.

9. Ask if there are any questions or if anything needs to be clarified.

#### COUNTERS BRIEFING (Pre-Ballot Counting)

1. Inform the counters per Toastmaster International rules, all ballots and voting results are confidential and should not be discussed with anyone.
2. Check if ballots are signed. Discard any unsigned ballots.
3. Check if ballots have contestants ranked ordered; if not, discard.
4. Review the timer record sheet and notify the counters of any time disqualifications.
5. The ballot counters will write the names of the contestants across the top of their Counter's Tally Sheet.
6. The Chief Judge will read the name of each judge; the ballot counters will write their names on the left side of the form.
7. The Chief Judge will read each judge's vote:
  - a. The ballot counters will write the appropriate number of points given by each judge under each contestant's name.
    - i. 1st place receives 3 points.
    - ii. 2nd place received 2 points.
    - iii. 3rd place receives 1 point.
8. Each counter will calculate the score for each contestant.
9. When all the Counter's Tally Sheets are complete, compare all scores to be sure they are the same. If not, resolve the discrepancies.
10. If any contestant(s), who have been disqualified, are among the highest ranked, remove them and identify the top three qualifying contestants.
11. If there is a tie for any of the top three positions, the ranking on the Tiebreaker Judge's ballot will be used to break the tie.
  - a. For example, if there is a tie for second place, then second place will be awarded to the tied contestant that is highest ranked on the tie-breaker judge's ballot.
  - b. NOTE: If there are no ties, the Tiebreaker Judge's votes must not be counted.

12. Confirm all counting discrepancies are resolved and all ties are broken.
13. Identify the winners and write down the order of finish on the Counter's Tally Sheet.  
Note the order of finish on the form.
14. The Chief Judge will collect all forms from the counters and destroy them after the contest.

#### **CHIEF JUDGE CONTEST CHECKLIST**

While the contest is in progress, the Chief Judge is responsible for communicating with the Contest Toastmaster, Counters, Timers and the Judges (in the event of a protest).

Chief Judge's specific responsibilities during the contest:

- Prepare to announce "The contest officials have been briefed and the contest can proceed" when called upon by the Contest Toastmaster at the start of the contest.
- For each contest type, if any arise, resolve any eligibility protests, originality protests or referencing another contestant or speech by another contestant at the same contest in which they are competing protests.
- Immediately after each contest type,
  - Collect the Time Record Sheets from the Timers.
  - Collect the Tiebreaker Judge ballot.
- After all contests have completed, adjourn to a private room with the counters to count the ballots.
- Oversee the ballot counting process. Ensure all ballots are counted twice to ensure accuracy.
- Once ballot counting is finished, complete the Results Form (Form 1168) for each contest and give the forms to the Contest Toastmaster.
- If the Contest Toastmaster announces incorrect winners, immediately interrupt the announcement and approach the Contest Toastmaster to clarify the correct winners.
- Ensure the Notification of Contest Winner form (Form 1182) is completed. List all the contestants in rank order. Sign the form and pass to the next level:
  - If club contest, pass to Area Director.
  - If Area contest, pass to Division Director.
  - If Division contest, pass to District Chief Judge.