

Tabulation Advisory Committee ORCS Pairing Proposal

At the 2019 annual meeting, the board of directors passed TFC-03:

Motion by Bernstein that, at ORCS, AMTA will use the following pairing system designed to equalize strength of schedule: Teams will be divided by TPR into four groups: Groups A (teams ranked 1-6), B (7-12), C (13-18), and D (19-24). Each team will face exactly one team from each of the four groups. The Tabulation Advisory Committee is directed to create a detailed implementation of this policy for the Board's consideration at the 2019 mid-year meeting.

This is the implementation policy for the Board's consideration at the 2019 mid-year meeting.

Before the Start of the Tournament

Before the start of each ORCS, AMTA shall divide all 24 teams into four groups of six teams. Assignment will be based on the most recent Team Performance Rankings. Group A will include the six highest-ranked teams; Group B will include teams ranked 7-12; Group C will include teams ranked 13-18; and Group D will include teams ranked 19-24.

If teams are tied in TPR such that it would affect group placement, ties shall be broken using results from the current year's regional tournaments. Tiebreakers, in order of application, are (1) ballots won, (2) combined strength (greater sum is better), (3) opponents' combined strength (greater sum is better), and (4) total point differential (greater positive differential is better). If teams remain tied, a coin flip will break the tie.

Because this pairing system is designed to equalize strength of schedule for teams in each group, schools gain no advantage by mislabeling their stronger team. Nonetheless, because such mislabeling can affect schedule equality for other teams, all schools advancing multiple teams to ORCS are required to honestly identify their stronger team (regardless of whether the school sends its teams to the same ORCS). Schools may seek AMTA guidance when doing so, and AMTA has authority to change the A/B designation given to each team from a school.

Pairing Round 1

Round 1 pairings must occur in public, typically at the opening ceremony (pairings of later rounds will occur in the tabroom).

In Round 1, teams in Group A will face teams in Group D, and teams in Group B will face teams in Group C.

All teams in Groups A and B will represent one party (all Prosecution, or all Defense), and all teams in Groups C and D will represent the other party. For example, if Group A teams are

Prosecution, then Group B teams are Prosecution, and Group C and D teams are Defense. Party representation will be determined randomly, e.g., by coin flip. (Note: All references to “Prosecution” shall refer to “Plaintiff” in civil cases.)

Otherwise, Round 1 pairing procedures at ORCS are identical to those at Regionals (e.g., the same-school matchup constraint remains in effect).

Pairing Round 2

In Round 2, teams in Group A will face teams in Group C, and teams in Group B will face teams in Group D.

Otherwise, Round 2 pairing procedures at ORCS are identical to those at Regionals (e.g., high-high pairing, same-school matchup constraint, flip sides from Round 1, etc.).

Pairing Round 3

In Round 3, each team will face another from its group (i.e., Group D teams will face teams in Group D). Pairing will be high-high, and cards will be placed using a “snake” order:

A1 v. A2

A4 v. A3

A5 v. A6

B2 v. B1

B3 v. B4

B6 v. B5

C1 v. C2

C4 v. C3

C5 v. C6

D2 v. D1

D3 v. D4

D6 v. D5

Impermissibles (same school matchups) will be resolved in the same fashion as at Regionals, though swaps and matchups must remain within-group (e.g., A6 cannot swap with B1). Sides will be determined via coinflip: if heads, all teams on the left (A1, B2, etc.) will represent Prosecution; if tails, all teams on the right (A2, B1, etc.) will represent Prosecution.

Pairing Round 4

In Round 4, teams in Group A will face teams in Group B, and teams in Group C will face teams in Group D. Pairing will be high-high, subject to same-school matchup constraints and the requirement that each team represent a different party in Round 4 than it did in Round 3.

Determining Placement for Bids

After Round 4, teams will be ranked using the same criteria used at Regionals (and previously used at ORCS).

Further detail and next steps

Upon passage of the above procedures, the tabulation director, with support from the tabulation advisory committee, will update the tabulation manual to reflect these procedures. In addition, the tabulation manual will include instructions on team withdrawals and byebusters, judge assignments, and other issues that might be impacted by this revised ORCS pairing system.