

# American Mock Trial Association Tabulation Manual      July 2021 Revision

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## Foreword

In AMTA's earliest days, AMTA's tabulation rules were created by its first National Tabulation Director, Brad Bloch. As AMTA and interest in its tabulation procedures grew, the rules were formalized and Mr. Bloch created this Manual. The Manual has been revised and edited over the years by those who have served as Tabulation Director: Bradley Bloch, David Nelmark, Kristofer Lyons, Johnathan Woodward, and Diane Michalak.

We wish to stress that there is no need for coaches, participants, or hosts to memorize the procedures contained in the Manual. Reading the Manual is helpful to understand what goes on "under the hood" at AMTA tournaments, but it is not critical to successful performance in a trial.

You will see from this Manual the various procedures in place to ensure fairness and accuracy. However, AMTA still encourages each team to send a representative to the Tab Room to check the results at the end Rounds 1 through 3, and to check results during the 30 minute review period following the awards ceremony. This provides a valuable triple (or quadruple) check on AMTA's tabulation.

Do not be concerned if the procedures in this Manual seem difficult to grasp on paper. It is much easier to understand the procedures once you see them in practice in a Tab Room. At most tournaments, you will be able to find someone to explain the procedures to you either during or just after they occur.

Questions about the Manual should be directed to Tabulation Director Diane Michalak, by email to [amta.tab@collegemocktrial.org](mailto:amta.tab@collegemocktrial.org).

During a tournament, questions about tabulation must be directed to the on-site AMTA Representatives. If disagreements or questions arise, the AMTA Representatives are directed to immediately contact the Tabulation Director for guidance.

## Overview

The Manual is official AMTA policy, and is incorporated by reference into the AMTA Rules. If the procedures described in the Manual conflict with any other rule or policy, the Manual controls on all issues related to tabulating ballots, scoring, and/or breaking ties.

It is crucial that you have the most current version of the Manual, as tabulation procedures are subject to more-or-less constant tweaks and changes. Typically, the Manual is released twice a year: once in the late summer/early fall, to reflect changes made by the AMTA Board at its summer meeting, and once around the holidays, to reflect changes made by the AMTA Board at its mid-year meeting, usually held in November or December.

AMTA Rules require that any concerns or disputes during a sanctioned tournament must be timely raised to one of the on-site AMTA Representatives. The AMTA Rules set forth an appellate process for certain rulings. Teams should carefully read Chapter 9 of the AMTA Rules to understand that process.

The AMTA Representatives assigned to sanctioned tournaments have no authority to ignore or overrule the procedures set forth in the Manual, even when they appear to produce an undesirable result. AMTA's Board of Directors has had a full analysis of advantages and disadvantages of different procedural options. It is also imperative from a fairness perspective that all Tab Rooms at all sanctioned tournaments follow identical procedures.

## Summary of Changes

The following changes have been made to this version of the Manual:

1. The method of side selection for the Championship Final Round has been changed.

## General Tab Room Rules

The Tabulation Room (or Tab Room) is the nerve center for any mock trial tournament. As its name implies, it is where ballots are tabulated at the end of each round.

When the Tab Room is open, one representative from each team is allowed to be inside the Tab Room. When the Tab Room is closed, only the AMTA Representatives and any individuals they have designated to assist them may be in the room.

The Tab Room must be closed once the first Round 4 ballot is received until the end of the awards ceremony. Otherwise, the AMTA Representatives should keep the Tab Room open as much as possible. However, the AMTA Representatives may, in their discretion, close the Tabulation Room during tabulation of ballots or the initial pairings if they find that such closing limits their distractions. The AMTA Representatives may also exclude specific individuals from the Tab Room if those individuals fail to follow instructions regarding matters such as remaining quiet during tabulation and pairing.

If a team has a coach with them at a tournament, one of the coaches may serve as the team's representative in the Tab Room. If and only if a team has no coach with them at a tournament, one of the students may serve as the team's representative in the Tab Room.

Each team's representative may enter the Tab Room at any time it is open to review the Pairing Cards and the team's own ballot envelope. At a convenient time, the team's representative may request of the AMTA Representatives to look at the original copy of any team's blue (scoring) ballots. However, a team's representative may never look inside another team's ballot envelope.

Each team representative has an obligation to report any suspected error to the AMTA Representatives, even if the suspected error does not concern the team being represented. Any and all suspected errors must be pointed out.

### **30 Minute Review Period**

After Rounds 1, 2, and 3, the AMTA Representatives will determine the pairings for Rounds 2, 3, and 4, respectively. Once the pairings have concluded, a 30 minute review period takes place. If a round takes place late in the evening, the AMTA Representatives have the option to hold the 30 minute review period for 30 minutes immediately prior to the following morning's Captains' Meeting. This is the time for each team's representative, described above, to review their team's ballots (for accurate tabulation) and their team's Pairing Card (for accurate transcription of the tabulation information, and accurate pairing). Perhaps most importantly, this is a time when students and coaches are encouraged to ask the AMTA Representatives questions about how the process works.

AMTA Representatives have the discretion to correct errors, including those in pairing, tabulation, or recording, provided that such errors can be corrected without undue tournament schedule disruption. Record errors shall be corrected if discovered within the 30-minute review period for each round. Pairing errors discovered within the 30-minute review period shall be corrected if such correction can be made without undue tournament schedule disruption. In making this decision, the AMTA Representatives should bear in mind the timing of the discovery of the error, the need to keep the tournament on schedule, and the degree of difficulty of correcting the error. The AMTA Representatives shall not correct any errors discovered after the expiration of the 30-minute review period unless pairings can be redone without undue tournament schedule disruption.

Any errors not raised during the 30-minute review period shall not be solely sufficient grounds for awarding an Act of AMTA bid.

The next round may start before the 30-minute review period is over. If a complaint is raised within the 30-minute period following the finalization of the next round's pairings, it will be deemed timely even if the next round has started.

Complaints regarding a tournament's final round must be made within 30 minutes following the distribution of the ballots at the close of the awards ceremony. If a complaint is raised within the appropriate 30-minute period it shall be deemed timely even if the issue is not resolved within the 30-minute period.

In all cases, issues must be voiced to one of the AMTA Representatives. Talking to a tournament host, judge, or another AMTA Director is not sufficient.

## Procedure for Checking-In Ballots

Before a ballot can be tabulated, it must first (of course!) arrive to the Tab Room. Checking these ballots immediately is a critical step in ensuring a trouble-free tournament.

During each round, one person should be responsible for checking each ballot as it arrives to the Tabulation Room. This person should first check each ballot to ensure:

- a. All 28 numerical scores are filled in. Be sure to check the closing argument scores, which are most commonly forgotten;
- b. All 28 numerical scores are legible;
- c. All eight individual attorney and witness rankings are completed.

If any there is any issue with any of the above three items, the ballot checker should use a highlighter to indicate the missing or illegible item(s), and instruct the runners to immediately return the ballot in question to the judge, with direction to complete or clarify the highlighted items.

If any score is listed as “zero,” the Tab Room should verify with the judges whether that function of the trial actually occurred. When part of a trial actually occurs, the lowest possible score is 1.

Generally, the ballot checker need not consult with the AMTA Representatives regarding legibility of numerical scores. In other words, if the ballot checker thinks a numerical score is illegible, it is likely others will as well. The best course of action is to send the ballot back to the judge without further delay, so that the issue may be resolved before the judge leaves the tournament site.

Frequently, judges will not circle “P” and “D” after the attorney and witness names, and/or use character names in the witness section. Neither error is cause to send a ballot back to the judge. The AMTA Representatives may direct the ballot checker to ask the student runners to help complete this information at the Tab Room door. When doing so, the ballot checker should randomize the order of the names so as to not indicate the order of the rankings to the students. Alternatively, the AMTA Representatives may simply wish to refer to the white comment ballots at a later time to correct or supplement this information.

The ballot checker should also assist the AMTA Representatives with tracking which trials have returned ballots to the Tab Room. As the All-Loss Time approaches, a AMTA Representative or designee must go to the trial rooms of those trials where an intervention has been properly requested, pursuant to Rule 4.33(5)(b). Returning a timely submitted ballot to a judge after submission does not trigger any All-Loss

penalty. The AMTA Representatives should carefully read Rule 4.33 for the procedures involved with the All-Loss Rule.

### **Procedure for Tabulating Ballots**

Each ballot must be tabulated to determine the differential between the total points earned by the Plaintiff/Prosecution team and the total points earned by the Defense team. The team with the superior point differential wins the ballot. If each team earns the same number of points, the ballot is tied, which counts as  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a win for each team.

Before tabulating a ballot, the AMTA Representatives should ensure that the team numbers and plaintiff/defense sides match the information recorded as to that round's pairings. Any discrepancies or ambiguities with respect to the team numbers or which side of the case each team portrayed should be resolved prior to tabulation and pairing.

The rules for determining the point differential are as follows:

1. Only whole numbers from 1 through 10 shall be counted. Ignore any and all plus signs, minus signs, fractions, and any numbers after a decimal point.

**EXAMPLE:** A judge writes one score as 8.25 and another score as 8.75.  
Each score is counted as an 8.

2. The score of 0 shall only be awarded when a particular trial function did not occur. 1 is the lowest score that can be awarded to a trial function that actually took place. If a ballot is returned with a score of "0," the AMTA Representatives should inquire with the judge as to whether that function of the trial took place. If it did take place, the score must be changed to "1." AMTA Rules 4.31(4) and (5) govern scoring when direct examination time and/or cross examination time expires prior to those particular functions taking place in their entirety.
3. A legible numerical score, properly placed upon the scoring ballot, shall be conclusive evidence of the judge's intended score. No team shall have any claim for relief on the grounds that the judge's comments or individual rankings suggest the legible score was intended for another function of the trial or otherwise improperly given.
4. The point differential on each ballot must be confirmed by at least two Tab Room officials, at least one of whom must be an AMTA Representative, as follows:

**First Adder:**

The first person who adds a ballot should first write the “raw total” of each team’s points in the margins on each side of the ballot. Some tabulators prefer to “add up,” so the number will be the sum of the points: 96, 115, etc. Some tabulators prefer to subtract from the maximum possible score of 140 points per team, so the equivalent numbers would be -44 and -25. Even if the first adder uses the “subtraction method,” the first adder must always write the raw point totals for each side of the ballot in positive number format, e.g., 110 vs. 121. We have found that solely writing the negative numbers increases the likelihood the point differential will be written on the wrong side of the ballot.

The first adder then determines the differential between the raw point totals of the two teams. Write the point differential for the winning team in the margin on the winning team’s side of the ballot: the left margin, if the Plaintiff/Prosecution wins, or the right margin, if the Defense wins.

**THIS STEP IS CRITICAL. If the point differential is written on the wrong side of the ballot, this greatly increases the chance that the wrong team will be credited with winning the ballot.**

If the point differential is zero, the first person should either write the word “Tie” or a capital letter “T” in the middle of the ballot.

**Second Adder:**

The second adder first re-adds both the Plaintiff/Prosecution and Defense columns to verify that the raw totals calculated by the first adder are correct.

For each total that matches, the second adder should place a check mark next to each verified number. If the second adder concurs that the point differential is correctly calculated and on the proper side of the ballot, the second adder should also place a check mark next to it.

If the second adder reaches a different raw total on one or both sides of the ballot, or reaches a different point differential total, the second adder should write the different number(s) they calculated next to the original number. The second adder should then forward the ballot to a third adder.

**Third Adder:**

If a third adder is used, the third adder should also place check marks next to each verified raw total and point differential. If the third adder is being used as a “tiebreaker” between two different numbers reached by previous adders, the third adder should cross out the number the third adder determines to be wrong, and place a checkmark next to the number the third adder determines to



be correct. If the third adder reaches a third and different number, additional adders should be used. At this point, the AMTA Representatives should ensure that all numbers on the ballot are legible. Frequently, tabulators reach different results when tabulators interpret a number written on the ballot in different ways, i.e., one person thinks a number is a “7” while another counts it as a “9.”

**Final Adder:**

Regardless of how many adders are used, the final adder shall circle the point differential (and ensure that the differential is written on the proper margin of the ballot) to indicate that the ballot has been fully tabulated. No ballot is official until at least two Tab Room officials have agreed on the differential and indicated such by circling the number on the proper margin of the ballot.

5. Illegible or unclear scores require a ruling:

If the judge can be located, the judge should clarify.

If the judge cannot be located, the AMTA Representatives may appoint a committee of three neutral individuals, with agreement of two sufficient to reach a ruling. “Neutral individual” means a person not affiliated with a team competing at that tournament. The AMTA Representatives themselves may be two of the three neutral individuals; in other words, if the two AMTA Representatives agree on the correct score, no further action need be taken.

Sometimes, scores illegible on a carbon copy may be legible on the original ballot, and vice versa.

In its discretion, the committee may refer to comment sheets and/or individual rankings to aid in its determination.

The decision of the AMTA Representatives as to whether to form a committee is final. The decision should be based on a fair assessment of the difference in time between receipt and tabulation of ballots as well as the likelihood that the questioned score may be determinative of the differential decision. In general, a tournament should not be delayed in efforts to track down the judge.

If a judge has departed significantly from the instructions for scoring (e.g. has scored everyone on a 20-point scale) the AMTA Representatives should attempt to locate the judge to correct the error. If it is not feasible to locate the judge, the AMTA Representatives should attempt to replicate as best as possible the judge’s understanding of each team’s performance (e.g. if it is obvious that each team was scored on a 20 point scale, all scores could be halved to get back within the 140 point total maximum.)

6. In the event any judge's ballot must be discarded for any reason, the other scoring judge's ballot shall be doubled for all aspects of the trial, including individual awards.

### Penalties

AMTA Rule 9.2 allows the AMTA Representatives to impose tournament penalties for certain rule violations. One possible penalty is a loss of points. If a penalty consisting of a loss of points is imposed, the penalized points shall be removed prior to determining each ballot's final raw point totals and point differential. The post-penalty result of the ballot is the final result for all subsequent purposes, including pairing, Combined Strength, and opponent's Combined Strength.

Note, however, that a penalty assessed pursuant to the All-Loss Rule does not follow this procedure. All-Loss Rule penalties are assessed at the end of the tournament, and do not affect CS or OCS.

### Recording Results on Pairing Cards

As each trial's ballots are tabulated, the AMTA Representatives must record the results on each team's Pairing Card. The Pairing Card looks like this:

Team #	School Name			
1000	Midlands State			
	1st Round	2nd Round	3rd Round	4th Round
Side, Opponent	Π v. 1234	Δ v.		
Decision & Points	W L +7 -2			
Record	1			
Running CS				
Running PD	+5			
Rank	P _____ D _____	R _____	P _____ D _____	FINAL _____

The first box is for recording the side played by the team, and the team's opponent. In the example above, Team 1000 was Plaintiff vs. Team 1234 in Round 1. As in the example, it is common for tabulators to note that the team will be Defense in Round 2, even though the opponent will not be known until pairings have taken place.

The second box is for recording the results of each ballot, by writing the letter W, L, or T above the point differential of each ballot. In the example above, Team 1000 won the first ballot by 7 points, and lost the second ballot by 2 points.

The third box is for recording the running total of the ballots won by the team. A tied ballot counts as  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a win. Tabulators are encouraged to write only one number representing the current total number of ballots won, e.g. "5", instead of writing the number in win-loss or win-loss-tie format, e.g. "5-1" or "4-0-2." Writing tied ballots in the latter format increases the chance the tabulator will miss that the 5-1 and 4-0-2 teams are at an identical record. The "half wins" generated by tied ballots do not "count less" than regular wins; in other words, a team that finishes with 4 wins and 4 losses is exactly the same as a team that finishes with 0 wins and 8 ties ( $0.5 \times 8 = 4$ ). As such, both teams are considered to have a ballot record of "4."

The fourth box is for recording the Combined Strength of each team after Round 2 and Round 3. The Combined Strength may be written in this space when necessary to break ties after Round 4. We will discuss how to calculate Combined Strength in a later section of the Manual (page 14.)

The fifth box is for recording the running point differential of each team. Note that you do not need to calculate the running point differential after Round 4 unless needed as part of the final tiebreakers.

The sixth box is for recording the rank of the team after Rounds 1-3. The next section will discuss how to calculate the rank.

Each Tab Room must have at least two sets of independent Pairing Cards. After all results have been tabulated and recorded onto the Pairing Cards, the AMTA Representatives must compare the two sets of cards before the pairing process begins, and must resolve any discrepancies between the two sets. This comparison is typically done by having one AMTA Representative read from their set of cards in rank order as the other AMTA Representative compares with their own set of cards.

## Determining Team Ranks

Team ranks after Round 1 are determined in the following order:

1. Ballots Won (more is better)
2. Point Differential (higher positive number is better)
3. Coin Flip Tiebreaker (see below)

Team ranks after Rounds 2 and 3 are determined in the following order:

1. Ballots Won (more is better)
2. Combined Strength (higher number is better)
3. Point Differential (higher positive number is better)
4. Coin Flip Tiebreaker (see below)

### Team Ranks After Round 1 and Round 3 At Regional and National Championship Tournaments

After Round 1 and Round 3 at Regionals and Championship, the tabulator must first separate the Pairing Cards into two stacks—one of teams that “Need Plaintiff” in the following round, and one of teams that “Need Defense” in the following round.

That is because the following rounds (Round 2 and Round 4) are side constrained, such that a team that was Plaintiff/Prosecution in Round 1 must be Defense in Round 2, and vice versa.

The “Needs Plaintiff” team with the best ranking is P1, the second best ranking is P2, and so forth. The “Needs Defense” teams are ranked D1, D2, etc.

**PITFALL:** Note that the rankings are based on the side of the case the team needs to play in the following round, NOT the side of the case the team just played in the round you are tabulating.

**EXAMPLE:** Team 1000 is Plaintiff in Round 1. Team 1000 will be ranked D\_\_\_ after Round 1 is tabulated, because Team 1000 will be on the Defense side of the case in Round 2.

### Team Ranks After Round 2 At Regional and National Championship Tournaments

Round 3 is not side constrained. For ranking purposes, the teams are all in one stack; the best-ranked team gets R (“Rank”) 1, the second best team gets R2, and so on. The Manual will discuss later how to determine the sides teams play in Round 3.

### **Team Ranks After Rounds 1 and 2 At Opening Round Championship Tournaments**

As this Manual will discuss later on, the ORCS system places each team into one of four groups: A, B, C, or D. Ranks at ORCS are always given within a team's group, but by the same principles used at other tournaments: ballots won, CS (after Rounds 2 and 3), and then running point differential.

As we will discuss later in the Manual, all teams in a group must be on the same side of the case in Round 1; therefore, all teams in that group necessarily must be on the opposite side of the case in Round 2. For example, if all of the B group teams are Plaintiff in Round 1, all of the B group teams must be Defense in Round 2. So, the team ranks after Round 1 can simply be by reference to the group designation, because by definition all teams with that group designation are on the same side of the case. For example, the team in the B group with the best ranking after Round 1 is B1, the second best ranking is B2, etc. After Round 2, for the Round 3 pairings, there are no side constraints. Therefore, these team ranks are again simply done within each group designation: C1, C2, C3, etc.

### **Team Ranks After Round 3 Opening Round Championship Tournament**

After Round 3, there will be three teams in each group that are "Needs Plaintiff" and three teams that are "Needs Defense". For example, after Round 3, the "Needs Plaintiff" team in the A group with the best ranking is A1Π, the second best "Needs Plaintiff" ranking in the A group is A2Π, etc. The "Needs Defense" team in the A group with the best ranking is A1Δ, and so on.

**CAUTION:** Especially in the Round 3 rankings/Round 4 pairings, there is a risk of confusing the letter "D" used to indicate the "D" group and the side designation for Defense. Therefore, you should only use the Greek letters Π and Δ to refer to the side designations. So, the best D group "Needs Plaintiff" team would be D1Π, and the best D group "Needs Defense" team would be D1Δ.

### **Coin Flip Tiebreaker**

It is possible that two or more teams will have identical records, Combined Strength (when applicable), and point differential after a round. Therefore, before Round 1 ballots return to the Tab Room, the AMTA Representatives must conduct a coin flip. The result of the flip will serve to break these ties for ranking purposes during the entire tournament. If the coin flips as heads, the team with the larger team number

will win the tiebreaker. If the coin flips as tails, the team with the smaller team number will win the tiebreaker.

Note that the coin flip tiebreaker is only performed once at each tournament. In other words, do not conduct a new coin flip before pairing each round. Also note that the coin flip tiebreaker has no bearing on tiebreaking for final placement. It only applies to the rankings that are written on the Pairing Cards for pairing purposes. See the section beginning on page 54 for instructions on tiebreaking for final placement/bids.

**EXAMPLE:** The coin flip comes up “heads.”  
After Round 2, Team 1300, Team 1400, and Team 1500 each has a record of 3 wins, each has a CS of 5, and each has a point differential of +10.

The rank order of the three teams would be Team 1500, Team 1400, Team 1300, because the larger team number receives the better rank per the coin flip.

### Calculating Combined Strength (“CS”)

A team’s Combined Strength (abbreviated as “CS”) is the sum of the ballots won by all of that team’s opponents.

**EXAMPLE:** Your tournament has completed two rounds.  
Team 1234 faced Team 1111 in Round 1 and Team 1222 in Round 2.  
Team 1111 has a record of 3 wins.  
Team 1222 has a record of 2 wins.  
Team 1234’s CS is 5 after Round 2/going into Round 3.

A team’s CS generally increases after each round, though it does not have to. (Put differently, the only time a team’s CS would not increase after a round is when all of the team’s opponents lose all of their ballots in that new round.) As a result, a team’s CS can never decrease.

**EXAMPLE:** Your tournament has completed three rounds.  
Team 1234 faced Team 1111 in Round 1, Team 1222 in Round 2, and Team 1333 in Round 3.  
Team 1111 has a record of 4 wins.  
Team 1222 has a record of 3.5 wins.  
Team 1333 has a record of 4 wins.  
Team 1234’s CS is 11.5 after Round 3/going into Round 4.

The easiest way to calculate CS is to make a list, in team-number order, of all the teams participating in your tournament. When you finish tabulating a trial, write each team's updated ballot record next to its team number. Some tabulators prefer to make a new list for each round's results; other tabulators prefer one grid with multiple columns which they update with each round's results. Regardless of the method, the ballot numbers change after each round, so you need to either create a new CS list or update your existing CS list after Round 3 and again after Round 4. (There is no need to make a CS list when tabulating Round 1 results.)

Then, go through each Pairing Card. Look at the team numbers of the opponents, and add the ballot record of each opponent as indicated on your list. Write the sum in the "CS" section of the Pairing Card.

### **Tabulation Summary**

Each sanctioned tournament is required to produce a Tab Summary. Typically, the AMTA Representatives will ask a third person, such as a coach or tournament helper, to assist with populating the summary with the data from each round. A copy of the Tab Summary must be either electronically transmitted to all teams immediately upon the conclusion of the awards ceremony or printed and provided to each team with each team's ballot envelope. You must also send an electronic copy of the Tab Summary to the Tabulation Director as soon as possible after tabulation has concluded.

AMTA will provide the AMTA Representatives with a Tab Summary template. You must use the template provided by AMTA, which is typically a spreadsheet that will calculate Combined Strength, opponent's Combined Strength, point differential, and other data if and only if all data is properly entered, including the team numbers each team faces.

For that reason, the AMTA Representatives are encouraged to cross-check their calculations against the Tab Summary, but should not rely solely on the Tab Summary spreadsheet to provide them with these calculations. It is imperative that both AMTA Representatives perform the calculations described in this Manual and cross-check the results with each other to ensure accurate results.

### **Distributing Ballots**

All ballots must remain in the Tabulation Room until the tournament is over. If a team wishes to leave early, they may take their ballot envelope with them if they have returned any necessary paperwork, such as tournament evaluation surveys.

The AMTA Representatives must maintain custody of the original (top copy) of each blue scoring ballot throughout the tournament, and must mail these originals to

the Tabulation Director after each tournament. One carbon copy of each ballot is given to each team.

Comment ballots must be brought to the Tab Room; judges should not distribute them directly to students or coaches. Coaches and Tab Room representatives may view their own comment ballots in the Tab Room, but may not view the comment ballots of other teams, or in any way access another team's ballot envelope.

The plaintiff/prosecution team should receive the top (white) copy of each comment sheet, and the defense team should receive the bottom (yellow) copy.

### **Assigning Rooms**

The AMTA Representatives must assign a trial room to each round at the initial random draw for Round 1, and after each subsequent round's pairings have been finalized. The room assignments should appear in random order when posted publicly. Some coaches prefer that their students are not apprised of tournament results during the course of the tournament; posting room assignments from "best to worst" defeats this preference.

However, the AMTA Representatives need not necessarily assign rooms in a random fashion. All things being equal, random assignment is the standard practice. However, when trial rooms are of different sizes, quality, or location, the AMTA Representatives should first take into account accessibility concerns of students, judges, coaches, and spectators. The AMTA Representatives may also take into account the size of the rooms vis-à-vis the number of anticipated spectators, competitive considerations, and any other relevant consideration.

No team may have any claim for relief on the basis of a room assignment.



**PAIRING PROCEDURES  
FOR REGIONAL TOURNAMENTS  
AND THE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP**

**Pairing Round 1**

Round 1 may be paired by any random method. The most common random method is writing each team number on a piece of paper or index card, and then blindly drawing cards to create the pairings.

Do not intentionally assign both teams from a school to the same side of the case. Not only is such a procedure not random, but it has a negative impact on the pairings in later rounds.

There are no coin flips for sides, nor do the teams get to choose their own side. The draw itself determines the sides: the first team drawn will be Plaintiff/Prosecution, the second team drawn will be Defense, etc.

Occasionally, a team will approach the AMTA Representatives prior to the first round draw and ask to play a specific side in Round 1 of the case. Normally, such requests should not be granted. The AMTA Representatives have the discretion to allow such a request if good cause is shown, e.g., a student who is an attorney on the Defense side is unable to arrive until Round 2 due to a family emergency. If both AMTA Representatives find good cause and agree to the request, it will be granted. In this case, randomly pair the round as instructed above. If the team in question is randomly paired into the side it wanted, you need not take any further action. If the team in question is randomly paired into the opposite side, simply switch the side designations for that pairing only and announce the reason for doing so.

The Round 1 pairings must be conducted in public. It is typical to conduct the pairings at the Opening Ceremony or, if there is none, as the first item of business at the Round 1 Captains' Meeting.

Teams from the same school shall not meet. If a draw causes a same school match, the second team drawn should be returned to the pool of available teams. Draw another team to complete the pairing. If a same school match occurs in the final pairing, swap the last team drawn with the most recently drawn team that will resolve the same school match.

**EXAMPLE:** The second-to-last pairing drawn was Team 1100 v. Team 1200. The last pairing drawn was Team 1300 v. Team 1301, which is a same school match.

Swap Team 1301 (the last team drawn) with Team 1200 (the most recently drawn team that will resolve the same school match.)

As the Round 1 pairings are conducted, at least one or two people should assist in writing down the pairings on a grid with room numbers. The Tab Room must retain one copy of the initial pairings for reference and for use in filling out the tabulation cards.

While it is technically possible to conduct the Round 1 pairings in advance of the tournament, it is discouraged for two important reasons: one, it reduces the chance teams will be present to see the draw take place, and two, the pairings would have to be re-done if one or more teams fail to arrive at the tournament for any reason.

### Pairing Round 2

Round 2 is side-constrained; each team that was Plaintiff/Prosecution in Round 1 must be Defense in Round 2, and vice versa.

After tabulation, each team will be ranked P1 through P\_\_ and D1 through D\_\_\_, based on the side of the case they will be playing in Round 2. In other words, the team with the best ranking that just played Plaintiff/Prosecution in Round 1 will be ranked “D1” for Round 2 pairing purposes.

Once the Pairing Cards have been organized in ranked order and compared, both sets of cards should be dealt out onto a table. Dealing the cards for Round 2 is easy: simply lay out the cards in two columns in the following rank order:

P1     D1  
 P2     D2  
 P3     D3  
 ...and so on.

**EXAMPLE: Ranking, Team Number, # of Ballots Won, Point Differential**

P1, 1030, 2, +40	D1, 1298, 2, +38
P2, 1401, 2, +30	D2, 1100, 2, +38
P3, 1582, 2, +5	D3, 1058, 1.5, +2
P4, 1282, 2, -5	D4, 1287, 1, +25
...and so on.	

Note that, in this example, D1 and D2 have identical ballot and point differential records. Here, the coin flip tiebreaker would have been “heads,” thus resulting in the larger team number taking the better ranking number.

### Pairing Round 3

Round 3 is not side constrained. As a result, the entire field is ranked R1 through R\_\_\_ regardless of the side the team played in Round 2.

When it comes time to deal the cards, the cards shall be dealt in rank order in a “snake” format as shown:

R1	R2
R4	R3
R5	R6
R8	R7
...and so on.	

After any and all impermissible matches have been resolved, one of the AMTA Representatives shall flip a coin. If the result of the coin flip is “heads,” then all teams that are in the left-hand column of Pairing Cards shall be Plaintiff/Prosecution in Round 3. If the result of the coin flip is “tails,” then all teams that are in the left-hand column of Pairing Cards shall be Defense in Round 3. In the latter case, it is common for the AMTA Representatives to physically switch the left hand and right hand columns after the coin flip, so that the Pairing Cards physically appear on the table in the standard “P vs. D” format. After physically switching places, check to make sure that the “snake” order of the rankings is still in place, but in reverse of the above format: the first trial should be R2 vs R1, the second trial should be R3 vs R4, the third trial should be R6 vs R5, and so on.

### **Pairing Round 4 At The National Championship Tournament**

The procedure for pairing Round 4 at the National Championship Tournament is identical to the procedure for pairing Round 2, above. In other words, P1 is dealt to face D1, P2 is dealt to face D2, etc.

### **Pairing Round 4 At Regional Tournaments**

Pairing Round 4 at Regional level tournaments is perhaps the most intricate part of this Manual. When AMTA moved to the ORCS system in 2009, AMTA also instituted this new system of pairing, designed to better serve the goal of finding the best group of teams at the tournament who should qualify to the next level of competition, rather than identifying a “winner” of the tournament.

**Step One: Rankings**

The first step of pairing Round 4 is to rank each team P1 through P\_\_\_ and D1 through D\_\_\_. The ranking part of the process is identical to the rankings done after Round 1 for pairing Round 2, except that Combined Strength (“CS”) is used after ballots won and before point differential.

**Step Two: Brackets**

The next step is to divide the teams into two groups: one group that is in the “Primary Bracket,” and another group that is in the “Secondary Bracket.” Sometimes, these are referred to as “Bracket 1” and “Bracket 2,” or the “Top Bracket” and the “Bottom Bracket.” Follow these steps to figure out the proper brackets:

**2a. Determine the “First Out” record**

The default number of bids to ORCS per Regional may vary from year to year. In some years, the default number is 6, with larger Regionals having 7 bids. In other years, the default is 7 bids, with larger Regionals having 8 bids. Either way, Regionals with fewer than 20 teams will have 5 or fewer bids, determined on a sliding scale. The Tabulation Director will confirm the number of bids with the AMTA Representatives and tournament host prior to each tournament.

The “First Out” record is based on the number of bids at your tournament, plus one. In other words, it is the sixth-best record at Regional tournaments with 5 bids, the seventh-best record at Regional tournaments with 6 bids, and the eighth-best record at Regional tournaments with 7 bids.

<b>EXAMPLE:</b>	<b>Team Ranking, Number of Ballots Won</b>	
	Needs Plaintiff:	Needs Defense:
	P1 6	D1 6
	P2 6	D2 5.5
	P3 5	D3 4.5
	P4 3.5	D4 4.5
	P5 3.5	D5 4
	P6 3.5	D6 3
	P7 3	D7 2.5
	P8 2.5	D8 2
	P9 2	D9 2
	P10 1	D10 1
	P11 1	D11 0
	P12 0	D12 0

In this example, the eighth-best record is 4 wins, the seventh-best record is 4.5 wins, and the sixth-best record is also 4.5 wins.

In other words: there are: 3 teams with 6 wins;  
1 team with 5.5 wins;  
1 team with 5 wins;  
2 teams (the first of which is sixth best, the second of which is seventh best) with 4.5 wins;  
1 team (eighth best) with 4 wins.

**2b. Determine Which Teams Go Into The Secondary Bracket**

1. All teams with a ballot record 2.5 wins (or more) greater than the “First Out” record are placed into the Secondary Bracket. These teams are mathematically guaranteed to earn a bid to the next level of competition.

**EXAMPLE:** The “First Out” record is 3 wins.  
Any team with a ballot record of 5.5 or greater is placed into the Secondary Bracket.  
(Note that it is impossible for a team to have a record greater than 6 after three rounds of competition.)

2. All teams with a ballot record of 2.0 wins (or more) less than the “First Out” record are placed into the Secondary Bracket. Note that a team going into the Secondary Bracket does not make a team technically ineligible to earn a bid. It is simply a mathematical determination of which teams are unlikely to advance based on their record through three rounds.

**EXAMPLE:** The “First Out” record is 4.  
Any team with a ballot record of 2 or less is placed into the Secondary Bracket.

3. If there are an uneven number of teams in the brackets, pull down the lowest ranked team(s) in the Primary Bracket to create an even number of teams in the Secondary Bracket, except as provided in the following caveat.

**CAVEAT:** Do not pull a team down from the Primary Bracket if the team you want to pull down is tied with, 0.5 ballot away from, or 1 ballot away from the “Last In” record—if a tournament has x bids, the “Last In” record is the xth best record. For example:

At Regionals with 7 bids: the 7<sup>th</sup> best record  
At Regionals with 6 bids: the 6<sup>th</sup> best record  
At Regionals with 5 bids: the 5<sup>th</sup> best record

For example, if you are at a Regional with 6 bids, and the 6<sup>th</sup> best record is 3.5 wins, the “caveat” applies to any team with 3.5 wins, 3 wins, or 2.5 wins.

Note that the determinative record for the “caveat” is different than the “First Out” record you calculated earlier. The “caveat” is based on the record of the team in x place, where x is the number of bids available at your tournament. The “First Out” record is the number of bids available plus one (x+1).

If this caveat applies to a team in the Primary Bracket, you should instead pull up the highest ranked team from the Secondary Bracket that was originally removed from the bottom of the Primary Bracket.

At this point, it is helpful to see several examples of how this process works.

**EXAMPLE ONE:**

**Ranking, Ballots Won, 5 Bid Regional**

Needs Plaintiff:      Needs Defense:

P1 6	D1 6
P2 6	D2 5.5
P3 4.5	D3 4.5
P4 3.5	D4 4.5
P5 3.5	D5 3
P6 3.5	D6 3
P7 3	
-----	
	D7 2.5
P8 2.5	D8 2
P9 2	D9 2
P10 1.5	D10 1
P11 1	D11 0
P12 0	D12 0

The “First Out” record is 4.5 wins.

There aren’t any teams 2.5 wins or more greater than 4.5. All teams with 2.0 ballots or more less than 4.5 wins move to the Secondary Bracket; thus, all teams with 2.5 wins or less move to the Secondary Bracket.

You have uneven brackets, so the first thing you should try to do is to bring down the lowest ranked team not already in the Secondary Bracket, which is P7. Before

you do that, check to see that P7 does not violate the “caveat”: is it tied or within 1 ballot of the fifth-best record (at a 5-bid Regional) or sixth-best/seventh-best record (at Regionals with 6 or 7 bids, respectively)?

This example assumes a 5-bid Regional, and the fifth-best record is also 4.5 wins. P7 is not tied or within 1 ballot of 4.5 wins. Therefore, P7 is OK to move to the Secondary Bracket.

**EXAMPLE TWO: Ranking, Ballots Won, 5 Bid Regional**

Needs Plaintiff:	Needs Defense:
P1 6	D1 6
P2 6	D2 5.5
P3 4.5	D3 4.5
P4 4.5	D4 4.5
P5 4.5	D5 3
P6 4	
P7 3	

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	D6 2.5
	D7 2.5
P8 2.5	D8 2
P9 2	D9 2
P10 1.5	D10 1
P11 1	D11 0
P12 0	D12 0

The “First Out” record is 4.5 wins.  
 There aren’t any teams 2.5 wins or more greater than 4.5 (remember, the best record after 3 rounds is 6.)  
 All teams with 2.0 ballots or more less than 4.5 wins move to the Secondary Bracket; thus, all teams with 2.5 wins or less move to the Secondary Bracket.

You have uneven brackets, so the first thing you should try to do is to bring down the lowest ranked teams not already in the Secondary Bracket, which are P6 and P7. Before you do that, check to see whether either P6 or P7 violate the “caveat”: is either team tied or within 1 ballot of the *n*th-best record (at a Regional with *n* bids)?

P7 does not violate the “caveat,” so it moves down into the Secondary Bracket.

However, P6 can not move into the Secondary Bracket because it is within 1 ballot of the fifth-best record, which is 4.5 wins in this example.

As a result, you would instead take the highest ranked team in the Secondary Bracket that would make things even. Here, that is D6. Move D6 into the Primary Bracket, and you have even brackets.

**EXAMPLE THREE: Ranking, Ballots Won, Assume 5 Bid Regional**

Needs Plaintiff:	Needs Defense:
P1 6	D1 6
P2 6	D2 5.5
P3 5	D3 3
P4 3	D4 3
P5 3	D5 3
P6 3	D6 3
P7 3	D7 2.5
P8 2.5	D8 2.5
P9 2	D9 2
P10 1.5	D10 1
P11 1	D11 0
P12 0	D12 0

The “First Out” record is 3 wins.

All teams with 2.5 or more wins greater than 3 wins (i.e., 5.5 or more) are placed in the Secondary Bracket.

All teams with 2.0 or more wins less than 3 wins (i.e., 1 or less) are also placed in the Secondary Bracket:



Needs Plaintiff:	Needs Defense:
P3 5	D3 3
P4 3.5	D4 3
P5 3.5	D5 3
P6 3	D6 3
P7 3	D7 2.5
P8 2.5	D8 2.5
P9 2	D9 2
P10 1.5	

---

Secondary Bracket

P1 6	D1 6
P2 6	D2 5.5
	D10 1
P11 1	D11 0
P12 0	D12 0

It may seem odd that teams with such large win totals are in the Secondary Bracket; especially in cases where such a team is paired to meet a team with a poor record. Remember, though, that the goal of this system is to remove from the Primary Bracket those teams that are no longer fighting for bids. This process ensures that a team fighting for bids is not knocked out by a team that is already mathematically ensured of moving on.

Here, again, the brackets are uneven. You are to first see if you can pull down a team from the Primary Bracket to even it out. Look at P10 and ensure it is not tied or within 1 ballot of the fifth best record (5-bid Regional) or sixth or seventh best record (6- or 7-bid Regional, respectively). In this example, we are assuming a 5-bid Regional tournament, and the fifth best record is 3.5 wins. Therefore, P10 can move down to the Secondary Bracket, between P2 and P11.

Note here the proper method for arranging the Pairing Cards in the Secondary Bracket: it is as simple as placing the cards in rank order on the “Needs Plaintiff” side and also in rank order on the “Needs Defense” side.

**EXAMPLE FOUR: Rank, Ballots Won, Assume 5 Bid Regional**

Needs Plaintiff:	Needs Defense:
Primary Bracket	
P3 3	D3 3
P4 3	D4 3
P5 3	D5 3
P6 3	D6 3
P7 3	D7 2.5
P8 2.5	D8 2.5
P9 2.5	D9 2
P10 2.5	
<hr/>	
Secondary Bracket	
P1 6	D1 6
P2 6	D2 5.5
	D10 1
P11 1	D11 0
P12 0	D12 0

This example assumes a five-bid Regional, and the fifth-best record is 3 wins.

You have uneven brackets, so the first move you check is whether the lowest-ranked team in the Primary Bracket can move into the Secondary Bracket to even them out. That is P10...but P10 is within 1 win of the fifth-best record.

Instead, you move the highest-ranked team from the Secondary Bracket that originally came from the bottom of the Primary Bracket. In other words, do not disturb the 6 and 5.5 win teams that originally moved down from the top of the Primary Bracket. Look at the best-ranked team that originally moved from the bottom of the Primary Bracket. In this example, that is D10. Move D10 into the Primary Bracket to even out the brackets.

- Step 3. “High-Low” the Needs Defense side in the Primary Bracket only.**  
 The term “High-Low” used to be used more frequently in AMTA pairing. Now, it is only used in the Round 4 pairing system.

Let’s say there are fourteen teams in the Primary Bracket: P1 through P7 and D1 through D7. “High-Low” means reversing the rank order in the “Needs Defense” column, such that the lowest-ranked “Needs Defense” team is at the top of the pairings: P1 faces D7, P2 faces D6, P3 faces D5, and so on.

Refer back to Example Three, above. This is what the brackets would look like after the “High-Low” swap in the Primary Bracket:

Primary Bracket	
P3 5	D9 2
P4 3.5	D8 2.5
P5 3	D7 2.5
P6 3	D6 3
P7 3	D5 3
P8 2.5	D4 3
P9 2	D3 3
<hr/>	
Secondary Bracket	
P1 6	D1 6
P2 6	D2 5.5
P10 1.5	D10 1
P11 1	D11 0
P12 0	D12 0

Note that the “High-Low” swap occurs only in the Primary Bracket. The Secondary Bracket stays paired in a standard “High-High” format: the best ranked team in the P column matches against the best-ranked team in the D column, the second-best vs. the second-best, and so on.

- Step 5. Resolve Impermissible Matches.**  
 Resolving impermissible matches for Round 4 pairings uses the same rules and principles explained later in this Manual, but with some caveats.

First, you may not go outside a bracket to resolve an impermissible match. This system places a high emphasis on maintaining the two brackets. As

such, if a card's adjacent rank is in the other bracket, ignore it. Look only at the adjacent rank(s) in the same bracket.

**EXAMPLE:** Refer back to the example immediately above.  
Assume that P2 and D2 are impermissibly matched.  
The first comparisons may only be between P2 and P1 and between D2 and D1. You must ignore P3 and D3, which are in the other bracket.  
If both P1/P2 and D1/D2 have been swapped and the pairing is still impermissible, then you may “jump ranks” and compare P2 with P10 and D2 with D10.

Second, always begin resolving impermissible matches in the Secondary Bracket. Typically, this bracket is smaller. Start with the best-ranked team in the Secondary Bracket and move down. Once you have confirmed that all impermissibles have been resolved in the Secondary Bracket, then move on to resolve all impermissibles in the Primary Bracket.

In the rare event that an impermissible match can not be resolved without invading the other bracket, then re-deal all the cards into a single bracket, P1 to the lowest ranked P team in the left hand column, and “high-low” with the lowest-ranked D team at the top of the right hand column all the way down to D1 at the bottom. (In other words, in a 24-team tournament, prior to checking for impermissible matches, P1 faces D12, P2 faces D11, and so on.)

## PAIRING PROCEDURES AT THE OPENING ROUND CHAMPIONSHIP

In 2020, AMTA began using a new pairing procedure at ORCS tournaments that is designed to ensure each team has a more equal strength of schedule. Many of the same basic principles that are used in Regional and Championship pairing apply, such as how to determine rankings and how to resolve impermissible matches. In many ways, pairing ORCS tournaments will now be easier because of the way this system is structured.

### Each Team Is Assigned a Group

Each team at each ORCS will be in one of four groups: A, B, C, or D. Group A comprises the six teams with the six best Team Power Rankings (or “TPR”) at the tournament, Group B comprises the teams with the 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> best TPR, Group C the 13<sup>th</sup> through 18<sup>th</sup> best TPR, and Group D the 19<sup>th</sup> through 24<sup>th</sup> best TPR. If two teams are tied at the same TPR and breaking the tie would be determinative of which Group a team falls into, the Tabulation Director will break the tie on the basis of the following tiebreakers, in order: Regional wins, Regional CS, Regional OCS, and Regional point differential.

The rankings which determine the Group designations may be changed up to the point of the Round 1 draw. For example, if the team with the 12<sup>th</sup> best TPR (by definition, in the B Group) drops out at the very last minute (but before the opening draw), all of the teams below the team that dropped out will move up one place—meaning one team that was previously in Group C will move up to Group B, and one team that was previously in Group D will move up to Group C. If a drop results in a Bye-Buster before the opening draw, the Bye-Buster will always be in Group D if the Bye-Buster exists from the beginning of the tournament. If a stand-by team or other actual replacement team is implemented prior to the Round 1 draw, the groups will be reassigned based on the TPR of the new team. However, once the Round 1 draw is conducted, the Group assignments are final. Any substitutions, such as a Bye-Buster team taking the place of a team that drops out, are done on the principle of stepping into the shoes of the departed team, including group designation.

After the ORCS fields are final (i.e., after all open bids have been accepted), the Tabulation Director will post a spreadsheet containing the groups at each ORCS tournament. This spreadsheet will then be updated as needed if there are any further changes. Note that this system requires schools with two bids to honestly designate their “A” and “B” teams. These designations will be indicated on the team rosters, which must be finalized prior to the opening round draw. The “A” team must carry the school’s lowest assigned team number, and the “B” team the second lowest. If there is

any concern or allegation of a school with improper A/B designations, contact the Tabulation Director immediately.

**Each Group Faces Each Other Group, And Itself, Once**

Each round will contain the following Group matchups. Round 1 is a random draw within the Groups, while Rounds 2 through 4 are paired high-high.

Round 1	Round 2
Group A vs. Group D	Group A vs. Group C
Group B vs. Group C	Group B vs. Group D
Round 3	Round 4
Group A vs. Group A	Group A vs. Group B
Group B vs. Group B	Group C vs. Group D
Group C vs. Group C	
Group D vs. Group D	

**Pairing Round 1**

In Round 1, each Group A team will face a Group D team, and each Group B team will face a Group C team.

The first step in the Round 1 pairing process is to conduct a single coin flip. This coin flip will determine all side assignments for the Round 1 pairings. It is, therefore, not possible to accept any side assignment requests.

If the coin flip is heads, all Group A and Group B teams will be Plaintiff/Prosecution, and all Group C and Group D teams will be Defense.

If the coin flip is tails, all Group A and Group B teams will be Defense, and all Group C and Group D teams will be Plaintiff/Prosecution.

You will need four separate sets of note cards, pieces of paper, or some other random method separated by Groups to create the pairings. For example, assume the coin flip was tails, meaning that all Group D teams are Plaintiff in Round 1, and each will face a Group A team playing Defense. You would first randomly draw a team from the Group D stack, and then randomly draw a team from the Group A stack to create the first pairing, and so on with the remaining teams in the Group D and Group A stacks. You would then do the same with Group C teams who are facing Group B teams. As with the random draw at Regionals, if a random draw happens to be a same-school impermissible, the second team drawn should be returned to the pool of available teams. Draw another team to complete the pairing. If a same school match occurs in

the final pairing, swap the last team drawn with the most recently drawn team that will resolve the same school match.

When filling out the team Pairing Cards, you should write the team's Group designation to the left of the team number, such as "A 1234".

### **Pairing Round 2**

All teams will play the opposite side of the case in Round 2. This system side constrains all groups; so if Group A and Group B were Plaintiff in Round 1, all Group A and Group B teams must be Defense in Round 2.

As discussed earlier in the Manual, the ranking for Round 2 follows the same principle as Regionals and Championship rankings for Round 2, except that here the rankings are done within each Group as opposed to across the entire field of teams. So, Group A will be ranked A1 through A6 based on ballots, point differential, and the coin flip tiebreaker, if necessary. Group B will be ranked B1 through B6, and so forth. Because the Groups are also determinative of sides, there is no particular need to refer to sides in the rankings for Round 2 (e.g., A1Π.) We recommend you write the rankings on the line of the Pairing Card that the Group will play in Round 2, so if the B Group is going to be Defense in round 2, write the rankings B1 through B6 on the "D" line of the Pairing Card.

In Round 2, Group A will be paired against Group C high-high, e.g., A1 vs. C1, A2 vs. C2, etc. Group B will be paired against Group D high-high, e.g., B1 vs. D1, B2 vs. D2, etc.

It is impossible to have a prior meeting match impermissible in this system because of the Group system. The only possible impermissible matches would be same-school impermissible matches. You will be able to know ahead of time which rounds specific same-school impermissible matches are theoretically possible. For example, if Midlands State A is in Group A, and Midlands State B is in Group C, the only round where there could possibly be an impermissible match between those two teams is Round 2, the only round when Group A faces Group C.

Resolving impermissibles is done on the same principles set forth in this Manual, with the additional provision that you may not compare or swap with a team outside the Group. For example, if there is an impermissible at A6 vs. C6, you would have only two possible initial comparisons: A6 with A5 and C6 with C5. If A6 has already swapped with A5 and C6 has already swapped with C5, you would then be able to "jump ranks" and compare A6 with A4 and compare C6 with C4.

### Pairing Round 3

- Step 1.** Rank the teams within each Group based on ballots won, CS, point differential, and the coin flip tiebreaker if necessary. Group A will be ranked A1 through A6, Group B will be ranked B1 through B6, and so forth.
- Step 2.** Lay out the cards in the following “snake” order:
- |          |          |          |          |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| A1 v. A2 | B2 v. B1 | C1 v. C2 | D2 v. D1 |
| A4 v. A3 | B3 v. B4 | C4 v. C3 | D3 v. D4 |
| A5 v. A6 | B6 v. B5 | C5 v. C6 | D6 v. D5 |
- (Note that A1 and C1 must always be in the left column, and B1 and D1 must always be in the right column.)
- Step 3.** Resolve any impermissible matches within each Group. Again, you may never swap outside of a Group. For example, if there is an impermissible match at A1 vs. A2, there is only one potential swap: A2 with A3. If that swap is made but creates a new impermissible, then there are two potential swaps: A1 with A3 and A2 with A4.
- Step 4.** Conduct a single coin flip to determine all sides. If the coin flip is heads, all teams in the left hand columns will be Plaintiff/Prosecution, and all teams in the right hand columns will be Defense. If the coin flip is tails, all teams in the left hand columns will be Defense, and all teams in the right hand columns will be Plaintiff/Prosecution.

### Pairing Round 4

In Round 4, Group A will face Group B, and Group C will face Group D. This round is side-constrained, with each team going the opposite side of Round 3. Each group will have two sets of rankings: three teams that “Need Plaintiff/Prosecution” and three teams that “Need Defense”. So, Group A will have A1Π-A3Π for teams that “Need Plaintiff/Prosecution,” and A1Δ-A3Δ for teams that “Need Defense”. The ranking factors are the same within each group: ballots won, CS, point differential, and the coin flip tiebreaker if necessary.

The pairings will be high-high, as follows:

A1Π v. B1Δ	B1Π v. A1Δ	C1Π v. D1Δ	D1Π v. C1Δ
A2Π v. B2Δ	B2Π v. A2Δ	C2Π v. D2Δ	D2Π v. C2Δ
A3Π v. B3Δ	B3Π v. A3Δ	C3Π v. D3Δ	D3Π v. C3Δ



Again, resolve impermissibles within each Group using the same standards described in the Manual, and the same provision that you may not swap outside of a group.

For example, if there is an impermissible at A1Π v. B1Δ, there are only two possible swaps at first: A1Π with A2Π, and B1Δ with B2Δ. You would swap the least different of those two comparisons; if there is no difference at all between them, swap on the defense side.

### Resolving Impermissible Matches

Resolving impermissible matches is perhaps the second “trickiest” part of the AMTA pairing system. Impermissible matches occur when, after dealing the cards as described above, the teams dealt to meet each other may not meet for one of two reasons:

- (1) both teams are from the same school, or
- (2) both teams have previously met at the same tournament.

**Teams may never, ever waive these rules or otherwise agree to an impermissible match. The impermissible match must be resolved in accordance with the Manual.**

#### What Is An Impermissible Match?

The definition in AMTA Rule 1.2(a) determines when teams are from the same school. For example, AMTA considers Fordham University at Rose Hill and Fordham University at Lincoln Center to be separate degree-granting campuses; therefore, a team from the former institution may play a team from the latter. Normally, AMTA’s Executive Committee makes such determinations. The Tabulation Director will be able to assist you with any questions. Teams from the same school may not meet even if the teams have different coaches and/or are run under different campus organizations.

The limitation on previous meeting matches only applies to the specific tournament you are at. For instance, two teams that meet during the invitational season may meet again at their Regional tournament, and the same two teams may meet again at their ORCS tournament.

The limitation on previous meeting matches applies to teams, not schools.

**Example:** Team 1401 (Midlands A) faces Team 1555 (Midlands State B)

Team 1401 and Team 1555 may not meet again at the same tournament, even if the teams were to play opposite sides of the case. However, Team 1401 (Midlands A) may face Team 1554 (Midlands State A) in a subsequent round. Even though those two schools have met, those specific teams have not met.

Basic Steps In Resolving Impermissible Matches

Resolving impermissible matches involves “swapping” or “trading places” between two Pairing Cards. When two cards swap places, they also swap ranks.

Here are the basic rules for resolving impermissible matches:

1. **At ORCS tournaments only, comparisons and swaps may only be done within the same Group.**

See the ORCS pairing section above for further discussion.

2. **In any given round, two cards can swap with each other only once.**  
For this reason, it is very important to write down every swap you make. Frequently this is called a “Pairer’s List” or “Swap List.” Simply write down (or ask someone else to write down) the team numbers of each swap you make, with the lower team number first for ease of reference.

**EXAMPLE:**      1140-1392  
                         1202-1261

If an anticipated swap already appears on the list, you can not swap those cards again in that round. This is to prevent swaps from becoming circular, thus preventing you from resolving the impermissible.

Note also that this rule only applies per round. If teams 1140-1392 swap ranks while pairing Round 2, they may not swap ranks again while pairing Round 2. However, those two cards may swap ranks when pairing Round 3.

3. **You are trying to find the card with an adjacent rank with the least difference from the impermissibly matched team.**  
The term “least difference” will be more thoroughly explained beginning on page 37 of the Manual.

“Adjacent rank” has a different meaning depending on whether you are pairing Round 2 and Round 4 (side constrained) or Round 3 (not side constrained.)

**EXAMPLE 1:**      Assume this portion of the dealt cards in a side-constrained round:

P5		D5
P6	← Impermissible →	D6
P7		D7

You will first compare P6 with P5 and P7—the two ranks adjacent to P6. You will also compare D6 with D5 and D7—the two ranks adjacent to D6.

**EXAMPLE 2:** Assume this portion of the dealt cards in a non-side-constrained round:

R4		R3
R5	← Impermissible →	R6
R8		R7

You will compare R5 with R4, and you will compare R6 with R7. You may not compare or swap the two teams impermissibly paired against each other.

It is important to always remember that you are looking for the adjacent rank numbers, which does not always mean the physically adjacent cards. For instance, in Example 2, above, R5 is compared with R4, but not with physically adjacent card R8. Likewise, R6 is compared with R7, but not with physically adjacent card R3.

**4. You must resolve impermissible matches from the top of the pairings to the bottom.**

The impermissible pairing with the best ranked team (P1/D1/R1) or closest to it should be resolved first, and so on.

**NOTABLE EXCEPTION:** When pairing Round 4 at Regional tournaments, resolve impermissible matchups in the “Secondary Bracket” first, starting with the pairing with the best ranked team. After the “Secondary Bracket” has been resolved, then move to the “Primary Bracket.”

**5. The two impermissibly matched cards cannot swap ranks with each other.**

This is only a concern in Round 3, which is not side-constrained. Let’s say that Team 1300 (R3) and Team 1400 (R4) are impermissibly matched against each other. You may not swap those two cards and give Team 1300 R4 and give Team 1400 R3. Your initial options are to compare R3 to R2 and compare R4 to R5.

**6. You will usually, but not always, have four cards you will be comparing overall.**

There are only three situations where fewer than four cards are involved in a comparison.

- a. When a team is at the “edge” of the rankings, it has only one other potential comparison.

**EXAMPLE 1:**        P1    D1 ← Impermissible  
                           P2    D2

P1 can only be compared with P2, and D1 can only be compared with D2.

**EXAMPLE 2:**        R1    R2 ← Impermissible  
                           R4    R3

Here, the only possible comparison and only possible initial swap is between R2 and R3. That is because you may not swap places or ranks between the two teams impermissibly matched.

- b. When the two teams impermissibly matched have consecutive ranks.

**EXAMPLE:**        R1    R2  
                           R4    R3 ← Impermissible  
                           R5    R6

R3 can only be compared with R2.  
 R4 can only be compared with R5.

- c. When one of the potential swaps already appears on the “Pairer’s List” or “Swap List.” See bullet point 1, above.  
 You should simply ignore the card that is no longer eligible to swap, and pick the least different card of the remaining available options.

**7. Once you make a trade or swap according to these procedures, the cards physically swap places and also swap ranks with each other.**

You will have to cross out the rank number written on each card and write in the new rank number each card has assumed.

**EXAMPLE:** You swap Team 1300, which was P3, with Team 1400, which was P4.  
 First, physically move the cards so they trade places.  
 Then, cross out the “3” in “P3” and write in a “4,” and vice versa on the other card.

8. **After each swap, look to see whether there are new impermissible matches created as a result of the swap.**  
 You must swap cards even when they create new impermissible matches. Simply continue following these procedures to resolve each new impermissible match that may arise.
9. **You may “jump ranks” only when you have exhausted all of the adjacent ranked cards.**  
 It is rare but possible to have the situation where no teams with the closest rankings can be swapped because every team involved has already swapped ranks with each other. If this occurs, leap over to the next group of closest ranks and run the same “least difference” comparisons.

**EXAMPLE:** Assume the following portion of the pairings:

P1	D1
P2	D2
P3	D3 ← Impermissible
P4	D4
P5	D5

Assume that the cards currently ranked P3 and D3 have already traded places with the cards currently ranked P2 and P4 and D2 and D4, respectively.

In this situation, you are allowed to compare ranks with the “next closest” group of adjacent ranks, so, you would compare P3 with P1 and P5, and would compare D3 with D1 and D5.

### Determining the “Least Difference” Between Cards

The difference between cards is calculated on the following bases:

1. Ballot record
2. Combined Strength—only used when pairing Round 3 and Round 4
3. Point differential
4. Sum of the ranks (greater sum is better)

After following the above steps to determine which cards you are comparing, the first step is to compare the total ballots won of the impermissibly matched team with the card(s) with the adjacent rank. The least difference would be a team that has the identical record of ballots won. The next best would be a team that is only ½ ballot different in either direction, and so on.

<b>EXAMPLE 1:</b>	<b>Rank, Ballots Won</b>	
	P4, 2	D4, 1.5
	P5, 2 ← Impermissible →	D5, 1
	P6, 1	D6, 0.5

The swap should be between P5 and P4, because those two cards have the least ballot difference (0 difference) than any of the other potential swaps.

<b>EXAMPLE 2:</b>	<b>Rank, Ballots Won</b>	
	P4, 2	D4, 2
	P5, 1.5 ← Impermissible →	D5, 1
	P6, 0.5	D6, 0

The swap should be between P5 and P4, because those two cards have the least ballot difference (0.5 ballot difference) than any of the other potential swaps.

If multiple teams have an identical amount of difference in ballots won, you move on to Combined Strength (when pairing Rounds 3 and 4) or point differential (in Round 2). Combined Strength is not used when pairing Round 2. If multiple teams have an identical amount of difference in Combined Strength, you then move on to point differential in those rounds.

The least different Combined Strength would be a team that has the identical Combined Strength as the impermissibly matched team. The next best would be a team that is only 0.5 CS point different in either direction, and so on.

<b>EXAMPLE 3:</b>	<b>Rank, Ballots Won, CS</b>	
	P4, 2, CS 11	D4, 1.5, CS 10
	P5, 2, CS 10 ← Impermissible →	D5, 1, CS 10
	P6, 1, CS 10	D6, 1, CS 10

Here there are two potential swaps with the same least ballot difference: P4 and P5, and D5 and D6. However, there is 1 CS point of difference between P4 and P5, while there is 0 CS difference between D5 and D6. Therefore, D5 and D6 should be swapped.

The least different point differential would be a team that has the identical point differential. Remember to account for the difference between positive and negative point differentials; e.g., when comparing a team with a point differential of +6 with a team with a point differential of -8, the difference between the two teams is 14 points.

**EXAMPLE 4: Rank, Ballots Won, CS, PD**

R1, 4, CS 12, +5		R2, 3.5, CS 12.5, PD +8
R4, 3, CS 10, PD +6	← Impermissible →	R3, 3.5, CS 11.5, PD +7
R5, 3, CS 9, PD -6		R6, 2.5, CS 8, PD +24

Here, your comparisons are between R3 and R2 and between R4 and R5, as those are the only adjacent ranks.

Both comparisons have the same ballot difference (0) and the same CS difference (1). However, R2 and R3 are only 1 point apart on point differential, while R4 and R5 are 12 points apart (+6 to -6). Therefore, R2 and R3 should be swapped.

When multiple cards have the same differences in record, Combined Strength (when applicable), and point differential, swap the two cards whose ranks add up to the higher number.

**EXAMPLE 5: Rank, Ballots Won, CS, PD**

R1, 4, CS 12, +5		R2, 3.5, CS 12.5, PD +8
R4, 3, CS 10, PD +6	← Impermissible →	R3, 3.5, CS 11.5, PD +7
R5, 3, CS 9, PD +5		R6, 2.5, CS 8, PD +24

Here, R2-R3 and R4-R5 have the same ballot difference (0), the same CS difference (1) and the same PD difference (1).

The swap should be made between the two cards whose ranks add up to the higher number.  $R2+R3=5$ ,  $R4+R5=9$ . Therefore, swap R4 and R5.

When the ranks add up to the same number—which is only possible in side constrained rounds—swap the cards on the defense side of the case.

**EXAMPLE 6: Rank, Ballots Won, CS**

P4, 2, CS 11, PD +5		D4, 1.5, CS 10, PD +12
P5, 1, CS 10, PD +4	← Impermissible →	D5, 1, CS 10, PD +10
P6, 1, CS 9, PD -1		D6, 1, CS 9, PD +5

Here, P5-P6 and D5-D6 have the same ballot difference (0), the same CS difference (1), and the same PD difference (5 points.) Both potential swaps have ranks that add up to 11. Therefore, swap on the defense side: D5 and D6.

## Final Thoughts And Notes On Resolving Impermissible Matches

When comparing teams to swap to resolve an impermissible, the first criteria is *always* next closest rank. For example: assume P3 has already been swapped with both P2 and P4. The next swap has to occur on the defense side (unless, of course, the defense card has also already swapped with both teams with which it is consecutively ranked). This is true even if swapping P3 and P1 is a closer match based on record, Combined Strength (when applicable), and point differential.

Take note of the special rules earlier in this Manual regarding resolving impermissible matches for Round 4 pairings at Regionals, when the two-bracket system is in effect.

Once both AMTA Representatives have resolved all impermissibles, be sure to read the pairings out loud to each other to ensure that everything is in agreement between both sets of Pairing Cards. Once that is complete, the pairings are final pending the conclusion of the 30-minute review period.

## Tabulating Individual Awards

Each ballot has a space for judges to rank the best four attorneys and witnesses. Points are awarded to each rank as follows:

- #1 ranking = 5 points
- #2 ranking = 4 points
- #3 ranking = 3 points
- #4 ranking = 2 points

Thus, the maximum number of points an individual can receive on one side of the case is usually 20 (5 points x 2 ballots x 2 rounds on one side of the case.) The National Championship Tournament is authorized to use 3 ballots per round; thus, the maximum number of points is 30 when 3 ballots are used in each round.

Sometimes, a judge may note on the ballot that two or more individuals are “tied.” In those situations, combine the points of the individuals tied, divide that number by the number of individuals, and award that number of points to each individual.

**EXAMPLE 1:** Judge notes that the #1 ranked attorney and the #2 ranked attorney are tied.  
That is 9 total points (5+4) to be shared by 2 individuals.  
Award each individual 4.5 points.



**EXAMPLE 2:** Judge notes that the #2 ranked witness, #3 ranked witness, and the #4 ranked witness are tied.  
That is 9 total points (4+3+2) to be shared by 3 individuals.  
Award each individual 3 points.

The back of each Pairing Card has four quadrants for keeping track of award points received by plaintiff attorneys, plaintiff witnesses, defense attorneys, and defense witnesses. Each AMTA Representative should separately keep track of the individual award points on the back of their Pairing Card. It is common practice for the AMTA Representatives to wait to record these points until after the subsequent round has begun, giving their full attention to tabulating the main ballot results and pairing the subsequent round when ballots are returned.

It is good practice for each AMTA Representative to make some sort of small mark on each ballot once they have recorded the individual ranking points from that ballot, so that they do not accidentally mark the points from that ballot twice.

Occasionally, judges will make errors such as writing down character names, writing down the name of an individual in both attorney and witness columns, and so forth. The AMTA Representatives may consult team rosters and the white comment ballots to best determine which individual should receive which ranking points. There are some errors which simply cannot be corrected, in which case some ranking points will simply go unawarded.

At Regional and ORCS tournaments, the top ten ranked attorneys and the top ten ranked witnesses are recognized as Outstanding Attorneys and Outstanding Witnesses, along with all those tied for the final ranking. However, a minimum of 16 rank points is necessary for an award.

**EXAMPLE:** There are 9 students with 17 attorney rank points or better.  
There are 13 students with 16 attorney rank points or better.  
Because the 10<sup>th</sup> best ranking was 16 points, you must recognize all students with 16 attorney rank points or better.

**EXAMPLE:** There are 8 students with 16 witness rank points or better.  
There are 14 students with 15 witness rank points or better.  
Because there is a minimum of 16 points required to earn an award, only the 8 students at 16 or better will be recognized.

At Regional and ORCS tournaments, you will typically have about 12 attorney and 12 witness plaques/awards on hand. If you have more winners than hardware, be sure to get a mailing address for those students who need an award, and provide that information right away to the AMTA office. Likewise, if there are extra awards left

over, one AMTA Representative should mail the extra awards back to the AMTA office. Those awards may be used to make up for a lack of awards at another location.

At the National Championship Tournaments, all students who earn at least 18 or more ranking points (or 27 points if three ballots are used) on one side of the case as an attorney or witness are guaranteed All-American Attorney or All-American Witness designations. If fewer than ten students in a division earn 18 (or 27) points or better, all students in the top ten in individual rankings, plus those tied for tenth place, earn the designation. See Rule 5.31.

### **Tabulating the Spirit of AMTA Award**

An AMTA Representative must distribute the Spirit of AMTA ballot at the Round 3 Captains' Meeting. To ensure the forms are properly completed, the AMTA Representatives should pre-fill each ballot with the team number of the team completing the ballot as well as the team numbers that team faced in Rounds 1, 2, and 3.

Team captains must be reminded that the ballots are to be returned at the Round 4 Captains' Meeting. Captains who fail to return the ballot will not be given trial ballots for Round 4 or otherwise dismissed to begin their trial. Collection is best organized when all Spirit of AMTA ballots are collected at the same time; therefore, students should not be allowed to drop the ballot at the Tab Room at the end of Round 3.

If a tournament has a Bye-Buster team, the AMTA Representatives should make every effort to ask a student who participated on each Bye-Buster team to provide a Spirit of AMTA score for their opponent. This ensures that teams are not penalized in Spirit of AMTA balloting for facing the Bye-Buster.

Shortly after Round 4 begins, one of the AMTA Representatives should calculate the score each team received. A simple list, in team number order, is an easy way to add the scores. Ensure that you have recorded all three scores for each team. The maximum possible score is 30 (a perfect 10 from all three opponents).

Should multiple teams have the same number of points, the next tie-breaker is order rankings. Each team will rank its three opponents from most civil (#1) to least civil (#3). The team with the lowest sum of the rankings wins the tiebreaker.

**EXAMPLE:** Team 1200's opponents gave them rankings of 1-1-3.  
 Team 1300's opponents gave them rankings of 2-2-2.  
 Team 1200 wins the tiebreaker, because  $1+1+3=5$  is better than  $2+2+2=6$ .

Should there still be a tie, evaluate the quantity of positive comments left on the ballots. If one team received more positive comments than the other team, the team with more positive comments wins.

Should there still be a tie, evaluate the quality of the comments. While this is highly subjective, one team's comments may be more glowing in the judgment of the AMTA Representatives. If that is the case, the team receiving more glowing praise is the winner.

If the AMTA Representatives are unable to break the tie, co-winners may be named. Notify the AMTA office that a second Spirit of AMTA award must be prepared and sent to one of the co-winners.

### **Bye-Buster Team Procedures**

There are no "byes" in AMTA tournaments; an even number of teams must compete in each round. When an odd number of teams are present at a tournament, the AMTA Representatives must marshal a Bye-Buster team.

#### Creating The Team

The AMTA Representatives shall create the team using the following criteria, in order of importance:

1. Current undergraduate students should be used whenever possible. Alumni or coaches should only be used as a last resort.
2. Students who attend the school opposing the Bye-Buster team in a given round should not compete on the Bye-Buster team, except as a last resort.
3. Students who have competed or will compete at a different tournament at the same level of competition should not compete on the Bye-Buster team, except as a last resort.

**EXAMPLE:** A Bye-Buster team is competing at the Washington, DC Regional.

A student who will be competing at the Owings Mills Regional tournament on a different weekend should not participate on the Bye-Buster team, except as a last resort.

4. To the greatest extent possible, the same group of students should compete in both rounds when the Bye-Buster is the Plaintiff/Prosecution. Likewise, the same group of students should compete when the Bye-Buster is the Defense. This is not always 100% possible depending on the roles of the students on their "home" teams.

**EXAMPLE:** Student A is on the roster of Team 1200. They are an attorney when their team is Plaintiff, but has no role when their team is on the Defense. In Round 1, Team 1200 is the Defense, so Student A volunteers to be on the Bye-Buster team, which is randomly paired to be Plaintiff.

In Round 3, the Bye-Buster team is again scheduled to be Plaintiff.

Student A should be used if they are not needed to compete on their regular team in Round 3.

5. Remind students serving on the Bye-Buster team that they are not to tell the judges what schools they are from, so as to avoid judging conflicts in later rounds. The students may simply tell the judges they are a collection of students from various schools.

#### Ranking and Pairing Bye-Buster Teams

For pairing, bracketing, and resolution of impermissible matches, the Bye-Buster team shall always be assumed to have a ballot record of “-1.” Therefore, the Bye-Buster team will always have the lowest possible rank after any given round. For example, in a 24-team Regional tournament, after Round 1, the Bye-Buster team would be ranked either P12 or D12 depending on its side constraint; after Round 2, the Bye-Buster team would be ranked R24. At an ORCS tournament, if the Bye-Buster team exists from the beginning of the tournament, the Bye-Buster will be always be placed in the “D” group, and will always have the lowest ranking within the D group.

However, the Bye-Buster team’s actual record of ballots won must be used when calculating the Combined Strength or opponent’s Combined Strength for other teams in the tournament.

The Bye-Buster team may be involved in a “High-Low swap” during Round 4 Regional pairings (see page 19) and may be swapped as part of resolving an impermissible match. Remember, though, that when resolving impermissible matches, the Bye-Buster team is assumed to have a ballot record of “-1.”

**NOTABLE EXCEPTION:** See the sections immediately following regarding forfeits for pairing and ranking procedures when a Bye-Buster team is formed to replace a team that will arrive late or has departed early.

Individuals who compete on the Bye-Buster team are eligible to earn individual awards for their performance. However, the Bye-Buster team is ineligible to “place,” earn team awards, or bids. The Bye-Buster team should never be listed in the Tabulation Summary as one of the outstanding teams.

The Bye-Buster team shall compete using team number “1985” in honor of the year of AMTA’s founding, unless otherwise directed by the Tabulation Director.

### **Forfeit/No-Show Procedures**

If a team cannot or does not compete in a round for any reason and a Bye-Buster team can not be organized in a timely fashion, that team’s opponent shall be given a one-point win on each ballot. The individual award points for the team opposite the forfeited team shall be doubled from the other round in which that team competed on the same side of the case.

### Late Arriving Teams

If a team arrives at a tournament after it has missed one or more rounds, the procedure depends on whether or not there was a Bye-Buster team in play prior to the team’s late arrival.

If there was not a Bye-Buster team in play, the late-arriving team is assumed to have lost each ballot prior to its arrival by one point, and paired accordingly.

If there was a Bye-Buster team in play, the late-arriving team assumes the actual record of the Bye-Buster team prior to the team’s arrival, and is paired accordingly.

For purposes of team awards and bids to later stages of competition, only ballots actually won by a team are valid. A team receives no credit for ballots won by a Bye-Buster team prior to or after a team’s departure.

### Team(s) Departing Early, Creating an Odd Number of Teams

If one or more teams depart early causing an odd number of teams, a Bye-Buster team should be formed whenever possible. The Bye-Buster team assumes the record of the departing team for pairing and CS purposes. If there are multiple departing teams, but only one Bye-Buster team is needed, the Bye-Buster team assumes the record of the departing team with the lowest rank. If there are multiple teams with the lowest rank, choose the one with the lowest ballot record, lowest Combined Strength or lowest point differential.

### Team(s) Departing Early, Creating an Even Number of Teams

The most common scenario involves a tournament with an odd number of teams that therefore uses a Bye-Buster team. If one of the regular teams departs early, you may no longer need a Bye-Buster team.

#### *Situation Where You Can Not Discontinue The Bye-Buster Team*

You would not be able to discontinue the Bye-Buster team if the departing team needs the same side of the case as the Bye-Buster team in a side-constrained round. In this circumstance, you will need to field a second Bye-Buster team, which steps in to the shoes of the departing team as outlined on page 43 of the Manual.

**Example:** After 3 rounds, Team 1234 decides to leave early.  
Both Team 1234 and the Bye-Buster team need to be Defense in Round 4.  
If you removed Team 1234 and the Bye-Buster team from the field, you would have 12 teams that need plaintiff and 10 teams that need defense. You can not "waive" the side requirement for one team to create an even bracket.  
Therefore, you must field a second Bye-Buster.

#### *Situation Where You Can Proceed With an Even Number of Teams*

You can proceed with an even number of teams if the two departing teams depart prior to Round 3, or, if they depart prior to a side constrained round but need opposite sides of the case.

In these circumstances, repair the subsequent round without the departed team and without the Bye-Buster team. In later rounds, for CS and OCS purposes, assume the departed teams "kept pace" with the ballot records they earned prior to departure by prorating their ballot totals accordingly.

**Example:** After 2 rounds, Team 1234 departs early.  
Team 1234 had won 2 ballots through 2 rounds. The Bye-Buster team had won 1 ballot through 2 rounds.  
After Round 3: Team 1234 has an assumed record of 3 ballots, and the Bye-Buster team has an assumed record of 1.5 ballots.  
After Round 4: Team 1234 has an assumed record of 4 ballots, and the Bye-Buster team has an assumed record of 2 ballots.

### Effect on Other Teams

In any case where there is a hybrid of a “real” team in some rounds and a Bye-Buster team replacing it in others, the combined ballots won by the “real” team and the Bye-Buster team shall be used for pairing purposes and in determining the Combined Strength or opponent’s Combined Strength of any other team. However, the “real” team shall only receive a bid, a team placement award, or any other recognition on the basis of wins actually earned by the “real” team.

### **Handling Rules Complaints and Intervention Requests**

The AMTA Representatives are responsible for interpreting and enforcing AMTA Rules at sanctioned tournaments. The AMTA Rules govern such activity; this section is designed to provide a general overview and explanation of such rules. A common misconception is that any complaint brought to the Tab Room is a request for “**intervention.**” Rule 9.9(1) defines “intervention” as:

When an AMTA Representative acts in a manner which alters or affects the progress of the trial in a substantive way.

The Tab Director has interpreted this to mean any action of the AMTA Representatives that involves directing the presiding judge, the entire judging panel, and/or the teams to act or refrain from acting in a particular way.

Interventions are only allowed in three circumstances, as set forth in Rule 9.9(2):

- (a) To prevent the application of the All-Loss penalty under Rule 4.33;
- (b) To provide clarification of rules upon request of the judges;
- (c) To address a major and flagrant violation of AMTA Rules, such as a judge prohibiting a student with time remaining from taking the witness stand or delivering a closing argument.

Interventions are **absolutely not allowed** on evidentiary issues, including improper invention complaints.

A common intervention request concerns the All-Loss penalty. When such a request is properly made, an AMTA Representative should observe the trial to determine whether a judge is causing unnecessary delay in a trial. If it appears that the judge is causing or contributing to the delay, you may politely intervene at an appropriate break in the action and direct the judge as necessary. See Rule 4.33(6).

The following guidance may assist you in deciding whether to intervene, and, if so, what to do:

1. As a general rule, trials should proceed with the least amount of AMTA Representative interference necessary. To the maximum extent possible, the student attorneys should advocate to the presiding judge why the AMTA Rules support their position on a particular issue.
2. If a judge requests guidance on a rules issue, do not instruct the judge on how they should rule. Instead, neutrally explain the applicable rule or rules to the judge. If necessary, remind the judge that scoring is within the judge's own discretion. An AMTA Representative should not suggest that a student or team "broke the rules" or "should be marked down." (If a rules violation is shown, the AMTA Representatives may *separately* impose a tournament penalty outside the presence of the judges, as described in the next section.)

### Rule Violation Complaints

As compared to **intervention requests**, a complaint of a rule violation does not require the AMTA Representatives to "alter or affect the progress of a trial in a substantive way."

Any person may raise a rules violation with the AMTA Representatives, regardless of whether the person is affiliated with a particular team. For example, a sheriff's deputy might report that a student was disrespectful to security staff. Additionally, the AMTA Representatives may themselves investigate a possible rules violation on their own initiative.

The AMTA Representatives need not act if a complaint is plainly not a rules violation. For example, you may occasionally receive complaints that a team's opponent is recording a trial. You may simply advise the complainant that this activity is permitted by rule and take no further action.

However, if a complaint does allege a potential rules violation, the AMTA Representatives are to:

1. Investigate the complaint by contacting the affected parties and any other persons who may have knowledge about the complaint.
2. After investigation is complete, confer between the two AMTA Representatives to determine whether to impose a tournament penalty and, if so, what the penalty should be.
3. If the AMTA Representatives disagree, follow the procedure in Rule 9.3(3) to break the tie between the two AMTA Representatives.
4. Notify the affected party or parties of the determination as well as of their right to appeal the determination.
5. If a party chooses to appeal, assist the party in contacting the person necessary for hearing the appeal under Rule 9.4.



### Tournament Penalties

Unless otherwise provided in the Rules, the available tournament penalties are:

Verbal or written warning

Loss of time

Loss of witness selection order

Loss of individual or team awards

Loss of points

Exclusion of individuals (students, coaches, or observers) from the tournament

**Not every rule violation requires the imposition of a penalty.** Rule 9.2(3) and 9.8.

The AMTA Representatives should not unfairly impact the competitive balance of a tournament or punish harmless error through penalties.

Finally, the AMTA Representatives may never impose tournament penalties for improper inventions of fact. The sole post-trial remedy is to lodge a complaint with the Competition Response Committee. See Rule 8.9(6)(a).

### Key Differences Between Rule Violation Complaints and Intervention Requests

#### Rule Violation Complaint

\* Any person may complain

\*Remedy is a tournament penalty

\*Tournament penalty decision is appealable by any aggrieved party

#### Intervention Request

\*Only a rostered student may request, except as provided by Rule 9.9(4)(b)

\*Remedy is for Reps to intervene by directing/instructing the judges

\*Decision to intervene is not appealable by team requesting intervention

There are some circumstances that may be **both** a complaint of a rules violation and a request for intervention. Keep in mind that the decision of whether to intervene is separate and distinct from the decision of whether to impose a tournament penalty.

### Difference Between Tournament Penalty and Sanctions

The AMTA Representatives are empowered only to issue a tournament penalty. Only the AMTA Executive Committee may issue a sanction. A sanction is not an “in-tournament” remedy: it is intended to address egregious and/or intentional misconduct, and is almost always issued some time after a tournament concludes. Available sanctions include a written reprimand, placing a student or team on probation, suspending a student or team’s eligibility to compete, or revoking a school’s bid eligibility. If sanctionable conduct occurs during a tournament, the AMTA

Representatives should gather as much information as possible to assist the Competition Response Committee and/or the Executive Committee in their deliberations. The AMTA Representatives may request that the Executive Committee consider sanctions if the AMTA Representatives believe sanctionable conduct occurred.

In some cases, the AMTA Representatives may impose a tournament penalty for a rule violation and also refer the conduct to the Executive Committee for the consideration of sanctions.

## STEP-BY-STEP LIST OF TAB ROOM RESPONSIBILITIES

### Tab Room Responsibilities During Round 1

1. Post the All-Loss Time on or near the Tab Room door and in other prominent places. See AMTA Rule 4.33 for a discussion of the All-Loss Rule and how to calculate the All-Loss Time.
2. Write each team's Round 1 side and opponent on each team's Pairing Card. You may write in each team's Round 2 side—it is automatically the opposite of their Round 1 side.
3. Write each team's opponent on each team's Spirit of AMTA Ballot.
4. Conduct the coin flip for ranking tiebreakers. (See page 13)  
Note that the coin flip is conducted only once at each tournament. The result of the coin flip tiebreaker will break any ties between ranks during pairings after Rounds 1-3.

### Tab Room Responsibilities After Round 1

1. Check in each ballot from Round 1 trials.
2. Tabulate each ballot and record the results on each team's Pairing Card.
3. At Regionals and NCT, sort the Pairing Cards into "Needs Plaintiff" and "Needs Defense" stacks, and rank the teams within each stack.  
At ORCS, sort the Pairing Cards into the four Groups, and rank the teams within each Group.
4. Compare the two sets of Pairing Cards and resolve any discrepancies.
5. Deal the Pairing Cards.
6. Resolve all impermissible matches.
7. Confirm that both Reps have identical pairings.
8. Write the pairings down on multiple room grids and distribute the pairings and room assignments.
9. Conduct the 30 minute review period.
10. (optional as to timing) During the 30 minute review period, update the Pairing Cards with each team's Round 2 opponent.

11. (optional as to timing) During the 30 minute review period, update each team's Spirit of AMTA Ballot with the team's Round 2 opponent.

### **Tab Room Responsibilities During Round 2**

1. Post the All-Loss Time on or near the Tab Room door and in other prominent places. See AMTA Rule 4.33 for a discussion of the All-Loss Rule and how to calculate the All-Loss Time.
2. If not already completed, write each team's side and opponent on each team's Pairing Card.
3. If not already completed, write each team's opponent on each team's Spirit of AMTA Ballot.
4. If not already completed, update each team's individual award points received from Round 1 on the back of each team's Pairing Card.
5. Ensure the Tabulation Summary has been updated with the Round 1 results and the Round 2 opponents.
6. Ensure Round 1 ballots have been distributed to each team's envelope or folder.

### **Tab Room Responsibilities After Round 2**

1. Check in each ballot from Round 2 trials.
2. Tabulate each ballot and record the results on each team's Pairing Card.
3. Make a CS list, noting the total number of ballots won for each team.
4. When able, calculate the CS for each team and record the result on each team's Pairing Card.
5. At Regionals and NCT, sort the Pairing Cards into one stack, and rank the teams.  
At ORCS, sort the Pairing Cards into the four Groups, and rank the teams within each Group.
6. Deal the Pairing Cards.
7. Resolve all impermissible matches.
8. Conduct a coin flip to determine sides for Round 3.
9. Confirm that both Reps have identical pairings.
10. Write the pairings down on multiple room grids and distribute the pairings and room assignments.
11. Conduct the 30 minute review period.
12. During the 30 minute review period, update each team's Spirit of AMTA Ballot with the team's Round 3 opponent. The AMTA Representative will distribute each team's ballot to the team captain at the Round 3 Captains' Meeting.

13. During the 30 minute review period, update each team's Pairing Card with the team's Round 3 side and opponent, and the team's Round 4 side, which must be the opposite of the Round 4 side.

### **Tab Room Responsibilities During Round 3**

1. Post the All-Loss Time on or near the Tab Room door and in other prominent places. See AMTA Rule 4.33 for a discussion of the All-Loss Rule and how to calculate the All-Loss Time.
2. If not already completed, write each team's side and opponent on each team's Pairing Card.
3. If not already completed, update each team's individual award points received from Round 2 on the back of each team's Pairing Card.
4. Ensure the Tabulation Summary has been updated with the Round 2 results, the Round 3 sides/opponents, and the Round 4 sides.
5. Ensure Round 2 ballots have been distributed to each team's envelope or folder.

### **Tab Room Responsibilities After Round 3**

1. Check in each ballot from Round 3 trials.
2. Tabulate each ballot and record the results on each team's Pairing Card.
3. Make a CS list, noting the total number of ballots won for each team.
4. When able, calculate the CS for each team and record the result on each team's Pairing Card.
5. At Regionals and NCT, sort the Pairing Cards into "Needs Plaintiff" and "Needs Defense" stacks, and rank the teams within each stack.  
At ORCS, sort the Pairing Cards into the four Groups, and then into "Needs Plaintiff" and "Needs Defense" stacks within each Group.
6. At Regionals only, determine the "First Out" record.
7. At Regionals only, deal the Pairing Cards into two brackets, and follow the rules in this Manual to create even brackets if necessary.
8. At ORCS only, deal the Pairing Cards as described in the ORCS pairing section.
9. At NCT, deal the Pairing Cards high-high in one bracket as described in the NCT pairing section.
10. At Regionals only, remember that the "Primary Bracket" must have a "High-Low Swap" on the "Needs Defense" side prior to checking for impermissibles.
11. Resolve all impermissible matches. At Regionals only, start with the "Secondary Bracket."
12. Confirm that both Reps have identical pairings.

13. Write the pairings down on multiple room grids and distribute the pairings and room assignments.
14. Conduct the 30 minute review period.
15. (optional) During the 30 minute review period, update the Pairing Cards with each team's Round 4 opponent.

#### **Tab Room Responsibilities During Round 4**

1. Post the All-Loss Time on or near the Tab Room door and in other prominent places. See AMTA Rule 4.33 for a discussion of the All-Loss Rule and how to calculate the All-Loss Time.
2. If not already completed, write each team's Round 4 side and opponent on each team's Pairing Card.
3. One AMTA Representative should tabulate the Spirit of AMTA ballots.
4. If not already completed, update each team's individual award points received from Round 3 on the back of each team's Pairing Card.
5. Each AMTA Representative should prepare an initial list of individual award winners at 16 points and above.
6. Compare the two lists of individual award winners and resolve all discrepancies.
7. Ensure the Tabulation Summary has been updated with the Round 3 results, the Round 4 opponents, and the Team Spirit of AMTA winner.
8. Ensure all Round 3 ballots are distributed to each team's envelope or folder.

#### **Tab Room Responsibilities After Round 4**

1. Check in each ballot from Round 4 trials.
2. Tabulate each ballot and record the results on each team's Pairing Card. Remember that you do not need to calculate the running point differential at this point. Point differential is used only as a fourth-level tiebreaker.
3. Make a CS list, noting the total number of ballots won for each team. Remember that you do not need to calculate the CS for each team, only for those teams where necessary for tiebreaking purposes.
4. You will also be recording individual ranking points as ballots arrive. Update the back of the Pairing Card as well as your separate attorney and witness lists.
5. Rank the teams using the final placement tiebreakers in this Manual.
6. The Two AMTA Representatives must compare their final rankings and final attorney/witness award winners, and resolve any discrepancies.
7. Ensure the Tab Summary is updated with all Round 4 results, the final bid/award winners and all tiebreakers, and the attorney/witness award winners.
8. Ensure all ballots are distributed to the team folder or envelope.
9. Email the Tab Summary to the Tabulation Director prior to the awards ceremony.

10. Announce the results at the awards ceremony! At Regional and ORCS tournaments, bids should be announced beginning with the team with the best record through the team with the lowest record.
11. After the ceremony concludes, email a PDF copy of the Tab Summary to all coaches and captains (these emails can be found in the Tab Summary spreadsheet).

### **Tiebreaking After Round 4 (For Awards)**

After four rounds of competition, teams are first ranked (as in the rest of the tournament) by their record of ballots won. Tiebreaking procedures come into play if and only if two or more teams have an identical record.

Note that, under the new ORCS system, the group designations do not factor in any way when determining the final results. You should rank all teams based on the standard tiebreakers as in previous years, without regard to their group designation.

At Regional and ORCS tournaments, AMTA Representatives must break all ties for the final bid-earning placement. At most Regionals, and at ORCS, this is sixth place. If a tie is between two teams guaranteed to advance, break the tie as far as OCS and list that result on the Tab Summary.

**EXAMPLE:** There are six bids from Regionals to ORCS at your tournament. Team 1200 and Team 1300 both have a record of 7 wins. Assume that regardless of who wins the tiebreaker, both teams are guaranteed to earn bids (for example, they have the best and second-best records at the tournament).

There is no need to break this tie to the n-th degree, because both teams are advancing. However, the CS and OCS numbers are easy to calculate, and teams appreciate that information.

On the other hand, if Team 1200 and Team 1300 each have 5 wins, and one team will earn the sixth and final bid and one team will not receive a bid, you must break the tie following all of these procedures.

Any team which loses a tie for a bid should be listed as an “Honorable Mention” team on the Tab Summary, along with the tiebreaker information for that team.

At Regional and ORCS tournaments, if you have team(s) that have not earned bids or been involved with tiebreakers for the last bid, and those teams have 4.5 wins or more,

please also list those teams as “Honorable Mention” teams and list the team’s CS. This will assist the Tabulation Director in populating the Open Bid lists.

At the National Championship Tournament, AMTA Representatives must break all ties, because teams at that tournament are said to “place” rather than simply be deemed a qualifier to a subsequent round.

It is first important to discuss the Head-to-Head tiebreaker, which should be checked first whenever teams are tied after any stage of tiebreaking. In order to win the Head-to-Head tiebreaker, one team (a) must have faced all other teams tied at the same “level,” that is, at the same ballot record, at the same CS record, etc. and (b) that team must have had head-to-head victories against all other teams tied at the same “level.” A Head-to-Head victory means the winning team either won both ballots (W-W) or won one ballot and tied the other (W-T.) Split (W-L) decisions do not result in a Head-to-Head victory.

In a tournament using three ballots, a Head-to-Head victory occurs when one team wins at least two ballots (W-W-W, W-W-T, W-W-L) or wins the equivalent of two ballots (W-T-T.) A (W-T-L) decision does not result in a Head-to-Head victory.

The Head-to-Head tiebreaker must be evaluated after each stage of tiebreaking:

**EXAMPLE 1:** Teams 1100 and 1200 are the only two teams tied at 6 wins. Team 1100 played Team 1200 in Round 2. Team 1100 won both ballots. Team 1100 wins the Head-to-Head tiebreaker over Team 1200.

**EXAMPLE 2:** Teams 1100, 1200, and 1300 are the three teams tied at 6 wins. Team 1100 played Team 1200 in Round 2. Team 1100 won both ballots. Team 1100 played Team 1300 in Round 3. Team 1100 won one ballot and tied the other ballot. Team 1100 wins the Head-to-Head tiebreaker over both Team 1200 and Team 1300. Team 1300 played Team 1200 in Round 4. Team 1300 won both ballots. Team 1300 wins the Head-to-Head tiebreaker over Team 1200.

**EXAMPLE 3:** Teams 1100, 1200, and 1300 are the three teams tied at 6 wins. Team 1100 faced Team 1200, but did not face Team 1300. You do the first tiebreaker, which is Combined Strength (“CS.”)

You find that Team 1100 has a CS of 21, Team 1200 has a CS of 21, and Team 1300 has a CS of 20.

Team 1100 and Team 1200 are tied at the CS “level” of tiebreaking, so if Team 1100 had a victory over Team 1200, Team 1100 wins the tiebreaker over Team 1200. Team 1300 would be third, as it has a lower CS than both Team 1100 and Team 1200.

The tiebreakers, in order of application, are:

1. Head-to-Head victory (see above)
2. Combined Strength (“CS”) (greater sum is better)
3. Opponents’ Combined Strength (“OCS”) (greater sum is better)
4. Total point differential (“PD”) (greater positive differential is better)
5. Total PD after dropping each team’s most favorable and least favorable ballot differentials
6. Total PD after dropping each team’s two most and two least favorable ballot differentials.
7. Total PD after dropping each team’s three most and three least favorable ballot differentials.
8. (In a 3-ballot tournament only) Total PD after dropping each team’s four most and four least favorable ballot differentials.
9. (In a 3-ballot tournament only) Total PD after dropping each team’s five most and five least favorable ballot differentials.
10. Total raw points earned (140 points x 8 ballots = 1120 points maximum; 1680 points in a 3-ballot-per-round tournament)
11. Total raw points after dropping each team’s highest and lowest raw point ballots.
12. Total raw points after dropping each team’s two highest and two lowest raw point ballots.
13. Total raw points after dropping each team’s three highest and three lowest raw point ballots.
14. (In a 3-ballot tournament only) Total raw points after dropping each team’s four highest and four lowest raw point ballots.
15. (In a 3-ballot tournament only) Total raw points after dropping each team’s five highest and five lowest raw point ballots.
16. Flip of a United States coin: “heads” results in the team with the greater team number winning; “tails” results in the team with the smaller team number winning.



### Calculating Combined Strength (“CS”)

Combined Strength is the sum of the ballot records of a team’s opponents.

Example: Team 1000 faced Team 1111, Team 1222, Team 1333, and Team 1444.  
Team 1111 finished the tournament with a ballot record of 5.  
Team 1222 finished the tournament with a record of 4.5.  
Team 1333 finished the tournament with a record of 3.  
Team 1444 finished the tournament with a record of 4.5.

Team 1000’s CS is  $5 + 4.5 + 3 + 4.5 = 17$ .

### Calculating Opponent’s Combined Strength (“OCS”)

Opponent’s Combined Strength is the sum of the Combined Strength scores of a team’s opponents.

**EXAMPLE:** Team 1000 faced Team 1100, Team 1200, Team 1300, and Team 1400.

You will first need to go to the Pairing Card of Team 1100. If you have not done so already as part of the tiebreaking process, calculate Team 1100’s CS, by looking at Team 1100’s Pairing Card and calculating the sum of the ballots won by each of Team 1100’s opponents.

Then, go to the Pairing Cards of Team 1200, Team 1300, and Team 1400 and do the same.

Let’s say Team 1100 had a CS of 19, Team 1200 had a CS of 18.5, Team 1300 had a CS of 22, and Team 1400 had a CS of 13. The sum of those four numbers is Team 1000’s OCS.  
 $19+18.5+22+13 = 72.5$ .

## Special Rules for the National Championship Final Round

### Determining Sides

Of the two division champions, the team with the better record shall have the privilege of choosing its side for the final round. If both teams have the same ballot record, the tiebreakers above shall be used, in order, to determine which team has earned the privilege. In other words, if both teams have a ballot record of 7, the team with the greater CS shall choose its side. If both teams have the identical CS, then the team with the greater OCS shall call choose its side, and so on.

### Tiebreaking Championship Trial Results

The team that wins the most number of ballots in the Championship Trial shall be the winner. If each team wins the same number of ballots, or if all ballots are tied, e.g. 3-3, 3-3-1, 0-0-6, use the following tiebreakers in order:

1. The team with more total points earned in the Championship Round.
2. If the presiding judge did NOT score the round, the presiding judge shall answer the question: "Which team put on the better performance?" The team picked shall be declared the champion. If the presiding judge refuses to answer the question, proceed to the next tiebreaker.
3. The team that won more ballots in the tournament's initial four rounds.
4. The team with more total points earned in the Championship Round after discarding each team's ballot with the highest and lowest total points earned.
5. The team with more total points earned in the Championship Round after discarding each team's ballot with the second highest and second lowest total points earned.
6. If a tie remains after the above tiebreakers have been performed, co-champions shall be declared.