

From the Tournament Handbook

(Selected Excerpts - 5 of 37 pages)

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Table of Contents

Getting Organized

Introduction	3
Contents of the Tournament Package	4
Overview of the Tournament	5
Sample Tournament Schedule	6
General Comments: Organizing	7
Sample Table Arrangement	8
General Areas of Responsibilities	9

Detailed Instructions for Committee Chairs

Tourney	11
Site	12
Publicity	13
Registrar	14
Awards	15
Printing and Packaging	16-17
Head Proctor and Assistant	18-20
Solutions Review	21
Head Scorer and Assistant	22-23

Sample Correspondence and Forms

Sample Table Assignment Master List	25
Sample Scoring Spreadsheet	26
Sample Press Release: Before	27
Sample Cover Letter	28
Sample Fact Sheet	29
Sample Tournament Registration Form	30
Sample Confirmation Letter	31
Sample Check-In Letter	32
Sample Chaperone Evaluation Form	33
Sample Press Release: After	34
MOEMS Evaluation Form	35
Permission to Reprint Copyrighted Material	36
Agreement for Next Year	37

Introduction

So you want to put on a mathematics tournament for students in grades 4-6 or 7-8.

This document is designed to walk you through every step of the way. It is very thorough, containing much more material than you can use. Over 30 years of experience in mounting contests and tournaments taught us much, and this booklet tries to pass it all on to you. The answer to any question you might have may well be here. If not, contact MOEMS.

All aspects of the tournament are spelled out in great detail for all members of the tournament committee: very specific guides for each task to be done, a suggested script for the Head Proctor to direct both the students and their chaperones, and sample communications to both schools and the media. In addition, successful practices from some organizations are included.

Pages 4-8 contain a general description of all the work needed to mount the tournament and should be familiar to all committee members. Pages 9 - 23 amplify the descriptions with explicit instructions for each committee member and should be distributed to them. Specific tasks are assigned to specific members, but should be changed as needed. Pages 24 - 35 offer samples for all communications, from forms to registration flyers to press releases. This handbook contains them as PDF files, but editable versions as DOC files accompany this manual. Page 36 allows you to reproduce the copyrighted material for tournament purposes. Page 37 can be used to sign up with MOEMS for next year.

IMPORTANT: Each team of 5 students should be accompanied by a chaperone, preferably a teacher from the school. For students so young, having their teachers visible during the tournament is reassuring, so using all the chaperones as proctors allows the child to see his or her teacher at all times. However, each chaperone should proctor an unrelated team at least two tables away from his or her students. If parents are used as proctors or scorers, problems can occur unless preventative care is taken.

People other than these chaperones should be used in the scoring room. This includes members of the sponsoring organization, retired teachers, student teachers, extra chaperones, and chaperoning parents.

Children should not sit endlessly. Separating the testing and problem-reviewing areas lets them burn off excess energy by moving about. To save time, the areas should be close to each other.

I am grateful to the following people whose hard work enabled us to create and offer the Tournament to you. Jane Sessler in 2006 suggested a math tournament for students in grades 4-6 in support of a Long Island organization; she and Richard Kalman designed and mounted it, based on an existing high school competition. Curt Boddie, Richard and Jane had co-created that high school tournament in 1983, so Curt was a natural choice to chair the committee to design this Tournament for your organization's use. A second pilot tournament for grades 4-6 was mounted in 2007 for the Nassau County (NY) math teachers and supervisors. Ann Masters was quick to join them in organizing it. Several other people followed her lead. Eric O'Brien helped Rich and Curt in the design of this handbook. Many changes were suggested by Dr. Jason Frand after he hosted the tournament in Culver City, CA. Requests for a companion tournament for grades 7-8 led to completely separate problem sets by 2009, although their structures were, and remain, identical.

The ideas in these pages are the results of Curt's and Rich's experience with the high school tournament for years and employ many observations by many enthusiastic colleagues, as well as the results of a number of volunteers and chaperones during the two years of pilot 4-6 tournaments.

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Sample Tournament Schedule

9:00	Team check-in Chaperones get assignments and collect student lunches, placing student names on lunch bag. Students fill in name tags and then proceed to Individual Event tables. Head Proctor chooses Cluster Leaders to help distribute and collect contest papers.
9:30	Welcome; Instructions for Individual Event
9:40	Individual Event: 10 problems, 30 minutes (Room 1)
10:20	Explanations of Individual Event solutions (Room 2) Assistant Proctor places snacks on each table in room 1 during the review. Scorers grade results, record them, and compile High Scorer list.
11:00	Snacks (Room 1); Instructions for Team Event Students proceed to Team Event Table.
11:20	Team Event: 10 problems solved cooperatively, 20 minutes (Room 1)
11:45	Explanations of Team Event solutions (Room 2) Scorers grade results, record them, and compile High Scorer list.
12:25	Bag Lunch (Room 1)
12:55	Tiebreakers (Room 1): 5 problems, 1 at a time, up to 5 minutes each Those tied for awards sit up front. Show problems on screen also.
1:25	Awards (Room 1) Top individuals and teams receive awards, and pose for pictures.
2:00	Dismissal and bus pickup

Notes:

Change this schedule as needed.

1. The name tags help ensure that students place the right Team Number on answer sheets.
2. Lunches are collected during the check-in so that students do not eat them during the snack period.
3. With a tight schedule, efficiency is improved by using “cluster leaders” and by distributing food beforehand.
4. Moving frequently between rooms releases excess energy from these young children.
5. A short snack period allows students to relax before the Team Event and to stay focused longer.
6. The Individual Event is done in 5-table clusters. Each table has one student from each of the 5 teams in the cluster. Students see a reason to “cover their paper”. One proctor per cluster is selected as the Cluster Leader to assist the Head Proctor with distribution, collection, and sorting for those five teams.
7. In the Team Event the students should split up the work, remembering that problems increase in difficulty from first to last and that they are working against the clock.
8. The High Scorers receive a printed tiebreaker. At the same time, the problem is displayed on the screen for everyone else to solve silently.

SAMPLE SCORE ENTRY SPREADSHEET

Team #	Team Name	Student Name	Individual Event	Team Event	Total Score	Awards
<i>Enter names and scores only in unshaded cells.</i>						
1	Mill School A	Arlen, Sue	4		4	
1	Mill School A	Benno, Bob	9		9	4th
1	Mill School A	Epstein, Annie	8		8	
1	Mill School A	Ferrara, Mona	7		7	
1	Mill School A	Hong, John	2		2	
1	Mill School A	School Total	30	7	51	
2	Ray School A	aaaa	10		10	2nd
2	Ray School A	bbbb	3		3	
2	Ray School A	cccc	5		5	
2	Ray School A	dddd	7		7	
2	Ray School A	eeee	5		5	
2	Ray School A	School Total	30	4	42	
3	Crest School	aaa	8		8	
3	Crest School	bbb	9		9	Hon. Mention
3	Crest School	ccc	7		7	
3	Crest School	ddd	7		7	
3	Crest School	eee	8		8	
3	Crest School	School Total	39	10	69	3rd
4	BNM School	aaaaaaaaa	7		7	
4	BNM School	bbbbbbbbbbb	10		10	1st
4	BNM School	ccccccccc	5		5	
4	BNM School	ddddddddd	6		6	
4	BNM School	eeeeeeeeeee	8		8	
4	BNM School	School Total	36	8	60	
5	Rawls School A	aa	2		2	
5	Rawls School A	bbbbbbbb	8		8	

Scorekeeping is done in the supplied Excel spreadsheet file, which consists of 4 worksheets. Entries are made only in white boxes, not in shaded boxes. Each entry is carried through to the other worksheets.

Worksheet 1 is partially shown. It is formatted for 120 teams, more than enough for your tournament. Before the tournament, enter the team and student names, correcting them as needed. During the tournament, enter the number of correct answers in the six white boxes. Excel will compute the two totals for each team ($Total\ Score = School\ Total\ of\ Individual\ Event + 3 \times Team\ Event$).

Worksheet 2 contains the assignments for each team and each proctor. The proctor's name and assignment should be entered. The worksheet can be sorted to make it easier to guide people to their tables after check-in. A sample is on page (25).

Worksheet 3 displays all Student Totals. Sort to find top-ranked students. Make no entries on this sheet.

Worksheet 4 displays all Total Scores. Sort to find top-ranked teams. Make no entries on this sheet.