Speech - Tiebreaker

Submitted on Mon, 05/15/2023 - 9:26 AM

Indicate the category of the proposed recommendation
State Tournament Recommendations regarding Format and Non-NFHS Rules or NFHS Experiments

Authors of the Proposal
MSCA Speech Advisory Committee:
Dana Amdahl, MSCA President
Ross Eichele-MSCA Past President
John Kleinwolterink
Bev Diles
Brian Stoebner
Zach Prax

Activity/Activities (Check all that apply)
Speech

Current Rule/Policy
State the rule/policy as it appears in the current MSHSL Handbook or Activity/Sport Specific Rules and Policies.
"Determining Finalists" #3

Proposed Recommendation
Submit your proposed change to the above-stated rule/policy.
Pages 17-18, "Determining Finalists" #3

Results from head to head matchups will be used to break ties. If a tie still occurs, or head to head cannot be used, the tabulators will use the average opponent rank of the speakers met in Rounds 1, 2, and 3 by each speaker in the tie. The speaker in the tie whose opponents have the lowest average ranks will advance. If a tie still occurs, reciprocal fractions of actual ranks will be used.

Include any other policies that are impacted by this proposal.
None.

Rationale
What is the history of the proposal?
Speech Advisory met at MSHSL on May 10 to review rule change proposals from coaches. This proposal, from Zach Prax of Eastview High School, was discussed at length and is supported unanimously by the committee.

How does your proposal benefit education-based opportunities and MSHSL Mission and Beliefs for all Minnesota students?
This makes tabulating results more accurate and fair.

From Zach Prax who tabulates results at the state tournament:
"The old rule works in a world where there are exactly 24 entries in each event. That used to be possible...if a student were ill and couldn't compete, an alternate could take their place. And, sections would always be competitive...in the past few years, there have been sections in both A and AA unable to field at least three entries in an event. Drops and fewer than three qualifying entries now mean that we often have fewer than 24 competing in an event at the state tournament. The precise wording of the rule doesn't even reflect the reality of an event with fewer than 24 speakers as "the actual ranks of the fifteen speakers met" can't be added when there aren't fifteen speakers that were competed against.

Average opponent rank is terrible to calculate by hand, but using Speechwire now means that tournament management can do it easily. It doesn't matter if an entry is in a section of five or six...average opponent rank corrects for those imbalances. Using the average corrects.

Without this rule in place, my concern is that tournament management will in future years create a phantom competitor to address a drop, and give that competitors a 6, just to follow "actual ranks." They have done that in the past, even when Speechwire allowed for the average. I believe that both the average opponent rank is less harmful than creating a phantom entry that 6s are then given to. If an entry is going against a guaranteed last place finisher in each round, their actual rank suffers more than an entry who gets to use average opponent rank without creating a phantom entry."

What other policies are significant in this proposal?
None

Provide evidence of support for the proposal from other groups
This is a small, common-sense change that is supported by Speech Advisory and Ben Stewart of Speechwire.

Impact
How does your proposal affect this activity, including its impact on all classes, areas of the state, and variety of schools
This change will make the tabulation of ranks more accurate and fairer to all competitors.

Administration
How does your proposal impact section and state tournaments?
This change will make the tabulation of ranks more accurate and fairer to all competitors.

Length of Tournament
How does your proposal impact the needed competition time for section and state tournaments?
No impact.

Participants
How does your proposal impact the number of participants/teams?
No impact.

How does your proposal impact the percentage of participants/teams that would qualify for the state tournament?
No impact.

**Facilities**
How does your proposal impact the facilities needed to accommodate your recommendation at both the section and state level?
No impact.

**Awards**
How does your proposal impact the number of awards at both section and state?
No impact.

**Other**
Provide any other pertinent information not included in this proposal
None.

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