

Santa Clara County's Modifications to the 2023-24 Team Rulebook ("Local Rules")

(Revised December 6, 2023)

1. Local Rules

The Santa Clara County High School Mock Trial Tournament Steering Committee adopts the Teach Democracy (formerly known as Constitutional Rights Foundation) Team Rulebook with the following modifications:

Rules concerning mandatory point deductions: The 2023-2024 Team Rulebook specifies a number of mandatory point deductions. As in the past, Santa Clara adopts the mandatory point deductions set forth in Rule 3.6G and H for failing to begin a direct or cross examination within the allotted time. However, to encourage professionalism and good sportsmanship, and to discourage overzealous allegations of rule violations, the other specified point deductions are not mandatory. The presiding judge has the discretion to determine whether a violation occurred. If the presiding judge determines that a violation occurred, the presiding judge will direct the scoring attorneys to use their own discretion to determine individually how many points (if any) to take off their score sheets. The decisions made by the presiding judge and scoring attorneys will be final. The Tournament Administrators, County Coordinator, and the Steering Committee will not consider any appeals regarding any rule violations or point deductions.

2. Specific Rule Modifications

Rule 1.4(C). This rule is modified to add the following sentence -- "Coaches' edits and contributions do not constitute plagiarism." Add "See Scripting Guidelines" to the end of the paragraph.

Rule 3.2(B). Teacher and Attorney coaches may only be identified at the conclusion of the trial.

Rule 3.2(C). (School anonymity) This rule is not adopted.

Rule 3.2(D). (Clothing that identifies a school) This rule is not adopted.

Rule 3.2(F). Delete second sentence and replace with "Schools may provide rosters with information on which roles and assignments the students perform."

Rule 3.2(I). Add "However, the Clerk and Backup Timer may use their cell phones as a stopwatch."

Rule 3.3(G). This rule is not adopted. The only mandatory penalty is if one side does not call a witness before time is called.

Rule 3.4(G) The only mandatory penalty is if one side does not call a witness before time is called.

Rule 3.5B This rule is not adopted. In Santa Clara County, it is within the exclusive discretion of the presiding judge to determine where lawyers may stand during speeches

and examinations. This issue should be discussed with the presiding judge when the lawyers discuss housekeeping matters with the presiding judge before opening statements.

Rule 3.5(D). The only mandatory penalty is if one side does not call a witness before time is called.

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Rule 3.7(D). This rule is supplemented by the Guidance to Schools and Presiders Re: Unfair Extrapolation and Witnesses.

Rule 3.9(F). The rule is modified to include “when attorneys read stipulations into the record” as conduct when the clock is not stopped.

Rule 3.9(D). See the MT Steering Committee Guidance Regarding Cross-Examination Answers

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Rules 4.4. The Power Pairing Memo replaces these rules for purposes of the Santa Clara County High School Mock Trial Tournament.