

1999 Competition Rules for the Preliminary Round of the US DOE Southwestern Pennsylvania High School Science Bowl

Eligibility Rules

1. Each competing team consists of four student members and one student alternate. To be eligible to compete, a student must be enrolled for the current school year in grades nine, ten, eleven or twelve at the team's school **and must be less than 20 years of age or receive a special waiver from the Department of Energy.**
2. No school may compete in more than one regional competition.

Competition Rules

3. The contest will use a round robin format for the preliminary rounds and a four-team double elimination format for the final rounds. For the preliminary rounds at the CCAC - South Campus, teams will be randomly placed in four (4) divisions with the number of teams per division as equal as possible. Each team will play 6 to 8 matches in its division in the preliminary round. At the end of each match, regardless of the overall score, two points are awarded for a win; one point for a tie; and zero points for a loss. There will be no tie break questions during the round robin matches.
 - (a) The top team in each division will advance to the four-team double elimination format final rounds at the Federal Energy Technology Center on **February 24, 1999**. Preliminary rounds **ONLY** determine eligibility for the final rounds, **not position in the draw.**
 - (b) In the event that one winning team from each division is not clearly identifiable (i.e. two or more teams are tied for first), a tie-break procedure in the following order will be used:
 - (I) Head to head won/loss record
 - (ii) Fewest losses
 - (iii) (a) If two (2) teams are still tied, there will be a five toss-up question run-off (interrupt penalty in effect). No bonus questions will be used during this segment of the competition. If still tied, another five toss-up question run-off will be used, etc. until the advancing team is determined.
 - (b) If more than two teams are tied, each team, in separate rooms, will be given a series of ten toss-up questions (no bonus questions will be used during this segment of the competition). The usual five (5) seconds will be allowed for a competitor to buzz in after the question is completely read. There are no interrupt penalties but also no reason to interrupt since all ten questions will be read. Scoring will be based on the number of questions right minus the number wrong. If two or more teams are still tied, procedure iii (a) or (b), as appropriate, will be used until the advancing teams are determined.

4. The final rounds of the regional contest will use a four-team double elimination format. No advancing team is eliminated from the final round until it has lost two matches. First round opponents for the final rounds will be determined by drawing lots. After this, a competition flow chart will be followed to determine opposing teams.
5. All the matches are played until either the time expires or **all the toss-up questions have been read**. The preliminary round will have two 8 minute halves with a 2-minute break (halves at the regional finals and Nationals are 10 minutes). We reserve the right to adjust length of halves to facilitate scheduling. In no case would halves be shorter than 6 minutes.
6. Substitutions may be made only at the half.
7. Both toss-up and bonus questions will be used for the preliminary and semi- final and final rounds (Please refer to specific rules for the final round). No team will have more than one opportunity to answer a toss-up question.
8. Questions are either multiple choice or short answer. **The only acceptable answer to a multiple choice question will be one of those read by the moderator.**
9. After reading a toss-up question, the moderator will allow 5 seconds for the two teams to respond before proceeding to the next toss-up question. Timing begins after the moderator has completed reading the toss-up question. Once read in its entirety, a toss-up question will not be reread.
10. On toss-up questions, the first player on either team to activate the lock-out buzzer system wins the right to answer the question. Before answering, however, the team member must be **verbally recognized** by the moderator. No player may buzz in until **AFTER** the moderator has identified the subject area of the question.
11. On toss-up questions, no consultation among team members may occur.
12. Should a player answer a toss-up question before being verbally recognized by the moderator or should consultation among any of the team members occur, any answer given does not count (the moderator does not say whether the answer given was correct or incorrect) and the team loses the right to answer the toss-up question. The question is then offered to the opposing team.
13. A participant who has buzzed in on a toss-up question must answer the question promptly after being verbally recognized by the moderator. After recognizing a participant, the moderator will allow for a natural pause (up to 3 seconds), but if the moderator determines that stalling occurred, the team loses its opportunity to answer the question and it is offered to the opposing team if eligible.
14. On a toss-up question, the first answer given is the only one that counts.

15. If the answer to a toss-up question is wrong and the question was completely read, the other team is given the opportunity to answer the toss-up question, **unless time expires before the second team has buzzed in.**
16. If a toss-up question is interrupted, the player recognized, and the answer correct, the team will receive 1 point. If the answer is incorrect, 1 point is added to the opposing team's score, the question is reread in its entirety, and the opposing team has an opportunity to answer the toss-up question for an additional point.
17. If the moderator inadvertently gives an answer to a toss-up question without giving either team a chance to respond, no points are awarded and the moderator goes on to the next toss-up question.
18. If a toss-up question is interrupted, the player in **NOT** recognized and blurts out an answer, the result is a non-answer. No penalty points are awarded to the opposing team. The moderator will not indicate whether the answer was right or wrong and the question is reread in its entirety to the opposing team.
19. If the moderator inadvertently gives the answer to a toss-up question before allowing the second team to respond (after an incorrect answer, or an answer given without the team member having been recognized) the next toss-up question will be asked to the second team in place of the inadvertently answered question.
20. If the time runs out in the contest or half; the following conditions apply;

If a toss-up question has been completely read, teams must buzz in before the time has run out. If a team had not buzzed in before the time runs out, it does not get a chance at the toss-up. This means, if a question was read completely and the first team that buzzes in is recognized and answers incorrectly or answers before being recognized, the second team will not get a chance at the toss-up unless it is able to buzz in before the time is called.

If the time runs out as a toss-up question is being read (**i.e., interrupted**), the following rules apply:

- (a) if no one buzzes in before the time is called, the contest or half is over;
 - (b) if a team member buzzes in before the time is called, is recognized, and answers the question correctly, the team receives 1 point before the contest or half ends;
 - (c) if a team member buzzes in before time is called, is recognized, but answers the question incorrectly, the other team receives 1 point and the question is reread for the other team, which is given the chance to answer it before the contest or half is over;
 - (d) if a team member buzzes in before time is called, is not recognized, and gives an answer, the answer is not accepted and the question is read in its entirety for the other team which is given a chance to it before the contest of half ends.
21. **No one in the audience may communicate with participants during the match;** communication will result in ejection from the competition room.

22. If someone in the audience shouts out an answer, the question will be thrown out (as will the person) and the moderator will proceed to the next question.
23. **Prior to each match, the two team coaches will introduce themselves to each other and will sit together in the back row of the competition room.**
24. No notes may be brought to the competition table. Nothing may be written before the clock starts. Scratch paper will be provided at the beginning of each match and collected at half-time and at the conclusion of the match.
25. Calculators are not permitted.

Challenges

26. Challenges are made only in response to an answer made by either team.
27. The answer given by the moderator will be considered as the acceptable answer.
 - (a) When an active team member (alternates may not challenge) challenges the validity of the "official" answer he/she may ask for a "judge's decision". This request must be lodged prior to the next question. The clock will be stopped on command of the moderator and begun in the same manner.
 - (b) The moderator will note the challenge.
 - (c) The challenge will be considered by the team of judges after the competition round. Teams will be notified of the results of challenges at the end of the last preliminary round (before any tie breakers are considered).
28. In the case of successful challenges where an alternative answer, in the ruling of the judges is equally valid to the one provided by the moderator, the challenger will receive 1 point. No team shall lose points as a result of a challenge, thus points won before the challenge will stand.
29. Because matches are not always concurrent, questions and answers may not be recorded electronically nor in writing.