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WHY IS DECEMBER 9 IMPORTANT?

- Participant Agreement/Photo Releases, Team Rosters, and Fee Must be Submitted
- We Need a Reliable Count of Participating Schools and Number of Students to Insure Adequate Resources

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WHY IS JANUARY 20 IMPORTANT?

- Last Date to Change Team Roster/Add Team Members
- Last Date to be Eligible for Refund if Your Team Must Withdraw
- Final Decisions About Logistics will be Made That Day. We Need a Reliable Count of Participating Schools to Assess Resources.



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COMPETITION DATES

- ROUND 1: February 9
- ROUND 2: February 15
- ROUND 3: February 22
- ROUND 4, AWARD CEREMONY, AND SEMIFINALS: February 25
- CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND: February 28

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COMPETITION LOGISTICS

- We have eliminated the In-Person Student Orientation Immediately Before Each Round – You and Your Students are Expected to Watch Our Virtual Logistics Sessions
- You Will Receive Courtroom Assignments In Advance
- Coach or Teacher Must Check-In in Courthouse Lobby
- Allow Time for Going Through Security
- Best if Your Team Arrives Together; Don't Congregate on Steps or in Lobby



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DON'T BE LATE

ROUNDS 1 - 3 WILL START PROMPTLY AT 5:30 P.M.
 • Teams should plan to be in the courthouse by 4:30 p.m.

ROUND 4 WILL START PROMPTLY AT 9:00 A.M.
 • Teams should plan to be in the courthouse by 8:00 a.m.

Awards Ceremony will take place following Round 4 and the semifinal round will take place after the awards ceremony.

Note: If a scheduled team is not present in the assigned courtroom within **15 minutes** of the designated start time, the team forfeits the trial and is subject to disqualification. (Rule 4.7 A.)



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WHAT ABOUT COURTROOM OBSERVERS?

ROUNDS 1 – 4: We are hopeful, but not certain, that parents/guardians/family/non-competing team members will be able to be physically present in the courtrooms to observe. Will also be available online.

SEMI-FINAL AND FINAL: May be present. Will also be available online.

AWARDS CEREMONY: May be present. Will also be available online.


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VIDEO/AUDIO/STILL PHOTOGRAPHY POLICY

- Teams may only take video/audio/still photography of a trial involving their own team with the permission of the opposing team and the judicial officer. Any team has the option to refuse video/audio/still photography during a round. Video/audio/still photography is for training purposes only and **may not be posted on the internet or published in any manner.**
- The competition has official photographers working on behalf of the Mock Trial Committee who may access all trials, orientations, and the awards ceremony to document everyone's participation (and for use in a slide show at the awards ceremony and mock trial promotion). All students have signed permission slips allowing use of these photographs by the Committee.

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MATCHUP PREVIEW

Round 1: Random Selection.

Round 2: Teams will flip sides from Round 1. Match based on W/L record, Power Scores ("percentage system") from Round 1, and placement in bracket.

Round 3: Match based W/L record, Power Scores from Rounds 1 and 2, and placement in bracket.

Round 4: Match based on W/L record, Power Scores from Rounds 1 - 3, and placement in bracket. Will consider whether Prosecution or Defense in the preceding round.

Four Teams with Best Win-Loss and Power Scores Will Be Selected for Semi-Finals. If a Tie, Tie-Breaker Forms Will Be Used. Winner of Each Semi-Final Round Will Go On to the Championship Round.

Explained in **Rule 4.6.**

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PREPARATION TIPS

- Take time to **review SD Rules, Scoring Criteria and Guidelines** with students. Consider designating a "rules guru." Note: Virtual Rules in shaded section.
- Routinely look for website announcements, FAQs, and training tips and materials. Encourage students to do so as well.**
- Respond to Mock Trial emails quickly.**
- Scrimmage**, if you can. (Take Rule 1.4 seriously; CRF copyrighted their materials.)
- Prepare, but no Scouting.** See Rule 1.5.
- Notify Committee in advance via Gmail if a student needs an accommodation.**



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TEAM COMPOSITION

- Teams 8 – 25 members. Must have 8 active team members participating in each trial (Rule 2.2 A & B).
- 1 pretrial motion attorney; 3 trial attorneys maximum (will also make opening & closing); pretrial attorney may not sit at counsel table or assist trial attorneys.
- 4 witnesses (all 4 must be called in one trial). Direct exam and cross-exam; may re-direct; no re-cross exam.
- 1 clerk/timer - participates with the prosecution team.
1 unofficial timer – participates with the defense team.
- 1 bailiff - participates with the defense team.
- Students can take on different rolls during your school's prosecution or defense rounds.

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STRONGLY DISCOURAGED ACTIONS (For Which Mandatory Penalties Apply)

- Ignoring team composition requirements (Rule 2.2 D)
- Running of time/Filibustering (Rule 3.9 D)
- Failure to call a witness (Rule 3.5 G)
- Failure to cross-examine a witness (Rule 3.5 H)
- Objection by wrong attorney during direct, cross or re-direct (Rule 3.7 C)
- Objection during pretrial argument, opening statement, or closing argument (Rules 3.8 C, 3.7 G)
- Unfair extrapolation (Rule 3.6 J)
- Failure by Clerk to provide time warnings (Rule 3.8)
- Assertion of hyper-technical rules violations (Rule 4.1 H)
- Improper trial communication with coaches, teachers, spectators, and between pretrial and trial attorneys and team members (Rules 3.3 A, E, F, and H)

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TRIAL COMMUNICATION - RULE 3.3

- Once trial starts, teachers, attorney coaches, teammates, and spectators are not allowed to communicate unless it is expressly permitted by the rules (e.g. communication between trial attorneys, between defense attorneys and defendant, between team members and coaches for 30- second irregularities consult).
- Pretrial attorneys cannot sit with trial attorneys.
- Mandatory 5-point penalty from team score for violations of Rules 3.3 A, F, and G; up to 2-point penalty from team score for violations of Rules 3.3 B or E, or if permissible communication is disruptive.
- No use of electronic devices.



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RUNNING OF TIME/ FILIBUSTERING RULE 3.9 D

- Running of another team’s time or filibustering is not allowed. Witness’ unreasonable running or filibustering of the opposing team’s time is inappropriate.
- Can draw an objection: non-responsive, narrative or running time.
- If the judge determines there has been an unreasonable running of time, the witness may be admonished by the judge and the judge may direct the attorney scorers to **deduct 5 points from the offending witness’s score.**
- Running of time is now officially part of the scoring guidelines as well.

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THE CLERK’S ROLE AND TIME KEEPING

- **Clerk** has an essential and **neutral role** (as does the bailiff), as timekeeper; providing verbal warnings and displaying timecards (2 minute, 1 minute, 30 seconds, and stop).
- Coaches are urged to work with clerks so they understand the requirements of the role.
- Rule 3.9 G has expanded list of events which stop time:
 - Witnesses called to stand and be sworn by bailiff
 - Attorneys make objections
 - Judge questions attorneys and witnesses
 - Judge offers observations
 - A witness asks for a question to be repeated
 - Attorneys request time remaining (remaining time must be provided for both sides)
- Time checks are limited to 4 per trial (SD Rule 3.9H)
- **JOIN US FOR TIMING CLINIC IN JANUARY 2023!**



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RULES OF EVIDENCE

- The Simplified Rules of Evidence are similar to CA rules
- Handling and Admitting Evidence - Rule 3.4
- Developing familiarity with the SRE and objections
 - Common: Relevancy, Hearsay, Foundation, Leading
 - Less Common: More Prejudicial than Probative, Improper Opinion, Impeachment with Prior Acts, Compound Question, Calls for a Narrative, Asked and Answered, Non-Responsive, Beyond the Scope
 - Unique To Mock Trial: Unfair Extrapolation
 - Unique to SD: Unreasonable Running of Time
- Objections:
 - Can only be made by the attorney examining the witness for the opposing side
 - Should never be made during pretrial motion, opening statement, or closing argument
 - Work on how to make an objection

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SCORING BASICS



1. Independent Scoring – Scoring attorneys do not consult with each other or the judge. Judge does not score.
2. Scorers score students' individual presentations – **not** as compared to the opposing team.
3. Scorers' primary goal is to apply Evaluation Criteria and score based on that criteria. Secondly, scorers will be noting particular points for comments/constructive criticism after scores are submitted.
4. Many penalties are preset; some require judicial finding first.



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RULES 4.1 AND 4.5

- Each scoring attorney will independently use the evaluation and scoring criteria to assign a numerical value (1-10) to individual and team presentations.
- Judges will rule on alleged rule violations. If the judge determines there has been a rule violation -- unless a specific point deduction for a particular infraction is provided in the rules -- each attorney scorer will determine the appropriate amount of deduction (if any) individually. (Rule 4.1 G) Scorers may also deduct points for rule violations they observe.

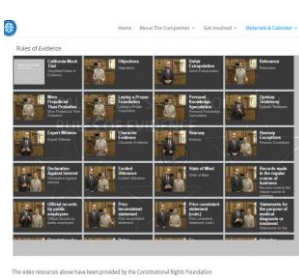
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POINTS



- Scoring attorneys are instructed to start from the middle of average range (in a 10-point scale, that would be 5) based on the guidelines.
- Be mindful of trial phases that have greater weight for tallying the team score (pretrial motion and closing arguments are x2).
- Be mindful of preset penalties.
- Coach and audience communication could result in deduction of points.
- Unless a specific point deduction is provided in the rules, each attorney scorer will determine the appropriate amount of deduction individually.


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WHERE TO FIND HELPFUL MATEIRALS

- **What You Already Have:**
Case Materials, Team Rule Book, and Simplified Rules of Evidence
- **Other Resources:**
 - Q & A (found at sdmocktrial.org)
 - **Team in a Box**
 - Links to tutorials (found at sdmocktrial.org)
 - Always use sdmocktrial.org website – some of our procedures differ from those used by CRF

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Irregularities: To Raise or Not to Raise?

- Consider Rule 4.1 – Know the process and the script
- Only one active team member can raise
- 30 seconds to consult with coach and team after pretrial argument and after trial
- If raising, cite the specific incident and corresponding rule
- Judge will hear from both sides – 30 seconds each
- If not a mandatory penalty, scorers will exercise discretion
- Do not argue for hypertechnical interpretations, especially to embarrass or gain unfair advantage. That will result in mandatory 5 point deduction.
- Do not use to make additional legal arguments, or to raise issues which could have been addressed with an objection.

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A FEW FINAL THOUGHTS



This is a competition, but the primary goal is individual growth for each student. The learning process and the experience is our number one priority.



Good citizenship and sportsmanship is paramount . . .

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Thank You for
Participating in the 2023
San Diego County High
School Mock Trial
Competition!