

## **Guide to Good Adjudication at Premchand 2011**

### **Things to do before the preliminary rounds:**

- Make sure you go through the entire rulebook carefully. It doesn't say much for the tournament if the judges are not clear on the rules.
- Bring any doubts you have about the rules to the notice of the Chief Adjudicators ASAP [numbers given below].

### **Things you should do before the rounds of debating commence:**

- If in doubt regarding any of the rules, scoring guidelines or any other subject, contact the tournament organizers or Chief Adjudicators before you go to the room assigned to you. Within the room you should be the one answering questions, not asking them.
- If you find yourself blank on the subject of a particular motion, then please clarify with the CAs. Don't hesitate. Making a mistake while adjudicating will be a much bigger loss of face than simply asking someone.
- DO NOT take personal biases into a debate, either positive or negative. If you are uncomfortable with judging a particular match, notify the people concerned and ask to be recused. However, requests on flimsy grounds which are aimed at judging "better" matchups will not be entertained. Definitely notify if by some error you have been asked to adjudicate a match concerning an institution with which you are or have been affiliated.

### **While the debate is on:**

- Make sure you listen to EVERYTHING that is said. Single sentences are known to change the course of matches. Make sure you don't miss anything.
- Take good notes. Use separate sections for each speech, and different colored pens or a highlighter. Don't try to save paper. Ask your runner for more if required.
- Do not give up a match as done and dusted until the last word is spoken. The debaters will listen to your feedback; give them the courtesy to hear them out entirely.
- Score speakers after the debate is done. This is because the score sheet doesn't have a separate section for reply speeches – you've to adjust the scores of the reply speaker within their overall speaker scores. Also, you are in a better position to judge the relative merits of each speaker and the impact of his/her speech on the course of the debate, at the end.
- Keep facial and other reactions to what you think of the speeches to a minimum. While some amount of encouraging speakers is acceptable, make sure that you don't give

away where the debate is swinging.

- Always keep the Proposition's case statement and the burden of proof, and the Opposition's points of clash in mind. These set the tone of the debate.
- For Chairs: during interrogation, allow for a free flow of questioning and refrain from interfering as much as possible. However, step in if you feel one of the teams is crossing the line as defined by the rulebook. Do not let examiners harass the person being interrogated - give him or her time to think out a rational answer. Don't ever interrupt a match unless you are the Chair.
- Watch out for new matter in interrogation and reply speeches. Be careful, skilled speakers will shroud these in the garb of examples. You must pick out genuine examples from substantive points masquerading as examples.
- In case there is a factual clash, judge whether the fact lies in the ambit of common knowledge. If not, whether or not you know the fact to be true, disregard it entirely. Arguments based solely on the fact shall then also not stand.
- As stated by the rules, floating models are not allowed in the case of the Proposition. So if a Deputy Prime Minister speaks on the model, be careful that it is merely clarificatory. A new angle is not permitted in the DPM's speech. However, the DLO is allowed to **add** to the model as proposed by his LO. Note that the entirety of the model cannot come in the DLO speech, nor can he change/delete a substantive point of the model that came in the LO speech. To repeat, the DLO is allowed to add to the model, not propose the model or modify the LO's model.
- As far as definition challenges are concerned, refrain from cancelling interrogation and reply. Defchals require that you know the rules thoroughly, so read them. If needed, check with the CAs

### **After the speakers have left the room:**

- Go over your notes. Refresh in your mind what the parameters for the debate were ie; Case statement, burden of proof, points of clash. It is possible that certain points which seemed inconsequential earlier seem to hold more water once the arguments end and the entire debate comes into focus.
- During the course of the debate it is possible that either the points of clash or the burden of proof may have shifted slightly. On occasion, what is central to a debate changes, so make sure you keep track of nuances such as this.
- Usually there are two or three questions that are central to a debate. See which side answered those questions better and you should find your winner. Prioritize.
- DO NOT READ INTO A DEBATE. Don't presume you know what the speaker meant.

Judge the debate on what the speakers said, not what you think they meant.

- Further, even if you know a certain fact to be true, but it falls under the ambit of specialized knowledge, disregard the fact. **DO NOT USE SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE.**
- Do not get influenced by other adjudicators in the room, especially senior adjudicators. If you need to verify on what was said, ask them. Otherwise refrain from conferring.
- Take your time; do not let people harry you. However, be conscious that the organizers work under time constraints, so don't waste time.
- **DO NOT JUDGE ON SPEAKING ABILITY. JUDGE ON THE BASIS OF ARGUMENTS GIVEN,** and nothing else.

**While giving feedback:**

- Outline two or three major reasons which decided the debate.
- Explain your decision on the basis of these cogently.
- Use specific examples from speeches to substantiate your point.
- Time permitting, individual feedback is encouraged as it makes for improvement in the future.
- Encourage the teams to ask questions, this is one of the only ways to ensure both sides are clear on the decision. Even if the question seems stupid, give it credence.
- Try not to run down the losing team, and justify your decision properly even if the margin of victory was huge.
- Keep your cool at all times; there is no point in teams and adjudicators shouting at each other.
- You can't change your decision once given. However, hear the losing team out. It is natural that the losing team will feel disgruntled, more so if they expected to win. So don't get flustered.

Phone numbers of the CAs are as follows: Ritwik (9873554908) and Dipankar (9818882385)