

Massachusetts Forensics League
Minutes from the September 12, 2002 Coaches' Meeting at Natick High School

Sarah Donnelly, Director of the Natick High School Speech and Debate Team welcomed us all to Natick High School. Marc Rischitelli, President thanked all who paid their respects over the loss of his father...it meant a lot to him and his family.

The meeting began the with introductions.

The tentative calendar was discussed tournament by tournament. Due to timing, it was decided to think about kick-off scrimmage/Workshop for next year.

Greg Cunningham expressed both his and Rob Crouteau's (who was not in attendance) concern regarding length of tournaments. And, asked that tournament directors move things along as much as possible. Cunningham also asked the league to discuss the number of double-entry tournaments in a year and to try and avoid back-to-back double entry tournaments. Rischitelli felt discussion between tournament hosts and appropriate vice president need to increase in order to speed up tournament, the league doesn't necessarily need to mandate tournament efficiency.

Each tournament was discussed and unanimously approved.

The Natick Holly Festival group discussion book information distributed. If you enter students in that event at the Holly, please provide a judge who has read the book.

A consortium of coaches of coaches from the North shore will be hosting interscholastic novice debate mini-tournaments to be judged by experienced students. They will be held monthly on Wednesday afternoons from 3 p.m. to 7p.m., followed by pizza. The first will be held on October 23rd at Manchester-Essex Regional High School. The second on November 13th. These tournaments are a good place for new programs to gain experience. The consortiums is not looking for sanctioning, but for a way to grow debate. Contact Tim Averill at timaverill@attbi.com if interested. This is open to MFL Members, but they will try and accommodate non-MFL members. There will be five dates total.

Middle School Tournaments: Youth Speaks will be held on December 8th or December 15th and the Milton Middle School Tournament will be held on May 11th or May 18th. The November 9th and the March 1st tournaments are open to eighth graders. If you need further information on middle school tournaments, please email Deanie Goodman at deaniewest@aol.com.

Treasurer's report: approximately \$3,400. Treasurer requests prompt payment of dues. Motion made and unanimously approved (Honeyman/Averill) to send out notification of non-payment of dues in January.

Will Crocker, Vice President of Student Congress explained the legislation request process. (See attached letter).

Jenny McNeil introduced Milton Coach Chris Palmer who is developing MFL website. The dummy site is online at www.MassForensics.org. It is his hope and ambition for information about schools and event, calendar, et al to be available there.

Donnelly discussed state qualification records. It is imperative that each coach keep their own database of qualifiers so that they do not have to be informed the week of the tournament that students are not qualified. If there are special categories at a tournament, the tab sheets for that event will be "Q".

All MFL tournaments must be pre-approved by the appropriate Vice President. At that time, it will be decided if special categories are subject to state qualification.

All MFL events must be offered at each tournament. Discussion ensued regarding TV News Team at the Holly Festival. Motion was made (Cunningham/Averill) and unanimously approved to sanction the Holly Festival with TV News Team instead of Radio Broadcasting. TV News Team will not count as a state qualifier for radio broadcasting.

Weiss asked for clarification regarding class year in Declamation. Declamation is open to all students at MFL tournaments...other leagues have other rules regarding Declamation. Weiss also asked for clarification on the status of a "novice." In the 16 speech events, a Novice is classified as first year in forensics.

Judy Crocker reminded coaches that all MFL invitations must be pre-approved by the appropriate Vice President prior to mailing.

Risचितelli informed coaches that the board voted to instruct tournament hosts to try to give trophies, plaques, or paperweights in lieu of certificates whenever possible.

PJ Wexler (Needham HS) is working on a oral history of forensics project and may be contacting members to find out the history of their programs.

John Held asked for clarification about new drop rule. Each tournament director of a MFL sanctioned tournament must have a morning call-in period. Each registered school must call in drops in by 8:30 a.m. or be fined \$25.00 per dropped entry...to be paid prior to the entry registration the next tournament or the school will not be allowed to compete at the next tournament. Fines are to be paid to the MFL. This should speed up tournaments considerably.

Sarah Donnelly and Marc Risचितelli took a moment to discuss National Catholic Forensic League Tournament in Boston 2004. They are making great strides and will be approaching and begging and pleading for assistance from coaches in the league. Hopefully everyone can do a little. The area where you can help is by helping them get to your parents organization... they need help recruiting volunteers. Things as little as photocopying ballots. And looking for people for larger responsibilities, i.e. publications, transportation, food, volunteer judges. They are planning a Sunday afternoon tea volunteer meeting. Coaches please get to our parents organization information to Sarah Donnelly or Marc Risचितelli so the committee can send out the info on the tea. Part of the Boston 2004 bid was to raise the bar on excellence at Nationals. Also, please put the last weekend in September 2003 on your calendar for Fall Moderators meeting. It's important to have a good showing of BCFL and CNECFL coaches for that meeting.

Motion (Cunningham/Donnelly) to adjourn unanimously approved at 6:03p.m.