

CDA Parli Format Tournament

On February 15 we will try out the Parliamentary debate format at a CDA tournament. Parli is very popular at the college level, and is offered at high school debate tournaments sponsored by some colleges. It is also included at most large high school tournaments on the West Coast. While the format of the debate is different, the philosophy is similar to that of the CDA in that there is limited research material and preparation time and debaters are judged more on the quality of their reasoning and analysis. CDA debaters have done quite well against national competition at tournaments sponsored by Yale and the University of Pennsylvania.

To help you prepare for this event, we are sending you three documents. This overview describes the event as a whole, emphasizing the differences with our usual tournament format. There are also one page documents, one for debaters and one for judges, that focus on the format, duties and judging for a single round. You should provide a copy of ALL THREE DOCUMENTS to your debaters and judges, and discuss it with them before the event.

Schedule for the Day

We will start at 9AM as usual, with the school open for registration at 8AM. Debaters will have one hour of preparation time and will be provided with an information packet with the resolutions and relevant material.

A Parli round is a bit shorter than the normal CDA round, so we can schedule them closer together and add a fourth round of debate. We will have a final round between the two top varsity teams and should still be able to leave a bit earlier than normal. Note the third round is given a bit more time than the others so the tab room can enter the ballots before scheduling the fourth round.

Time	Activity	Comment
8-9AM	Arrival and registration	Register, buy lunch tickets, gather in the cafeteria
9-10AM	Case Preparation	Packet distributed; teams prepare for debate
10-11AM	Round 1	
11AM-12Noon	Round 2	
12Noon-1PM	Lunch	Cafeteria
1-2:30PM	Round 3	
2:30-3:30PM	Round 4	
3:30-4:30PM	Final Round	Auditorium
4:30-5PM	Awards	Trophies, ballots and departure

Debate Topic

The CDA format is policy debate, and the matter in contention is called a resolution. Parliamentary debate is based on the British House of Commons and the issue is called a motion. In CDA we have a single resolution for all rounds, limited research materials and one hour of preparation. In Parliamentary debate the motion changes every round, there may be more than one motion to choose from, there is no research material, and debaters have 15 minutes of preparation.

In order to ease the transition we will combine the two:

- Three motions to choose from, all related to a single subject area;
- A standard packet of approximately ten pages of relevant material on the subject;
- One hour of preparation time.

This will give all the debaters some background on the topic, but add some of the additional spontaneity of Parli. The debaters will have to prepare cases for and against each of the three motions during the hour.

Choosing Motion and Sides for Each Round

The specific motion to be debated and the side each team will support are not assigned prior to the round. At the beginning of each round, the two teams will flip a coin. The winner has the option of either choosing the motion or choosing the side to support. Based on that result, one team chooses the motion and then the other team chooses which side to support. The debate begins immediately with no further preparation time. (This means the teams must prepare for all three motions, pro and con, during the initial hour). The steps in order are:

1. Teams flip a coin;
2. Winner must choose whether it will determine the motion or the side to support; loser gets the remaining option;
3. Team chooses the motion;
4. The other team chooses the side to support;
5. Debate begins.

Format of the Round

The two sides in a Parliamentary debate are the Government or Gov, and the Opposition or Opp. Like the Affirmative in policy debate, Gov must support the motion, has the right to make reasonable definitions and speaks first and last. Opp opposes the motions, must clash with the Government case and persuade the judge, here formally called the Speaker of the House, that the Government has not made its case.

The two sides have equal speaking time, but unlike policy debate, the two speakers on each team have unequal speaking time. The Government speakers are referred to as the Prime Minister and the

Member of Government. The Opposition speakers are the Leader of the Opposition and the Member of the Opposition. The Prime Minister and the Leader have two speeches, a constructive and a rebuttal. The two Members each have only a constructive. The format of the round is as follows:

Prime Minister Constructive (PMC)	7 minutes	Provides an interpretation of the resolution and lays out the Government's case
Leader of Opposition Constructive (LOC)	8 minutes	Lays out the Opposition case and replies to the Government case.
Member of Government Constructive (MGC)	8 minutes	Responds to previous arguments, and may introduce new points while doing so
Member of Opposition Constructive (MOC)	8 minutes	
Leader of Opposition Rebuttal (LOR)	4 minutes	Summarizes the debate from the Opposition perspective, while responding to previous arguments.
Prime Minister Rebuttal (PMR)	5 minutes	Summarizes the debate from the Government perspective, while responding to previous arguments.

New arguments may be entered during any of the constructive speeches. New arguments may not be entered during the rebuttal, but only new examples and extensions of existing arguments.

Questioning

Unlike policy, there is no special time reserved for questions. Instead the opposing team attempts to interrupt the speaker during the constructive speeches. To raise a Point of Information (POI) a debater stands, places one hand on his head (to hold his wig in place) and extends one hand toward the speaker. The speaker may accept the question, saying he will take it in a moment, or refuse. Questions may not be raised during the first and last minute of a constructive speech. It is considered poor form if the speaker does not accept at least two POI's during a constructive speech, and poor performance if a team doesn't rise to offer multiple POI's during each of their opponent's constructive speeches.

The Opposition may also raise a Point of Clarification (POC) during the Prime Minister's Constructive immediately after the PM outlines the Government interpretation of the motion. A POC cannot be refused and the timer stops while the Opposition asks the PM to clarify details of the Government case.

Either side may raise a Point of Order (POO) which is directed to the Speaker (Judge) if they believe the other side has violated a rule of debate. Generally these are the speaker going over time by more than 30 seconds (Parli speakers are allowed 30 seconds grace after time runs out), or if a new argument is introduced during rebuttal. The Speaker is expected to rule immediately on a POO by saying he agrees ("point taken"), he disagrees ("point not taken") or that he will consider the matter but the debate should continue ("point taken under consideration").

Judging

Judging is pretty much the same as in CDA: the decision should be awarded to the team that the judge believes was most persuasive in support of their side of the motion. Since facts are limited, explanation is Speakers are ranked from 1 (best) to 4 (last), and awarded up to 30 speaker points.

Some adjustments must be made for the unequal speaking times. The Judge (Speaker of the House) should not assume that the Prime Minister or Leader is better than either of the Members simply because they have two speeches to one. A Member's single constructive speech may contribute more than the constructive and rebuttal of another speaker. The Speaker must be sensitive to this possibility.

Ceremony

The Speaker of the House (Judge) has a slightly more active role than in policy debate. Traditionally the Speaker starts the debate by calling the House to order, and then calling on each speaker in turn with language like: "The Speaker calls upon the Prime Minister to deliver a constructive speech of not more than seven minutes in length." At the end of the speech the Speaker will thank the Prime Minister then use the same formula to call on the Leader of the Opposition.

ejr,1-27-14