

Parly Notes 2000-2

To have a “parly team” or not?????

Some chapters and advisors have a long history in having a parly team in the district level competition and others do not. To have or not to have is a question to be answered at the chapter level. There are many reasons to have including: a challenging team activity, a high profile CDE in Indiana FFA, results in a well prepared group to conduct meetings and presentations (such as annual banquet), trains members for full participation in “real world/beyond high school” organizations and governmental groups, builds “resumes” for members, develops better public speakers, etc. etc..... Why not have: one of the most time consuming of CDEs as to preparation, need a minimum of seven members, need very dedicated and strong academic students to have best chance of high placing, teacher has to know parliamentary procedure and be comfortable with it, etc. etc.....

Just as with preparation of any group for participation there are personal preference of the advisor so anything said here may be considered one persons take on the situation.

First, the basics---why learn parliamentary procedure (and not just to enter a contest— one of the worst reasons for spending time learning something that can be given.)

Second: What are the basic points of parliamentary procedure---includes points such as: motions have intent to achieve something and motions have precedence. Also there are legal reasons to know and understand parliamentary procedure as court cases have been decided based on proper (or improper) use of parliamentary procedure.

Third: Know the rules to the CDE---what exactly is the team going to be doing during their time in the “meeting room”

--At this point if an advisor is having concerns since they do not feel proficient to handle--now is the time to seek assistance. One of the greatest things about being in the Agricultural Education Profession is the willingness of teachers to help teachers. If you need help then simply ask for it and it's an odds on favorite that you will get it even to being another teacher (or retired teacher) coming in and working with you and your team in helping them get the basics down. Every teacher of any years in Indiana can relate several times that assistance was just “down the road” in the form of another teacher who pitched in and helped. As one teacher once said---I have no problems telling you about how to do something it just maybe that I won't tell you everything I know. On the other hand, some of the retired teachers still have a “need” to be teachers and miss the opportunity.

Some points on training a team:

- a) short sessions—don't wear everyone out
- b) mini quizzes---5-10 questions on some aspect of parly perhaps a unit you are going to cover in that session
- c) stress over and over and over---team---the chair can not blow the contest performance ---that is, if the chair makes a mistake --lost points---but the team will also lose points since they did not seek to correct the error. Every member

- must conduct meaningful debate –every member (except chair). Every member has to know about every motion---who knows what card is coming their way.
- d) While doing the official ceremonies must be done “word perfect” and with feeling be careful not to tire them out on it and it lapses into a dull monotone presentation. Each part is a mini speech and should be given with emphasis. Remember this is early in the presentation and a key time to favorably influence the judges---first impressions are lasting impressions (and often cloud our judgments of any encounter throughout.) May be that want to work on the ceremonies early in the training period then ever now and then and then in the last practices.
 - e) Know about FFA happenings and doings---This relates to local chapter as well as state activities---sometimes these are the topics of main motions presented in the contest and may also be important in debate points. Some examples from past experiences: having slave auctions is an acceptable activity (been ruled out of order on that motion), many chapters conduct “Young MacDonalds” displays, participate in AgDayUSA activities, plant trees on Arbor Day, contribute or have funds in a local community foundation (every Indiana county now has one serving it), etc.... Know about requirements for degrees, delegates at state convention (and national), where is the state camp, national headquarters, national convention, etc..... –these may be put in paper form for members to review and covered during practices.
 - f) Motions: how to obtain the floor, present a motion in correct form including such a motion as postpone definitely which of course should never have the word “definitely” in the motion, where does a main motion rank in precedence of motions, etc. etc. etc.....

Thinking ahead: all members must be in official dress according to the rules---some advisors need to revisit “official dress” issues—for example: blue jeans are not official dress, brown cowboy boots and tennis shoes are not official dress. Question to ponder since it presents a continuing problem for advisors and judges: what is official dress for female members for a CDE such as the Chapter Meeting CDE? Should any breach of the national rules in this area cost points and if so how many? There needs to be consensus within the state as to how to handle this situation. More on this and input requested.

More to come including: the motions and about there usage; when is a privileged motion not a privileged motion, which group of motions have no rank within the group, what are the motions that bring a voted upon motion back to the floor, etc. etc.

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