

TABLE TOPICS CONTEST RULES

These rules apply to all Table Topics speech contests.

1. PURPOSE

- A. To provide an opportunity to learn by observing the more proficient speakers who have benefited from their Toastmasters training.
- B. To encourage development of impromptu and/or extemporaneous speaking skills and to recognise the best as encouragement to all.

2. SELECTION SEQUENCE

- A. Each club in good standing may select its club speech contest winner to compete in the area contest. An alternate (second place winner) should also be selected. The area speech contest winner (or alternate) then proceeds to the division (if applicable) contest. The division contest winner (or alternate) then proceeds to the district contest.
- B. In those areas with three clubs or less, both first and second place winners may participate in the area contest. In those divisions with three areas or less, the first and second place winners from each area contest may compete. Similarly, in districts with three or fewer divisions, the first and second place winners from each division contest may participate in the district contest.

3. ELIGIBILITY

- A. All Toastmasters who are members in good standing, in a club in good standing, are eligible to compete.
- B. The following are ineligible to compete in this contest:
incumbent international officers and directors; district officers (governor, any lieutenant governor, division governor, area governor, secretary, treasurer or public relations officer) whose terms expire June 30; international officer and director candidates; immediate past district governors; district officers or announced candidates for the term beginning July 1.
- C. A Toastmaster who is a member in good standing in more than one club and who meets all other eligibility requirements may compete in each club contest in which he or she is a member. However should he/she win more than one, he/she can represent only one of them at any level beyond the club. No Toastmaster can compete in more than one area contest... even if the two areas are in different divisions or different districts.

4. TOPICS

- A. All contestants shall receive the same topic, which shall be of a general nature, and shall speak for two minutes.
- B. The topic shall not require a detailed knowledge but should lead to an opinion or conclusion.

5. GENERAL PROCEDURE

- A. A contest chairman, contest sergeant-at-arms, chief judge, at least five judges, two counters and two timers are appointed. These appointments will be as far as is

practical at club level, but required for area through to district levels of this contest. Whenever possible, the sergeant-at-arms should not be a member of any contestant's club.

B. Before the contest, contestants and the contest sergeant-at-arms are briefed on the rules by the contest chairman. Judges, counters and timers are briefed on their duties by the chief judge. Contestants will then draw for their speaking position with the contest chairman.

C. If a contestant is absent from the briefing, the alternate speaker, if present, may be included in place of the primary contestant. During the meeting when the Presiding Officer introduces the Toastmaster for the contest to begin the contest, if the primary contestant has not arrived, he/she is disqualified and the alternate officially becomes the contestant. Where the primary contestant arrives and makes his/her presence known to the Toastmaster with all required paperwork in good order prior to the introduction, and missed the briefing, he/she shall not be disqualified and may speak in the order his/her name was drawn, but waives the opportunity for a briefing.

D. When the contest begins, all contestants except the first shall leave the room. The topic is then read to the first contestant, who shall then speak on that topic for two minutes.

E. There will be a one minute interval between contestants during which the judges will mark their ballots.

F. Announcement of contest winners is final.

6. TIMING

A. Speeches should be two minutes long. Contestants who speak less than one minute or more than two minutes and 30 seconds will be disqualified. Time will begin with the first word uttered by the contestant. The green light will be turned on at one minute and remain on for 30 seconds. The amber light will be turned on at one minute and 30 seconds and remain on for 30 seconds. The red light will be turned on at two minutes and remain on until the speech is concluded. No audible device, such as a buzzer, shall be used for the overtime period.

Disqualifications for reason of time may be announced, at the discretion of the contest chairman, although it is not recommended.

PROTESTS

A. Protests will be limited to judges and contestants. Any protest will be lodged with the chief judge and/or contest chairman prior to the announcement of the winner and alternate(s). The contest chairman shall notify the contestant of a disqualification regarding eligibility prior to that announcement before the meeting at which the contest took place is adjourned.

B. The contest chairman can disqualify a contestant on the basis of eligibility.

C. All decisions of the judges are final.

WINNERS

A third place winner (if wanted), second place winner, and first place winner will be announced.

CONTEST SCHEDULE

Districts conducting Table Topics Contests should announce the date of the district contest and establish dates by which the division, area and club contests must be completed.