



SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

Mock Trial Rules/Agreement (3.27.24) San Joaquin County

All high schools in San Joaquin County (public or private) may register one team in the SJCOE Mock Trial competition. The six rounds of competition will be held in February. The San Joaquin County competition closely follows the Constitutional Rights Foundation's rules on: sportsmanship, team eligibility, team make-up, and trial procedures.

Teams

A team may have between 8 and 25 team members, including alternates and supporting roles. Official team roster must be composed of full-time, eligible students from 9-12th grade, from the same high school.

Schools may register a 2nd Varsity team:

Schools may register and pay for a second Varsity team

Varsity teams at the same school may not compete in the Championship round. If necessary, teams from the same school will face each other in Round 5 to determine which team from their site would move on to the championship round.

Schools may register and pay for a "JV team":

The JV team is not eligible for any overall team placement (1st-4th) or "best" roles

JV teams will only compete against JV teams. If needed, scoring attorneys and/or judges will be coaches.

Coaches of JV team may present certificate to the team MVP

Bye Buster Team:

In the event that our county competition has an odd number of teams, a Buy Buster Team may be created in order to fulfill the empty space. This team will be comprised of:

- *students within our county*
- *who are part of a SJCOE registered Mock Trial Team*
- *are available to fill in an empty role when they are not competing*
- *the team will be comprised of students from all different SJCOE teams*

Out of county teams:

Out of county teams are allowed if there is room in our competition.

Out of county teams are not eligible for overall team placement (1st-4th) or "best" roles

Coaches of Out of county teams may present certificate to the team MVP

Guest teams:

Guest teams are only used if our county competition has an odd number of teams

Guest teams may "fill in" but are not eligible for any awards or recognition

Artist/Journalists (See additional rules on SJCOE Mock Trial Website)

Each team may register up to 3 journalist and 3 artists. All artists/journalists must:

- be enrolled in the participating school
- be listed on Mock Trial team roster and have a permission slip on file
- have signed artist/journalist registration form (posted on SJCOE website)

Artist- Official judging will only be on **Round 2** submissions

Journalist- Contestants must write their articles based on their team's **Round 2**.

Winning artist and journalist from the County competition are invited to attend the State competition with the winning Mock Trial team. One artist and one journalist will be invited to attend the State competition along with the willing Mock Trial team.

Ranking of Teams during the Competition

Ballot system will be used to score the competition. Instead of referring to a team's win/loss record we will look at how many judges ballots each team has received. This will mean a change in reports and how we rank teams for pairing. Below is a summary of what the ballot system is, how it works, and how we will pair teams for the competition rounds.

About the Ballot System:

- Each attorney/scorer uses the same 10-point scale to evaluate each role/performance on the score sheet as they have in the past.
- The computer adds up all of the scores for each judge and assigns a ballot to the team with the most points for that judge.
- There are 3 ballots possible for each round. There are 12 ballots possible for the four preliminary rounds.
- If there are 2 scorers in a room – then the ballots would be pro-rated.
 - A 2-ballot victory would translate into 3 ballots to one team and zero to the other.
 - A split of 1-1 would be counted as 1.5 ballots per team.
- If there are 4 scorers (presiding judge) then the presiding judge score would not be used. This would allow him or her to focus on running the trial.
- If a scorer produces a tied score – each team would get .5 of a ballot.

Why the Ballot System:

The way we did it in the past allows one scoring judge to alter the outcome of the trial. If it is a weak scorer and they really favor one team over another the following could occur.

Team A:	Judge <u>1</u> - 89 Ballot	Team B:	Judge 1 - 84
	Judge <u>2</u> - 87 Ballot		Judge 2 - 83
	Judge <u>3</u> - 80		Judge 3 - <u>97</u> Ballot
Total	256	Total	<u>264</u> Winner using traditional method

Definitions:

Ballots (B)

- Your record is based on the number of ballots your team wins. Note this is not “round wins”

Strength of Schedule (SOS)

Strength of your opponents

- To calculate SOS, we look at the number of ballots that your opponents have captured.
- We keep a running tally of your SOS throughout the competition which you can view.

Percentage of Points (PP)

The margin of your wins/losses

- Receiving a larger average of total points by judges is another factor in ranking your team.
- We keep a running tally of your PP throughout the competition which you can view.
- Averages are added together so numbers often get higher than one. For instance – R1 you received a .5343 and R2 you received a .5102 for a total PP of 1.045.

Round 1 Pairing:

We will randomly draw for Round 1. The pairing will be shared the week before the competition.

Pairing Rounds 2-4

We will rank teams based on Ballots won, Strength of Schedule, and Percentage Points earned. We will pair teams high v high. You may play the same team twice in the preliminary rounds, but will be placed mandatory opposite sides.

Round 2

Your team will flip sides (If you were just Defense for round 1 you will be Prosecution for round 2). We rank all teams that need to go P and those that need to go D and then pair them (highest P v highest D), (next highest P v next highest D), etc.

Round 3

This is a pure high v high match-up (sides don't matter). We rank all of the teams in the competition and then pair them (high v high), (next high v next high), etc.

Round 4

Same as round 2 pairing. We rank all of the teams that must go P and those that must do D and then we pair teams (highest P v highest D), (next highest P v next highest D), etc.

Pairing for Quarterfinals – Top 4 teams

Top 4 teams will be ranked highest to lowest using B, SOS, and PP from preliminary rounds. Teams will be paired high v low, next highest v next lowest: (1v4), (2v3). If teams have already faced each other they will switch sides. Otherwise, a coin toss determines sides and the team with the most ballots will call the coin.

Pairing for Final Rounds

Winners from both Semifinal rounds will face each other in the Final round. Losers from Semifinal rounds will face each other in the consolation round to determine 3rd & 4th place. If teams have already faced each other they will switch sides. Otherwise, a coin toss determines sides and the team with the most ballots will call the coin.

Room Reports

- After each round, room reports will be emailed to each coach the following day showing results from both teams. This report shows scores from each scoring attorney (minus the name.)
- Coaches have 6 hours from the time scores are emailed to communicate any concerns.

Role Changes

Role changes must be shared with the coordinator by 10am the day of the scheduled round.

Watching/Observing other Teams- Recording and Photos

During our SJCOE Invitational (or any other time) new teams often use this as a starting point to introduce the competition to students and coaches. Coaches/students must have permission from both teams before observing.

Recording trials is not allowed at the courthouse or online.

Photos are not allowed in the courthouse.

Student Recognition-

MVP Round Certificates- After each round (1-6) teams will present the opposing team with a MVP Certificate provided by SJCOE. Coaches are responsible for picking up the certificate at check in before each round.

Awards Ceremony-

Each team coach will present a Top Prosecution and Top Defense Certificate. If a school has two teams, each team will receive certificates.

Scores taken from Rounds 1-4 will determine the following. The number of student participants will determine the number of students recognized in each category (except artist and journalist).

Top Pre-Trial Prosecution

Top Pre-Trial Defense

Top Clerk

Top Bailiff

Top Attorneys

Top Witnesses

Best Artist

Best Journalist

Judge Cruickshank Award- Scoring attorneys from Rounds 1-4 will vote for one student to receive the Judge Cruickshank award. This award goes to a student who displays enthusiasm, integrity, and teamwork.

Advancing to State Competition

The first-place team will be invited to the Mock Trial State Competition. The San Joaquin County Office of Education Educational Foundation will contribute to the cost of State registration, hotel stay and transportation. After the county competition, no new students may be added to the team.

SJCOE vs. State

1.3

- C. SJCOE does not use a team code to identify
- L. SJCOE does allow use of device **for timing only**
- F. It is optional at the SJCOE competition to provide teams rosters, unless changes have been made to roster.

2.1

- F. SJCOE office provides CRF with team information and student information. It is optional for coaches to provide this information to CRF

3.2

- A. SJCOE does allow evidence/exhibits to be enlarged larger than 22 X 28" and/or to be enlarged on the digital Elmo provided into the courtroom.