

# SCHOLASTIC BOWL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

May 7, 2014

The IHSA Scholastic Bowl Advisory Committee met at the IHSA Office, Bloomington, Illinois on Wednesday, May 7, 2013, beginning at 10:00 a.m. Committee Members present were: Stacy Kolack, Activities Director, New Trier H.S.; Gary Erickson, Coach, Seneca H.S.; Doug Happ, Coach, Paris H.S.; Martin Kelley, coach, St. Ignatius College Prep (Chicago); Linda Greene, coach, Rockford Auburn H.S.; Jay Winter, coach, Greenville H.S. Others in attendance: Ron McGraw, IHSA Assistant Executive Director; Kayode Adegoke, IHSA Special Projects Coordinator; Rob Grierson, Coordinator of Officials, Skokie, IL; Cynthia Wierzba, Meet Manager/Coach Farmington H.S.

## TERMS AND CONDITIONS AND RULE CHANGE RECOMMENDATIONS:

### **I. Item: Definition of a Scholastic Bowl Contest/Change the Season Limitation By-Law (5.360) Recommendation:**

The proposal recommends two changes.

First, that the IHSA Board of Directors provides an interpretation for the definition of a Scholastic Bowl Contest. This definition should be included in the IHSA Handbook in the Definition Section. The suggested definition is:

An event in which teams of **four (4) or** five (5) students representing two (2) high schools compete with or against each other in academic quizzing, utilizing a format and rules comparable to the IHSA series, **and utilizing questions that cover an extensive range and variety of academic areas**, is considered a scholastic bowl contest. (By-law 5.362)

Second. That a by-law proposal be submitted to be considered during the 2014-15 IHSA Legislative process. This by-law 5.362 would be edited to say:

#### 5.360 SCHOLASTIC BOWL (CURRENT)

##### 5.361 Season Limitation

- a. No school belonging to this Association shall organize its Scholastic Bowl teams, practice or participate in interscholastic contests earlier than Monday of Week 8 or later than Sunday of Week 38.
- b. Each school belonging to this Association shall be limited to practicing and participating in no more than one (1) scholastic bowl tournament beginning the Sunday of Week No. 38 and ending the Monday of Week No. 8.

##### 5.362 Contest Limitation

- a. No school belonging to this Association shall participate on more than eighteen (18) dates of interscholastic contests, exclusive of the IHSA series.
- b. No individual shall compete on more than eighteen (18) dates of interscholastic contests, exclusive of the IHSA series.

## 5.360 SCHOLASTIC BOWL (PROPOSED TO BE EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY)

### ~~5.361~~ Season Limitation

- ~~a. No school belonging to this Association shall organize its Scholastic Bowl teams, practice or participate in interscholastic contests earlier than Monday of Week 8 or later than Sunday of Week 38.~~
- ~~b. Each school belonging to this Association shall be limited to practicing and participating in no more than one (1) scholastic bowl tournament beginning the Sunday of Week No. 38 and ending the Monday of Week No. 8.~~

### ~~5.362~~ 5.361 Contest Limitation

- a. No school belonging to this Association shall participate on more than thirty (30) dates of interscholastic contests, exclusive of the IHSA series.
- b. No individual shall compete on more than thirty (30) dates of interscholastic contests, exclusive of the IHSA series.

### **Rationale:**

The IHSA has made well-thought-out and significant changes in the Scholastic Bowl rules over the past five years in order to bring Scholastic Bowl more in line with the so-called 'national format' used in dozens of other states around the USA. While there are still some minor differences, the only significant distinction is in the number of players that constitute a team. Changing the definition of Scholastic Bowl to include four-on-four competition is an appropriate next step.

This change will not only allow Scholastic Bowl teams to participate in a number of very worthy and high quality four-on-four competitions; it will also free schools from having to maintain separate Scholastic Bowl teams and 'quiz bowl' clubs. It makes total sense to eliminate this "distinction without a difference." However, combining these groups, which have until now had to maintain separate schedules, requires that the season limitation be eliminated and the contest limitation be increased.

The Scholastic Bowl season already starts in mid-August. For 90% of the schools in Illinois who field Scholastic Bowl teams, the *de facto* end of the season will continue to be defined by the IHSA State Tournament which is held in mid-March. Eliminating the *de jure* end of the season will allow those schools in the 10% to plan out their competition year to include preparing for, and competing in, the established multi-state tournaments that are scheduled for late May and early June.

The leadership in smaller schools may be under the impression that extending the Scholastic Bowl season will give larger schools a competitive advantage. But with all the state and federal mandates for special education and support for students with learning disabilities, Scholastic Bowl has become, for many smaller schools, one of the few remaining programs for gifted students. Allowing this academic-based program to continue throughout the entire academic year will help keep the best and the brightest students at all Illinois schools engaged and challenged.

Scholastic Bowl, after all, is the only IHSA non-athletic 'activity' that has a season limitation. The season limitation was imposed about 20 years ago, at a time when this type of IHSA-sanctioned academic competition in Illinois was in its infancy. In the two decades since, Illinois has become a bright star, and even a leader, in academic competition nationwide. This has been due, in part, to those schools and teams that have 'gone the extra mile' by fielding 'quiz bowl' teams to compete in 'quiz bowl' competitions. It's

time to acknowledge that Scholastic Bowl is a form of ‘quiz bowl’. At this point, the IHSA's season limitation on this form of academic competition is an anachronism.

A growing number of local tournament hosts are moving to a four-on-four format in order to align their tournaments with the format used in other states and in national competitions. Scholastic Bowl teams at IHSA-member schools have not been able to participate in such tournaments. (Schools may have been sending other quizzing clubs or groups to such events, but they have not been allowed to send their Scholastic Bowl teams.) The IHSA believes that four-on-four contests are worthy events, and that Scholastic Bowl teams should be allowed to participate in them and count them towards their record.

It seems contrary to the mission of schools and of the IHSA to set a season limitation on learning. Consequently, the current language limiting when a scholastic bowl team can be organized and be functioning as a team should be eliminated. The ability for a scholastic bowl team to exist during the entire school year should be allowed. Increasing the number of opportunities for a team/individual to compete should be raised to accommodate the new opportunities for school teams to compete in the 4 on 4 national formatted tournaments and the proposed extended season. No IHSA member school has any obligation to approve their team to compete on as many as 30 dates, but they would be allowed to do so if the local school administration deemed this appropriate for their team and students.

Currently, several conference/league schedules include after-school meets at which just one or two matches are played each time. Depending on the number of teams in the conference/league and whether they play each other once or twice, this can use up from 6 to 12 dates of the current 18 allowed on the calendar, thus leaving too few dates for participation in other events. Increasing the number of competition dates would take care of this problem.

Coaches who wish to bring out the best in their students and give them more opportunities to play have been forced to deal with navigating around this archaic rule. By recognizing that Scholastic Bowl and Quiz Bowl are effectively the same, and extending the season, coaches of high-level programs can continue to provide the competition experience for their students, and it will allow coaches of emerging teams more freedom and opportunity to pursue higher levels of competition without having to deal with two sets of rules. As educators, we should be for anything that increases student opportunity to participate and learn.

Motion-Rob Grierson

Second-Marty Kelley

Motion Passed 9-0

Tabled

## II. Item: Rule Edit 4-B-8 (The hose rule)

### **Recommendation:**

Edit the rule as follows:

Add the words, or when a specific form for the answer has already been heard to the list of restrictions that prevent the moderator from accepting or prompting an alternative form.

### **Rationale:**

This edit will not run counter to the intent of the “hose rule”, it will only re-establish the need for players to listen carefully and restrict correct answers when a specific form has been heard.

Motion - Linda Greene

Second - Gary Ericson

Motion Passed 8-0

Approved

### **III. Item: Rule Edit 3-G-2 (Procedure for breaking a tie)**

#### **Recommendation:**

Re-write 3-G-2a and 3-G-2b, and eliminate 3-G-2c, as follows:

3-G-2a. Overtime will consist of one or more readings of a toss-up question and a bonus, drawn from the set of replacement questions provided for the tournament at each venue.

3-G-2b. Select the first available (not previously used as a replacement) toss-up, and pair it with the first available (not previously used as a replacement) bonus from a different category

#### **Rationale:**

The Rules were written so as to guarantee that ties would be broken using random topics.

In the first year we used the Rule Book, we discovered that there was no easy way to “select randomly” from a list of ten-or-so questions. From then on, the Editor was directed to submit the Replacements in a pre-randomized order. But we never changed the wording of the Rules.

The Problem

Rules 3-G-2a and 3-G-2b do not match the way the State Series Replacement Questions are prepared or implemented. The word “accompanying” is misleading; it was meant to require the use of a both toss-up and a bonus, even though the list of toss-ups is separate from the list of bonus questions. And, within each list, the questions have been intentionally pre-randomized.

Motion – Jay Winter

Second – Linda Greene

Motion Passed 8-0

Approved

### **IV. Item: Rule Edit 4-B-1 (Blurt Rule)**

#### **Recommendation:**

Rule 4-B-1 should be modified by adding the words, or, if the moderator prefers that players wait to be recognized, within three (3) seconds of being recognized.

#### **Rationale:**

When we eliminated the ‘blurt rule’ we modified the rules as written, but in doing so created a potential dilemma. Why wait to be recognized if you only have 3 seconds to begin an answer?

Next year, there should probably be a longer discussion of the whole issue of recognizing players or not. The current practice at local tournaments seems to be: no recognition needed. In the meantime, the proposed edit should be implemented.

Motion – Linda Greene

Second – Marty Kelly

Motion Passed 8-0

Approved

## V.

**Recommendation:** Identify specific suggestions that will enable question writers to develop question sets that best satisfy the goals of IHSA Scholastic Bowl. Linda Greene will be provided a complete set of questions to be used for the purpose of identifying suggestions for improved question sets.

**Rationale:** Some coaches believe that improvements can be made regarding the State Series question sets. If there are specific suggestions that would improve question sets, we should explore the possibility.

## ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. **Item State Series Question Set Quality**

**Recommendation:** Identify specific suggestions that will enable question writers to develop question sets that best satisfy the goals of IHSA Scholastic Bowl. Linda Greene will be provided a complete set of questions to be used for the purpose of identifying suggestions for improving IHSA question sets.

**Rationale:** Some coaches believe that improvements can be made regarding the State Series question sets. If there are specific suggestions that would improve question sets, we should explore the possibilities.

### 2. **Regional Pairings Process**

**Recommendation:**

Explore the possibility of using the computer pairing tool to integrate Weighted Winning Percentages in the pairing process.

**Rationale:** Some coaches believe that it is important to avoid pairing a seeded team with team that is not seeded but does has earned a high weighted winning percentage. Such teams should also not be randomly placed in the round zero playin round when such a round is necessary.

## ITEMS OF GENERAL DISCUSSION

1. The committee discussed IHSA school classifications relative to scholastic bowl and the sectional assignment process.
2. The committee discussed several playing rules and will revisit these next year when it is appropriate and add and adopt new playing rules into the rule book.