

EXTEMP PREP AT NATIONALS

by C. Edwin Brower

For many, many years the late H. B. Mitchell was in charge of Extemp Preparation at the National Tournament. Mr. Mitchell's philosophy still reigns supreme for extemp preparation at Nationals. **NFL RULES IN REGARDS TO EXTEMP PREP WILL BE FOLLOWED PRECISELY!**

All coaches and contestants should be aware of the prep rules long before the National Tournament begins, since they are in effect the same rules which apply at the NFL District Tournaments. Sadly, however, we find every year there are some, both contestants and coaches, who either don't know the rules or who choose to ignore them. Perhaps this might be caused because of a difference in enforcement throughout the various District Tournaments.

It is important to understand that the rules are not in effect to limit or inhibit the contestants, but rather they are for the betterment of the contestant by providing a uniform and fair policy for all to follow.

Please understand that the rules will be strictly enforced at Nationals, even if it means disqualifying the contestant!

We wish to stress here, some of the major rules for extemp preparation:

A. No contestant in extemp may take any notes from the prep room.

B. Any contestant who leaves the prep room without official permission shall be ranked last in that section.

C. After the contestant has drawn his/her topic, there shall be no consultation with others.

D. The only material allowed in the prep room will be published books, magazines, newspapers and journals or articles therefrom, provided:

- 1. they are originals or photocopies of the originals.**
- 2. that original article or copy is intact and uncut.**
- 3. there is no written material on that original or copy.**
- 4. topical index without annotation may be present.**

E. Extemp speeches, handbooks, briefs and outlines will be barred from the prep room. Computers are also barred.

F. Once the preparation has started, only contestants still in the contest will be allowed in the prep room.

G. Once a contestant has finished speaking, he or she may not reenter the prep room until the last contestant has left for the contest room.

Very simply these are the rules. However, because of the logistics of the prep room and the contest rooms, each tournament must have special announcements from time to time. How often do we who conduct the preparation hear from a contestant who has had a problem, "But I didn't hear...etc., etc." Special announcements have to be made at times by tournament officials. In order for all of the hundreds of contestants to hear these announcements, we must insist on silence in the room. So, be prepared to be absolutely silent in the prep room once the draw has begun!

The National Secretary takes great pains every year to see to it that contestants have the very best facility for extemp prep. He also provides skilled and dedicated officials to run the preparation. What is expected from contestants and coaches alike, is that they follow the rules, listen carefully to all announcements, and respect others.

Good luck; see you in Missouri.

(Hall of Fame Coach C. Edwin Brower, former NFL Vice-President, is Chair of National Extemp Prep.)

Ode to Extempers

"Extempers can leave and go to the prep room,"
The hostess said to us, leading us to our doom.

The lot of us sat at the library tables,

Going over our mags, our quotes and fables.

They called my number "X322."

I came to the table and joined in the queue.

He gave us our envelopes and said to us, "Draw!"

The topics this round concerned Government and
Law.

The first was on the Budget, the second on War,

But the third was the best, on the plight of the
poor.

I told the man the number of the topic at hand.

I sat back at the table and went to work and,

I thought about drugs, prostitution and more,

In my magazines I found statistics galore.

I memorized the figures and stood near the wall.

I spoke to the cabinet, and stated my gall.

At "The state of the homeless, it is a crying shame"

With more of these topics I could gain much fame.

After twenty or thirty minutes had passed,

The prep monitor said the second speakers at
last,

"Got to your room, X322."

It was marked on the map as room 40U.

I entered the room and scoped out the judge.

I remembered him somehow, but had forgotten
the grudge.

"How can the homeless be helped?: I said.

I remembered my outline and from memory read,

My speech that I wished would go on, if wordy,

For 6 at least, but I hope seven thirty.

I finished my speech with my grand design

To home all the homeless, and the government
malign.

I looked at the judge and he gave me a smile.

I knew I had suddenly passed the first trial.

One round was gone, with three more to go.

At the end I wished I would win, place, or show.

This process that all the extempers go through.

Was repeated twice more, with topics anew.

The nervous stares the judges gave me,

The queasy stomach, and the battered knee,

And the food I ate at the forensic tourney.

By the time finals came they would need a gurny.

But the finals came around and the hostess once
more,

Announced that we faced our final door.

The finalists for Extemp were being spoken

We listened to the judges called, for some token,

A sign if we were in finals, we did care

We wanted to know, "Did our speeches fare?"

First they announced the B school and then the Q

And then they announced "X322."

"YES, I'M IN!" I shouted with glee.

The first three rounds had broken me free.

I was in the top six of the huge tourney.

Before I exaggerated, I didn't need that gurny.

But, why do we do it, why do we toil?

To make it to finals and then recoil.

For another announcement that ties our fate,

For those that had failed "I could have had a
date."

But If you are good, and can face the unknown,

If you can take a whole day and face it alone.

If you can create a 7 minute speech in only twenty,

You are among few in a world of plenty.

To do a speech well, is truly a lift.

This ode to Extempers is for you a gift.

--Steven Tamm

New Hartford Central School

