

# NFC Minutes

September 8, 2001

Clark College, Vancouver, Wash.

1. Thank you to Clark College and director of forensics Dave Kosloski for hosting this year's gathering

2. Attendance

**Familiar faces:** Mary Lynn Veden, Lewis & Clark; Kyle Hunsicker, Willamette; Jim Hanson, Whitman; Clella Jaffe, George Fox; Dave Kosloski, Clark; Amanda Feller, PLU; Ed Inch, PLU; Steve Hunt, Lewis & Clark; Gary Gillespie, Northwest College, Seattle; Dennis Waller, Northwest Nazarene; Brenda DeVore Marshall, Linfield; Sam Mathies, Pacific; Larry Galizio, Portland Community College; Jil Freeman, Portland State University; Liz Kinneman, Portland State University; Nick Lougee, University of Oregon; Pete Mohn, University of Oregon; Mack Sermon, Albertson; Debbie Steckman, Clackamas; Kelly Brennan, Clackamas; Tiffany Seeley, CSI; Chris Bragg, CSI; Marty Most, Boise State; Jeff Stoppenhagen, Boise State.

**New faces:** Shaun Reed, Clark; ; Derek Buescher, UPS; Bill Sheffield, Lewis-Clark State; Jeanne Ratliff, Eastern Washington University; Steve Woods, Western Washington; Jackson Miller, Linfield; Tobin Steiskal, Albertson; Mindy Chumbley, University of Portland;

3. Introduction of officers: Brent Northup, Carroll College, president (until May, 2003); Dave Kosloski, Clark College, at large rep (until May 2002); Chris Bragg, CSI, community college rep (until May 2002); Steve Johnson, Alaska, NPDA rep (until May 2002); Glen Frappier, policy rep (until May 2002); Sam Mathies, Pacific, NIET rep (until May 2002).
4. Budget Report. \$146.30 positive cash flow for NFC season, 2000-2001. Checking account balance of \$997. NFC fee raised to \$4.25 per student to compensate for reduction in number of Designateds from four to three for this season.
5. All conference awards & judge educator awards announced.
6. Calendar updated. Copy enclosed.

7. Designated tournament reports:

Lewis & Clark: "We will cut off when we are full," warned Steve Hunt of entries to his approaching Designated tournament. "And we need your judges," he said.

University of Oregon: Announced they are not on a football weekend, lowering some demand for hotel space. Said they would consider offering NFA-LD, but were not certain they could.

Whitman: Will offer Ext-LD and NFA-LD. Dean McSloy IE tournament will be on Friday, preceding the tournament.

## **DISCUSSION OF THREE TOPICS FLOWED FROM THE DESIGNATED REPORTS: VAN SAFETY, ASSESSING THE DESIGNATEDS, REQUEST FOR MORE HOSTS**

- a. The group discussed the safety of 15-passenger vans. Some schools are enacting safeguards such as "no driving after midnight", or "no driving unless 25 years old" or "drivers limited to shorter shifts at the wheel" or "no 15-passenger vans period." Some schools are flying more frequently, some are seeking charter buses. The group expressed concern about the safety of 15-passenger vans because of highly publicized accidents around the country involving college groups traveling in such vans.
- b. Brent Northup suggested that he chair a committee to "assess the Designateds" and share the reports with tournament directors and with the conference coaches. This was unanimously approved. These assessments will take place during and/or after the tournaments.

- c. A brief discussion took place on “the state of the designateds” and there was agreement that more schools should host designated tournaments. The requirements, at maximum, were said to be 60 IE rooms and 70 rooms during debate rounds.

8. Tournament reports: Other schools were invited to announce their approaching tournaments.

9. Judge philosophy update. Topic was overlooked at this meeting. Comments, anyone?

10. Policy discussion

**Assessment of Designateds, proposal by Brent Northup.** Approved unanimously.

**Parli Topic Announcement proposal by Kelly Brennan, et al.**

Brennan expressed concern that distribution of parli topics at tournaments should be standardized, so as to prevent abuses such as early disclosure of topics to teams, early coaching before the teams actually receive the topic, and so forth. Brennan suggested topics be placed in sealed envelopes and sent to the room with the judge – who would not open the envelope until all teams were present. The coaches discussed this and decided to accept an “aspiration” on the issue – a non-binding guideline addressing the topic.

The following “aspiration” was passed unanimously and will be added to our bylaws.

Aspiration on distribution of parliamentary debate topics:

“The Northwest Forensics Conference aspires to guarantee fairness in the distribution of topics to parliamentary debate teams. The community encourages hosts of NFC tournaments to take steps to insure such fairness by:

- 1) announcing the topic at a common assembly

and/or

- 2) distributing the topic in sealed envelopes not to be opened until both teams are present

and/or

- 3) informing judges in writing that revealing the topics prematurely to any team is unethical

NFC hosts are encouraged to take any or all of these steps to insure fairness in the distribution of topics at tournaments.”

**Divisions proposal by Jim Hanson**

Jim proposed changing the definitions of novice, junior and open divisions in parliamentary debate, policy debate and individual events.

Steve Hunt of Lewis & Clark suggested that the proposal be tabled for further discussion. A motion to table passed, with three dissenting votes. The motion stipulated a thorough discussion of the topic and the appointment of a committee to study the matter this year.

Highlights of the discussion follow: We need to define high school experience more carefully, with reconsideration of the tournament of champions stipulations; we need to reduce the glut in junior divisions and increase the size of senior/open divisions; we need to ask ourselves whether more people in open division really improves open division; we need to decide if experience is defined by genre – does interp success determine interp classification? Does debate experience determine debate classification? Does short prep experience determine short prep classification? Does platform (ADS, Inform, Persuasion, CA) experience determine platform classification? Or does platform experience also determine short prep classification and vice versa?; we need to proceed so as to keep hope for novices to succeed – they need a

division and they need not to be “elevated” too quickly; we need to be careful not to produce rules that results in a person moving from novice to open too suddenly – some suggestions could push a student from novice to open after one good tournament; we need to be sure that a series of successes in novice does not move a student to open, bypassing junior altogether – some junior experience should be allowed even after success in novice; policy debate should allow novices who have parliamentary experience because policy is a whole new ballgame; we might consider the number of finalists awards, rather than the number of top-three awards, in determining when to elevate a student to open; debate and Ies should have some consistency in their approach; we should think about the two types of novices – the “pure novice” who has no experience whatsoever in the event versus the “technical novice” who has some experience, but meets the requirements for novice set by the tournament; we should consider the NIET rules as guidelines to determine success – perhaps a first counts for 4 points, second counts for 3 points, and so forth and the points determine when a person advances to a higher division; perhaps a tournament with 8 schools should not count as a tournament, in the same fashion that NIET does not sanction an 8-school tournament; we need to determine how much experience determines a semester of competition – one tournament? Two tournaments? Three tournaments? So many rounds?; we should think about an “outcome standard” that determines when to elevate a student – when they possess certain skills, certain outcomes, they are moved upwards; we should discuss whether a team continues to be defined by its most experienced member; we should consider whether debate and Ies should have separate definitions of novice and junior; we should avoid too complicated a system; we should consider the guidelines of other regions who often define junior more simply as a student in the first or second year of college participation in the event; we should consider wellness at tournaments.

Chris Bragg was appointed chair of a committee to study the issue. He will be joined by the executive council (Northup, Johnson, Kosloski, Frappier, Mathies) plus others of Bragg’s choosing. They will report to the body at the fall meeting on September 7, 2002.

#### **Discussion of other topics including wellness and well being and the Designated system.**

Comments from members:

We are not a healthy community if we start early, end late, eat late and sleep little; we should consider only two rounds of IE preliminaries to shorten tournaments; we should be careful to shorten tournaments because some schools travel a long distance and want to maximize opportunity to compete; we should offer more two-day tournaments, ending Saturday; we should recognize that religious schools sometimes are reluctant/unable to compete on Sundays; we should be aware of the value conflict of shorter tournaments versus maximizing the amount of competition; traveling all night is unhealthy; we should keep talking about allowing “different types of tournaments” to serve as Designated tournaments; we might consider opportunities for cardio workouts at tournaments; we should continue to monitor gender issues in our community; we should remember that Designated tournaments bring the community together and offering “full service” tournaments meets the needs of many different programs, which is good.

#### **11. Organizational Reports**

Policy debate: Discussion of the NDT qualifying system is underway.

NIET: the date for the NIET qualifier is not set, but the most likely date will be March 3, at the conclusion of the CEDA champs tournament at the Lewis & Clark tournament. Other possibilities include Feb. 23, at the close of the Willamette Hatfield parli tournament. March 10 is also possible. The AFA website has useful information on joining the AFA-NIET. The website for AFA is XXX

NPDA: to join send \$30 to Brent Northup, NPDA treasurer; the national tournament is at Metro State from March 22-25; schools are welcome to apply to host the national tournament in 2003 or 2004. The website for NPDA is XXX

Canada and Worlds: World debate is blossoming, and schools are encouraged to consider competing at international locations. The world parli tournament is at the University of Toronto beginning Dec. 27, 2002.

Eastern European debate is skyrocketing and Robert Trapp is encouraging support and participation there. The website for Worlds is: XXX

Phi Rho Pi Nationals is in Fort Worth, April 8-13.

Interstate Oratory will take place in Rapid City, SD on April 25-27. Contact Larry Schnoor, 507-387-3010.

DSKTKA tournament will take place at the University of Florida, March 22-24.

The Seattle Urban Debate League is alive and well. Derek Bueshcer of UPS encourages participation and support. It features debate opportunities for urban high schools. It's modeled after similar efforts in LA and San Francisco, for example.

Portland Debate League continues under the guidance of Mike Dugaw of Lower Columbia College.

Brent Northup offered to write letters of support for programs needing such support. Please e-mail Brent with requests.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:38 p.m. Coaches returned to their campuses, not sensing that in three days the world would be dramatically changed.

END