HIGH SCHOOL COACH INSTRUCTION GUIDE

John Wheeler

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I. Getting Started

A. Registration

Teams are required to complete the Registration Form on the Iowa State Association (ISBA) Mock Trial website page to sign-up your team for the 2021 High School Mock Trial Competition. This initial form will ask fundamental questions: school/organization, number of teams, and contact information. The deadline for initial registration is February 8, 2021.

After completing the Registration Form, coaches can make adjustments to the number of teams, teams' creative names, and specific team members until the initial registration deadline. Please email jwheeler@iowabar.org with particular changes, so teams’ registration information can be updated timely.

B. Team Code Assignment

After coaches submit their Registration Form, Mr. Wheeler will send their assigned Team Codes in an email. Please reference this code on all forms, such as the Competition Preference Form and Team Rosters.

Coaches who decide to add another team will receive an additional assigned team code. If coaches drop a team, the corresponding team code will also be dropped.

C. Competition Preference Form

In an email, coaches will receive a link to the Competition Preference Form along with their assigned Team Code(s).

Preliminary Rounds

For each team, complete a separate Competition Preference Form and input the assigned Team Code. Due to the virtual nature of the competition, there will be no traditional “regional” competitions. Instead, each team will participate in two (2) Preliminary Rounds (once as P, once as D). These trial assignments will be made based on responses to the Competition Preference Forms to accommodate all scheduling issues.

On the comments section of the Competition Preference Form, please note any special scheduling requests. For example, a coach can request all of their teams participate at the same time.
Play-Off Round and State Tournament
After the Preliminary Rounds, some teams will automatically qualify for the State Tournament. Other teams may qualify for a single round Play-off trial. In the event that a team qualifies for the Play-off Round, please include preferred dates and times for the Play-Off Round on the same form.

D. Team Rosters

After coaches submits their Competition Preference Form, they will receive an email with a link to Team Roster forms. On these forms, indicate the names of students and their assigned roles.

Before the competition begins, these team rosters will be posted by Team Code for judges’ reference during the trials.

Reminder: Coaches will submit BOTH a PLAINIFF and a DEFENSE roster for each team. (Changes may be made to rosters after submission, but please try to minimize any alterations.)

E. 2020 Iowa Middle School Trial Regional Tournament Dates

High School tournaments begin the week of March 1st with Round 1 Preliminary Competition and culminates with the State tournament the week of March 22nd.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2021 Iowa High School Mock Trial Tournament Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Round</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Round 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Round 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>State Tournament</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

• **Round 1**: Preliminary competition starts on Monday, March 1st through Saturday, March 6th. The competition will be treated like current regionals with randomly matched trials. Teams will be required to participate in two (2) trials (once as Plaintiff and once as Defense) during that week. This year, there will be trials offered each day (Monday-Saturday) at different times. Teams will choose their desired days and times to minimize academic schedule conflicts as well as Zoom fatigue. For example, a school can select Monday at 12:30 pm and Thursday at 4:30 pm for their two preliminary rounds.

• **Round 2**: The Play-Off Round occurs Tuesday, March 9th through Saturday, March 13th. Qualifying teams will be required to participate in one (1) power-matched trial. In addition, teams will select their preferred days and times for their virtual trial.
• **State Tournament**: Overall, State tournament qualifiers will be selected during the week of March 9th. The State Tournament will be the week of March 22nd at specified days and times. This tournament may be virtual, or if conditions allow in-person. For an in-person competition, the State Tournament will follow social distancing guidelines. If virtual, we will modify the structure so that each team participates in at least 2 trials. A final determination about the State Tournament structure will be made in late January.

F. **Judge Recruitment**

The Judge Sign-up Form can be found on the ISBA webpage. Each team is required to recruit judges to serve for at least two rounds of competitions (hopefully more!). With the shift to virtual competitions, judges are not required to travel to a competition site. Therefore, you can recruit volunteers to judge from your local area and beyond (in some instances WELL beyond – John Wheeler served as a judge for a mock trial competition in South Korea over the summer). Keep in mind, judges can be college students, law students, lawyers, legal professionals, college professors and of course judges in Iowa.

G. **Team Structure**

There are three models for virtual competition, you can choose one:

1) **Each student on their own in their own space**
   This is the most social-distance-friendly option with each student on their own device in different locations. Everyone can participate regardless of pandemic restrictions! And by insisting on having each student on their own computer there are other benefits as well. First, when each student has their own device, they will more familiar using the device. Second, if each student using their own device, they will less time will be needed for trading positions, changing the name displayed for the competitor, and other, similar matters.

2) **Same room, one camera – courtroom set-up**
   This option has each team set up and present their trials in a familiar setting, just without the opposing team, judges, and evaluators physically present. It does require additional equipment in the form of a wide-angle lens webcam and microphone sufficient to capture all that student participants say during a trial. You will have to experiment to find optimal distances and angles for presentations and may choose to stage mark where different participants sit or stand during the trial.

3) **Same room/same building, multiple cameras**
   This option places all participating students from a specific team in the same room or general location but requires each to have their own device for the portion the student is performing. Under this format, there may be some feedback issues during questioning of same team witnesses, so it may be advantageous to physically separate attorneys and witnesses. Teams, however, are able to stay together in a general location to enhance the social nature of the activity (while remaining appropriately socially distanced!) and allows the team manager/tech to be able to troubleshoot as needed. This scenario may also be necessary in areas where a central location (likely school itself or a law firm) has the only stable high-speed internet available. While more devices are in use by students, it does offer the possibility of limited sharing if needed by simply renaming participants as the trial advances. At a
minimum, teams in this scenario would need three devices: one for attorneys to share, one for witnesses to share, and one for the timekeeper.

H. Team Manager/ Trial Technician

As usual, teams consist of between eight to ten students. This year, an additional team member can serve as a Team Manager providing technology assistance during the virtual competition. The Team Manager would handle team tech issues such as screen sharing of exhibits, renaming participants to adhere to rules/protocols, and serve as liaison between team and competition coordinator in case of emergency.

I. Benefits of Scrimmage

Prior to the competition, teams are encouraged to scrimmage and practice trials on Zoom, so students are familiar with the virtual mock trial format. By hosting scrimmages on Zoom, students will receive good preparation and practice. It is also an opportunity to check on potential technical issues that may need to be addressed before the tournament. The contact information for each team will be publicized to facilitate scrimmage scheduling.

II. Zoom Mock Instructions

Zoom is an online videoconferencing platform.

A. Materials Needed

- Internet Connection
- Computer/ laptop or wide-angle camera and microphone
- Zoom link

B. Joining the Zoom Tournament

Mock Trial participants will receive a Zoom link to the competition in an email. On the day of the tournament, click the blue link under the “Join Zoom Meeting” section of the email.
After clicking on the Zoom link, the Zoom meeting should pop up. If not, the webpage below will show on the screen. Click ‘join from your browser’ in blue font.

Click on the blue button ‘Join with Computer Audio’

C. Zoom Tool Bar

At the bottom on the screen, there is the Zoom Tool Bar.
**Zoom Tool Bar**
- Microphone button - Enables Mute and Unmute
- Start Video button - Enables to show video and not to show video
- Participants button - Shows how many participants are in the meeting
- Chat button
- Share Screen button
- Record button
- End button

In the Zoom meeting, please check that the Microphone Button has a red line through it and says “Unmute”. If not, click the Microphone Button to disable it. Also, please check that the Start Video has a red line through it. If not, click the Start Video to disable it.

**D. “Courtroom” Set Up using Breakout Rooms**

For the virtual mock trial competition, there will be two Zoom meetings/platforms and individual breakout rooms for the trials themselves. Teams will be sent a Zoom meeting link to one of these platforms at their chosen day/time. After the participants click on the Zoom link, they will enter the waiting room. At this time, participants should rename following screen name protocols. Then, the Host/Trial Administrator will assign them to the appropriate breakout room. Please note that there will be a wait time for the trial to begin as the Host/Trial Administrator assigns participants to breakout rooms on Zoom.
E. Chat Function

1. Click the “Chat” button on the Tool Bar

2. The Chat box pops up

3. The “Three Dot” Button on the right side of the Chat box allows participants to chat with: No One, Host Only, Everyone Publicly, Everyone Publicly and Privately

4. Type message in Text Box (**Only Displaying Time and Communicating Messages is allowed**)

F. Screen Sharing

1. Click the “Share Screen” button

2. Click the screen that needs to be shared

3. Hit the “Share” button

4. To stop sharing your screen, click the red “Stop Share” button
G. Leaving the Meeting

1. Click the red “End” button

2. Click the “Leave Meeting” button

III. Virtual Trial Procedures

A. Display

On Zoom judges are instructed to “hide non-video participants.” This means that they will not see the participants -- advocates, witnesses, and other judges -- who have turned off their videos, and it means that the participants whose videos are on will appear larger on their screens. This will allow judges to focus attention on -- and more clearly see -- the advocates they are scoring.

Judges are instructed to use Speaker View when attorneys are delivering opening statements or closing arguments. Speaker View displays the person who is speaking in almost full screen and minimizes the videos of everyone else. This allows judges to focus on the advocate speaking.

At all other times -- especially during witness examinations -- judges are instructed to use Gallery View. This puts multiple people on screen at once. For example, when a witness is testifying on direct examination, judges will be able to view four people at once: the witness, the directing attorney, the crossing attorney, and the presiding judge. This will allow judges to watch the dialogue between
attorney and witness, and it also allows the judge to see everyone involved in an objection and subsequent argument.

Also, judges are advised to enable “Side-by-Side mode.” This provides a different view when advocates display exhibits via screen-sharing. When someone shares their screen, the default Zoom function on judge’s computers is to display the exhibit across nearly the entire screen and to display the speaker in a small box in the upper right corner. There is an alternative: Side-by-Side mode, which allows judges to resize the exhibit/video display so, for example, the exhibit and the advocate each occupy half the screen.

**B. Screen Names**

All participants will adopt and announce screen name conventions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Description of Screen Name Protocol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bailiff</td>
<td>A bailiff’s screen name will be the number of their courtroom, the initials “TC” for the trial coordinator, and their last name (“6-TC-Smith”).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presiding Judge</td>
<td>A presiding judge’s screen name will be the number of their courtroom and their title (“6-Hon. Dewain Fox”). This way, participants know who to message in case of a problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judges</td>
<td>Screen names will be the number of their courtrooms, the word “judge”, and their last name (“6-Judge-Smith”).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocates</td>
<td>Screen names should include the number of their courtrooms, parties, team codes, and last names to help judges know who they are scoring (“6- P - ABC - Nixon” or “6- D - XYZ - Johnson”). The inclusion of Ms. and Mr. (or pronouns) may help prevent misgendering.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaches</td>
<td>Coaches will have their videos disabled. But judges can still see their names in the participant list. Therefore, coaches should include the number of their courtrooms, parties, team codes, and the name “Coach” on Zoom to reduce the likelihood that judges identify the teams they are judging (“6-P-ABC-Coach”).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Witness</td>
<td>For witnesses, use a screen name that identifies the number of their courtroom, the party calling them, their team code, and the student’s actual name (“6- D-ABC- Doe”).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Managers/Trial Technicians</td>
<td>Include the number of their courtrooms, parties, team codes and the name “Tech” for trial technicians (“6- P- ABC-Tech” and “6-D-ABC– Tech”).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observer</td>
<td>Video will be disabled, but their screen name include would include number of their courtroom, the word “observer” and their team code (“6-Observer-XYZ”).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
C. Judges’ Audio and Video

Presiding judges will keep their video and audio on throughout the trial. This way, advocates can see the judge at all times. Also, judges can quickly respond to objections and questions raised.

Non-presiding judges ("jurors" or evaluators) will have their videos on for only two parts of the trial: (1) the very beginning / before the trial starts, and (2) every time the court returns from recess. This allows the presiding judge and advocates to ensure everyone is present. Otherwise, throughout the trial, jurors should have their video off, so everyone viewing the trial can focus on the advocates because they will be the ones visible on the screen. Jurors will turn on their audio and video, of course when giving post-trial feedback should your state allow post-trial feedback.

D. Witnesses’ Audio and Video

Witnesses should disable their audio and video except when testifying.

E. Advocates’ Audio and Video

When using a standard Zoom room: During appearances and housekeeping, all advocates should have their video on. During speeches, only the two attorneys giving that particular speech should have their video on (e.g., during the Plaintiff opening, both the Plaintiff opener and Defense opener should have their video on).

During witness examinations, only the two attorneys examining that witness should have their video on (e.g., during the direct examination of the police officer, both the prosecutor directing the witness and defense attorney who will later cross the witness should have their videos on). Attorneys should mute their audio except when performing. For example, a prosecutor should mute their audio during the defense opening and during the defendant direct examination.

Otherwise, background noise will change the person displayed in judges’ Speaker View, which will interrupt and distract from the speech. If an attorney wishes to object, they should turn on their audio to make the objection and then turn off the audio once the judge has ruled.

IV. Competition Rules

Rule 1.3.B Emergencies – Virtual Competitions
This rule provides information on how a presiding judge can take a brief recess for an emergency; team member emergency substitution; how to deal with technical difficulties and what they are; any emergencies associated with the timekeeper or presiding judge; and the importance of not feigning a technical difficulty.

Rule 3.2 Team Composition
For a virtual competition, the team roster becomes official at 5pm local time of the Host location on the day prior to the first round.
Rule 3.5  Team Roster Form
For a virtual competition, teams must submit Team Roster Forms in accordance with the protocol announced by the host for the competition. In addition, Team Rosters will be distributed to the judges electronically.

Rule 4.1  Courtroom Setting
Guidance on how to log into the selected virtual platform is provided. A minimum of three devices are needed for performing attorney, witness, and timekeeper. Each participant needs a screen name according to guidance provided by the host. Competing team members will have cameras turned on, no one else.

Rule 4.4  Swearing in Witnesses
For a virtual competition, all witnesses will be deemed to be sworn.

Rule 4.6  Timekeeping
During a virtual competition, after each witness, timekeepers shall confer using the “chat” or similar feature regarding how much time remains for each team. Timekeepers signal time using the chatroom function or may use camera to show time remaining cards. Timekeepers may use stopwatches or cell phones to track time. If using cell phones, phones are kept in airplane/silenced mode.

Rule 4.11  Supplemental Material: Accents, Costuming, Exhibits
In a virtual competition, students may be directed to display screen names according to protocol established, which will not be considered a violation of this rule.

Rule 4.12  Trial Communication
During a virtual competition, no team member, coach, judge nor students may use the “chatroom” function except to display time and to communicate emergencies. Observers may not use the “chatroom” function at all.

Rule 4.14  Videotaping/Photography
All participants must consent to video or audio recording and electronic posting of each performance at the National Championship except as provided by Rule 1.5 determined by the National Board. No team may post, share with another competing team, or disseminate any round prior to conclusion of National Championship. Family and observers are also to be notified of this rule as any violations could bring sanctions to the team up to and including disqualification.

Rule 4.16  Standing During Trial
Student attorneys may elect to stand or remain seated for all parts of the trial, except that all objections shall be made while seated.

Rule 4.17  Objections During Opening Statement/Closing Statement
The attorney shall make all objections while seated.
Rule 4.20.B  Procedure for Introductions of Exhibits – Special Rules for a Virtual Competition
The procedures in 4.20.A on introduction of exhibits should be followed except that: witnesses will have all materials, but only refer to them when prompted; attorneys identify the exhibit they wish to show the witness; attorneys do not have to confirm exhibits were shown to opposing counsel; witnesses will answer to “identify” witness referred to; for purposes of impeachment or refreshment of recollection – the examining attorney’s team share screens or similar technology to show the document referenced; exhibits shown in this manner are not deemed admitted unless formally published to jury; and teams may use technology to mark exhibits only to the extent that marking physical exhibits would have been permitted in rule 4.20.A.

Rule 4.21  Use of Notes
Virtual competitions allow for the use of laptops or other electronic devices.

Rule 5.2.A  Composition of Judging Panels
If a technical or other emergency impacts the presiding judge, a designated evaluator will serve as the presiding judge until the dispute resolution committee can be informed and can act to adjust the panel composition.

V. Technology Advice

1. Whatever tech you’re going to get, get it soon. You want whatever tech you’re going to use to be in your possession with plenty of time to test it and to practice with it prior to the start of the tournament. You do not want to show up on the first day of the tournament with a brand-new microphone or webcam that you’ve never tried before.

2. Internet: A wired connection beats a wi-fi connection. It’s just that simple. If you can figure out a way to plug directly into your router then that is a better option than just relying on your wi-fi connection. This is the single most important thing you can do to improve your set-up for online trials. If your computer doesn’t have an Ethernet port, you can get an Ethernet-to-USB converter (for less than $30). If you absolutely have to use wi-fi, be as close to your router as possible, with nothing in between your computer and your router. As a last resort / back up option, download the Zoom app on your phone so that you could use cellular data to connect if need be.

3. Mic: Proximity matters more than tech. You can use whatever mic you want: your computer mic, an earpiece, an external mic, a headset, etc. Of course, whatever mic you use, think about optics with the judges in the room. Also, internet and proximity to the mic are more important than mic quality. Whatever mic you choose to use, make sure you test it with another human on the other end before the tournament begins.

4. Be aware of household bandwidth usage and potential tradeoffs. Know who in your household is going to be doing what online. Try to have exclusive use of the internet in your home during your rounds in order to ensure the best connection possible. Close out of any unnecessary tabs during trial to reduce bandwidth use.
5. **Plan how you’re going to communicate with your co-counsel during the trial.** You will need to communicate with your co-counsel during the round in which you are an advocate. This could be as simple as texting, sending a private chat in Zoom, Google Hangout, etc. Practice which will work best for you and your teammates.

6. **Lighting: You want to be lit from the front.** A bright light directly behind you will make it harder to see you. So make sure that whatever is providing light in the room you are in is on your face and not on your back.

7. **Backgrounds: Think about what is behind you.** You do not want judges staring at a messy room or a poster of your favorite band (and you may not have school-affiliated items displayed on screen). So think through your background.

8. **Practice screen sharing/marking-up exhibits.** This is just a quick note to practice, practice, PRACTICE sharing documents on your screen and marking up those documents before the tournament begins. You should try to get to the point where this is just second nature.

9. **Greenscreen/Image Backgrounds are forbidden unless exempt is granted.** The “greenscreen” backgrounds, i.e., images inserted by the computer are not allowed because virtual backgrounds consume bandwidth and processing power, which disrupts with some devices. However, if there is an issue, please contact the ISBA office or email jwheeler@iowabar.org.
VI. FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)

A. Zoom

Q1. What should my student do if they are kicked off Zoom?

A1. As long as the individual still has an internet connection, the solution is simple: they log back onto Zoom. For the virtual competition, there will be breakout rooms using Zoom. The student will be reassigned by the host/trial administrator to their appropriate break out room once they log back in.

Q2. What should my student do if they lose internet connection?

A2. If an advocate or witness loses internet connection completely, we recommend using the phone app as a backup plan. An advocate could log onto Zoom with their phone, using cellular data, and complete the trial, so long as they have reception. Another option, a student could also use their phone as a hotspot to connect to the internet if their internet connection goes out. We recommend asking advocates and witnesses to prepare for this ahead of time by downloading Zoom to their phones and practicing with their phones.

If no internet connection can be restored, students can continue participating via audio. Zoom permits audio connections to its rooms, so a student who is unable to re-establish an internet connection should call back in either to the main Zoom room. If needed, substitution is allowed if no connection can be established within a reasonable timeframe.

B. Competition Rules

Q3. Can parents and friends watch the mock trial competitions on Zoom?

A3. Spectators are allowed, but numbers may be limited due to capacity on Zoom. The Event Coordinator will inform teams of this capacity limit in advance. Spectators can watch a trial with muted audio and disabled video functionality. Also, their screen name would be the number of their courtroom, the word “observer” and their student’s team code (e.g.: “1.Observer-ABC”). Spectators can watch the competition rounds through Zoom links.

Q4. Will the virtual competitions be recorded and posted online?

A4. Only the State Tournament Championship Round will be recorded and posted on the ISBA website.

However, individuals can record trials via Zoom. At the beginning of pretrial motions, the Presiding Judge will ask both teams if they agree to be recorded. If both parties agree, then an individual who wants to record should return to the Zoom waiting room.

The Host/Trial Administrator will grant that individual permission to record. Afterward, the individual can return to their breakroom room/courtroom and hit the tool bar’s record button at the bottom of the screen.
Q5. How do timekeepers display time during the tournament?

A5. During the tournament, timekeepers would use the “chat to everyone” function on Zoom and publish the remaining time. In addition to using the chat function, timekeepers can use timecards during Opening Statements and Closing Arguments. Timekeepers should have their video on and audio muted when displaying timecards. Afterwards, they should turn their video off.

Q6. How can student attorneys confer with their co-counsel?

A6. If a student attorney and their co-counsel are in the same room, the student attorney can request permission from the presiding judge. Then, the student attorney can mute their audio and confer with their co-counsel. If a student attorney and their co-counsel are in different locations, the student attorney and their co-counsel can use the private chat function on Zoom, text via cell phones, or email each other.

Q7. How do teams qualify for the Play-Off Round?

A7. The number one criterion is winning both the plaintiff and defense rounds on performance points during the Preliminary Competition. Then, teams are ranked on total overall points.