



# Coaches' Corner

Dear CTOM Community,

Like many of you, my heart broke a little when I received the recent email announcing the cancelation of the 39th annual Odyssey of the Mind tournament due to SCSU's [directive](#). My eyes teared a bit as I shared the news with the high school team that was in the midst of rehearsals in my living room. So much time, effort and creativity have gone into these solutions, and the first reaction was a negative "it was all for nothing."

But, as the parents came to pick up their students and for the first time got a glimpse of the creations and creativity, it became evident that all their hard work was for something. Many of our teams started coming together in October, and have worked weekly... sometimes daily... to create amazing stories, fantastical characters and creative pieces of art. Think back to that first team meeting... how far they have come. Significant growth happens when hard work and commitment drive our students. Odyssey has helped our students to grow exponentially. While working so hard toward an outcome that was not predicted is frustrating, each team is a winner in its own right. We are all champions because we came together to make something out of nothing.

Over the past six months, we have taught our students the value of teamwork. Today we teach them a new lesson... the value of resilience. The next few weeks may be hard for everyone. The CTOM tournament will likely not be the only disappointment created by the spread of the COVID-19 illness. I encourage everyone to celebrate your team and their accomplishments. Congratulate yourself (and your team parents) for getting the team this far. Celebrate their creative problem solving and inspiring theatrics. For my team, I'll pack up props and costumes into boxes and store them in the basement. Once the disruption has passed, they would like to perform their solution for friends and family.

Though there continues to be only a handful of cases of COVID-19 in Connecticut, the actions of the CTOM Board and SCSU were prudent, timely, and arrived at thoughtfully. As Dave Schaller outlined in his communication, we all recognize all of your hard work and effort this season.

Not to sound trite, but in this instance the adage seems true... "it doesn't matter if you win or lose, it's how you play the game." Thank you for taking your students on the Odyssey journey. Thank you for teaching them how to play 'the game.' I hope everyone enjoyed the OM experience and that we will have the pleasure of working with many of you next season - CTOM's 40th anniversary year. More will come later this week from CTOM regarding creative solutions and practical details.

Best,

**Kim Kempton**  
CTOM Coaches' Coach

***CTOM is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to  
Odyssey of the Mind in CT***

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