

Coaches' Corner

March 2022

Did That Just Happen?

In the weeks leading up to the competition, teams will transition from building to rehearsing. Be sure to practice what happens when something goes **WRONG!**

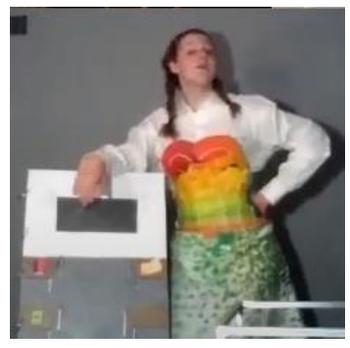
The First Thing to Do... Breathe. What you have feared for the last few weeks has just happened on competition day during your team's performance: One of your team members forgot their lines, a prop broke on stage, or the balsa tower broke a minute into the performance. The first thing that you must do is breathe! Mistakes can, and will, happen. The magic of Odyssey of the Mind is that the unexpected will happen, and your team members have a distinct ability to take any problem and create an immediate solution.

Second... Learn from Mistakes. From experience, the best way to avoid issues on stage and to prepare for when something goes wrong on stage is to practice, practice, and practice! Allow your team opportunities to practice their performance over and over again.

During these performance times, mistakes are likely to happen, and solutions will be created right then and there.

Third... Always Stay Positive. When something goes wrong during your team's performance it is vital that you don't show your stress, even though you may be going through a plethora of emotions on the inside. Remember that your students are just that, kids who are doing Odyssey of the Mind as something fun and enriching. Coaches and parents need to be sure not to react when something goes wrong. The team will already feel disappointed in themselves if a mistake is made, and they do not need to see disappointment or disapproval from others.

Lastly... Lead by Example. Breathe! Have faith in your team and remember that no one is perfect. Mistakes happen and things will go wrong on stage. Success is truly shown in how you handle it! Remember, this is Odyssey of the Mind, and we must expect the unexpected!



Send in PHOTOS

PHOTOBOMB CTOM! To be included in the Awards video montage, send your team photos or videos to photos@ctom.org! Either attach the files or share a link to a file sharing platform!



Login to Microsoft Teams TONIGHT for comradery, questions, and insights.

CTOM Office Hours
Monday, March 7th
7-8pm

[Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)

March Topic: Are you ready for the competition?





Planning your Competition Day

The CTOM competition will be an exhausting whirl of excitement, emotion and (occasionally) drama. First, take a deep breath and pat yourself on the back. Your job is almost done! You have successfully delivered the team to the competition. Congratulations! Here are a few coaching suggestions to make sure that the day runs smoothly, and that the drama is limited to the performances.



Before You Leave Home

On the day of the tournament please monitor every team member and coach for symptoms per the CDC guidelines and keep a child home if necessary. Before your team leaves for the tournament, review your check-list and make sure all sets, props, costumes and any necessary tools have been packed.

Keep in Touch Along the Way

Before the day of the competition, create a cell-phone call list or group chat and share with all. NOTE: there is NO guest WIFI on campus, so plan accordingly. While Southern Connecticut State University is not a huge campus, it is still quite easy to get separated. A phone or group chat is the most efficient way to ensure your team can quickly reconvene. Similarly, make sure that EVERYONE has the schedule and location for BOTH the Long-term and Spontaneous competitions. Maps and parking instructions are on our website.

Create a Schedule for the Day

Plan to arrive at least 1 hour before your first competition, regardless if it's long term or spontaneous. The reality of competition day doesn't sink in until you pull onto campus. Give your team the opportunity to relax and allow the anxiety to subside. Expect someone to get lost, be delayed or just be nervous. Plan an adequate cushion of time for everyone to come together and gain composure. If you have an issue, please inform the tournament director or problem captain as quickly as possible.

When You Get to Campus

If you are dropping off team props, use approved prop drop spots. Unload them on the sidewalk. Do not leave the car unattended. Immediately drive to the parking area assigned for your problem. Parents are ALLOWED (and encouraged) to help carry props to the performance site. Teams and coaches should meet at a designated outdoor spot and then proceed to their first competition, either their long-term problem or spontaneous, where their Covid-19 papers will be checked, and they will be given wristbands. Spectators (limit - 2 per team member) should proceed to the nearest **Audience Check-in desk** for their wristband. **Everyone** must show a vaccination card or a negative test result. Adults must also show ID. Wristbands are required to attend a performance.

Settling In

Once everything is unloaded from the cars and the team has checked to make sure everything is accounted for, take a few moments to warm up for spontaneous, organize props, assemble sets and repair any damage that may have occurred during transport. Be vigilant about the outside assistance rule... only team members can assemble or repair. Take a few moments to inspect the competition space. Are there changes in the room set-up compared to where the team practiced? Revert to asking questions and make sure everyone is comfortable with the logistics.





Bring a Toolbox

Odyssey praises creative problem solving, but it also rewards being prepared. As your team finalizes their props and costumes, create a toolbox. Include all the things that may be needed in an emergency on competition day. Have the team think about what tends to break and what is needed to fix them. Problems during dress rehearsals often reveal additional tool kit supplies! Include typical things such as tape, scissors, duct tape, Velcro, zip ties, spare prop parts, screwdrivers, etc. Bring the team toolbox to the staging area to use for setting up the performance or for repairs. The toolbox should not be part of the solution. See the Program Guide for exemptions.



Don't Forget the FORMS!

Be Prepared

Odyssey teams could likely learn a great deal from the Boy Scout motto “be prepared” when it comes to forms. DO NOT wait until the last minute to complete your forms. Once completed, make multiple copies. Keep one set of forms with you and place a set in a box with props or costumes.

When Do We Need the Forms?

Forms will be given by the team to a judge in the Staging Area, just prior to performance. Required paperwork includes:

- 4 Copies of the Style Form
- 4 Copies of the Team List Form (available for download from the Team Area of the website)
- 1 Outside Assistance Form (signed by all team members and coaches)
- 1 Cost Form
- 1 Copy of any TEAM SPECIFIC clarifications (if any were submitted)

Do It With STYLE

Each problem has two required elements and two items of the team’s choice. The form requires a paragraph that explains how well the 4 Style elements fit together and enhance the solution.

Team List Form

The problem specific team list form simply helps the judging team know what to look for and provides a brief description of scored elements.

Outside Assistance Form

This form is signed by the team members indicating they completed all parts of the skit themselves or indicated on the form the type of outside assistance that occurred.

Cost Form

Only what is in the final solution is counted in the cost form. Group similar items into single cost lines. Remember the three categories for items: cost, exempt, and assigned values. Be sure to have the team add up the cost and verify it meets the allowed amount for the problem solution. See the Program Guide for more details





Focus on Safety.

CTOM is dedicated to providing participating teams with a full Odyssey of the Mind experience, and as of now we plan to have an in-person tournament at SCSU on March 19th, 2022. See [here](#) for more details.

Be Prepared, Be Spontaneous

During the competition, every team solves a spontaneous problem, an opportunity to show the judges their ability to think on their feet. Teams participating in the same problem and division will solve the same spontaneous problem. To ensure fairness, there is no discussion of the problems outside of the room.

What to Expect at the Competition

Arrive at the designated Spontaneous area 20 minutes prior to your assigned spontaneous competition time. Only coaches (or one parent) should accompany the team. Follow the signs to the check-in desk. You and your team will be assigned to a holding room where you will wait until it is time to compete. When it is time for your team to compete, a judge will come to your holding room to call your team's name and escort them to their competition room. At this time, only the team members may follow the official to the competition site. The entire team enters the spontaneous room and solves the problem. Remember, there are no spectators for spontaneous!

To prepare for Spontaneous, teams should practice all three types of spontaneous problems. However, they should also be prepared for the unexpected.

Coaches wait for their team in the debriefing room while they compete. Problems range from 5-15 minutes. Following completion of their problem, the team will be escorted to the debriefing room to discuss and decompress with their coach. Once you leave the debriefing room, you ARE NOT ALLOWED to discuss the spontaneous problem. Period.

Scoring Spontaneous

In competition, the spontaneous problem is worth up to 100 points. The team with the highest raw score in each problem receives 100; every other team receives a percentage of 100 based on its raw score.

In verbal spontaneous problems, creative responses are scored higher than common responses. In hands-on, team members are scored for solving the problem and, oftentimes, for how well they work together and the creativity of their solution. Verbal/hands-on problems usually require some type of verbal responses, combined with an application or technical component.

Spontaneous scores are not released during the competition. Spontaneous scores can be viewed on the website once all scores are published following the conclusion of Awards.

Key Dates and Details:

Key Dates

Monday, March 7th, 2022

CTOM Office Hours

Saturday, March 19, 2022

**CTOM State Tournament
Southern CT State University**

Getting Your Scores

As a reminder, scores will be delivered ELECTRONICALLY following the competition. Coaches will be contacted via email when scores are available. **This year's Award Winners will be announced virtually following the completion of all competitions.**

Competition Score Breakdown:

100 Spontaneous
200 Long-term
50 Style

350 TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS



Do you have
other questions? Email
me – kkempton@ctom.org