



Coaches' Corner March 2025

Competition Edition



We can't wait to be inspired at the
**2025 CTOM
STATE TOURNAMENT**
Saturday, March 29
Bethel Middle School

View and download the [2025
CTOM Tournament Program Guide](#)

WELCOME *ODYSSEY INCLUSIVE*



A new OotM initiative to enhance the experience of neurodiverse competitors and competitors with disabilities. CTOM is excited to welcome our first OI team to the 2025 State Tournament.

CLOSING CEREMONY

Bethel Middle School Auditorium
2:15PM
"The Bubble Show"
3:00PM
2025 CTOM Award Ceremony

Did That Just Happen?

During performance times, mistakes can happen, and solutions will be created on the spot. This is just one of the things that make OM unique. But how to prepare for the inevitable?

The First Thing to Do...Practice. Make your mistakes at home and learn from the 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!

Second...Breathe. What you have feared for the last few weeks has just happened on competition day during your team's performance: someone forgot their lines, a prop broke, or didn't function. The first thing that you must do is breathe! Mistakes can, and will, happen. Take a deep breath and focus on solutions.

Third... Stay Positive. If something goes wrong during your team's performance, don't show stress. Let your team see your confidence in their ability to work through anything.

**SELF-SERVE
COACH ID BADGES**
Help us identify you at your
competition sites --
Look for "Coach" badges at
conveniently placed
PICK UP & RETURN stations





Planning your Competition Day

The CTOM competition will be an exhausting whirl of excitement, emotions, 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

Before your team leaves for the tournament, review your check-list and make sure all sets, props, costumes, and any necessary tools and team forms have been packed.



Keep in Touch Along the Way

Before the day of the competition, create a cell-phone group chat and share with all. NOTE: there is NO guest WIFI on campus, so plan accordingly. This 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.

Food on Campus

Arrive with team snacks as needed throughout the day. During lunch hours, there will be food-trucks on site. And nearby Bethel downtown offers convenient lunch or dinner options.

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. Parents are ALLOWED (and encouraged) to help carry props to the performance site.

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 differences 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

OM praises creative problem solving, and rewards being prepared. As your team finalizes their props and costumes, create a toolbox. During dress rehearsals, have the team think about what may need fixing and what is needed to fix them. Include typical items: tape, scissors, duct tape, Velcro, etc., but also team specific spare parts or tools. Have toolbox near performance area for setup, but it should not be part of the solution. See the [OotM Program Guide](#) for exemptions.

Don't Forget the 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. Forms are available for download from the [Member Area](#) of the Odyssey of the Mind website.

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
- 1 Outside Assistance Form (signed by all team members and coaches)
- 1 Cost Form
- 1 Copy of any PROBLEM SPECIFIC forms 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 Long-Term solution 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





MARKET PLACE

8AM – 2PM Bethel Middle School Cafeteria



ENTER THE RAFFLE

Remind your competitors to enter the tournament raffle! The prize: pin collector towel laden with OM pins from around the world.

Winner takes all!

Drawing will take place at the Award Ceremony.

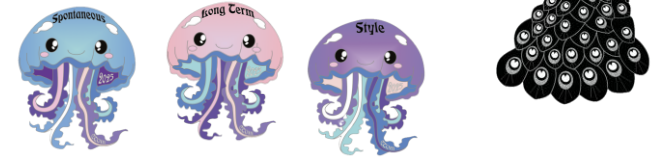
FREE Raffle tickets packets will be distributed to coaches at the Spontaneous Problem site.

VIEW the CTOM Historic Pins Collection

Don't miss the CTOM collection of state, town, and team pins from around Connecticut. The exhibit spans 35 years of Connecticut OM pin trading tradition.



SHOP for your 2025 CTOM Pins and T-shirts at the 2025 CTOM State Tournament MERCHANDISE TABLE



For more CTOM Market Place info visit the [CTOM Tournament Program Guide](#)



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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 designated adult) 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. The team will be escorted back to the debriefing room to discuss/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. The Jill Riggles Award recognizes teams with the highest spontaneous score in their problem division.





**We're excited to welcome you at the 2025 CTOM State Tournament!
Good luck to all Connecticut teams!**

COMPETITION DAY



GET THERE EARLY

Bethel Middle School

600 Whittlesey Dr, Bethel CT
Bethel has a lovely downtown for lunch before or dinner after the Closing Ceremony. During lunch hours local food-trucks will also be on site.

Find competition information, including competition schedules here: [CTOM TOURNAMENT PROGRAM GUIDE](#)
We recommend coaches download a copy for the day of the tournament.



Getting Your Scores

As a reminder, scores will be delivered ELECTRONICALLY. Coaches will be contacted via email when scores are available.

Competition Score Breakdown:
100 Spontaneous
200 Long-term
50 Style
350 TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS



Join us in the BMS Auditorium at 2:15PM

Celebratory Entertainment
The Bubble Show
followed at 3PM by the
CTOM Awards Ceremony

STAY TILL THE END

