

ILLINOIS SCHOLASTIC BOWL RULES SUMMARY

This IHSA Scholastic Bowl Rule Summary is intended for the use of new coaches and students to give them an overview. It is recommended that coaches carry with them to matches a copy of the full IHSA Terms & Conditions, Rule Book, and Case Manual (all of which can be found at www.ihsa.org) for reference. Also, it is very important to be familiar with all of those documents before moderating a match.

Each team has five players. Matches are run by a Moderator, who has full authority during a match. Coaches can appeal Moderator decisions before the next question is read, but there is no higher authority to hear appeals.

One-fifth of all questions are in each of the following categories: Literature, Math, Science, and Social Studies. The remaining questions are in Fine Arts and Miscellaneous.

At the beginning of each match, the Captain and Head Coach of each team are recognized, and the teams introduce themselves and test the buzzer system.

There are two types of questions, Toss-ups and Bonuses. The match begins with a Toss-up, and each Toss-up that is answered correctly is followed up with a Bonus.

At the beginning of each Toss-up Question, the Moderator announces the category and begins reading. A player may buzz in to answer a tossup at any point once the moderator has begun reading it. The Moderator will stop reading and recognize the player by name as soon as the player has buzzed in. Once recognized, the player has three seconds to start giving an answer. If the answer is correct, that player's team is awarded ten points and control of the Bonus. If the answer is incorrect, that player's team is not allowed another attempt at that Toss-up Question, and the Moderator will read the entire question for the other team. Once the Moderator is done reading the question, players have up to ten seconds to buzz in if there are no computations and up to thirty seconds if there are computations. If the first team answers after a question is entirely read, the clock runs down while they answer, but the other team is given a minimum of three seconds to buzz if the first team gives an incorrect answer. There are no penalties for incorrect answers.

No written or verbal communication is allowed during a Toss-up Question, though players can write on their own paper. Players should wait until the Moderator recognizes them by name before answering—failing to do so will result in the team receiving only five points instead of ten points, though the team will still control the Bonus.

At the beginning of a Bonus Question, the Moderator announces the category and the number of parts. The Moderator then reads the question, including all parts. Players can write while the question is being read, but they cannot talk. Once the entire Bonus has been read, players have up to thirty seconds to work and confer. The controlling team can end this time early by calling Time. Once the conferral time is over, teams have three seconds to quietly pass papers to each other.

The team that controls the Bonus (because it correctly answered the preceding Toss-up) gets the first chance to give its answers. All answers must be given by a single person—either the Captain or a player deferred to by the Captain. Once the controlling team gives its answers, the Moderator will state which parts were correct and give the other team (without additional conferral time) a chance to answer the other parts.

An entire Bonus Question is worth twenty points. If there are five parts, each part is worth four points. If there are four parts, each part is worth five points. If there are three parts, teams are awarded six points for one part, thirteen points for two parts, and twenty points for three parts, no matter which parts were answered.

Teams are allowed up to two time-outs per half, and they can only be called by the Head Coach. Coaches can substitute players during time-outs or halftime.

To enter the IHSA Tournament, teams must register online by the end of October and submit their record online by the end of January. It is recommended that each Head Coach attend a Seeding Meeting held in February. The IHSA Tournament is divided into two classes based on school enrollment and consists of a single-elimination Regional, a pool-play Sectional, and a pool-play State Final with Championship and Third Place matches.

There are several rules that are enforced during the IHSA Tournament that are not enforced in some other matches and tournaments. These rules state that each team must start the match with five players and must wear matching tops, and the length of each match is 30 tossups and associated bonuses. Tournament and Conference Directors are responsible for communicating any variations in the rules to participating Coaches, and Coaches should contact the Directors if there are any questions.

This document is published jointly by the IHSA, the organization responsible for creating and enforcing rules in addition to running its State Tournament, and the IHSSBCA, a coaches organization dedicated to improving and growing Scholastic Bowl in Illinois. IHSSBCA also recommends that coaches read our Ethics Guidelines, which can be found at www.ihssbca.org.