

MEMORANDUM

From: The Arkansas High School Mock Trial Committee

To: All Schools Participating in the 2012 Competition

Date: February 9, 2012

Re: Interpretation of Rule 4.13 for Coaches with More than One Team for the 2012 Competition

In an effort to increase the quality of competition and to provide for more opportunities to compete, the Mock Trial Committee has recently authorized schools to field more than one team. The Committee has received an inquiry pursuant to Rule 7.3 requesting an interpretation of the relationship between Rules of Competition 7.1 and 4.13.

Because Rule 7.1 was recently amended, the Committee feels this rule change requires interpretation of the existing Rules of Competition and, therefore, pursuant to Rule 7.3 provides the following guidance to teams, sponsors, and coaches. This interpretation will apply to the 2012 Mock Trial Regional Competition and the State Playoffs.

Rule 7.1 of the Rules of Competition permits each school to “enroll up to two (2) separate teams in the Competition.” It provides that, “[i]f more than one team is enrolled in the Competition, the teams must be composed entirely of different students; the teams will be treated separately for purposes of the Competition.” The Committee has permitted schools enrolling two teams, at the school’s discretion, to have separate coaches for each team, or one coach for both teams.

Rule 4.13 of the Rules of Competition governs viewing a trial. Rule 4.13 states: “[t]eam members, alternates, attorney/coaches, teacher sponsors, and any other persons directly associated with a mock trial team, except for those authorized by the Mock Trial Committee, are not allowed to view other teams in competition, so long as their team remains in the competition.”

The Committee finds that this scenario falls within an exception to Rule 4.13 provided by the language “except for those authorized by the Mock Trial Committee.” The language of Rule 7.1 authorizes a coach or teacher sponsor to view his or her team in competition, whether the coach or teacher sponsor serves in that capacity for just one team or for two teams from the same school. Should a parent or guardian have children on more than one team, the parent or guardian may view any of his or her children in competition for each team for which they are a participant.

However, because the spirit of Rule 4.13 was intended to prohibit the practice of “scouting” an opponent, the Committee finds it appropriate to issue the following guidance to

all teams. The Committee prohibits any team member, teacher sponsor, parent/guardian, or coach from disclosing any information about an opponent with which the team member, teacher sponsor, parent/guardian, or coach is not directly related, including without limitation the tactics, techniques, arguments, or positions taken or advocated by any opponent in competition, to any individual associated with another team.

If a school has separate coaches and/or teacher sponsors for each team enrolled under Rule 7.1, then the teams will be treated as different entities for purposes of Rule 4.13. Where a coach or teacher sponsor serves in the same role for two teams or a parent/guardian has children on more than one team, he or she is prohibited from using or disclosing any information obtained from his or her observing a common opponent in prior rounds of competition.

Any violations of this prohibition may be lodged pursuant to Rule 6.4 of the Rules of Competition.