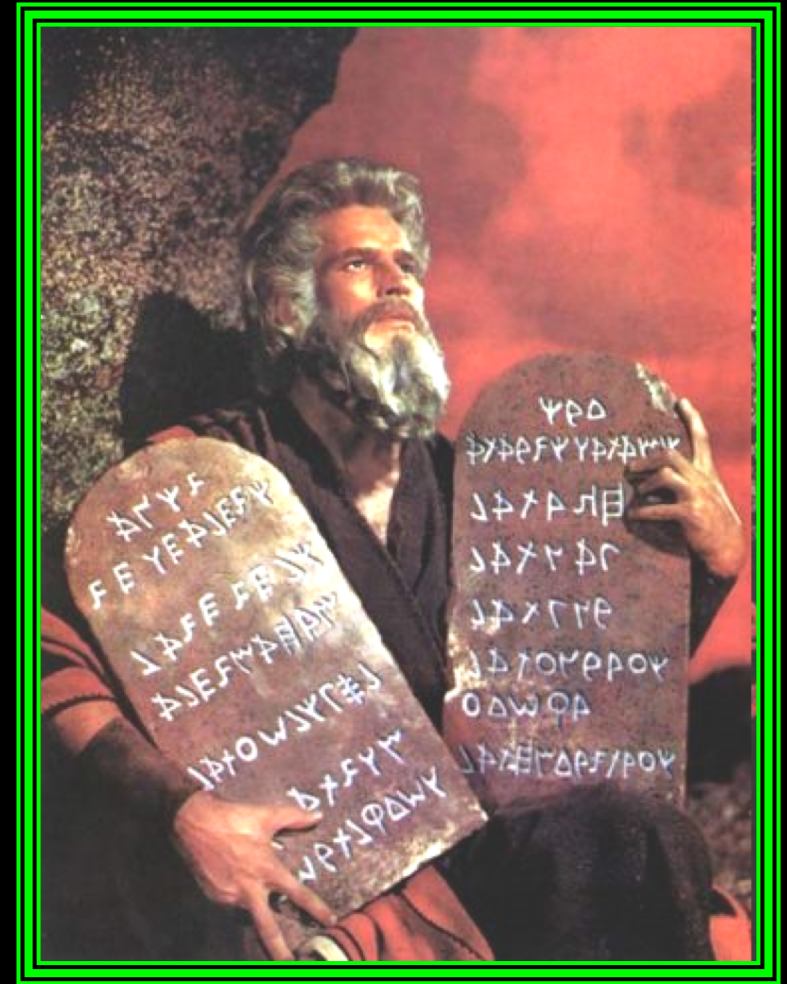# The Ballot As a Learning Tool in Policy Debate

Rich Edwards

Ballots Are More Permanent Than You Think

1. Some coaches save ballots forever

2. Some tournaments are scanning & posting ballots online

Purposes of the Debate Ballot

1. Provide a reason for decision
2. Promote judge adaptation
3. Instruction for debaters
4. Reinforcement of things done well
5. Communication with the coaches

Example of Reason for Decision

The significant clash(es) / issue(s) used as the basis for my decision were:

Federalism Disadvantage — This wins the round for the negative. The impact of the disadvantage is never really questioned by the affirmative, and the impact is huge: ethnic cleansing and warfare around the world unless the American model of federalism is maintained. The affirmative tries to defeat the disadvantage by questioning the links, but the negative has good evidence indicating that child care is primarily a state and local function and that the states are now doing a good job of experimenting/innovating in this area. There is also good evidence showing that a uniform federal mandate would effectively end state innovation and thus, hurt federalism.

Promote Judge Adaptation

Rich, I like your organization and time management, especially in the rebuttal. But you are trying to speed up when you read evidence and the evidence becomes incomprehensible as a result. Also, be careful of rudeness in CX – Karen was trying to answer your question on the topicality argument, but you kept cutting her off.

Provide Suggestions for Improvement

Steve, good job in the rebuttal of answering the topicality argument. You just need more evidence on the federalism disadvantage

Provide Suggestions for Improvement

Steve, good job in the rebuttal of answering the topicality argument. you just need more evidence on the federalism disadvantage

Provide Reinforcement

Keren — you stood your ground in CX during the topicality exchange. You also did an outstanding job of questioning in the 1st CX period. You set up the federalism disadvantage very nicely with your questions.

Letting the Coach Know What Went Well & Not As Well

Amy – Great job of extending the disadvantage impact in the final rebuttal and showing why it outweighed the case impact. You really didn't leave anything to chance in the 2NR. I liked the fact that you spoke clearly and emphasized the key phrases in your evidence.

What Do Points Mean?

1. Point inflation is a reality, but it's not the end of the world; points are relative.

2. The speaker point reality:
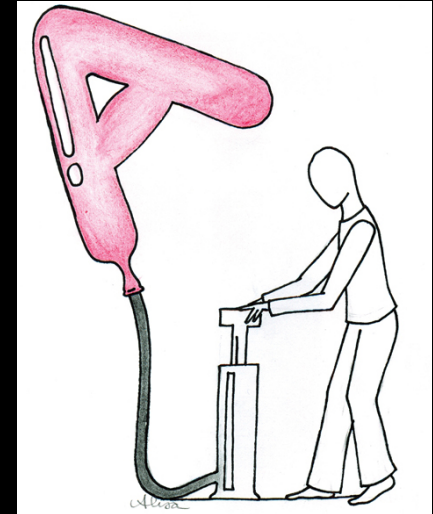
30 = You should be top speaker
29 = You <u>should</u> be one of the top 10 speakers at this tournament
28 = You <u>might</u> be one of the top 10 speakers at this tournament
27 = A speaker award for you is unlikely, but you did OK
26 = Not only is it unlikely you will get a speaker award, but I'm going to make sure you don't get one
<25 = You were rude or borderline unethical in something that you did and I'm determined to get your attention!!

What About Those Boxes?

Affirmative Speaker Rich Edwards				Optn Tme	Affirmative Speaker Steve Rollins				Optn Tme	Voting Criteria
2	3	4	5		2	3	4	5		Organization
2	3	4	5		2	3	4	5		Evidence
2	3	4	5		2	3	4	5		Analysis
2	3	4	5		2	3	4	5		Refutation
2	3	4	5		2	3	4	5		Oral Style
2	3	4	5		2	3	4	5		Speed of Delivery
POINTS (20 to 30)		RANKS (1 to 4)			POINTS (20 to 30)		RANKS (1 to 4)			

1. My advice: Decide the points you want to give first, then work backwards to mark the boxes accordingly (they aren't used at state anymore)

2. If, for example you give a 28, ask what area or areas in which the student most needs to improve and circle appropriately.

3. The total of the numbers circled should equal the number of points given.

Ballot Mistakes

1. No decision
2. No points/ranks
3. Confused room sides with ballot sides
4. Unmarked low point win
5. No reason for decision

CROSS-EXAMINATION DEBATE BALLOT
Beisch, Bo
University Interscholastic League

5A   Date: 07-09-2009   Judge: Beisch, Bob   Room: Unknown   Round: 1

Affirmative: Newton ER   **Negative: Oskaloosa BT**

Circle the number on each category below representing your evaluation of each speaker. Rank each debater from 1 to 4 in order of excellence (1 for best, 2 for next best, 3 and 4). Delivery that interferes with effective communication should be penalized.

2 Points—Below Average   **3 Points--Average**   **4 Points—Good**   **5 Points—Superior**

NOTE: Contestants are listed in the order they are in the computer; this is not necessarily their speaker order. Be sure to list the correct points/ranks beneath the correct name.

Affirmative Speaker Rich Edwards	Negative Speaker Steve Rollins	Voting Criteria	Negative Speaker Amy Brenneman	Negative Speaker Karen Taylor
2 3 4 5	2 3 4 5	Organization	2 3 4 5	2 3 4 5
2 3 4 5	2 3 4 5	Evidence	2 3 4 5	2 3 4 5
2 3 4 5	2 3 4 5	Analysis	2 3 4 5	2 3 4 5
2 3 4 5	2 3 4 5	Refutation	2 3 4 5	2 3 4 5
2 3 4 5	2 3 4 5	Oral Style	2 3 4 5	2 3 4 5
2 3 4 5	2 3 4 5	Speed of Delivery	2 3 4 5	2 3 4 5
POINTS (20 to 30)	RANKS (1 to 4)		POINTS (20 to 30) RANKS (1 to 4)	POINTS (20 to 30) RANKS (1 to 4)

The best ballots teach and encourage the student. Please offer areas of improvement and positive attributes.

Comments for: Newton ER   **Comments for: Oskaloosa BT**

The significant clash(es) / issue(s) used as the basis for my decision were:

Final Advice

1. Fill in the general comments section during prep time

2. Wait to fill out the Reason for Decision section until the end

3. If you gave low points, help the debaters/coaches know why

4. Make no rude/crude comments on the ballot (no profanity, no sexual innuendo): The standard should be as follows: If the losing team gets upset and sends a copy of this ballot to my principal, would I be able to defend myself.