

WISCONSIN HIGH SCHOOL FORENSIC ASSOCIATION NEWS LETTER

"Not to defeat each other, but to pace one another on the road to excellence."

Vol. IX

MADISON, WISCONSIN, NOVEMBER, 1937

No. 2

Additional copies available to member schools at five cents each.
Copies available to other than member schools at ten cents each.

SCHEDULE FOR CONTESTS, 1938:

REGISTRATION. Final date for registration for all contests
except dramatics is December 15.

DEBATE:

Jan. 15—Latest date for first round.
Jan. 22—Latest date for second round.
Feb. 5—Latest date for semi-sectional.
Feb. 19—Latest date for sectional, or
Feb. 25 and 26—Latest date for tournament.
Mar. 5—Latest date for state debate.

DRAMATICS:

Dec. 3—Latest date for second round.
Dec. 10—Latest date for sectional.
Dec. 15—Date for state contest.

OTHER CONTESTS:

Apr. 7—Latest date for league contests.
Apr. 21—Latest date for district contests.
Apr. 28—Latest date for state contests.

"IN THESE DAYS, WHETHER WE LIKE IT OR NOT, POWER
IS WITH HIM WHO CAN SPEAK."—Lord Salisbury.
Source: The Rostrum, September, 1937, Official Publication of the
National Forensic League.

WISCONSIN HIGH SCHOOL FORENSIC ASSOCIATION

E. J. McKEAN, Chairman Tomah	EAU CLAIRE DISTRICT Howard M. Lyon, Chippewa Falls	OSHKOSH DISTRICT T. J. McGlynn, De Pere
ALMERE SCOTT, Secretary Univ. Extension Div., Madison	LA CROSSE DISTRICT E. J. McKean, Tomah	PLATTEVILLE DISTRICT M. A. Fischer, Dodgeville
O. H. PLENZKE, Treas. Sec., Wis. Education Ass'n, Madison	MILWAUKEE DISTRICT W. R. Bussewitz, Horicon	RIVER FALLS DISTRICT H. C. Mason, River Falls
PROF. A. T. WEAVER, Adviser in Speech		STEVENS POINT DISTRICT Joseph Kraus, Stevens Point
ETHEL THEODORA ROCKWELL, Adviser in Dramatics		SUPERIOR DISTRICT Geo. E. VanHeuklom, Glidden
		WHITEWATER DISTRICT Chas. A. Jahr, Elkhorn

WISCONSIN HIGH SCHOOL FORENSIC ASSOCIATION

REPORT OF TREASURER

November 1, 1936—November 1, 1937

Balance — November 1, 1936	\$1,177.06	
INCOME: November 1, 1936—November 1, 1937		
Dues	\$1,509.00	
Selections	165.33	
Miscellaneous	21.61	1,695.94
		<hr/>
		\$2,873.00
DISBURSEMENTS: November 1, 1936—November 1, 1937		
Mimeographing and Printing	\$ 585.80	
Telephone-Postage-Envelopes-Post Cards	335.56	
Supplies (Debate Handbooks, Supplements, Manila Envelopes)	259.66	
Miscellaneous (Breakfasts, Lodging for State Contestants)	99.60	
Travel	83.47	
Cuttings	45.00	
Banners-Badges-Medals-Cups	170.26	
Institute Expenses	261.10	1,840.45
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Balance Nov. 1, 1937		\$1,032.55

O. H. PLENZKE, Treasurer.

—OR FOREVER HOLD YOUR PEACE

by

W. R. Bussewitz, Horicon, Wisconsin

Suggestions for bettering speech work were sent in this fall by some thirty schools and considered by the state board in Milwaukee. One matter was referred to a special committee for action. The state needs redistricting or reorganization of some kind, to equalize and improve speech work. M. A. Fischer of Dodgeville, G. E. Van Heuklom of Glidden, and W. R. Bussewitz of Horicon were appointed as such committee. You are invited to send in ideas and suggestions to help the committee do the best possible job.

If you have well established conferences, such as the Wisconsin Little Ten, Fox River Valley, etc., for speech work, will the officers of such conferences please report membership to the committee. You can see why the membership should be considered in any reorganization plan.

Some small schools object to meeting large schools. Is it desirable to accommodate them? If so, have you any practical plan to do it?

Some district tournaments are too large. If they are, what do you recommend?

Look at the state map on page three of the September News Letter. Can you help us improve district lines and equalize districts, bearing in mind travel conditions, delayed spring up north, and preferred league alliances now existent?

Help us help you.

NEED FOR REVISION OF THE POINT SYSTEM OF JUDGING DEBATES

An event from which the schools of northwestern Wisconsin gain considerable satisfaction and in which they take pride is the annual High School debate tournament held at Chippewa Falls. This pride comes from a feeling of having pioneered in a movement to adjust debating to the changing needs and opportunities of the times. Along with this feeling there exists a realization that the pioneering period is not over for there are still some improvements to be made in the tournament system.

One of the tools of the old debate system, which has become a misfit in the tournament system, is the method of judging. In drawing opponents by lot, we often find two of the better teams meeting each other. Since under the old point system one team must win and thus receive four points, and one must lose and receive no points, two very closely matched and well trained teams are at once quite widely separated for elimination purposes. On the other hand a pair of the weaker teams are frequently matched and again since one must win and receive four points, it immediately ranks considerably higher than the strong team who lost to another strong team.

It has been suggested that a system of awarding points for excellence in debating would afford some relief from the evils of the older system. The proposed plan provides for a maximum of five points and a minimum of one point to be given to each team in any one debate. The debate between the two good teams as mentioned before could be given a five to four decision while the debate between two weak teams could be given a two to one or three to two decision. It is believed that a revision of the point system in debate judging embodying this idea would help to offset the disappointment and discouragements frequently encountered by youngsters on the average or better teams that are eliminated in the preliminary rounds by a tough schedule.

This matter was placed before the forensic board at its meeting on November 3, and a committee was appointed to study the matter further and to draft an amendment to remedy the difficulty. The amendment which is submitted is in most part the plan which the debating schools in the northern section have studied and approved. The general features of this plan are now being used in other states and have been found quite satisfactory.

The Proposed Amendment

To amend Article VIII, section 3, second paragraph, by substituting the following after the sentence "By point system the winner shall be determined": The judge or judges shall rank each team on a scale of from one to five depending on his estimate of their excellence—the maximum rating to be five points and the minimum rating to be one point. No judge shall give the two teams in any one debate the same number of points. In determining survivals of elimination rounds, any ties in total points earned may be broken by using the squares of the judges' rankings for all debates counted in such elimination rounds.

T. J. McGLYNN
JOSEPH F. KRAUS
H. M. LYONS, Chairman.

**FUTURE FARMERS OF AMERICA
PUBLIC SPEAKING CONTEST**

by

Louis M. Sasman,

Assistant State Director and State Adviser, F. F. A.

Sixty-four Wisconsin Chapters of Future Farmers of America participated in the Eighth Annual Public Speaking Contest which was held during the past year.

In the organization of this contest, the state is divided into districts and sections in order that not more than five or six boys may compete in any one contest. This past year there were twenty-one districts. The districts are grouped into five sections, and the sectional contests are arranged by the five vice-presidents of the State Association of Future Farmers of America.

The purpose of this contest is to train farm boys for speaking so that they may assume positions of leadership among the future farmers of America. The boys write their own speeches dealing with some agricultural subject. These speeches must be of such length that they can be delivered in ten minutes. At the close of the speech, the boy is asked questions by the judges for five minutes in order that the judges may determine whether he is thoroughly familiar with the subject he has selected.

The score card which is used for this contest allots 40 points for the score on the written production, 25 of these points being allowed for content and 15 points for composition. Sixty points are allowed for delivery, including voice, 10; stage presence, 10; power of expression, 15; response to questions, 15; and general effect, 10.

The winners and their subjects in the district contests this past year were as follows: Albert Ravnholt, Milltown, Cooperation, the Only Way; Herschel Rogers, Barron, Our Changing Agriculture; Walter Babula, Hawkins, The Era of Vocational Guidance; John Simpson, Durand, Some Principles of Soil Conservation; Earl Boettcher, Bloomer, Soil Erosion; Donald Vine, Neillsville, Soil Conservation; Hiram Thompson, Blair, Farm Credit; Joseph Mason, Sparta, Rural Health Conservation; Darrell Mitchell, Gays Mills, The Farmer, a Business Man; Harold Price, Lone Rock, Reforestation; John Paynter, Darlington, Conserve Our Forests; Roland McNutt, Antigo, Power for Agriculture; Ben Shefchek, Luxemburg, Rural Education and the National Welfare; Jack Gunning, Oshkosh, First in Agriculture; David Brooker, Shiocton, Conservation of Trees and Forests; David Schuster, Oregon, The Farmer's Standard of Living; Willard Masterson, Janesville, A Local Planning Board for Inter-Rural Social Activities; and Ray Morter, Lodi, Soil Conservation.

The winner of each district contest was given an F. F. A. belt by the State Association of Future Farmers of America. Then the winners in the sectional contests, who, of course, were the competitors in the final state contest, were each given an F. F. A. Public Speaking Medal. The winner of the state contest, who this year was Jack Gunning of Oshkosh, receives from the State Association \$5.00 toward his expenses to the North Central Regional Contest, which for the past two or three years has been held at Ames, Iowa. In addition, his Chapter is given a State Award Plaque. This year Jack Gunning was successful in winning the Regional Contest and last month won the national contest which is held in connection with the National Meeting of Future Farmers of America at Kansas City.

Training in public speaking for farm boys is continually increasing in importance because with modern transportation group action of farmers is increasing and with it the importance of the ability to present problems of agriculture capably. This contest tends to develop that ability. Naturally, winners in these contests are not the only ones who profit. In fact, it may be that some boy who is not good enough to win in any one year, or in four years, may receive the greatest benefit through constant improvement of his ability to speak. Every farm boy should include practice in public speaking in his program of activities.

NEWS ITEMS

Membership. Indications are that the membership this year will reach the goal of 400. Will your county be the first to report 100 per cent membership?

Latest date for registration for all contests except dramatics is December 15.

Board. The newly elected and the re-elected Board members to serve to dates indicated are as follows:

Milwaukee District: W. R. Bussewitz, Horicon—to 1940.

Stevens Point District: Joseph Kraus, Stevens Point—to 1940.

Superior District: Geo. E. Van Heuklom, Glidden—to 1940.

Whitewater District: Chas. A. Jahr, Elkhorn—to 1939. (To fill unexpired term of C. H. Dorr, resigned.)

Superintendent E. J. McKean, Tomah—unanimously elected as chairman.

Constitutional Amendment. The following constitutional amendment again acted favorably upon at the annual meeting, having been passed by referendum, is now a part of the rules of the Association: There is added to Article VII, General Rules, Rule 2: Any regular student of the High School for the Blind at Janesville is eligible to participate, providing he has had for the previous semester and has for the current semester, an average standing for all his work equal at least to the passing mark of the school with not more than one standing below the passing mark.

Proposed Constitutional Amendments. The following proposed constitutional amendments, passed unanimously at the 1937 annual meeting, are submitted for referendum vote, ballot enclosed. In order to become effective these amendments must be approved by referendum vote and acted upon favorably at the next annual meeting.

1. To substitute for Debate Rules, Article VIII, Rule 5. Each debate team shall consist of two speakers. The constructive speeches shall be limited to ten minutes; the rebuttal speeches to five minutes.

2. Because of the discontinuance of the publication of one of the magazines selected as a source for topics for the extemporaneous speaking contest, a motion was carried to submit the following substitution for General Rules, Article VII, Rule 6; The Board of Control shall name each year at its annual meeting the periodicals from which the topics for extemporaneous speaking shall be selected for the current year.

Management of Contests. The Constitution provides for the management of contests as follows: League Contest—Article V,—3. The officers of each League shall be a Chairman and a Secretary-Treasurer. District Contest—Article VI,—2. An executive Committee composed of one representative from the State Teachers' College, one high school principal, and two coaches or teachers of Public Speaking.

Reading Contest. By vote at the annual meeting of the Board, Biography was selected as the type for the reading contest for this year.

Extemporaneous Speaking. Because the Literary Digest changed to the Digest, and as such incorporated the Review of Reviews and World's Work, it was necessary for the Board to select the third source for topics for extemporaneous speaking. The Board selected the American Observer. Since the annual meeting, the Literary Digest is again published, incorporating the Digest, Review of Reviews, and World's Work; hence the three magazines from which the topics will be taken this year for the extemporaneous speaking contest are the February, March, and April issues of the American Observer, Current History, and Literary Digest.

By action of the Board, each contestant will be asked one or two questions by a judge on his speech.

Prompting. Any student prompted shall be disqualified.

Reorganization of the State. By action of the Board, a committee was appointed by the chairman to consider the reorganization of the state in order to equalize the districts and to facilitate travel, such committee to report at the next annual meeting, 1938. Committee appointed—W. R. Bussewitz, Chairman, M. A. Fischer, and Geo. E. Van Heuklom. Read carefully the article "—Or Forever Hold Your Peace" by W. R. Bussewitz in this issue of the News Letter, p. 2. You are urged to co-operate in this project of reorganization in every possible way.

Honor to Another High School Student. Jack Gunning, Oshkosh High School, was awarded the \$250 prize in the National Public Speaking Contest of the Future Farmers of America at their national convention in Kansas City. More than 5,000 boys had entered preliminary contests. Jack is now attending the University of Wisconsin.

Honor to a Former Wisconsin High School Forensic Participant. Gordon Dupce, former student of Oconomowoc, was on the winning debate team for the University of Wisconsin debating against Northwestern University at the University of Wisconsin, November 19. Gordon will accompany the university team to the Speech Institute scheduled at Spooner on December 4.

Debate Question for Next Year. Please return immediately the Information Blank on the Debate Question for 1938-39. The National University Extension Committee meets December 28 in New York City.

From the Field:

New London High School—"For the first time, debate work is being conducted in the Washington High School in New London on regular school time, and regular school time, and regular school credit is being given those students enrolled in the class. The class will meet regularly three days a week. The initial enrollment is 15 students; I feel certain this number will increase. Before making an intensive study of the debate question for this year, the students will spend some time studying the elements of speech composition and a few of the fundamental principles of debate."

Washington High School, Milwaukee—From The Washington Scroll—"Large Class Spells Crown—Employing a new system of intensive training in preparation for the current Unicameral Legislature subject, a preliminary State Debate class is being conducted. Included in the new training methods are periods of panel discussion, extemporaneous speaking, and debates.

"To those who take advantage of the mental advancement offered to them is given a course in debate tactics, strategy, and speaking methods barely touched in a public speaking course. In an effort to groom a team which will compare favorably with last year's sectional championship squad, the constructive criticism of a whole semester of speech clinics and critiques will be placed at the disposal of the debaters.

"With the objective of drawing upon students interested in speech work regardless of previous training, Coach Kenneth A. Dewey's second call for material has just been issued. On this turn-out depends a repetition of last year's victory; for a winning squad usually has its foundation in a large, well trained, keenly competitive class."

S. O. S. If you can release one or more copies of the Congressional Digest for September, 1937, will you send them immediately to the secretary and you will be reimbursed from one-half to three-fourths of the price, depending upon the condition of the magazine. The publisher's supply of the Congressional Digest is entirely exhausted and some schools have not yet had access to it. Will you not help out?

Revision of the Point System for Judging Debates. The Board approved the experimentation of the proposed plan for judging debates providing all the schools participating agree. Read carefully the article by the special commit-

tee, H. M. Lyon, Chairman, T. J. McGlynn, and Joseph F. Kraus, in this issue of the News Letter, p. 3. Be sure to report your reaction to the plan.

Microphone Speaking Technique. A motion was carried at the annual meeting that the Wisconsin High School Forensic Association encourage the use of the public address system in high school speech work in order to develop a microphone speaking technique among high school students.

Student Participation. 193 schools out of 384 members, or 50+%, responded to the questionnaire on Student Participation in Forensic Activities. 15,438, or 24+%, of the students participated in one or more events. A similar report will be requested on this year's participation, and it is hoped that reports will be received from more schools and that there will be greater participation. The goal—100% student participation.

Speech Institutes. Approximately 1000 students and coaches from 63 schools registered at the Speech Institutes scheduled at Shawano and Madison. With two additional Institutes—Spooner, December 4, and Sparta, January 8—it is anticipated that approximately 1500 students from over 100 schools will take advantage of instruction in the various fields of speech education—a training important not only in the preparation for citizenship in a representative government, but also in making a success in practically all business and professional careers.