

First Annual Metro-Hudson League Grand Championships

This year marked a number of changes for the MHL. First, it was renamed the Metro-Hudson League, to recognize the geographic diversity of the league. We eliminated per-tournament fees in favor of a single, low annual dues payment, and waived dues overall for new teams, to help them get started in the activity. We held our inaugural one-day free workshop in September, to introduce new debaters, parents and coaches to the activities. And we launched the “Modest Novice” LD topic, the ongoing use of a single recurring topic chosen to bring new debaters into the activity in what we hope is the best way possible. A lot of changes, all of them positive. To celebrate the year, and end it with a bang, we invite your team to our Grand Championships to be held April 10 at the Bronx High School of Science.

Please read this invitation carefully. The Grand Championships is quite a bit different from the normal MHL.

While this is certainly an MHL event, the tournament will be open to non-member schools. There will be three divisions of LD (novice, JV—second year debaters only—and varsity), three divisions of Policy (novice, JV—second year debaters only—and varsity), and one division of PF (JV—freshmen and sophomores only). Unlike normal MHLs, there will be a fee of \$10 per individual entrant, including new schools. This will cover the cost of awards plus the cost of lunch, which will be provided by the host school.

The novice and JV divisions will debate 5 rounds. Judge requirements are 1 to 3 in LD and PF and 1 to 2 in policy. There is a limit of 8 teams per school per division. Speaker awards will be given in all these divisions (including PF, which will be set up for individual speaker points).

Varsity LD and policy will be a bit different. Varsity divisions will run in the challenge format, single-flighted. Round 1 will be random. Subsequent rounds (number depending on the size of the field) will go by reverse seed, challenging any higher seed. The challenged debater gets to choose the side. Revenge rounds (challenging the same person twice) are allowed. The judge ratio is 1 to 2. Each school is allowed up to 5 varsity debaters.

All LD divisions will run the Jan-Feb topic. PF will run the April topic.

To enable the increased number of rounds, check-in will be from 8:00 to 8:30. Round One will begin at 9:00. Things will probably wrap up at around 8:00 p.m.

Needless to say, Mr. Jon Cruz of the Bronx High School of Science will be the officer in charge of pomp and circumstance. Where warranted, Mr. Jim Menick of Hendrick Hudson will be augmenting said pomp and circumstance with a collection of his patented crappy prizes and his patented whispered announcements. To mark the

special nature of this tournament as both an acknowledgment of a year of hard work as well as a celebration of the year's achievements, we will be noting the following honors. Sweepstakes award and small school award, for performance at the tournament

- The People's Champion Award, details to come
- The Modest Novice Awards—these are awards of a special nature that will only be disclosed in advance to adult coaches who have registered entries
- A special award to be revealed at the tournament
- The establishment of a Metro-Hudson League Hall of Fame, to honor those who have made this league possible.

We hope to see you at this event in April. Registration, as always, will be on tabroom.com.