

Ace Peak x Ziggy Online Tournament Rules

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1. How to Read the Rules

A. Formatting

Normal text is binding.

Bolded text is not binding. *It is presented for ease of reading and navigation.*

Italicized text is not binding. *It is provided for guidance, clarity, or explanation.*

B. Not Enforced

There is no official penalty for violating bold or italicized text. *Judges may use these passages at their discretion.*

2. Purpose

A. Priorities

Ace Peak x Ziggy online tournaments serve the following three purposes, in descending order of priority:

- 1. Prepare students for excellence in life after graduation.*
- 2. Prepare students for in-person tournaments in any high school league.*
- 3. Create a competitive online tournament environment.*

B. No League

Ace Peak and Ziggy are not affiliated with any physical league. It is a complement, not a substitute, to physical competition. Participants are encouraged to take advantage of all opportunities to compete, regardless of league.

Ace Peak rules were created specifically for an online-only setting. They differ from those of other leagues. Participants are encouraged to read the rules carefully.

3. Eligibility

A. Requirements

A student is eligible to compete if they meet EITHER of the following criteria:

- 1) They are 12-18 years old and either have not graduated high school, or graduated less than 365 days ago.
- 2) They are eligible to compete in a major high school forensics league such as NSDA, NCFLA, Stoa, or NCFL.

Some tournaments may have additional eligibility criteria.

All members of a team must meet these eligibility requirements.

Competitors do not need to be affiliated with a religion or education style to participate.

B. Round 1 Check

These eligibility requirements must be met at the start time of the first round of the tournament; they are ignored at all other times.

4. Lincoln-Douglas Debate

The Lincoln-Douglas format uses value resolutions. A value resolution assigns worth to one or more entities.

In Lincoln-Douglas, competitors compete one-on-one, as follows:

Affirmative Constructive	6 minutes
Negative Constructive	7 minutes
1 st Affirmative Rebuttal	4 minutes
Negative Rebuttal	6 minutes
2 nd Affirmative Rebuttal	3 minutes
Preparation time	3 minutes
Cutoff time	1 hour
Submission time	2 hours

5. Team Debate

The Team format uses policy resolutions. A policy resolution proposes a change.

In Team, competitors compete in teams of two, as follows:

1 st Affirmative Constructive	8 minutes
1 st Negative Constructive	8 minutes
2 nd Affirmative Constructive	8 minutes
2 nd Negative Constructive	8 minutes
1 st Negative Rebuttal	5 minutes
1 st Affirmative Rebuttal	5 minutes
2 nd Negative Rebuttal	5 minutes
2 nd Affirmative Rebuttal	5 minutes
Preparation time	5 minutes
Cutoff time	2 hours
Submission time	3 hours

Competitors assume a role as either the first or second competitor in their team and give corresponding speeches.

Example: The 1st affirmative competitor give the 1AC and 1AR, and cross-examines the 2NC.

6. Judges

A. Judge Authority

Ace Peak and Ziggy believe in maximizing the authority of the judge, for both philosophical and logistical reasons. Many things that are hard-and-fast rules in other settings are non-binding here. Tournament officials will defer to judges as much as possible.

B. Complete Agency

The judge may vote any way they choose for any reason they choose. *Judges are encouraged to base their decisions on the content of the round as much as possible, and to set aside personal biases and special knowledge.*

Judges are encouraged to punish debaters for rules violations and unethical behavior.

C. Judge Eligibility

Someone is eligible to judge if they meet BOTH of the following criteria:

- 1) 18+ years old when the round begins.
- 2) Fluent in English.

D. No Training

No previous experience or training is needed.

Debaters are responsible for teaching the judges representing them enough to do their jobs. Judges are encouraged to review the Judge Manual.

E. Responsibilities

At registration, competitors must register someone who will be assigned to judge 3-4 rounds.

F. Alternate Judges

Competitors may replace the judges intended to represent them, provided the replacement is eligible. The alternate judge goes to the round to which the original judge was assigned.

When filling in a ballot, the alternate judge should list the name of the original judge in parentheses in the Reason for Decision box, like this: "(The original judge was John Doe)."

G. Failure to Appear

If no judge has appeared after 20 minutes, or if the round cannot conclude because of scheduling/technical difficulties on the judge's part, the competitor the judge represents will be penalized with a forfeit in that round. The competitors with the missing judge will each receive a bye.

Example: Jane's mother Mary is assigned to judge round 2 but doesn't show up. Jane wins round 2, but because of her forfeit, the round is recorded as a double loss. The competitors with the missing judge each get a bye.

H. Failure to Submit

Judges must submit a decision, competitor points, and competitor rank for their rounds no later than the submission time for that format. If the ballot arrives later than that, the round will be treated as if the judge failed to appear.

If a round ends because of participant technical issues, the judge is still responsible for submitting the ballot on time.

I. Final Submission

Once a complete ballot has been submitted, judges may not make substantive changes to it.

At the discretion of tournament officials, judges may continue to add feedback to a ballot after submitting their decision.

J. Avoid Conflicts

Judges are expected to avoid judging rounds if their personal biases for the competitors would make impartial ruling difficult. To prevent this, competitors are encouraged to recruit judges who are not already familiar with the competitors.

If a judge has no other option, taking a ballot for someone they know or already judged is acceptable.

7. Schedule

A. Postings

Round announcements matching opponents and judges - or “Postings” - will be made at least 20 minutes before the round begins.

Each debate round takes place on a distinct Discord server. Click the corresponding link, then click “Join the Debate.” We encourage you to create a Discord username and install the Discord app on your device, but neither is necessary to participate.

B. Failure to Appear

If a competitor has not appeared by 20 minutes after the round start time, or if the round cannot conclude because of scheduling/technical difficulties on a competitor’s part, the competitor will be penalized with a forfeit. Their opponent(s) will receive a bye.

C. Going Maverick

If one member of a team is not available for any reason, their partner may speak on their behalf for one or all speeches/cross-examination. The absent partner will receive 12 speaker points.

Going maverick is not permitted in elimination rounds. If a partner is unavailable and speech time is exhausted, the round will end. The team with the missing partner will receive a forfeit; their opponents will receive a bye.

D. Removal after 2 Absences

If a competitor/team fails to appear or goes maverick two debates in a row, they will be removed from the tournament.

Non-sequential absences will not cause removal.

E. No Exceptions

No exceptions will be made for emergencies or other special circumstances. *This is for logistical reasons and to protect the competitive integrity of the tournament.*

8. Timekeeping

A. Judge is Timer

Judges are responsible for timing speeches, cross-examination, prep time, and cutoff time to ensure that the rules are upheld.

B. No Time Signals

Judges are not expected to provide time signals. Instead, competitors are encouraged to time themselves.

9. Speech Time

A. Start/End

Speech time begins when a competitor begins speaking and ends when time is used up or the competitor finishes.

Once a speech has begun, it can only be stopped for a technical pause (*see Technical Difficulties*).

Once a competitor has ended their speech, they may not resume it.

B. Overtime

Competitors may not begin a new sentence after their speech time has ended. *Going slightly overtime to finish a sentence is acceptable.*

C. No Rollover

Unused speech time is forfeited.

10. Preparation Time

A. Meaning

Each competitor/team has a budget of time that they may use to prepare before a speech.

B. Begins Immediately

If a competitor is due to speak, they have 10 seconds to start speaking or begin using preparation time.

Competitors should alert the judge if they will use preparation time.

C. Rollover

Unused preparation time can be used later in the round. It cannot be used as speech time.

Example: In a Lincoln-Douglas round, the negative competitor uses 1 minute to prepare for the NC. They have 2 minutes left to prepare for the NR.

Preparation time is pooled between both competitors on a team.

D. Speech Begins When Prep Ends

If a competitor has used all their preparation time, their speech time must begin whether or not they have begun speaking.

11. Cross-Examination

A. After Constructives

Cross-Examination always lasts 3 minutes and goes after every constructive speech.

B. Witness and Examiner

In cross-examination, the person who just spoke - or “witness” - answers questions, while a representative of the other team - or “examiner” - asks questions.

C. No Prep Time

Cross-examination must begin within 10 seconds of the end of the preceding speech.

D. Speech Timing Rules

Cross-examination uses the same timing rules, such as measuring overtime, that are used for speeches.

E. Examiner Does Not Go Next

In Team debate, the competitor who is not scheduled to give the next speech is the examiner.

Example: After the 1AC, the 1N is set to speak next. Thus, the 2N cross-examines the 1AC.

12. Evidence

A. Immediate Credit

Competitors must credit the original source whenever they quote someone else's words. Credit must be given before the speech is over.

Practices such as "Sources are available upon request," are not permitted.

B. Verbal Clarity

Competitors must make clear when they are using their own words, and when they are quoting someone else. They must also indicate when they skip over more than 2 full sentences in the original text.

Example: "Later in the article, they say ..."

C. Two Standards of Completeness

Competitors are expected to provide enough information about a source to meet both standards of completeness:

- 1) Everything the judge needs to know to accurately evaluate the evidence.*
- 2) Full credit to the original author(s).*

The name and credentials of the author and the year of publication are usually an acceptable minimum.

D. Modification

Evidence may be modified by adding or removing words. Essential context must be included. Modification may not add to or alter the meaning of the text. Reasonable simplification, such as changing "57.29%" to "over half," is acceptable.

E. Evidence Review

Upon request by the opponent during the round or the judge at any time before the participants leave the server, a competitor must produce any evidence they quoted for review. If the evidence has been modified, the original text must also be available.

Modifying the evidence in a way that makes the original visible - such as shrinking the font size of omitted text - is encouraged.

Competitors are responsible for delivering evidence in a legible and timely fashion. Failing to produce evidence for review due to a technical issue is just as serious as outright refusing to produce it.

Evidence may be shared by pasting text into the chat, sharing a high-resolution picture of the evidence, or emailing/sharing a link with the judge and opponents.

F. Research during the Round

Competitors may not use the internet or any other resource to gain new information or evidence during the round.

G. Penalize Infractions

Judges are encouraged to penalize unethical use of evidence with loss of competitor points and/or the round. Penalizable infractions include not crediting a source in the speech it was presented, not presenting evidence for immediate review upon request, modifying evidence in a way that changes its meaning, and intentionally fabricating or misrepresenting facts.

H. Trust in the Judge

Ace Peak depends on judges to protect the integrity of rounds by holding competitors to high standards of conduct. Judges are encouraged to review the Ace Peak Judge Manual and to seek help from tournament officials for help understanding the rules.

13. Special Win/Loss Conditions

A. Bye

If a debater receives a bye, they win that round, even if they received a losing ballot. Their speaker points are an average of their other preliminary rounds.

B. Forfeit

If a debater receives a forfeit, they lose that round, even if they received a winning ballot. They receive 12 speaker points.

C. Double Loss

Judges have the right to give a double loss as an extreme punitive action. Double losses should never be given in response to a tie; they should only be used if both sides behaved so offensively that neither deserves to win.

14. Technical Difficulties

A. Competitors are Responsible

Technical difficulties are inevitable in an online tournament. These rules attempt to strike a balance between leniency and competitive integrity. Competitors must take responsibility for making sure that they and the judges representing them have stable internet connections, working equipment, and no distractions or scheduling conflicts. If technical difficulties become too severe, the competitor will be penalized and the tournament will proceed. Competitors should adopt a mindset of complete personal responsibility, rather than shifting blame or asking for special treatment when things go wrong.

All participants are encouraged to test their setup before the tournament begins.

B. Cutoff Time

Cutoff time is a maximum duration that a round will be permitted to continue.

If a round reaches the cutoff time, the round will end. The judge will give a forfeit to the competitor/team most responsible for the delay. Their opponents will receive bye.

C. Technical Pause

A technical pause stops the current timer. It may be used only for resolving technical issues. Technical pauses are granted at the judge's sole discretion.

Any participant may ask for a technical pause by placing a "!" in the chat box.

D. Technical Repeat

At the judge's request, time may be added to the current clock and a competitor may repeat a portion of a speech that was not communicated effectively due to technical difficulties.

Competitors must recreate the original performance as accurately as possible. Cross-examination questions and answers may not be changed.

Competitors may not request technical repeats.

Technical repeats may only be used on the current speech or cross-examination.

E. Judge Discretion

Judges may use as many technical pauses and repeats as they wish, for whatever duration they wish. *Judges should avoid using pauses and repeats in a way that gives the better-connected team a disadvantage.*

Technical pauses and repeats may only be used for the judge's benefit; not for the benefit of competitors.

F. Delays Do Not Move Cutoff

Technical difficulties and delays do not extend the cutoff or submission times. *Thus, judges should employ them sparingly to ensure that the round ends and they turn in the ballot on schedule.*

15. Miscellaneous

A. Decorum

Competitors should treat everyone with the kindness, respect, and dignity appropriate to a formal competitive high school speaking event. Vulgar or obscene behavior is not permitted.

There is no dress code. *Competitors are encouraged to dress professionally.*

B. No Aids

Competitors may not supplement their speeches with written, audio, or visual aids. *Gestures are allowed.*

C. Muted Mic

Everyone is expected to mute their microphone when it is not in use.

D. Spectators

At the discretion of the judge and competitors, spectators may join the server. Their microphones must always be muted and they may not interact with the participants. Spectators must leave the server if the judge or any of the competitors wish. Spectators will not be allowed to cause any delays or disruptions.

Example: "Can we wait a few minutes before the next speech? My mom has to restart her phone." No. Waiting for participants is acceptable. Waiting for spectators is not.

E. Punitive Action

Judges should make clear on a ballot when they take punitive action, both for the benefit of the competitor and so tournament officials have the option to explore the matter further.

F. No Outside Help

Competitors may not interact with anyone outside the team during the round.

G. Talking to Partners

Competitors may interact with their partners during prep and opposing speeches. They may not interact with each other when one of them is participating in a speech or cross-examination.

H. Webcam Encouraged

Use of a webcam is not required. *However, it is encouraged.*

I. Recording by Permission

Participants and spectators may record video and/or audio from rounds only if all competitors in the round explicitly consented. Ace Peak and Ziggy have exclusive rights to record and post the semifinal and final rounds. *Recordings of semis and finals will be uploaded to YouTube.*

16. Appeals

A. Definition

Appealing is the process of invoking tournament officials to intervene in normal tournament proceedings, such as to overturn a judge's decision. *It is known in other settings as adjudication.*

Appeals can be initiated using a form on the tournament website.

B. Last Resort

Appeals should be used only as a last resort. Tournament officials will defer to judge authority as much as possible.

C. Rules Only

Appeals may only be used when binding text in this document has been violated. *Judges are the first and only line of defense against legal but unethical behavior, and they are always the preferred way to enforce the rules.*

D. Benefit of the Doubt

Uncertainty will be handled in a way that minimizes disruption, maximizes judge agency, and assumes that the competitors were acting with good intentions.

E. Rule Violation Accusations are Serious

Competitors should not accuse each other of rules violations lightly. Suggesting that the opponent broke the rules calls their integrity into question. Even clear violations should be dealt with carefully and precisely, whether in the round, in an appeal, or when speaking of the round to others. Mishandling a rule violation can cause more harm than the violation itself.

These rules are written with article and clause numbers to facilitate reference. When someone is accused of breaking a rule, it is a good practice to always mention the article and clause, like "Rule 16A." If you can't find a corresponding clause, you should not be invoking the rules.

Judges should penalize competitors who invoke the rules in a flippant, slanderous, or misleading way.

F. Victims Only

An appeal can only be initiated by a competitor who was directly impacted by the rule violation.

G. 24-hour Window

An appeal must be submitted no later than 24 hours after the cutoff time of the last round of the tournament.

H. Official Discretion

Tournament officials have full discretion to launch an investigation, overrule a judge decision, or make any other changes to the tournament in response to an appeal. *The goals of these actions are to minimize the effect of the rule violation, indemnify the victims, and mitigate future violations.*