

# Extemp Question Central National Points Race

by Logan Scisco

The “invitational” portion of the national extemporaneous speaking season has finished for the 2008-2009 season and after the completion of one second tier tournament and three third tier tournaments the standings are still lead by **Stacey Chen** of North Allegheny Senior High School in Wexford, Pennsylvania. In fact, over the last three months, Chen has opened a bigger gap on her competition than she had at the end of December.

The most notable tournament to occur over the last three months was the Montgomery Bell Academy Extemp Round Robin in Nashville, Tennessee. Extemp Central provided live coverage for this event, and as many around the country now know, **Matt Arons** of Millburn High School in New Jersey won the tournament over **Evan Larson** of Bellarmine College Prep in California. Points leader Stacey Chen placed third at the competition. The Round Robin was notable because it is the first time that the fifth place finisher at the event, in this case **Dillon Huff** of Southlake Carroll High School in Texas, won the Exhibition Round at the end of the tournament.

However, the standings below are still subject to much change. The three tournaments that remain on the calendar, the Extemp TOC, CFL Nationals, and NFL Nationals, are worth two to three times the size of invitational tournaments and could do much to change the dynamic. The next edition of *The Ex Files* will be a TOC and CFL Nationals preview and will not include an extensive points race update. However, the NFL Nationals preview edition of *The Ex Files* will provide updated standings after those tournaments finish so that extempers know where they stand heading into the final tournament of the season.

## Individual Standings

Here are the updated individual standings as of March 30, 2009. The top fifteen in the rankings, including ties, are included below:

RANK	NAME	SCHOOL	POINTS
1	Stacey Chen	North Allegheny Senior HS (Wexford, PA)	240
2	Matt Arons	Millburn HS (Wyckoff, NJ)	180
3	Dillon Huff	Carroll HS (Southlake, TX)	178
T4	Nick Cugini	Cypress Ridge HS (Houston, TX)	135
T4	Evan Larson	Bellarmino College Prep (San Jose, CA)	135
6	Jovalin Dedaj	Fordham Preparatory (Bronx, NY)	76
7	Brennan Morris	Randolph-Macon Academy (Fort Royal, VA)	70
8	Aaron Lutkowitz	Montgomery Bell Academy (Nashville, TN)	62
T9	Ryan Pereira	Nova HS (Davie, FL)	60
T9	Michael Watson	Desert Vista HS (Phoenix, AZ)	60
T9	Alex Tolkin	Newton South HS (Newton, MA)	60
12	Morgan Booksh	McNeil HS (Austin, TX)	52
T13	Alon Elhanan	Bronx High School of Science (Bronx, NY)	50
T13	Jane Kessner	Walt Whitman HS (Bethesda, MD)	50
T13	Jason Bernstein	Nova HS (Davie, FL)	50

Compared to the December rankings, Stacey Chen has widened her lead in the national points race from twenty to sixty points due to a third place showing at the MBA Extemp Round Robin and yet another major national circuit victory at the Harvard Invitational Tournament. For much of the season Chen has been at the front of the national points race and she does not seem to be relinquishing any of that momentum anytime soon. In second position is Matt Arons, winner of the MBA Extemp Round Robin, and he is holding a narrow edge over Dillon Huff thanks to a third place finish at the Harvard University Invitational tournament. Evan Larson also makes his debut in the standings for the first time this season after placing third in last season's rankings. Larson's fourth place position is owed only to his second place finish at the MBA Extemp Round Robin and victory at the California Invitational Forensic Tournament.

Observant followers of the national points race will note that there is not too much movement in the top ten in the rankings. However, **Jason Bernstein** of Nova High School in Florida makes his debut in the top 15 after his victory at the Barkley Forum over an impressive field of competition that included Huff and teammate **Ryan Pereira**, who sits in a tie for ninth in the current standings after a finalist placing fourth at that tournament.

**Jane Kessner** of Walt Whitman High School in Maryland also cracks the top 15 after a third place finish at the Barkley Forum. Kessner avoided getting points for the MBA Round Robin due to her sixth place finish at the tournament, although next year's points formula may include points for MBA's sixth place finisher as the tournament is not a conventional format. Joining her in the top 15 is **Michael Watson** of Desert Vista High School in Arizona, who placed fourth at the Harvard Invitational. Finally, **Alex Tolkin** of Newton South High School in Massachusetts cracks the top 15 after a runner-up finish to Chen at the Harvard Invitational.

### Team Standings

Here are the updated top ten in the Extemp Question Central National Team Points Race as of March 30, 2009:

RANK	SCHOOL	POINTS	# OF FINALISTS
1	North Allegheny Senior HS (Wexford, PA)	240	5
2	Carroll HS (Southlake, TX)	194	5
3	Millburn HS (Wyckoff, NJ)	180	3
4	Nova HS (Davie, FL)	140	4
5	Cypress Ridge HS (Houston, TX)	135	3
6	Bellarmino College Prep (San Jose, CA)	135	2
7	Newton South HS (Newton, MA)	90	3
8	Fordham Preparatory (Bronx, NY)	76	3
9	Randolph-Macon Academy (Fort Royal, VA)	70	2
10	Montgomery Bell Academy (Nashville, TN)	62	2

Propelled solely by Stacey Chen's finishes thus far this season, which include five final round placings, **North Allegheny Senior High School** in Pennsylvania has maintained its lead in the national team points race. In second place, forty-six points behind North Allegheny, is **Carroll High School** of Texas. Carroll has an equal number of final round placings, much of them from

Dillon Huff, and remains within striking distance of overtaking North Allegheny when the season is completed.

Storming up the standings over the last three months is **Millburn High School** in New Jersey, who is lead by Matt Arons. Due to Aron’s victories at Yale and MBA and top three finish at Harvard, Millburn has improved its standing from ninth in the team points race to third, where they hold a forty point lead over **Nova High School** of Florida. Nova moves up one spot in the rankings after having two finalists at the Barkley Forum, which included tournament champion Jason Bernstein.

**Cypress Ridge High School** in Texas remains in the top five, albeit dropping due to a period of inactivity and **Newton South High School** has entered the top ten thanks to Alex Tolkin’s second place finish at the Harvard Invitational. Newton placed second in last year’s “mock” standings to Scarsdale High School, but one wonders if 150 points is too much of a margin to makeup this late in the season.

Perennial NFL powerhouse **Bellarmino College Prep**, led by Evan Larson, also makes a debut in the national team points race following Larson’s second place finish at MBA and second consecutive victory at the California Invitational Forensic Tournament.

The remaining schools in the top ten, **Fordham Preparatory (NY)**, **Randolph-Macon Academy (VA)** and **Montgomery Bell Academy (TN)** have avoided slipping out of the top ten, but schools like **Desert Vista (AZ)** and **San Marino (CA)** are nipping at their heels.

### Tournament Overview

Here is an overview of the tournaments that will count for this year’s competitive calendar towards the Extemp Question Central National Points Race, how many points each tournament will be worth, and who the big winners have been so far.

TOURNAMENT	DATE	LOCATION	WINNER'S POINTS (TIER)	WINNER
Wake Forest National Early Bird	9/12-9/14/2008	Winston Salem, North Carolina	50 (3rd Tier)	Alon Elhanan (Bronx HS of Science, NY)
Yale University Invitational Tournament	9/26-9/28/2008	New Haven, Connecticut	50 (3rd Tier)	Matt Arons (Milburn HS, NJ)
St. Mark's Heart of Texas Invitational (IX)	10/16-10/19/2008	Dallas, Texas	50 (3rd Tier)	Dillon Huff (Carroll HS, TX)
St. Mark's Heart of Texas Invitational (USX)	10/16-10/19/2008	Dallas, Texas	50 (3rd Tier)	Nick Cugini (Cypress Ridge HS, TX)
University of Pennsylvania Liberty Bell Classic	10/18-10/19/2008	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	50 (3rd Tier)	Brennan Morris (Randolph Macon Academy, VA)

The Glenbrooks	11/22- 11/24/2008	Northbrook, Illinois	50 (3rd Tier)	Stacey Chen (North Allegheny Senior HS, PA)
George Mason University Patriot Games	12/5- 12/8/2008	Fairfax, Virginia	50 (3rd Tier)	Aaron Lutkowitz (Montgomery Bell Academy, TN)
Montgomery Bell Academy Extemp Round Robin	1/9- 1/11/2009	Nashville, Tennessee	100 (2nd Tier)	Matt Arons (Millburn HS, New Jersey)
Barkley Forum for High Schools	1/23- 1/25/2009	Atlanta, Georgia	50 (3rd Tier)	Jason Bernstein (Nova HS, Florida)
Harvard National High School Invitational Tournament	2/14- 2/16/2009	Cambridge, Massachusetts	50 (3rd Tier)	Stacey Chen (North Allegheny Senior HS, Pennsylvania)
2009 California Invitational Forensic Tournament	2/14- 2/16/2009	Berkley, California	50 (3rd Tier)	Evan Larson (Bellarmine College Prep, California)
Extemp Tournament of Champions (TOC)	5/8- 5/10/2009	Chicago, Illinois	100 (2nd Tier)	
2009 CFL National Tournament	5/23- 5/24/2009	Albany, New York	150 (1st Tier)	
2009 NFL National Tournament (IX)	6/15- 6/19/2009	Birmingham, Alabama	150 (1st Tier)	
2009 NFL National Tournament (USX)	6/15- 6/19/2009	Birmingham, Alabama	150 (1st Tier)	
2009 NFL Final Round (IX)	6/19/2009	Birmingham, Alabama	25 bonus pts. (1st tier)	
2009 NFL Final Round (USX)	6/19/2009	Birmingham, Alabama	25 bonus pts. (1st tier)	