

# 2009-2010 Extemp Central National Points Race

By Logan Scisco

Last month, Extemp Central gradually revealed the tournaments that would make up this year's National Points Race. The only shakeup for tournaments was the decision to exclude the University of Pennsylvania's Liberty Bell Classic from the National Points Race this season. The reasoning behind this was that the Liberty Bell Classic will run opposite of the California Invitational at Berkeley and the Harvard Invitational this season so its level of participation is in question.

Extempers also noticed when the tournaments were rolled out that the tier structure has been changed. Unlike last year, which featured only three tiers of tournaments, this year's National Points Race will feature five tiers of competition. One of the criticisms that was mentioned about last year's National Points Race are that smaller, more regional tournaments like the Wake Forest National Early Bird, the St. Mark's Heart of Texas Invitational, and the California Invitational were worth the same amount of points as larger, more recognized tournaments like the Glenbrooks and Harvard. To reward extempers for their performance among larger fields, the tiers have been expanded so that the National Points Race can recognize the nation's best extemper across a broad field of tournaments.

Last year was the first official year of the National Points Race, with Stacey Chen of North Allegheny Senior High School in Pennsylvania claiming the individual championship and claiming the National Team Points Race championship for her school. A picture of the trophies can be found at this website. If you count Becca Goldstein's unofficial victory in 2008, when the points were used to give a snapshot of how the 2007-2008 season would have worked out, women have won the last two National Points Race titles. So this year will be interesting to see if any male extempers step up and wrest away the championship.

The only question that was not answered from last month's rollout of the tournaments is how many points they were going to be worth. This is the question that this article will answer. The points system is set up to reward victories at major events, but also to reward top three finishes. During the season, even if there are defects, the points scale will not be changed. This is meant to provide fairness and uniformity to the season's rankings. By the next edition of *The Ex Files*, which will be released prior to the Glenbrooks, three tournaments in the National Points Race will have been completed. Come back to Extemp Central after the Wake Forest National Early Bird, the Yale University Invitational, and St. Mark's to find out what is going on in the National Points Race standings.

## *First Tier: NFL Nationals*

This year, there is only one tournament that occupies the first tier in the standings: the National Forensic League national tournament that will be held in Kansas City, Missouri. Last year, both the Catholic Forensic League national tournament and NFL nationals shared the first tier. However, after considering that the NFL national tournament offers a bigger test of competition, has a much more grueling schedule, and has much more prestige in the extemp community, the decision was made by the points race committee to make it the sole tournament in the first tier.

As was the case last year, extempers will earn 25 bonus points if they manage to win the final round national championship in United States or International extemp. This could make the difference if two extempers who are neck-and-neck in the standings both make finals.

One major difference for how NFL nationals will be scored over last year is that instead of giving each semi-finalist in United States and International extemp 25 points, extempers will earn points based on

their placing from seventh to fourteenth. This decision was made because NFL does recognize placing in semi-finals, unlike CFL, and because extempers have had to compete for twelve rounds prior to the vicious cut prior to the final round.

Here is a breakdown of the points that will be offered to competitors for NFL Nationals:

<b><i>Ranking</i></b>	<b><i>Points Earned</i></b>
1 <sup>st</sup>	200
2 <sup>nd</sup>	175
3 <sup>rd</sup>	150
4 <sup>th</sup>	110
5 <sup>th</sup>	90
6 <sup>th</sup>	75
7 <sup>th</sup>	60
8 <sup>th</sup>	55
9 <sup>th</sup>	50
10 <sup>th</sup>	45
11 <sup>th</sup>	40
12 <sup>th</sup>	35
13 <sup>th</sup>	30
14 <sup>th</sup>	25
Final Round Winner	25

*\*Italics denote semi-final placings*

*Second Tier: The Montgomery Bell Academy Extemp Round Robin*

Due to its unique format and high quality of competition, the Montgomery Bell Extemp Round Robin in Nashville, Tennessee was selected as a second tier tournament. Although the tournament is more selective than any other tournament on the year's calendar, no one can dispute the quality of its champions or of the level of competition that exists there. Also, the prestige level this tournament carries in the extemp community puts it above CFL nationals and the Extemp TOC, both of which are in the third tier this year.

The big change this year to the points awarded for the Round Robin is that the sixth place finisher will also receive points, although they will receive over ten points less than the fifth place finisher. The reasoning for this is because MBA does recognize the sixth place finisher at their awards ceremony and as such, it is only fair to reward that extemper for achieving that placing even if they do not make the Exhibition Round.

The decision was also made to award no points to the Exhibition Round winner of the tournament because the competitors who do not make the Exhibition Round judge it and that can cause a small disparity in the standings, when all of the other tournaments use non-students as judges.

Here are the points awarded for the MBA Extemp Round Robin:

<b><i>Ranking</i></b>	<b><i>Points Earned</i></b>
1 <sup>st</sup>	150
2 <sup>nd</sup>	125
3 <sup>rd</sup>	100

4 <sup>th</sup>	70
5 <sup>th</sup>	61
6 <sup>th</sup>	50

*Third Tier: CFL Nationals, the Extemp Tournament of Champions (TOC), Glenbrooks, and the Harvard Invitational*

The third tier is the largest of the other five tiers and is made up of tournaments carry a higher level of prestige compared to other “regular season” tournaments, but are not put on the same level as NFL Nationals or the MBA Extemp Round Robin. CFL Nationals and the Extemp TOC fall in the standings, as last year CFL Nationals was a first tier tournament and the Extemp TOC was a second tier tournament. In the case of CFL Nationals, it has been dropped because it is a shorter version of NFL Nationals, does not carry the same level of geographic participation, and its judging is not on the same level as NFL. Also, for the Extemp TOC, its drop is mostly due to a lack of numbers in the field last year, but if it is able to get a substantial number of participants for this year it could rise into the second tier next year. Glenbrooks and the Harvard Invitational move above other regular season tournaments because of their high level of participation and because of their recognition as early season national tournaments.

CFL semi-finalists will still earn twenty-five bonus points for their finishes, but since the tournament does not recognize the placings of its semi-finalists they will only earn a flat twenty-five points instead of having it indexed like NFL semi-finalists.

<b><i>Ranking</i></b>	<b><i>Points Earned</i></b>
1 <sup>st</sup>	100
2 <sup>nd</sup>	85
3 <sup>rd</sup>	70
4 <sup>th</sup>	50
5 <sup>th</sup>	43
6 <sup>th</sup>	39
<i>CFL Semi-Finalist</i>	25

*Fourth Tier: The Yale Invitational, George Mason University Patriot Games, and the Barkley Forum*

The three tournaments in this tier were selected because they have a wider participation than tournaments in the fifth tier, but lack the level of prestige the tournaments in the third tier carry. Most of the tournaments listed here have a long history of competition or their fields in extemp have traditionally been among the stronger of the regular season tournaments in the country. Currently, Extemp Central has chosen not to recognize the George Mason University Extemp Round Robin because that would result in “double counting” the tournament because the Round Robin has the same competitors in it as the regular tournament.

<b><i>Ranking</i></b>	<b><i>Points Earned</i></b>
1 <sup>st</sup>	70
2 <sup>nd</sup>	60
3 <sup>rd</sup>	50
4 <sup>th</sup>	35
5 <sup>th</sup>	30
6 <sup>th</sup>	27

*Fifth Tier: The Wake Forest National Early Bird, the St. Mark's Heart of Texas Invitational, and the California Invitational*

This is the final tier for this year's National Points Race. The tournaments here are included because they have a degree of national recognition, but over the last several seasons have included more regional fields than tournaments in the earlier tiers.

The one significant difference that exists in this tier concerns the St. Mark's Heart of Texas Invitational. Last year, St. Mark's was "double counted" and extempers earned points twice based on their performance in International and United States extemp. This year, the results sheet of St. Mark's will compare extempers performance in both fields and an extemper's performance in both tournaments will decide their ranking. For example, if an extemper finishes first in International and second in U.S. they will be ranked above someone who finishes first in U.S. and third in International. A detailed breakdown of how this was calculated will be posted after St. Mark's concludes.

<i>Ranking</i>	<i>Points Earned</i>
1 <sup>st</sup>	40
2 <sup>nd</sup>	35
3 <sup>rd</sup>	30
4 <sup>th</sup>	15
5 <sup>th</sup>	12
6 <sup>th</sup>	10

In two weeks, the 2009-2010 season gets started in North Carolina with the Wake Forest National Early Bird. It should be a great year for the National Points Race and remember, stay tuned in to Extemp Central to find out who's moving up and who's moving down in the standings. A more complete summary of the first quarter of this year's points race will be revealed in the second edition this season's *Ex Files*, to be released prior to the Glenbrooks.