

# Summary of Key Rule Changes

The following excerpts are offered to help mock trial coaches check the key changes in rules from the previous season. Only substantive changes in the rules are provided, please note that some stylistic and typographical changes may also have been made. Please review the rules in their entirety and contact the mock trial coordinator with any questions at rgarner@msbar.org or 601-355-9226.

<b>Rule Number</b>	<b>New Language</b>
<b>Rule 7(a)</b>	<b>Team Eligibility and Composition/Coaches/Code of Ethical Conduct</b> Team Composition and Eligibility – A team shall consist of a minimum of six (6) members up to nine (9) members, including a non-participation timekeeper, in grades 9, 10, 11 or 12 during the current academic year. Each team will have six (6) team members participating during each round: three (3) attorneys and three (3) witnesses. Teams must also provide a timekeeper. Teams with only six (6) members may allow a witness to serve as a timekeeper. Teams with additional members must have a non-participating member serve as the timekeeper. The timekeeper on teams with nine (9) members can only be the timekeeper and can never participate as an attorney or witness in any round.
<b>Rule 24</b>	<b>Ballots</b> The judges will each complete an individual ballot. The term “ballot” will refer to the decision made by a judge, based on the total points, as to which team made won the round. The “ballot” also refers to the form on which speaker and team points are recorded. Judges are not bound by the rulings of the presiding judge. The team that earns the highest points on an individual judge’s ballot is the winner of that ballot. Each judge decides which side gave the best overall presentation. This award is utilized only in the event of a tie on a single ballot to determine the winner of that ballot. The use of the best overall presentation award doesn’t affect the total points tallied on the score sheet. The team that receives the majority of the three ballots wins the round. The ballot votes determine the win/loss record of the team for power-matching and ranking purposes. While the judging panel may deliberate on any special awards, (i.e., Outstanding Attorney/Witness), the judging panel should not deliberate on individual scores.
<b>Rule 25(4)</b>	<b>Completion of Ballots/Judging Guidelines</b> Tie Breaker – In the event that the total points equal on an individual judge’s ballot, the committee refers to the “best overall presentation” award decided by that individual judge. This award determines the winner of the ballot. No points are added to the total points score previously determined by the committee.
<b>Rule 28</b>	<b>Effect of Default</b> For the purpose of advancement and seeding, when a team wins by default, the winning team for that round will be given a win and the number of ballots and points equal to the average of all winning teams’ ballots and points of that same round. A team may be in default if it is more than 15 minutes late for a round without good cause, as determined by the committee, or makes an ineligible substitution of team members.
<b>Rule 33</b>	<b>Trial Squad Roster Form</b> This form does not need to be sent to the Mock Trial Coordinator. Copies of the Trial Squad Roster Form must be completed and duplicated by each team prior to arrival at the competition site.
<b>Rule 42(2)</b>	<b>Procedure for Introduction of Exhibits</b> Ask for permission to approach the bench. Show the presiding judge the marked exhibit. “Your honor, may I approach the bench to show you what has been marked as Exhibit No. __?” In the event the round is in a location non-conducive for the marked exhibits publication to the Presiding Judge, the team member should reference the exhibit and refer the Presiding Judge to the copies of the exhibits contained within the judge’s packet.