

# NorCal State



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## *Science Olympiad Team Structure*

### REGIONAL DIRECTORS

Steve Bock  
Fresno County  
Office of Education

Meredith Davis  
San Joaquin County  
Office of Education

Jonathan Janzen  
Tulare County  
Office of Education

Barbara Little  
Stanislaus County  
Office of Education

James Hill  
CSU, Sacramento

Mike McKee  
Univ. of Central Florida  
Bay Area Region

### FOUNDING STATE DIRECTOR

O'Dell Scott, Retired  
Modesto High School

### PAST STATE DIRECTOR

Tom Smithson, Retired  
SCATS Center  
CSU, Sacramento

Dear Science Olympiad Coach:

The Directors and NorCal State Director for the Science Olympiad meet each July to make decisions regarding the program. When we began meeting a few years ago it became apparent that regions were using different practices and rules for their event. The directors made the decision to standardize areas of the regional and state events by developing Tournament Rules. (A copy of the rules can be found at: <http://www.stan-co.k12.ca.us/scoe/admin/nScienceOly/rules.htm>.)

The standardized rule outlining the team structure advancing to the state finals has become an issue for several coaches. It is never easy to standardize a practice when you have years of precedent and strong feelings involved. However, the directors feel strongly that, in fairness to all teams, it is important to standardize the team structure rule and support the concept that the Science Olympiad is a “team” competition. This means that a “team” that practices together all year long, and participates together at the local regional event, should advance together as a “team” to the state finals. We do not believe it is fair to eliminate students from a winning team because a member of another team outperforms them.

Perhaps the most critical aspect in standardizing this rule is to make sure everyone clearly understands the rule as teams come together to begin preparing for the competition. We realize this may necessitate a different approach in motivating and supporting students at schools that field more than one team. We sincerely hope that all coaches will clearly communicate the team structure rule and rationale behind it to all students and parents as the new competition year begins.

We also wish to remind coaches that there is always the possibility of conflicts for students on the Saturday of the state finals. The state competition must be scheduled within a narrow window of time between regionals and nationals and must also contend with scheduling constraints at the hosting institution. The date of the 2009 NorCal Science Olympiad State Finals is April 18th at Delta College, Stockton. Please take event conflicts into consideration when forming your team(s).

If you have questions or concerns, please direct them to your Regional Director.