

Coaching a Winning Science Olympiad Team

Keys to Small School Success

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Presentation Agenda

- Target Audience for this Session
- Maine-Endwell H.S. (NY) Profile and NSO History
- Six Keys to (Small School) Success
- Our Annual NSO Calendar (Example)
- Forming a Cohesive (Small School) Team
- Pre-Season Planning and Team Selection Process
- Group Discussion - Questions and Answers

Target Audience for This Session

- New Coaches Striving to Better Organize Their Teams
- Small Schools (<200/Class) Striving to Compete with the "Big Guys"
- Teams Seeking to Advance from Regional to State Level
- Teams Seeking to Advance from State to National Level
- Teams Ultimately Seeking a Top-10 National Finish

Experienced Coaches (State/National Champions)

- Your Comments are Welcome throughout this Briefing!

MEHS School Profile and NSO Record

- Suburban-Rural School District near Binghamton, NY
- Public, Non-Magnet School... Approximately 160 in Graduating Class
- Began NSO Participation in 1987... Two H.S. Faculty Coaches
- Five N.Y. State Championships (250+ Division C Teams)
- Eleven Trips to NSO National Finals (1990-2006)
- Highest National Finishes - 3rd (1995), 5th (1998), Multiple Top-10's

IF WE CAN DO IT... SO CAN YOU!

Six Keys to (Small School) Success

1. Gradually Increased Coaching Staff from 2->12 (Faculty, Volunteers)
2. Developed a "12-Month Mindset" to NSO Season
3. Each Year, Practiced All 25 NYS Events from Day-1 (vs. 18 Regional)
4. Developed a Rigorous Pre-Season Planning Process
5. Leveraged Middle School Program as "Feeder" to High School Team
6. Took Specific Actions to Create Family Atmosphere & Team Cohesion

KEYS ARE APPLICABLE TO ALL SCHOOLS... VITAL FOR SMALL SCHOOLS

Our Annual NSO Calendar

May	National Tournament Concludes - <u>Event Lineup for Next Year</u>
June	Coaches Meeting - <u>Coaching Assignments & Holes</u> , Returning Team
July - Aug	<u>NSO Summer Institute</u> - Preliminary Draft of Event Rules
Aug	Informal Tech Event Planning and Practices
Sept.	Team Meeting - <u>Student Interest Forms</u> - <u>Event Planning Matrix</u>
Oct	<u>Coaches Clinic - NY</u> - Event Rules Clarifications
Oct - Dec	Early Season Practices (All Events - Strong Tech Event Emphasis)
Jan	NY Pre-Season <u>Invitational</u> Tournament - Coaches Meeting
Feb	NY Southern Tier <u>Regional</u> Tournament - Coaches Meeting
Mar	NY <u>State</u> Tournament - Coaches Meeting
Apr - May	Final Practices and Fund Raising for Nationals (if Advancing)
May	National Tournament and <u>Team Recognition</u> (Picnic, School Board)

Forming a Cohesive (Small School) Team

- Develop a Tightly Knit Coaching Staff (Dinner Meetings, Cookouts...)
- Recruit and Integrate New Coaches with Love and Care
- Recruit a Minimum of 5-7 Students in Each Grade Level (Continuity)
- Conduct a Parent's Meeting in the Fall... Leverage their Strengths
- Consider Team Dinners and a Weekly "Team Night" (with Food)
- Leverage Existing Student Friendships and Working Relationships...
Especially for Technology Events
- Be Flexible on Practice Times... Small School Achievers Multiplex!!
- Celebrate & Recognize All Small Victories... Success Breeds Success!

Pre-Season Planning Process

- Begin with Clear Knowledge of All Events at Your State Tournament
- Conduct Pre-Season Recruiting of New Team Members
- Hold Initial Team Meeting (Early Sept.) - Student Interest Forms
- Build an Event Planning Matrix - Compilation of All Interest Forms
- Conduct Coaches Meeting - Initial Team Assignments (State Sched.)
- Hold Second Team Meeting - Student Feedback and Minor Iterations
- Privately Plan on 12-13 Core Starters... Build Event Teams Accordingly
- Our "Contract" with Students... If You Work, You Travel with the Team. Those Who Work the Hardest Compete.

Your Comments and Questions?

Thank You and Good Luck!