

Team Debate Comes to IPDA

The first instance of Team IPDA Debate occurred as an experiment as early as 2005. In this embryonic stage, there was no limitation on eligibility and coaches competed alongside students in a single open division in an attempt to test the pedagogical and competitive value of having a pair of debaters on each side of the table. The choice to provide familiar team-based activities was both in the interests of the educational value of debate as well as a pragmatic perspective for the organization; IPDA could provide a more familiar environment for growth by offering a two-vs.-two format.

By the Spring of 2009, the IPDA's Team Debate Division was approved by the IPDA Executive Committee as an exhibition effort for launch in the 2010/2011 competition season (again, as an open division), with the first tournament being offered by the University of Arkansas at Monticello. That year, six tournaments were held in an effort to be more accommodating to those programs who had experience in parliamentary debate or policy debate at the high school level. Using a modification of the traditional IPDA debate rules and structure, the concept has grown to see approximately fifteen Team IPDA tournaments being offered annually as a compliment to IPDA tournaments across the regular season.

In the 2010/2011 season, TIPDA became an undergraduate-level division and has been recognized for Season-Long Team Sweepstakes and with regard to National Championship Tournament awards, along with their corresponding TIPDA Speaker awards. While it remains a division wholly separate from IPDA competition, and not included in the Founders' Cup and Scholastic Cup calculations, TIPDA is included in the National Championship Tournament

Sweepstakes tabulation and has proven itself to be a valuable and enjoyable addition to the International Public Debate Association for nearly a decade.

Today, Team Debate within the IPDA remains an undergraduate division, with any undergraduate students being eligible to compete in a single open division. Participation in Team Debate does impact divisional eligibility, and participation typically is more popular amongst Varsity and Professional undergraduate debaters, though many talented Junior Varsity and Novice competitors have been competing since the first tournaments in 2009. Since the establishment of the division, there has been tremendous parity across the organization, with a wide array of programs (both university and community college) bringing home national championships. The IPDA has also seen growth in the number of programs participating in Team Debate, with nearly a third of IPDA programs participating in TIPDA competition in a single season.

The Philosophies & Conventions of TIPDA

Team Debate continues to grow, and it remains a helpful tool in providing intercollegiate debate programs who wish to add to, or move away from, NPDA or CEDA competition. Since the division's inception, TIPDA has offered top-tier competition that remains accessible to lay audiences. As with IPDA, there is the tradition of using a lay-judging philosophy, and a far greater emphasis on the quality of delivery and a "real world" expectation for argumentation within debate rounds.

Historically, there is no "one right way" to compose TIPDA pairs ... some programs place people of similar experience levels together, while others will put a more advanced debater

alongside a less experienced debater as a means of increasing the educational value for newer participants. In some situations, the stronger speaker may be placed first in sequence in order to lay out the case, while other programs would prefer to have the more experienced speaker in the second position to better combat their opposition's arguments. Regardless of how coaches choose to compose their TIPDA pairs, the value of this division cannot be overstated.

With the added responsibility of teamwork, it is paramount for both speakers to focus on fundamentals when it comes to both preparation. Whether from a collaborative process during topic striking, interacting fully throughout the prep period, or by communicating effectively during the round itself, working in tandem is a more dynamic process than operating independently during IPDA.

The Mechanics of Team Debate

In Team IPDA, just as in Individual IPDA, both teams, or all four competitors are called during the drawing process and handed a single sheet of paper containing the five chosen resolutions. Just as in Individual IPDA, the negative side chooses which resolution to eliminate first. That strike is followed by a strike by the affirmative side, one more by the negative, and then a final choice is made by the affirmative, which determines the resolution to be debated in the round. The most significant difference between individual and team debate is in the consultation amongst members of the two-person team. Not only does each member have to choose according to their strengths and weaknesses, their likes and dislikes, and based on their ability to defend their side of the topic, they must also account for those same factors with consideration to their partner. Often a lengthy discussion takes place between partners as to

which topic should be kept and which topic should be eliminated. In the decision calculus the partners must find a resolution that will best fit both of their attributes as debaters.

Once teams have decided on the topic for the round, the preparation for the debate begins. As in individual IPDA debate, the team division allows for a total of thirty minutes of preparation time, which starts with the calling of the draw. Team debaters have the advantage of being able to better utilize this time by discussing and dividing research duties amongst one another. This discussion includes the delegation of burdens between team members, the delegation of which speaker will handle each argument, and the individual responsibilities, as well as in which speech those arguments will be made. A much greater examination of burdens, arguments, and presentation tactics will be held further in this chapter. Often highly successful teams discuss the issues they wish to present in the round and separately begin to research, organize, and prepare the different arguments and support needed to prove their case.

Once the debaters have entered the room, there are a few procedural issues that are customary to IPDA and TIPDA debate. The first is that the different sides set up their seated positions according to their placement on the judge's ballot. This means the Affirmative team is to sit on the judge's left-hand side, while the negative is to sit on the judge's right-hand side. This will cut down on confusion of which team is represented by which competitors in the mind of the judge. To further assist the judge, competitors should place their school codes, affirmative or negative, and each debaters name on the board at the front of the room. Competitors should be indicated by either first or second speaker and at a minimum, the speakers last name. Additionally, one of the two teams should write the resolution that will be debated on the board; traditionally, this is done by the affirmative. Both teams should ensure

that the resolution is written correctly so that there is no issue with the accuracy of the topic to be debated as the round proceeds. After these tasks are accomplished, the debaters should allow a few moments for the judge to write down the information and assure that they have the appropriate debaters in their correct positions on the ballot and that the resolution is written down as well.

The time format for Team IPDA is designed to allow for an equal allotment of speaking opportunities for both the affirmative and the negative teams, with the affirmative having both the first and last speeches. After each constructive speech by each of the affirmative and negative speakers is a cross-examination period, which is conducted by the opposing team. The times for Team IPDA are as follows: four minutes first affirmative constructive, followed by a two -minute cross-examination which should be conducted by the second negative speaker. Then a five minute first negative constructive, followed by another two-minute cross-examination led by the first affirmative speaker. The second affirmative then speaks for five minutes, once again followed by a two - minute cross-examination by the first negative speaker.

After this cross-examination, the negative block begins. The negative block consists of a four-minute constructive by the second negative speaker, with cross-examination by the second affirmative speaker, as well as the first rebuttal of the debate, a three - minute speech by the first negative speaker. The first affirmative then has the daunting task of a four-minute speech, in which they must refute the entirety of the negative block. This is followed by the second negative rebuttal given by the second speaker on the negative team for a maximum of

four minutes. The final speech of the round is a maximum of three minutes and is given by the second affirmative speaker. Team IPDA speech times are simply put as:

- 4 - minute 1AC
- 2 - minute CX
- 5 - minute 1 NC
- 2 - minute CX
- 5 - minute 2 AC
- 2 - minute CX
- 4 - minute 2NC
- 2 - minute CX
- 3 - minute 1NR
- 4 - minute 1 AR
- 4 - minute 2 NR
- 3 - minute 2 AR

Trends and Strategies

Before the round begins, there are a few strategic decisions or ploys that a team may attempt to implement to give their side of the debate a strategic advantage. Mostly these are done by the negative side but often can be done by both teams. Affirmative teams can choose tactics that attempt to focus the debate or to make the decision by the judge clearer and more relevant to that individual. Affirmative teams have the advantage of selecting the playing field on which the debate will happen as well as setting the initial goals to be reached and parameters by which the game of debate will be played (Edwards, 2008). Tools such as weighing mechanisms and judging paradigms can be used effectively by the affirmative team to place the context of the debate round into a realm that is more advantageous for their side. Affirmatives have the right to define key words in the resolution but must do so fairly and allow room for reasonable negative argumentation.

Affirmatives that are successful often build cases with the ability to answer the negative argumentation that they know will come in the round. Richard Edwards describes how often affirmatives will set up their cases with hidden advantages and built-in argumentation that will allow them to refute the disadvantages of the negative (Edwards, 2008). The ability to predict the negative teams' arguments and to structure the affirmative case in this manner gives the affirmative team a distinct advantage in the round. The negative side often does not know what the affirmative case will consist of before the first affirmative has delivered it, so going into the round with foreknowledge of the arguments likely to come allow the affirmative team to be one step ahead if appropriately prepared. Additionally, affirmatives can effectively use extension arguments in the second affirmative speech to re-emphasize their most persuasive arguments. Affirmatives can also add additional points of new argumentation and advantages in the second constructive speech to give their side of the debate more weight. An example would be if the resolution were: "Resolved: We should adopt an alternative energy policy." If the affirmative was arguing for the use of wind-powered sources of energy they may begin by showing the harms of the current system, the cost-effectiveness of wind technologies, and then the benefits to the environment. An additional advantage that could be given in the second affirmative would be the benefits of wind technology to the federal, state, and local economies. This new advantage may counter some of the negative harms about cost of such technology and allow the affirmative to turn the argument into a net positive for the affirmative rather than a negative for their side of the debate.

The biggest thing for a good affirmative to remember is that the first speech is crucial to the flow of the round. As in all forms of debate, Team IPDA begins with a speech from the first

Affirmative speaker. This speech is designed to handle all *Prima Facie* issues, that is to say, that all definitions, weighing mechanisms, paradigms, claims, support, and analysis, that may be necessary to prove the resolution correct, must be brought forth in the first affirmative constructive speech. This does not mean that new materials cannot be brought forth in the second affirmative speech, it merely means that the judge should have all the essential information necessary to understand the premise of the affirmative case. The first affirmative constructive speech is one of the most important speeches of the debate. If it does not adequately set forth the foundation for the affirmative argument, often, the affirmative will spend the rest of the debate answering questions on its inadequacies and attempting to rebuild its foundation. On the other hand, a good first affirmative speech can allow the affirmative team to focus on defeating the argumentation brought forth by the negative team, by using and building on the arguments established in their first speech.

For the negative, the clear and biggest advantages are a division of duties, time blocks, and the vast array of argumentation at their disposal. If appropriately done, negative debaters never have to cover the same argumentation as their partners until the very last speech. This makes it very hard for the affirmative teams to handle the number of negative attacks that are given in the debate round. Time constraints in the first affirmative rebuttal speech make it very difficult for the affirmative to adequately answer the arguments presented by the negative team and allow the negative to emphasize the arguments that did not fully get answered. Furthermore, the negative side has far more strategic arguments that they can make to win the debate round, or at least show that the affirmative should not win the debate round, and thus presumption and the ballot should go to the negative.

For the negative, a clear division of duties team between the two speakers is a tactical advantage that teams can use for their side of the debate. Not only does this division create a much more in-depth refutation of the affirmative, but it will also simultaneously make it very hard for the affirmative to refute all the negative arguments and analysis adequately. For the sake of fair argumentation and debate, a negative team should not try to intentionally use more argumentation than they can sufficiently discuss or support to force the affirmative to drop arguments. However, dividing duties can allow them not to spend time with overlapping argumentation and allow for a fuller development of their support and analysis on a subject. The first negative speaker should make all procedural challenges. This includes any challenges to definitions of words, weighing mechanisms, scopes of the round, or general interpretations of the resolution. Over the last several decades, it has become a commonplace practice of ethical debate for these arguments to be presented right away in a debate round. These challenges can be critical to a debate round and thus should be allowed adequate time to be answered by the affirmative team. While new challenges may arise throughout the debate, any immediate procedural issues should be made in the first negative constructive speech.

Along with any procedural arguments, negative disadvantages, counter plans, critiques of the resolution, or negative off case refutation should be brought in the first constructive speech as well. The second negative should address the affirmative case. This allows time for the negative to use their research obtained during preparation in an adequate manner according to the scope of the case. By arguing the affirmative case in the second negative constructive, a broader analysis of the topic can be given in refutation to the affirmative case. When it is time for the rebuttal speeches, the first negative rebuttal should focus on the

arguments they delivered in the first constructive. There should be no need to go back over the argumentation of the second negative, for the affirmative has not yet had a chance to argue these points. The second negative rebuttal speaker will have to evaluate the ebbs and flow of the round and decide which arguments they wish to continue within the hopes of giving them the best chance to win the round.

The division of duties by the negative can create a tremendous advantage for their side of the debate, but it does not have to be followed by all teams in every round. Often negatives will choose to argue procedurals, off case arguments, and parts of the affirmative case in the first negative speech. The second negative will then answer the affirmatives rebuttals to those arguments as well as addressing more of the affirmative case. This is absolutely a proper negative tactic but will not allow for a fuller discussion of the topic by the negative and will create much more overlap in the arguments made by the negative speakers.

The negative also has a clear advantage in the blocks of time that are allowed in a TIPDA round. While speaking times are designed for equal amounts among both teams, the negative block, if used correctly, allows the negative team to level the playing field from the advantages of the affirmative. Having the first and last speech in a debate round allows the affirmative to open and set the tone for the debate, as well as having the last word, which can be very persuasive in an evenly matched contest. However, the negative block forces the first affirmative rebuttal to answer a lot of negative argumentation in a concise period of time. If the block is not answered adequately, the negative team can take advantage of the lapse in argumentation and analysis to further emphasize their points in the round. This can be created

by the negative team with an effective division of duties throughout the first two speeches for their side.

The last advantage that the negative side has is the wide variety of argumentation at their disposal. The previous chapter on negative argumentation discusses the various ways that individuals can refute an affirmative case. Along with these methods, the negative team has an array of attacks at their disposal. Among the most often used are the disadvantage and counterplan. The disadvantage is designed to show specific ill effects of an affirmative course of action. While the Counterplan is designed to avoid those same disadvantages and give an alternative more beneficial option to the affirmative case. A disadvantage should have a few specific parts to it. First, it should link to the affirmative case. This means that an affirmative case is a direct reason why the disadvantage or the impacts of the disadvantage would happen. Second, the disadvantage should be unique to the affirmative case. For this to be true, the negative should show how only the affirmative case would cause the disadvantage to be triggered. Last is the impact of the disadvantage. This is the crucial element of a disadvantage. The impacts are designed to outweigh any advantages of an affirmative case and to bring about such harms that would not usually happen, that a judge should be compelled to reject the affirmative in favor of the negative team.

A counterplan also has distinct requirements. First, it should, in good theory, be non-topical, this means that the ground that the counterplan stands out should not be within the ground of the resolution. Any ground within the resolution is typically considered affirmative ground; thus, a counterplan should not impede upon this ground. Second, it should be mutually exclusive. To have a unique alternative to the affirmative, a counterplan must not be able to be

done at the same time as the affirmative. For example, in the above state resolution, the actor would be the United States Federal Government, a mutually exclusive counterplan may call for the actor to be non-governmental organizations that operate outside of the federal prevue. The third element is that a counter plan should be competitive. This simply means that it should have more benefits than the affirmative, or at least be able to solve the problems that the affirmative presents while avoiding any disadvantages.

Cross-Examination

Team debate has the unique aspect of possibly allowing for all four participants to be involved in the cross-examination portion of the debate. This is referred to as open cross-examination. Simply put, either of the two members of the team asking the questions can do so, conversely, either of the two members of the team receiving the questions is allowed to answer. On the other hand, a closed cross-examination is just the opposite. Only the person whose turn it is from either team can ask or answer the questions. In recent years the debate over the preference for open and closed CX has become a bigger issue on the Team IPDA circuit. Different coaches and competitors argue the merits of both sides of the conversation. This chapter will not seek to solve that debate, only to present relevant ideas, pros, and cons for both sides of the issue.

First, it should be determined how the use of open or closed CX is determined in a debate round. There are a few general rules that should be followed. When deciding which CX-format will be used, one of the two teams should begin the discussion before the round beginning inside of the room that the debate will be held. First, the team should ask if the judge

has a preference. Some experienced debate judges will prefer one or the other based on their debate philosophy. Most lay judges will not have a preference at all. If the judge prefers closed CX, then the issue is settled, and the debaters should proceed with the round using the closed CX format. If the judge does not have a preference or leaves it up to the debaters, then the next step should be followed. After the judge's decision on the matter, the other teams should be consulted. If both sides decide that open CX is preferred, then it would be proper to proceed with open CX. However, if either of the teams prefers closed CX, then the debate should continue with the closed CX format. Open CX is only allowed when both teams and the judge agree that it is the format for CX that is preferable or allowable for the round. If any participant in the round prefers closed CX, then closed is the automatic default for the round.

Open CX has its pros and cons. The pros come from a more in-depth discussion on the issues. Often in team debate, one partner will know more about a subject matter or even a particular aspect of the subject matter than the other partner. Thus, they will be more capable of accurately answering questions presented by the opposition. If the intent of the CX is to get answers for a question truly, then open CX will often provide the best option for those answers. As debaters and academics, we are taught to seek answers and truth; with this, in mind, a strong case can be made for the use of open CX. The cons to open CX are that it allows a debater to be able to make arguments that they don't truly understand or can adequately defend. Often debaters make arguments that others have prepared for them; this means that they are merely arguing for their side of the proposition without fully understanding what it is they are advocating for.

Further, open CX can allow a debater to continually rely on their partner for answers to pertinent questions instead of seeking out answers to the issues pre- and post-debate round. Lastly, it allows for teams to pair stronger or more experienced debaters with those weaker and less experienced for the sake of education while remaining competitive. Open CX allows the stronger partner to maintain the arguments of the round and to be sure that their answers to questions adequately and correctly represents their position in the round.

Closed CX also has its own set of pros and cons. The pros to closed CX are often the converse to the cons of Open CX. Closed CX will force debaters to stand on their own while asking or answering questions. This, in theory, will force the participants to be more prepared for the arguments that they will be using in any round. It also denies teams the ability to hide a weaker or less prepared debater. The cons of closed CX is that it can allow for a misrepresentation of the truth or arguments presented in a round. An experienced debater is easily capable of setting up questions in cross-examination so that a less experienced competitor will unexpectedly misrepresent the arguments of their side or generally make their stance appear weaker because of their inexperience on the matter or in debate generally. Closed CX also has a pedagogical disadvantage of getting to the truth and accuracy of the issues. If the goal of cross-examination is truly to answer questions or clear up misunderstandings on issues, often closed CX is not the preferred method for debaters or coaches.

Ultimately the issue of open or closed cross-examination is one for each coach and team of debaters, as well as judges, to decide. Both forms of it have their merits and advantages and disadvantages. The biggest takeaway from the ongoing debate is that there is no right or wrong

answer to this question. Instead, it is a matter of preference by those that are engaged in the debate itself.

The Future of TIPDA

Ultimately, the growth of TIPDA will dictate whether or not it becomes a full division of IPDA Cup standings rather than its current exhibition status. In recent years, NPDA teams have competed alongside IPDA programs in this team activity and have found it to be simultaneously familiar and with sufficient novelty to encourage further participation. Those with Team Debate experience have proven themselves especially competitive in third-party debate activities (the James Madison Cup, a long-table public forum style of debate for example), and TIPDA programs at both the university and community college levels have demonstrated their competitive fitness.

Team Debate tournaments within the larger IPDA have become a robust and creative form of discourse, presenting unique challenges to undergraduates and expanding the scope of our activity for over a decade. While TIPDA has not yet found widespread popularity with our West Coast programs as of 2019, it remains a promising vehicle to encourage cross-discipline debate participation and to serve as a productive part of debate swings as the IPDA itself continues to grow.

Activity: “Teamwork Makes the Dream Work”:

Anticipating your TIPDA partner’s strengths and weaknesses is essential for building a rapport during rounds. Often, one partner will need to generate offensive and/or defensive

argumentation on the fly for their other partner. There will need to be four people for this exercise: a competitor who will provide an Affirmative Constructive, a pair of debaters who will comprise the Negative Team, and an adjudicator.

During this form of team practice, Partner A will flow their opponent's arguments and prepare a set of Negative on-case responses, a counter-plan, or any other observations; no information will be shared with non-flowing partner B. Partner B will then take the notes of Partner A without any further verbal communication and be required to give a full timed rebuttal based solely what Partner A has provided.

A third party adjudicator will then compare a flow of this rebuttal against the original notes of Partner A to see if there are any gaps.

Bibliography

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