



A-TEAM DIRECTOR'S LETTER

Lake Erie International Model United Nations

**Northcoast High School Conference XXXI
March 30 - April 1, 2010**

To the A-Team Members:

I congratulate you on your decision to join the A-Team. The A-Team is, in my humble opinion, the most challenging and rewarding assignment at our conference. There is no better opportunity at our conference to demonstrate the breadth of your knowledge, the superiority of your debate skills, and the ability to think on your feet than by participating on the A-Team.

The A-Team is short for "Absent nations Team." Many of our committees deal with subjects or topics that involve countries that are not present on that particular committee's membership. This is especially true on the Security Council, where the Council will address security issues involving countries that, while members of the United Nations, are not members of the Security Council itself. The role of the A-Team is to go to those committees upon request, and present information and answer questions about the topic on the floor. This often will include your position on any working papers or draft resolutions being discussed in that particular room.

In preparation for the A-Team, you should begin by looking at all of the other president's letters and learn about the various topics before the various committees. You should look at what topics are likely to come up in the Security Council. You should identify which nations may be called in to discuss that topic. For example, if a council is speaking about Israel-Palestine, you should be prepared to come in and portray either Israel or Palestine. Thus, you ought to do some independent research on various conflicts around the world, and understand the positions and points of view about each of the players in those conflicts. It would not hurt for you to prepare some "talking points" about each nation you think you may be called to portray. Indeed, in advance of the conference, you should discuss with other members of your team the topics they are researching, as this may help you in your own preparation. If there are any key non-governmental organizations involved with a particular conflict or situation, you may also be called to portray a representative of that NGO.

During the conference, certain councils may be called into emergency session to address a breaking crisis. You can expect to be asked to portray the various players in the emergency simulation.

Here is how the A-Team works.

1. Assuming a 5 delegate team, the delegates will be numbered 1 through 5. As requests for A-Team come in, they generally will be assigned in order to the delegates, 1 through 5. Thus, each delegate must be prepared for anything. As director, I do reserve the right to call people out of order to ensure diversity of assignments and to ensure that committees see a diversity of A-Team delegates.

2. Upon receiving the assignment, the A-Team delegate will have no more than 15 minutes to study before s/he must report to the committee/council to which s/he was called. You get only 15 minutes because it is assumed that you have researched the various countries that may be called based upon the topics in the other president's letters and your own research, and you will have prepared some of your own materials in advance of the conference. Your 15 minutes will hopefully be spent refining what you are going to say in relation to what is going on the committee, rather than spent learning the basic principles about the topic and the country. However, we will have internet access for you, and you are encouraged to bring a laptop computer if you have one. If you do not have a laptop, you will nonetheless be provided use of a computer with internet access during the 15 minute study period.
3. The requesting chair may take the A-Team delegate aside and brief them on what is going on in the committee room, show the A-Team delegate the working paper or resolution on the floor, and provide any other information the chair deems relevant and/or helpful, such as sample questions from the delegates of the requesting council/committee. We will encourage the chairs to provide as much of that information as possible when they make the initial A-Team request.
4. Once in the committee, the A-Team delegate does not have the right to call his or her own questions. The chair must do that.
5. The chair will keep track, for scoring purposes, of approximately how much time the A-Team delegate was in the committee, as that will weigh into the A-Team delegate's score. For example, a 5 minute appearance will not count the same as a half hour appearance, but will be weighted accordingly.
6. The chairs are required to complete scoring sheets on each A-Team delegate who appears in the room. You will be evaluated by the chair on a 1 to 15 scale for Portrayal of Country, and then on a 1 to 10 scale on each of the following questions:

Did the A-Team delegate make a good presentation that provided useful information to the committee?

Did the A-Team delegate think quickly on his/her feet in order to handle questions, including difficult questions, well?

The scoring sheet will also require that the chair indicate roughly how long the A-Team delegate was on the floor. The longer the A-Team delegate was on the floor, the more the performance is worth in the delegate's overall score. We will also encourage the chairs to provide written comments on the sheets. These comments will be compiled and shared with your advisors or head delegates after the conference.

7. The scope of what you may be asked to portray is limited to recognized member countries and other representatives of other UN bodies and certain NGOs. Rebel fronts will be handled on a case by case basis. There is no calling of "an ordinary citizen" or of a representative of an opposition political party not in charge of the government of a particular country, absent very extraordinary circumstances.
8. The Emergency simulation will be designed to maximize the use of A-Team to give the A-Team delegates plenty of scoring opportunities.

The A-Team will be run by staff members that are experienced at A-Team, both in the administration of it and in portraying absent nations in committee. As we are not the ones evaluating you for awards (the chairs of the committees will do that), we are free to assist you at the conference to help you be the best A-Team delegates you can be. Thus, you should feel

free to ask us any questions you want, as the “no coaching rule” will not apply to us. This does not mean you have any less preparation to do for this assignment. We will not be doing your research for you, or briefing you on basic policy. But what it does mean is that we can help you with the finer points as they arise. And certainly we will be briefing you on the Emergency Simulation.

More detailed information on the evaluative process, rules of procedure, and conference policies can be found on our conference website, www.leimun.com.

I look forward to working with you at the upcoming conference. I expect that will find this assignment to be the most satisfying and most fun assignment you will ever have in Model United Nations.

Very truly yours,

The A-Team Director