



# Odyssey of the Mind<sup>®</sup>

## Newsletter

Volume 32

Fall 2009

Number 1

### ODYSSEY INSPIRATION

A team from the Burton School District in California has been receiving accolades for combining its creative problem-solving skills with public service. Over the past years, they've helped numerous friends and classmates overcome physical disabilities through their inventions. The team has helped them achieve dreams such as being part of marching band, playing the drums, or even completing simple tasks like writing with ease. Behind this generous and inspiring team is a seasoned coach who knows the importance of letting teams triumph over their mistakes in order to become great problem-solvers.

Todd "Hoss" McNutt has coached 53 teams over the past 30 years and has learned just as many important lessons through OotM as his teams have learned from him. He cites one World Finals as helping him to fully comprehend the meaning of OotM. His team became fast friends with the first Chinese WF team — without allowing language and cultural barriers to become a hindrance. Teams quickly began to trade pins, play games, and invent their own language that he calls OMERese.

"I have never seen such joy and laughter before — those kids were alive with Odyssey of the Mind spirit." They also supported each other throughout competition, helping to move props and cheering for each other during the Awards Ceremony. "Until you see teenagers from rural California crying tears of joy because of the success of new friends from China, you just can't fully understand what Odyssey is all about," said McNutt.

Another eye-opening experience was in witnessing a team rise above great obstacles when their machine for *The Mail Must Go Through* caught fire two days before a com-

petition. He said, "It looked like a toaster going through a car wash."

McNutt witnessed his team rally together to recreate a miniature forklift that had previously taken them months to build. He found inspiration from seeing the students "become a true team." He also found recognition from those same students years later when they told

him how that experience helped them face other projects gone bad. They remembered the forklift fire and said, "If I could overcome that disaster, I can solve this problem."

McNutt's advice to new coaches stems from this experience. "Please understand that it's okay if the kids have disasters and problems. Be there for support, but don't solve the problem for them. When they do

solve the problem they will be empowered for life with the attitude -- *I may not understand how to do it YET, but I will,*" he said.

It is this attitude that gives McNutt great satisfaction. "I've had students that didn't believe they were smart enough to go to college.

After being in OotM, they realized that no one can stop them from achieving what they want. It is always a special moment when they get accepted to college or get the job they wanted and they come and tell me. The pride in their voice and that glow of success makes the work worthwhile. As a coach, the greatest victories in Odyssey of the Mind sometimes occur years after the competition. Problem solving is a skill that lasts a lifetime and is one of the best lessons teachers can share with their students," he said.

Aside from coaching, McNutt teaches robotics and a problem-solving class that uses Odyssey methods. He's been active in boy scouts for 56 years, and was a scoutmaster for 37 years. He's taught for 30 years and plans on continuing to teach, "as long as kids keep showing up wanting to learn."

*"Problem solving is a skill that lasts a lifetime and is one of the best lessons teachers can share with their students."*



*Hoss celebrates with his Burton MS team after receiving a special OMER's award for their charitable inventions. They designed and built a prosthetic arm for classmate Matt Lane.*



Also in this Issue . . .

2. Clarifications & Great Minds  
3.-4. Problem Procedures

5. Order Form  
6. Correction, OMER

6. COU Scholarship Winners

### CLARIFICATION REMINDER

The problem clarification system is not intended to replace reading the problem and program guide. Please reread both again before submitting a clarification. Do not submit a clarification that asks: **(1)** if an idea is creative or if one idea would receive more score than another. (No comment regarding subjective scoring will be provided); **(2)** where the judges or audience will be during the performance (That is a question for your tournament director); **(3)** to confirm the wording of the problem; **(4)** if something may be different from an aspect that is specifically required (For example, if the problem requires 1/8" wood for a part you may not use 1/16" wood for that required part).

### PROBLEM CLARIFICATIONS AS OF NOVEMBER 9, 2009

#### Problem No. 1: Nature Trail'R

1. If the list required in B13 is not presented to the Staging Area Judge before time begins, Penalty E10 will be assessed.

#### Problem No. 2: Return to the Gift of Flight

1. If the list required in B13 is not presented to the Staging Area Judge before time begins, Penalty E9 will be assessed.
2. The measurement given in C1 for the floor area should be 8' x 22' or 2.8m x 6.7m.

#### Problem No. 3: Discovered Treasures

1. If the list required in B13 is not presented to the Staging Area Judge before time begins, Penalty E9 will be assessed.
2. Correction: B7a must be portrayed as the discovery of a structure **or** sculpture that exists today but when it is discovered it is considered lost and/or forgotten, or the people living at the time are not aware of its previous existence.

#### Problem No. 4: Column Structure

1. C3a: Once a column's footprint has been measured during weigh-in, it must not change in size during the performance. If

it is designed to do so, a Spirit of the Problem Penalty will be assessed. If a column is not the same size at its top and bottom, the team must mark the bottom end.

2. C11f: The weight placement portion of the problem solution will end if the columns touch each other in any way.
3. D2a: Bonus points should read three or two. The Spirit of the Problem requires more than one column to be used for Testing.
4. Figure B: Ignore the word *camouflaged*.
5. B5: The word *performance* refers to the 8-minute presentation time. The team must use its device and test its structure during this time to receive score. The team does not have to integrate the use of the device and/or testing of its structure into its Style presentation

#### Problem No. 5: Food Court

1. If the list required in B13 is not presented to the Staging Area Judge before time begins, Penalty E9 will be assessed.
2. B10b should read: cannot be *physically portrayed* by team members in any way except to provide voices and sounds.



### Julia Child's Kitchen Court

Turning ordinary ingredients into something fantastic, or even figuring out a new dish from unusual ingredients takes creative thinking and risk-taking. Julia Child showed many that they can cook interesting and delicious meals with a few basic instructions and thinking-outside-of-the-box.

As a newlywed, Julia Child brazenly attempted to cook an exotic meal for her husband and it turned out — horrible. Years after her first foray into cooking she published many books, starred in award-winning cooking shows and inspired a nation of home cooks. She brought French cuisine to America through her writings and TV appearances. She proved that passion, hard work, and creative thinking can lead you down many exciting paths.

She started a career in copywriting after college, but decided that she wanted to serve her country at the start of World War II. Unfortunately, at 6'2" she was too tall to be a part of the US Army or Navy and joined the Office of Strategic Services (now called the CIA). She was in charge of many top-secret documents overseas. While she was stationed abroad, she met future husband Paul Child. Once married, Paul was stationed in France. It was here that Julia Child found her true calling.

According to her memoir, *My Life in France*, she was very nervous about being a young, inexperienced woman living in

France. Once she arrived, she felt more than welcomed, she felt at home. She attempted to learn all she could of the language and the food by befriending local vendors and chefs. Eventually she attended the prestigious Cordon Bleu cooking school.

From then on Julia's hard work paid off. She worked on a cookbook with two other fellow students called *Mastering the Art of French Cuisine*, which has since become an essential text for French cuisine in America. Its clear instructions and explanations along with its many useful photographs made the book a success.

After moving back to the states, she began doing publicity for her new cookbook. This led to various TV appearances and eventually a cooking show. Her work was recognized with a Peabody Award in 1965 and an Emmy Award in 1966.

Along with more popular cookbooks and television series Child also helped to found the American Institute of Wine and Food, an association of restaurants dedicated to increasing knowledge of food and wine.

Her history-making kitchen can be viewed at the National Museum of American History in Washington D.C. She also received many honorary doctorates and prestigious awards including the French Legion of Honor in 2000 and the U.S. Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2003.

In response to her popularity she said, "Some people like to paint pictures, or do gardening, or build a boat in the basement. Other people get a tremendous pleasure out of the kitchen, because cooking is just as creative and imaginative an activity as drawing, or wood carving, or music."

She believed that while French cuisine was intimidating, it wasn't impossible to learn. She proved her case to a nation and revolutionized the way they cooked at home. Above all, she tried to increase the public's awareness and appreciation of wholesome, well-prepared food regardless of wealth or class.

## Long-Term Problem Procedures

✓ Report to the Check-in Area 15 minutes before the scheduled competition time with four completed copies of the Style Form, Material Values Form, Outside Assistance Form, Team Required List Form, clarifications specific to the team's solution, and any other paperwork listed in the long-term problem, along with all items needed for the problem solution. If teams do not have the required list in staging, they can complete one then. Staging area judges will have extra copies of the team list forms. If it can't be produced by the time the team performs, there's a 5-point penalty.

✓ The Staging Area Judge will check for clarity and completion of all paperwork and pass it to the Timekeeper, who will give it to the Problem and Style Judges. The judge will then check all props for safety, the team members' foot coverings and the membership sign. The team will then be able to ask questions.

✓ The Staging Area Judge will also explain how to pick up the long-term raw score to the coach, who will be directed to sit in a designated area, if available.

✓ Once directed by the Staging Area Judge, the team will have 3 minutes to remove its materials from the Check-In Area and proceed to the Staging Area (If areas are in a different place.), where they will be met by the Timekeeper. (Others may help move items into the Staging Area. After that, no one may assist the team in any way until the presentation is over. The team does not need to clear the Staging Area until its performance is finished.)

✓ The Timekeeper will introduce the team to the audience, and ask that all cell phones and other electronic devices are turned off. The Timekeeper will announce if the team will allow flash photography and/or videotaping of its presentation. No one, including the Timekeeper, may read a description of the team's solution aloud. If the team wants it read, it must do so during its competition time.

✓ When the Timekeeper says, "Begin," the team has 8 minutes for setup, Style and the presentation of the problem solution. At the end of 8 minutes, judges will call "time," and the team must stop. An Overtime Penalty will be given if the team takes longer. In problems 2, 3, and 5 judges will stop the team after one minute of overtime.

✓ When competition ends, the judges meet with team members to ask questions or request demonstrations. The team may point out any special aspects of its solution. When dismissed by the judges, the team will quickly clear the competition site. It is the team's responsibility to bring cleanup materials, and to leave the competition area clean and dry for the next competing team. Others may help with clearing the site and cleanup. There will be a three-prong electrical outlet available for the team's use. Teams must provide any necessary extension cords or outlet adapters.

✓ Unless otherwise indicated, the Head Judge reviews with the coach the team's long-term raw score, including penalties, but not Style. Some sites post signs when scores are ready for review. After the score is reviewed, the coach has 30 minutes to return if additional concerns arise.

*Continued on next page*

## Spontaneous Problem Procedures

✓ Report to the spontaneous holding room 10 minutes before the scheduled competition time. If there is no holding room, teams report to the competition site 10 minutes before the scheduled time and wait quietly for further instruction. Only one coach may accompany the team into the holding room.

✓ One team member will register the team, giving its long-term problem and division, the team membership name and number. Team members will wait in the holding room until a judge calls them. A judge will then accompany the team members to the spontaneous problem room. The coach will remain in a designated area and wait for the team.

✓ All team members are allowed to enter the spontaneous room. A judge will give the type of problem the team must solve: verbal, hands-on, or verbal/hands-on. The team members will then have one minute to decide among themselves which five members will compete. The non-participating members may remain and watch or they may choose to leave the room. If they remain, they must not talk, signal, or intervene in any way, otherwise they will be warned and/or asked to leave. The team's competition time will continue. If a team has five or fewer members at competition, all must participate in spontaneous. Teams with fewer than five members may be at a disadvantage in the Spontaneous portion of competition.

✓ Teams should listen carefully to the judge's directions, as every spontaneous problem is different and specific rules for each individual problem may apply.

✓ A judge places a copy of the problem in full view of the participating team members and reads the problem aloud. The team may refer to its copy of the problem as necessary. Once the judge finishes reading the problem, he or she will say, "Begin," and time starts. The team members may ask the judges questions, but time will continue. In some instances, judges may tell the team that they cannot answer their specific question, and may refer the team to the problem. Judges will try to clarify the problem so the team members understand what the problem requires; however, judges will not give information that helps solve the problem. In verbal and/or verbal/hands-on problems the judges will use the following language:

- If a team member speaks too fast or mumbles and the judges cannot understand, the judges will say, "UNCLEAR. Please say it again."
- If a response does not make sense to the judges, or it is not acceptable, they will say, "INAPPROPRIATE. Please clarify or give another response."
- If a response is a repeat of a previous response, the judges will say, "DUPLICATE. Please give another response."

✓ Once competition is over the team must leave the room quietly and meet the coach at the designated area. Teams must not discuss the spontaneous problem with anyone until after the competition.

✓ Spontaneous problems are not subject to the grievance process; however, if a team has a concern, one team member should ask to speak to the Spontaneous Problem Captain, who will then speak with the judges and the entire team, if necessary.

*~ Joy Kurtz, International Spontaneous Problem Captain*

Long-Term Problem Procedures (continued from page 3):

**Problem 1: Nature Trail'R**

The team must move its vehicle and camper so they are touching only the floor within the 4' x 6' Campground/Start Area. (The vehicle and Camper may touch each other). The team members return to the Staging Area. Once time begins, the vehicle and Camper will travel together around the Nature Trail. They will begin from inside the Campground, circle outside of the Nature Trail, and return to the Campground. The Camper will remain in the Campground where it will change appearance at some time during the performance. The vehicle will travel the Nature Trail and will encounter four circumstances that cannot be combined.

The team may present the theme and style throughout the presentation. Tournament Directors will provide a 24' x 20' presentation area (larger if possible) with non-carpeted floors.

~ Wayne Kerhli, IPC



**Problem 2: Return to the Gift of Flight**

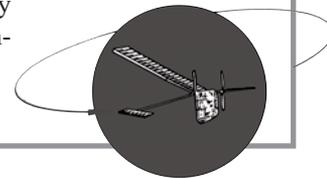
The Staging Area Judge will identify the official who will serve as the Flight Plan Judge and notify the team by ringing a bell when a Flight Plan has failed.

The competition site is a minimum of 8'x22' but may be larger if space permits. A raised ceiling and indirect ventilation is recommended but is not guaranteed. A taped 4' square will be placed in the center of the site. This square is for the target for *Drop something into a target* and *Touch down and take off* flight plans. There will be a 5' taped Start and Finish Line 6' from the taped square. Please refer to Figure A in the problem for diagram. Nothing can be placed on the competition site until time begins.

If space permits, teams may perform or place equipment outside of the 8'x22' area. If a drop off exists beyond the site dimensions, a caution line may be taped 30" from the edge of the drop-off. This will serve as a warning not a boundary.

There are six specific Flight Plans and three different types of propulsion systems. The team may present the theme and style throughout the presentation.

~ Carol Biros, IPC



**Problem 3: Discovered Treasures**

Along with the required paperwork, the team will present the Staging Area Judge with four copies of its list as described in B13 and documentation of both treasures as well as documentation of where and when the historic treasure was discovered. The competition site will be a minimum of 7' x 10' and will not be marked. If space permits the team may perform and/or place equipment, props, etc. outside the 7' x 10' area.

~ Rita Sleeman, IPC



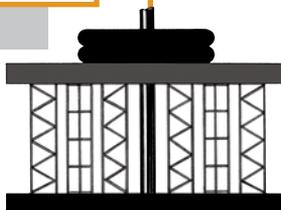
**Problem 4: Column Structure**

Before its scheduled competition time, the team or a team member must report to the weigh-in site, where the structure will be measured, weighed and checked for rule infractions. If time permits the team may make corrections of any infractions. After filling out the weigh-in checklist, a Weigh-in Judge will seal, mark and store the structure in a team-supplied container or paper bag supplied by the tournament director. Approximately 25 minutes before their scheduled competition time, a team member will pick up the structure and take it to the competition site. The coach and other team members will report to the competition site 20 minutes before the team's scheduled time with the props, membership sign and anything else needed for the long-term problem solution

At the staging area, the Staging Area Judge will remove the weigh-in checklist. The team informs them whether Style will continue after the structure breaks.

If an adult assistant is used in Division I or II, he or she must be identified in the staging area and will remain with the team throughout the long-term solution. It must be apparent to the judges that when the adult is assisting in weight placement a team member is supporting at least 50 percent of each weight being handled.

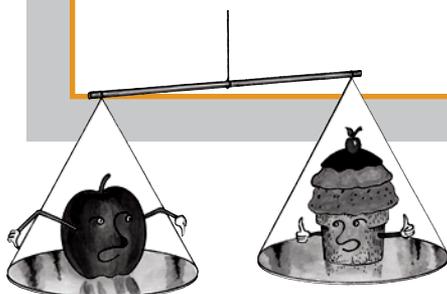
The only people allowed inside the testing area during the long-term solution are the team members, judges and adult assistants, if used. Style may take place at any time during the 8-minute competition. When the long-term solution is completed, all wood from the crushed structure or the whole structure if it does not break, must be placed in a paper bag and returned to the weigh-in site by a designated judge. The structure may be inspected again at the weigh-in site. ~Dan Semenza, IPC



**Problem 5: Food Court**

If the team chooses to do so they may present the Judge with documentation of its selected food items to avoid possible disqualification of any characters. The competition site will be a minimum of 7' X 10' and will not be marked off. If a drop off exists beyond the 7' X 10' dimensions, a caution line may be taped 30" from the edge of the drop off. This will serve as a warning not a boundary. If space permits, the team may perform and/or place equipment, props, etc. outside the 7' X 10' area.

~Sharlene Smith, IPC





# ODYSSEY OF THE MIND® 2009-10 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Questions? Email [info@odysseyofthemind.com](mailto:info@odysseyofthemind.com) or call 856.256.2797.

For new memberships or renewals, complete this form and return it with a check, purchase order, or credit card information (see below).

**Check one:**

**Divisions I, II and III:**

- Individual school:** Must register in the school name. May enter one team per problem per division in competition.
- Two or more schools:** Must share the same principal to be under the same membership. Use school district name on application. May enter one team per problem per division in competition.
- Home-schooled students:** Must include at least four home-schooled students. May also include up to three members from one school. May enter one team per problem in competition.
- Community Group:** May enter one team per problem in competition. May not be an organization established solely for the purpose of participating in Odyssey of the Mind. Please submit by-laws if this is a new membership.

**Division IV:** All team members must be high school graduates and registered for at least one class at a college or university. They do not have to attend the same institution. May enter one team per problem. May proceed directly to World Finals.

Membership name \_\_\_\_\_ Membership number (for renewal, if known) \_\_\_\_\_

Grades covered by membership \_\_\_\_\_ School district \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

Contact person (may be a coach) \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address (for newsletter delivery and correspondence) \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime phone \_\_\_\_\_ FAX \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Each individual membership costs \$135, but you will receive discounts if you purchase more than one membership. For each membership purchased, you get five competitive long-term problems, one primary problem, one copy of the Program Guide, one newsletter subscription, and more!*

- Individual 2009-10 Odyssey of the Mind membership @ \$135.....
- Additional membership(s) for the same school or community group @ \$100.....
- 6-10 memberships for the same school district (registered at the same time) @ \$120.....
- 11 or more memberships from the same school district (registered at the same time) @ \$100.....

## ODYSSEY OF THE MIND SUPPORT MATERIALS

- \*\*Lots of Problems . . . And Tips to Make You More Creative @ \$19** tips on problem-solving.....
- The Spirit of Creativity @ \$25** — Anecdotes about Odyssey of the Mind, written by Dr. Sam.....
- A Creative Experience DVD @ \$9.95** — Odyssey of the Mind promotional video.....
- \*\*Creative Interaction @ \$19** Discusses the importance of interaction between students.....
- \*\*Applying Your Creativity @ \$18** Discusses different types of human creativity.....
- NEW Book!! Spontaneous Combustion @ \$7.50** Booklet of spontaneous problems and tips.....
- Odyssey of the Mind Program Guide @ \$7.50** (one is included with membership).....
- Coaches Training Video @ \$20** Tips and techniques for coaches.....
- packs of **Balsa Wood** (premium grade AAA 36" x 1/8" x 1/8") @ \$25 per 100 pieces.....

Subtotal \_\_\_\_\_

S & H \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_

\* Spend \$40 or more and get free Shipping & Handling. Orders under \$40, add \$7.50 Shipping & Handling.  
Contact CCI for S & H outside of the U.S.

**\*There are no Shipping & Handling charges for membership packets.**

*\*\*These books are a collection of long-term and spontaneous problems from past competition years.*

**Payment Method:**

- **U.S. Mail:** Send this completed form along with a check, money order or purchase order, payable to CCI, or with your credit card info to:  
**CCI, 406 Ganttown Road, Sewell, NJ 08080**
  - **FAX:** Send this form along with a copy of your purchase order, or include your credit card information and fax to **856.256.2798**.
  - **On-line:** If paying by credit card, go to **www.odysseyofthemind.com** to access this form.
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Acct. no. \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of cardholder \_\_\_\_\_ CVV Code \_\_\_\_\_

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## Odyssey of the Mind

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Hey Teams,

Remember — there's no limit to creativity!

Your friend,

**OMER**

The *Odyssey of the Mind* Newsletter is published by Creative Competitions, Inc.

### Correction

An OMER's Award recipient was incorrectly named in the Summer Newsletter. **Emily Perkins** was awarded an OMER's award for courageously competing by herself and for turning a solution meant for seven into a great one-woman show.



### Where's Omer?

Each year Omer travels around the world visiting Odyssey of the Mind tournaments and activities.

Here, OMER walks the red carpet at Pennsylvania's tournament to help hand out awards to the "stars" of the night.

If you'd like to share one of your pictures of Omer having fun at an Odyssey event email it to: [pressroom@odysseyofthemind.com](mailto:pressroom@odysseyofthemind.com)

### COU Scholarship Winners

Creative Opportunities Unlimited (COU) rewards OotM participants that demonstrate exemplary creative problem-solving skills, good sportsmanship, and teamwork in their everyday lives. For more information visit: [www.creativeopportunities.org](http://www.creativeopportunities.org). Congratulations and good luck to this year's winners:

#### \$1000 Scholarship:

Elijah Melanson, NC  
Laura Dolan, NY  
Jennifer White, NY  
Levi Brandon Key, VA

#### \$500 Scholarships:

- Emily Gerke, WI
- Benjamin Richardson, IL
- Taylor Prewitt, KY
- Zack Freeman, ME
- Dustin Balton, PA
- Heather Hutchinson, NJ
- Clayton Richenberg, NY
- Matthew McMullin, TX
- Joy Stephenson, DE
- Jacob Jones, MO
- Kimberly Kelderhouse, MI
- Anielia Polak, KY
- Jason Young, AR
- Mollie Ballard, WV
- Stephen Erdman, PA
- Elizabeth Falat, CA
- Luke Bowman, AZ
- Kasey Davis, VA
- David Hedrick, GA
- Kent Reynolds, KS
- Rochelle Vollnerding, PA
- Jonelle Walker, TX