



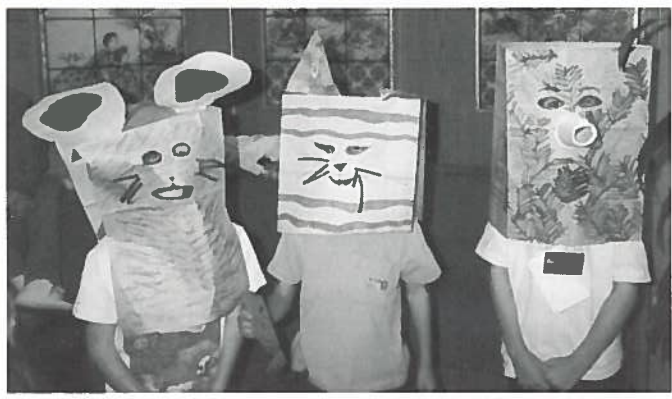
Odyssey of the Mind

Newsletter

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NUMBER 1



OM Receives Northern Exposure

What does a cruise ship, a totem pole and the Odyssey of the Mind program have in common? Everything!! Dan Semenza, International Problem Captain and Jo Weber, his wife and former OM coach, represented OM—as a faculty—on an Alaskan cruise for the Northwest Chapter of the Young Presidents Organization's area conference. This organization invited OM to participate in its family education experience.

During the first cruise day, Dan and Jo presented an introduction to Odyssey of the Mind so all participating parents and children could be exposed to the power of creativity. This session included discussion of the OM long-term problems and Style. The group also learned how to solve hands-on spontaneous problems.

Later in the day, two additional spontaneous sessions were held as the ship slipped through the inside passage. The Lido Restaurant on board provided the space and the Alaskan wilderness provided the scenery as all ages competed on OM spontaneous teams. Finally, the action focused on the six- to nine-year-olds, who were confronted with solving the "Masks" problem: that is, developing masks to depict a favorite animal and its story. Of course, as you might expect, costumes were created.

The following day, the ship (Ms Maadam) arrived at Ketchikan with all participants disembarking to visit the natives and to learn about totem poles. (Did you know that the most important object is always placed at the top?) The natives danced in their ceremonial robes as they welcomed us into their Cedar Tribal House.

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A CALL FOR OMERS ABROAD!

OMers HERE! OMers THERE! OMers, OMers EVERYWHERE! After sixteen years, millions of participants speak to the overwhelming success of the Odyssey of the Mind program. Both young and old OMers throughout the world have come to know, love and appreciate the value of creative problem solving and the life skills it has to offer. Not a week goes by without hearing an exciting story from one of our OMers in another part of the world, just bursting to tell us how OM and the opportunity to creative problem solve has excited yet another group of youngsters.

In response to such overwhelming interest and enthusiasm, we would like to introduce the newest regular feature of our newsletter, **OMers ABROAD**. OMers ABROAD has two goals: the first is to bring new and exciting OM stories to our readers. These stories will feature OM-related events of human interest experienced by OMers throughout the world. We hope our readers will truly understand and appreciate the value OM holds for its participants when reading each story.

A second goal of OMers ABROAD is to **spread the**
(continued on page 4)

Toyota City Boys and Girls Invention Club Greet '93 WF Hosts in Japan

During the summer of '94, two American gals, Amanda and Rachel Olson, from Plano, MI, were reunited with members of an international team they hosted at the 1993 OM World Finals in Maryland. This meeting took place in Toyota City, Japan.

The Olson girls, who were OM team members in '93, represented Michigan in *The Old Man and the Sea Analogy*, Division II, at the OM World Finals at the University of Maryland, College Park. For one year following the competition, they communicated with their new-found friends from Toyota City and then set out to visit them. The girls stayed in Toyota City for eight days with Syozo Kurahashi, the coach of Japan's '93 teams. On July 30, 1994, three girls and seven boys, who were members of the two teams that represented Japan in the World Finals of '93, met with the girls.

(continued on page 3)

SPOTLIGHT



Spotlight on...
JOYCE McHENRY,
IOWA OM
Association Director

Joyce McHenry is an elementary teacher for gifted students in Iowa. When she is not "facilitating" her classes, however, she is working to make OM happen throughout the state. Although Joyce has been IA OM Association Director for only the last two years, her experience with

OM goes back to 1986, when she served as a board member for IA OM. Since then, she has been an OM regional director, coach and, for the past several years, Summer Enrichment Program (SEP) director.

Some of you will readily recognize Joyce for her work with the SEP Program. She is one of the "stars" of OM Association's *Summer Enrichment Program Awareness* tape. For those of you new to OM, SEP is an opportunity for kids to enjoy OM year-round. Participants are led by experienced OM coaches, who use problems developed by OM Association. These OM "summer camps" are generally one-week-long and provide youngsters—even non-OMers—with an opportunity to involve themselves in creative problem-solving activities. There are no geographical restrictions either—participants in Iowa's SEPs have hailed from ten different states. Iowa's OM SEPs are generally held at Grinnell College in Grinnell, IA.

This past year, as association host for the 15th annual OM World Finals, Joyce worked to merge local host families with our international visitors. She even worked as a "hostess" for 37 Germany International participants who stayed in Mason City for ten days before the World Finals competition was under way!

When she is not managing OM business, Joyce is mom to Kristie, 22; Brian, 20; Katie, 17 and Jeff, 15. (As you might suspect, all have been involved in OM in some fashion!) Joyce is currently working on a master's degree in Educational Technology out of University of Northern Iowa. She is also a facilitator for the Batterer's Education Program, a domestic violence intervention program for males in need of such assistance. Thanks, Joyce, for a job well done.

**Editor's Note: The University of Northern Iowa recently became a participant in our OM scholarship program. Iowa State University, host of the 1994 OM World Finals, is also an OM scholarship sponsor.*

Odyssey of the Mind has Lessons for Educators and Adults, Too

The following letter appeared in the Ames Tribune on June 17, 1994:

To the editor:

Ames recently had the honor of hosting the Odyssey of the Mind World Finals competition. The OMers, as they call themselves, participated in an assortment of events designed to stimulate the problem-solving nature of human minds in the spirit of teamwork.

My personal interest led me to the Iliad competition, in which the teams were required to perform a scene from the Homeric epic as well as a scene set in the 20th century. The most important element of the assignment, in my view, was this: the two scenes must be related in some way. Brilliant idea.

So often we as adults, with our best intentions guiding us, lead our youth on paths which are not only pointless, but due to the time and energy involved, rob the young people of the opportunity of insightful pondering of the world and their place in it. The opportunities are everywhere, from the schools teaching questionable topics of divisive multiculturalism to parents providing their children with endless hours of television viewing void of ethical, moral or intellectual material. Such activities shrink the mind rather than broaden it.

As a spectator of the Iliad competition, I was genuinely moved and enchanted to see young people of all ages reap the benefits from exposure to one of the greatest stories of all time. With varying levels of sophistication, they all exhibited an understanding that modern mankind at its essence exists with the same human desires, temptation, flaws and courage as did the ancients. The hubris of Achilles is evident in the arrogance and self-destructive actions of important individuals who live and have lived in the 20th century. Hector's torturous separation from the family that loved him is something to which we can all relate. Courage, love, revenge and remorse are present in the classical epic poem, which is every bit as relevant to the challenges of modern mankind as to life in the classical era.

I have a hunch that the privileged participants in the Iliad competition came away from the experience with a newfound insight into human nature and a truer understanding of self. And perhaps those of us responsible for guiding and nurturing the intellectual growth of children need to gain a truer understanding of our role as educators.

Judith L. Black, Ames

1994-95 OM Chartered Association Membership Cutoff Dates

US ASSOCIATIONS				INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS							
AL	12/14/94	IL	02/08/95	MO	01/15/95	OH	01/15/95	VA	02/01/95	ALBERTA	01/30/95
AR	12/16/94	IN	12/20/94	MS	01/15/95	OK	02/01/95	VT	01/15/95	AUSTRALIA	02/15/95
AZ	02/15/95	KS	02/01/95	MT	01/15/95	OR	01/06/95	WA	01/20/95	BENELUX	02/10/95
CA	01/10/95	KY	01/27/95	NC	12/15/94	PA	02/15/95	WI	12/20/94	BRIT COL	01/01/95
CO	02/15/95	LA	12/02/94	ND	12/16/94	RI	12/31/94	WV	01/15/95	CHINA	12/31/94
CT	01/15/95	MA	12/16/94	NE	01/01/95	SC	03/01/95	WY	02/15/94	N W TER	02/25/95
GA	12/16/94	MD	03/01/95	NH	02/15/95	SD	12/15/94				
IA	12/09/94	ME	02/01/95	NJ	12/31/94	TN	12/01/94				
ID	12/15/94	MI	02/01/95	NV	01/31/95	TX	01/10/95				
		MN	12/16/94	NY	01/15/95	UT	02/03/95				



Hosts in Japan (continued from page 1)

"They had a good time, singing Japanese folk songs, playing games and exchanging friendship. I think it is very nice and important that after OM World Finals we could meet again in Japan and exchange friendship. It was our pleasure to be their host after a year of continuous correspondence," said coach Syozo. 🍡

Northern Exposure (continued from page 1)

After this excursion, the children finished creating their masks and the performances began. Following the presentations of the youngest age group, the ten- to twelve-year-olds worked to construct a totem pole and develop a skit to showcase its importance. Once again, the Lido restaurant served as backdrop for OM performers as the ship sailed into Alaska's capital, Juneau.

The ship docked in Juneau for a full day of activity onshore. The city welcomed us with its flower-lined streets and the Mendenhall Glacier. Before our departure from this capital city, Governor Hinkel welcomed us to the "Last Frontier" state, and wished us a pleasant journey. The ship set sail to Glacier Bay.

The following morning, we were treated to the icy spectacle of Glacier Bay. OM activities were suspended to the afternoon when the ship left the bay. Glaciers, thousands of years old, were receding with huge chunks breaking off with thundering sounds. What could compete with that presentation? An OM paper airplane flying contest in the Rembrandt Lounge was the answer. Teams with a minimum of four people each designed paper airplanes that were to complete certain tasks. These included flying distance, shooting through a hole for accuracy, and staying aloft. The lounge never looked so good—with the white paper airplanes that reminded us of the icebergs of Glacier Bay.

Our next stop was Sitka, a former "Russian Capital." On winter days, this city receives two to three inches of snow, which melts by noon. Their schools are always in session. With that in mind, we finished the day with the final results of "Totem Poles." The teams performed their solutions in true OM style, incorporating all newly acquired knowledge into the skits. The only thing left was to tabulate results, award the medals and set sail for our return to Vancouver. 🍡

"OMER CAM" DEBUTS IN 1994 WORLD FINALS

Hey! Who said the annual *OM World Finals Video Yearbook* has to look the same every year? Not the OM video production team, whose mission is to capture all the highlights and highjinks of the three-day event. So, this year Jennifer Devine, your annual host for the World Finals video, brought along her Hi8 home video camera for some funky, hand-held fun and games. And if Jennifer was busy videotaping a sequence with one of the two official OM video crews (those happy shooters in the cool black T-shirts), her friend, Michelle, handled the shooting.

The result is a lot of funky, shaky, happy shots that show the World Finals from a "different" perspective. For some reason, OMers seem to get a little more outrageous when they see the little home video camera. Meanwhile, the two official OM video crews shot over 30 hours of tape as they roamed far and wide to cover all of the people and events that make the World Finals so special. OMER took advantage of the camera named after him by taking some fun-filled excursions into places previously unvisited by a 6' raccoon. The OMER Cam was there to document it all.

The 1994 *OM World Finals Video Yearbook* is an action-packed record of the excitement and drama of an event that featured everything from fireworks and sumo wrestling to water-powered vehicles and a talking platypus.

Enjoy it all—and experience the world's first OMER Cam!

Editor's Note: The 1994 World Finals Video Yearbook is now available. Send a \$50 P.O., check or money order to Video Yearbook, OM Association, Inc, P.O. Box 547, Glassboro, NJ 08028-0547. The cost includes shipping and handling.

OM CHARTERED ASSOCIATIONS AND GRINNELL COLLEGE JOIN OM SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Last year, 64 OMers received OM scholarships. The scholarships included monetary awards from the American Honda Foundation, the Chevron Corporation, the University of Maryland, GMI Engineering and Management Institute, Iowa State University and the New Hampshire OM Association.

This year OM headquarters has more exciting news for our OM graduating seniors and college students. First, Grinnell College will be offering two \$750 one-year (nonrenewable) scholarships to two Iowa OMers. Each applicant must be an admitted, incoming, first-year Grinnell College student and a legal resident of Iowa, and must have participated on an Odyssey of the Mind team for two of four years in high school. These scholarships will be coordinated by the Iowa OM Association. Iowa OMers should contact Grinnell College (515-269-3250), Office of Financial Aid, for further information.

Second, OM has added new scholarship opportunities from three OM chartered associations. These are Massachusetts, offering two \$500 scholarships; Michigan, awarding two \$500 scholarships; and New Jersey, giving one \$500 scholarship. Our first participating OM association, New Hampshire, will continue its commitment to the program, offering two \$500 scholarships. That brings our association involvement to four, with other association boards discussing possible involvement.

The application process for the association scholarships remains the same. Interested graduating seniors or college students are to complete the scholarship application and accompanying paperwork and send it to arrive in OM headquarters by Friday, January 6, 1995. Those applicants not awarded a Chevron, Honda or university scholarship will have the opportunity to be considered for an association-sponsored scholarship. Their applications will be forwarded to the appropriate participating OM association. Each participating association will then review the applications and award its scholarship(s).

The OM Association looks forward to continuing its commitment to help OMers “. . . make the world a better place in which to live” by encouraging the pursuit of higher education. Should you have any questions relating to the scholarship program, please contact the OM office at (609) 881-1603. 🍷

Call For OMers (continued from page 1)

word. Many OM participants, coaches and judges travel throughout the world. In fact, numerous letters of inquiry from countries outside of the U.S. are generated by OMers visiting there. They generate OM excitement wherever they go. OMers involved in student exchange programs . . . adults working in Fulbright programs . . . parent coaches and judges engaged in business overseas . . . all come into contact with people in different parts of the world. If you are planning to visit another country and would like to take some OM informational brochures with you, just let us know. We'll help in any way we can to facilitate and develop a new OM relationship.

We hope that you will enjoy this new feature, as OMers throughout the world share their OM experiences. If you have such a story, please send it to OM Association in care of **OMers ABROAD**, P.O. Box 547, Glassboro, NJ 08028. 🍷



New Staff Members Join OM Headquarters

With the retirement of Carol Schoepkse, an OM headquarters employee of 10 years—who worked to ship and track the OM products we send to you and the departure of another employee in our shipping area, OM Association, Inc., in Glassboro welcomes three new hires.

The most seasoned of these is Kevin McDonough, who came on board in April 1994, just weeks before our excursion to the World Finals competition in Iowa. What a way to begin OM! In record time, Kevin learned how to wear a multitude of hats at OM headquarters. In his varying roles, Kevin's “top of the mind” wardrobe includes caps ranging from a Ryder trucking/moving hat to an architect's headgear. (He helped transport products to World Finals and assisted with redesigning the OM office to accommodate our new personnel.) Kevin, who is single, speaks a number of languages, bakes (for the enjoyment of all staff) and has traveled extensively.

In late August, Kathy Cerino began working at OM headquarters—focusing her energies on providing directors with the support materials and services they require. There were plenty to provide as we kicked off the new OM season! Forgoing her former ritual, which was returning each fall to teach fifth-graders, Kathy came into a whole new experience at OM. Her classroom experience, however, gave her valuable insight into the education of young folks, and she brings that knowledge with her. She has been married to husband Frank for nearly 25 years. The family, which includes son Frank and daughter Cynthia, resides in Franklinville, NJ.

Gail Olwyn Madison, our newest rookie, came on board in early September—just in time to help process all the new membership requests! Gail has been (affectionately) renamed Gail OM and already is a dedicated and active member of our support team. She has experience in a variety of employment arenas—having worked in a school setting as well as in her own business as a local merchant. Gail has three children, all who, incidentally, participated in the OM program when they were in grade school.

When you call the OM office, if you speak to these folks, please be sure to extend a warm welcome as the newest additions of our OM team! 🍷

Bob Purifico Attends 2d International Conference on Education Business Partnership


This past June, Bob Purifico, Vice-Chairman of the OM International Board of Directors, was a presenter at the Second International Conference on Education and Business Partnership in Paris, France. Bob, an administrator in the Cherry Hill Public School system in Cherry Hill, NJ, is currently on sabbatical and will be working with OM to further international involvement, as well as develop OM's new community program.

This year's conference, entitled "Innovation Through Partnership: The International Challenge," was attended by over 500 delegates from 23 countries. Sessions were offered in five themes: Technological Change—Skills for the 21st Century; Innovation in Primary, Secondary and Higher Education; Economic and Social Regeneration of Communities; Maximizing the Benefits of Education-Business Collaboration; and The International Dimension: Global and International Initiatives.

Bob's presentation, OM Style, was in the Innovation in Education theme and was attended by delegates from ten different countries. The presentation emphasized creativity as an educational pedagogy that can be both taught and nurtured. Participants at the session were treated to samples of long-term and spontaneous problems and became just as excited about creative problem solving as our many OMers throughout the world.

When OMER, who made a special phone call to Bob upon his return, asked about the conference highlights, Bob related the following:

"The European community is highly involved in business partnerships with education. The ECC (European Economic Community) has allied and dedicated itself to assisting the development of education on the continent. The most striking difference between North American and European partnerships seems to be not only what business has to offer to various educational institutions, but what is equally offered back by the schools to their business partners."

As a result of Bob's efforts in Paris, OM may be adding additional memberships in other European countries that expressed interest in OM and creative problem solving. The Second International Partnership Network has already contacted Bob and asked him to write a feature article in its worldwide newsletter entitled, *CIRCUIT*. We wish Bob success as he travels the world in his creative problem-solving quest. 

In Memory

This past summer, OM lost two valuable OM contributors and supporters. Molly Gower, daughter of Jim Gower, Regional Director for CO OM, met an untimely departure from her loved ones, as did Jim Schmidt, son of Betty Schmidt, Association Director of MI OM. We, at OM, share in their sorrow.

Setting the Record Straight!

The listing below correctly identifies the recipients of third and fourth place in the 1993-94 problem *OM-Believable Music*, at the OM World Finals, in Ames, Iowa. We regret that Ingleside Middle School was not cited in the summer issue of the *OM Newsletter*:

OM-BELIEVABLE MUSIC, Division II

Third Place: INGLESIDE MID SCH, Phoenix, AZ

Coach: Deidre Horstman

Team members:


Ben Grissom
Chis Horstman
Heather McAdam
Nitesh Patel
Rosa Sanchez
Jeffrey Sullivan
Alexis Zewinger

Fourth Place: MELROSE MID SCH, Melrose, MA

Coach: Bert Spector

Team members:

Lindsey Anton
Colleen Crowley
Mark Drauschke
Zack Gurard-Levin
Kaitlin Hennessy
Kate Spector
Rachel Wasdyke

Another note: Beth Rosenbalm was omitted from the list of Ranatra Fusca winners from Kingwood HS, Humble, TX. The team won an award for its performance in the problem, *The Iliad*, Division III. 

Problem Clarifications

SCIENTIFIC SAFARI

1. Some lettering and numbering changes should be made in the problem:

On page 2, B.5 f & g should be B.5 c & d.

On page 6, Penalty #6 should read, "The vehicles' (and trailer's if attached) floor contact points are not entirely within the Camp when time begins."

Penalties for Division I only:

#11-delete "and (3 or 4)"

Penalties for Division II, III and IV only:

#10-change "(3or 4)" to "(10 or 11)"

#11-change "(3 and 4)" to "(10 and 11)"

2. Consistent with the Spirit of the Problem the animals may be fictional

(continued on page 6)

OM NOTES

* **Sue Tracy**, who, with **Faye O'Briant**, is co-Regional Director of the Sun Region in Florida, wrote OM headquarters to tell us that the region was recently honored. The local chapter of the **Phi Delta Kappa** named the Sun Region as its Outstanding Organization of the Year. Phi Delta Kappa is a professional fraternity for education, founded on the principles of research, service and leadership. The organization recognized educators who exemplify those principles at its annual ceremony held in May, 1994. Congratulations!

* **Vanessa Arbogast**, from Johnson City, TN, wrote to OM headquarters in late June. She told us a personal story about her recent OM World Finals experience. Here is an excerpt from her letter:

*At the OM World Finals in Ames, Iowa, I had the misfortune of losing my wallet. Apparently it dropped from my backpack at the Coliseum. I did not discover it was missing until I boarded the bus to the Omaha Airport. The Passageways travel agent at Omaha was extremely concerned and helpful, giving me the number of lost and found at Iowa State. Almost immediately after returning home, **Maggie Van Camp** called to say she had my wallet. [Maggie coached an OM team at W.E. Groves HS in Beverly Hills, Michigan.] After I identified my wallet by phone, Maggie sent it back to me with a check for the \$172.16 that it contained. Since honesty and integrity have become part of the OM tradition, I wanted to let you know how these OMerS from Michigan carried out the tradition. I would publicly like to thank them for their efforts to return my wallet in the best OM spirit.*

* The "oldest living OM team" (from the University of Colorado at Denver) participated in the 1994 OM World Finals competition. One of the team members (who remains nameless) wrote about the 1994 World Finals—and what he and his team members learned from the experience:

We had a lot of reservations about our participation because we did not want to harm the OM program in any way. My wife, Susan, and I have been involved with OM for five years now. In that time we have coached nine teams from Divisions I, II and III. We have also served on the Colorado OM Community Advisory Board and are presently the school coordinators for Holly Hills/Ridge Elementary Schools where our son attends. The school

district is starting a challenge school and we have offered to help get an OM program started there, too. As you can see OM has taken on great importance in our family's life. To prove it, most of our casual wear has OM written on it.

Before I started the oldest living OM team in January, I queried both Colorado OM and National OM to get an opinion on our participation. All responses were positive, but I still had my own doubts. The team members are all software engineers and none of us had any formal training in either mechanical or electrical design. (All of our knowledge comes from self learning and experience.) We therefore felt that it would be unfair to compete against college students in the vehicle problem. [Editor's Note: All these Division IV team members were over 18 and enrolled in college, following the rules cited in the 1993-94 Odyssey of the Mind Program Handbook.]

We avoided using corporate resources such as machine shops or CAD/CAM equipment. We did all of the construction in our garages using our own tools. We stayed away from unduly sophisticated solutions and used only technology that would be readily accessible to any other OM team. We put our emphasis on creativity and effort. Because of our logistics (if you work full time and qualify to be on an OM team, you don't have time) we fell behind the mark on teamwork. Where our performance was most lacking, it was in areas affected by coordination between team members.

I definitely have a new perspective. Being on the floor performing is a bit different than I imagined. I made the same mistakes that I know I cautioned my teams to watch out for. However, we all feel that it was a worthwhile endeavor and are making plans to do it again. Although I still have some concerns about professional engineers competing against [full-time] college students, I want to assure you that we will be sensitive to it next year as we were this year. Thank you for making OM available to me, both as a coach and now as a team participant.

Editor's Note: This team finished fourth in a field of nine Division IV teams. 

Problem Clarifications (continued from page 5)

3. Since there are almost a million different species of animals living in the world today, teams using animals other than the common ones should bring proof (i.e., documentation or photocopy) that what is portrayed is an animal.
4. A virus is NOT an animal.
5. The entire animal must be portrayed. You may not portray just a portion, e.g., the head, a hand, etc.

Classics... VAUDEVILLE


1. The positive aspect of society may not be from the past. 

OM Considers

Sponsoring Educational Conferences

OM is considering sponsoring a conference for educators entitled, *Creative Problem Solving*, with mid-October, 1996 as the tentative date and Washington, D.C., as the tentative site.

A second summer event on creative problem solving, designed for families, has a working title of, *Meeting the Challenge of the 21st Century*. No date has yet been targeted for this event.

As an OMer, your comments, ideas and statements of interest in these events are invited. Send these suggestions to Dr. James J. Pallante, Chair, OM Board of Directors Program Committee, P.O. Box 547, Glassboro, NJ 08028. 

The OM-ty Nest Syndrome


By Amy DeNike, Coach
Kingsville, ES, Kingsville, MD

Now I know how my parents felt when the last of us moved out on our own! As one of four children, I never gave it much thought—since we all still live in the same area and get together often.

But now I am on the other side of the situation. Six of my seven team members from last year have moved on to middle school. Granted, the middle school is about four miles down the road—that may not be a long distance by car, but in my heart the distance might as well be 4,000 miles.

As a coach, the team has become more than seven kids working together toward a common goal. The team and I have a special bond, glued together not only by hot glue guns, sequins, glitter and sweat, but by the love of OM and the countless hours of being together day after day, week after week, and month after month. These children have not only invaded my classroom with all their cardboard and glitter, but they have permanently invaded my heart. For the last two years, we were fortunate enough to have traveled to World Finals. That meant struggling together to raise the money for travel, that special bonding that takes place when you live in a dorm together, and the thrill of performing against teams from all over the U.S.A. and all over the world.

As a new school year begins, I feel a sense of emptiness as I begin the hunt for six team members to replace them. I remind myself that I have had to do this several times in my nine years as a coach. Lindsey, Megan, Ana, Andy, Meghan and Greg may be moving on to middle school and all it has to offer, but their influence on Kingsville Elementary Odyssey of the Mind will live on. The six new members will soon learn where the exacta knives are kept, where the best buys on sequins are, and how to run through the skit “one more time” even though you are so tired you could drop.

And, before you know it, they too will have formed that special OM bond that makes us more than a team; it makes us a family. They, too, will have a special place in my heart along with all my OMers and their families. So, I can relax a bit and know that my heart is never OM-ty for long. It is filled with love, creativity and memories to last a lifetime. 


Go Jackie!

Jackie Otis, a former OMer and now a graduate of the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, CO, tells a story of how interesting it is to meet OMers from all over the world, especially out of “context.” For example, when Jackie was in Basic Training, she engaged in intensive wilderness training, which included navigating obstacle courses. In charge of a squadron, Jackie had to use her leadership skills to encourage the group to solve several problems so it could successfully complete the course and return to the starting point safely. Jackie’s group not only completed the course, it came in first in record time.

“Cadet Otis, how did you accomplish this task?” asked her superior.


“Sir, I used my OM skills. Sir, that’s Odyssey of the Mind skills.”

The commander in charge boomed back, “I know what OM is. I was at the World Finals in Akron, Ohio!”

Note that Jackie’s sister, **Jamiee Otis**, a participant in the 1994 OM World Finals, is following Jackie’s footsteps at the Academy. Her squadron placed first in overall ranking of the Basic Cadet Training, Summer 1994. 

Briefly Speaking

The Board of Directors met on June 5, 1994, at which time, the minutes of the May 8, 1994, meeting were approved. Highlights of the May meeting follow:

- Maureen Donovan presented the treasurer’s report. This included the 1994 membership rebate summary. These rebates are given annually to associations.
- The membership report was reviewed. A total of 12,022 memberships were reported as of May 3, 1994.
- The OM Employee Handbook was presented and approved. Job descriptions were also accepted as presented.
- The Scholarship Committee reported that a letter was sent inviting all Fortune 500 Companies to participate in the OM Scholarship Program. Another letter invited all associations to participate as well. 

The Sportsmanship Address

by Joy Henshaw & Jason Hooper, Kentucky OM

Zero score and a few years ago Sam Micklus brought forth in this great country, a new idea, conceived in creativity, and dedicated to the proposition that all students are good sports.

Now we are engaged in a time of competition, testing whether our team or any team so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met in the location of this great competition. We have come to compete in a portion of this competition as good sports like those who have competed here before us so that the competition can prosper. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we cannot get outside assistance—we cannot go over the cost limit—we cannot show bad sportsman-

ship—at this competition. The good sports who have competed here have struggled far more than our minds can conceive. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget the impact OM has had on us. It is for us the team, rather, to be dedicated to complete the unfinished work without outside assistance. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the task remaining before us—that these teams understand increased sportsmanship for which they gave their last ounce of creativity—that we highly resolve that we did not compete in vain—that this competition, under OMER, shall have a new birth of sportsmanship—and this sportsmanship of the teams, by the teams, and for the teams, shall not perish from OM.

COACHES' CORNER

POETRY CORNER

UNTITLED

by Kathy McCauliff, Coach
McBain Rural Agr'l School, MI

I know there's a reason
That I am here.
Why do I coach OM
Year after year?

Perhaps it is those practices
Hour after hour.
Cracking my whip
So my team members cower.

We meet after school
And Saturdays too.
No time for life,
I haven't a clue.

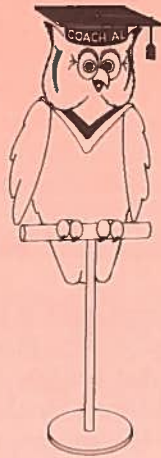
But then again,
It might be my team.
Talking and laughing,
There's a steady stream.

And, of course,
There's always our snacks;
Can't work without eating,
Chips, cookies and cracker jacks.

I hate to admit it,
But I know it's true.
Without OM to coach,
I'd have little to do.

The words I live by,
When they chat and roam:
"If you don't get to work,
You can all go home."

There are words more important
This quote is a gem:
*If you imagine new things,
You will surely achieve them*



I MUST BE CRAZY

by Chris Chennault, OM Coach
Mukilteo, WA

I face school each fall with a grin,
"You want me to coach you again?"
What a very short summer it's been."
That's the life of an OM coach.

With purse bulging from candy and
snacks
And the letters "OM" on my back,
My one aim is to keep them on track;
For I'm an OM coach.

I've got seating for eight in my van.
I'm reporter and booster and fan.
There's no one more versatile than
Me, the OM coach.

A stopwatch hangs 'round my neck.
Our double garage is a wreck!
And dinner is late? What the heck—
Do you know I am an OM coach?

For years my life's been in a whirl
Of sets, costumes, props, boys and
girls.
Wouldn't trade it all for the world—
I'm glad I am an OM coach.

OM, A Coach's Perspective

by Steve Grundy, OM Coach
Gwinett Schools, Lawrenceville, GA

Who *wouldn't* want to be an OM coach? I can't imagine why anyone would turn down the prospect of seven additional children (in an already overcrowded house) once a week—even two or three times or more as March 26 draws near! Just think of the excuses you can use for having a messy garage or basement. "Oh, that's what the OM team is working on," or "I am saving that for OM." If you are not a coach, you couldn't say that! I've collected so much "trash" and recyclables that I am starting to get calls for weekly trash pickup! Being an OM coach can really satisfy that "scrounging" desire.

OM rules set a limit for the amount of dollars a team can spend on its presentation. That's really a good rule since it puts most everyone on equal footing. However, the dollar amount doesn't take into account the numerous pairs of latex-spattered blue jeans or the cost of pressure washing the garage floor!

Remember the *Wide World of Sports* "Thrill of Victory and the Agony of Defeat?" Being an OM coach lets you experience both of those. No, I am not referring to winning at competition. (Although that would be fun!) The thrill of victory is similar to landing that really big fish. The thrill isn't in the prize, but in the battle. I know you are saying, "What's the connection?" Well, have you ever tried to drag an idea out of a fourth grader? That is a very long, protracted battle and the victory is finally the "Eureka" moment. Of course, the agony of defeat covers many areas: structures that don't hold their own weight, props that won't stay together and teammates bickering amongst themselves. But never fear, the coach is here with those reassuring, well-rehearsed words, "Can you think of another way to do that?"

Think of an OM coach as a combination rocket scientist, UN negotiator and taxi driver. The fruits of your labor aren't always appreciated, some don't want to hear what you say, and the tips are few and far between! However, when the kids come up with the novel ideas and then turn their group from seven individuals into one sync unit, you feel really great. Your heart beats faster, you get that lump in your throat; just like that for your own child. They *are* your children and will continue to have some attachment even after competition.

We aren't coaches because we like to go to competition or win awards; it's for the special feeling we get when those seven little minds begin working together and become a problem-solving super machine!

What will I say this year when my school director asks me to be an OM coach? "Um, um, I can't think of anything," or maybe "I forgot" or how about "What was the question?" So Mrs. Slater, will I be a coach this year? NO WAY. . . Just kidding! We'll see what this year brings, and be spontaneous!!!

More from the Coaches' Corner

by Susan Shetter, Arizona OM

Well, I have learned a few things about Outside Assistance in the past five years: what it is and what it isn't. I have learned that it is not outside assistance to say firmly, "The tournament is just six weeks away. Don't waste your time coming into my house every weekend and eating my food if you are not serious about working." Sometimes we all need a kick in the pants.

I have learned that a super-looking prop or a costume does not necessarily denote outside assistance.

(continued on page 12)

Procedures for Scientific Safari

Problem #1 (Divisions I, II, III and IV)

by Wayne R. Kehrl, International Problem Captain

Approximately 15 minutes before the team's scheduled competition time, a Staging Area Judge meets all team members and the coaches, and directs them with their vehicle, trailer, props and membership sign to the staging area. The



team presents all of its forms, including the Outside Assistance Form, two (three at World Finals) Style Forms, the Cost Form and any problem clarifications. The Staging Area Judge inspects the membership sign. The team is then asked to review the vehicle and the trailer with the judge who will check the two power types. The judge will check for potential floor damage and safety hazards. The team will identify the six animals to be tagged, the six animals to be picked up, the animal to be rescued, the new species and the two poachers. Also, the Staging Area Judge will ask the team to place the animals and poachers that are not portrayed by team members in the performance area on specific markings. The vehicle and optionally the trailer will be placed by the team in the CAMP. The Staging Area Judge will explain the procedure for picking up the long-term raw score and penalties. The team members are usually given an opportunity to ask questions. The Staging Area Judge will dismiss the non-performing team members and the coaches, who may sit in designated chairs, if provided. After this, no one may assist the five long-term team members in any way until the presentation is completed. The team is introduced to the Timekeeper, who introduces the team to the audience.

When the Timekeeper says, "Begin," time begins and the team removes everything from the staging area and proceeds to the problem solution, including setup and Style.

The team will attempt the five tasks, one at a time in any order. Style may occur before, during and after the tasks. Scoring of the long-term solution includes creativity of the safari vehicle's system, creativity of the theme, towing the trailer while completing a task, and completing the five tasks. In addition, Division I will be scored on the creativity of the new animal species and the method of capturing animals. The other divisions will be scored on the type of power times the level of difficulty for tasks 1 and 2.

This is a linguistic problem. At the end of 8 minutes, or before if the team notifies the judges, the competition ends. Usually the judges will then meet with ALL team members to discuss their solution. It is the team's responsibility to bring materials to clean up any mess in order to leave the competition area clean and dry for the next team. The team and any assistants should clear the area quickly.

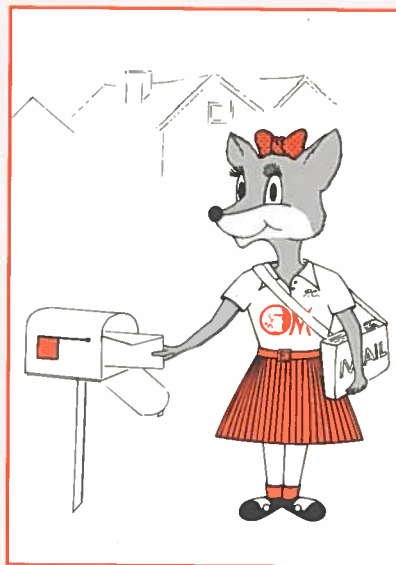
Unless otherwise indicated, the Head Judge reviews with the coach or the Division III/IV team captain the team's long-term raw score and penalties, but not Style, after they are compiled. The final score will be produced by the score room. The final score will be the percentaged long-term, less penalty points, plus percentaged Style, plus percentaged spontaneous.

Procedures for The Mail Must Go Through

Problem #2 (Divisions II and III)

by Alice McRae, International Problem Captain

At some tournaments a pre-staging area may be designated outside the performance room. Approximately 15 minutes before the scheduled time, the team is called by the Staging Area Judge. All team members and the coach will proceed to the designated pre-staging area with all problem solutions, props, background scenery, membership sign, and any team-provided equipment. The team will present two copies of its Style Form, a Cost Form, Outside Assistance Form, Problem Clarifications (if any), and its membership sign. The Staging Area Judge will check for clarity, pass the paperwork on to the rest of the judging team, then check measurements of letters and packages, if warranted, and answer any team questions. The Staging Area Judge will also check for potential floor damage and safety hazards.



When the Staging Area Judge has completed his/her responsibilities and answered all team questions, the team and coach will be given 3 minutes to clear the pre-staging area, if used, and proceed to the staging area adjacent to the competition area. Anyone may assist in this movement.

At this time a judge, in most cases the Timekeeper, will give any final explanation about the competition area, answer any additional questions, and then ask the non-performing team members and coach to leave the staging area. They may sit in their designated seats, if provided. After this, no one may assist the five performing long-term team members in any way until the presentation is completed. The Staging Area Judge will explain the procedure for obtaining the long-term raw score.

The Timekeeper will introduce the team to the audience. When the Timekeeper says, "Begin," time begins and the team moves everything to the competition area. The team then has 9 minutes for setup, Style, and the problem solution. If no pre-staging area is used, the team must clear the staging area within 3 minutes after time begins.

The competition site will be set up as in Figure B in the problem. All lines will be taped and all areas labeled as in the Figure B diagram. In addition, 2 x 4s (1.5" x 3.5") will be taped to the floor as in Figure B.

At the end of 9 minutes, the Timekeeper will call, "Time" and the team must stop. When time is called, or before, if the team indicates completion of its presentation, the judges will meet with ALL team members to discuss their solution, ask questions or for demonstrations, then indicate to the team to quickly remove its solution. It is the team's responsibility to bring materials to clean up any mess in order to leave the area clean and dry for the next team.

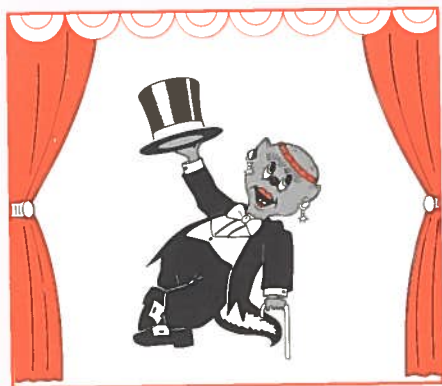
Unless otherwise indicated, the Head Judge reviews with the coach or Division III team captain the team's long-term raw score, including penalties but not Style, as soon as it is compiled.

(continued on next page)

Procedures for Vaudeville

Problem #3 (Divisions I, II, III and IV)

by Rita Sleeman, International Problem Captain



At some tournaments a pre-staging area may be designated outside the performance room. When the team is called by the Staging Area Judge, all team members and the coach will proceed to the designated pre-staging area with all items needed for the performance inside two suit-

cases or one trunk that meets the specifications indicated in B. Limitations, no. 13. Items exempt from being in the container(s) include street clothes, makeup and footwear worn by the team members, and commercially produced musical instrument(s). The team will present two copies of its Style Form, a Cost Form, an Outside Assistance Form, problem clarification(s), if any, and two copies of a list on one side of an 8 1/2" x 11" paper, identifying the order of acts, the act scored in D.6 and a one-sentence description of the commercial.

When the Staging Area Judge has completed his/her responsibilities and answered all team questions, the team and coach will be given 3 minutes to clear the pre-staging area and proceed to the staging area adjacent to the 7' x 10' performance area. Anyone may assist in this movement.

At this time a judge, in most cases the Timekeeper, will give a final explanation about the performance area, answer any additional questions and then ask the non-performing team members and coach to leave the staging area and sit in their designated seats, if provided by the Tournament Director. After this, no one may assist the five performing long-term team members in any way until the presentation is completed.

At the Timekeeper's signal, the 8-minute time limit will begin and the team will proceed with its setup, Style and long-term presentation. Plugging in an extension cord and, if possible at the facility, turning lights on and off are part of the time limit. If no pre-staging area is used, after the time begins the team must clear the staging area within 3 minutes.

The team should be prepared to indicate to the judge when its performance is finished. If the team requires more than 8 minutes, judges will assess a penalty; however, time will not be called. The Timekeeper's time is the official time and no other time will be considered.

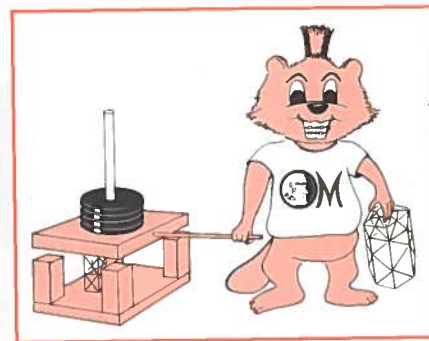
At the conclusion of the performance, the judges may look at the containers, membership sign and any other items used by the team and ask the team questions about its solution. The judges will tell the team members when they may move out of the presentation area. The team must clean up any remaining debris and remove all its items from the competition site in a timely manner.

Unless otherwise indicated, the Head Judge reviews with the coach or Division III/IV team captain the team's long-term raw score, including penalties but not Style, as soon as it is compiled. The coach should inquire when and where this review takes place.

Procedures for A New Twist

Problem #4 (Divisions I, II, III and IV)

by Dan Semenza, International Problem Captain



Prior to the scheduled time to compete, one or more team members will bring their structure to the weigh-in site. A Weigh-In Judge will weigh the structure, make appropriate measurements for thickness of wood, and check for artificial strengthening. Penalties will be noted

at this time. If appropriate, the team may make corrections at this time. After filling out the weigh-in sheet, the Weigh-In Judge may tag and store the structure until approximately 20 minutes prior to the scheduled time of competition. If structures are stored, only team member(s) can pick up the structure and carry it to the testing site. The coach and remaining team members will report to the test site 15 minutes before scheduled time with the props, membership sign, and anything else needed for the long-term solution.

At the staging area, the Staging Area Judge will remove the weigh-in checklist and direct the team to take the structure from the container. The Cost Form, Outside Assistance Form, and team clarifications will be collected and sent to the scoring table. Two Style Forms (three at World Finals) go to the Style Judges. They are informed whether Style will continue after the structure is crushed. The coach and all seven team members should be present in the staging area while the judge goes through a list of procedures and answers questions they may have. The props will be checked for possible safety hazards and to see if they may cause damage to the site. The team is reminded that they have 3 minutes to clear the staging area of all items after time begins. The coach is told where the score may be obtained after the long-term solution. After this is completed, the coach and non-performing team members will be directed to leave the staging area and sit in designated seating, if provided. They may not assist in any way from this point on. 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. When all is ready, the Staging Area Judge will direct the team's attention to the Timekeeper. After the Timekeeper introduces the team to the audience and says, "Begin," the team will have 8 minutes for site setup, Style presentation, and weight placement.

In Division I, an adult may assist in the placement of weights of 25 pounds or more. At least one team member must be physically involved in the placement of these weights. In Division II an adult may assist with the placement of 45-pound weights only.

The only people allowed inside the testing area during the competition are the five team members and the judges. In Divisions I and II the adult assistant may also be present. Style may take place before, during, and after the structure breaks.

Weight placement will end if the weight stack COMES TO REST against the safety pipe; Style may continue. COMPETITION will end when (1) Style has been completed and the structure has broken, or (2) the 8-minute time limit has expired. All wood from the broken structure must be placed in a paper bag and sealed. The team must clean up the testing site. The judges will meet with the coach and all team members to discuss the solution to the problem. If a structure is to be tested for artificial strengthening or any other potential violations, it should be

(continued on next page)

returned to the weigh-in site. Penalty points may be assessed at this time. Unless otherwise indicated, the Head Judge will present to the coach the long-term scoresheet and review penalties, if any. The coach then has 30 minutes to question any **technical** aspect of the long-term score.

Procedures for Time Traveler

Problem #5 (Divisions I, and II)

by Marietta Kehler, International Problem Captain



Approximately 15 minutes before the scheduled competition time, the Staging Area Judge will meet all team members and the coach in the staging area or pre-staging area, if one is used, to review all pre-competition requirements. At this time, team members will bring their props, background scenery, membership sign, and time machine, and present their paperwork. This includes the Cost Form, Outside Assistance Form, two copies of the Style Form, problem clarifications (if any), two copies of a list identifying the team-created task, the time-traveler to be scored, the sequence of how the journeys through time will be presented, and an explanation of the effect of moving through time. The Staging Area Judge will answer any team questions and will identify the Head Judge to the coach so they can meet for scores at a designated time after the team's performance.

The final staging area is the place that will be the team's designated starting point for its timed performance. Adults may assist the team in carrying equipment to this area, which will be adjacent to the performance area. However, after props, etc. are placed in the final staging area, no one may assist the five performing long-term team members in any way until the performance is completed. Each team will have 3 minutes to clear the pre-competition area that the next team will occupy during the competing team's performance. If this is a pre-staging area that is to be vacated before movement to a staging area, the 3 minutes are in addition to the 8-minute presentation time. If this is a staging area that the team is to vacate only after time begins, the 3 minutes are part of the team's 8-minute presentation time. When the team has assembled itself in the staging area, the Timekeeper will introduce the team to the audience and will give the signal to begin after requesting silence from the audience. The team then moves its props for its timed performance without adult assistance.

If the team chooses to use its own panels, either in place of or with the Tournament Director's panels, it must move them during its 8 minutes of competition. World Finals competition is the only level at which the Tournament Director will provide optional panels, which will be on a pre-taped spot at the rear of the performance area. It will be the team's responsibility to complete the problem within the 8-minute time limit. Judges will not call time, but an Overtime penalty will be assessed if the team has taken more than 8 minutes. At World Finals competition, the team must leave the panels in their original position on the designated tape.

At the end of 8 minutes, or before if the team indicates completion of its presentation, the judges will meet with the entire

team to discuss its solution, ask questions or request demonstrations, then instruct the team to quickly remove its solution. It is the team's responsibility to bring materials to clean up any mess in order to leave the area clean and dry for the next team. Adults may assist in this clean up.

After the team's competition, the coach should inquire of the Head Judge when to check back for the team's long-term raw scores and penalties. The Head Judge will identify the specific area and time to meet.

Procedures for Spontaneous Problems

by Joy Kurtz, International Problem Captain

Before Competition

All team members, accompanied by one adult (usually the coach), report 10 to 15 minutes before scheduled competition time to the Spontaneous Holding Room, if one is being used. If the competition is not using a holding room, the team members should report to the spontaneous room 10 minutes before the scheduled time. **Do not knock** on the door or enter the room.

Wait quietly!

When the team is called, **all** team members may go to the Spontaneous Problem Room. Upon entering the Spontaneous Problem Room, a judge will tell the team members whether the problem is verbal, hands-on or a combination (verbal hands-on). The team members will be given one minute to decide which five team members will participate. (If there are only five, then all must participate.) The non-participating team members may stay in special seats set aside for them in the room. If they choose to stay, they must remain quiet and serve as observers only. Any interference from the non-participating team members will be penalized as follows:

Minor Infraction = -5 points (from raw spontaneous score) This will be given for inadvertent interference that does little or nothing to actually help the team. (This penalty may be given more than once.)

Intermediate Infraction = -15 points (from raw spontaneous score) This will be given one or more times for inadvertent interference that helps the team or one time for one instance of deliberate interference. If deliberate interference substantially helps the team or occurs more than once, a major penalty will be assessed in addition to this penalty.

Major Infraction = -35 points (from raw spontaneous score) or a spontaneous score of 0 (cannot fall below 0) This will be given for deliberate and repeated interference or for obvious help. (This penalty may be given more than once.)

These are all at the discretion of the judges.

If a coach does not choose to send all team members to spontaneous (either to the holding room or to the problem room), it is perfectly acceptable. There will be NO PENALTY for not sending more than five team members. However, if a team has only five or fewer team members, all must report.

REMINDER: To avoid congestion, only one adult may accompany the team members to the holding room.

During Competition

Each problem states the rules for that problem. Team members must listen carefully to the judge reading the problem. In a hands-on problem, if the judges feel that the team misunderstood the problem, they will voluntarily provide information to attempt to clarify the problem. Once time begins, it may not be stopped.

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Coaches' Corner (continued from page 8)

I have learned that it's okay to ask lots of open-ended questions that help your team members think creatively, but it's not okay to say, "I have a great idea. Can anyone guess what it is?"

Every year, around this time, the coach I was five years ago has a conversation with the coach I am now. It goes something like this:

Q: Just what is Outside Assistance?

A: The Outside Assistance Form that you will be required to complete references that no one should help the team get the idea for the solution or help with the actual development and construction of the solution. But that doesn't mean you should not lead brainstorming sessions and ask open-ended questions. You should. If your problem is to create a musical instrument, for example, you might ask members to list things that make noise. Then ask them if these ideas can be combined to make a musical instrument.

Q: Can I teach my team a special skill?

A: Yes. The general rule is: *If, with good research, the team members can get the information from a book, they may also get information from a person.* The resources used may NOT solve the problem for the team, but merely offer insight or teach skills that can be used to solve the problem. If a good book on stage craft will instruct your team members on how to build flats, you can too. But remember, you cannot give them the idea to build flats and you cannot build them. Try asking your team members to think of all the different ways to make background scenery.

Q: Do you ever get tired of talking to yourself?

A: Yes. Help me out here. I know that in the next *OM Newsletter* the editors would like to feature additional tips/stories from all you new and veteran coaches reading this column. Then we could talk to each other!



Problem Procedures (continued from page 11)

During a verbal or verbal hands-on problem the following terms will be used by the judges: (1) If students repeat an answer that was already given, the judge will say, "Duplicate, give another response." (2) If an answer is inappropriate or doesn't make sense to the judge, the judge will say, "Inappropriate, clarify or give another response." (3) If students can't be heard, or mumble, or can't be understood, the judge will say, "Unclear, say it again."

If the problem is hands-on, unless the problem specifically states you may, a taped or marked course **may not** be altered.

Timing devices that beep or make a sound signifying an elapse of time may **not** be brought into the competition room.

REMINDER: If the problem is verbal or verbal hands-on and the turning cards procedure is used, the team member responding MAY NOT turn the card until he/she finishes responding. The judges will stop any team member who does so and make him/her repeat his/her answer. Repeated offenses may result in an Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalty.

After Competition

The team is to leave quickly and quietly. Team members are not permitted to discuss the problem with anyone, not even their coach, until all teams compete. Revealing the problem can cause the team to be penalized. Remember—all teams in a problem and a division receive the same spontaneous problem, thus secrecy is essential!

Concerns that can be expressed only by revealing the spontaneous problem should be addressed to the problem captain by one of the spontaneous team members. All other spontaneous problem concerns (generally procedural) should be addressed by the coach to the problem captain. In the absence of a problem captain, concerns should be addressed to the Tournament Director. Remember—judges' subjective decisions may not be challenged.

