

OPTIMIST BRAIN BOWL PROTEST PROCEDURES

The Brain Bowl committee makes every effort to provide a fair competition and ensure that our Readers are trained to enforce the rules consistently. We require all tournament officials to attend training every year and we adjust the training to address the most common issues from the prior year. We purchase our questions from an outside source, then have them reviewed by several members of the committee to check for clarity and identify potential alternate answers. Despite our best efforts, we are all human and there will occasionally be an issue either with a question or with the Reader's handling of a question. There are two circumstances when a Room Coach might file a protest. ALL intended protests must be declared by the team captain on the scoresheet before the team leaves the competition room or there will be no change of score.

1. **Your team provided an answer that you believe is correct, but it was not accepted.** To ensure consistency across many oral competition rooms, our Readers have NO discretion to accept answers that are not listed in the question packet. We know that our clever competitors will occasionally think of an answer we neglected to include in the packet, and we welcome the Room Coach to submit a protest form to see if the alternate answer is acceptable.
2. **The Reader made a procedural error in the handling of a question and did not provide the remedy required by the competition rules. Please note that not all procedural errors require a remedy.** Procedural errors should be brought to the Reader's attention immediately after the completion of the question. When a remedy is required, the original question will be replaced by one of the alternate questions for the round and BOTH teams will have equal opportunity to buzz in for the new question. Alternate questions will be used in order beginning with question A1 and generally will not be the same topic as the voided question. Dissatisfaction with the outcome of the alternate question is NOT a reason to protest and will not result in a score change. An uncorrected procedural error that resulted in points being awarded unfairly may be protested and may result in the points being deducted from the final score (negative protest).

Historically, less than half of our teams ever need to file a protest, very few teams file more than one protest, and only a small fraction of all protests result in a score change. Please keep the following things in mind if you need to protest:

1. Every Room Coach should have a Protest Form on hand so it can be filled out before the round ends while the events are fresh in mind (play will not stop). DO fill out all information on the table and above the table. DO write legibly. DO NOT repeat information from the table in your additional details -- use that space to explain WHY you believe your answer was right or why you believe there was an uncorrected procedural error.
2. Take the Protest Form to the Protest Room immediately after the end of the affected morning round and before the end of the following round. Delayed protests will not be considered.
3. The Room Coach is the ONLY person authorized to make a protest. DO NOT bring team members or multiple adults to the Protest Room to argue your case. Be prepared to explain the issue in one or two minutes. Be respectful. DO NOT monopolize the Protest Officials' time if other Room Coaches are waiting.
4. The Protest Officials will not give an immediate decision. The Room Coach may stop by the Protest Room after a later round to learn the outcome of the protest. All decisions by the Protest Room are final. Scores that were changed by a successful protest will be indicated by a speech bubble icon on the posted results as well as in the Brain Bowl database.
5. Afternoon rounds must end with a winner and protests will only be considered if they could affect the outcome of the round. Protest Officials will come to the competition room if needed and all protests must be decided before the teams leave the room.
6. Any comments about the performance of a Reader – good or bad – should be put on the Room Coach Evaluation, not the Protest Form. If you believe a Reader is not following the competition rules, please send an adult member of the audience to the Protest Room during the round to request assistance from a tournament official.
7. Aggressive or unsportsmanlike behavior by team members, coaches, or spectators – including bringing a group of people to the Protest Room to argue with Protest Officials -- may result in the team's disqualification. Frivolous and repeated protests fishing for additional points will not be entertained and may result in a team being ineligible for the Championship.