Canadian Junior National Debating Championships
The Bracketing System

The pairings for the rounds in "Canadian National Debate Format" will be created using a "bracketing system" which is used extensively in university style debating tournaments. It is one in which teams debate other teams with the same win-loss record. The purpose of bracketing is to ensure that teams need to beat the best teams to get to the top of the standings, as opposed to being successful as a result of random luck. Win-loss record is used as the primary criteria for determining the standings, and total team points are the secondary criteria.

In a tournament using bracketing, the first round is randomly paired (but in this case it will be the first two rounds as there is a prepared topic). Then, for the second round teams that have a 1-0 win-loss record debate each other. The top 1-0 team (on total team points) will debate the bottom 1-0 team, etc. All the teams that are 1-0 are said to be in the 1-0 bracket. Then the teams in the 0-1 bracket are paired with the top team facing the bottom team, and so forth.

After the second round, there will be some teams in a 2-0, a 1-1 and an 0-2 bracket, and they are paired accordingly. This system is followed through the entire tournament. Obviously, all results from a particular round need to determined and standings produced after each round before proceeding to the next round. When the pairings for each round are announced, teams are not told what bracket they are in. It is possible, and does happens somewhat frequently, that two teams will debate against each other more than once.

In theory, the system is easy to implement, however, there will be three things that can complicate the pairings.

1. Proposition / Opposition Split
Each team will debate once as Proposition and once as Opposition in the prepared rounds. For the remaining impromptu rounds, an attempt is made is to even out the number of times that teams get each side, but it cannot be guaranteed that you debate each side an equal number of times. There are four impromptu rounds, and while most teams should get two rounds on each side, the only guarantee is that you will debate at least once on each side. **You need to keep this in mind, as you need to ensure that each speaker debates in all four positions in the six CNDF rounds.**

2. Team Protection
It is possible that two teams from the same province or even school will debate each other. We will, however, guarantee that teams from the same province will not debate each other in the two prepared rounds.

3. Odd Number of teams in a bracket
When there are an odd number of teams in a bracket, it becomes impossible to match the top team vs. bottom, etc. What will happen is that one team in the bracket with an odd number of teams will debate a team in the bracket below. Usually one takes the middle of the bracket to "pull up", and then re-seeds based on speaker points.

DISCLAIMER: No amount of rules written down on paper can anticipate every scenario. There comes a time when some discretion is needed to ensure proper match-ups, especially with a small tournament. Such decisions are made by the tournament tabs director.

At the end of the tournament only, in the unlikely case of a tie in speaker points as well as win-loss records, the following criteria are used to break the ties:
- W/L against team(s) tied with, if any
- points against team(s) tied with, if any
- the two prepared rounds only, using the same above criteria in order
- a coin toss