

For the upcoming 2014 OPS Challenge Laboratory Event, we reviewed all 2013 competition penalties as well as feedback from individual teams in an effort to improve and provide better transparency for the upcoming competition. The items listed below were the most common and widespread of the errors encountered by the teams. We hope that providing this information will enhance your overall skills and improve the quality of the event.

If after reviewing the information posted here, you still have questions or concerns, please avail yourself of the option to post questions on the RMWEA web page. Please note, in an effort to be completely fair to all teams, we will not respond to direct emails or calls. All questions must be posted on this site to be answered and seen by all competitors.

Video Recordings

It is the policy of Operations Challenge to not use video recordings as a response to protests of assessed penalties

Proper use of Pipets

The 6 ml volumetric pipets have two markings: TC (To contain), and TD (To deliver). Please note that the upper line (TD) is the correct line and will be enforced during the 2014 competition.

Response to Written Protests

There will be a maximum time period of 10 minutes for any exchange/discussions with the Laboratory Coordinator regarding resolution to written protests.

Raw Times/Scores

There will be a lead judge at each table who will be responsible for discussing team penalties with the TEAM CAPTAIN immediately after the event. The maximum amount of time for discussions with the lead judge will be 3 minutes. If there are any questions or concerns after discussions with the lead judge, this judge will discuss with the Coordinator.

Scoring

None of the table judges has access to any penalty times. Penalties are assessed through random computer selection prior to the competition, and entered into a spreadsheet by our scorekeepers immediately prior to the competition. No teams, judges, or operational personnel have access to this data prior to or during the competition with the exception of the official score keepers.

Scoring/penalties are only available after judges turn in the scores and they are entered into the spreadsheet. Values are changed yearly so as to not duplicate penalty scoring.

Rinsing Glassware

ALL surface areas must be rinsed thoroughly. That includes pipets, electrodes, beakers, BOD bottles and graduated cylinders.

Blot Dry

This year we will be enforcing BLOT dry for pH electrode. The entire surface must be dried, but it must be blotted, NOT WIPED.

Markers/Pens

Each table will have TWO Markers and TWO Pens. Teams will be allowed to bring additional markers/pens for their teams to use. That is their discretion. Don't forget to pick them up on your way out.

Team 2 Minute Set-up

In between competing teams, the judges will reset tables to maintain consistency in quantity, location and condition of equipment supplies, etc. During the 2 minute set-up, teams are responsible for verifying all items are present, and in working order. Teams must request replacement for "water logged" pipet bulbs, replacements of equipment they think may be missing, in addition to moving the items indicated as "moveable". Any questions asked during setup must be limited to quantity and condition of equipment.

REMINDER: Teams may NOT expel air from pipet bulbs during 2 minute set-up. If this is done, table judges will impose a penalty for each bulb not fully inflated when event begins. ALSO, all tips must be left on squirt bottles. If they are removed, penalties will be assessed!

Numbering and Labeling Bottles

Mistakes relating to the numbering and labeling of bottles has led to many penalties that could have been easily avoided. Refer to the BOD procedure to ensure all bottles are properly labeled. Abbreviations, illegible writing, and other errors will result in penalties.