

# 2020 Virtual World Finals & NC Teams

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Charles Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities* opens with this sweeping paragraph:

*"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair."*

One can't help but compare Dickens' words from over 160 years ago to today's world. Hopeful Spring is here, but so is the despair of a virulent novel coronavirus that is ravishing the entire world.

In the best of times, we would be sending 30+ NCOM teams to Iowa State University at the end of May to participate in the World Finals. But, in these worst of times, physical proximity is not good and will actually cause the further spread of a deadly virus with no vaccine or cure.

*We do not know which of our teams are interested in participating in the 2020 Virtual World Finals and apologize if this message is just one more unnecessary hit to your inbox.*

However, since the Odyssey of the Mind website announced the virtual World Finals just 4 days ago, there are already changes. <https://www.odysseyofthemind.com/virtual-wf-home/> General Clarifications for all teams have been issued as well as ones specific to Problems 3 and 4.

And, changes have already come to NC as well because of the coronavirus spread. Governor Cooper has closed all the schools until May 15th, issued a Stay-At-Home order now in effect until April 30th, and reduced gatherings to no more than 10 people. The peak of the virus outbreak is not expected here in the Tar Heel State until the end of April. Many municipalities are going further than the state government in curtailing social gatherings and opportunities for the virus to spread. Durham has issued no gathering of more than 5 people. That sure knocks out a team hanging out in the backyard to videotape their performance!

NCOM wants to encourage interested teams to participate in World Finals, but remember "stay at home" means **STAY AT HOME**. Look at the procedures again for submitting a video. Many of your videos from regional performances will be fine along with some additional explanation of certain problem elements that can be done without a team gathering together.

Take a look at this solution presented by a Div. 3 team in NY when they were challenged to do a performance of the Primary Problem - Bug Fashion Show. It was all done on Zoom with each team member socially isolated from the others. The first video is their solution and the 2nd is an explanation from the team members on how they put together their performance each working separately from the other.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZNKsBuotG1g&feature=youtu.be>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0FOAENUPeWE&feature=youtu.be>

Coaches, please listen to your parents' concerns. All of us must help adjust team expectations to this extraordinary time and trying circumstances. We are lucky here since all of our teams were able to demonstrate their creativity and present their solutions at regional tournaments. NC is one of the few states to have that distinction.

Please follow the guidelines set up by Odyssey of the Mind for this virtual World Finals, but most importantly, follow the guidelines of the CDC, NC Health Department, Governor's Office, local municipalities, and your own social conscience during this unprecedented time. We know that continuing social distancing for the next weeks will help flatten the curve and keep more North

Carolinians safe and healthy.

NCOM celebrates your creativity, but also wants this to be "the age of wisdom" and not "the age of foolishness."

Thanks and stay safe,

Marj Moe, NCOM Assn. Director

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