

To our Maine Association of Math Leagues Coaches:

The Maine Association of Math Leagues (MAML) Board has drafted a plan to accommodate the circumstances surrounding COVID-19. Many schools have remote and hybrid students that are unable to gather at the same time in a school setting. Some schools are only allowing extracurricular activities that can be run remotely. For these reasons, MAML will change the typical format, grading, and awards for this year. Each league may choose different options than what MAML is providing. A league may decide that they can meet collectively, or each team at a school. A league can choose different data collection and grading practices. Each league can give their own awards at the end of the season.

Dates: The initial date of October 7 has been moved back a week to October 14. This is to allow all leagues, including Aroostook, to participate, and to give more time for schools and teams to form and practice and to familiarize themselves with the new format. All other dates posted on the MAML website remain the same.

Awards: There will be no awards given by MAML this season. There will be inequity in technology, familiarity with online learning, limited security, and other hindrances to the participants. The current scores and cumulative scores will still be posted on the MAML website, but these are for participants to gauge their success comparatively in a more general manner. The statistical error in these scores negate individual comparisons and awards. This takes pressure off the grading, appeals, and the participants and some of the controversy that could arise in those comparisons. This turns this contest into a more intrinsic process where we value the math and the activity, not the prize. Individual leagues can make their own decisions about local awards.

Format: There will be just 5 individual rounds with no team round. The problem writers and proofreaders are modifying the questions for this year to result in integer answers if possible. Each meet will be held remotely with the coach acting as a proctor in a “live” synchronous learning environment, such as Zoom or Google Meet. All participants will have their video on, so that it allows the proctor to see who is doing the problems and that there are no other resources being used. The coach will have the problems before the meet as a pdf. The meets will typically start at 3:30, with the MAML reps from each league in communication via a Google doc or Meet. The coach will announce to the participants that the round is going to begin. Each round is 13 minutes - adding an extra minute for the transposing of the problems onto paper. The coach will display the problems through screen sharing for 13 minutes. The coach will note the time that the round started, announce when there are 2 min left and when there are 30 sec left. The participants will submit their answers before the 13 minutes expire. There will be a Google Form sent to each coach for the participants to submit their answers. The form will have time stamps for when the answers are submitted. The coach will input the starting time, and then any answers that are given after the 13 minutes will be flagged.

Note: The Google Form is provided, but not the only mechanism allowed for data collection. A league may choose to allow participants to submit answers via scanning or some other method.

Misspellings and grammatical errors have no impact on how correct an answer is. “2sqrt2” is acceptable along with “2 square roots of 2”. However, if they put Sqrt(8), then we would now apply MAML rules to say that this is not a reduced radical. So, all MAML rules apply, but there is interpretive license given for the grader to determine this.

The sheet created from the Google Form has two columns for grading. The first grader determines if the answer typed in is correct and types in the points earned for each question. These are hidden as the second grader goes in and types in the points they observe have been earned. A difference in those scores will be flagged on the spreadsheet and the two graders can collaborate to determine the appropriate score. The coach will then send the sheet to the statistician, Kelley Scott (kelly@maml.net) who will compile and share the scores on the MAML website. Again, a league may collect their scores and post in a different manner.

There will be an optional Practice Meet administered on September 30. This meet will have some problems from a former MAML meet. No scores will be posted anywhere. This is just to find out what issues need to be addressed before the official Meet 1 on October 14.

This pandemic has forced many changes in many environments. We are changing the rules on the fly here, trying to accommodate our mathletes and still provide them an opportunity to challenge themselves mathematically and hopefully have some fun in the process. Thank you for your patience. I welcome your feedback and suggestions. My email is crobbins@maml.net.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'CR', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Carl Robbins
President, Maine Association of Math Leagues