

The California Society for Respiratory Care

SPUTUM BOWL RULES OF COMPETITION

REVISED for 2025

- I. The prime objective of the Sputum Bowl is to stimulate interest in the current knowledge and practices of respiratory care.**
- II. The competitions shall be held in a spirit of professionalism and good sportsmanship. Individuals found to not be in compliance with this guideline may be required to leave the premises and/or be banned from future attendance.**
- III. There are no losers in this contest. All should gain from this experience a greater understanding of respiratory care and themselves.**

IV. Submission of Teams

- A. Each team shall submit a roster of members three weeks prior to the beginning of the CSRC Annual meeting, via the CSRC website.**
- B. All sputum bowl team members must be members in good standing of CSRC.**
- C. A maximum of 8 student teams will be allowed to compete at the state tournament**
Each region will be allocated one student team slot for the tournament. For the remaining two slots, and if a Region does not fill its allotment, the remaining slots will be offered to the teams with the highest average point scores in the regional competitions.

V. Sputum Bowl Team Composition

- A. A team shall consist of at least three and not more than four (4) Respiratory Care students in an entry level program.**
- B. Member Eligibility**
 - 1. Team members (herein considered the team) must be current members in good standing of the CSRC as determined by current CSRC bylaws. Team members must be registered for the annual convention prior to being accepted on the competition roster.**
 - 2. An individual may be a member on only one team entered in the competition.**

VI. Format for Competition

- A. The competition will be held during CSRC sponsored events.
 - 1. Preliminaries will be held prior to the finals.
 - 2. The competition will in a double elimination format.

VII. Moderators

- A. The moderator shall be someone familiar with the terminology of the profession and shall be appointed by the Sputum Bowl Committee Chairman.
- B. The moderator shall have the power and option to accept or reject an answer without asking for a judge's ruling.
- C. The chairman of the Sputum Bowl Committee and moderator shall be responsible for the physical setup of the contest site, the proper functioning of all equipment, questions and all other necessary arrangements to ensure a smoothly run game.
- D. During the playing of the game, the moderator is in charge. He must control the actions of the teams, judges, scorekeeper, timekeeper and audience.
- E. The moderator shall review all questions prior to the competition to determine the limits of acceptable alternate responses to each question and determine sets of questions for use during each round of play.

VIII. Judges

- A. The judges shall be qualified individuals in their respective fields.
- B. Judges may review the individual and team eligibility prior to and during the actual competition to determine if any irregularities exist.
- C. The judges shall not be directly related to team members involved in any individual contest.
- D. The judges impaneled for the competition shall rule on the response to any question when so desired by the moderator and indicate whether they accept or reject a team's answer. All decisions shall be final.

IX. The Competitions

- A. The competitions may consist of two phases, Regional and State competitions. Regional competitions will have separate provisions, (determined by the Regional President), for sections IV A, and IV B.
- B. Preliminaries
 - 1. A game will consist of:
 - a. Two teams of up to three members each competing at a time.
 - b. Eight minutes in length
 - c. The team scoring the most points at the end of eight minutes is the winner of that game.
 - d. A team will be eliminated when losing two games.
 - 2. When a team fails to take their seats within three minutes of being called at the time of their game, they shall forfeit that game.
- C. Finals
 - 1. A game will consist of:
 - a. Two teams in competition
 - b. Twelve minutes in length
 - c. The team scoring the most points at the end of twelve minutes is the winner of that game.
- D. The moderator shall signal the beginning of each game.
- E. The timekeeper shall time the length of play and announce the end of play.
- F. The scorekeeper shall maintain a running score visible to all participants and audience.
- G. The moderator will ask the pre-selected questions. Anyone may answer a toss-up question. The element of “Risk/ Reward” will exist throughout the entire game. If a team buzzes in to answer before the moderator has finished reading the question, the moderator will stop at that point in the question and indicate to that team that they are “At Risk”. The team then has ten (10) seconds to begin an answer. Team members have the liberty to confer during this time period. If the answer is correct, they are “Rewarded” with a point. If the answer is incorrect, a point will be deducted from their score. Then the moderator will turn to the opposing team, re-read the question and give that team ten (10) seconds to begin an answer. If that team is correct, they score a point. If they are incorrect, a point will not be deducted from their score. The moderator will judge the first answer given by any team as to its correctness, and if correct, indicate so to the scorekeeper.

H. A team will never be “At Risk” if they respond to a question after the moderator has finished reading it.

I. If neither team responds to a question within ten seconds after the moderator has completed its reading, the question will be set aside and questioning will continue.

J. Each correct answer to a question will have a value of one point.

K. Bonus/Penalty Phase

There will be a Bonus Phase during the last two minutes of preliminary play and during the last three minutes of Finals play. A team who buzzes in first with a correct answer will receive 2 points (bonus). A team that buzzes in first with an incorrect answer will have 1 point deducted (penalty). IF the first team that buzzes in is incorrect, that team will lose a point and the second team will then receive an opportunity to answer the question. If correct, the second team will earn 1 point. If incorrect, no points will be deducted.

L. If, due to moderator error, a question must be thrown out after Team A has already missed it and before Team B has had a chance at the question, the very next question will be read to Team B which shall have ten seconds to respond within the rules. Any points lost by Team A on the first question (penalty phase) shall stand and Team B shall earn points on the next question based on their correctness. The moderator at all other times shall have the freedom to select questions in the order he/she sees fit and to throw out questions at any time he/she deems necessary.

M. Tie games at the end of regulation play shall be resolved by a sudden death playoff. The first team to score three points shall be declared the winner. There is no bonus phase and Rule IX. K does not apply during such sudden death playoffs.

N. Any question begun prior to the end of regulation play shall be completed in accordance with the above rules if either team has responded prior to the end of play. (Elapsed time to 0:00 as determined by the timekeeper.)

X. Questions

A. Questions used in competition may be of both the traditional oral and visual types. They will be reviewed and selected by the Sputum Bowl Committee prior to competition.

1. The questions will represent the level of didactic and clinical proficiency the respiratory care practitioner is expected to possess.

2. The questions will not be of either the true/false or multiple-choice format.

3. The questions will be referenced to relevant textbooks. Any question qualified in the last five year's competitions will remain available for this year's competition. A list of the main references is included in Appendix A.
4. The following categories of questions will be used in the competition:
 - a. Anatomy and Physiology
 - b. Diagnostics
 - c. Pathology
 - d. Acute Care
 - e. Mechanical Ventilation
 - f. Neonatal / Pediatrics
 - g. Airway Management
 - h. Gas Therapy
 - i. Microbiology
 - j. Pharmacology
 - k. Cardiopulmonary Rehab / Home Care
 - l. Chemistry/Physics
 - m. Humidity / Aerosol
 - n. Management
 - o. History

XI. Challenging the Competition

- A. Team captains are asked to wait at the contest site for two minutes after the completion of their game to learn of any protests relative to that contest.
- B. A team member may submit a protest form, challenging the competition within five minutes after the completion of the game in which the protest is claimed. It is highly encouraged to use discretion when challenging the competition and limit the challenges to games decided by two points or less.
- C. Questions that have been previously ruled on by the judges may not be challenged.
- D. The Review Committee shall consist of:
 1. Scorekeeper
 2. Moderator
 3. Timekeeper
 4. Judges
- E. Review shall consist of:
 1. Team captains stating discrepancy and any or all supporting material or statements (limited to 2 minutes).

2. Any rebuttal from the opposing team captain (limited to 2 minutes).
3. Committee meeting and reviewing all material pertinent to the proceedings.
4. Final decision voted upon and decided by the majority of the Review Committee within one hour of the completion of that round of competition.

G. A team which has won a game in regular play cannot be declared the loser of that game as a result of a protest. Teams, which lose a game in regular play and as a result of the remedy applied to a successful protest would not lose, will play their opponent in a sudden death playoff per the rules contained in IX N. above.

XII. Electronics Systems

- A. The device shall be constructed to provide the following:
 1. Hand switches for each contestant.
 2. Indicator system to show which team has responded first.
 3. Timer mechanism to time responses of 10 seconds for initial response and timer for 10 seconds when the question is given to the opposing team.
 4. Reset device for timekeeper to reset system in preparation for the next question.
- B. Timekeeper shall be the person in control of the device and shall have a thorough working knowledge of the device.
- C. In the case of an electronic malfunction, any Sputum Bowl Committee member or judge shall immediately notify the moderator who will call time. The game clock shall be reset to the time when the malfunction was first noticed. The question in progress shall be thrown out. The moderator shall signal time in and begin with a new question. No points may be awarded on the question thrown out nor may they be deducted if in the penalty phase. Prior to restarting play the moderator shall make certain that all systems are operational and clear.
- D. In keeping with CSRC annual meeting policy, no recording devices of any kind will be permitted during contests.

XIII Student Sputum Bowl Competition

- A. Student Sputum Bowl Team Member Qualification:

1. Student team members must be current members of the CSRC at the time of competition, satisfying the same criteria as defined in rules V. A, B.2 and B.3 above.

2. Student Sputum Bowl team members who win a State Student Sputum Bowl championship will not be eligible to compete in the Student Sputum Bowl competitions in subsequent years. The champions of a State Student Sputum Bowl competition may enter the Practitioner Sputum Bowl competition in the year after their Student championship.
3. Student Sputum Bowl team members may not compete on another team in the same year. In other words, compete on both the Student level and the Practitioner level at the same time.
4. Each Student Sputum Bowl team member must be a current student in a Respiratory Care entry-level educational program, or must have graduated from a Respiratory Care educational program during the current calendar year. This student status must be verified for every team member, and validated by the student's program director or their delegate, on the Student Sputum Bowl roster, which must be submitted to the CSRC at team signup.

APPENDIX A

Reference List

American Association for Respiratory Care. Clinical Practice Guidelines. CPG's published through Jan 2025, available at <http://www.aarc.org>.

Cairo JM, Pilbeam SP. Mosby's Respiratory Care Equipment. 8th edition. Elsevier (Mosby – Saunders) Company. 2010

Desjardins, Terry and Burton, George. Clinical Manifestations and Assessment of Respiratory Disease. 5th edition. Elsevier (Mosby - Saunders) Company. 2011.

Gardenhire, Douglas. Rau's Respiratory Care Pharmacology. 8th edition. Elsevier (Mosby – Saunders) Company. 2012

Hess DR, et al. Respiratory Care Principles and Practice. Jones and Bartlett. 2012.

Kacmarek Robert et al. The Essentials of Respiratory Care. 4th edition. Elsevier (Mosby – Saunders) Company. 2005

Malley WJ. Clinical Blood Gases: Assessment and Intervention. 2nd edition. Elsevier (Mosby – Saunders) Company. 2005.

Oakes DF Oakes' Practitioner's Pocket Guide to Respiratory Care. 7th edition. Health Educator Publications Inc. 2008

Pilbeam Susan. Mechanical Ventilation. 5th edition. Elsevier (Mosby – Saunders) Company 2012.

Respiratory Care. The Official Journal of the American Association for Respiratory Care. January 2008 through March 2025.

Walsh Brian, et al. Perinatal and Pediatric Respiratory Care 3rd edition. Elsevier (Mosby – Saunders) Company. 2010.

Wilkins RL, et al. Clinical Assessment in Respiratory Care. 6th edition. Elsevier (Mosby – Saunders) Company. 2010.

Wilkins RL, Stoller JK. Egan's Fundamentals of Respiratory Care. 9th edition. Elsevier (Mosby – Saunders) Company. 2008.

Motram C, et al. Ruppel's Manual of Pulmonary Function Testing, 11th edition. Elsevier Company, 2018.

Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Management of Asthma, Summary Report 2007.National

Asthma Education and Prevention Program, Expert Panel Report

3.<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/guidelines/asthma/asthsumm.pdf>

Global Strategy for the Diagnosis, Management and Prevention of COPD, Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease (GOLD)
2011.http://www.goldcopd.org/uploads/users/files/GOLD_Report_2011.pdf

Qualified questions from the past 10 years' competitions are allowed to remain in play, even if the reference has been retired from the list above.

APPENDIX B

Question Submission

Question submission shall be via email to the CSRC Sputum Bowl Coordinator and will be formatted using a word processor and saved with an rtf extension. The questions will be typed into a document named with a team designation and the year of competition eg: LLU-1-2018.rtf

Question format example

Category: Anatomy & Physiology

Question: What are the gas exchange units of the placenta called?

Answer: Chorionic Villae, [Intervillous spaces]

Reference: Egan X, p - 156

Question format explanation

Category: list is in section X 4. Of this rule set.

Question: Questions concerning the practice of Respiratory Care and the foundational sciences. Questions should paraphrase statements from one of the references, (Appendix A).

Answer: Short answers or lists are acceptable. [alternate answers are contained in square brackets]

Reference: A short description that includes the main author/organization, edition number and page number.