

HOW TO RUN YOUR OWN HELLENIC HISTORY TOURNAMENT

A GUIDE TO AHEPA DISTRICTS

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Note: The initial part of each chapter describes the tournament as conducted in its original home, the District 7 HHT, also known as the North East HHT. Any differences practiced in the other three regional tournaments are explained following the initial chapter narrative before the next chapter starts.

1. Introduction

The Hellenic History Tournament is a competition for high school students who want to learn about the millennia-long history of the Hellenes (Greek speakers).

According to Joe Keane, Past Chairman of AHEPA's Hellenic Cultural Commission, "the Hellenic History Tournament is the best use of our chapters' education dollars". With HHT, it costs a chapter about \$135 to educate a student in Hellenic history. This is compared to \$1,000 for a typical college scholarship, as a result of which the student is not obligated to learn anything about that subject.

All HHT participants are winners because they all develop a sense of the historical timeline, and they all learn the history of our heritage and our nation's contributions to world civilization. In addition, the members of the first and second place teams each win \$1,000 and \$500 dollars respectively. It costs each chapter about \$400 to sponsor a team of three students, which covers the prizes, a luncheon, and refreshments.

Why should a District decide to run its own Hellenic History Tournament? Here are some potential motivators:

- Execute on our primary mission of promoting Hellenism
 - Ensure our youth learn about their fascinating heritage
 - Demonstrate AHEPA's leadership in this area
- Involve young Hellenes into the AHEPA Family
 - Simple awareness and positive associations
 - New chapters of SoP (e.g. New Haven, CT) and/or MoA
- Cultivate Philhellenes from an early age
 - Typically, 15%-20% of the students do not come from a Hellenic heritage home
 - Good way to reach out to and educate the greater community

- Increase membership by signing up non-member parents into AHEPA Family chapters
- Generate enthusiasm about AHEPA in local communities

2. Overview

Generic Annual schedule

February-March	Announcement
End of June	Registration deadline
Mid November	Competition Day

The annual tournament is initiated in early spring by a mass email to the district chapters and other possible sources of teams in neighboring districts. Each chapter's operations are led by a dedicated HHT Representative. The chapters then publicize the tournament within their communities and settle on the teams they will sponsor. Interested students form their own 3-member teams and invent their team names. After they contact their local AHEPA chapter and receive confirmation that the chapter will sponsor them, they each fill out their personal registration form and mail it, along with a \$25 registration fee, to the tournament chairman by the registration deadline, which is June 30. In return, each contestant receives a copy of "Hellenika, Heritage and History" by T. Peter Limber, the book used as a basis for most of the competition questions. If a student does not require a copy of the book, the registration fee is only \$10. Contestants have the summer to study the book, unencumbered by school homework.

The tournament takes place during a single Saturday in the fall, preferably the Saturday before Thanksgiving. All contestants who physically make it to the tournament receive a certificate of participation. After that, the teams compete in consecutive rounds of simultaneous matches until the winning team is determined.

The AHEPA chapter that sponsors the first-place team receives the Hellenic History Trophy cup and keeps it for a year.

3. Roles

The tournament is officially run by the Hellenic History Tournament Committee whose members are the chapter HHT Representatives. The chairman of the Committee must be appointed by the District Governor. The Chairman has the overall responsibility for the success of the tournament. He needs to be the glue that binds the various tournament aspects together and ensures their smooth functioning. More specifically, he needs to:

1. Construct a budget and get the chapters' agreement
2. Secure an acceptable venue for the tournament
3. Fix the dates for the registration deadline and the tournament day
4. Construct and distribute a registration form for prospective students and collect the completed forms
5. Find ways to get more chapters to sponsor more teams
6. Ensure the students receive their books (send instructions to GreeceInPrint.com)
7. Communicate with the students and their parents via email or phone. Examples of needed communications: Clarifying or completing missing data on registration form, reminding students of the tournament date and venue, sending last minute information related to the weather forecast, etc.
8. Recruit and train volunteers to perform the tasks needed to run the tournament

9. Resolve any issues that come up during the tournament, including during matches between teams.
10. Formally report the financial results of each annual tournament to a gathering of chapter representatives.

The tournament is run by interested volunteers who may or may not be members of the AHEPA Family. Here are the roles that need to be performed:

1. **Publicity Coordinator:** There are three aspects to publicity. First, the recruitment of student teams depends to some degree on community and student awareness. Second, the media must be informed with press releases both before and after the tournament; and monitored to see if/what they publish. Third, the photographer and videographer must be given guidance on what to capture on video, and their work product must be utilized effectively to improve publicity for future tournaments.
2. **Questions Provider:** The questions and answers used in the matches need to be generated based on the Hellenika book by someone who can claim some expertise on the subject of Hellenic history or at least some academic qualifications. He or she will then turn over the generated questions and answers to the IT Support person who will incorporate them into the computer program that runs the matches (Match Guide). Obviously, this material is very confidential and should not be entrusted to anyone other than these two people. Creating the needed set of questions/answers for a tournament is very time consuming and all care must be taken to give the Provider adequate time (months) to complete them by a couple of weeks before the tournament date. They should be guarded with care to avoid making them available for students of future tournaments. **Good News:** By now, the four existing regional tournaments have created an inventory of question sets (1 needed per round to be used in multiple simultaneous matches) that they will be glad to share with any new regional tournament for the next few years.
3. **Coach:** AHEPAns are not necessarily familiar with the high school students in their community. If they are not, they are strongly advised to cultivate relationships with GOYA advisors, Greek school teachers and staff, and other members of the community that are much closer to the students. This is VERY important. Chapters that have not followed this path have not had as much success in fielding teams consistently through the years. These coaches should care enough to help teams prepare and to accompany them to the tournament venue.
4. **Welcome Committee:** The venue must be prepared and manned by local people who are familiar with it. They are responsible for setting up the classrooms; manning the entrance; giving incoming students their name tag and instruction packet; ensuring the public address system works; ordering and serving the morning coffee, lunch and refreshments; and cleaning up afterwards.
5. **IT Support:** This role may require more than one person, depending on his/her skills. There are several broad areas of responsibility: a) prepare the Match Guides for as many rounds as necessary by inserting the questions and answers into the Excel workbook; b) secure the right number of laptops and computer projectors needed for tournament day; testing them to ensure they work together; setting them up in the morning before the students arrive; and dismantling them at the end of the day, making sure no copy of the Match Guide is left on any loaned laptop; c) provide the Scorekeepers with a hardcopy of the questions for each match so they can quickly write down a backup version of the proceedings to be used in case the computer fails or there are issues that require a sequence of events other than that built into the computer; and d) feed the results of each round into a computer and determine the competing teams for each match in the following round. The Match Guide was developed as an MS Excel workbook and will be available free of charge to any district that asks for it.
6. **Moderator:** Each match is run by an Excel workbook which needs a human being to interact with it by reading the questions to the competing teams and entering their answers. That human is called a Moderator. The most important skill of a moderator is the ability to interact with a computer by using a mouse. Other skills include the ability to concentrate so that the mouse and keyboard actions reflect the

students' choices (no errors), some familiarity with Greek history and Greek names (pronunciation), and the ability to stick to the script and not offer extemporaneous remarks (which may lead to unfairness issues). High school teachers make excellent moderators. Our star moderator for eleven of our twelve annual tournaments has been the Latin teacher at Norwich Free Academy (now retired).

7. **Scorekeeper:** The moderator is backed up manually by a Scorekeeper, whose job it is to write down each question asked, the team involved, the corresponding answer and the associated score. The scorekeeper should also keep an eye on the audience during the match to make sure that they don't communicate the answers to the competing teams. Finally, it is the job of the scorekeeper to bring the hardcopy answer sheet with the score to the IT support person feeding the results into the computer.
8. **Photographer:** Tournament Day needs to be captured in photographs to be distributed to the media as part of a post-event press release. Making the photos available on the internet for the perusal of students, parents, volunteers, and chapters helps keep the level of interest high for the next tournament.
9. **Videographer:** This position should be filled by a volunteer, but in the last several years we have been unable to find one, so we have either skipped the video or hired a videographer to capture and condense the event into a 7-minute promotional video to be used in recruiting chapters and teams in the next tournament.

4. Tournament Mechanics

The only time the teams meet and compete is on a single Saturday in the fall. November is best in order to avoid conflicts with high school sports tournaments or with SAT tests. The day starts at 9:00 am with the members of the Welcome Committee opening the doors and preparing the coffee and donuts for the day. At 10:00 am there is a training session for the moderators and scorekeepers. Simultaneously, as the laptop computers and projectors are brought in, the IT Support person (or persons) makes sure they are properly connected and started up in all the classrooms being used for matches.

The tournament proper starts at 11:30 am with a lunch of pizza and salad for all students and guests. The late start time allows students living as far away as 3 hours by car from the tournament venue to get there on time without having to wake up too early. At 12:00 noon, the students are called to the main stage where they are presented with a certificate of participation and gather for a group photo. The short presentation that follows instructs the students on the tournament rules and informs them where and when the matches will be held. The competition starts at 12:30 pm. Matches occur simultaneously in groups called rounds. To minimize the number of questions necessary for the whole tournament, all matches in the same round use the same set of questions. A round takes about 45 minutes, so, as an example, you need to plan 3 hours for 4 rounds.

To maximize the number of times a team competes before it is eliminated, we have done away with the pure single-elimination bracket (one loss and you're out) and replaced it with a scheme that allows up to 3 matches before any eliminations. If the total number of competing teams is even, each team will compete with three other teams chosen at random in three rounds before the top four teams are chosen for the semifinals and then the final match. To keep within reasonable time limits, if the total number of competing teams is odd, each team will compete with only two other teams chosen at random in three rounds before the top four teams are chosen for the semifinals and then the final match. The tournament brackets for 14 and then for 13 teams would have the structures shown in the next 2 pages.

Teams are denoted as T01, T02, etc. Matches are shown as M01, M02, etc.

ROUNDS 1-3 OBJECTIVE: ACCUMULATE POINTS TO QUALIFY FOR THE SEMIFINALS

To prevent tie-breaking points from favoring closely matched teams, matches in rounds 1-3 should be stopped after the first 24 questions.

<u>Round 1</u>			
<u>Team No.</u>	<u>Team Name</u>	<u>Match No.</u>	<u>Score</u>
T04	Stamford, CT - Mirmidons	M01	Tie
T03	New Haven, CT - Aristotelians		
T12	Rye, NY - Spartans	M02	Tie
T13	Rye, NY - Athena		
T02	Paramus, NJ - Polyxerous	M03	Tie
T08	Providence, RI - Greek Geeks		
T07	Marlborough, MA - St Anargyroi Stars	M04	Tie
T05	Stamford, CT - Sacred Heart Greenwich		
T10	Newport, RI - Team Kertezi	M05	Tie
T06	Marlborough, MA - Denisas		
T11	Newport, RI - Team Manesi	M06	Tie
T09	New Britain, CT - Philomathia		
T14	Bridgeport, CT - Black Rock	M07	Tie
T01	Nashua, NH - Gate City Greeks		

<u>Round 2</u>			
<u>Team No.</u>	<u>Team Name</u>	<u>Match No.</u>	<u>Score</u>
T10	Newport, RI - Team Kertezi	M08	Tie
T08	Providence, RI - Greek Geeks		
T12	Rye, NY - Spartans	M09	Tie
T09	New Britain, CT - Philomathia		
T05	Stamford, CT - Sacred Heart Greenwich	M10	Tie
T03	New Haven, CT - Aristotelians		
T04	Stamford, CT - Mirmidons	M11	Tie
T11	Newport, RI - Team Manesi		
T14	Bridgeport, CT - Black Rock	M12	Tie
T13	Rye, NY - Athena		
T06	Marlborough, MA - Denisas	M13	Tie
T07	Marlborough, MA - St Anargyroi Stars		
T02	Paramus, NJ - Polyxerous	M14	Tie
T01	Nashua, NH - Gate City Greeks		

ROUNDS 4-5: MUST WIN THE MATCH TO QUALIFY FOR THE NEXT ROUND

In case of a tie, tie-breaking questions are necessary

<u>Round 3</u>			
<u>Team No.</u>	<u>Team Name</u>	<u>Match No.</u>	<u>Score</u>
T12	Rye, NY - Spartans	M15	Tie
T03	New Haven, CT - Aristotelians		
T05	Stamford, CT - Sacred Heart Greenwich	M16	Tie
T09	New Britain, CT - Philomathia		
T08	Providence, RI - Greek Geeks	M17	Tie
T06	Marlborough, MA - Denisas		
T10	Newport, RI - Team Kertezi	M18	Tie
T14	Bridgeport, CT - Black Rock		
T07	Marlborough, MA - St Anargyroi Stars	M19	Tie
T13	Rye, NY - Athena		
T02	Paramus, NJ - Polyxerous	M20	Tie
T11	Newport, RI - Team Manesi		
T04	Stamford, CT - Mirmidons	M21	Tie
T01	Nashua, NH - Gate City Greeks		

<u>Round 4</u>			
<u>Team No.</u>	<u>Team Name</u>	<u>Match No.</u>	<u>Score</u>
tbd		M22	Winner
tbd			
tbd		M23	Winner
tbd			

<u>Round 5</u>			
<u>Team No.</u>	<u>Team Name</u>	<u>Match No.</u>	<u>Score</u>
tbd		M24	Winner
tbd			

Depending on the Covid situation, both final teams will be invited to compete in the International HHT at the 2022 AHEPA Family Supreme Convention at Disney's Coronado Springs Hotel in Orlando, FL, on Thursday, July 21.

ROUNDS 1-3 OBJECTIVE: ACCUMULATE POINTS TO QUALIFY FOR THE SEMIFINALS

To prevent tie-breaking points from favoring closely matched teams, matches in rounds 1-3 should be stopped after the first 24 questions.

<u>Round 1</u>			
<u>Team No.</u>	<u>Team Name</u>	<u>Match No.</u>	<u>Score</u>
T04	Stamford, CT - Mirmidons	M01	Tie
T03	New Haven, CT - Aristotelians		
T12	Rye, NY - Spartans	M02	Tie
T13	Rye, NY - Athena		
T02	Paramus, NJ - Polyxerous	M03	Tie
T08	Providence, RI - Greek Geeks		
T07	Marlborough, MA - St Anargyroi Stars	M04	Tie
T05	Stamford, CT - Sacred Heart Greenwich		
T10	Newport, RI - Team Kertezi	M05	Tie
T06	Marlborough, MA - Denisas		
T11	Newport, RI - Team Manesi	M06	Tie
T09	New Britain, CT - Philomathia		
T14	Bridgeport, CT - Black Rock		Bye
T01	Nashua, NH - Gate City Greeks		

<u>Round 2</u>			
<u>Team No.</u>	<u>Team Name</u>	<u>Match No.</u>	<u>Score</u>
T10	Newport, RI - Team Kertezi	M07	Tie
T08	Providence, RI - Greek Geeks		
T12	Rye, NY - Spartans	M08	Tie
T09	New Britain, CT - Philomathia		
T05	Stamford, CT - Sacred Heart Greenwich	M09	Tie
T03	New Haven, CT - Aristotelians		
T04	Stamford, CT - Mirmidons	M10	Tie
T11	Newport, RI - Team Manesi		
T14	Bridgeport, CT - Black Rock		Bye
T13	Rye, NY - Athena		
T06	Marlborough, MA - Denisas	M11	Tie
T07	Marlborough, MA - St Anargyroi Stars		
T02	Paramus, NJ - Polyxerous	M12	Tie
T01	Nashua, NH - Gate City Greeks		

ROUNDS 4-5: MUST WIN THE MATCH TO QUALIFY FOR THE NEXT ROUND

In case of a tie, tie-breaking questions are necessary

<u>Round 3</u>			
<u>Team No.</u>	<u>Team Name</u>	<u>Match No.</u>	<u>Score</u>
T01	Nashua, NH - Gate City Greeks	M13	Tie
T13	Rye, NY - Athena		

<u>Round 4</u>			
<u>Team No.</u>	<u>Team Name</u>	<u>Match No.</u>	<u>Score</u>
tbd		M14	Winner
tbd			
tbd		M15	Winner
tbd			

<u>Round 5</u>			
<u>Team No.</u>	<u>Team Name</u>	<u>Match No.</u>	<u>Score</u>
tbd		M16	Winner
tbd			

Depending on the Covid situation, both final teams will be invited to compete in the International HHT at the 2022 AHEPA Family Supreme Convention at Disney's Coronado Springs Hotel in Orlando, FL, on Thursday, July 21.

This approach keeps the necessary number of rounds to a maximum of 5, the maximum number of questions to 160, and the maximum number of competition hours to 3.75. The number of rooms is a function of the number of teams (teams/2). Also, since sponsorship fees are the main source of funding for the \$4,500 prize money, the sponsorship fee per team is inversely proportional to the number of teams. For planning purposes, these relationships are briefly summarized in the following table:

Teams	Max Rounds	Questions	Hours	Rooms	Sponsorship Fee/Team
2	1	32	0.75	1	2250
3-4	5	160	3.75	1-2	1500-1125
5-8	5	160	3.75	2-4	900-563
9-16	5	160	3.75	4-8	500-281
17-32	5	160	3.75	8-16	265-141

Unless you can use a school, facilities with more than 10 rooms are very difficult to find. This eliminates tournaments with more than 20 teams. On the other hand, chapters cannot easily commit fees totaling \$600 to sponsor a team (\$100 participation fee + \$500 sponsorship fee). So, the practical range of the number of teams is 8-16. This is why a district is needed to run the tournament, as opposed to a single chapter or a small group of chapters, and also, why the Yankee District 7 requires a minimum of 10 teams before the tournament can proceed.

5. Match Details

A match pits two teams against each other. To run a match, you will need the following:

1. A soundproof room large enough for a minimum of 8 people equipped with chairs and a desk
2. A windows laptop computer capable of running MS Excel 2007 or higher (iMacs don't qualify)
3. 32 questions with 4 possible answers each, of which only one is correct (8 ancient, 8 Roman/Byzantine, 8 Ottoman/Modern, and 8 more Modern as reserves for tie breaking)
4. The special HHT MS Excel macro that runs the match (the Match Guide), preloaded with the 32 questions
5. An LCD or DLP projector connected to the computer, and
6. A projection screen or a blank wall
7. A moderator familiar with computer use
8. A scorekeeper to keep a manual record of the score as backup to the computer

During a match, a team selects one of three historical periods: Ancient, Roman/Byzantine ("Middle"), or Ottoman/Modern ("Modern"). Once the period is selected, a question from that period and four multiple choice answers are projected onto a screen from the computer monitor via a projector. Questions are read and answers recorded by the moderator and scorekeeper during the match. There is no penalty for incorrect answers, except that the opposing team can then select from the remaining three answers. The computer keeps a running log of the teams' scores. The visual projection of questions, answers and scores simulates an exciting TV quiz show environment and keeps the audience aware and involved. The team that answers most of the 24 questions correctly is the winner of the match. During rounds 1-3, the objective is to accumulate points to qualify for the

semifinals (round 4). To prevent tie-breaking points from favoring closely matched teams, matches in rounds 1-3 should be stopped after the first 24 questions. During rounds 4-5, the objective is to win the match to qualify for the next round or to win the tournament. If the two teams are tied at the end of the available questions, the tie must be broken, so the computer should be allowed to automatically present two additional tie-breaking questions at a time, until the tie is broken.

At the end of the final match, the three members of the winning team are each awarded a \$1,000 prize and a Hellenic History Trophy. The three second place winners receive \$500 each.

The AHEPA chapter that sponsors the first-place team receives the Hellenic History Trophy cup, gets to inscribe the chapter number and name on it, and keeps the cup for a year, until it has to turn it over to the chapter that sponsors the following year's winners.

6. Financials

There are three kinds of fees that serve as revenue sources:

1. **Registration Fee:** this is a fee per student and is paid for by each student and serves as a token of their commitment to participate. It is sent in with the registration form. If the student requires a Hellenika book, the fee is \$25, otherwise it's only \$10. Any net proceeds from this fee go to subsidize the prizes.
2. **Participation Fee:** this is a fee per chapter and is paid by ALL the chapters in the sponsoring district, regardless of the number of teams they sponsor, plus all the chapters from outside the district that sponsor at least one team. It is a flat \$100 fee meant to support, for the most part, the non-prize expenses of the tournament, such as mailing, copying, lunch, refreshments, videographer, etc.). Any net proceeds from this fee go to subsidize the prizes.
3. **Sponsorship Fee:** this is a fee per team and is paid by the chapters that sponsor at least one team. It goes to pay for the \$4,500 in prizes less any subsidies from the registration and participation fees. Since the total prize amount is fixed at \$4,500 but the number of participating teams varies, the fee per participating team is not known precisely until all the teams have registered. In an ideal situation of 16 participating teams and book and general expenses equal to the registration and participation fees collected (i.e. no subsidies for the prize money), the sponsorship fee would be $\$4,500 / 16 = \281 per team.

In that same ideal situation of 16 participating teams, if a chapter sponsors one team, the total cost to the chapter would be \$100 participation fee + \$281 sponsorship fee = \$381. This is the basis for the \$400 quoted earlier.

Sponsorship means the chapter is willing to pay the \$100 participation fee plus a team sponsorship fee that depends on the total number of teams participating. Any group of interested adults other than an AHEPA chapter, such as a Greek Orthodox community without an AHEPA chapter, or even an ad hoc group of parents, can sponsor a team if they agree to pay the two fees.

The profit and loss statement below shows the actual financial results of our tournament in the fall of 2021.

2021

Registered Teams	13
Competing Teams	12

Book Sales	25
Registration Fees	670
Participation Fees	1,500
Sponsorship Fees	3,562
Total Revenue	5,757

Prizes	4,500
Lunch & Refreshments	513
Hellenika Books	350
Presentation Printing	115
Certificates of Participation	57
Trophies	93
Expenses	5,628

Net	129
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7. Help Available

You can find sample registration forms, official rules, articles and videos of previous tournaments at <http://www.ahepadistrict7.org/>

The authors are willing to go to great lengths to help other districts stage their own tournaments because we share the vision of Joe Keane and John Grossomanides, who said:

“Those of us who were fortunate enough to have attended the event and seen how beautifully it brought our young people together are now charged with the desire to convince others that this is something that must be done throughout the AHEPA domain. Brother Nikas has provided us with this Hellenic History Tournament template. Now we all must ‘Go forth and do likewise’.”

Joe Keane

Past Chairman, AHEPA Educational Foundation

“We think it’s something special. We are going to keep making this thing grow. We hope it becomes a national program: you win the regionals, you go to the nationals, and you become the champion of the whole country. This is just the beginning, with bigger things to come”

Dr. John Grossomanides

Past Supreme President, AHEPA

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