



F Y I

Judging

At The South Florida Regional Science And Engineering Fair

First Round Judging:

First round judging takes place usually on a Tuesday.

Judges from the various schools, universities, and business

in the community are invited to participate. The averaged results of all judges of a project determine the award level that each project will fall into, Honorable Mention, Excellent or Superior. First round judging will be divided into two different judging periods – before and after lunch. The judging criteria used in each judging period may be different, based upon the number of judges, the number of projects, and the time available.

Second Round Judging:

Second round judging takes place all day on day two, usually a Wednesday. Second round judging consists of all projects that were designated a **Superior** in the first round of judging. **All judging scores from the first round are dropped.** A panel of State experts spends the day judging all of the Superior projects based upon the merits of the project as expressed by the board. No students are present. All Superior projects are then ranked by their potential to be successful at State. In the report from the judges, each project has accompanying it comments as to its strengths and weaknesses.

There are thirteen categories of judging in the Fair. BE, BI, BO, CO, etc. The projects in each category are ranked, based upon various criteria, as to their potential to be successful at State. Our Regional fair is only allowed 30 projects to enter into the State Fair. We are allowed only two team projects. Since there are thirteen (13) categories in the Fairs judging, we try to provide the top project from each category -- based upon second round judging -- the opportunity to participate in the State Fair. This may vary based upon the number of projects in each category entered into the regional fair and the number of projects ranked in the first round of judging as Superior. Sometimes we may need to send more of one category than another based upon the above stated parameters.

Regional fair personnel begin at the top of the Second round judging lists for each Division (Junior/Senior) and begin calling students to make arrangements for them to come back down to the Fair's office to participate in the **Final Round of Judging**. If a student called can not or chooses not to participate further, their name is crossed off and the next name on the list is invited to participate. This process continues until all slots for the State Fair are filled. We then try to provide alternates in case a project chosen can not participate for whatever reason. All students for whom an appointment has been set will participate in the State Competition as a representative of South Florida.

Final Round Judging:

Final Round Judging takes place on Thursday evening. The purpose of this judging is to determine the Best in Fair and the Best in each Category of the Fair -- Physical and Biological – for both Junior and Senior Divisions. Students that were invited to participate in State stand before a panel of judges (PhD's within their chosen field). Students are asked questions about their projects. The questions become harder as time goes on until the student does not have the answers to the questions. This tells the judges the depth of each students understanding of their subject and project. The **students** are then ranked as to their ability to respond properly to the questions posed. This ranking of the Final Round Judges is used to determine the top award winners for the Fair.

ISEF: International Science and Engineering Fair

The Top Eight Senior Division Projects – based upon the ranking of the Final Round Judging -- are then invited to participate in an all-expense-paid trip to the International Fair for that year.

Common Misunderstandings:

1. *A score in first round judging qualifies a project for participation at the State level.*
First round judging ONLY determines the level of award (Honorable Mention, Excellent or Superior) for the project and places a project in a pool to be considered for State.
2. *Projects with the highest scores in the first round of judging have an advantage in the consideration for State.*
All scores received in the first round of judging are dropped in the second round of judging. All projects are judged by a panel of judges based upon a projects potential to be successful at State.

Special Area Judging:

Representatives from the District Fair as well as representatives from the military, local businesses and community organizations will also judge projects during the first round of judging. These representatives will wear red “Judge” ribbons identifying them as Special Area Judges. It is their intent to find projects that fit into a specific category or area of interest important to that organization or group. Those projects that are determined to fit these requirements are listed as award winners from Special Area Awards. In the past the South Florida Regional Science and Engineering Fair has awarded over \$30,000.00 in special area awards with the potential of these winners receiving part of nearly \$80,000.00 in additional prizes, scholarships, etc. obtained from further participation in assorted National competitions.

Award Ceremony:

All Special Area Awards as well as category awards and the top awards for the Regional Fair are presented at the annual Award Ceremony which is usually held two weeks following the Regional Fair competition. All recipients should be present to receive their award(s). The Fair does not have the capability to mail out the awards that are not picked up at the ceremony. Special arrangements will need to be made by the individual recipient to be able to obtain the necessary award(s) if they do not attend the ceremony. Therefore it is imperative that a representative be present who can pick up an award.

PLEASE NOTE: All participants who attend the Award Ceremony will check in at the front desk. To expedite the presentation process, only the names of those individuals who are present will be called out. Those individuals who are to pick up an award for another individual must check in at the front desk as well, and provide for them a signed letter giving them the right to receive any and all awards for the individual named. The absent individual’s name will then be marked as present and their name will be called. An individual representing an absent individual will then come up and receive the stated award(s) at the time that the absent student’s name is called.

It is important that all teachers encourage their participating students to attend the award ceremony. All participants in the award ceremony are to be dressed professionally.