

2025 Emcee and Game Announcer Pre-Season Training Call

Recap and Season Notes v2/19

By the Numbers

- 10,000 -- Rookie team starting number
- 10,714 -- highest team number
- 3700+ total teams, incl. 350 Rookies
- # of countries competing: 30
- 69 Regionals, 103 Districts, 12 Dist. CMPs, 1 CMP = 185 events
- Appx. 20,000 matches thru CMP

Please review all Event Materials in the [Resource Library](#) prior to the event (Scripts, Schedules, etc.)

REEFSCAPE NOTES – Emcees

Major 2025 Changes

- Pick side of the field to stand with Prod. Team/camera and Event Mgr., then keep consistent for all Ceremonies and the Alliance Selection.
- Robots start midfield, be careful
- The Barge is low... watch your head, be safe
- You can go outside the field, if there's room and it's clear
- Mid-field under the Barge will be busy during reset: removing robots, placing Cages, setting robots
- Finals Handshake needs to happen in front of the field. Announce in Pick order. Invite teams to come in front of field for "Traditional *FIRST* Handshake before the Finals."
- Awards set-up will be determined by Event Mgr. and PDP based on layout of the arena and production/cameras. Either on one side of the field or in front of the field.

REEFSCAPE NOTES – Emcees and Game Announcers

Major 2025 Changes

- Award script may be printed by either Judge Advisor/Event Mgr. or Scorekeeper
- Rookie Inspiration Award is replaced by Rising All Star Award
- CMP Qualifying Criteria for Regionals has changed: [FRC Blog](#) , [Resource Library](#)
 - A. Regional *FIRST* Impact Award Winner
 - B. Regional Engineering Inspiration Winner
 - C. Winning Alliance: Captain
 - D. Winning Alliance: 1st Pick
 - E. Invited from the Regional Pool (*see Resources at end of document for details)
- No more wildcards

- No longer is there NASA grant funding for the Eng. Inspiration Award winners at US Regionals or District Championship events due to uncertainty around the NASA funding grant to FIRST
- Wi-Fi at events: we now use 6GHz radios for the robots, freeing up some room for scoring table Wi-Fi. There will be a second access point for the FTAs to use this year setup to broadcast a 5GHz Wi-Fi signal. We used this solution at Week 0 with no issues. The Emcee/GA can get the Wi-Fi network name and password from the FTA. *As always, access to this network is restricted to only those who absolutely need it, so do not share the password with others. Please only connect to one device: phone, tablet/iPad, or laptop.*
 - o Wi-Fi NOTE:
This secondary AP is not a required piece of equipment. We aren't working with venues to guarantee that an open 5GHz channel exists for us to use this AP free of interference. The FTA may open up the channel scanning app on their phone, see that the 5GHz WiFi environment is really saturated and opt to not setup the AP to avoid the need to troubleshoot connection issues during the event. We think the likelihood of that scenario is very low. Many venues will have their own WiFi disabled as usual and we anticipate that the majority of FTAs are going to want the WiFi network available to them.

NEW ALLIANCE SELECTION PROCESS

- Now structured and timed with consequences for not being prepared to pick
- Use Alliance Selection script! Pre-Selection segment begins after last Qual. Match score is posted.
- There is an 8 min. window between Quals and Alliance Selection, filled with the Alliance Selection-Playoffs Schedule video which Emcees will introduce using the Alliance Selection script
- During this break the field is cleared of Cages and the Capt. armbands get set
- During Alliance Selection use the script so that communication with the FTA is clear when to start Timer. Work out signal/communication with FTA
- Emcee stays in one spot on the field and the Team Captain come to Emcee to announce picks. The best spot is by the April Tag on the Reef facing the Barge. Webcams will see you there.
- No more ranked 1-8 individual team introductions
- Round 1 pick timer is 45 seconds, Round 2 is 90 seconds
- The Timer has a 5 second countdown clock ticking sfx, and a new buzzer sfx when time is up.
- The 2 and 8 min. Timer countdowns use the existing 30 second warning sound and the normal endgame time expired sound, just like a timeout does.
- 3 team reps on field per team, can include 1 adult if there are 2 students
- FTA runs the pick time Timer and is the authority on "a good faith effort" to pick in time
- Only one student Capt. approaches the Emcee to pick/decline, even in the second selection round
- The FTA will assign someone to assist with directing and ushering the teams on the field to stand by the rails. The field is busy, but if we keep the teams to the rails it's better.
- There is a 2 min. video for Emcee to introduce during the 2 min. break between Selection Round 1 and Round 2
- Alliance 8's Round 2 pick Timer begins after the Emcee announces it using script (Alliance 8 doesn't have to be ready at the end of the 2 minute break)
- Backup teams need to confirm with Lead Queuer
- Drive the Alliance Selection, you're in charge, oh, and use the script!

- Music can play during deliberations as long as the Sound Board operator takes it out during the pick announcements
- Don't belittle, make fun of, fill air with banter, jokes, etc. No more jeopardy music, for example.

REEFSCAPE NOTES - Game Announcer

- Use all proper game terminology to ensure consistency across events– use [Cheat Sheet](#) in [Resource Library](#) and in [gatool](#)
- Print out a Cheat Sheet and bring it to your events, it's also in the gatool.
- One Game Announcer only per match. If more than 1 GA is assigned to the event, rotate shifts- every 10 matches for example.
- During the first team intro announce up to 3 Sponsors, on subsequent intros no Sponsors are announced
- [gatool](#) is an enormous help. Visit teams to get updated team info on practice day.
- Gameplay sightlines are a bit obstructed by a Human Player and the Refs. Stay behind Scoring table. Don't GA from opposite side of the field. Keep sightlines open for the audience.
- DO NOT speculate on fouls (for example: "I think I just saw a foul on...")
- Explain and note Ranking points (more this year) Fouls, replays, etc.
- [Audience Display Screens](#) - will show rankings on preview screens, icons for progress during match, QR Code
- Real time scoring in effect, but there is a Referee consultation/confirmation after match
- Endgame (last 20 seconds of the match) SFX is a sonar ping
- A short animation leads off score display, with winning alliance color revealed as fish color

GENERAL SEASON NOTES – Emcee and Game Announcer

- Review [Emcee Training Presentation](#) and [Game Announcer Training Presentation](#) in the Resource Library
- Emcees set tone for the event, are the face of *FIRST* at the event. GAs are the voice of the event.
- Emcees, GAs, and all volunteers represent *FIRST*. Social media posts/podcasts/streaming personas and your private life are visible to the community.
- As a *FIRST* volunteer, no Influencer names or online presence audience building is allowed. *FIRST* events are not a platform for you; they're about supporting and spotlighting the students and teams.
- Costume/Shirt – only *FIRST* affiliated shirts or Sponsors. No licensed characters. STEAM themed preferred. Nothing provocative. If you have to ask, don't wear it.
- Be very careful speaking around microphones and assume they are ON, especially handhelds.
- Emcees- DO NOT read verbatim from the script. Use notecards to bullet point the script contents.
- Find inclusive words to welcome and address the audience, such as "Hello Cleveland", "Welcome Robot Fans", "Good morning everyone and welcome..." etc. and avoid using "Ladies and Gentlemen".
- Say full season and game names in Ceremonies: "*FIRST* Dive presented by Qualcomm" and "REEFSCAPE presented by Haas"

- During Opening Ceremonies, after introducing a guest speaker, Emcees should be accessible to the Event Mgr. and stand along the rail by the scoring table while the guest is speaking
- National Anthems: at events with 4+ nations, the suggested multi-nation procedure (and what we do at the Championship) is acknowledge all countries attending by having the Emcee announce them, and then say "Please stand, if able, and remove your hat for the national anthem of the host country". It is not expected that all anthems will be played, but the decision is up to the Event Mgr. and PDP (Program Delivery Partner).
- No Emcee Assistants or flag buckets- teams need to bring flags to field, then Emcees hand off to field re-setters to return to teams
- Team flag size limits in effect. *** See rules at end of this document.*
- You need to bring your own device (computer/tablet) to the event to use [gatool](#).
- Team Introductions- DO NOT WAIT for a green stack light to begin introducing teams - introduce teams prior to stack light turning green by working with the FTA to determine timing.
- Introduce teams in proper direction: starting at Red Alliance driver station and moving counterclockwise
- Safety first –be careful on the field.
- Prior to Match Start: Emcee must get “field is ready” thumbs up from the FTA prior to starting match
- Emcees- after introducing the 3rd Blue Alliance team, step off the field and stay by the gate to start the match. This allows the FTA to always know where you are to give the “thumbs up”
- Match Start: “Drivers behind the line, 3, 2, 1, GO!”
- Field reset - aiming for 7 to 8 minute cycles, determined by # of competing teams and schedule by the FTA
- Music- Playlists again this season on DJ laptops at Regionals. Districts will have to download, use FRC Spotify playlists
- WFFA Award– signed shirt at Regl. & District CMP events
- Before the Alliance Selection, CONFIRM RANKING with Ranking report and gatool
- Alliance Selection- place Capt. armbands on the field per Alliance Selection script diagram. Use Alliance Selection script
- The top 2 Backup teams will have Reps field-side during Playoffs.
- Playoff Tournament: Double Elimination format with Upper bracket and Lower bracket. No time-outs allowed.
- Use Playoffs script and video assets to explain Playoff bracket to the audience. Remind teams that Awards will be presented during the Playoffs between Rounds.
- Alliances that use backups can revert to the swapped-out team in a subsequent match. Alliances deliver line-up cards to the Head Ref prior to every match.
- Conduct Handshake before Finals Match 1 (see [Handshake Procedure](#)) in front of field
- Video fillers: during the Playoffs, introduce the video segment using the script.
- Day 2 Awards will be presented between Rounds with the Judges lined up on the cleared field or off the field. If Award presentations do not need the full 15 minutes and teams are ready to play, the FTA can begin staging the teams.
- The Emcee should run the Awards ceremony on the field and read the Award description and Judge’s remarks. The GA announces Team info after Emcee announces the winners Team #
- ChatGPT/AI is allowed for team award essay submissions and for the Judge’s to use. It’s OK to announce this if the Judge’s ask you to.
- *FIRST* Impact Award video is not a required submission anymore. If a winning team has a FIA video, begin playing it as the team enters the receiving line, then close the event with the 2025-2026 season teaser.
- Regionals will have a spare video monitor (backup for scorekeeper) on the truck- GA’s can use at scoring table
- Webcasts: all domestic (US) Regional truck routes have a webcast unit on them. Domestic truck routes that go to Canada are also covered. Mexico is not covered.
- District Events are responsible for their own streams.

- Please complete the post-event Evaluation – you’ll receive an email post-event with a link

All documents and recorded calls are on the [Emcee & GA Resources webpage](#). Including:

- Master of Ceremonies & Game Announcer Training Presentations
- Regional & District Event Scripts, Alliance Selection Script, Awards Script
- REEFSCAPE Cheat Sheet
- Playoff Bracket and Schedule

THANK YOU for volunteering and have a great season!

Resources

- [Emcee & GA Resource Library](#)
- gatool - <https://gatool.org>
- To request access to gatool: <https://mailchi.mp/05884400853c/gatool>
- 2025 Week Zero matches: <https://www.youtube.com/@FIRSTRoboticsCompetition/videos>
- [Regional matches Webcast Guide](#)
- [2025 REEFSCAPE Game Manual](#)

2025 Training Call Schedule

Dial In Information:

- US Dial-In Number: +1 603-250-6811
- Alternative Dial-In Numbers: [Conference Dial-In Numbers](#)
- Online: [Join the Emcee/Game Announcer Conference Calls](#)

Access Code: 847 540 757#

Pre-Season Calls:

- February 17, 2025 at 7pm - 8pm ET - Emcees ONLY
- February 18, 2025 at 7pm - 8pm ET - Game Announcers ONLY

Weekly Calls (All Emcees / Game Announcers Welcome):

- March 4th, 2025 at 7pm - 8pm ET
- March 11th, 2025 at 7pm - 8pm ET

2025 Selected Rules and References

E114 *Limit flag and flagpole size. Flags and flagpoles may not be of unreasonable size and weight.

As a guideline, reasonable flags are less than 3 ft. by 5 ft. (~91 cm by 152 cm) in size and weigh less than 2 lbs. (~907g). Reasonable flagpoles may not be more than 8 ft. (~243 cm) long and weigh less than 3 lbs. (~1360g).

Qualification Ranking

Order Sort	Criteria
1 st	Ranking Score
2 nd	Average <i>Coopertition</i> Bonus points
3 rd	Average ALLIANCE MATCH points, not including MINOR FOULS and MAJOR FOULS
4 th	Average ALLIANCE LEAVE + AUTO SCORING ELEMENT points
5 th	Average ALLIANCE BARGE points
6 th	Random sorting by the FMS

Playoff Match Schedule

Round	MATCH	Upper/ Lower	Gap (min)				Next MATCH (MATCH # (ALLIANCE color))	
			Blue	Red	Blue	Red	Winner	Loser
1	1	Upper	8	1			M7 (R)	M5 (R)
	2	Upper	5	4			M7 (B)	M5 (B)
	3	Upper	7	2			M8 (R)	M6 (R)
	4	Upper	6	3			M8 (B)	M6 (B)
2	5	Lower	L2	L1	0:24	0:33	M10 (B)	
	6	Lower	L4	L3	0:15	0:24	M9 (B)	
	7	Upper	W2	W1	0:42	0:51	M11 (R)	M9 (R)
	8	Upper	W4	W3	0:33	0:42	M11 (B)	M10 (R)
3	9	Lower	W6	L7	0:24	0:15	M12 (B)	
	10	Lower	W5	L8	0:42	0:15	M12 (R)	
6-minute break								
4	11	Upper	W8	W7	0:27	0:36	M14 (R)	M13 (R)
	12	Lower	W9	W10	0:27	0:18	M13 (B)	
15-minute awards break: Imagery, Gracious Professionalism, Team Spirit, and Rising All Star								
5	13	Lower	W12	L11	0:18	0:27	M14 (B)	
15-minute awards break: Autonomous, Creativity, Quality, and Industrial Design								
Finals	14		W13	W11	0:18	0:48	M15	M15
15-minute awards break: Innovation in Control, Excellence in Engineering, Team Sustainability, Judges								
Finals	15		W13	W11	0:18	0:18	M16*	M16*
15-minute awards break: Rookie All Star, Dean's List, Engineering Inspiration**								
Finals	16*		W13	W11	0:18	0:18		
Awards: Remaining awards, Finalists, Winners, and FIRST Impact Award								

* if required

** Program Delivery Partners may choose to hold these awards until after all MATCHES are complete.

Playoff Match Tiebreaker

Order Sort	Criteria
1 st	Cumulative MAJOR FOUL points due to opponent rule violations
2 nd	ALLIANCE AUTO points
3 rd	ALLIANCE BARGE points
4 th	MATCH is replayed

Championship Qualifying- REGIONALS

A team competing in a Regional in 2025 qualifies for the *FIRST* Championship by meeting 1 of the following criteria:

- Regional *FIRST* Impact Award Winner
- Regional Engineering Inspiration Winner
- Winning Alliance: Captain
- Winning Alliance: 1st Pick

E. Invited from the Regional Pool

Regional Pool

All Regional event teams not already qualified for the *FIRST* Championship are ranked together in the “Regional Pool” based on the points earned from their first two regional events. Beginning after week 2, teams are invited to the *FIRST* Championship weekly from the Regional Pool based on rank. This list helps ensure the top performing teams across events qualify for the *FIRST* Championship and allows for the consideration of performance across multiple events for teams. Awarding points at the first two events, with a projection if a team has only played one event, rewards consistent performance over the season without being punitive to single-event teams.