

## **Waitlists and *FIRST* Championship**

Given two *FIRST* Championship locations in 2017 and our desire to accommodate some teams wishing to attend their 'non-home' Championship, we are revising the waitlist process.

As [described here](#), *FIRST* Championship teams are assigned based on team location, not the location of the event at which they qualified for *FIRST* Championship. The reason is help the *average* team – though we recognize not *every* team - reduce travel distance and costs to their *FIRST* Championship location. For example, a Texas team that earns a Championship slot at an Illinois Regional will be assigned to *FIRST* Championship Houston.

Each *FIRST* Championship location will have its own waitlist, and they both open on November 3rd at 3:00PM Eastern Time. Regardless of team location, a Veteran Team may sign up for either, or both, or neither waitlist if they wish. *We strongly encourage all Veteran Teams with an interest to sign up as soon as they have made their decision to do so.* Rookie Teams are not eligible to join the waitlists, and so will not be part of this process.

We recognize the two *FIRST* Championship locations are somewhat imbalanced regarding the number of qualified teams expected to attend each event (teams that earn their slot to the event). We anticipate a greater number of qualified teams will attend St Louis rather than Houston. This is a result of the team concentrations assigned to those Championship locations. While we sought balance between the events regarding qualified team count, it conflicted with, and wasn't as much of a priority as, the goal of minimizing travel distances.

At the same time, an imbalance of qualified teams causes problems, like the perception that one event is the 'stronger' Championship location. It also reduces the number of non-qualified waitlist slots at the event, making it more difficult for teams assigned to St Louis to attend the event via the waitlist.

We have a solution that, while not perfect, gives teams the possibility of attending their non-home Championship location if they desire, while helping with the balance between the two locations. We can't give absolute rules because we are entering new territory for FRC. We don't know how many teams will sign up for each waitlist or how many qualified teams will be interested in attending their non-home Championship location. We also expect that the landscape will shift each week during competition season. I can tell you, though, that we will be attempting to be as fair as we can while still meeting our overall goal: delivering a great *FIRST* Championship experience to a larger number of teams.

*Teams that wish to attend their non-home FIRST Championship should put themselves on the waitlist for their non-home Championship as soon as possible.*

The process below is presented in table form at the end of this document.

If a team qualifies for *FIRST* Championship, they will register and pay for their home Championship location within a few days, just like in prior years, to lock in their slot at that Championship. They are then removed from their home Championship waitlist (if they were on it). At the same time, if they are on the non-home Championship location waitlist, we will mark them as 'qualified', differentiating them from the non-qualified teams on that waitlist.

### **Qualified Teams Balance**

To better balance qualified teams between the two events, qualified teams on the Houston waitlist will have an advantage in being selected over qualified teams on the St Louis waitlist, up to a point. The advantage will be approximately 2:1, until we have about 20 net qualified teams shifting from St Louis to Houston. In other words, for every two qualified teams that are selected from the Houston waitlist, one qualified team will be selected from the St Louis waitlist until approximately 20 net teams are realized, meaning 40 qualified teams have been selected for Houston and 20 qualified teams have been selected in St Louis. After this point, we will be selecting qualified teams in approximately a 1:1 ratio.

## **Offers to Qualified Teams on Waitlists**

As a rule of thumb, qualified teams get priority over non-qualified teams on the waitlists. However, as noted above, this is not an absolute rule, and there will very likely be times when a non-qualified team is selected from the waitlist rather than a qualified team.

Qualified teams on a waitlist, including teams pre-qualified before the season starts, will be randomized each week that waitlist slots are being released for a given Championship. There will be no 'weighting' to the randomization process; it will be a straight up roll of the dice. Being among the first qualified teams on a waitlist does give a practical advantage in that a team's number will be in more 'draws' from the waitlist compared to a team that qualifies later in the season, and there will be more slots available earlier than later. We recognize this is a disadvantage to District teams, as they won't know if they have qualified for Championship until late in the season. In 2018 we will be working with greater knowledge and will make adjustments as necessary.

*Exception:* Hall of Fame teams have committed to *FIRST* that they will be a solid presence at both Championships. They are selecting their Championship location by working out how best to split their attendance among themselves, with *FIRST* HQ input.

## **Offers to Non-Qualified Teams on Waitlists**

Non-qualified teams on each waitlists will be randomized using the weighting procedure explained in the FRC 2016 Administrative Manual, [Section 7.5](#). Basically, teams that haven't been to Championship in a while have a better chance of rising to the top of the waitlist than those who have been recently. This portion of the waitlist will also be randomized each time waitlist slots are being released for a given Championship location.

### **For Teams Already Registered for a Location, who then Qualify**

If a team is already registered for their home Championship location, by being selected from the waitlist, for example, no further action is necessary if they later qualify, as they already have a berth in their home Championship location.

If a team is already registered for their non-home Championship location, by being selected from the waitlist, and they are on the waitlist for their home Championship as well, they will automatically be offered a slot at their home event if they later qualify.

## **Declining Waitlist Offers**

A team can decline a waitlist offer they receive from *FIRST* HQ with no problems. We know intentions and circumstances can change, and it's much harder to say yes to a Week 6 waitlist offer compared to a Week 3 waitlist offer.

When a team declines, though, they are removed from the waitlist for the particular Championship to which they were invited. This does not affect their status on the other waitlist, if they happen to have signed up for both.

## **Week 7 Events**

As we noted in [this blog](#), for practical reasons, teams attending Week 7 events (Two District Championships, Michigan and Ontario, and the 7 Rivers Regional in Wisconsin) will not be allowed to attend the Houston Championship.

We also need to put restrictions on 7 Rivers Regional attendance, to ensure no teams who normally would be assigned to the Houston Championship sign up there accidentally.

## **Championship Housing**

Championship housing registration is scheduled to open in December. Our expectation is that the majority of teams will be attending their home Championship location. As teams will only be allowed to attend a single Championship location, and to prevent the appearance of false housing shortages, teams will only be allowed to register for housing at their home Championship location.

If a team registers for housing at their home Championship location, then is offered and accepts a berth at their non-home Championship location, Experient, our housing provider, will work with them to find a block of rooms at the non-home Championship location.

It is important for teams to keep this housing registration restriction in mind when making decisions regarding Championship attendance.

### Examples

We recognize how complicated all this is, at least a first glance, and so we offer a few examples.

- A. Team A's home event is *FIRST* Championship St Louis. However, they are really interested in going to *FIRST* Championship Houston. They sign up for both waitlists. They win a week 2 Regional, earning their slot in *FIRST* Championship St Louis. They register and pay to secure their slot in St Louis. Simultaneously, *FIRST* removes them from the waitlist in St Louis (because they are already locked in there) and marks them as 'qualified' on the Houston waitlist. They have an advantage in making this move, because they are attempting to switch from St. Louis to Houston, and *FIRST* hasn't yet achieved the 20 team net shift. A few weeks later, they get the lucky email, offering them a slot at *FIRST* Championship Houston. They can decline with no problems and would be removed from the waitlist for Houston (and can focus on prepping for St Louis). On the other hand, if they still really want to go to *FIRST* Championship Houston, OK. They say 'yes' to the waitlist offer, *FIRST* transfers their event registration, and they start getting ready for *FIRST* Championship Houston.
- B. Team B's home is *FIRST* Championship Houston, but they really want to only go to *FIRST* Championship St Louis. It's St Louis or bust, so they only put their name on the St Louis waitlist. There's no joy in Mudville for Team B this season, and they don't qualify at either of the two Regionals they are attending. However, their number does float to the top of the list on the St. Louis waitlist in week 5. They get the email, accept, and are off and running.
- C. Team C is a District team with a Week 6 District Championship. Their home is *FIRST* Championship Houston, but they want to go to *FIRST* Championship St Louis. They put their names on the waitlists for both events. They qualify at their District Championship, register and secure their spot in Houston. They're really hoping to switch to St Louis, but they have a few disadvantages. First, they qualified late in the season, and second, if *FIRST* has not yet achieved a net shift of 20 qualified teams from St Louis to Houston, two teams must make that move for them to go in the other direction. While they are never removed from the St Louis waitlist, their name never comes up, and they simply attend *FIRST* Championship Houston for which they are registered.

I recognize this is a great deal to absorb. The table below may aid in your understanding.

The simplest advice is – get your team on the waitlist for the Championship locations you want to attend as soon as you can. Other than the decisions you make about when to join the waitlists and which to join, there is no other action for you to take related to potential selection. If your team floats to the top of the waitlist, and we have an opening, we will contact you. And, if you get an offer, consider carefully what it means to accept, which will vary depending on your situation and what may happen later in the season.

*FIRST* will be attempting to balance out the Championship locations as best we can while still being as fair as possible. 2017 is definitely a learning year, and with what we learn this year we will make changes to improve the system for 2018.

Frank

### Waitlist and *FIRST* Championship Table

If a team...	Then...	If after that, the team...	Then...	If after that, the team...	Then...
<b>qualifies for home Championship</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- if team is on home waitlist, team is removed</li> <li>- if team on non-home waitlist, team is marked as "Qualified"</li> <li>- if team registers/pays, team is in <b>HOME CMP</b></li> </ul>	<b>receives invitation from non-home waitlist</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- team is removed from non-home waitlist</li> <li>- if the team works with <i>FIRST</i> to switch, team is in <b>NONHOME CMP</b></li> </ul>		
<b>receives invitation from home waitlist</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- team is removed from home waitlist</li> <li>- if team register/pays, team is in <b>HOME CMP</b></li> </ul>	<b>qualifies for home Championship</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- if team on non-home waitlist, team is marked as "Qualified"</li> <li>- team is still in <b>HOME CMP</b></li> </ul>	<b>receives invitation from non-home waitlist</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- team is removed from non-home waitlist</li> <li>- if the team works with <i>FIRST</i> to switch, team is in <b>NONHOME CMP</b></li> </ul>
		<b>receives invitation from non-home waitlist</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- team is removed from non-home waitlist</li> <li>- if the team works with <i>FIRST</i> to switch, team is in <b>NONHOME CMP</b></li> </ul>	<b>qualifies for home Championship</b>	There are no changes, and team is still in <b>NONHOME CMP</b>
<b>receives invitation from non-home waitlist</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- team is removed from non-home waitlist</li> <li>- if team registers/pays, team is in <b>NONHOME CMP</b></li> </ul>	<b>receives invitation from home waitlist</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- team is removed from home waitlist</li> <li>- if the team works with <i>FIRST</i> to switch, team is in <b>HOME CMP</b></li> </ul>	<b>qualifies for home Championship</b>	there are no changes and the team is still in <b>HOME CMP</b>
		<b>qualifies for home Championship</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- if team is on home waitlist, team is automatically invited to their <b>HOME CMP</b></li> <li>- if the team works with <i>FIRST</i> to switch, team is in <b>HOME CMP</b></li> </ul>		