



The Entomology Games are a lively question-and-answer, college bowl-style competition on entomological facts played between university-sponsored student teams. Since its inception more than 40 years ago, it has become one of the biggest highlights of the annual ESA and branch meetings.

Competition Questions/Game Rules

Points are scored by correctly answering questions asked by the moderator. The two types of questions are Toss-ups and Bonuses, with each question worth 10 points.

Each round begins with a Toss-up question, read by the moderator. The first player to signal answers the question. If no player signals within 10 seconds of completion of the question, the moderator will declare that time is up; any attempts to signal after the moderator has completed their declaration will not be recognized. The moderator is the sole arbiter of whether a player action (e.g., a signaling attempt) has been made before or after such a declaration has been completed. This holds true for all other timed portions of the game. A timekeeper will be on stage to assist the moderator by notifying them when 10 seconds has elapsed.

When a player signals to answer a Toss-up question, they must be recognized by the moderator as the eligible respondent prior to giving the answer. Repeated failure to be recognized by the moderator may result in turning the question over to the opposing team. After being recognized, the player has 10 seconds to give the answer. They must do so without consultation with other team members.

If a player answers a Toss-up incorrectly, the other team will have 10 seconds for one of their players to signal and attempt to answer the Toss-up. As before, the signaling player on the other team must be recognized prior to answering and cannot consult with other team members. If no correct answer is given, the moderator will reveal the correct answer and begin reading the next Toss-up question.

If a player answers a Toss-up correctly, their team is awarded 10 points and is given a chance at a Bonus question. After the moderator has read the Bonus question, team members may confer for 10 seconds. After 10 seconds, one player must signal, be recognized by the moderator, and then immediately give the answer on behalf of their team. Traditionally, the team captain acts as spokesperson for the team, however, any player on their team is allowed to signal. If a Bonus question is answered correctly, the team is given 10 points. If it is answered incorrectly, the moderator will reveal the correct answer and begin reading the next Toss-up question. The other team does *not* get an opportunity to answer that Bonus question.

If a player believes they know the answer to a Toss-up question before the moderator has finished reading it, they are allowed to interrupt the moderator by signaling. When this



occurs, the moderator will immediately stop reading the Toss-up and recognize the player. If the player gives a correct answer, their team scores 10 points and is given a chance at a Bonus question. If an incorrect answer is given, their team receives a 5-point deduction, and the moderator will read the same Toss-up question in its entirety for the other team. A correct answer by a member of the other team scores 10 points and a chance at a bonus question.

Toss-ups and Bonuses are read in their entirety only one time by the moderator. In rare circumstances, the moderator may choose to repeat portions of a question at their discretion (e.g., in the event of technical difficulties that interfere with audio quality and volume). However, players should assume that there will not be any opportunities to hear any question a second time.

A game consists of 16 Toss-up questions. The team with the most points at the end of the game is the winner. If the score is tied at the end of regulation, the tie is broken by a sudden-death playoff. The moderator will read a tie-breaker Toss-up question, and the team of the player that correctly answers it (following the same rules for answering Toss-ups during regulation) will win the game. If a player gives an incorrect answer to a tie-breaker Toss-up through an interruption (i.e., answering before the moderator has completely finished reading the question), they will immediately lose the game, since the tie is broken by virtue of the 5-point deduction applied to an incorrect answer on an interrupt.

Questions and answers are prepared by the ESA National Entomology Games Committee. Toss-up questions are categorized according to the following subject areas: (1) Biological Control, (2) Behavior & Ecology, (3) Economic & Applied Entomology, (4) Medical, Urban & Veterinary Entomology, (5) Morphology & Physiology, (6) Biochemistry & Toxicology, (7) Systematics & Evolution, and (8) IPM & Insect/Plant Interactions. Bonus questions can come from any area of entomology but will draw heavily on the areas of history, cultural entomology, current events, and people. On the average, two Toss-up questions in each game will come from each subject-area category. Note: some subject areas span multiple disciplines such as apiculture, molecular entomology, disease vectors, etc. and can be cross functional.

Team Pairings

The champion team will be determined by tournament format in which pairings are based upon the Branch level placing and scores.

Ten teams (two teams from each of the five branches that held branch-level competitions at their annual meetings) will compete in the Entomology Games at the ESA meeting, in a single-elimination tournament format.



The preliminary round comprises 5 games. In each game, a team that got first place in their branch competition will play against a team from a different branch that got second place in their branch competition. Matchups for these games will be determined randomly, within the above-mentioned parameters. The 5 winning teams advance to the next round.

Of the 5 remaining teams, the three teams with a higher seeding from the preliminary round will automatically qualify for the semi-finals. The remaining two teams will play a game, with the winner taking the fourth semi-final spot. The exact metric for assessing seeding of ALL the teams from the preliminary round is determined by the ESA Entomology Games Committee. Total points scored from Toss up questions will be a major contributor to this metric, but other game data can be considered to mitigate bias from strength of opponent, difficulty of questions, and other factors that can be highly variable from game to game. The exact metric will be shared with competing teams and coaches at least 1 week prior to the games, so they can plan their gameplay accordingly.

Once the final four teams have been determined, the semi-final and final games will take place in a single-elimination format, as with the preliminary round.

Team constitution and member eligibility

A team can be formed with as few as 2 members and at most 6 members. A maximum of four members can compete on stage at one time. Teams with more than four members should designate who the alternates are and inform the organizers prior to the start of the games. Substituting a player with an alternate needs to be done prior to the start of a game by informing the Gamesmaster/ moderator. Students who are ESA members and enrolled or admitted into a degree awarding program at an accredited institution within the calendar year of the competition are eligible to participate.