

Final – August 6, 2020

STELLARXPLORERS



The National High School Space Challenge Rules Addendum for “Virtual” Competition



The Air Force Association

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WELCOME

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This document outlines the Rules and Procedures for conducting a “Virtual” competition of the **StellarXplorers National High School Space Challenge**. The Rules and Procedures regarding teams, competitors, Team Directors, Mentors and Team Assistants, as stated in the Official StellarXplorers Rules and Procedures dated May 4, 2020, are still in effect except where noted in this document. Any other discrepancy between this document and the standard Rules and Procedures document should be brought to the immediate attention of the StellarXplorers Competition Staff for resolution.

If the rules of the school or organization to which a team belongs are more restrictive than the StellarXplorers rules, then the school’s or organization’s rules will take precedence.

Note: These procedures are only in effect for the **StellarXplorers VII** Competition Season (October 2020 to March 2021). Use of “Virtual” competition in future seasons will be based on the health conditions during those seasons.

Any future changes to this document will be posted on the StellarXplorers website (www.stellarxplorers.org) and Team Directors will be notified via email of a summary of the changes.

Submit recommendations for updates or changes to this document by email to Mr. Tim Brock at brock1874@bellsouth.net.

Revisions

None

Definition of a Virtual StellarXplorers Competition Round

Normally, the **Baseline** for the StellarXplorers competition is for teams to compete as a “unit” in one location with a minimum of two but up to six team competitors. In their competition location, the team could only use up to two computers: one to run STK and the second to run other tasks such as Excel, taking the Academic quiz, or acting as a backup STK computer. Teams were only allowed to have one instance of STK operating and the team had to perform their analysis using that one instance.

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a number of organizations not allowing groups to congregate in one location, such as a classroom. Because of this, the StellarXplorers Program Office developed the following procedures for holding the competition in a “Virtual” mode. In this mode, one or more team members will be competing from different locations in order to isolate themselves from one another. This situation requires a modification of the StellarXplorers Rules and Procedures to allow for a virtual competition.

The following paragraphs outline the modifications required to successfully conduct a **Virtual StellarXplorers Competition Round**. The competition can only operate if all Competitors, Team Directors, Mentors, Team Assistants, and Staff conduct themselves to the highest ethical standard and observe these procedures rigorously to create a fair competition for all. Since the competition is dispersed, all are expected to behave according to the guiding principles stated in the StellarXplorers Rules and Procedures document.

Competitor Safety and Protection

Since most Competitors are minors, their safety remains as the *TOP PRIORITY* for all involved. It is the Team Director’s responsibility to ensure the safety and protection of his or her team while involved in all StellarXplorers activities. He or she must ensure that a safe environment is provided to each team member regardless of their physical location. Each location must be safe and secure. The Team Director retains the responsibility and authority to control their teams, including access of other people to his/her team. The Team Director is the ultimate authority concerning who works with his/her team. As such, the Team Director must make sure that each team member has an appropriate adult over the age of 18 at each location to supervise the competitor(s) during a virtual competition round.

Competition Technical Requirements

In a virtual environment, the most difficult aspect of the competition will be coordination between competitors at the different locations. Each team is responsible for setting up their own coordination and communication system. Some video teleconferencing options to consider include Zoom, GoToMeeting, Microsoft Teams, and WebEx to name

a few. Teams could use just voice communication to coordinate team activities using the “conference calling” capabilities on individual phone systems.

Computer Usage

The use of a maximum for two computers per team is waived for a team competing virtually. Each team member may operate one computer at their remote location. Each individual team computer may run STK with an Educational License. If two or more competitors are located in the same location, they are allowed to have up to two computers. However, only one version of STK can be open at each location. The second computer can be used for other operations such as Excel and as a backup to the STK computer.

Virtual Round Scenario Procedures

Each team must designate one and only one person to act as the “Lead” for each competition round. This “Lead” individual can be a competitor or the Team Director. The StellarXplorers Competition Staff will only accept the team’s scenario solution from this one individual. Solutions submitted by other team competitors will not be accepted by the Competition Staff. It is also recommended that this individual be the person to open the “Getting Password to Start Round” quiz from our online Quiz application, **ClassMarker**, since this action officially starts the team’s competition round timer. Once the Lead has the password, it can be sent to the other competitors so that they can extract the scenario files from the round zip file. However, if any member of the team opens the “Getting the Password” quiz prior to the Lead, the team’s competition timer will begin at that time. Normally, teams have fifteen minutes to unzip and prepare their scenario files prior to the start of the round. For a virtual round, each team will be given an additional five minutes for a total of twenty minutes to unzip the file prior to the start of their six-hour competition period. Note: Each competitor can download the scenario zip file from the StellarXplorers Web Site prior to the beginning of the round and place it on their individual computers. Each team must identify their round “Lead” and the email address that the Lead will be using no later than 5:00 Eastern Time (ET) on the Wednesday prior to the start of the Competition Window (12:01 AM ET Thursday).

Virtual Academic Quiz Procedures

Each team must complete the Academic Quiz, if required, sometime during the four-day competition window (Thursday to Sunday). It does not have to be taken during the team’s six-hour scenario competition period. When the team is ready to take the Quiz, a person will go to **ClassMarker** and sign in using the team’s unique Username and Password. Again, we recommend that the round “Lead” sign in since this action starts the team’s Academic Quiz timer. However, if any member of the team opens the Academic Quiz prior to the Lead, the team’s quiz timer will begin at that time. After hitting “Start”, the timing begins and the first 10 questions (#1-10) will appear. To send the questions to other competitors, do the following: Left click on the Computer’s Mouse and then “Save As a Webpage” or “Print” for these 10 questions. Go to the bottom of the page and click “Next”. The

second 10 questions (#11-20) will appear. Again, left click on the Mouse and “Save As a Webpage” or “Print” these 10 questions. Then the Lead can either email the two Webpages to other team members or scan the two printed Webpages and email them to the other competitors. To support this activity, the StellarXplorers Competition Staff has added an additional ten minutes to complete the quiz. The total quiz time is now 40 minutes.

Conclusion

The worldwide pandemic has caused us all to review and revise many of our day-to-day activities. StellarXplorers is no exception. We have developed these procedures to continue this program through this difficult period. We hope that many of our teams will be able to compete in the **Baseline** mode (one location with two computers) if not at the start of the competition, at some point later in the year. The **Baseline** mode will be employed at our National Finals to be held in Colorado Springs this year. We will need for each team to notify us if they will be competing in the **Baseline** or **Virtual** mode no later than 5:00 Eastern Time on the Wednesday prior to the start of each round. The extended times for the Round Starting Time and the Quiz Completion Time listed above will be applied to all teams whether competing **Baseline** or **Virtual**.

This is a unique and challenging time for us all. But with your help, we believe we will have a highly successful **StellarXplorers VIII** event.

If you have any questions on these procedures, please email StellarXplorers@afa.org.