

It was wonderful to see the great progress made by ensembles this past Saturday at Championship Prelims, since I first saw you on opening day, February 7th! Now, you go into finals week with just a few days remaining to the 2026 RMPA season. These days need to be used wisely and productively!

First, as a staff, be organized with your time and use it productively! Highlight the specific items that need attention and set a time to accomplish them. If you haven't achieved the level you want at the time you set, move on to what is next on your list. When your students see that you are structured with your plan, they will jump on board with your commitment. I also recommend that you print out your rehearsal timeline for the staff and your students. They all need to know what is ahead, and how you plan to get it done.

Next, take time this week to perfect the setting up of your electronics. Rehearse the roll out and plug in. Possibly even plan and rehearse a 'glitch' and perfect a way to resolve it. You don't want to get timing penalties, which could cost you a placement, because you did not know what to do. If possible, you may want to have extra cables and cords just in case.

Finally, work the 'head trip' of your students. In the end it is all about how they will perform next Saturday. Keep them 'in the zone.' Keep them comfortable and positive about their many responsibilities. Help them to believe in themselves and their responsibilities so highly that they 'own it' when they go out there next Saturday! When they all go out with a 'locked in' sense of commitment, they will feel it! They will know it! And so will the judges and the audience!!!

Prepare for and have the best run you have had all season! And never forget, above all, HAVE FUN!!!

-Dave Pickett

Judge Coordinator/Trainer

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