



## Missouri's 2016-2017 Season Outline

Welcome to the 2016-2017 season of *FIRST* Tech Challenge®! We are excited to serve the teams in Missouri and Kansas and our grandfathered Southern Illinois teams who may choose to join us. We have a new outline for the flow of competition this year. If you were with us last year, the plan is revised from what we were discussing at the end of the school year. The main change is the addition of Conferences on the Meet side. This document also outlines the timeline, costs and Qualifier schedule. Please read the complete document and the FAQs.

### NATIONAL REGISTRATION

National registration is currently open at <http://www.firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc/cost-and-registration>. We encourage teams to complete their registration as soon as possible. We have a very hard time judging capacity for events until teams are registered. Therefore, we are setting a deadline for planning purposes. Teams who have registered and paid nationally by midnight on September 30<sup>th</sup> will be guaranteed ONE spot at a Qualifier. If registration is completed after September 30<sup>th</sup>, we will do our best to find teams a place to play.

We will finalize event sizing and advancement slots after October 1<sup>st</sup>. At that point, we can determine availability of Qualifiers and Meets to outstate teams.

### QUALIFIERS

Qualifiers are full *FIRST* Tech Challenge events with qualifying rounds, alliance selections and judging that run a full day (approx. 7 am – 5 pm). Teams wishing to advance **MUST** compete in a Qualifier. The Missouri *FIRST* Tech Challenge Championship cannot be reached via meets only.

- Qualifiers are scheduled Dec. – Feb.
- Qualifier registration will begin on Wednesday, October 12<sup>th</sup>.
- Teams will choose their **ONE** Qualifier. There is no guarantee that you will get a spot at your first choice location. Teams should have a first, second and third choice in mind prior to registration in case the event they want is full. There will be no subsequent rounds for picking additional qualifiers.
- The entry fee of \$100 must be paid with a credit card. No PO processing is available.
- Teams will advance to the Missouri Championship using the *FIRST* advancement criteria.
- Teams advancing via a Qualifier may still participate in Meets.

## QUALIFIER SCHEDULE

Day	Date	Venue	Location
Saturday	12/3/2016	STLCC – Florissant Valley	St. Louis Metro
Saturday	12/10/2016	Smithville High School*	Kansas City Metro
Saturday	12/17/2016	Camdenton High School*	Mid-MO
Saturday	1/7/2017	STLCC- Meramec	St. Louis Metro
Saturday	1/21/17	KC Plaza Academy *	Kansas City Metro
<b>SUNDAY</b>	1/29/17	Southeast Missouri State University	Southeast MO
Saturday	2/11/17	Selvidge Middle School*	St. Louis Metro

\*Indicates a host school team advances as well

## MEETS

New this season is the Meet and Conference Qualifier structure. Meets are 12 team game play only (no alliance selection or judging) events. Robots are still inspected and rounds scheduled. The focus is on playing more and being able to refine your robot. The goal is for each meet to take no more than 4 hours from arrival to departure.

- Meets will be scheduled mid-October through January 30<sup>th</sup>.
- Meet registration will begin on Wednesday, October 5<sup>th</sup>.
- Teams will be able to register for up to **TWO** Meets. Teams may choose to play in just one meet, however, the chances of advancing to the Conference Qualifier will be very small.
- The entry fee of \$50 per Meet must be paid with a credit card. No PO processing is available.
- Teams may play in any Meet in Kansas or Missouri - stay close to home or travel.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *This plan only works if we have volunteers to host Meets. Please contact [FTC@StLFIRST.org](mailto:FTC@StLFIRST.org) ASAP. We hope to have the full list of available Meets for our Sept. 10<sup>th</sup> kickoff events.*

## CONFERENCE QUALIFIERS

Conference Qualifiers are full *FIRST* Tech Challenge events with qualifying rounds, alliance selections and judging that run a full day (approx. 7 am – 5 pm). Teams that did not advance to the Missouri Championship via a Qualifier, will be ranked based on their scores (QP and RP) at the Meets for determining invitations. Scores do **NOT** carryover or impact Conference Qualifier play. Everyone has a blank slate for the actual event.

- Conference Qualifiers will be held in February.
- There is no entry fee.
- Teams will advance to the Missouri Championship using the *FIRST* advancement criteria.

<b>Meet Conference Qualifier Location</b>	<b>Conference</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Max. Teams Possible</b>
Metro Community College - KC	West	2/18/17	24
Rolla Junior High School*	East	2/18/17	24

**CONFERENCE DEVELOPMENT LOGIC**

Our Meet structure is different than the League Play defined by *FIRST*. We have worked to incorporate the feedback from teams. We consider our model to be something of a Missouri Compromise. This is a pilot year, and we expect some challenges and insights.

Part of the League Play model was to develop a local community of teams who could learn and compete together. The Leagues would also insure a geographic representation to the Championship event. In order to balance representation across the state with Meets, teams will all be assigned to a conference based on their geographic location. There will be FOUR conferences. These conferences are drawn by county roughly along the I-70 corridor for North and South and along the Missouri Highway 63 for East and West.

Teams may play in any Meet but their rankings will be used within their Conference to determine who advances. The North East and South East Conferences will play at the East Meet Conference Qualifier in Rolla. The North West and South West conferences will play at the West Meet Conference Qualifier in KC.

CONFERENCE MAP



Conference	# of Teams Last Season	% of total in Missouri region	Minimum Meets Needed for 2 per team	Counties in the Conference
<b>NE</b>	74	45.7	13	23
<b>SE</b>	30	18.5	5	31
<b>NW</b>	44	27.2	8	29
<b>SW</b>	14	8.6	3	32
<b>Totals</b>	162	100	29	115

The numbers in this chart are based on the 2015-2016 season. The Kansas teams are added in the NW numbers. Illinois teams are not currently included, but would likely split 8 to NE and 2 to SE.

We will be update this info after Sept. 30, 2016 for this season. There will be a ratio of total teams to teams in the conference applied to determine advancement to the Conference Qualifier and to the Missouri Championship. For example, NE = 74 + SE = 30 totals to 104 teams. NE is 71% of the total so they would get 71% of the advancements to the East Conference Qualifier. That would be 17 of the 24 teams. SE Conference would advance 7 teams.

## Missouri *FIRST* Tech Challenge Championship

We are delighted to once again return to Missouri University of Science and Technology (S&T) in Rolla for our Missouri Championship event. Mark your calendar for Saturday, March 4, 2017.

- The Missouri Championship will be a 48 team event.
- Teams will be advancing from Qualifiers and Conference Qualifiers. The breakdown will be dependent upon team registration and participation in the two paths.
- The entry fee of \$150 must be paid with a credit card. No PO processing is available.

## Further Advancement

Teams can advance from the Missouri Championship using the *FIRST* advancement criteria and allotted spaces for our region.

- North Super-Regionals in Cedar Rapids, Iowa March 30-April 1, 2017. Entry fee is \$500.

Teams can advance from the Super Regional using the *FIRST* advancement criteria and allotted spaces for our region.

- *FIRST* Tech Challenge World Championship in St. Louis, Missouri. April 26-29, 2017. Entry fee is \$1,000.

### Missouri Event Flow



\* Qualifier attendance required to advance to Championship with Meets also.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Our team cannot register nationally until after Sept 30<sup>th</sup>, what happens to us?**

We will be setting the ratios as of Sept 30<sup>th</sup>. We will not be able to guarantee a Qualifier for you to play in though we will do our best. We have always been able to place teams in the past. You are more likely to have to travel. You will still be eligible and encouraged to play in Meets and try to advance through that route.

### **Do we have to play in a Qualifier?**

We encourage all teams to play in a Qualifier in order to experience judging and multi-level competition. If you hope to advance to the Missouri Championship, you **MUST** attend a Qualifier. Advancement is not possible through the Meets only.

### **We want to play in more than one Qualifier. Can we, if there are qualifiers with space?**

No. We are limiting teams to one Qualifier for fairness and to encourage more game play through the Meet system. We do not have enough space to allow all teams two qualifiers.

### **Do we have to play in Meets?**

No. Teams can choose to play in one Qualifier only. Meets could be considered as a way to prepare before your Qualifier or extend your season if you don't advance to Missouri Championship or if you do advance, to better prepare for Missouri Championship.

### **Can we just play in one Meet?**

Yes. Teams may want to just "try it" or schedules may not allow two meets. There is a slight possibility of advancing to the Conference Qualifier, if your scores for the 5 rounds rank highly.

### **Can we play in more than two Meets?**

No. At this time we are limiting teams to no more than two Meets. We encourage you to play in two as the design cycle and learning is best served by playing against others. We selected two Meets to manage the number of required meets (29 across the state), to give teams more plays than last year, and to prevent a team from playing an unfair amount of times.

*Note: We need teams to volunteer to host Meets or we will not have enough openings. See Meet Logistics section for more info.*

### **Do we have to play in our own Conference?**

No. You do not have to play within your own conference. We encourage you to play with different teams at each meet for the variety and sharing of ideas. Your scores will only count within your conference regardless of where you play.



**Our area does not have enough teams for a Meet with 12 teams. What do we do?**

It doesn't matter how many teams are in your immediate area because your Meet will be available to all Missouri and Kansas teams to attend. Hopefully other teams will be in driving distance to attend yours. Keep start time in mind when scheduling to allow for travelling teams. We won't know the response rates until registration opens.

**Can a Meet have less or more than 12 teams?**

Best practices at this point say that less than 8 or more than 12 are really problematic. With too few teams, the cycle is such that teams go right back on the field after playing. With more than 12, the Meet runs longer. We recognize not all Meets will be right at 12. That is an ideal situation. Any Meet with less than 8 or more than 12 will need special approval from the Committee.

**We do not like the Conference we are in. What can we do about it?**

If you are along a boundary line and have a good case for changing conferences please contact us at [FTC@StLFIRST.org](mailto:FTC@StLFIRST.org). We will consider your case but make no promises. Remember some teams will be advancing straight from Qualifiers and while they play in the Meets, they will not be eligible for the Conference Qualifiers.

## **Meet Logistics section**

### **Who is responsible for running the Meet?**

A meet host is responsible for the Meet. There are 4 required, trained, and certified volunteers (FTA, Ref, Scorekeeper, and Inspector) to run a meet. These can be any normal volunteers within *FIRST*. We encourage team parents, co-workers, etc. to get trained and certified. The committee will help with advice, meet registration, training and verification of certification. The committee may be able to help with the key volunteers but it is a benefit to the whole state for more people to be trained and certified.

### **How do we get the needed training?**

Training for volunteers will run at some of the kickoffs. There will be training Sept 24<sup>th</sup> in the St. Louis area at training camp as well. We also recommend helping at a meet prior to yours to see not only the cool robots but get a feel for how things work. All of the training documents from *FIRST* will be online including the certification tests.

### **How do we sign up to be a Meet host?**

Send an email to [FTC@StLFIRST.org](mailto:FTC@StLFIRST.org) stating your interest. We will need your event details, contact info, etc. We would like to have as many Meets published as possible by kick off.

### **What benefits are there for being a host?**

Meet hosts will get valuable experience in how events run and the planning of events. It is a great opportunity to get people associated to your team trained and better able to help you. It limits your team travel. It's a chance to play in front of your parents, friends or school.