

Alliances, Eliminations and Scouting

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FIRST Training Resource

Overview

- Objectives: Understand how the *FIRST* tournament structure works
- Topics:
 - The Real Deal on Alliances (What they are and how they work)
 - Help! I'm in the Elimination Tournament (What to do when you're in the finals)
 - Scouting: What you don't know CAN hurt you (How to gather information on the other teams)
- The information presented here is based on previous years' challenges. This year's challenge may vary.



Alliances

- What are they?
 - An alliance is a “Team of Teams” working together in an attempt to win the match
 - Your alliance will be pitted against another alliance during every match
 - The teams in your alliances will be randomly assigned for each of your qualification matches
 - Every member of each alliance receives the same score
 - You may play with a team that you just played against in your last match



Alliances

- A sample match schedule for 12 teams:

Match Number	Red Alliance			Blue Alliance		
1	6	2	9	12	5	11
2	1	10	3	8	7	4
3	4	3	11	6	10	12
4	8	5	9	1	2	7
5	4	9	10	5	3	2
6	8	1	12	11	7	6



Alliances

- Being a good alliance partner:
 - Know your robot's strengths and weaknesses
 - Don't over-exaggerate your abilities. It doesn't help anyone
 - Develop a match plan with your partners BEFORE the match starts, and stick to it!
 - Communicate with your partners during the match. If you're having problems, let your partners know so they can cover for you
 - BE CONSISTENT: say what you'll do, and then do what you say to the best of your abilities



Eliminations

- What are they?
 - The elimination portion of the tournament is like the playoffs.
 - Teams are ranked (seeded) based on their Win-Loss-Tie ratio from the random qualification matches
 - The top seeded teams (typically 8) pick alliance partners that will stay with them for the rest of the tournament
 - These alliances then compete in a series of best-of-3 match formats through quarterfinals, semifinals and the finals
 - Alliance picks happen just before lunch on Saturday



Eliminations

- Alliance Selections
 - The top seeded teams may invite any team ranked below them to play on their elimination alliance
 - The #1 seeded team picks their first partner, then the #2 seeded team picks, etc. through the #8 team. #8 then picks their second partner, followed by #7, all the way back to #1
 - If a top 8 team accepts an invitation to partner with another top 8 team, all teams below move up a spot



Eliminations

- Alliance Selection Scenario
 - #1 Seed invites #3 seed to play. #3 accepts.
 - All seeds below #3 will move up one spot

Rank	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Partner #1	10	5	7	3	1	8	12	6	4
Partner #2									



Eliminations

- Alliance Selection Scenario
 - #1 Seed invites #3 seed to play. #3 accepts.
 - All seeds below #3 will move up one spot

Rank	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	10	5	3	1	8	12	6	4	19
Partner #1	7								
Partner #2									



Scouting

- What is it?
 - Scouting, at its heart, is taking notes on the other robots at the competition
 - Good scouting is necessary for making informed strategy choices before matches
 - Good scouting is necessary in order for top seeded teams to make informed alliance partner choices



Scouting

- The Types
 - Pit Scouting: Involves going around to other teams' pits, looking at their robots and talking to their team members about the robots' physical attributes
 - Match Scouting: Involves watching matches and taking notes on robot performance



Scouting

- Ranking Teams
 - Every team should make a “pick list”, regardless of where you are ranked. This is a ranked list of teams you would like to play with in eliminations.
 - Key members (scouts, drive team, coaches) should meet on Friday after competition to discuss top picks
 - Have your picks ready for alliances selections, even if you’re not in the top 8. They could help any alliance you’re drafted for choose a second pick.



Putting It All Together

- Look at your match lists to see which teams you will be playing with, and which teams you will be playing against
- Strategize with these teams before your qualification matches, and stick to the plan. Consistency counts!
- Scout the other teams both on and off the field, and create a pick list for eliminations
- Pick (or be picked) for eliminations
- Have fun!

