

Reason for Using Ranking Instead of Numerical Scores

The simple reason for using rank instead of numerical score is that it makes all judge's opinions equal and gives each judge the same "weight" when scoring contestants. When using only a numerical score total to determine the winner, it is easy for one single judge intentionally (or not intentionally) to be the sole decider of who wins, regardless of what the other two judges believe. The situation below will explain how when using numbers only, this could happen (and often does).

Suppose, for example, that the competition is over and here is the scoresheet.

	Contestant 1	Contestant 2	Contestant 3
Judge 1	5	10	15
Judge 2	6	12	18
Judge 3	8	35	15
Total	19	57	48

Notice that in this example, judges 1 and 2 both have contestant #3 picked as their winner. Judge #3 has contestant #2 picked as a winner. However, because Judge 3 has a larger "number" difference between contestants than either of the other two judges, Judge 3's contestant wins and he or she has decided the winner, regardless of what the other two judges thought (they both like #3 the best). Now, use the same score sheet above, but let's do this by rank.

First, each judge takes **their individual number scores** (after all judging is finished) and ranks each contestant **on his or her own score sheet** under the "rank" column. The person with the highest score on your sheet should get a rank of 1, the next a 2, all the way to the lowest number getting the last rank. If 2 contestants **on your individual score sheet** have the same number, you **MUST** give one of them one point more or less and decide which is higher ranked- there can be no ties in your **INDIVIDUAL** ranking. After all judges have written their ranks on their scoresheet, you enter the rankings of each judge into a table like the one above. For our situation above, the **RANKING** sheet **OVERALL** would look like this:

	Contestant 1	Contestant 2	Contestant 3
Judge 1	3	2	1
Judge 2	3	2	1
Judge 3	3	1	2
Total	9	5	4

Now, looking at the total ranks (each judges rank added together in the total column) the lowest rank is first place, next lowest second, all the way to the highest rank being last. Therefore, in our above example, contestant 3 is first, contestant 2 is second and contestant 1 is third. This makes sense, since 2 of 3 judges agreed that #3 should be first. This means that regardless of if a judge gives one person 50 points more on his or her scoresheet, that judge still only gets to put a rank of "one" down, just like the other two judges get to do.

The second reason this is good, is because it breaks ties. Forget the examples above, and focus only on the next example. Suppose the individual “numerical” scores were as follows:

	Contestant 1	Contestant 2	Contestant 3
Judge 1	5	10	15
Judge 2	5	10	15
Judge 3	15	5	10
Total	25	25	40

We transfer these scores onto the ranking sheet as described above:

	Contestant 1	Contestant 2	Contestant 3
Judge 1	3	2	1
Judge 2	3	2	1
Judge 3	1	3	2
Total	7	7	4

Using this, we see that contestant #3 has the lowest rank overall, so he or she is first. But, the next lowest rank is seven, and TWO people share it (we have a tie). The rank system allows us to break the tie fairly, not force one judge to change his or her mind and cave in to break it. To break the tie, we take the ranks of **just the two that are tied**, and re-rank them either “1” or “2” Like this:

	Contestant 1	Contestant 2
Judge 1	2	1 (because his rank of 2 above is higher)
Judge 2	2	1 (because his rank of 2 above is higher)
Judge 3	1	2 (because his rank of 3 above is lower)
Total	5	4

We have broken the tie, allowing #2 to be second and #1 to be third (because an overall rank of 4 is lower than that of 5). So, to break ties (for the top three places only- ties in other places really don't matter) you just re-rank the two that are tied using the first ranks, but only entering a "1" or a "2" for the tie breaker.

It can be confusing at first, but by following the examples, and ranking the kids in this way, it allows us to be much more fair, both to the contestants and to the judges. This way, no one judge is bullied into letting someone else's favorite win. Each judge has the right to rank one person first and so on...

If you do not understand, please find a coordinator and get him or her to explain it to you. Don't just try to make it up as you go if you don't understand. This can make things worse. Thanks for helping us make these competitions more fair for all kids involved.