

Hello, coaches!

We're down to the last week -- First let me say how excited I am that you'll all be coming to join us in Colorado. As you might imagine, putting on a tournament of this magnitude is no small feat, and I've had a wonderful team working hard for many months. Now that we know who won each of the state tournaments, final details are coming together. And I'd like to review a few of those final details.

TL;DR – Please read this whole letter – for Food, National Anthem singers, practice time, arrival/registration, t-shirts, parking, Solar Power trial event...

By now, I hope you have lodging arrangements (either at CSU or off campus), and that you know where you're going to eat. For those of you not staying in the dorms, Fort Collins is full of restaurants; in fact, at one point we had the highest concentration per capita of anywhere in the country. I suspect the restauranteurs are looking forward to your business, especially since the CSU students will have just left town. The City of Fort Collins has a visitors site highlighting some of the best: <https://www.visitftcollins.com/eat-drink/restaurants-by-experience/> -- the "Family Friendly" list here is a great place to start. Closer to campus, there's a food court in the Lory Student Center (names and hours posted on the tournament site under "Food on Campus"), and within a block or two of the edge of campus there are lots of sandwich shops, pizza, Thai, Mexican, Cajun, burgers, Mediterranean food, wings... Just don't bring external food into the Lory Student Center.

NOTE: We're trying something brand new this year at our opening ceremony. Instead of a music professor or a recording for the National Anthem, we're going to do a 50-state pop-up choir. Sort of a "flash mob National Anthem." The director will be Chelsea Kendall, who just completed her master's degree at CSU. The music is posted on the tournament website in the Ceremonies section for students to download (just the first verse, in 4-part harmony). I'd like to request that you identify one person from each team. I know some teams may not have a "choir person" on the roster, but I'm pretty sure we have lots of overlap nationally between music and science. There will be one quick rehearsal in Moby Arena at **3:00** on Friday (no more than 30 minutes). It'll be an adventure, and I look forward to hearing and seeing the choir in action.

I've had a number of questions about early practice times for building events. After discussions with national tournament staff, the decision was made to limit practice time to only the morning of the tournament, once the supervisor is present. I apologize for any confusion caused by an early version of the schedule that indicated practice times before Saturday.

If your team is staying in the dorms, check-in for lodging is at each dorm. Team registration (please just for coaches – not enough room for all the teams) is in the North Ballroom of the Lory Student Center. At team registration, you can pick up any items you pre-ordered (extra pins, extra programs).

T-shirt sales have been going well on the Fine Designs website. You can also purchase on-site, and printing will be done just-in-time, with some extra colors/styles available.

Note that the on-campus shipping address on the website is still correct, but as of this writing the timing is getting tight. It takes extra time to get through the campus system after the item arrives at the warehouse. If you still must ship something to campus at this point, please email me for approval.

Pay close attention to the Parking section on the tournament site. While parking is not enforced after Friday at 4pm (and not at all on Saturday/Sunday), if you try to park in the Lory Student Center lot before 4pm Friday you'll need to park in a metered space and pay at the electronic pay station (or go to Parking Services for a permit).

If any of you haven't paid Conference & Event Services for dorm/meal fees, you must do so when you arrive. A representative will be at a table in the team registration room in the Lory Student Center whenever it is open, so please take care of this as you arrive.

There's a new version of the rules for the Solar Power trial event, which addresses a scoring glitch identified by several teams. Thanks for keeping us honest!

And finally, please keep an eye on the tournament website. I'll do my best to update it whenever I have additional information.

Thanks so much for all your efforts in getting your teams to this point. See you very soon in Fort Collins!

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