

A REVIEW OF THE NATIONAL FORENSIC LIBRARY OF INSTRUCTIONAL VIDEO TAPES, PART II

by Larry Smith

The Rostrum in February 1994 carried my review of the first production of instructional video tapes from the NFL. This review covers the 20 additional tapes that have been produced since then. Jim Copeland asked me to review the second set some time ago, and I finally found another hot August to do so while I hibernated from Fresno's 100+ heat.

Nothing, absolutely nothing, including hosting the gigantic national tournament yearly, is as important as this effort by the NFL to provide usable and effective instruction in forensic events for coaches and students.

Think about it.

Consider the transient rate of turn over in forensic coaches nationwide, the number of new hire English teachers who are told, "By the way, you are in charge of the speech and debate team." Consider the number of coaches who only teach and coach a limited few events they feel comfortable with and who ignore the other events.

The NFL has provided an exceptional set of tapes which will be invaluable to any coach, including those who have been tilting in the forensic wars for years and those rookies who are pressed into teaching something called forensics, a word they previously associated with some kind of horrible dissection of dead bodies.

Without thousands of dedicated, knowledgeable, enthusiastic coaches, the NFL and the national final tournament would not exist.

The tapes act as both an incentive and an insurance that good teaching and coaching will carry on, and the NFL will truly remain the one nationwide organization in education that trains our nation's future leadership.

Enough editorializing.

I'll repeat the caveats from the first review:

1. These tapes are not to be considered baby sitting tapes you might use to keep some students occupied while you work with others. I will note those I think students will watch unattended. Most are "talking heads" either as a lecture or a panel of expert coaches. Some have actual student performances which I believe enhances the attention span of the average 15 year old in a class. For those which are basically lecture or panel discussion, teachers should preview and prepare some sort of questions or some sort of outline for students to utilize as they watch the tape.

2. Some tapes are best utilized in a "stop/start" joint viewing so the coach can clarify or interject commentary or personal philosophy. That means a coach should have previewed the tape prior to using it in the classroom.

3. Many of the tapes are longer than a normal class period unless they are shown in a school that has adopted a block schedule system of classes. As I noted in the previous review, all have an introductory section featuring the eloquence of James Unger. These intros should be watched, but if time is of the essence, you can fast forward to the instructional portion of the tape and skip James for your class. I like to watch Jim not only for his cogent thoughts on the contents of the tape, but also just to admire his wardrobe. I've watched 40 tapes and seen forty different neckties and suits. James is truly a GQ man: classy, stylish, and brilliant.

4. I have tried to refrain from editorializing too much on the format or the performance in my commentary. In all the years I taught I hated

buying some sort of instructional materials. . . . books, tapes, films. . . . without knowing in advance anything more than the glowing advertising blurb I got in the mail or catalog. The commentary I make is towards that end; to let coaches, particularly coaches with limited financial resources, know what instructional value I see in the tape so limited resources can be expended fruitfully.

And remember this, you can borrow and COPY any of these tapes from NFL at no charge. The price on tapes is so low, it hardly seem worth the hassle of sending for tapes, waiting for them to arrive, copying them, and shipping them back. But if that is all a coach can do, then the effort will be worth it.

5. I chose to mark the tapes:

* a tape that is primarily for coaches and/or very advanced students.

** a tape that is good for coaches (experienced and inexperienced) and for students who have some previous instruction or experience in the event.

*** a tape that is good for coaches (experienced and inexperienced) and for beginning students who are trying to learn the event.

CX 107 (*) Unger and Company Chapter Two 59 Minutes

CX 108 (*) Unger and Company Chapter Three 5 8 Minutes

Professors James Unger, American University; William Southworth, Redlands University; and Dallas Perkins, Harvard University.

Commentary: As debaters like to say, "Group these two together." For advanced de-

baters and expert debate coaches this panel offers a glimpse into the thinking of five of the most recognized university debate coaches in the country. I doubt that this much knowledge on debate has ever been assembled in one spot before.

As might be expected, there is no universal agreement among these coaches regarding the debate theory issues they discuss. The essence of debate is to argue over issues, and arguments regarding debate theory are certainly relevant to that process. This is a very advanced theory discussion, so coaches are cautioned regarding utilizing it with novices. Learn from the experts, then distill it down for the beginners.

Content CX 107: Discussion on:

Inherency...relevant or not
Structure...prep time, CX, rebuttals, etc.
Generic arguments...good or bad?
Counter plans...how often, how effective?
"Real world" arguments...effective?

Content CX 108: Discussion on:

Presentation...appearance and delivery
Intrinsicness...
Value of debate institutes...
Future directions for policy debate...

CX 109 ()** Introduction to Debate Analysis 72 Minutes

Mr. James Copeland, NFL National Executive Secretary

Commentary: Contrary to what new coaches might think, Jim has not been the NFL Executive Secretary (who signs all those certificates) forever. For years he coached with huge successes at Marquette University High School and produced countless national finalists in debate, extemp, and oratory. It is a

pleasure to see him in a "teaching mode", a role in which we rarely see Jim anymore. Coaches should do a "start/stop" viewing and add to and clarify for each of the three segments. The 72 minute format really lends itself to two or three class periods.

Content: This tape is for students who have had some beginning instruction in policy debate. The focus is on how students (and their coaches) can approach a new debate topic in order to construct effective affirmative cases.

I. Five Key Questions to Ask:

1. Does a new condition exist (in relation to the debate topic)
2. What are the harms caused by the new condition(s)
3. Do the harms have broad ranging significance?
4. What current national policies allow those harms to occur?
5. Are those policies inherent, that is, do they warrant advocating a change of policy

II. Affirmative Case Structures

1. "Traditional" needs-plan cases
2. Comparative Advantages cases

III. Affirmative Plans...required elements to be topical

CX 110 (*) Paradigms in Debate 54 Minutes

Professor David Zarefsky, Northwestern University

Commentary: This is "heavy stuff" which will make the most sense to advanced debaters and coaches. The latest fads in debate have been in the area of paradigms, and, more lately, in justifi-

cation and "kritique" arguments (and whether or not these theoretical issues belong in the high school debate arena.) Each coach will have to adapt to or reject these deep theory arguments according to his/her own philosophy regarding policy debate. Those who want to play with the "biggies" on the national circuit need to get into these issues and understand them. This tape is only on paradigms. Look to back issues of the *Rostrum* for articles on the others.

Content: I took a whole page of notes. I'll condense those to the two major concepts Professor Zarefsky covers. Those who know debate will recognize whether or not the content will be worth viewing.

1. An overview of the meaning of paradigms
2. Paradigms in policy making...a focus on action. What should be done?

Assumptions: Change is inevitable, so we should select the most desirable change (new policy) Under this paradigm, the affirmative team serves as policy makers.

3. Paradigms in hypothesis testing.

Assumption: Since no change will result because of the debate round, the purpose of debate is

to determine the probable truth of the resolution.

Under this paradigm the participants in the

debate function as critics of current policy and debate the truth of what the resolution says.

If the resolution has no significant "truth" then there is no need to adopt the resolution in any way.

I know that distilled

version of content is not very adequate, but space for re-viewing all 20 tapes is at a premium. I do not intend to make a whole issue of the *Ros-trum* out of this! I hope this brief description will be sufficient for coaches to decide whether or not they want to risk their funds... or take the time to borrow the tape and copy it. Coaches who know advanced debate get the picture.

CX 111 (*) Demonstration Debate and Analysis**
122 Minutes

Mr. Greg Varley, Lakeland High School, NY

Comment: The tape is for all levels, but novices will need a considerable amount of instruction before they watch. ALSO, although the tapes are numbered CX 111 and CX 112, beginning and even some junior varsity debaters need to view CX 112 first, since it is on flow sheeting. Then they can practice while viewing CX 111.

The 122 minutes format requires a two class period showing for most schools, and this is a good "stop and go" tape for additional clarification and instruction. It might serve well for an evening pizza/soda party viewing for a squad so it can be covered all in one time frame.

(The affirmative team members are twin brothers, which proves siblings can co-exist peacefully on a forensic team. The tape comes with a sample flow sheet of one of the issues in the round.)

Content: Varley opens with a discussion of debate settings and how a final round (the 1992 final round) offers some differences from the normal Saturday contests. He then leads the viewers through the debate, stopping after key speeches and cross examinations to explain what has happened and what it might mean in the final result of the debate.

CX 112 (*) Flowing a Debate**
36 Minutes

Mr. Greg Varley, Lakeland High School, NY

Comment: Flowing as a difficult but necessary aspect of debate

1. reasons for flowing
2. who flows what
3. how to flow

The follow up should be some practice flowing of short speeches, and then all should watch a real debate (CX 111 or another) and "get into the flow" of debate.

CX 113 (*) Recruiting Round Table**
53 Minutes

Part I: Wayne Brown, K.C., MO

and his students

Part II: Greg Varley, NY; Daryl Fisher, LA; and Vicki Drinnon, AZ

Commentary: Part I is a dramatization by Wayne Brown's class in Kansas City. A young man, obviously interested in one of the female debaters on the team, drops by to see what this forensic business is all about.

The dramatization is well done. Unfortunately it was made in 1984 which leaves a viewing coach having to endure student's commentary on the "weird" hair and clothing styles and the strange debate files. But it still makes the point. It explains what the forensic business is all about.

Part II. Three coaches from three different types of school...public, private, and parochial... explain various methods they utilize to find good students for their forensic programs.

Content: The commentary pretty much explains the content.

EXT 105 (*) Expert**

Extemp: First Experiences
42 Minutes

EXT 106 (*) Expert Extemp: Advanced Techniques**
45 Minutes

Lanny Naegelin, Texas (facilitator); Austan Goolsby, Beth Garrett, Christi Cunningham, and David Frederick...all former national final round competitors.

Commentary: I like these tapes! Lanny has assembled four of the all time great extemporaneous competitors into this panel. They are all very articulate, poised, knowledgeable, and successful young adults...the kind we want our children and our students to grow up to be. This is not a dry panel discussion. I would feel safe allowing students to watch it unattended, although a coach might sit in and "hold the hands" of those who may be reluctant to try extemp because it looks...well, scary and hard. Watching these charming young men and women will provide an excellent set of role models, particularly when students hear them recall their first extemp attempts. Any student who hears them recount how much extemp lead to their future successes will be convinced that extemp is "where it is at..." (to borrow a non-grammatical idiom that drives me crazy)

Content Ext 105: Just the introductory portion and the personal history of each of these young men and women is impressive. The discussion centers around how each was drawn (or coerced) into extemp as a beginning forensic student. Each recalls his or her first attempts and experiences and the moment that each decided that extemp was THE EVENT for them.

Content Ext 106: This is a continuation where the discussion turns to more practical considerations of how each became a very successful

extemper.

1. Reading sources...beyond the weekly magazines.

2. Files...a squad file or a personal file?

3. Using prep time effectively

4. Introductions and sources for introductions.

5. Structuring a speech.

6. Personal hints...things each did to have success.

It will strike viewers that there is a considerable similarity and also a considerable dissimilarity to successful extemp approaches. But whatever each did, they did it well. Their competitive records and their "life after high school" proves that.

EXT 107 (*) Expert Extemp: Speech and Critique 43 Minutes**

Same panel as EXT 105, 106

Commentary: The tape may be somewhat intimidating to beginning extempers since the panel listens to what appears to be an effective extemp speech, and then the collective critique shows a considerable number of suggestions for improvements. But if the critique is followed closely, it becomes obvious that all of the comments are constructive and helpful. Everyone can do anything he does, ...better. We never reach perfection; we only strive towards it.

Content: The commentary shows the content.

INT 103 (*) Interpretation of Prose and Poetry 86 Minutes**

Professor Emeritus Ruby (Miss Ruby) Krider, NFL Hall of Fame, deceased

Commentary: I was never fortunate enough to meet Miss Ruby or to take a class from her. I envy those who did. This is a class act by a wonderfully warm and genteel lady. You immediately under-

stand she loves what she teaches.

The tape is lengthy, but it is conveniently broken into three parts, so it can be shown in segments. Part one could easily be used in English classes when teachers are trying to make students understand how writers utilize language choices to make word pictures.

Content:
Part One: "Catch the image..."

Finding "tone color" in words that appeal to sensory experiences

Finding kinetic words, ones that express motion or movement

Finding kinesthetic words, ones that are linked to internal emotions
Recognizing good literature for interpretation.

Part Two: "Chat, chat, chat..."

Analyzing literature to find who, what, when, where, and why

Analysis of the poem *Richard Cory*

Knowing the narrator

Part Three: "Make us believe you..."

Analyzing characters for interpretation

Portraying the physiological, psychological, sociological character

INT 104 (*) Critique of Interpretation (Humorous) 60 Minutes**

Ron Krikac, Bradley University; Rosella Blunk, Sioux Falls, SD; Tony Figliola, Holy Ghost, PA; Mildred Peveto, Newman Smith, TX.

Commentary: This is an especially good tape because it utilizes two performances from national final rounds in humorous interpretation. Tapes of performances of final round interps have been

impossible to get because of the copyright laws.

Content: A performance of *Midsummer Night's Dream* followed by a panel critique. Because this is an often done and successful selection it provides an excellent example of what could be classified as "good" or classical material for interpretation.

The second performance is the selection *Three Step Method*, a good example of an often done contemporary piece. Of special interest in this performance is how FEW lines the interper utilizes, instead relying on a considerable amount of physical movement and expression to capture the humor of the piece. It is followed by the critique.

INT 105 (*) Introduction to Poetry Interpretation 57 Minutes**

Ms.Barbara Funke, Chester-ton, IN

Commentary: Not all states have poetry reading as an event, but all schools that qualify students to the national tournament have the option of entering contestants in supplemental poetry reading contest. Some states, California for example, do have events where a "read" manuscript must be in the competitor's hands. This tape is a useful instructional guide for not only poetry reading, but also as a guide to how handle a manuscript in presenting a "read" selection.

Content:
Choosing a poem that is right for the performer

Putting a five minute program together

Finding the persona of the poem

Analyzing the language of the poem

Interpreting the poem vocally and physically

Technical aspects of performing

Coaching poetry reading

GEN 101 (* coaches only?)

Ethics in Competition 4 0 Minutes

Mr. Joe Wycoff, Chesterton, IN

Commentary: I really enjoyed this tape. I discovered why Joe's students always had such success at the national tournament. He is a cornucopia of ideas and wonderful anecdotes when he constructs a message. And what he has to say about ethical behavior is truly an excellent message. The problem I have is how to apply the tape. I anticipated something more pragmatic regarding ethical behavior in competition. Instead I got an inspirational speech on what is required of the individual to become (or remain) ethical. Joe is missing his calling. He could become a very rich man touring around giving inspirational speeches. This is a tape to borrow and copy rather than purchase if funds are in short supply. All coaches need to see it if not for the message, then for the construct of the content as an example of a good speech.

LD 105 (*) How to Prepare for Your LD Rounds 35 Minutes**

Ms. Dale McCall, Wellington HS, West Palm Beach, FL

Commentary: Some coaches may disagree with Dale's comments regarding evidence and the use of evidence, but the practical advice more than offsets any negative reaction. Students need to take notes for follow up discussion.

Content:
Affirmative
- research, the nature of evidence
- definitions of resolutional words
- values premises and how to find them in the resolution
- developing criteria to

support the value premise
- using internal summaries and tie backs
- "writing" and LD case

Negative: establishing a negative position

Rebuttals:
- "ball parking and crystallizing" arguments

- focusing on key issues
- underviews and summaries

Added tips for surviving rounds

LD 106 (*) Value Analysis in LD Debate 43 Minutes**

Professor Diana Prentice-Carlin, University of Kansas.

Commentary: This is a very listenable explanation of the concept of the meaning of "values". A basic understanding of that meaning is, of course, intrinsic to learning to do LD debate. Students should take notes.

Content:
- definition of "value"
- four categories of values
- distinction between instrumental and terminal values
- "common American" values
- characteristics of values
- relating values to LD topics and debate
- utilizing value positions in rounds

LD 107 (*) LD Debate: The Moderate Style 55 Minutes**

Ms. Pam Cady, Apple Valley, MN

Commentary: The tape seems to establish an "acceptable" standard for Lincoln Douglas, the "moderate style" as compared to the extremes of "philosophical based" in some areas or "pragmatic ap-

proach" in others. (Maybe it is time to draw some clear boundaries regarding what LD is supposed to be. We've been at it since 1979 and still cannot seem to find a consensus nationwide.)

There is an excellent demonstration LD debate on this tape, one that clearly shows the moderate style. (I had considerable trouble getting my copy of the tape to track, but finally did. I hope it was just my copy that was bad. Work with it.)

Content:
- discussion of debate styles: philosophical-moderate-pragmatic
- principles of moderate debate
- demonstration debate
- review of debate with debaters, pointing out moderate style