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SCRIPPS NATIONAL SPELLING BEE SETS NEW RULES FOR 2017

CINCINNATI – The Scripps National Spelling Bee, presented by Kindle, continues to evolve the program with revised rules in the 90th year of the proud tradition.

In 1925, Frank Neuhauser correctly spelled *gladiolus* to win the first national spelling bee. The event continued on an annual basis, and The E.W. Scripps Company took stewardship of the program in 1941. There were three years during World War II when there was no Scripps National Spelling Bee – making this year’s competition the 90th national spelling bee.

Each year, the Scripps National Spelling Bee evaluates its program and welcomes feedback from fans and constituents for the consideration of rule changes. These are the significant new rules for 2017:

- Bee officials will administer a Tiebreaker Test to all spellers remaining in the competition at 6 p.m. on Thursday, June 1. The test will consist of 12 spelling words, which spellers will handwrite, and 12 multiple choice vocabulary questions.
- If it becomes mathematically impossible for a single champion to emerge victorious through the administration of a maximum 25 consecutive rounds involving three or fewer spellers, Bee officials will disclose the Tiebreaker Test scores of the remaining spellers. The judges will declare the speller with the highest score the Champion. In the event of a tie for the highest Tiebreaker Test score, the judges will declare the spellers with the tying highest scores co-champions.
- For the spelling portion of the Preliminaries Test, spellers will handwrite their spellings on Bee-formatted test forms, which will be hand-graded. In the past several years, the Bee used computerized forms for the entire test.
- [Merriam-Webster Unabridged](#) is the official source of words for the Bee. The previous official source was Merriam-Webster’s Third New International Dictionary, which is out of print.

“The very first bee started with nine students, and now the Scripps National Spelling Bee program reaches more than 11 million,” said Paige Kimble, executive director of the program. “During our history, students have expanded their spelling abilities and increased their vocabulary to push our program to be even more challenging.”

This year’s Scripps National Spelling Bee welcomes 290 students ages 5-15 from all 50 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and the Department of Defense Schools in Europe. Spellers representing the Bahamas, Canada, Ghana, Jamaica, Japan and South Korea will also compete.

The National Finals will take place May 30-June 1 at the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center in National Harbor, Maryland.

For the 24th consecutive year, ESPN and its family of channels will provide coverage of the Bee. Spellers will take to the stage for the first time on Wednesday, May 31, for the Preliminaries. The Finals are on June 1.

About the Scripps National Spelling Bee:

The Scripps National Spelling Bee is the nation's largest and longest-running educational program. The purpose of the Scripps National Spelling Bee is to help students improve their spelling, increase their vocabularies, learn concepts and develop correct English usage that will help them all of their lives. Visit spellingbee.com for more information about the Scripps National Spelling Bee, which is administered on a not-for-profit basis by The E.W. Scripps Company.

About Scripps:

[The E.W. Scripps Company](http://www.espn.com/scripps) (NYSE: SSP) serves audiences and businesses through a growing portfolio of television, radio and digital media brands. Scripps is one of the nation's largest independent TV station owners, with 33 television stations in 24 markets and a reach of nearly one in five U.S. households. It also owns 34 radio stations in eight markets. Scripps also runs an expanding collection of local and national digital journalism and information businesses, including satire and humor video and web brand [Cracked](http://www.cracked.com), podcast industry leader [Midroll Media](http://www.midrollmedia.com) and over-the-top video news service [Newsy](http://www.newsypb.com). Scripps also produces television shows including ["The List"](http://www.thelist.com) and ["The Now"](http://www.thenow.com) and runs an award-winning investigative reporting newsroom in Washington, D.C. Founded in 1878, Scripps has held for decades to the motto, "Give light and the people will find their own way."

About Amazon:

Amazon is guided by four principles: customer obsession rather than competitor focus, passion for invention, commitment to operational excellence, and long-term thinking. Customer reviews, 1-Click shopping, personalized recommendations, Prime, Fulfillment by Amazon, AWS, Kindle Direct Publishing, Kindle, Fire tablets, Fire TV, Amazon Echo, and Alexa are some of the products and services pioneered by Amazon. For more information, visit www.amazon.com/about.

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