

Debating 2020

This has been a challenging year for most because of the devastating impact of the Covid 19 pandemic on South Africa, and the activities of SACEE in Johannesburg were not exempted. The initial portion of the league had been completed before the nation went into lockdown in March but the league championships remained in hiatus for quite some time as the lockdown for schools was extended. After a lot of deliberation about potentially cancelling the rest of the league or delaying for much longer, it was decided to explore the option of hosting the league championships online. Many schools had been participating in debates online all around the world during lockdown so it was hoped that this arrangement would overcome the challenges of the Lockdown.

The online league championships were staged and it was a very pleasant and educational experience for those schools who opted to still take part. Unfortunately, while online debating solves a lot of logistical problems such as transport and finding venues willing to host, it also exposed a new range of challenges related to very real digital divide that exists in South African schools. Now as our branch looks ahead to 2021 a lot of discussion is planned about what has been learned from the introduction of technology into debating and the consequences of this for the SACEE debating league going forward. SACEE has always upheld the values of communication and interaction that come from running a debating league, and these will continue to be the focus as the league is exposed to the innovations of technology.

The winners of the Senior Debating League were St David's and the runners-up were St John's.

The winners of the Junior Debating League were Heronbridge and the runners-up St Dunstan's.