



ACR  
Convergence  
Where Rheumatology Meets

# 2025 ACR Knowledge Bowl

[rheumatology.org/annual-meeting-knowledge-bowl](https://rheumatology.org/annual-meeting-knowledge-bowl)

*GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION*

**#ACR25**

OCTOBER 24–29 • CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

	PRELIMINARY SESSION	FINAL SESSION
<b>Number of participating teams</b>	16	4
<b>Rehearsal before the session to practice with the buzzer system?</b>	YES	NO
<b>Teams participating in each round of the competition</b>	A drawing during the rehearsal will determine which teams will compete in each of the preliminary rounds.	The four teams will consist of the top winners and runners-up each of the two playoff rounds held on Day 1.
<b>Team members</b>	Two (2) Contestants (Fellows)  <i>*Faculty members only participate in the second round of final session &amp; the Wager Round*</i>	Two (2) Contestants (Fellows) + One (1) Faculty Member ( <i>Attending</i> )  <i>*Faculty members only participate in the second round of final session and the Wager Round*</i>
<b>Number of regular rounds</b>	Preliminary Rounds – 4 Playoff Rounds - 2	# of Final Rounds –3 <i>(Faculty members only participate in the second round of final session and the Wager Round).</i>
<b>Number of questions per round</b>	Preliminary Rounds – 20 questions Playoff Rounds – 20 questions <i>*Subject to change based on number of teams*</i>	Final Rounds – 20 questions Final Bowl Question – 1 question  <i>*Subject to change based on number of teams*</i>
<b>Final Round</b>	There will be two playoff rounds to determine the teams who will compete in the Final Session on Day 2.  The playoff rounds will consist of the four winners and four runners-up from the preliminary rounds 1-4.  The winners and runners up for the two playoff rounds will advance to the Final Session.	Final Rounds: The winners and runners-up from the playoff rounds from Day 1 will compete in three final rounds during the final competition session.  Final Bowl (Wager) Question: At the conclusion of the third round, teams will be asked one final question where wagers are made based on the topic of the question; four teams participate; one winner of the overall competition will emerge.

<b>Faculty participation?</b>	No Faculty (Attending) participation in the qualifying rounds.	Faculty members (Attendings) will only participate in the second round of final session.
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**IMPORTANT - Incomplete Portal Tasks:** Knowledge Bowl contestants (i.e., fellows and faculty members) who have not logged in to the ACR Convergence Faculty Portal and completed all required tasks by **Noon ET on Tuesday, April 15, 2025** will be unable to participate in the competition. Teams without the required number of fellows and faculty members will be required to drop out of the competition. It is highly advised that you login to your faculty portal account and confirm that you have completed all required tasks ASAP. If you have yet done so, please check your inbox for reminder emails that contain your portal login information. Contact ACR staff via [facultymanagement@rheumatology.org](mailto:facultymanagement@rheumatology.org) if you have any questions.

## REHEARSAL SESSIONS

### Hosts Only Rehearsal

**Date:** Saturday, October 25, 2025

**Mandatory Rehearsal:** 2 PM – 3 PM CT - Hosts will meet with ACR staff to go over Knowledge Bowl final logistics.

**Location:** McCormick Place Convention Center, Room W375E

**Attire:** Business Casual

### Hosts, Judges, & Contestants

**Date:** Saturday, October 25, 2025

**Mandatory Rehearsal:** 3 PM – 4 PM CT - ALL team members must be present

**Location:** McCormick Place Convention Center, Room W375E

**Attire:** Business Casual

**Seating:** Participating teams will arrive 30 minutes early for the rehearsal and sit in the front rows of the room in the designated seating area. **There will be a drawing before the practice session begins. At the rehearsal you will find out which of the four preliminary rounds your team will participate in and who you will be competing against.**

### Pre-Game Prep & Preliminary Session

**Date:** Sunday, October 26, 2025

**Pre-Game Prep:** 12:30 PM CT, ALL team members **must attend and be on-time** as we will continue toward starting the Preliminary Rounds right after. **Teams not ready to participate will be removed from the competition and a backup team will continue in their place.**

**Preliminary Rounds:** 1:00 – 3:00 PM CT (120-minute session)

**Location:** McCormick Place Convention Center, Room W375E

**Attire:** Business Casual

**Seating:** Participating teams will arrive **30 minutes early** for the rehearsal and sit in the front rows of the room in the designated seating area.

## PRELIMINARY SESSION

### Final Preliminary Session Rehearsal

**Date:** Sunday, October 26, 2025

**Mandatory Rehearsal:** 12:30 PM ET – 1 PM ET - ALL team members must attend, please arrive early – teams who are not present on time will be removed from the competition and a backup team will take their place.

**Preliminary Begins:** 1:00 – 3:00 PM CT (120-minute session)

**Location:** McCormick Place Convention Center, Room W375E

**Attire:** Business Casual

**Seating:** Participating teams will arrive early for the rehearsal and sit in the front rows of the room in the designated seating area.

- **Team selections will be announced again prior to starting the rounds.**
- **Once you know your round, please sit with your teammates in the corresponding row. Rows will be labeled by team name. This will allow for the session to move smoothly.**

### Preliminary Session Format

#### Teams:

- **The returning championship team from the previous year will compete in the qualifying session.**
- Each team will consist of two rheumatology fellows from the same institution.
  - ☐ In the event a team member is unable to participate, the team must appoint an alternate **by Noon CT on October 26.**
  - ☐ Teams with less than two participants will be disqualified and one of the pre-designated alternate teams will take their place.
  - ☐ A fellow must replace a fellow.
  - ☐ Alternate team members must be from the same institution as the participating team.

#### Preliminary Rounds:

- **\*Please note, the number of rounds is dependent on the final number of teams.**
- The qualifying session typically consist of four (4) preliminary rounds and two (2) playoff rounds\*.
- Each preliminary round consists of four (4) teams\*.
- Teams will be randomly assigned to one of the four preliminary rounds.
- The winner and runner-up of each of the four preliminary rounds will advance to one of two playoff rounds.

### Questions:

- Each preliminary round typically consists of four (4) categories and twenty (20) questions (five questions per category).
  - Categories will consist of disease-specific or broad topics relevant to rheumatology.
  - Each category's five questions will be presented in order of perceived degree of difficulty. Accordingly, the last question in each category will be worth more than the first question (points range from 100 to 500 in each category).
  - Point values will remain unchanged in each of the rounds.

### Answering Questions:

- A drawing the day of the final competition will determine which team is the first to select a question from the gameboard.
- The selected question will be posed by the moderator/co-host.
- Each team will be given a smart tablet containing an electronic buzzer. ACR staff will confirm buzzers are working properly before session begins.
- Once a question is asked, the teams will have ten (10) seconds to buzz in before time is called.
- When the team or a member of the team knows the answer or is willing to guess, the buzzer should be pressed.
- During gameplay, the game will show the order in which the teams "buzz in" by displaying a number on the team podium on the main screen and displaying a finger pointing to the team who buzzed in first. The team that buzzes in first gets the first chance to answer the question. If they provide an incorrect answer, the next team in sequential order has the opportunity to provide their answer for scoring.
- **Discussion among team members may occur before the buzzer is pressed. Discussion among team members may occur after the buzzer is pressed. Discussion among team members may occur after the team is acknowledged by the moderator. Once acknowledged by the moderator, you will only have 5 seconds to answer the question.**
  - If correct, the team will be awarded the number of points associated with the question and will then get to select the next question.
  - Failure to respond within 5 seconds after buzzing OR answering the question incorrectly will result in points equivalent to the worth of the question being deducted from the team's total.
  - If the answer is incorrect, the associated points will be deducted.
- **Answers must be phrased in the form of a question (as on Jeopardy).**

### Winning Your Preliminary Round:

- The team with the highest number of points at the end of each preliminary round will advance to either the SIXTH or SEVENTH round of the Qualifying Session...the PLAYOFF rounds.
- In the unlikely event of a tie during a preliminary round, each of the tied teams will appoint a single member to compete in a one- question face-off.
  - The player who buzzes in first will have an opportunity to win if they answer correctly; an incorrect answer awards the other team the victory.

## Playoff Round Format

### Teams

- Each team with the highest point total at the end of their preliminary round will be considered a **winner** of that round.
- Each team with the second highest point total at the end of their preliminary round will be considered the **runner-up** of that round.
- The winner and runner-up teams from each preliminary round will advance to the playoff rounds.
- There will be two playoff rounds held immediately after the preliminary rounds on Day 1 of the competition.
- A drawing will be held to place each preliminary round winner and runner-up in one of the two playoff rounds.

### Playoff Rounds

- The playoff rounds will include four (4) teams each\* (i.e., the winners and runners-up of from each the preceding four preliminary).
- The winners and runners-up of each of the two playoff rounds will compete the next day in the final competition session.

### Winning Your Playoff Round:

- The two teams with the highest number of points at the end of each playoff round will advance to Day 2 of the Knowledge Bowl... the FINAL session.
- In the unlikely event of a tie during the playoff rounds, each of the tied teams will appoint a single member to compete in a one- question face-off.
  - The player who buzzes in first will have an opportunity to win if they answer correctly; an incorrect answer awards the other team the victory.

## FINAL SESSION

### Final Session Logistics

**Date:** Monday, October 27, 2025

**Qualifying Session:** 1:00 – 3:00 PM CT (120-minute session)

**Location:** San Diego McCormick Place Convention Center, Room W375E

**Attire:** Business Casual

**Seating:** Until the beginning of the event, participating teams will sit in the front row of the room. All teams should arrive on the day of the Final Knowledge Bowl, at least 30 minutes early (12:30 PM CT).

**Awards:** An awards ceremony will immediately follow the conclusion of the Knowledge Bowl Final Competition. The winning team will receive a traveling trophy to take back to their program for one year, or until they relinquish their title. The trophy will be engraved with their program's name, names of the individual participants, and the year of the win.

## Final Competition Format

### Teams:

- Four (4) teams will be competing in the final rounds and the final bowl question: the winners and runners-up from the two playoff rounds during Day 1.
- Each team will consist of the same contestants who competed in Day 1.

### Answering Questions:

- A drawing the day of the final competition will determine which team is the first to select a question from the gameboard.
- The selected question will be posed by the moderator/co-host.
- Each team will be given a smart tablet containing an electronic buzzer. ACR staff will confirm buzzers are working properly before session begins.
- Once a question is asked, the teams will have 10 seconds to buzz in before time is called.
- When the team or a member of the team knows the answer or is willing to guess, the buzzer should be pressed.
- During gameplay, the game will show the order in which the teams "buzz in" by displaying a number on the team podium on the main screen and displaying a finger pointing to the team who buzzed in first. The team that buzzes in first gets the first chance to answer the question. If they provide an incorrect answer, the next team in sequential order has the opportunity to provide their answer for scoring.
- **Discussion among team members may occur before the buzzer is pressed. Discussion among team members may occur after the buzzer is pressed. Discussion among team members may occur after the team is acknowledged by the moderator. Once acknowledged by the moderator, you will only have 5 seconds to answer the question.**
  - ☐ If correct, the team will be awarded the number of points associated with the question and will then get to select the next question.
  - ☐ Failure to respond within 5 seconds after buzzing OR answering the question incorrectly will result in points equivalent to the worth of the question being deducted from the team's total.
  - ☐ If the answer is incorrect, the associated points will be deducted
- **Answers must be phrased in the form of a question (as on Jeopardy).**
- Each subsequent round will begin with the team with the lowest number of points.

## Final Rounds Format

- There will be three (3) final rounds consisting of four (4) categories and twenty (20) questions in each round.
- Final Round 1 and Final Round 3 will be for fellows (Contestants) only. **During Final Round 1 and Final Round 3, fellows may confer with each other (as outlined above) but NOT the faculty team member (Attending).**
- Final Round 2 will be worth double points (starting at 200 and increasing to 1000). Faculty Members will be invited on stage. **Faculty Members (Attendings)** may confer with their team, buzz in, and answer questions during this round.
- Categories will consist of disease-specific or broad topics relevant to rheumatology.
- Each of the four (4) category questions will be presented in order of perceived degree of difficulty. Accordingly, the last question in each category will be worth more than the first question (points range from 100 to 500 in each category for Final Round 1 and Final Round 3, and 200-1000 in Final Round 2).

## Final Bowl Question

- The Final Bowl Question is comparable to "Final Jeopardy" on the television show.
- The teams will be informed of the Final Bowl topic, at which point they will be able to wager up to 100% of their accumulated points.
- After the wagers have been submitted, a single question will be read.
- Each team will have 30 seconds to write down their answer.
- All four team members will be allowed to confer during the final bowl question.
- With a correct answer, the amount of points wagered will be added to the team's score.
- With an incorrect answer, the amount of points wagered will be subtracted from the team's score.
- The team with the highest point total at the end of the Final Bowl Question will be named the 2024 ACR Knowledge Bowl Championship Team.
- In the unlikely event of a tie, each team will appoint a fellow to compete in a one-question face-off. The player that buzzes in first will have an opportunity to win if they answer correctly; an incorrect answer awards the other team the victory.

## OTHER PROGRAM NOTES

**Judges:** There will be three (3) judges presiding over the competition (see list below). Judges will be responsible for ensuring that all participants follow the rules. In the event that the moderator/co-host has a question as to whether or not to accept an answer, the moderator will defer to the judges.

**Moderator/Co-host:** The session moderator/co-host (aka the "Alex Trebec" of ACR Knowledge Bowl) will be responsible for maintaining the overall flow of the competition. He/she will ask all questions and will confirm if a respondent's answer is correct or not. The moderator/co-host will have the option to go to the judges for a ruling whenever he/she sees fit. (See complete list of moderators below.)

**Penalty for Team Dropouts:** If a team invited to participate in the 2025 Knowledge Bowl chooses to drop out of the competition 4 weeks (or less) before the date of the Preliminary Session, the ACR will not accept an application for the 2026 Knowledge Bowl from that institution. The institution may reapply the following year (2027).

**Alternate Teams:** If you are designated as a "participating alternate team," this means that you are **required to attend the 2025 ACR Annual Meeting and Knowledge Bowl Rehearsal**, and you should be prepared to participate in the competition. Should a team need to be replaced, a participating alternate team will be asked to compete on site

**IMPORTANT - Incomplete Portal Tasks:** Knowledge Bowl contestants (i.e., fellows and faculty members) who have not logged in to the ACR Convergence Faculty Portal and completed all required tasks by **Noon CT on Tuesday, April 15** will be unable to participate in the competition. Teams without the required number of fellows and faculty members will be required to drop out of the competition. It is highly advised that you login to your faculty portal account and confirm that you have completed all required tasks ASAP. If you have yet done so, please check your inbox for reminder emails that contain your portal login information. Contact ACR staff via [facultymanagement@rheumatology.org](mailto:facultymanagement@rheumatology.org) if you have any questions.



MODERATORS	JUDGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Moderator/Co-host:</b> Mike Putman, MD, MSc – Division of Rheumatology, Medical College of Wisconsin</li> <li>• <b>Moderator/Co-host:</b> Joanna L. Marco, MD – Allegheny Health Network</li> <li>• <b>Moderator/Co-host:</b> Didem Saygin, MD, MSc – University of Washington</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Judge:</b> Bharat Kumar, MD, RhMSUS, MMed – University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics</li> <li>• <b>Judge:</b> Vivek Mehta, MBBS – Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium</li> <li>• <b>Judge:</b> Sean Whelton, MD – Medstar Georgetown University Hospital</li> </ul>

## 2025 ACR Knowledge Bowl Awards and Prizes

### ■ 1ST PLACE: \*

- ACR Knowledge Bowl Gold Medal
- ACR Knowledge Bowl Traveling Trophy
- Complimentary registration and housing (3 days) at ACR 2026 Convergence

### ■ 2ND PLACE: \*

- ACR Knowledge Bowl Silver Medal
- Complimentary registration to ACR 2026 Convergence

### ■ 3RD PLACE:

- ACR Knowledge Bowl Bronze Medal
- Fifty dollar (\$50) gift card (for each team member)

**\* IMPORTANT: 1st and 2nd place prizes are non-transferable.**