

Logos extends mock-trial winning streak

School's 'A' team claims sixth consecutive state title, earns trip to national competition in Atlanta

By Halley Griffin, Daily News staff writer

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Gresham Schlect had to cross-examine his sister on Tuesday.

"I almost started laughing at the beginning," he said. "But it was pretty fun. I eventually got through it."

Schlect was a prosecuting attorney for one of Logos School's mock trial teams at the state championships in Boise this week - a competition Logos has now won for six consecutive years and 11 of the past 15 years.

The school's "A" team will go on to compete in the national competition in Atlanta in May.

The A team, which consists of older Logos students, faced off against the school's younger team in the semifinals Tuesday morning, and then went on to face Boise's Saint Ambrose High School in the championship round.

Schools received this year's case in October, and teams set about preparing both a prosecution and defense.

The Logos students met three times a week at 6 a.m. through December, and then gathered once a week in the Latah County Courthouse.

As part of their preparations the team members tried the case in front of Latah County District Court Magistrate Judge John Judge.

This year's case centered on a woman who had shot and killed a grizzly bear.

Prosecutors argued that she was in violation of the Endangered Species Act, while defense attorneys contended that she was forced to shoot the bear in self-defense.

Teams are randomly assigned to prosecution or defense before each round of competition.

Logos prosecuted in both the semifinal and final rounds on Tuesday.

"You get really tired, it's really hard," Schlect said, adding that nerves prevented most of the team from eating much over the two-day span.

The team will get a several-week break before receiving its case for nationals at the beginning of April.

"It's a lot different (from preparing for state)," Schlect said. "You get a lot shorter time to prepare but you have to be a lot better. Just for the next month it's going to be really tough."

Last year's state competition found the two Logos teams facing off in the championship round.

Coach Chris Schlect laughed awkwardly when asked if that means that even Logos' newer mock-trial participants are more skilled than any other team in the state.

The Logos team has not yet won a national competition, although 2008 graduate Maggie Church was recognized by the national judges as the best high school trial advocate in the country last year.

As preparation for the national competition, the team will try the case in Moscow sometime in April.

They also will fundraise and accept donations to offset the costs of traveling to Atlanta, although the details have not yet been worked out.

"I'll put it this way: We need money," Chris Schlect said with a laugh.

The team also includes attorneys Bekah Ryan, Tim Schultz and Tyler Evans, and witnesses Elliot Dickison, Naphtali Lineberger, Lizzy Ryan and Caleb Courtney.

Logos' secondary team is made up of attorneys Josiah Nance, Lizzy Jeschke, Lydia Ryan and Madeline Schlect, and witnesses Hannah Page, Kellen Meyer, Gavin Meyer and Kevin McGarry.

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