

Norfolk quiz bowl team looks forward to Chicago



NORFORK — The recent 1A state championship win by the Norfolk High School quiz bowl team was a nerve-racking event for the students. They've got some time to recover before they head to Chicago in June, to compete on the national stage.

The team traveled to Conway last month to compete on live television against Ridgefield Academy, a team they've played more than once this year.

"They beat us and we beat them this year," said assistant coach Deanna Klaus, a math teacher at the school. "We've got a rivalry going on against them and they compete very well."

Despite the added pressure of a live television appearance, the team settled down after some initial jitters and played well, according to Klaus.

"I was really nervous being under the lights and in front of the cameras," said team member Brad Morrison. "I calmed down after I answered the first question, but my hands were sweating."

Morrison wasn't the only nervous Norfolk competitor.

"I was scared to death," said Jacky Thomas. "We'd been working towards that point all year and we sure didn't want to blow it."

Not all team members were nervous going into the state championship match.

"It didn't make me as nervous as I thought it would," said team member Josh Partridge. "It was a pretty fun game, it was close, that's for sure."

While Norfolk stayed ahead for the match, Ridgefield Academy stayed close through most of it, making it exciting for Klaus.

"It was a very tight match pretty much all the way through," Klaus said. "Often, Ridgefield was just one question behind us."

Ernest Higgins, a math teacher at Norfolk and the team's coach, was pleased with their performance.

"I think they did well," Higgins said. "Anytime you score 250 points or more, you're doing pretty good."

Next stop, Chicago

The team will continue to practice and prepare for the national championship to be held in Chicago next month. The format of the competition will change for the national championship match.

"It's a lot faster and shorter match," Klaus said. "They can score points in more ways and they can have points deducted."

The different format is nothing new for the Norfolk team though.

"This format is nothing new for them," Higgins said. "They played this format at Harding University earlier this year so they know it."

Bright lights, big city

While the students say they are looking forward to the competition, they're also looking forward to checking out the Windy City.

"I've never been that far from home so it will be something new," Thomas said. "It will be interesting to see the city."

Morrison also is excited about seeing Chicago.

"I think it should be a lot of fun," Morrison said. "Hopefully we win, but whatever happens, I'm looking forward to seeing the city."

Higgins said school officials are trying to work out a free day for the students to explore the city.

"I hope we get to see a few museums," Higgins said. "I'm very pleased with the support the team has received from the school and the community."

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