

Crosby Debate Team Shines on National Scene

Every year thousands of debaters throughout the nation debate one common topic for the entire school year. At debate tournaments, 2-person debate teams engage in at least 6 hours of debates over issues of governmental policy. In one weekend, students perform more speeches than a college semester-long public speaking class.

The Crosby Debate Team has been traveling a nationally-competitive travel schedule for the past several years. Since 2004 Crosby has qualified 3 teams for the National Forensic League National Tournament and had 3 teams advance to the quarterfinals of the UIL 4A State Tournament. For the last decade the Crosby Debate Team has won its UIL District Championship.

This year the Crosby team of Matthew Carswell and Jon Slotter has made their mark on the national debate scene. Despite beginning their debate partnership in mid-November they have already amassed more wins than most debate teams will for the entire season. At the Klein High School TFA Debate Tournament they steamrolled the competition with 6 consecutive wins to capture first place. They defeated larger 5A schools from The Woodlands, The Woodlands College Park and Dulles High School.

Tournament of Champions tournaments are nationally prestigious. Tournaments that are designated TOC Qualifiers are generally regarded as the top twenty-five most difficult tournaments in the country. The team of Carswell and Slotter has amassed a 17-3 win-loss record for the year at TOC tournaments. They have defeated teams from Dallas Jesuit College Prep (Dallas, TX), St. Mary's Hall (San Antonio, TX), Round Rock High School, Milton High School (GA), Dowling Catholic (LA), South Eugene (IL) and Fullerton Prep (CA). During their winning streak they advanced to the final 16 teams at the University of Texas TOC Tournament and the Gonzaga University Tournament in Spokane, Washington. There were 160 and 90 teams at each of these respective tournaments. They won first place at the Isadore Newman TOC Tournament in New Orleans.

"We are excited about the upcoming tournaments," said Matthew Carswell, "this definitely makes us feel good about how much work we have put in for the last three years. Debate is very time consuming but also very addictive. We learn skills that are difficult to attain through other means." Cross-examination debate teams have thousands of pages of research that they have to find, sort and understand. "The research aspect of the activity is often times where top debaters can distinguish themselves from the rest of the pack," said Jon Slotter.

Upcoming tournaments are at University of California at Berkeley and Vestavia Hills High School in Alabama. Matthew Carswell is currently being recruited by Samford University, Gonzaga University and University of Texas at Dallas.