



Photo by Sean Poston

Todd Prorise (pictured) teamed with University debate team partner Ladd Wiles to take first place in senior division debate in a tournament held this weekend.

Debate team gamers top ranking

By Carrie Dennett
Emerald Reporter

The University's debate team took top honors this weekend at one of the Pacific Northwest's largest debate tournaments held in the last decade. The tournament brought students from 28 colleges and universities to campus from Friday through Sunday.

The Oregon team, generally ranked in the top 10 out of 241 competing teams in the nation, finished first in the senior division, making it the top-ranked team in the country.

The tournament season runs throughout the school year, with a fall topic and a spring topic chosen each year for use by all competing teams. The current topic is art censorship.

Steve Stolp, assistant director of the University's team, said the 45 students on the team

typically begin doing research on the fall topic in late August, spending from 15 to 20 hours each week in the library.

Preparation for the tournaments also involves numerous practice rounds.

ine that for all of us not debating would worsen our class performance," Jacobsen said.

"The skills that I learn and practice in debate, whether it be research, speaking, or thinking, can be classified to all of

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— David Frank

"You can see the blood and sweat and tears on the floors of Villard Hall because we spend a tremendous amount of time listening to our students present their arguments, criticize their arguments and revise them," said David Frank, director of the forensics program

The preparation intensifies before each tournament. "The last 48 hours before a debate are devoted to debate work directly or indirectly," said Junior Trond Jacobsen, who is ranked as one of the top collegiate debaters in the country.

While success in the competitions is important, perhaps the most important aspect of debate is its educational benefit. "It's much more than just a game, it's much more than something people do for pleasure," Frank said. "It's not an athletic competition, it is an activity specifically designed to educate students, and educate them well."

"The students in this activity are much more committed to presenting radical and new ideas in a pretty open forum of discussion," Stolp said.

It might seem that the time spent preparing for debates would have a negative effect on schoolwork, but in fact the reverse seems to be true. "I imag-

my classes," said junior Ladd Wiles.

Frank said in addition to the educational benefits, debating improves the college experience as a whole.

"Forensics is among the most important of all the co-curricular activities in helping to create a sense of community," he said. "Students in our program treat each other very well, and are very supportive of one another."

Debating, for all its benefits, can also have a down side. "One of the things that has been difficult about debate is that it wears down the body over time from stress," Jacobsen said.

He said he tries to get as much sleep as possible, and tries to deal with stress before it hits.

The forensics program is unique in that it is open to anyone who is interested in participating.

"We're the second largest program in the country, and we are among the very few programs that will basically take anybody," Frank said. "But at the same time we try to support a national caliber program. We try to be everything to everybody, and sometimes that's hard."

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INFORMATION TABLE

October 30-31, EMU 10:00 am to 3:00 pm, Drop by and talk with a Peace Corps Representative

PRESENTATIONS

Film: *Peace Corps Impressions*, October 30, 12:00-1:00 pm, EMU Walnut Room

Film: *Fate of the Forest*, October 31, 12:00-1:00 pm, EMU Walnut Room

A NOM PARTY!

October 30, 7:00-9:00 pm, COME ONE, COME ALL! Nominees, applicants and families, other interested people and Returned Peace Corps Volunteers. Here's an opportunity to find out more about Peace Corps. Place to be determined.

INTERVIEWS

November 14-15, Call Career Planning and Placement (346-3235) to schedule an interview. Suzette Horspool is your campus Rep. You must bring a completed application to the interview.

Norman Meyers

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