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Fordham Moot Court Team Wins NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

McCluskey Awarded Runner-Up Best Speaker
Team Also Wins Best Team Oral Argument And Second Best Brief

by Mark Gamell

For the first time in its history, Fordham Law School has captured the National Moot Court championship. The phenomenal team of Georgene Vairo (3B), Orin McCluskey (3B) and Michelle Daly (3A), after sweeping all honors in the Regional Preliminaries last November, was awarded the national championship, the award for Best Team Argument, and runner-up for Best Brief. In addition, Mr. McCluskey, who was awarded Best Speaker in the Regionals, won runner-up for Best Speaker in the national competition. The decision of the distinguished seven judge panel was greeted by tumultuous applause and cheers from the almost 200 Fordham Law students who turned out to watch the final rounds Wednesday night. Standing room only was the order of the evening, as students, lawyers and even dignitaries sat in the aisles and stood against the walls in the meeting hall of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York.

The team argued five times in the three days of final competition, utilizing the "shift" strategy that had been so successful in the Regionals. Mr. McCluskey argued for petitioner, Ms. Vairo argued for respondent, and Ms. Daly was in the difficult "swing" position, arguing whichever side the team was assigned by the pre-argument coin toss. In

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the semi-finals, Fordham defeated Creighton University, Duke University. In a tough quarter-round, Fordham eliminated Vanderbilt, the team that was later to win the award for Best Brief in the nation.

Wednesday afternoon's semi-final round pitted Fordham against a team from Florida State University College of Law. But the Fordham team clearly outclassed their competition in every way—preparation, style, and clarity of presentation. Presiding Judge Edward Neather of the Southern District was so impressed with the arguments that he told the audience, "Chief Justice Burger's point about advo- cacy being some preparedness by today's legal education is clearly disproven by these teams."
The team's excitement was mirrored by the excitement felt all over the school. Despite afternoon classes, almost 150 students attended the 4PM semi-final rounds, prompting one member of the Young Lawyer's Committee which runs the competition to remark, "Have they cancelled classes this afternoon, or is it the whole school cutting?" The showing of school spirit and support for the team was overwhelming. And to top it all off, Dean McLaughlin made one of his rare public appearances at the semi-finals, staying long enough to hear the arguments, predict the outcome, find out that he was reserved as someone to prepare pictures for The Advocate, extend some congratulations, accept some congratulations, and then whiz off into the night.

After arguing respondent in the semi-finals, Fordham drew petitioner's side for finals, forcing Ms. Daly to do a complete turnaround in only two hours. While the team prepared, spectators began to gather in the hall as early as 7PM in order to get seats for the final round.

The Fordham team was faced with not only a fiercely competitive team, but an experienced petition side. The Fordham team's unique style was quickly recognized by the judges, who were impressed with the team's approach to the problem.

The Fordham team also benefited from the support of their coaches, Professors Hollister and Evans, who were on hand to assist the team, and the encouragement of their supporters, which included students, faculty, and administration.

The team's victory was well-deserved, and their efforts are a testament to the hard work and dedication of the Fordham Moot Court team. Congratulations to all involved!
The imposing court—from left to right: Mr. Clark, Mr. Mattson, Judge Friedman, Judge Feinberg, Judge Brodie, Judge Weinfield and Mr. Seymour.

Moments before the final argument, Orin, Michelle and Georgene sit at the petitioner’s table. Coach Putzel can be seen just over Georgene’s left shoulder.

An Old Friend—Prof. Sheila Birnbaum, who left Fordham for N.Y.U. last year, came to watch her former students compete. Her comment about them after the finals—“Terrific!”

The Dean just after the semi-final round—completely confident.
The win...