Michigan to host battle of minds on Saturday

By Elizabeth Stevens
Lantern staff writer

While the Ohio State football team is participating in a battle of brawn on the Horseshoe, the OSU Academic Team, will be competing in a battle of the minds at the University of Michigan.

The winner of this meet competes in the Nationals Tournament in January, which is held at a different location each year, said Michael Starsinic, team captain and a graduate student in statistics.

Brad Savage, a senior majoring in classics and political science, said the team is prepared for the Regionals, because they know the other teams' strengths and weaknesses.

“We are also looking up new questions and reading up on current events,” Savage said.

The team hopes to qualify, but it needs more members to become stronger, said Andy Wayne, a senior majoring in international business.

For now, the team relies on the annual Ohio Union intramural tournament for recruiting new members in the future, Wayne said.

In January, the Ohio Union will host a college bowl tournament, where anyone can show up and play, he said.

There are no academic criteria to be on the team, nor does one have to try out, Savage said.

“You don’t have to be a super genius,” Savage said. “It’s fun and anyone can participate.”

Academic Team tournaments resemble Quiz Bowl and Jeopardy, said Steve Pedler, a graduate student in international relations.

“Competitions are made up of multiple rounds, which are held in university classrooms and are usually supervised by students,” Pedler said.

Each team scores points every time it answers questions correctly, he said.

The team's season lasts from October until April, and there are usually three tournaments per quarter.

The team prepares for tournaments by practicing two hours each week.

“During practice games, we use old question packets, because most questions are recycled at other tournaments,” Starsinic said.

Science, history, literature, current events, sports, and pop culture, are all topics for questions, he said.

The OSU team consists of a first team and a second team. The OSU squad's first team, took first place with a record of 10-0, in the Nittany Lion Invitational Tournament on Nov. 9.

There, they competed against the University of Maryland, Cornell University, University of Pittsburgh, Johns Hopkins University, Penn State University, Swarthmore University, Bowling Green State University, and Western Michigan University.

The team went to the elimination rounds, beating University of Pittsburgh, University of Maryland, and Cornell University, 265 to 120, Starsinic said.

OSU’s first team includes Michael Starsinic, Steve Pedler, Bernard Grindel, graduate student in history, and Mike Haynes, a senior majoring in computer science.

Since the team was formed last year, it has made some major improvements, Wayne said. All of the top players are back, and the team has gained more depth in knowledge of the various subjects.

The team took first place overall, in a tournament at Michigan State University on Oct. 19. It also placed third overall, at Bowling Green Oct. 26, Pedler said.

Competing with the Academic Team gives members a sense of accomplishment, self improvement, and pride, Starsinic said.

“Enthusiasm is more important than talent,” he said. “If you’re committed and willing to improve, you will get better with practice.”

The OSU Academic Team meets every Monday at 7:30 p.m. in Hitchcock Hall 30.
Buckeyes seek national title

Academic team crushes Michigan, 18 other schools

By Tony Gottschlich
Lantern staff writer

Ohio State's success in bowl games this year continues.

OSU's Academic Team outsmarter the University of Michigan and 18 other schools this past weekend en route to winning the 1997 Region 7 College Bowl tournament. The victory sends the team to the National College Bowl tournament in April.

Tackling questions on current events, pop culture and academics, the OSU team cruised to the semifinal round by posting an 8-1 record in league play. The team then swept defending national champion Michigan in the best two-out-of three series in semifinal play.

The team narrowly won the first game against the maize and blue by a score of 260-205, but went on to crush the team up north 325-85 in the second game.

The victory over Michigan was particularly satisfying to OSU team captain Christy Peterson.

"Michigan always has a good team," said Peterson, a senior majoring in chemistry. "Knocking them out of the finals made this the first year since 1990 that they haven't been in the finals."

After sending Michigan packing, the team squared off against defending Region 7 champion Western Michigan University in the finals.

The Bucks played possum in the first game, allowing Western Michigan to build up a lead before rallying to victory by a score of 255-225.

Western Michigan was no match for OSU in game two, however, succumbing to the intellectual might of the Buckeyes by a score of 430-130.

The Buckeyes have two months to train and one tune-up match before the National College Bowl tournament takes place April 18-20 at Monclair State University in New Jersey. The team will compete with schools from 15 other regions from around the country in the tournament.

Peterson isn't too worried, though, about matching wits with Harvard, MIT and other collegiate powerhouses.

"I think we'll do well," Peterson said. "We came out of a very strong region."