

The mock trial teams have taken part in two competitions in Imperial and McCook during the first part of October.

Tuesday, Oct. 18, at the Chase County Courthouse in Imperial:

The Perkins County Red team, doing the plaintiff side of the case, performed very well in their first competition of the year.

“Dundy County/Stratton is a well-prepared and talented team and we were very pleased by our Red team’s performance, said assistant coach Don Harris. Acting for the Red team are attorneys Michi Prante, Kim Cook and Brady Mailand.

When they are doing the plaintiff side of the case, the witnesses are Lacey Jensen portraying Phoenix Perdante, the plaintiff; Taylor Walter portraying coach Sterling Morton and Rachel Carrig portraying Char Connors. Other members of the Red team who testify as witnesses when doing the defense side are Rachel Patrick doing coach Sylvia Vester and Kaleb Gaar as Joe Serpico, a security guard. Lacey Jensen was also a witness for the defense, portraying M.J. Hencken, a student reporter.

This year’s case involves a libel suit by Phoenix Perdante, who was accused of cheating by an article in a student newspaper following the state finals of mock trial the previous year.

Perdante was accused of receiving a text message from the coach, Sterling Morton, a violation of the mock trial rules.

Perdante is now suing the school coached by Sylvia Vester whose student reporter, M.J. Hencken, wrote an online article making the accusation of cheating. As a result of the article, a college scholarship which had already been awarded to Perdante was withdrawn. Perdante is now suing for damages.

For the first trial of the year with several new mock trial participants, the Red team accorded themselves well, said Harris. “Because we respect Dundy County/Stratton so much, we felt that this was an excellent win. We know that there is room for improvement, but for a first trial, it was a nice performance and a good win.”

In the second trial of the day, the Perkins County Black team defeated a fine Eustis-Farnam #1 team. Eustis-Farnam is another team which year after year has well prepared teams, and this was their top team.

The Black team’s attorneys are Trevor Lee, Colton White and Michael Dreiling. The Black team was doing the defense side and the witnesses were Ashley Kemling, portraying M.J. Hencken; Christian Miyamoto as Joe Serpico and Tanya Metcalf as Sylvia Vester.

The other witnesses of the Black team are Callie Meyer as Char Connors and Tori Osler who normally plays Vester.

Tanya Metcalf learned that she would portray the part of an arrogant mock trial coach the day before the competition when Tori Osler became ill and was unable to perform. Metcalf stepped in and did an excellent job, even earning a perfect score of 10 from one performance judge, said Harris.

“Christian and Ashley were also outstanding. The attorney did many fine, and in some cases, original things. Coach Diana Tate and I felt it was a great start by an experienced and talented team against good competition,” said Harris.

Thursday, Oct. 20, at the Red Willow County Courthouse in McCook:

The schedule required the teams to come back just two days later and perform again. In the first trial of the day, the Red team, this time acting as the defense, defeated Maywood #3. This

time they needed Rachel Carrig to step in as an attorney when Kim Cook was ill and unable to attend.

Carrig learned to be an attorney in one day, doing an excellent job with pre-trial matters and acting with poise in questioning, said Harris.

“While the competition was not as strong in this round, we still felt there were good things about the performance, particularly when the Red team had just one day to be ready to do the other side of the case.

“Rachel Patrick was outstanding as Sylvia Vester; Lacey Jensen who plays parts on both sides of the case was very good, and Kaleb Gaar in his first mock trial appearance, did a solid job as Joe Serpico.”

In the second trial, the Black team, again doing the defense side, while not perfect, did a nice job with some excellent performances by everyone in defeating Maywood #2, Harris said.

“Scoring in mock trial can be very subjective and scores from performance judges can vary greatly, but both judges scored it as a strong and convincing win for the Black team. One judge had it as a 31-point win, a margin of victory beyond anything I have ever seen,” said Harris.

Tori Osler returned as Sylvia Vester and the presiding judge characterized her as the finest witness he had seen, added Harris.

“Christian Miyamoto received a 10 from one performance judge and Ashley Kemling, who portrays parts on both sides of the case, is always outstanding,” said Harris. “Our attorney performed opening and closing statements without the use of notes and was rewarded with excellent scores.”

Both Tate and Harris saw many positives in the wins this week. Both teams are undefeated heading into third round competition and have shown the potential to compete with other strong teams in the region.

The Black team consists of talented and experienced performers and the coaches expect more great outings from them.

“The Red team has several members who had never performed, or in some cases seen, a mock trial,” said Harris, “We were pleased and proud of them, as well.”

No dates, locations, or opponents have been named for the next round of competition.