COLLINS
DAHARSH
LANGLEY
LONG
MANN
MAZOUR
TREVINO
WILKERSON
J. JOBMAN
N. JOBMAN
ROCHA

Novice Swede speech team earns runner-up honor.

In addition to experiencing a more laid back and “feel good” contest Saturday, Swede speech coach Dan Jensen has even more reasons to smile.

For the seventh year since the Swede speech team started competing in the Grand Island Northwest meet in 2006, members captured the sweepstakes plaque for accumulating the most points.

Kearney was runnerup.

Novices, who are first-year competitors, were runnerup to North Platte for the sweepstakes award.

Varsity Swedes also won the meet in 2005, 2006, 2007 and in 2011, 2012 and 2013, returning to the Grand Island event after competing in Loup City in 2009 and 2010.

Eleven Swedes earned gold.

In varsity competition, Carlin Daharsh was a double winner in persuasive speaking and serious prose while Ashley Wilkerson took first in extemporaneous speaking and Abbie Mazour in humorous speaking.

Alayna Collins won gold in entertainment speaking and Drake Langley and Kayla Trevino teamed up to win duet acting.

Trenton Long and Brett Mann captured first in a fun event at the contest known as improvised duet. Competitors have 30 minutes to create a skit (with a given topic) and present it to judges.

In the novice division, twins Jason Jobman and Nathan Jobman were judged first in duet acting and Julyssa Rocha stood in the winner's circle for persuasive speaking.

The Swedes dominated two events—humorous speaking and serious prose—as they were four of the top six medalists and took first in both events.

In addition to Gothenburg and Grand Island Northwest, schools represented at the meet included Fairbury, Kearney, Grand Island, Hastings, Grand Island Central Catholic, Milford, North Platte, Shelton, Holdrege, Arapahoe, Adams Central, Doniphan Trumbull, Lexington, Central City, Alma, Litchfield and St. Paul.

About the sweepsteakes win, Jensen said it was great to get ready for the SWC and district meets with a positive attitude and on a winning streak.

Still, he worries about maintaining a competitive edge.

"The students have had their material polished long enough that their performances can become stale," Jensen explained. "It's hard to tell a story like it's the first time it's been told when you have been competing with the material for seven weeks."

On Tuesday, the varsity team was cut in half since the Southwest Conference and district meets only allow two competitors per event.

The next meet will be the Best of the West in North Platte on March 8 followed by Southwest Conference in Ogallala on March 11. Districts are set for March 20 in Gering.

Medalists included:

Extemporaneous speaking

Varsity: 1. Ashley Wilkerson, 6. Faith Rickertsen

Novice: 2. Alex Meyer

Persuasive speaking

Varsity: 1. Carlin Daharsh, 2. Sara Picci, 5. Alayna Collins

Novice: 1. Julyssa Rocha, 2. Ebony Anderson, 4. Kaelyn Young

Informative speaking

Varsity: 4. Rachel Rice, 6. Trenton Long

Entertainment speaking

Varsity: 1. Alayna Collins

Novice: 3. Alex Meyer, 6. Dominic Long

Humorous prose

Varsity: 1. Abbie Mazour, 3. Dylan France, 4. Jett Seimer, 5. Brett Mann

Serious prose

Varsity: 1. Carlin Daharsh, 2. Abbie Mazour, 3. Betsy Potter, 5. Drake Brand

Poetry

Varsity: 2. Carlin Daharsh, 3. Betsy Potter, 5. Roman Schmidt

Duet acting

Varsity: 1. Kayla Trevino and Drake Langley, 4. Drake Brand and Brett Mann, 5. Jett Seimer and Joseph Darling

Novice: 1. Jason Jobman and Nathan Jobman

Improvised duet acting

Varsity: 1. Brett Mann and Trenton Long, 4. Drake Brand and Dylan France

Oral interpretation of drama

Varsity: 2. Gage Taylor, Kaylee Beyea, Kayla Trevino, Alayna Collins, Trenton Long

Also competing were Kennedy Wahlgren Rebecca Riley, Kaelyn Young, Brianna Richey and Macy Schroeder.