

# SIERRA STAR

Updated: Wednesday, February 7, 2007

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**EDUCATION****YHS earns 14th Decathlon title****Academic Decathlon team now eyes state championship**

By [David Richards](#)

(Updated Wednesday, February 7, 2007, 12:04 PM)

The dominance continues.

The Yosemite High School Academic Decathlon team won its 14th consecutive county title Saturday at Madera South High School.

Made up of nine team members and three alternates, the YHS students scored 34,772.90 points out of 60,000 in the five-team competition.

Liberty High School placed second, and Chowchilla placed third.

Other teams competing included Chawanakee Academy, Madera High and Madera South.

Each team consisted of three "A," three "B" and three "C" students.

"Certainly we take pride in all of the accomplishments of our students, but I think it is particularly rewarding when students achieve in the academic arena," said Steve Raupp, YHS principal. "These students work particularly hard, and they are commended for all of the time and effort that they, along with their adviser, Steve Browning, spend in preparing."

In the all-day event Saturday, students took part in 10 different categories and answered 50 questions each in the subjects of art, super quiz, economics, music, language and literature, and social science; 35 questions in math, while also competing in speech, interview and essay portions.

The top three scorers in each category were awarded medals.

YHS claimed 16.

The Yosemite students, along with Browning, began preparations for the Academic Decathlon in May, with optional reading assigned this past summer, and then test-offs to narrow the team in December.

This year's Academic Decathlon centered around the topic of China, with a super quiz topic of climatology.

Think you might be able to do well? Think again.

Sample test questions asked why Wang Yangming was extremely critical of Zhu Xi and in what city did Sun Zhongshan first set up in Guomindang.

Browning said the formula for his team's success has been a combination of hard work, multiplied with a sense of humor.

"I think that's our success," Browning said. "When we're learning, we're still having fun."

David Wells of Chowchilla was the top decathlete this year, scoring 6,646 points across the 10 events.

Each test carries a maximum of 1,000 points. The top scoring senior from each school receives a \$100 scholarship.

Daniel Norby, who wears a tie to school every day except on casual Fridays, took home the top senior honor for Yosemite.



Members of the Yosemite High School Academic Decathlon took a break from studying last week so they could have their picture taken. From left to right in back are: Joel Shipp, Raj Srinivasan, Daniel Norby, Wesley Jackson, Benjamin Hand and Zac Browning. Sitting from left to right are Brittany Bergan and adviser Steve Browning.

Photo by [David Richards](#)

"If I'm going to take a half an hour to get ready every morning, I might as well look decent," Norby said.

"He looks better than half the staff," Browning added.

Norby also won gold in both speech and economics, and added a silver in super quiz.

Other Yosemite medalists included Valerie Woolard, who placed gold in essay, language and literature, and mathematics and bronze in economics; Raj Srinivasan, bronze in speech and silver in language and literature; Wesley Jackson, silver in music and bronze in art; Brittany Bergan, bronze in language and literature, and a silver in art; Benjamin Hand, silver in social science; Molly O'Callahan, bronze in social science; and Joel Shipp, gold in super quiz.

Next up for the YHS Academic Decathlon team is the state competition, set for March 15-18 in Los Angeles.

Yosemite has won state twice in the past decade, placed third two years ago and second last year.

"There's only one place to go from there," Browning said. " I think this team has the potential to take first in state."



Daniel Norby



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