



The Comeback Kids

Not long ago, they were thought of as the team to beat by other colleges in the nation. In the state and national contests, they won four years in a row. Over the past few years, their unbeatable reputation has faded.

Texas Tech University started competing in Range Wildlife Quiz Bowls in 1996, but it has been a little over ten years since they have had a win.

“The National Wildlife Quiz Bowl Team is working hard to earn our title back,” Rachel McMath, president of the Range Wildlife and Fisheries Club, said. “We are hoping our hard work will pay off in future contests.”

This is McMath’s junior year at Texas Tech as a natural resources management student, but it is her first year on the quiz bowl team.

Dr. Mark Wallace, Texas Tech University chairman of Natural Resources Management, is the quiz bowl team’s coach. Wallace has been in charge of the team since it was first started at Texas Tech.

“This is a fun thing for students to do to get their foot in the door to the range, wildlife and fisheries professions,” Wallace said.

There are no tryouts to make the quiz bowl team. Since the Texas Tech team hasn’t been competing regularly the past few years, Wallace wanted to give everyone the opportunity to participate. The majority of this year’s team consists of first year team members.

Four students participate in the question-and-answer quiz bowl at a time. Substitution of team members is allowed throughout the contest.

Some contests are single elimination, and others are double elimination. The first team to buzz in and accurately answer the question receives points. The team with the highest amount of points wins.

“Anything is fair game at a wildlife quiz bowl contest,” Wallace said. “They can ask questions regarding wildlife laws and acts, animal identification, techniques and ecology.”

Along with competing in the quiz bowl, college students are also competing for the title of who will have the honor of hosting the Western Wildlife Regional Quiz Bowl Contest at their university.

“Texas Tech hosted the Western Regional contest back in 2004 and the team is hoping to host it again in the next year or two,” Wallace said. “Some contests have as many as 14 teams that will participate, so it would bring a lot of students and faculty to our campus.”

After such a long fall from the top, the team knows it is going to take more than one win to restore the reputation it once had. Luckily they have a plan: they will practice weekly, study hard, and travel to every contest they can until they are champions once again. **T**

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