Getting ready for start of debate at Muskegee Central High school, from left, Johnson, coach with Coach Ruth Ewing, of Seminole High school, at left is Christine Morey.

.story and pictures by P. I. Federation

The young lady didn't say it like you think a high school girl would. She said it with calm dignity and fullness characteristic of good professional speakers. The young lady didn't say it like you think a high school girl would. But the words were coming from the mouth of a girl who was among many speakers, all girls, who were competing in the famed 6th annual Little Nations speech tournament held at Muskegee's Central High school under sponsorship of the Rotary club.

Throughout the day and night 250 students from 10 schools in six states competed in debate, reading, poetry, and extemporaneous speaking. These students represent the best speakers in their schools, said tournament director J. W. Patterson, of speech at Muskegee Central. "It is designed to develop leadership. There are special programs for beginners. There certainly is no reason why we shouldn't have programs (such as this tournament) for those who will be leaders of the country."

Patterson pointed out that this form of expression is needed so that average high school students do not get lost. "This competition furnished by the Little Nations gives an idea of what it's like, and allows them to 'search' for the best within themselves," he declared.

Patterson, after meeting with the student speakers Oklahoma, Texas, Louisiana, Kansas, Missouri, and later in the auditorium and later during the debate on the group brought forth the "best yet in the six-year history of the competition."

The judges—teachers, college students majoring in public speaking. Sonja Bivens, Northeastern State college speech major, former Little Nations contestant, thought that "the competition was not quite as exciting as when she was in the tournament."

Said Mrs. Alma Blythe, listening to her first debate contest: "It's good and quite professional. The girls have a very smooth presentation."

The only area tournament of its kind in the United States, the Little Nations is a prep ground for the annual one to be held this year at Philadelphia. Patterson said, quite proud of the record our speakers make.

Quoting Bruno Jacob, secretary of the Nations' league from Ripon, Wis., Patterson said, "That if there is any indication, 87 per cent on in the national tournament will be the competition in the Little Nations."

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Photo by F. A. FEDER

Between debates two members of the Monett, Mo., High school team study notes in the virtually empty Central High auditorium. At left is Don Johnson, a junior, and at right, Darlene Adams, a senior.

Proficiency of student speakers at the "Little nationals" held at Muskegee, is evidenced in attention of students and audience who heard the speakers and those of the college. The college students majoring in public speaking had their comments to make.

Sonja Bivens, Northeastern State college speech major, former Little Nationals contestants, thought that "our team was very keen... there are some outstanding students there, however, I felt that competition was not quite as exciting as when she was in the tournament."

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Before start of "little nationals," cheer leaders strut their stuff on stage of Muskogee's Central High. Audience is composed of more than 200 student debaters from 30 schools in six states.

Smooth operation of "little nationals" is result of a hard working committee, some of whose members served as judges. Standing around Mrs. Russell Sorrells, are, left to right, Diana Bankston, Mrs. Bill Oglesbee, W. J. Patterson, Central High's director of speech, and Fred Dorward, student president of the National Forensic league.

At right: Comparing notes, while member of the opposing team presents argument, are members of the team from Fisher High school. At left is N. B. East; at right, Ray Luckinbill.

Jim Hanner, Sand Springs, for two straight years has taken top honors, sparkles in oratory and extemporaneous speaking.

Appearing more like a young businessman, Robert Valerius, of Byrd High school, Shreveport, La., addresses student group during debate.

Arguing the question "that the president be elected by a direct vote of the people," DeLee Lentz of Cushing says, at right, "the electoral college has long outlived its usefulness . . . " and then continued to point up the "glittering showliness of communism . . ." at left.