

Debate team wins at Baylor

By Don Puckett
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The UK debate team proved its depth at Baylor University, advancing two teams to the tournament's final round.

Both UK's top team, juniors Jason Patil and Paul Skiermont, and UK's C team, senior Cy Kiani and junior Jay Finch, won four consecutive elimination rounds before meeting each other in the tournament's final debate last week.

Patil and Skiermont were declared the winners because they had a better preliminary round record, but Patil said Kiani and Finch deserve all the accolades.

"They were the superstars this tournament," he said. "We were lucky enough to debate some weaker teams in elimination rounds, while they cleared out the other side of the bracket."

Finch and Kiani beat Texas, Wayne State and two teams from Dartmouth on the way to finals.

Finch said the tournament was a confidence builder

as the team heads into the last stretch of the season.

"We've always had close debates with good teams but haven't been able to beat many of them," he said.

Finch and Kiani became the third UK team to advance to the final round of a national tournament this season. UK's A team has won three tournaments so far, and UK's B team, senior Trevor Wells and sophomore Jason Renzelmann, were in the final debate of the Harvard Invitational early this season.

Wells and Renzelmann lost in the quarter-final round at Baylor to Wayne State.

UK also increased the chances that it will be the first school in college debate history to advance three teams to elimination rounds at every competition.

Skiermont, who has been the top individual speaker at six national tournaments this year, placed fourth at Baylor.

The Baylor tournament was UK's last tournament before the National Debate Committee announces automatic bids for the National Debate Tournament.

The win almost assures that Patil and Skiermont will be the top seed at nationals.