

The 86th Nebraska State FFA Convention is in the books and as Imperial FFA members headed home Saturday they held their heads high.

Two teams—marketing plan and senior parli pro—were state champions, Imperial had a champion proficiency winner in Derek Schilke and Blair Hartman was elected state FFA vice-president, a second consecutive year a state officer will hail from the Imperial chapter.

The local FFA sent 31 FFA members and 12 junior high students to compete in 17 different events in Lincoln.

Members competed in Leadership Skills Events (LSEs), Career Development Events (CDEs) and Junior High Quiz Bowl during the three-day convention.

“Going into it we knew we had several strong teams and individuals that could possibly come out as state champions, but with the level of competition at state, you never know what is going to happen,” said FFA Advisor Jeremy Vlasin.

Members competed in two separate categories of contests. LSEs are those events which include Parliamentary Procedure, Public Speaking, Job Skills Interview, etc. CDEs are based off agricultural career pathways and include contests such as Agronomy, Floriculture, Agricultural Sales, Food Science, etc.

Vlasin said the chapter had a goal of qualifying at least two teams for nationals. In order for a team or individual to qualify for nationals they must win state.



The state champion Market Plan Team includes Anna Bauerle, Cassie Burpo and Jessica Hartman.

In this competition, students have to create a way to add value to an existing local business. They have to write a seven-page plan identifying and explaining the analysis of the market, business proposition, strategies and action plan and budget. Members of the team then have to give a 15-minute presentation and answer follow up questions.

Another team crowned as state champions and earning the right to represent Nebraska at the National FFA Convention in Louisville, Ky., was the senior Parliamentary Procedure team.

Members include Anna Bauerle, Blair Hartman, Travis Luhrs, MaKenna Ketter, Mindy Castle and Jessica Hartman.

The Parliamentary Procedure competition involves demonstrating the proper way to conduct business at a meeting under the Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised 11th Edition. They took a 25-question test over different aspects of parliamentary law, conducted a 10-minute demonstration and orally answered questions about parliamentary law and clarification questions about their demonstration.

This was the second year in a row that Imperial has won the Sr. Parliamentary Procedure Competition.

Vlasin said that it's tough to win competitions back-to-back in FFA because once an individual

or team wins a state championship they cannot compete again in that event with the same people. That meant that this was the first time all six members of the team had competed in Sr. Parliamentary Procedure and had a large learning curve, competing against many teams who had competed before.



“I don’t know of the last chapter in Nebraska to win Sr. Parliamentary Procedure two years in a row. If it has happened it has been over 20 years ago. That says a lot about the work that these students had to put into it,” Vlasin said.

On Thursday night, Imperial had three individuals in the top three for Proficiency Awards. Proficiency applications highlight an FFA member’s Supervised Agricultural Experiences (SAEs). Members can submit proficiency applications at any point while they are in high school or a freshman in college.

Named as proficiency finalists were Callin Ledall (Turf Grass Management), Sam Haarberg (Diversified Crop Production Placement) and Derek Schilke (Grain Production Placement.)

Schilke was announced the state champion in Grain Production Placement. Ledall and Haarberg were announced as state-runners-up in their areas.

Schilke’s proficiency will now move on to a national review committee. The national committee selects the top four proficiencies from each area.

If Schilke’s proficiency is chosen as one of the top four proficiencies in the nation, he will earn the right to interview at the National FFA Convention. There it will be determined if he has the top SAE in Grain Production in the nation.

Another highlight of the State FFA Convention came at the end of Friday night’s final session when Blair Hartman was announced as a state vice-president on the 2014-2015 State Officer Team.

“I would say Blair had a fairly successful convention. She was selected to be a state officer, which is impressive by itself, but she also was a part of the state champion Sr. Parliamentary Procedure team, and her Ag Sales team was third place in the state,” Vlasin noted.

This is the second Imperial FFA member in a row that has been selected to serve on the state officer team as her brother Spencer Hartman served the past year as State FFA President.

The CCS senior will serve the Nebraska FFA throughout this next year by conducting summer leadership retreats, representing the FFA on business and industry visits and facilitating workshops at chapter visits across the state.

Imperial also had several individuals and teams in the top 10 at convention.

The Ag Sales Team took third place, while the Food Science Team was fourth. The Agronomy Team finished ninth.

Individually, Jessica Hartman’s speech in the senior division on Genetically Modified Organisms earned her a gold medal and a sixth place finish.

Other Imperial FFA members finished in the top 15 percent of their competitions.

Eleven members of the Imperial chapter received their State FFA Degrees during Friday night’s ceremonies.

Receiving the coveted State Degree were Ashlin Bussell, Sam Haarberg, Kelsey Wood, Jordyn Doetker, Tyler Oxford, Blair Hartman, Elizabeth Tomky, Bailey Springer, Andrea Hogsett, Derek Schilke and Mallory Coleman.

UNL freshman Spencer Hartman, an Imperial FFA member, finished his 2013-14 term as State FFA President, and gave his retiring address Friday night titled “Live on Purpose.”

“Spencer not only represented the State FFA organization well, he represented our chapter and community well throughout the year,” Vlasin said.

His retiring address can be found on upstream.tv.

“It would be well worth your time to listen to his retiring address if you missed it,” Vlasin said.

“We are very proud of all the FFA members. The time, effort and commitment these students have to put in on top of everything else they have going on to get these kind of results is unreal,” Vlasin said.



Here are Imperial FFA’s complete results from the convention.

State Vice-President—Blair Hartman

State Champion Proficiency—Derek Schilke

State Champion Senior Parliamentary Procedure Gold—Blair Hartman, Anna Bauerle, Jessica Hartman, Travis Luhrs, MaKenna Ketter, Mindy Castle

State Champion Marketing Plan Purple—Cassie Burpo, Anna Bauerle, Jessica Hartman

State Runner-up Proficiencies—Sam Haarberg, Callin Ledall

Ag Sales 3rd Purple—Individually Blair Hartman-Purple, Sam Haarberg-Purple, Andrea Hogsett-Blue, Darin Knobbe-Red.

Food Science 4th Purple—Individually Jessica Hartman-Purple, Mindy Castle-Blue, MaKenna Ketter - Red, Shaylee Dorn

Agronomy 9th Purple—Sam Haarberg-Purple, Mallory Coleman-Blue, Derek Schilke-Blue, Tyler Oxford-Red

Senior Public Speaking Gold—Jessica Hartman

Senior Livestock Evaluation Blue—Jessica Hartman-Purple, Darin Knobbe-Blue, Kevin Chavira, Abbi Vetter

Creed Speaking Silver—Trey Bahler

Floriculture Red—Ashlin Bussell-Purple, Abbi Vetter-Red, Jordyn Doetker, Dawn Castle

Natural Resources Red—Andrea Hogsett-Red, Mallory Coleman-White, Bailey Springer, Elizabeth Tomky

Extemporaneous Speaking Bronze—Mindy Castle

Junior Livestock Evaluation White—Regan Gittlein-Red, Cade Francis-White, Trace Helser-White, Shaylee Dorn

Ag Mechanics—Sam Haarberg-Blue, Derek Schilke-Red, Tyler Oxford, Elizabeth Tomky

Agriscience—Trey Bahler-White, Dawn Castle, Cade Francis, Trace Helser

Farm Business Management—Cassie Burpo-Red, Taylor Wilson, Angel Hinojosa, Caleb Bubak

Meats—Caleb Bubak-Red, Hunter Bartels, Angel Hinojosa, Eric Chavira