

BALANCE

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'Best Ever' Mock Trials

The 1997 Grand Final of the Interschool Mock Trial Competition was debated at the Law Courts Building in Alice Springs by Darwin region winners - Katherine High School, and St Phillip's College, representing the Alice Springs region.

The Mock Adjudicator, Justice Sir William Kearney had no hesitation in declaring the contest to be the best that he had witnessed over a number of years of involvement in the Mock Trials. Both teams, their teachers, coaches and supporters had no difficulty in endorsing those sentiments.

Following an excellent presentation of the case material from both sides, St Phillip's College emerged the victors by a narrow margin. This team was well prepared for the contest, having taken part in last year's Grand Final, but losing to St John's College. There could be no doubt of the educational value of the Mock Trial Competition as both teams displayed exceptional courtroom skills in all the roles that participants are required to play during the trials.

Katherine High School was a first time entrant in the competition and faced the additional burden of travelling to Darwin for each of the rounds - a commitment that paid off as they were surprised and delighted to come through as the team to represent the northern region.

Tribute was paid to the quick thinking of the barristers on both teams, all of whom attracted high scores for their roles from Justice Kearney and their solicitors, who did an excellent job of instructing. The witnesses managed the difficult task of dealing with examination-in-chief and cross-examination and it is in this role that the dramatic talents of the student participants are most to be admired. All witnesses were given a perfect



Justice Sir William Kearney presents the trophy to St Phillips' Tracy Hurst

score by the adjudicator. Justice Kearney also praised his mock associate and the clerk of court, whose task it was to ensure that the trial ran smoothly.

Following the presentation of certificates and trophies to both winners and runners-up, the teams, teachers and coaches retired in high spirits to *Oscar's Cafe* for a post-final celebratory dinner.

The Law Society records here its thanks to all members of the pro-

fession who gave up their time to act as coaches and adjudicators for the competition, which involves directly some 120 high school students and indirectly the greater proportion of legal studies classes throughout the Territory. These include: Felicity Cain (CAALAS), Charmaine Gibson (KRALAS), Kathy Perry (McBride & Stirk), Pam Ditton, Julie Franz (Ditton's), Caro Walters (Povey's), Teegan Lindsay (Clayton Utz), Robin Dyall (EDO), Theresa Van Gessel (AGS), Ross McSwan (Resolve), Kate Stevenson (Eileen Terrill & Ass), Michael Grove, Martin Hardie (Ward Keller), Brian McGowran (Cecil Black's), Peter Maley (Withnall Cavanagh Maley), Tony Young (William Forster Chambers), Alan Woodcock (Mildren's), Patrick McIntyre, Steve Southwood (James Muirhead Chambers), Duncan McConnel (Morgan Buckley), Chris Roberts (DPP), Cathal Smith (Turner & Deane), Roger Bennett (Martin & Partners), Murray Preston, Greg Cavanagh, SM and Justice Kearney. Case material for 1997 was written by Peter Ward, Jonathon Nolan and Barbara Tiffin. The 1997 Interschool Mock Trial Competition was sponsored by the Law Society Public Purposes Trust and the NT Department of Education and supported by Qantas.