

Debaters getting ready . . . Cont. from page A1

Knock says the invitation to attend the world-class event comes as a surprise. She believes the team might be the only junior high team in Canada to ever attend the event.

The debaters, Grade 9 students Victoria MacKinnon and Katelyn MacMullin and Grade 8 students Dillon Ross and J.D. Zillman, can skip some qualifying rounds because of their track record.

In 2007, MacKinnon helped the school win the provincial title and in October, Zillman and MacMullin became Nova Scotia champs during impromptu challenges held in Dartmouth.

Through the next few months, the team will prepare for its international challenge against teams mostly from England and Ireland.

They will be using the British Parliamentary debating style, receiving support from Cape Breton debate leader and Sydney Academy teacher Harold Kyte.

"To go over there and compete in a new style with international teams that are obviously really good is of course scary, but you can only hope for the best," said Ross.

Zillman is also excited to see England.

"I can't wait to see the things I'm going to see and experience a whole new culture. I think it's going to be a great experience for myself and for the team."

Knock was not sure at first if the group would accept the rare invitation. Two of the students are already travelling to Europe as part another school trip the week after the tournament.

They will spend a week in England for the competition, cross the pond back to Canada and return for their second school trip shortly afterward.

"They are seeking help from local businesses," said Knock of the students' trip. "We're confident now that we can book the trip and we're going, we're registered and everything is ready."

Anyone wishing to sponsor the debaters can contact Whitney Pier Memorial Junior High at 562-6130.

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J.D. Zillman, member of Whitney Pier Memorial Junior High School debate team

From the Cape Breton Post of January 21st, 2008.

No arguing junior high debate team's success

Whitney Pier Memorial Junior High School debaters invited to international tournament

By EMILY PORTER
CAPE BRETON POST

WHITNEY PIER — Four junior high school students from Cape Breton are setting a record for the province.

Members of the Whitney Pier Memorial Junior High School debate team, the current provincial champions at their school level, will attend the International Young Debaters Tournament at Oxford University in England. It is the first time a junior high school from Nova

Scotia has been invited to the competition.

Cathy Knock and Carol Milne coach the team and will accompany the students to the debating competition this May.

"There are two different tournaments. One for high school, the other for junior high," said Knock. "The tournament for the junior high is basically to encourage interest among students their age to enter debating."

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Whitney Pier Memorial debating team members, from left, J.D. Zillman, Dillon Ross, and Katelyn MacMullin are getting ready to head across the Atlantic for the International Young Debaters Tournament at Oxford University in England. Steve Wadden - Cape Breton Post