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## K-State Soil Judging Team wins back-to-back national titles

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The University of Kansas men's basketball national championship trophy is no longer the only award on display in the Kansas House of Representatives.

The K-State Soil Judging Team won the National Soil Judging Competition for the second year in a row in April and its trophy now resides in the House as well.

"Our trophy is slightly bigger," said Mickey Ransom, K-State Soil Judging Team coach and professor of agronomy.

The team was honored by the House Tuesday for its outstanding work and accomplishment in the competition.

Ransom said the team was presented to the House from the Speaker's desk and was recognized for winning back-to-back national championships as their meeting began.

Kansas Rep. Dan Kerschen - whose daughter, Kim, freshman in agronomy, is on the team - organized the honor along with Sen. Tom Hawk and Rep. Sydney Carlin, who both represent Manhattan.

"It was very impressive," Ransom said. "It was really an honor for the team to do this."

The competition took place in Springfield, Mo., this year and featured 23 teams.



Kneeling – Paul Hartley, graduate student in agronomy and assistant coach Left to right – Rep. Dan Kerschen, R-Garden Plain; Rep. Sydney Carlin, D-Manhattan; Stuart Watts, sophomore in agronomy; Kim Kerschen, freshman in agronomy; Kelsey McGie, junior in milling science management; Joshua Klein, junior in agronomy; Timothy Foster, freshman in agronomy; Mickey Ransom, professor of agronomy and head coach; and Sen. Tom Hawk, D-Manhattan

Ransom said the competition involved teams evaluating different soils for their properties, colors, textures and structures in a 6-foot-deep soil pit. He said competitors also were required to determine how the soils could be used - e.g., to build a house with a basement.

"We had practices once a week for the whole year and then spent a full week, all-day in the pits [in preparation]," Kim said. "It was hard work, but it definitely paid off."

The competition involved both individual and team soil judging. Ransom said though K-State did well in the individual categories, the group really shined in the team category.

"This year, the team judging was really what we excelled at," Ransom said. "It is probably the reason why we won."

Since K-State started participating in the contest in 1961, the team had never won a national competition until last year. To boast two back-to-back national wins is "truly an honor," Ransom said.

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