

Rising Stars: Jacob Simmons pours love of geography, sports, pop culture into becoming Scholar Bowl star

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RISING ST★RS -CLUB-

BRIGHTON - Jacob Simmons is not only a starter on the Southwestern baseball team, but he is among the top in the nation in scholar bowl competition.

During the recent NAQT Tournament, Jacob faced opponents from Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Michigan and Oklahoma. Around 100 students competed in the event. Jacob was 25th overall and third overall in geography, pop culture and sports knowledge. This is the first time a Southwestern High School student has ranked this high in the NAQT individual tournament at nationals.

In national competition, this past weekend at Rosemont, Jacob's team was seventh out of 162 teams in the nation and he scored 10th overall on the team out of 648 players.

"To be honest I was more shocked than honored," Jacob Simmons said of his recent performances. "I went to go up there for a last bucket list item for my high school career. Upon winning the rounds and moving forward, I was amazed and shocked to be awarded a third place in my categories, that totally made my year right there." He said his strong interests in geography, pop culture and sports likely happened because of his love of movies and television.

"My family instilled that study into me, from going to the movies to listening to old Rock n' Roll," he said. "The geography sections, I have always loved studying foreign lands and the geography that surrounds those countries."

Asked how he would use these talents in the future, Jacob said: “I plan on using my array of skills to better myself in my education to come. I hope to become a teacher just like my Coach, Matt Hasquin, who has led me on the greatest path of my career in Scholar Bowl and taught me the importance of teamwork, leadership and ensuing knowledge for the love of the game.”

Jacob said his parents, Jason Simmons of Alton, and mother, Shelly Simmons of Brighton, are his true inspirations.

“My parents have been supportive of my efforts and career in my sports,” Jacob said. “With Scholar Bowl, my family has always been there to watch me score my 2000 question of my career at Southwestern and to see me score 25th in the nation. I will always look back at my time I get to spend with my dad, when I don’t get to see him as much as he works to better the community and allow me to mold myself as the man he is. I will always be thankful and hope to be as supportive to my future kids if I coach or have my own children down the road.”

Jacob added that he has been inspired by history itself and the love of learning. But, His two biggest inspirations are his brother and his coach, Mr. Matt Hasquin.

"My brother has always quizzed me and been supportive with all of my schooling to sports," Jacob said. "I look up to my brother and try to model myself around his career in college. He is a history teacher now in Litchfield, IL. He has taught me that history is always changing and there will always be something new to learn. My coach, on the other hand, has pushed me to work hard and learn more. He provided me with the structure and talent that I have today. But more importantly, I could not do any of this without my team at Southwestern."

Jacob Simmons said he plans on attending Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville and majoring in history and work to become a high school history teacher or college professor in history and possibly psychology.

[To nominate a Rising Stars candidate, click here.](#)