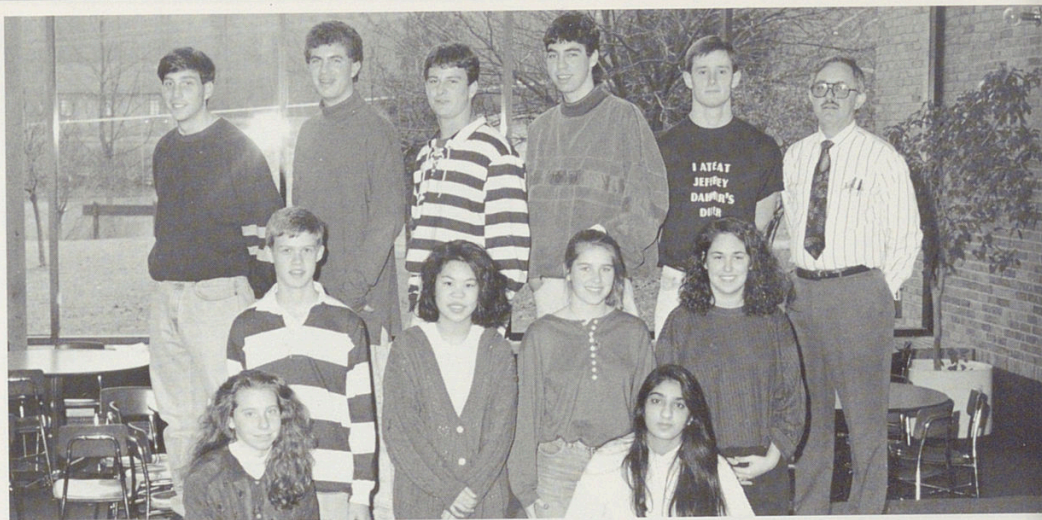


Mock Trial Team

Front Row: A. Mittman, S. Mather. **Middle Row:** D. Santschi, J. Ferng, B. Wilson, T. Comejo. **Back Row:** C. Kohn, A. Rothwell, J. Ullner, A. Dumes, R. Hengehold, Mr. Riesenberg.



Skills on Trial

Ten years ago, Sycamore began providing students with yet another activity to enable them to practice what they have learned in the classroom. Mr. Riesenberg stated, "The Cincinnati Bar Association asked if we would like to enter county-wide mock trial competition. I announced to my classes to see if there was student interest, and the response was overwhelming. The rest is judicial history!"

The mock trial club has come a long way in the past ten years. Now the competition has evolved into a time-consuming effort. Reisenberg described, "Mock trial competition involves six to eight weeks of preparation, two practice trials at the Court House, and two "live" trials at the Court House--one trial per week for four weeks."

Sycamore usually enters two teams in the contests. Each team consists of two plaintiff/prosecution lawyers, two defense lawyers, and three witnesses for each side. A panel of three lawyers preside and judge participants on poise, interest, relevant questions and answers, and effective communication skills.

Senior Jason Ullner, a member of the team, feels that it is a great way for future lawyers to get a feel of what it is all about. "Since the cases are written by Bar Association lawyers and based on real cases, I really felt I got realistic experience in reading and studying the cases."

The cases, according to Reisenberg, are based on present day issues about school matters such as students' free speech rights, free press, religion, search and seizure, students with HIV, and other amendment 5 and 14 issues.

This club is giving Sycamore students a chance to apply what they know in a real-life situation. Both students and advisors agree that its biggest benefit is that it provides participants with an excellent opportunity to analyze case materials and laws and apply that knowledge in a public speaking format.

by Courtney Shackelford

