



Winning way: Hawera High School young enterprise group Syntax Games created a maths-based computer game. From left, Harry Ng, Sean Wilkie and Zel Hawe. Absent Schalk Bower. **Photo: LAIRD HARPER**

YES to Hawera team

By LAIRD HARPER

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It was a nervous and painful wait for Young Enterprise Scheme regional winners Schalk Bower, Zel Hawe, Harry Ng and Sean Wilkie on Thursday night.

A last minute error in their annual report had all but sealed the fate of the Hawera High School team and cost them the title - or so they thought.

Mr Hawe, who is Syntax Games financial and communications manager, said it was his mistake and his head hung low as the winner of the report section was read out at the Plymouth Hotel.

"It all came down to the annual report. We realised we had made a mistake in it. I thought that was going to cost us," he said.

"We needed to win that section if we had any hope of winning the regional title.

"When I heard our team's name, I don't know, I just laughed."

Then moments later when they were announced as the best youth business in Taranaki the excitement was impossible to contain.

"Our teacher was out of her chair cheering. It was too good to be true."

Their product, Mathsper The Friendly Ghost - a maths-based computer game - was developed from their desire to help their younger brothers and sister succeed at school.

Despite the fact the game took a long time to develop, due to an unhealthy dose of procrastination, the game has been quite popular and created a possible

career path for at least two of them.

"Both Schalk and I are hoping to keep it going. It's a real option for us," Mr Hawe said.

The group will now hope to emulate the success of former Hawera High School students who, in 2007, took the national award with their 'Arctic Strip' which cools the body for up to eight hours.

"They had a really good marketing strategy but you just never know."

The boys received the coveted Young Enterprise Scheme trophy, \$500 and a \$1500 computer package for their school.

They will now head to the national awards in Wellington on December 1.

In Taranaki, the Shell Lion Foundation YES is co-ordinated by Education Taranaki.