

Far North projec

By Peter de Graaf

Students from the very Far North have cleaned up in the Young Enterprise Scheme Northland Trade Fair, with Kaitiaki and Taipa schools taking out five of the seven awards.

The student companies had already been through a grilling by a panel of business experts and the recent Trade Fair was their chance to test their sales pitches in public. The event was one of a series in the annual Lion Foundation Young Enterprise Scheme (YES), where secondary students set up a company, create real products or services, and make real profit or loss.

Ingenious products showcased by the teen entrepreneurs included a bikini that changes colour when wet, a high-tech device to stop you destroying your cellphone in the wash and a rack that lets you take your surfboard to the beach by bicycle.

The prize for best display, as chosen by 18-year-old Jade Larkan, last year's regional winner, went to Sheridan Hill of Taipa Area School.

Her company, Spill ('tipe' backwards), makes mandarin-scented lip balm with natural New Zealand-sourced ingredients, a beeswax base and no preservatives. Saturday's fair doubled as her product launch.

The 17-year-old sole trader said she was very excited to win and would put her prize money towards making more lip balm.

Sheridan settled on the mandarin flavour after surveying potential customers and also because the fruit was widely grown around Taipa. She plans a business degree next year at AUT.

The Kaitiaki College students behind Favoloso, Italian for "fabulous", took out the customer choice prize for their lively presentation of novelty bikinis which change colour and reveal patterns when wet.

They now face the challenge of raising \$5000 to get a commercial quantity of bikinis professionally made.

Team member Evie Davis said the trade fair was a door opener for the fledgling company as they had made contact with a businessman offering to help them over the next hurdle.

Young Enterprise co-



BALMY DISPLAY: Taipa Area School solo trader Sheridan Hill, 17, won the best display award for her mandarin-scented lip balm.

ordinator Sasha Webb said the slow sales on Saturday were a symptom of the slow retail climate.

"But that's reality right now in Northland and the rest of the country. Don't let that get you down. You have some fantastic products here," she said.

RESULTS

Customer choice: 1. Favoloso colour changing bikini, Kaitiaki College; 2. Spill mandarin lip balm, Sheridan Hill, Taipa Area School; 3. Tahī Wai bottled water, Dargaville High School.

Best display: 1. Spill mandarin lip balm, Sheridan Hill; 2. Revolutionary Records recording label, Kaitiaki Abundant Life School; 3 equal, Wrap & Gap heated hair-styling product bags, Whangarei Girls' High School, and Favoloso colour changing bikini.

PEDALLING PADDLER: Benjamin Walker demonstrates Pedal to