

CHS band pulls votes

DASHA KUPIENKO

Cambridge High School band of four, El Jay Hall, won audience's hearts and walked away from Smokefree Rockquest 2015 with the People's Choice Award.

The band placed second in the Waikato regional finals, and received a best song award with their hit *Lights On*. But they said they wouldn't have got that far without their fans voting.

Friends and year 13 students Stephen Watson (lead vocalist), Liam Jack Hall (drummer), Oli Fairbrother (bass), and Josh Mayo (lead guitarist) put the indie-pop together over a year ago.

Their inspiration includes Darwin Deez, and The Kooks.

“Our high energy and unique sound separates us from the rest”

Stephen Watson

“Our high energy and unique sound separates us from the rest,” said Stephen. “With Liam’s punk rock drumming style, Oli’s unique bass playing, my falsetto voice, all rounded off with Josh’s indie-style riffs, we create a defined sound of catchy up-beat music,” he said.

Stephen called El Jay Hall the “underdogs of the competition”.

They didn’t originally make the cut for the finals and entered at the very last minute because of



CHS band El Jay Hall, from left, Josh Mayo, Stephen Watson, Oli Fairbrother and Liam Hall.

PHOTO: SUPPLIED

a large number of voting supporters.

The guys admitted they were still shocked after getting so far in the competition.

From the top 30, the top nine were picked, but we didn’t make it. That’s when people texted to vote for us, and we got back in.” Liam said.

Liam and Stephen said the

crowd loved their music – some were “boogying” to their tunes.

“It [*Lights On*] was catchy. We know because after a sound check everyone was whistling it.”

The band received 12 hours worth of recording time at the iconic Roundhead recording studio in Auckland as their prize.

They were proud to be able to

record their songs in the same studio as world-famous bands.

“It was a cool experience. Big Bands such as The Who and the Rolling Stones recorded there – so just to go there was pretty crazy.” Liam said.

Good news for fans – the boys are planning to take a gap year after school and continue making sounds.