

THE ULTIMATE UNIVERSITY QUIZ

UCU WINS UNIVERSITY QUIZ FINALS

PHOTOS BY MIRIAM NAMUTEBI AND MPALANYI SS

By Dallen Namugga

Uganda Christian University (UCU) delivered a clinical, composed and relentless performance to win the Season Three Ultimate University Quiz finals, defeating a fearless Ndejje University side 330-270 in a high-stakes showdown yesterday.

This win placed Ndejje University second overall, followed by Busitema in third and Gulu University in fourth position.

The matchup revived memories of Season One, where UCU reached the finals, but agonisingly lost to Mbarara University of Science and Technology by a razor-thin margin. This time, they steered clear of defeat.

From the opening introductions to the last question of the wealth category, UCU carried a quiet hunger for victory.

The game opened with the money, economics and trade category, where both sides traded blows. Ndejje struck first and went ahead early, capitalising on UCU's misses on answers like the penny, insider trading and Lebanon's currency. At the end of Round One, Ndejje led 80-70.

Round Two (general knowledge) tightened the contest. UCU pulled through with quick correct answers on smallpox, the Masai Mara migration and International Monetary Fund leadership, but Ndejje maintained their edge with sharp responses on Damascus, JFK and Che Guevara. Ndejje extended their lead to 160-130 by the end of the round.

UCU'S GAME CHANGER

The momentum shifted violently in Round Three with science. UCU exploded with accuracy on points like phytoplankton, triple point, biodiversity, saltpeter, olivine, absolute zero, and the Paris Agreement.

Ndejje kept answering, but could not match UCU's hit rate. UCU overturned the deficit and stormed ahead with 250 points against Ndejje's 210, entering the final stretch with confidence and control.

The decisive moment came in the 'Wealth' Round, where questions were delivered separately to each team.

UCU were almost perfect, nailing wealthy personalities and their net worth. Their consistency pushed them further ahead, forcing Ndejje into a chase.

Ndejje answered strongly too, scoring a couple of personalities, but the gap created in Round Three proved too wide to close.

When the final scores appeared, 330 for UCU, 270 for Ndejje, the UCU bench erupted. A season of near-misses, tense qualifiers and tactical discipline ended with redemption. UCU walked away as champions of Season Three. Ndejje, newcomers who bulldozed their way to the finals, leave with second place and undeniable respect.



Front row: The governor Bank of Uganda, Michael Atingi-Ego (fifth-left) and Wanyama (fourth-left) handing a trophy to UCU student. **Standing at the back (L-R):** the acting director of corporate affairs of the Uganda Communication Commission, Emmanuel Nwoyombi; head of marketing Hariss International, Sam Hooper; the executive director of NEMA, Dr Barirega Akankwasah; the director Net Studios Africa, Godfrey Mutabazi; the head of public relations Capital Markets Authority, Lyn Tukei; the associate programme management UNEP, Mary Ssentongo; the corporate and sustainability coordinator at Hariss International, Comfort Ahumuza and the National Office co-ordinator at NEMA, Isaac Mugabi. This was at the awards ceremony at Vision Group's head offices in Kampala yesterday

PRIZES

UCU scooped a generous sh25m worth of equipment, with each team member and their coach taking home sh1m and a new laptop.

Ndejje University has taken home sh15m, with each of the four participants taking a cash prize of sh500,000 and a laptop, while Busitema University in third place, has taken sh10m and each participant getting a cash prize of sh300,000 and a tablet.

Each participant and coach, including those who dropped out in the first games got sh200,000.

HOW THE FINALISTS PLAYED

Yesterday's grand finale was a classic matchup of experience versus skill.

Ndejje's debut run was defined by aggression: fast starts, crisp teamwork and fearless buzzing that rattles opponents early.

UCU, by contrast, relied on experience, cautious openings, surgical precision in technical rounds and late-game control, notably in their previous games.

NDEJJE'S PERFORMANCE

Ndejje University had explosive openers and excellent buzz timing. In their quarter and semifinal games, they repeatedly grabbed early leads by nailing rapid-fire general knowledge and starter rounds. That early pressure forced opponents into riskier play.

Their team members co-ordinated quick signals and rarely clashed on answers; their result was clean, low-noise buzzing and fewer wasted interruptions. This made it easy for them to convert questions into easy points.

Whenever their opponents pushed back, Ndejje University shifted to

VISION GROUP BOSS SPEAKS OUT

Vision Group chief executive officer Don Wanyama used the award ceremony to celebrate the growth of the quiz, noting that the competition has expanded from 16 universities in 2023 to 18 institutions this year.

He praised the students for turning the quiz into a platform of "intellect, wit, teamwork and collaboration," and highlighted the intense matchups that defined the season, including the double-tie between Kyambogo and UCU and debutants Ndejje's narrow win over Soroti University.

Wanyama highlighted the enthusiasm from participants which has already inspired universities to revive quiz clubs, singling out Kampala University for rolling out the initiative across its campuses.

Wanyama also thanked the partners whose support has sustained the competition, extending special gratitude to Bank of Uganda for its "commitment to fostering an educated society".

He acknowledged the contributions of Parliament, Uganda Communications Commission, National Environment Management Authority, Harris International, Capital Markets Authority and Net Studios Africa, and applauded coaches for preparing teams to face "tough questions."

Wanyama noted that the quiz is more than an academic contest, it is a movement building critical thinkers and problem-solvers who can contribute meaningfully to Uganda's future.

speed over depth: shorter answers, faster rebounds and aggressive point-taking rather than waiting for perfect certainty. This worked against teams that gave up early leads.

Their only weakness was depth during technical rounds. They sometimes faltered on science/ICT/logic categories, where UCU picked up ground. Ndejje was lightning-fast with starters but had to survive the technical rounds.

UCU'S PERFORMANCE

UCU was an experienced team, methodical and technical, slow in the start but dominated hard categories and finished strongly.

They measured their openings.

UCU often conceded early rounds, but recovered via accuracy; they were at their best in middle-to-late rounds where tougher, technical questions rewarded depth over speed.

UCU had intellectual discipline, which rewarded high-value technical categories (science, current affairs, logic) and rarely gave cheap points away.

Both their scoring pattern and penalty avoidance were textbook.

UCU's answering rhythm showed long-game thinking: they let other teams tire themselves, then exploit errors later. This made them dangerous in extended matches.

Their only weakness was the slow starts. When opponents like Ndejje

Sponsors

The quiz has mainly been sponsored by Bank of Uganda in partnership with Uganda Communications Commission, National Environment Management Authority, Parliament of Uganda, Harris International and Capital Markets Authority, powered by Net Studios Africa.

sprint early and build a sizeable lead. UCU was forced into riskier play than they prefer. Although they often pulled it back, but the changes the dynamics.

PREVIOUS CHAMPIONS

UCU joins a list of champions that includes Mbarara University of Science and Technology, which defeated Soroti University to win Season One (2023) and Soroti University which beat Lira University to be crowned Season Two champions last year.

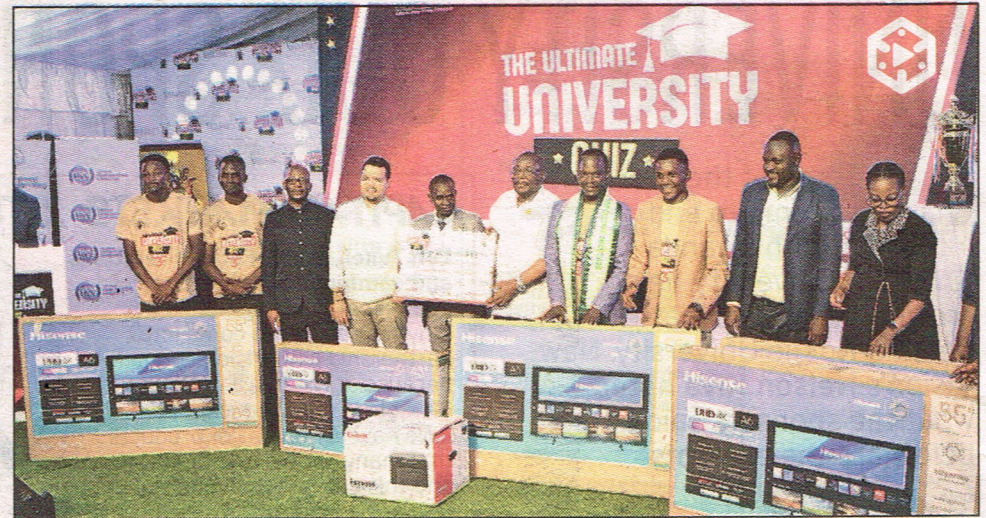
Before the grand finale, Gulu University head-to-head with Busitema in a third-place play offs. In this, Gulu emerged victorious with 280 points, coming in third-place and fourth place with 240 points.

The quiz has grown into Uganda's most competitive educational platform, one that has transformed classrooms, inspired universities and developed critical thinkers.

All Ultimate University Quiz events were aired on all Vision Group stations, Bukedde TV 1 and LUO TV and TV WEST. They were also aired on UBC TV.



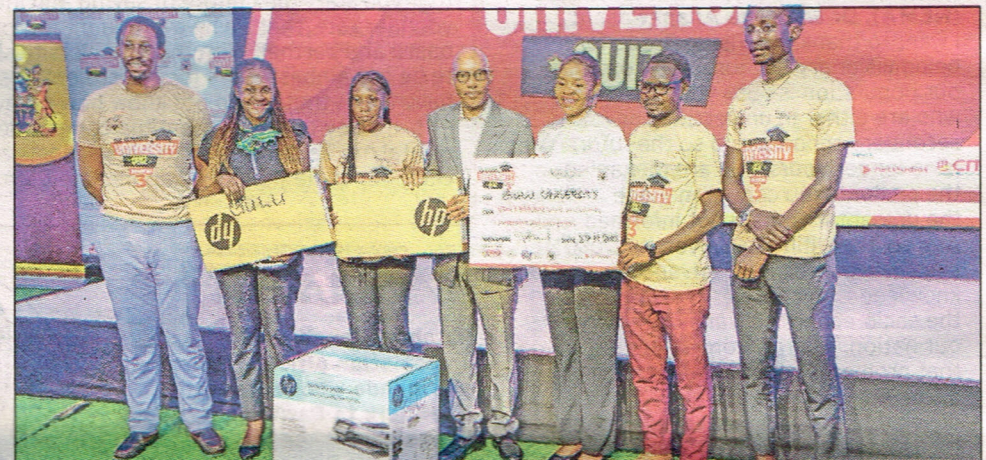
The senior information officer at Parliament, Ibrahim Manzil (third-left) and the acting director of corporate affairs at Uganda Communication Commission, Emmanuel Nwoyomba (fourth left); handing gifts to the vice-chancellor of Ndejje University, Rev. Canon Prof. Olivia Nassaka Banja (fifth-left) and the students after emerging second in the Ultimate University Quiz yesterday



The executive director of NEMA, Dr Barirega Akankwasah (third-left) and the head of marketing at Hariss International, Sam Hooper (fourth left), handing gifts to Busitema University students who emerged third in the Ultimate University Quiz. (Scan picture with Vision Digital Experience to watch video)



L-R: Vision Group's deputy editor-in-chief, Felix Osike, chief finance officer Wilson Kamba and the deputy managing director, Gervase Ndyababo, during the quiz



The director Net Studios Africa, Godfrey Mutabazi (centre) and the head of public relations and communication at Capital Markets Authority, Lyn Tukei (third-right), handing gifts to Gulu University students who emerged fourth in the quiz

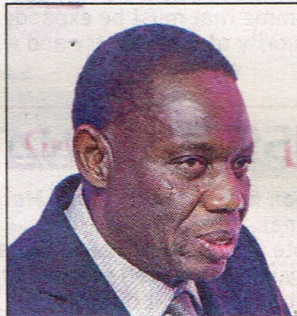
Ultimate University Quiz is grooming future experts

Tonight, we celebrate more than a competition, we celebrate a vision that began as a spark and has now ignited a national movement. What started as a modest idea three years ago has evolved into a transformative platform, one that educates, inspires, and empowers Uganda's brightest minds.

SHARED PURPOSE

This journey reflects the essence of progress: innovation, resilience and partnership. The collaboration between the Bank of Uganda and Vision Group is no coincidence; it is anchored in shared purpose.

At the Bank of Uganda, our mission is clear: to promote price stability and a sound financial system in support of Uganda's socio-economic transformation. For Vision Group, it is to generate and distribute content that advances society. Together, these missions converge



MICHAEL ATINGI-EGO

in the Ultimate University Quiz (TUUQ), a beacon of intellectual empowerment.

TUUQ is more than a televised quiz; it is a strategic intervention aligned with national priorities. It promotes economic and financial literacy, demystifying concepts such as inflation, interest rates, budgeting, markets and financial stability concepts that

shape everyday life.

It builds trust through transparency by humanising central banking, strengthens public engagement and nurtures talent for Uganda's future financial sector and policy spaces. Contestants gain visibility, confidence, and exposure to real-world economic thinking and problem-solving, contributing directly to the country's talent pipeline.

The initiative also amplifies sustainability awareness, aligning with our strategic plan's commitment to inclusive growth and ESG (environmental social governance) principles. TUUQ's programming, university research prizes, and partnerships directly support the objectives of the Sustainability Standards Certification Initiative (SSCI). By stimulating academic interest in economics and public policy, TUUQ elevates national conversations and inspires universities to innovate.

Beyond mastery of content,

what truly inspires me is the organisational excellence you displayed. In every round, you demonstrated the power of diverse knowledge creating competitive advantage, blending specialists from economics, finance, and current affairs. You mastered collaborative competition, that magical mix of individual confidence and genuine humility, knowing precisely when to defer to a teammate's stronger knowledge to ensure collective success.

You proved that speed and accuracy under pressure matters processing complex information and making rapid decisions, a capability that distinguishes effective leaders in volatile business environments. This competition has served as a high-impact, real-time test for the market, highlighting the talent best equipped for Uganda's future challenges.

We stand at a pivotal moment, navigating the age of Artificial Intelligence (AI),

where machines excel at computation. Yet global studies affirm that humans outshine AI in adapting to change and novelty. The critical skills you demonstrated creative problem-solving, intellectual agility across disciplines and collaborative thinking – are the uniquely human capacities that will deliver Uganda's future.

CULTURE CHANGE ROADMAP

This is why the Bank of Uganda actively champions these traits. Our Strategic Plan 2022–2027 prioritises building a future-fit culture through a Culture Change Roadmap and the development of a dedicated Innovation Strategy. This is not theoretical; we are implementing concrete initiatives such as:

I hope that the discussions and questions in TUUQ have helped our community better understand the central bank's role. Allow me to reaffirm a cornerstone of our mandate: price stability. The Bank of Uganda pursues an inflation

target of 5%, a level that safeguards households from the erosion of purchasing power while providing businesses and investors with a predictable environment for long-term planning.

A stable inflation rate is not just a statistic; it is a promise a promise that your incomes retain value, your savings remain secure, and your investments thrive in a climate of certainty. This is how we build confidence, foster growth, and sustain transformation.

As we close this chapter, let us remember: TUUQ is not just about winners; it is about a generation equipped to lead Uganda into a future of stability, sustainability, and shared prosperity. Your challenge now is to take this intellectual muscle and apply it. Embrace the uncertainty ahead not as a threat to fear, but as the ultimate opportunity where the human mind truly excels.

*The author is the governor
Bank of Uganda*