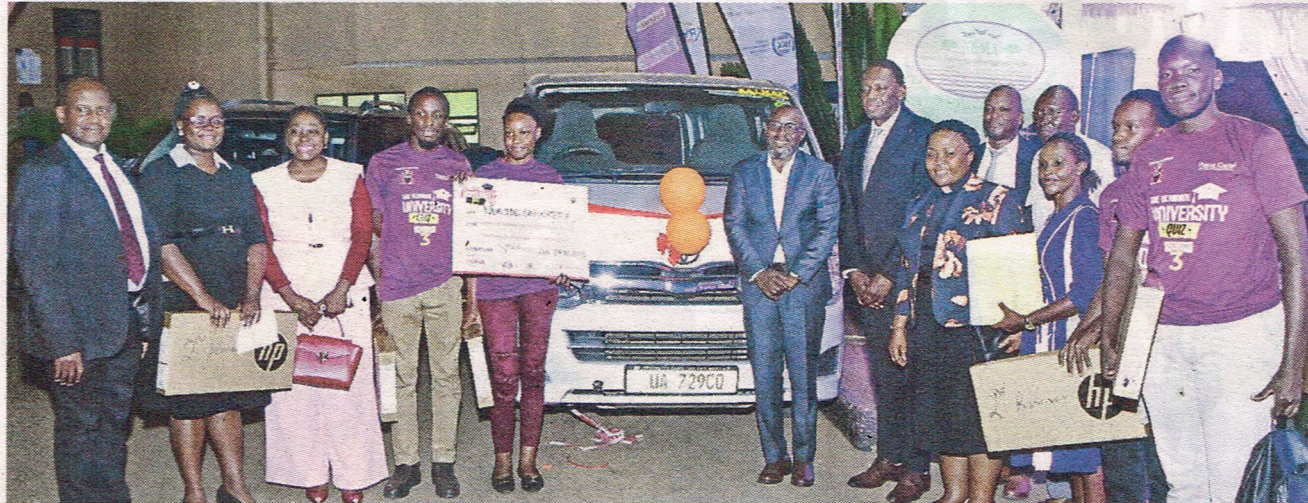


# Winning teams reveal techniques at core of their success

PHOTO BY MIRIAM NAMUTEBI

## SEASON THREE WRAPPED UP

On Thursday, Uganda Christian University (UCU) was crowned the Ultimate University Quiz Season Three winner. Ndejje University came in second, while Busitema University placed third. The quiz's finalists stepped back to reflect on what pushed them this far, and what other universities can learn if they hope to compete at this level. During the awards ceremony on Thursday at the Vision Group headquarters in Kampala, the participants' advice, drawn from weeks of pressure, strategy and self-correction, paints a clear picture: Preparation, diversity, confidence and teamwork are the real currency of success. They spoke to **Dallen Namugga**



Ndejje University secretary Can. Dr. Charles Kahigiriza (left); Vision Group CEO Don Wanyama (sixth-left); Bank of Uganda governor Michael Atingi-Ego (front row, fourth-right) and Ndejje University vice-chancellor the Rev. Can. Prof. Olivia Nassaka Banja (front row, third-right), with other officials, university administrators as well as students in front of a van they co-funded with quiz winnings as the first runner-up team at the Ultimate University Quiz Season Three. This was during an awards ceremony at Vision Group headquarters in Kampala on Thursday

## QUIZ FINALISTS SHARE WINNING STRATEGIES



**Davis Lakica, captain, Ndejje University**

We did not have as much time to prepare, but we made a strategic decision; we chose a diverse team. We made sure the students were from different faculties so each one could cover a specific field. That widens your chances of getting more questions right.

My advice to teams that dropped off is simple: Believe in yourself. Many teams lost because of self-doubt. You need team bonding, too. If I were to improve anything next time, it would be more preparation and deeper bonding, because some answers we missed were due to debating. We were not on the same page at certain moments. Team chemistry matters.



**THE REV. CAN. PROF. OLIVIA NASSAKA BANJA, VICE-CHANCELLOR, NDEJJE UNIVERSITY**

I am glad my students got the opportunity to take part in this quiz. It allowed them to share their knowledge but also exposed them to real-world challenges. This competition has built their confidence and their networks; things that are useful beyond the classroom.

In preparation, we coached them and did dry runs. They showed resilience and determination. Our strength is engineering, but we selected students from other fields so they could handle the wide range of questions asked. That balance made a difference.



**Timothy Kisembo, captain, UCU**

What I noticed is that most teams had four people, but in the three who played, there was usually one who was not very strong. Many relied on the person in the middle who knew most of the answers. That is not balanced. You need to study the range of topics they release beforehand and divide them. Let everyone take on a niche.

Last year, we lost because of the economics and finance round. In season one, it was the science and technology round. This year, we made sure to fix that by selecting people strong in those areas. We also had dry runs and started intense preparations two weeks before the competition.



**JACOB ENGWAU ERYATU, UCU**

University teams should build a genuine passion for knowledge. You need people who enjoy learning and sharing what they know; that energy shows on the national stage. The intensity here is serious. Your team has to be ready for that pressure.

Teams should also identify their strongest areas early. Every team needs members with clear subject strengths they can rely on. Encourage wide reading. Anything your eyes land on helps, whether it is novels or biographies. A sharp mind comes from constant exposure.

Lastly, balance matters. Find something that keeps you steady, whether it is sports or another hobby. It helps with focus. And above all, trust God and your abilities. With that, any university can come in strong and win.



**Flavia Nakirija, Ndejje University**

I want to tell anyone who wants to return next season not to give up; have team spirit. Keep doing continuous research so that your mind grows in different subjects. That is what makes you stand out.

This was our first time in this competition, so we had to understand quickly how things are done. Our coach kept telling us to be fearless and confident. Confidence is everything. Many dropped out because they lacked it. Once you show fear, your score drops. So, keep the team spirit alive, work with your colleagues and aim higher.

**Francis Byaruhanga, UCU coach**

We were set up for success from the word go. Everything we did along the way was about preparation, prayer and being relentless. We had to be confident at every stage. The teams we faced were tough. In fact, I believe we had the toughest games of the competition.

Our strategies were simple: put together a balanced team, build a fighting spirit and keep God at the centre of everything. Those three elements kept us locked in. My advice to teams trying again next season is this: review your mistakes, fix them and come back better.



**Emmanuel Nabimanya, captain, Gulu University (fourth place)**

As a university, we always have our own quiz competitions, which help us pick the right participants. We break down topics and share them with everyone so

they gain a wide knowledge base. When topics are broken down, it becomes easier to remember things. My advice to teams is simple: come prepared and involve God in your preparations. It helped us a lot throughout this competition.