

Modest champions attribute victory in IT contest to 'pure luck'

BY OLIVIA LEE

NILAI: When a teacher selected three students to represent their school for *The Star's* Comquiz 2004, it was because they sat in the front row of their class.

Little did the three – Roy Chai, Merllyn Khoo and Then Kai Hao of SM Batu Lintang in Kuching – know that they would emerge champions of the IT contest.

"It's not as if we were picked because we are IT savvy. It was the first time our school was taking part and our Mathematics teacher chose us.

"We are still amazed we made it this far. We never thought we'd go beyond the preliminary round," said 17-year-old Chai, who was also the top scorer among the participants in Kuching.

On how many hours they spent studying for the quiz, the

boys laughed and candidly said they did not study at all and attributed their victory to "pure luck."

As it turns out, the secret was that Khoo's and Then's fathers are IT teachers.

"I grew up with a lot of IT terminologies around me. I suppose that helped us a bit," said Khoo, an aspiring audio engineer, after his team was announced the champion at Inti College Malaysia here yesterday.

Each of them received full scholarships of up to RM11,000 for pre-university or foundation studies at Inti College.

Among the other goodies they bagged were a Canon LiDE 20 scanner, Nokia 3100 mobile phone, Digi Beyond Prepaid SIM pack plus a RM100 reload coupon, and Microsoft and Eastpak products.

Contestants from Chong Hwa Independent High School in

Kuala Lumpur emerged first runner-up while SM Hin Hua in Klang was second runner-up. Contestants from both teams also won the same full scholarship.

The fourth placing went to the team from SM Katholik in Petaling Jaya.

All four schools will receive a personal computer, printer, camera and scanner.

Among those present at the finals yesterday were Deputy Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Datuk Kong Cho Ha, *The Star* group editorial/education adviser Datuk Ng Poh Tip and Inti College Malaysia president Tan Yew Sing.

Comquiz 2004 was jointly organised by *The Star*, the Education Ministry and Inti Foundation. The main prize sponsors were Inti College, Microsoft, Brunnsfield, Canon, DiGi and Eastpak.



TOP TEAM: (From left) Then, Chai and Khoo showing off their trophies after they were announced the winners of Comquiz 2004 at Inti College Malaysia in Nilai yesterday.