



Facebook's positives win the day

TWGHs Kap Yan Directors' College edges out rivals in tough debate, writes **Wong Yat-hei**



TWGHs KAP YAN DIRECTORS' COLLEGE TEAM (FROM LEFT) JONATHAN CHAN, GRACE CHUNG CHEUK-YAN AND ALEX FUNG CHEUK-WANG AT LAST FRIDAY'S DEBATE. PHOTO: EDMOND SO

In the fourth round of the 11th Nesta-SCMP Inter-School Debating Competition, TWGHs Kap Yan Directors' College edged out China Holiness Church Living Spirit College on the motion: "Facebook enriches our social life."

The debate took place last Friday at TWGHs Kap Yan Directors' College who were the affirmative side.

Adjudicator Ilona Pochwyt, a native English teacher from Pentecostal Lam Hon Kwong School, said it was tough to decide the winner since both teams did very well.

"The affirmative's rebuttals were excellent. [They were very] convincing," she said. "When the negative challenged that Facebook causes cyber bullying, the affirmative rebutted that it is Facebook users, not Facebook, that play a significant role in the bullying. This is a great point that is hard to argue against."

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Despite the loss, the team from China Holiness Church Living Spirit College earned praise from adjudicators for their excellent research and good use of examples. "It was hard to decide. I think this motion is more difficult for the negative side to argue. Their debaters had put a lot of effort into collecting facts, figures, and examples to support their case which I think was impressive," Pochwyt said.

The other adjudicator, Mary Tuip, a native English teacher from Pui Kiu College, said all debaters had



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carried out their tasks with great determination and enthusiasm.

Both teams argued fiercely over whether Facebook increases interaction between people. The affirmative team said Facebook offers a platform for people with the same interests to get together and share their views. It is also very popular, with millions of users around the world, they said.

The students from China Holiness Church Living Spirit College countered that Facebook users may be involved in other activities like playing games, instead of interacting, with each other.

They raised several points criticising the social networking tool. Their second speaker, Form Seven student Ron Cheung Tsz-kin,

suggested that Facebook could be used for cyber-bullying and to invade the privacy of its users. "Facebook makes huge profits from collecting and selling personal information to advertisers," he said.

Third speaker of the winning team, Form Five student Jonathan Chan, fought off the arguments by saying that Facebook users can decide what information they want to share on the site.

"It is inevitable that Facebook makes huge profits but this is not related to whether it can enhance our social life," Jonathan said. "Moreover, in this age of advanced technology, interaction in the cyber world should be part of our social life. Facebook enriches social life because people are willing to share their pictures, videos and feelings."

The contest, jointly organised by the Native English Speaking Teachers' Association and the *South China Morning Post*, is sponsored by the Hong Kong Jockey Club.

say it

Phrases from this story

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