

debate Division Two final



St Stephen's has last word

A consistent team argument pays off for Stanley school during a packed final, writes **Wong Yat-hei**

A debate on the motion, "Space is the Final Frontier", took place before a packed audience of 200 people at a suitable setting - inside Hong Kong's Science Museum.

St Stephen's College, Stanley, won the Division Two Science Alive Nesta-SCMP English Debating Final, beating St Paul's Convent School, who backed the motion.

Representing St Paul's were Form Three student Eunice Yiu, Erica Kwan Siu-huen, who is in Form Four, and fifth-former Kathy Wu Lok-yiu.

St Stephen's team comprised fifth-formers Amy Pang Lok-yee, Kenneth Wong Chun-ho and Cheung Lok-him.

The debate was adjudicated by scientist Brendan Mullan, of the astrophysics department at Pennsylvania State University, in the United States, and Gina Green and Stephen Cooley, who are both members of Hong Kong's Education Bureau.

St Paul's argued that space is the final frontier because humans will need to turn to space when the

Earth runs out of resources eventually.

However, St Stephen's responded by saying that there was no such thing as a final frontier because our knowledge was constantly evolving. There are many important frontiers still to be explored, such as the bottom of the Earth's ocean, and the human brain.

The adjudicators awarded victory to St Stephen's because they felt St Paul's were unable to effectively rebut their opponents' argument that there should not be a final frontier.

Green praised St Stephen's for their strong argument and rebuttals. "The negative team were consistent with their team line throughout the debate," she said.

Cheung Lok-him, the third speaker for the college, was named the best speaker.

"It's a pleasure to listen to Lok-him," Cooley said. "He spoke in a relaxed and confident manner and rebutted arguments from the

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the former Soviet Union in the 1960s. The negative side could have rebutted that [argument]."

St Paul's suggested there are plenty of resources in outer space, but their rivals questioned the existence of those resources.

Mullan said the rebuttal could have been more convincing. "Science has proved that there's an abundance of natural resources, such as gold, in outer

space. The problem is whether human technology is able to access them, and the cost of doing so."

The contest is organised by the Native English Speaking Teachers' Association and the *South China Morning Post*.

affirmative [team] point by point."

Cooley reminded speakers not to wear a watch while speaking because this was against the rules of the debate.

Mullan noticed flaws in the arguments of both teams.

"The affirmative side suggested space technology brings harmony to the world as it strengthens co-operation between nations. But this is not necessarily true; space technology used to be a military competition between the US and



Amy Pang (left), of St Stephen's College, argues against the motion; (bottom) her teammates Kenneth Wong and Cheung Lok-him; (above right) Erica Kwan and Kathy Wu, and (inset right) Eunice Yiu, of St Paul's Convent School. Photos: Thomas Yau

say it

audience (n)
聽眾

flaws (n)
漏洞

astrophysics (n)
天體物理學

harmony (n)
和諧

resources (n)
資源
military competition (n)
軍備競賽

