

Duo of TCS-MMS win Ad Club-BL quiz hands down

Our Bureau
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A clinical performance right through by Mr R. Jayakanthan of TCS and Mr Gopal Kidao of Madras Metallurgical Services (MMS) saw the duo win the 11th edition of the Ad Club-Business Line quiz hands down, leading the second-placed team, Citibank, comprising Mr Rajen Prabhu and Mr G. Swaminathan, by 36 points.

Team Clueless, contrary to their name, with Mr Ramkumar Shankar of the Sammar group and Mr Arvind Ramaiah of Nokia, actually ran the first-placed team close at one point but got kayoed by some negative points and finished the second runner-up.

A record 77 teams turned up to participate in the quiz at Hotel Saveria here, conducted by Mr Mitesh Agarwal, (himself a past winner of the Ad Club-BL Quiz), showing how much the quiz has gained in stature over the years. With teams streaming in from Bangalore, Visakhapatnam and Hyderabad, competition was stiff. The quiz was presented by Union Bank of India.

The veteran quiz duo of Kidao and Jayakanthan first swept the written preliminary round. Six two-member teams made it to the finals. Participants were not short on imagination for their team names, what with Boxwallahs

and Tea Kadai Bench throwing their hats in the ring.

CEREBRAL QUIZ

Mr Agarwal, who has conducted 200 quizzes in many forums, and is chief technologist for Sun Microsystems, Retail Business, set a very different and cerebral quiz for the teams of quizzers. No guesswork or frivolous questions here and nor did he resort to gimmickry — it was hard, serious quizzing and the teams rose to the challenge.

The first round was piecing together several covers of *The Economist*. Mr Agarwal, who is part of the well-known quiz team, Metaquizziks, showed two provocative covers with the cover headlines blanked out — one was of two camels mating (*The trouble with mergers*) and one a caricature of a woman stripping (*The stripping of Ma Bell*, referring to AT&T being carved up).

The quiz master innovated on the format — any team was allowed to punch the buzzer if they knew the answer which they had to write on a sheet and show the quiz master. A correct answer would get plus ten points and the question could pass over to the team whose direct question it was. That way, Mr Agarwal explained, no team could carp of getting a difficult direct question when they knew the an-



Winning smile: The quiz master, Mr Mitesh Agarwal, congratulates Mr Gopal Kidao of MMS and Mr R. Jayakanthan of TCS, the winners of the Ad Club-Business Line Quiz 2009, in Chennai on Saturday. — Bijoy Ghosh

swer to an earlier question. As he said: "I didn't want any showmanship in the quiz and deliberately kept the quiz at a high level as there were so many good teams participating."

VISUAL TWISTERS

In the visual and theme

rounds Mr Agarwal unleashed several mind benders. One visual round showed several seemingly unconnected videos — from a documentary, a clip from a Tamil movie, a Vicks ad, and a song from *Slumdog Millionaire*. The Citibank team did get close with some brilliant guesswork —

the connect was Piyush Pandey of O&M and his sister Ila Arun and her daughter Ishita Arun. Pandey conceived the documentary, Ila Arun sang the song *Ringa Ringa* while little Ishita was the kid in the Vicks ad and the actor in the movie *Snegithiye*.

There were more such, like

guessing the theme of several unrelated answers: Komatsu, Temasek, 3M, BHP Billiton — turns out, all take their names from cities or places of origin.

One question on Bobby Fischer had the Chennai audience stumped for a while — what product did the chess legend use in the US that he

couldn't find in Iceland: Amrutanjan Pain Balm, which he asked V. Anand to get for him! And, what is the most emailed attachment of all time in India, pushing even Shah Rukh Khan to second place? The confession letter of Ramalinga Raju of Satyam. Appropriately, the answer from the audience was given by a Satyam employee.

PRIZES

The top team won Rs 25,000 in cash, LCD TVs from Samsung, watches from Helvetia, mobile phones from Wavetel, printers from Modern Computers and several other gift hampers.

The Title Sponsor was Union Bank of India, Associate Sponsors, Steel Authority of India and Nippon Paints, Academic Partner, Pearson Education and Writing Instruments partner, Parker (Luxor Writing Instruments Pvt Ltd). The other prize sponsors were Samsung, Valore, Tibre, Raintree, Henkel, Modern Computers, Wavetel, Sinclair, Icare Communications and Helvetia.

Mr N. Murali, Managing Director, *The Hindu*, Mr Ramesh Rangarajan, Director, *The Hindu*, Mr K. Venugopal, Joint Editor, *The Hindu Business Line*, and Mr R. Seshadri, President, Ad Club Madras, were also present at the quiz and gave away the prizes.