

They want to be rich

Three young investors play the money game right, and reap the rewards. **DANIEL BUENAS** reports

THEY were only students, but when they walked out of Singapore Press Holdings' Toa Payoh office yesterday, they were also millionaires. Well, at least virtual millionaires — students Hu Shu Kai, Alvin Huang and Alvin Lim were the top three winners of a Cashflow board game competition that was held over the weekend.

The competition, organised by the Nanyang Technological University Investment Interactive Club in conjunction with SPH and supported by RichDad Asia, aimed to pit students from the different schools against each other to see who would be the "richest".

Mr Hu, a final year accountancy student at Nanyang Technological University (NTU) won the top prize, ending the game with a paycheck of \$21.2 million. Mr Huang, a second year business student at Singapore Management University (SMU) and Mr Lim, a first year Ngee Ann Polytechnic banking and finance student, won second and third prize, respectively.

Each winner walked away with a set of the boardgame, along with \$100 to \$500 in cash.

The Cashflow game, a brainchild of well-known author and financial self-help guru Robert Kiyosaki, aims to teach accounting, finance, and investing principles to its players.

Around 140 students from four polytechnics and three universities took part in the competition, which was held over two days at SPH's offices in Toa Payoh.

Mr Hu, who is also working part-time as a financial adviser, believes that the game teaches some principles that can be applied in real life. He was also the winner of other Cashflow competitions that were held previously in his university.

"In my second year of studies, I realised that I wanted to be really rich," Mr Hu said. "Not just earning two or eight thousand dol-

lars a month, but earning something like \$20,000 a month." He added that he had switched from pursuing engineering to accountancy for this very reason.

"I want to be rich for my parents and my loved ones, so that they can enjoy life and walk into a store and buy things without cost being a consideration," he said.

In order to reach his goal, Mr Hu plans to become a full-time financial adviser after he graduates.

Second-prize winner Mr Huang, who started playing the game about five years ago, said that the concepts provided in the game are "pretty general", although they could be applied to real life situations.

Even though he is only a second year student, Mr Huang, who is also part of his school's investment club, said that he earns between \$2,000 and \$3,000 a month in "passive income" from his own Internet business.

He said that eventually, he would like to grow his business or move into helping to manage his family's business.

Mr Lim, the third prize winner, was a dark horse in the competition, having never played the game before he decided to take part.

"I didn't join to win the prizes or anything. I joined merely for fun, because it looked like it was something interesting," he said.

Mr Lim said that the two main points that he felt people could take away from the game was the need to invest and to generate passive income in order to "get a better life".

Although just 18, Mr Lim said that he is already working part-time for a leading management consultancy, and he hopes to one day join their ranks.

"I'll like to become an investment banker for a few years, and then move into management consulting, because I like to travel and it looks pretty cool," he said.

Eugene Soo, president of NTU's Investment Interactive Club, said that the game was



Well on their way: From left, the top three winners of the Cashflow board game competition held over the weekend: Alvin Huang, Hu Shu Kai and Alvin Lim

increasing in popularity among tertiary institutions.

"We did some research and found that there are actually some clubs that play the game individually in the polys and universities," he said. "We wanted to be a pioneer and pit them against each other."

He added that, playing the game with friends was very different from playing with strangers, especially when there were actual cash prizes involved.

"The atmosphere was quite competitive,

and you get the chance to see all sorts of people and their strategies they use when they played the game," he said. "I personally think that there are some real-life applications that can be taken."

He also pointed out that the students came from a variety of disciplines, and not just business-related fields.

"I think that's because financial literacy is not limited to those in the finance industry. Anyone out there can take an interest in it," he said.

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