

# Coaches say Bentsen won debate between candidates

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Editorial Editor

Members and coaches from nine of the nation's top collegiate debate teams overwhelmingly chose Texas Sen. Lloyd Bentsen as the winner of last night's vice presidential debate.

The nine schools are competing in the Kentucky Thoroughbred Roundrobin Classic, hosted by the UK debate team.

The judges of the nine schools unanimously chose Bentsen as last night's winner, while debaters chose the Texas senator over Indiana Sen. Dan Quayle by an 11-3 margin.

"Quayle seemed nervous and unprepared throughout the debate," said David Coale, an economics junior at Harvard. "He seemed very unprepared on issues he had not been prepared for."

While a lot of the issues and details "get lost in the shuffle" in presidential debates, Coale said "you get the feeling (Bentsen) is cool under pressure."

Dallas Perkins, one of Harvard University's coaches, said for the first 40 minutes of the debate Quayle appeared very calm, but "then he got rattled" when Bentsen made several attacks on the Reagan administration and then told him, "Senator, you're no Jack Kennedy."

Perkins said Quayle failed to address the character issue that has dogged him since he was selected as the Republican vice presidential running mate in August.

"If character is more important (to voters than issues), Quayle did very little to alleviate any concerns they had," Perkins said.

J.W. Patterson, coach of UK's debate team, said Bentsen addressed specific issues, while Quayle retreated to talking about broad, general subjects such as "motherhood and apple pie."

"Bentsen came across as a little more compassionate with the have-nots than Quayle did," Patterson said.

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Although Quayle did not address the issues, Patterson said the junior Indiana senator should have improved his image in the eyes of the American voters.

One of Patterson's debaters, however, disagreed.

T.A. McKinney, a political science sophomore who was the top novice debater in the nation last year, said he voted for Quayle because of the tough foreign policy stance he presented toward the Soviet Union.

"For me foreign policy was the most important issue, and Quayle presented himself as being tougher with the Soviet Union," McKinney said.

Quayle was asked three separate times by last night's panelists about his presidential qualifications, and McKinney said that could have helped the GOP candidate.

"It seemed to me the the public tonight might have gotten on (Quayle's) side because of the re-

peated questioning (of his qualifications)," he said.

Martin Loeber, a political science and economics senior at Baylor University, said since Quayle did not make any major blunders in the debate he came away the winner.

Although last night's meeting between the two candidates in Omaha, Neb., was officially called a debate, many of the debaters and coaches who watched it said it was little more than two simultaneous press conferences.

"Neither one of the candidates seemed to really address the issues," said Sherry Hall, one of Harvard University's coaches.

Patterson said it is difficult to judge last night's event as a true debate because "every time when they'd get going they would switch to the other issue."

In order to test the candidates' forensic skills, Patterson said the two candidates should have been allowed a follow-up question.