

Another look at Miss Universe pageant False hair, bad treatment star behind the scenes

By JADA LOU TOO

CLEM LUE YAT can now boast that he is a hair stylist to the queens. Considered to be the leading expert on hair-weaving, the Trini born wizard with the comb was responsible for the hairstyle of the newly crowned Miss Universe, Mpule Kwelagobe.

The Botswana beauty won the title on Wednesday last, beating some 83 other beauties from around the world.

Hers was an intricate up-do style with small curls neatly pinned on the top of her head.

It took ten minutes to perfect and it was what she wanted, he said.

Trading secrets with Newsday, Lue Yat said that Kwelagobe's hair incorporated the use of "human hair" extensions in both dark brown and two gold lengths to match the colour of her gown.

"I am so happy for her," he said. "She was one of the nicest girls in the pageant. Whenever I had her hair to do she would just wait patiently for me to finish, never pushing or hurrying me up. She was really a nice girl who deserved to win," he emphasised.

He not only worked his magic on the new Miss Universe, but also did the hair for the first



HAIR STYLIST to the Queen: Trinidadian Clem Lue Yat putting some finishing touches on the new Miss Universe, Mpule Kwelagobe before the Pageant.



LUE YAT posed with the first runner up, Philippines, Miriam Quiambao

runner up, Miss Philippines, Miriam Quiambao, as well as some of the ten finalists— Miss India, Gul Panag, Miss Ghana, Akuba Cudjoe and Miss Venezuela, Carolina Indriago.

For the night, many of the delegates wore hair extensions including Miss Japan, Satomi Agawa, whose strand by strand extensions kept falling out whenever she combed her hair.

Miss Mexico, Nigeria, Honduras, Curacao and Bahamas also had their hair "looking the part" with extensions made from human hair.

Although he did not gain financially from the Pageant, the prestige of having worked on the new Miss Universe's hair will bring him added fame in his adopted home of New York, he surmised.

But for him, and many of the 40 stylists, the pageant was not all glitz and glamour.

Apart from the hard work they also had to put up with scant disregard on the part of certain Miss Universe Inc. officials.

Lue Yat said that although they were given strict directives to comply with the girls' requests, they were told that the hairstyles were "too high".

"They told us to flatten the hair down. But the girls wanted their hair up."

He said that he had to stand up for himself and explained to the official that the girls' hair would be as they wanted it to be.

Although admitting that he was very proud of his work, he lamented that the treatment meted out by Miss Universe's security officials was poor and uncalled for.

"We were treated badly...like second hand citizens," he said.

"One woman came into the dressing room and barked at us telling us that we could not take pictures. It was rude because we all volunteered our time and should not have been treated like that," he added.

Shortly after the pageant, several hairstylists also complained that they were badly treated.

"We were not even given water to drink," said one.

"It was terrible. One girl fainted and we were working round-the-clock doing as much as five girls at one time and they did not offer us a snack or a drink," said another.

Some of the 40 stylists also complained that after all their hard work they were not able to see the show.

"Imagine that they gave us a 12 inch screen TV which was not working. After a few days, they finally gave us a 14 inch TV. But can you imagine 40 people trying to look at the show on a little TV like that?" they complained.

Nonetheless, the stylists, including Lue Yat, said that they felt privileged having worked for the prestigious Miss Universe Pageant and will use the experience to further their careers.



BACKSTAGE WITH MPULE: Newly crowned Miss Universe Mpule Kwelagobe checks to make sure that her Oscar de la Renta swimsuit fits just right, before making her run for the swimsuit competition, on Wednesday night at the Universe Centre, Chaguaramas. In the background are several of the other delegates awaiting their turn to go on stage.



EVEN THE pretty Venezuelan, Carolina Indriago had her hair done by Lue Y