

## Southern Adventist student in finals of 'Jeopardy!'

By Michael Stone

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Hans von Walter already knows this week's "Jeopardy! College Championship" winner since the competition was taped in October.

But be patient, he said, because contractually he can't discuss the outcome before airtime.

### IF YOU WATCH

\* What: Hans von Walter, a junior at Southern Adventist University, will be competing against two other students in the "Jeopardy! College Championship" finals

\* When: 7:30 p.m. tonight-Friday on ABC

\* Outcome: The student with the highest cumulative score from the two-day competition will win.

"It's been so funny because I've had so many people try to get [who the winner is] out of me," the 20-year-old Florida native said. "But I thought, 'This will be a lot more fun to keep people on edge.'"

A junior biochemistry major at Southern Adventist University, von Walter will take on two other college students tonight and Friday for the grand prize of \$100,000. Second- and third-place winners receive \$50,000 and \$25,000, respectively.

The winner is whoever has the highest cumulative score from both days.

"I'm happy just making it this far," von Walter said. "Anything that happens is just a fun experience -- whatever happens, happens."

Von Walter finished third in his quarterfinal match-up earlier this month. His \$17,000 total, though, was enough to advance him to the semifinals.

In his semi-final bout Tuesday, he beat students from the University of California at Los Angeles and Ohio State University. In total, 15 schools have been represented in the competition.

"To be able to say that my school, my tiny little school, was able to stand shoulder to shoulder with Ohio State and UCLA and Boston University and Yale ... that just kind of blew my mind," von Walter said.

University President Gordon Bietz echoed those thoughts.

"Our university is clearly not a nationally recognized institution, so having one of our students provide his ability to a national audience is very significant," he said. "We have a lot of enthusiasm and excitement about that."

Von Walter is humble about the whole experience. A cello player, he said he's accustomed to performing before crowds, and he's also an avid trivia player.

"'Jeopardy!' is a game I love to play from home," he said, "so basically it's just like playing another game."