

Michigan Championships Usher in Holiday Season



For the second consecutive year, Santa Claus and Christmas carolers (along with a talented band) helped Dennis Bittner, host of the Club Car Lounge, welcome shufflers from across Michigan to the friendly Durand community for the 13th Annual Michigan Championships.

Held over the Thanksgiving weekend, this year's championships increased in both participation and total prize monies, with 70 players participating in five events, vying for a share of the \$12,230 total pot.



Coming out ahead of the field of 22 teams in the mixed doubles were John McDermott and Betty Parrish. Host Dennis Bittner presents the first-place plaques to the winners.



The skills of the husband and wife team of Bonnie and Sonny Morgan awed opponents and spectators as they fought their way to take second-place honors.



Veteran partners Jerry Hershman and Marie Sweeney finished third in the mixed doubles event.

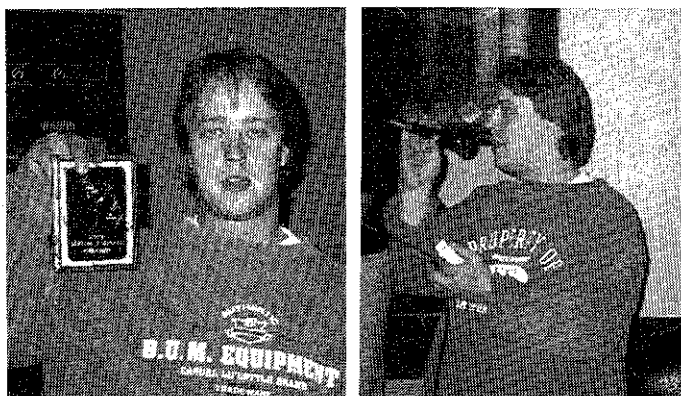
Other winners were Trish Tolsdorf and Bjerne Sunde, 4th; Steve Auten and Carrie Cottrell, Rob and Debbie Kern, tied for fifth and sixth.

In the Division II singles, the Auten Brothers found themselves going head to head, with the "older" one coming out ahead, and other shufflers wondering why

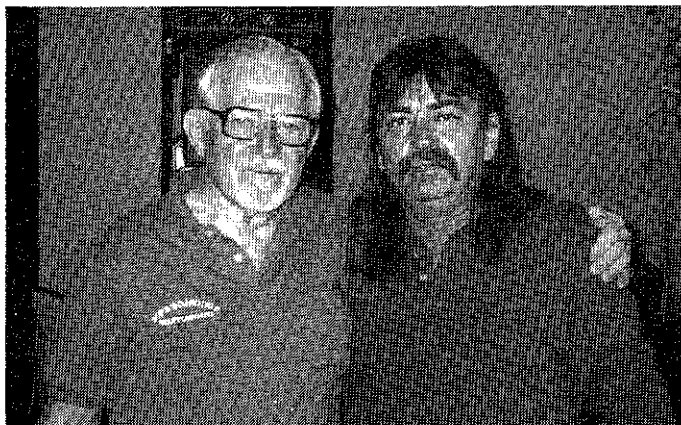
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Michigan Champs (cont. from Page 3)

these two talented young players were still rated as 2's.



Steve Auten shows off his first-place plaque and then shows off his talent during a Karaoke session.

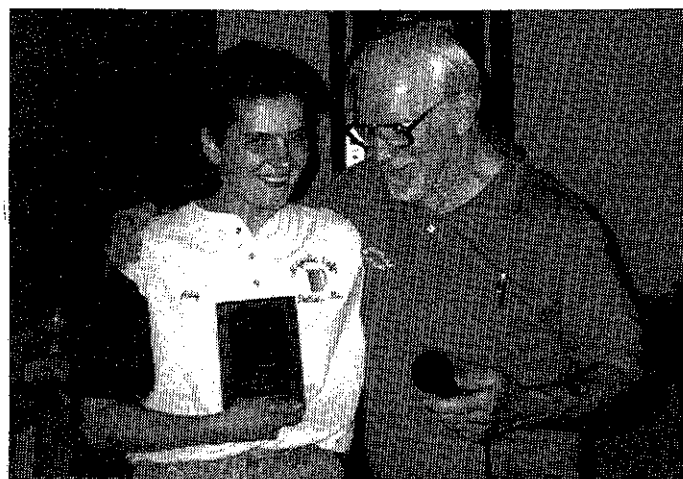


Co-sponsor Board Talk George congratulates Chris LeMieux (formerly "Canadian Chris") for taking second place in the Div. II singles.

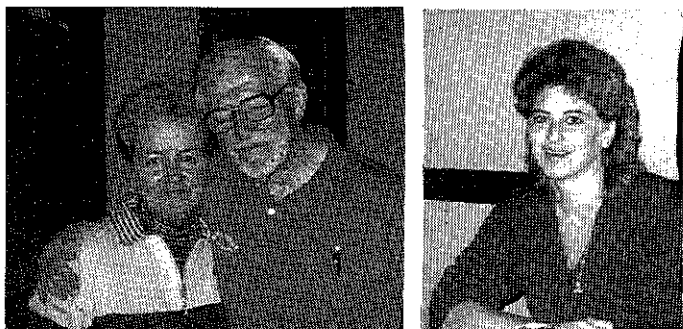


And tournament director Rob Kern assures third-place finisher Scott Auten that someday he will beat his big brother.

Rounding out the winner's circle in the Div. II singles were: Eugene Wendling, 4th; Roland Harkless and Ron Bown, tied for 5th and 6th. There were 23 entries in this event. The Div. II, open and ladies' singles were played simultaneously.

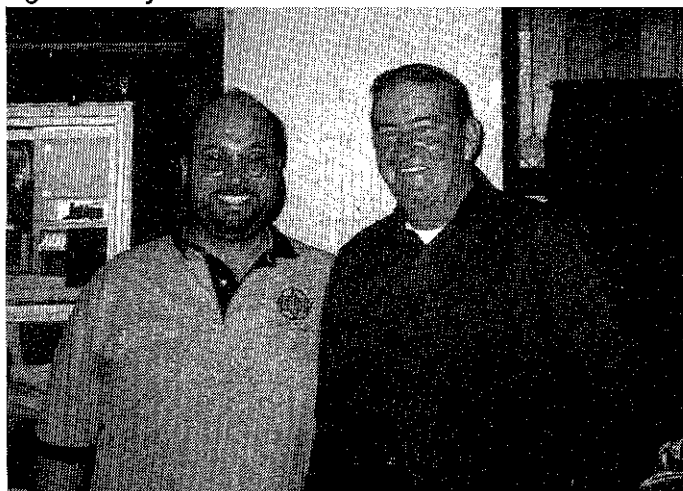


Ady Hallgarth is the 1998 Michigan ladies' singles champion. A former Hoosier, she already held the crown for the ladies' singles in Indiana.



Trish Tolsdorf took second-place honors (is George praying or taking a nap?), with Kim Parrish (right) in third place.

Others finishing in the money were Deb Kern, 4th; Betty Parrish and Betty Kuebler, tied for 5th and 6th. There were 18 entries in the ladies' singles, three more than last year. With the kind of stiff competition displayed in this event, chances are it will increase again next year.



John McDermott, in his second victory of the weekend, took the title of 1998 open singles champion. He was challenged by Bjerne Sunde (right), who settled for second after a fierce battle in the finals.

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Michigan Champs (cont. from Page 7)

In a surprise "finish" before the finals match, McDermott and Sunde shared equal honors by becoming the first players to be inducted into the Michigan Shuffleboard Hall of Fame (see accompanying story).

Finishing third in the open singles was the always tough Chris Passariello with Doug Fridley Jr. in fourth place.

The final event of the weekend was the open doubles with 19 teams participating.



Making it a "triple hit" in the 1998 championships, John McDermott and his partner, Mike Chamarro, took top honors.



Doug Fridley Jr. (left) and Chris Passariello took second in the open doubles.



Bob Bolt and Steve Auten finished in third place.

Other finishers were Bjerne Sunde and O.B. Brim, 4th; Scott Auten and Dave Kittles, Kathy Gianokos and Ady Hallgarth, tied for 5th and 6th.

Door prizes, drawn throughout the weekend, were donated by The Board Talk, the Club Car Lounge and its beer distributors. The Club Car, the Sunset Motel of Durand, and The Board Talk also contributed a set of shuffleboard weights to the Michigan Shuffleboard Hall of Fame for their fund-raising efforts. Winner of the weights was Kathy Gianakos.

Sunde and McDermott Inducted into Michigan Shuffleboard Hall of Fame

There was a break in the action on Saturday afternoon, not only for the free feed, courtesy of The Club Car, but for the induction of two worthy individuals into the Michigan Shuffleboard Hall of Fame. The inductions of Bjerne Sunde and John McDermott were announced via a video salute to each, followed by the presentation of plaques to the inductees. During the video salute, host Dennis Bittner sang "Memories" as the background music for Bjerne, and "I Did It My Way" for John. Family members of both inductees were present for the induction ceremonies.

This was the third and fourth inductions by the Michigan Hall of Fame Committee, but the first for their skills as players. Rudy Stober of Stober's Lounge, the first, and George and Donna Wilber of The Board Talk, the second inductees, were honored for their promotional efforts of the sport.



Michigan Hall of Fame Committee member Frank Parrish emotionally presented his mentor and role model, Bjerne Sunde, with his induction plaque. It read: "Congratulations to Bjerne Sunde for your many years of commitment to shuffleboard and the many achievements you have recorded in our sport's history. Your integrity, your skills as a player, and your good sportsmanship have made you an outstanding ambassador for shuffleboard in your home state and across the nation. We are proud you have become known as Michigan's 'gentle giant' with a heart as big as your hands."