

Action Unlimited in Reno!

By Teri Wilber Elkins

Players from across the U.S.A. and Canada gathered at the Sands Regency Hotel/Casino in Reno, Nevada, Nov. 10-15, for The Shuffleboard Federation's 1992 North American Championships. The tournament had everything players and spectators alike could possibly ask for -- exciting competition in all 10 smoothly-run events, great atmosphere, fellowship with old friends and new, and BIG bucks from the Sands Regency to sweeten some of the pots.

Winners: Johnson and Busch

Action started on Tuesday with the Division II/III Draw and the Division I Draw. In the II/III Draw, the "coast-to-coast" winners were Jane Johnson of New York and Charlie Busch of California, whose pay-off envelopes were fattened with \$500 of the \$1,000 added money from the Sands. Rollie Westerhoff of Colorado and Slick Parrish of Michigan took second place honors; Jim Filkins of Nebraska and Dick Smedberg of New York finished third; with Ken Hawks of Colorado and Gary Kennedy of Texas in fourth place.

Winners: Brorsen and Busch

The Sands also added \$1,000 to the Division Draw and the winners were: Andy Brorsen of California and Denny Busch of Nebraska. Bjerne Sunde of Michigan and Gwynette Orsi of Nebraska took second, and George Ostrum of Colorado and Mark Foust of Oklahoma finished third.

Winner: Diana Hagen

The Division I Singles and Division II/III Singles were on Wednesday's agenda. Thirty-two players participated in the exciting Division I event and sponsor sales were "hot!" And it was Diana Hagen of Texas who took home the lion's share of the big pot. Mark Foust of Oklahoma showed up in the winner's circle again to take second place money. Johnny Ballard, Rod Cameron and Bobby Williams -- all of Texas (that's four out of the top six from the Lone Star State) -- finishing third, fourth and fifth respectively, with Terry Smith of Illinois in sixth place, helping Mark save this event from being a clean sweep for Texas.

Winner: Dale Williams

More Texans topped the field of 26 contenders in the Division II/III Singles, with Dale Williams in

first and Mary Koteras in second. It was another good finish for Charlie Busch of California in third, with Sher Blessing of Michigan in fourth place. Jimmy Kumpula of Michigan/Florida and Bill Moody finished fifth and sixth.

Thursday was another action-packed day, with the start of four big events -- the Division I Doubles, Division II/III Doubles, Pro Doubles, and the N.A.S.L. Team Event. And, again, sponsor sales were healthy.

Winners: Cowan and Ostrum

There were 18 teams in the Division Doubles and the winners were Dave Cowan and George Ostrum of Colorado. Mark Foust (haven't we heard that name somewhere before?) and Sam Sweatt of Oklahoma teamed up to take second place honors. The Arizona team of Bob Lewis and Bill Thomas took third, with Texans Dale Koteras and Bobby Williams in fourth.

Winners: Burkhart and Robinson

Of the 24 teams participating in the Division II/III Doubles, it was a \$50 team that came out on top -- Leroy Burkhart and Butch Robinson of Oregon. George Main and Steve Luttrell of California took second, with Al DiBella and Louise Freer of Pennsylvania finishing third. Billy Poole and John Cason of Oklahoma were fourth; Larry Balzer and Don Stallworth of Oregon, and Jim Filkins of Nebraska and Bob Jacobsen of Arizona were fifth and sixth.

Winners: Melton and Williams

A father versus son for top honors situation in the Pro Doubles gave an interesting twist to this exciting event. It was a challenge, but veteran Bill Melton of Oklahoma and Dave Williams of Texas did beat Billy ("How can you call somebody who's 6 feet tall and weighs over 200 lbs. Little Bill?" asks friend Sam Summers) Melton and his partner, Bob Shaw of Texas. Finishing third were Rick Boyer and Jody Slack of Colorado.

Winner: Sam Summers

There was a formidable line-up of 16 contenders in the Pro Singles and all fought valiantly for a piece of the pie. When it was all over, it was Sam Summers of Oklahoma who was victorious. It was a bittersweet victory for Sam, who wanted to be with his wife Sharon at her Dad's funeral, but had already committed to the tournament. After his win, Sam said: "I dedicate this win to the memory of my father-in-law, Henry Horsch. May he rest in peace."

Looking like the pros that they are, Bobby Voorhis of Indiana took second place winnings, with Fred Thuman of California in third.

Winners: Smith and Barthel

There were 11 teams in the LegendsDraw Partners event and Terry Smith of Illinois and Larry Barthel of Texas came out on top. John Wiggs of Texas and Jimmy Kumpula, Michigan/Florida, finished second, with Bjerne Sunde of Michigan and hometown "boy" Carl Guidici taking third place.

Winners: The Houston Gang

As usual, the N.A.S.L. Team Event was a big crowd-pleaser as each of the 16 teams had their own rooting gallery. It was the Houston Gang that took the 1992 crown and the biggest share of the pot. Team members were Mary Koteras, Diana Hagen, Dale Williams, Sheriff Hallberg, Ty Migliore, and Garry Kennedy. The Balloon Inn of Arvada, Colorado, took second place honors, with the No Name team of Texas in third place.

Winners: Busch and Williams

In a post-tournament consolation draw on Sunday afternoon, Denny Busch of Nebraska and Bobby Williams of Texas were the winners. Dave Cowan of Colorado and Johnny Ballard of Texas finished second, with Dale Williams of Texas and Bill Meyer of Michigan in third place.

Winners: Mom and Dad -- and Me

During my first assignment as a reporter for The Board Talk, I tried very hard to stay objective, but alas, I failed. The highlight of the tournament for me was when my Dad accepted The Shuffleboard Federation's very first Sol Lipkin (what a dear man!) award. I was so proud! The beautiful plaque reads: "The Board Talk, George & Donna Wilber, for providing the spark that began the resurgence of the sport and for helping to maintain the momentum through your continued commitment, we proudly present the first Sol Lipkin Award in recognition of your extraordinary contributions to the advancement of shuffleboard."

I felt like John McDermott when he expressed disappointment that Mom couldn't be there. But I was glad that I could pitch-hit for her and get to meet all the wonderful people in The World of Shuffleboard. Now I know why they are so committed to serve you! Thanks to all of you for extending the hand of fellowship to me and special thanks to The Shuffleboard Federation for honoring my Mom and Dad.

(Editor's Note #1: Teri kept a diary of the 7 days she spent babysitting her Dad, all of which was censored! Sorry, readers! It was VERY interesting....)

(Editor's Note #2: Thanks for the hamburger, Bud!)



Shuffleboard Federation President Phil Skover honors Sol Lipkin for a lifetime of service to the sport of shuffleboard.



The tournament's only casualty we know about was Gwen DeRosa of Springfield, Illinois, who sprained her ankle sliding down a bannister. Is that really true?



(Left) The Shuffleboard Federation's Vice President, Cheryl Collins, admires Board Talk George's plaque.



(Right) Look, Mom! My bucket's empty again. Dad did it!

(Editor's Note #3: More photos next month.)