

American Contract Bridge League District 16
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Bert Onstott Wins Jacoby Award



Congratulations to Bert Onstott the winner of the 2009 Oswald and Jim Jacoby Award. Bert's passion for bridge is proven by his never ending work for both unit 174 and the district. He has done more for bridge in his unit in six years than most of us do in a lifetime. Below, we have listed only a few of the many things Bert has volunteered for, supported, and helped with:

In support of Unit 174, Bert served six years on our board, including two terms as President. While on the board, he chaired 12 sectionals and two regionals. When he wasn't chairing the tournaments, he was there early to set up tables and stayed late after the tournament to tear down the tables and crate supplies. That is approximately 30 tournaments, plus additional help with NAP and GNT.

Bert set up online group email for intra-board communication as well as online file storage for board re-

cord keeping. This will enable future boards to archive past records.

Bert created a spreadsheet template for tournament planning and profit and loss accounting.

Bert developed a web based, database driven online partnership desk for unit members. This has proved to be very helpful for players in our unit to find partners any day of the week, or for people visiting our unit from out of town.

Bert served as unit photographer.

Bert was coordinator for bridge in schools, and taught bridge to junior high and high school students.

Bert was instrumental in initiating a program that attracts social bridge players to duplicate. Two such events have been held, and both were very successful. The first one had 21 tables, and the second one had 16 tables. New players signed up with the ACBL, and all participants had a good time.

In support of District 16, Bert has served as the district webmaster. In the first two months of the job, he revamped and updated the district web site. He created a program to automate the process of removing the names of those who choose not to receive a paper Scorecard.

Thanks for everything Bert.

Past Oswald & Jim Jacoby Award Winners

2008 Ira Hessel, San Antonio	1995 Barry Hagedorn, Houston
2007 Dewitt Hudson, Fort Worth	1994 Shirley Pagan, Corpus Christi
2006 Rosemary Kelley, Austin	1993 Jacque Tucker, San Antonio
2005 Toni Snow, Houston	1992 Henry Baer, Dallas
2004 Betty Starzek, Houston	1991 Mary Williams, Austin
2003 Al Lochli, San Antonio	1990 Gerrie Owen, Dallas
2002 Scott Humphrey, Austin	1989 Dan & Joan Morse, Houston
2001 Tom Hughes, Fort Worth	1988 Jim Downs, Houston
2000 Mary Ross, Corpus Christi	1987 Judy Jacoby, Dallas
1999 Arlene Weingarten, Houston	1986 Cissie Horton, San Antonio
1998 Eric Snow, Houston	1985 Sue Barber, San Angelo
1997 George & Leah Olivarri, Corpus Christi	1984 Ann Carb, Fort Worth
1996 Howard Wilkins, Abilene	1983 Joyce Cook, Houston

Even for multi-world champion Bob Hamman of Dallas winning a world championship is not easy. This year's March to Gold was no exception. It all started at the United States Team Trials in June this year when the Nickell Team (Nick Nickell, Dick Freeman, Bob Hamman, Zia Mahmood, Eric Rodwell, Jeff Meekstroth and coach Eric Kokish) was upset in an early round of the trials. However, this year's trials qualified two teams and the Nickell Team came back from the "Loser's Bracket" to become the second representative (USA II) in the 2009 Bermuda Bowl held in Sao Paulo, Brazil. (Unfortunately, fellow teammate Dick Freeman passed away shortly after the team trials ended. Freeman was replaced by Ralph Katz of Chicago.)

In the coming weeks, the phone rang and Nickell asked if I would like to be the team's Non-Playing Captain. I accepted immediately and began my adventure to winning my first GOLD medal! Hamman, however, had eleven world championships under his belt including nine Bermuda Bowls wins prior to this year's championship. His first championship came in 1970 after joining the famed Dallas Aces in 1966. Every

since his first victory at the world level, Hamman dedicated his life to promoting the game of bridge with efforts ranging from raising funds for U.S. world championships to helping local clubs build membership.

USA II began the 2009 Championships on an ominous note when all of the team member's planes were diverted because of weather, but once on the ground the group focused on winning the gold. The first of the two-week championship consisted of 21 rounds against each of the other teams in the event. In the end, the top eight teams advanced from the round robin to the knockout round. USA II finished fourth after the round robin and drew the Netherlands in the round of 8. This was a tough draw since the Netherlands team was seen as one of the top three teams in the event along with USA II and Italy. After 96 boards and a grueling match, USA II was victorious over the Netherlands and next faced China in the Semi-Finals. Finding themselves trailing by over 100 imps with 16 boards to play, China withdrew giving USA II a much needed break before starting the finals.

Once again, USA II was facing off

with Italy for 128 boards in the finals of the World Championships. USA II got off to a large lead in the first of eight segments only to see Italy come back to virtually tie the match after the second segment. The USA and Italian fans could tell this was going to be a battle to the bitter end. The boards passed by and with two segments to go (32 boards), it looked like USA II had the match under control but nothing is a sure thing against the perennial powerhouse Italian team. Italy mounted a strong comeback but with four boards to play in the match, Hamman and Zia bid to a 6D contract making while their Italian counterparts bid only to 5D. This 11 imps sealed the event and USA II became the 2009 Bermuda Bowl winners!

The Bermuda Bowl trophy is on display at the Bridge Academy of North Dallas. Please stop by when you are in the Dallas area to see the most prestigious trophy in bridge which traces the history of the Bermuda Bowl winners dating back to 1950. You may also visit www.bridgeacademyofnorthdallas.com to read USA II's daily blog of the March to Gold.

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