



DUAL MONARCHS

**2010 Kings of Bridge:
Tom Walsh and Adam Grossack**

Each year, the ACBL and the ACBL Educational Foundation pick one graduating high school senior for the title of King or Queen of Bridge to recognize not only outstanding tournament performances but also skill in promoting and organizing bridge. In 2010, however, two young players have been selected for the honor.

Tom Walsh, 18, of Saskatoon SK and Adam Grossack, 18, of Newton MA, will share the King of Bridge title, an event that has happened only once before in the history of the honor (in 1981).

Walsh, a graduate of Evan Hardy Collegiate in Saskatoon, learned to play bridge in the eighth grade through classes offered at the Saskatoon Bridge Club. He became a Life Master in October 2008, despite the limited opportunities available for tournament play in Saskatchewan.

Walsh's friendly, positive demeanor earned him the Sportsmanship Award at the first Youth North American Bridge Championship held in Atlanta in the summer of 2008. At the 2009 Youth NABC in Washington DC, Walsh was selected as a Youth Ambassador to help promote the game, especially to younger players.

"I enjoy encouraging newcomers of all ages," Walsh said. I help out with

my bridge club as much as possible. We have a Wednesday night rookie/master game at the club, and I always have a rookie that I try to help. I am always on hand at the open houses to meet, greet and show those interested that bridge



Walsh



Grossack

is not just for retirees."

Walsh, who also enjoys golfing and curling, will attend the Edwards School of Business in the fall.

Grossack, a graduate of Newton South High School in the Boston area, began playing bridge when he was 8, although a promotional flyer from the free class offered at the nearby Cavenish Club led him to believe he wasn't eligible to attend. It read, "Come one, come all, ages 9-90." Grossack joined the class only after his mother, Jori, assured him it would be okay.

The first year wasn't easy for the

young Grossack, who often became frustrated trying to learn the game. After taking a break from lessons, Grossack's interest in the game grew with prompting from his mom. He began reading her system notes that she played with her regular partner, and then became interested in card combinations, counting and endplays.

"By age nine, I was hooked," he said.

In addition to playing weekly at the local duplicate, Grossack began to play in local tournaments. He won his first sectional event at age 11. Grossack also began teaching bridge to classmates.

"I started a bridge club in middle school and continued it through high school," he said. "I have taught more than 100 kids the game of bridge."

Grossack, who became a Life Master in April 2006, notes that his best student is his younger brother, Zach, who is 13 and also a Life Master.

In addition to bridge, Grossack played football for four years in high school (two years on the varsity squad) and also enjoys chess, poker and the card game Barbu. His first love is still bridge, however.

"I plan to be a dedicated promoter of bridge for the rest of my life." □