

A GAME FOR ALL AGES

Big Easy draws big Youth crowd.

By Dave Smith



ACBL President Richard DeMartino (center) presents trophies to the winners of the Baron Barclay National Youth Open Pairs: Andrew and Richard Jeng.

By the numbers

8497 = the number of miles Russell and Neil Slighton traveled to play — from Hong Kong to New Orleans. Randy Pan also came a long way. He traveled from Beijing, People's Republic of China — 7333 miles.

113 = the number of youths who came and played.

23 = the number of different states and provinces the players came from.

34 = the number of players from Georgia. Florida had the second-most with 27.

15.78 = the number of masterpoints won by top earners Richard and Andrew Jeng.

Trophies and masterpoints were awarded, but the emphasis was on fun at the third Youth North American Bridge Championships in New Orleans, July 29–31.

“It was a tough hand,” said a defender when declarer went down one in 5♦.

“You gave it a good try,” said dummy after her partner played 3♣, down two.

These and similar comments show that the players, 19 and younger, considered having a good time to be the most important thing.

There was lots of bridge played each day under the guidance of Tournament Director Nancy Watkins, but other activities took place, too. Astronaut Greg Johnson presented a slide show and answered questions about his 6.6-million-mile trip in space. Award-winning author Louis Sachar talked about *The Cardturner*, his new book about bridge. Sachar answered questions and signed books.

The local Audubon Society presented the Animal Olympics. The Funny Bones Improv comedy group performed and interacted with the young players.

After playing bridge all day, the youngsters mingled with other players and made new friends. They ate salad, sandwiches and pizza, and had a good time.



Jacob Wexel was presented the Sportsmanship Trophy by Tournament Chair Dana Norton.



Youth and Junior Ambassadors were named at the Awards Ceremony. Players chosen were those who are encouraging and supportive of bridge and other youth activities.

The winners of the Baron Barclay National Youth Open Pairs were Andrew and Richard Jeng of Johns Creek GA. Arjun Dhir of Alpharetta GA and Thomas Walsh of Saskatoon SK were second. The Jeng brothers will each receive a \$1000 college scholarship, donated by Baron Barclay Bridge Supply.

Jacob Wexel was the recipient of the Sportsmanship Trophy, an award voted on by the other players. Wexel, of Lilburn GA, will receive a \$1000 college scholarship, as well as the trophy. The award was donated by well-known bridge and poker player Phil Gordon.

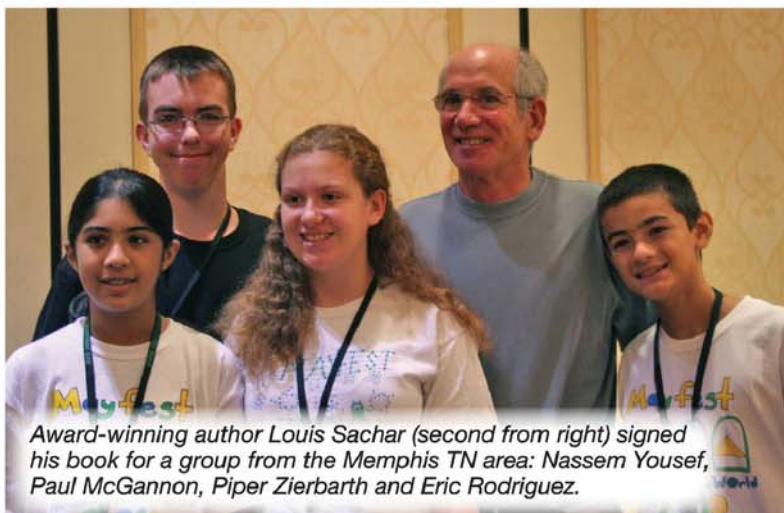
The winners of the orderTopia National Youth Swiss Teams were Adam Kaplan, New Port Richey FL; Adam Grossack, Newton MA; Jesse Stern, Lutz FL, and Jourdain Patchett, Sarasota FL. Each member will receive a \$1000 scholarship, given by orderTopia, a company that describes itself as a new platform for mobile and online e-commerce.

Chair Dana Norton declared the tournament a success. According to Norton, the help of local volunteers was crucial.

“We couldn’t have done it without them,” she said. “They were on top of the game. Also, the parents were unbelievable. One of the moms even caddied.

“Plans are already underway for next year in Toronto,” Norton added. “American kids should remember they’ll need a passport.”

The two previous Youth NABCs were held in Atlanta GA and Washington DC. □



Award-winning author Louis Sachar (second from right) signed his book for a group from the Memphis TN area: Nassem Yousef, Paul McGannon, Piper Zierbarth and Eric Rodriguez.



The winners of the orderTopia National Youth Swiss Teams: Adam Kaplan, Adam Grossack, Jesse Stern, Sharon Meng-Horton (npc) and Jourdain Patchett.



Camille Gros of Apopka FL plays a card.