

Daily Youth NABC Atlanta 2018 Bulletin

2018 Youth NABC

Editor: Brent Manley

Youth NABC closes with record attendance



Open Pairs 1st: Winners of the Baron Barclay National Youth Open Pairs: Kunal Vohra and Reese Koppel.

Among the players who attended the dinner at the end of the 11th Youth NABC at the Marriott on Saturday was the person who dreamed of the tournament more than a decade ago and has watched it become an important annual event on the ACBL calendar. That would be Patty Tucker of Atlanta.

Looking around the room of young players, she saw a variety of ages, races and cultures, all busy seeing old friends, making new ones and planning trips to next YNABC, next summer in Las Vegas.

“This is what it’s about,” said Tucker. “The kids have one thing in common. They all love to play bridge. There are no social barriers.”

Attendance at the tournament was expected to top 240 players because of pre-registration numbers but fell two short of that number. It was, however, one better than last year’s total.

It’s impossible to have an event such as the Youth NABC and maintain quiet, but the sometimes-raucous gathering produced an unmistakable increase in the energy level in and around the playing areas.

“The kids have been really great,” said Eveylyn Gilliard, YNABC chair. “They are more competitive than I expected, even the little ones. She praised the volunteers who helped out with the cardroom games and told interesting stories. Gilliard said one volunteer, a retired pediatrician, reported watching a young player declare a contract “better than I would have played it.”

Parents weren’t allowed in the playing areas, but they were keen observers nonetheless. Jodi Rabinowitz of Williamsburg VA was attending her first NABC and was impressed with the organization of the Youth tournament. She liked the central location of the hotel and the food for the kids. “They actually ate their lunches,” she said.

The contingent from Williamsburg, including Evan Rabinowitz, was put together by Jim Davis, who has been leading groups of young players to YNABCs for the past five years. This year’s



Jim Davis

Williamsburg group numbers 19.

Said Rabinowitz, “Mister Davis is a real hero here.”

The players enjoy the exposure to other nationalities and cultures. Nya Runde of Orlando attended her second Youth NABC and noted, “It’s amazing how many people are here and how diverse it is.”

Williamsburg player Mary Gray is 17, very near to the upper age limit for participation in the tournament. “It’s nice meeting a bunch of new kids, and it’s kind of fun being the oldest one at the table,” she said.

Barbara Traore, one of a large group from Orange NJ, said the competition is fun: “I like it when we’re winning.”

Recognizing winners is on the agenda at the tournament’s closing dinner. Here they are:



National Youth Swiss Teams: First in the National Youth Swiss Teams: front, Jacob Freeman, Martin Zhao and Luke Williams; rear, Bo Han Zhu, Finn Kolesnik and John Dong.

Baron Barclay National Youth Open Pairs: Reese Koppel, Metairie LA, and Kunal Vohra, Alpharetta GA. The victory comes with a \$1,000 scholarship for each player.

National Youth Swiss Teams: Jacob Freeman, Toronto ON; Bo Han Zhu, Oakville ON; John Dong – Martin Zhao, Richmond Hill ON; Luke Williams, San Diego CA, and Finn Kolesnik, Ventura CA. The team will divide \$4,000 in scholarship money.

The third major trophy of the day went to Williamsburg’s Ashley Thomas, chosen by the other players to receive the Master Point Press Sportsmanship Award. That honor also includes a \$1,000 scholarship.

When the school year starts this fall, Ashley will be a sophomore at Warhill High School in her home town. Pleased with being selected for the trophy, Ashley commented that “I always try to be nice.” Although at present she is interested in community theater, Ashley said her ultimate goal is to become a veterinarian.

Other Saturday winners included the foursome captained by Avery Silverstein, winners of the Saturday Consolation Teams. Her teammates were Olivia Schireson, Lucas Huang and Jonathan Shi.

The Saturday morning Cardroom Pairs was won by Nathan and Helen Chow with a 71.67% game.

The Saturday afternoon Cardroom Pairs was won by William Qu and Leondina Passucci with a 66.92% game.



Ashley Thomas: Winner of the Master Point Press Sportsmanship Award was Ashley Thomas of Williamsburg VA

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