

Plano, June 5, 2004



WF WF Spades Tournament

Earl & Linda Stickles spank competition, capture title.

The Stickles left no doubt as to who the champs are this year. They breezed through the preliminary rounds with a 3-0 mark that included a solid win over the defending champs. That made Earl and Linda the top seed going into the semi-finals but the going would be mighty tough there.



In their semi-final match they had to face 2002 champs **Tony Papa & Ray Wottrich**. A close match ensued but Earl pulled a nifty nil at the end to pull off the upset.

In the other semi, the defending champs, **Larry Bruder & Jodie Turner**, had just enough to edge upstart newcomers **Todd Fullerton & Kim Covington** and advance to their third final in four years.

The final, a rematch of the opening round, was nip and tuck throughout. With the score 453-435 it looked as if Larry and Jodie might keep the title. The final hand was dealt and the Stickles muscled up a strong 7 bid. Only a 6 bid, a set or a nil could save the champs. The champs pursued the risky nil and were set by the new champions: **Earl & Linda**. Afterward Linda graciously remarked "We came, we saw, we spanked."

A 5-0 record, knocking off the 2001, 2002, 2003 champs. Beating the defending champs twice. I'd say that's a pretty darn good tournament.

Congratulations champs. You earned it!

Other Notes:

- Twelve Teams competed for the title. If we move beyond 12 teams in the future, we might consider advancing six teams to the playoffs instead of four teams.

- It appears that a team fashion trend is taking hold. I think 7 of the teams had matching shirts, hats, socks, whatever. Even though the cards weren't really with them this year, the award for best team outfit has to go to **Vonnie Reff** and **Susan Hammerschmidt**. You go girls!

- **Kristina Bruder** and **Sheila Doss** looked out for the details and those two cute little baby girls (**Josie Bruder** and **Haley Courtney**) during the tournament. Many thanks.

- This is the fourth year and the rules seem to work well. Barely a fuss, lotsa fun, lotsa opportunity. **Ray Wottrich** outlined the tournament and really did a great job as it remains a fun, competitive event. Who knew he had such vision?

Until next year!