

## **RENO BATTLE LINES**

**“the competition was furious at the Shuffleboard Federation’s ‘93 Championships”  
(RePlay Magazine, February 1994 Issue, page 113)**

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# RENO BATTLE LINES

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Steve Perry of the Gas Log Team (Sacramento, Calif.) shows the winning form that brought his group to the final showdown with the Nebraska team.



Don Valk's (c) contributions to shuffleboard earned him this year's Sol Lipkin Award. Flanking him are Sol himself (l) and Phil Skover.

Nearly 200 players converged at the Sands Regency Hotel Casino in Reno, Nev. Nov. 9-14 to compete for more than \$60,000 in prize money in twelve events at the 1993 North American Shuffleboard Championships.

The tournament was sanctioned and promoted by The Shuffleboard Federation and marked the return of American Shuffleboard, (who provided 16 new Royal tables) to the tournament scene.

Among the many highlights of the week-long event was the anticipated introduction of the Federation's new game, Deuces Wild. It's a fast, easy to learn, frames-based game that can be played in one third the time of standard shuffleboard. The Sands Regency added \$2,000 to the pot for this event, which matched randomly selected four-person teams in a best three out of five, single elimination event.

The participants in the Deuces Wild event ranged from top pro players to novices attending their first big tournament. Everyone learned how to play at the same time, and after the first few frames, they all looked like veterans. If their reaction is any indication, the Federation's Deuces Wild operator league program (also sponsored by American Shuffleboard)

should be a huge success.

Other crowd pleasers were the N.A.S.L. Team Event, which included \$5,000 in added money from the Sands Regency, and the East West Pro Team Challenge. The N.A.S.L. Team Event featured one of the most exciting finishes in the history of the tournament. In the finals, it was the Nebraska team of Junior Butler, Larry Morrow, Gwen Orsi, Joel Rahn, Mike Roach and Maggie Worley out to avenge their only loss, in the finals of the winners bracket, to the team sponsored by the Gas Log Lounge in Sacramento, Calif.

After six games, the score was tied three games apiece. The Nebraska team won the next two games to force a sudden death match, but the Gas Log team of Mike Bruner, Charlie Busch, Lloyd Coffelt, Cheryl Collins, Steve Perry and Debbie Voorhis fought back to tie it up again with two more wins. The Cornhuskers responded by taking the second set two games to one, and once again the score after two sets was three games apiece.

The match came down to the final shot. With the teams tied at four games each, and Nebraska ahead 14 to 13 with two weights on the board, Lloyd Coffelt of Sacramento had a chance to win the game, match and

tournament by lagging a two. To the delight of the Nebraska team and their fans, his shot trickled off the end of the board, giving the win to the Cornhuskers.

Although the East West Pro Team Challenge did not have nearly as exciting a finish, it certainly had an exciting start when the West team put on a lagging exhibition and blew out the heavily favored East team during the first two games of the match, which was a race to five.

This pumped up the partisan West Coast crowd, who cheered loudly for their all stars. Those cheers and the prospect of being whipped by a team that many felt did not have a chance to win lit a fire under the East team, which roared back to win five in a row on their way to the title.

A very emotional moment in the tournament occurred on Friday night when U.S. Open founder Don Valk was presented with the 1993 Sol Lipkin award in recognition of his extraordinary contributions to shuffleboard. Don's wife Linda, who knew about the award, did such a good job of keeping it a secret that Don was standing there with his camera focused on Sol Lipkin, waiting for the announcement of the 1993 recipient when he heard his name.