

Gilbert, Ariz., residents capture Smokin' in Mesquite championship

Jennifer Duncan and her husband, Tom, had a choice of staying home to handle business in Gilbert, Ariz., or enter the second annual Smokin' in Mesquite BBQ Championship Labor Day Weekend at the CasaBlanca Resort.

The Duncans and their Smoked to the Bone BBQ team made the right decision as evidenced by the fact that they were named 2010 Grand Champion of the prestigious \$40,000 event in a field of more than 40 teams.

With teams traveling from as far away as Florida to compete, placing in the top ten was an accomplishment and winning was tantamount to winning the Super Bowl of BBQ. The margin of victory was about one-half point.

“This is huge,” said Mrs. Duncan, her face beaming with a huge smile and her hands clutching a winner’s check of \$10,000. “We had a choice of going to Mesquite or staying home to work our catering business.”

The catering business in Gilbert has not slowed, but the Duncans packed up their gear and headed north for the nation’s second-richest BBQ event sanctioned by the Kansas City Barbecue Society and sponsored by the Mesquite Resort Association.

To say this may be one time when the couple was glad it made the decision it did would be an understatement, for sure. The team has been competing for 1 ½ years, and this victory was certainly the highlight of its career.

“The win made it all worthwhile,” said Mrs. Duncan, whose team outlasted some of the best BBQ experts in the country. “We are very consistent about everything, and we really love what we do.

“I put a lot of love in the food we prepare. We do this for a living, and competition is the fun part especially when you win.”

Scottie Johnson, whose www.cancersucks.com team finished runner up to the Duncans, was ecstatic with his finish as reserve champion to win \$5,000. The team was considered a top pick considering that it won the Jack Daniels’ World Championship in Lynchburg, Tenn., in October of 2006.

“This was an awesome event,” said Johnson, whose team traveled from Chicago, Ill., to compete. “It was well-run. We aren’t used to the heat, but we just kept drinking lots of fluid. We had two air conditioning units going the entire time.

“You have to keep plugging along and deal with the cards that you are dealt. It makes you a stronger person.”

Dave Malone and his All Sauced Up team from Valencia, Calif., captured the first Nevada State Championship which awarded the top combined results from the Best Dam BBQ Championship Memorial Day in Boulder City with the Smokin' in Mesquite event.

“I really don’t have any big secrets to my BBQ,” said the modest Malone, who works for the Metropolitan Water District in Southern California. “I cook like I always cook.” However, the 46 year-old Malone had to overcome a big challenge en route to his triumph. The door on his cooker fell off during the middle of the night creating a challenge he had never anticipated.

“The door was on the ground when I got to the cooker at 5 in the morning,” Malone said adding that the added air created too much heat. “I knew it wasn’t a good situation, but I just kept on going. I had to control the air manually. I am a low and slow cooker and to beat a bunch of grand champions like the ones they had here, you really need to do well.”

Malone’s dedication earned him a total of \$4,000 with \$3,000 for the Nevada State Championship and another \$1,000 for his finish in the Smokin’ in Mesquite competition.

“Pulling out the championship during a very hot week made it all worth it,” said Malone, who used a cool towel and lots of water to keep him cool.

Illustrating how competitive the BBQ competition was this year, last year’s winners Sweet Peppers finished tenth in the overall standings.

Sunday’s schedule wrapped up with the Backyard BBQ competition won by Rex and Cynthia Sell of Henderson, who took their Pimpin’ Q team to the top money of \$1,000.

“This is the first time we have entered a BBQ contest as competitors,” said Mr. Sell, a mechanic for the City of Las Vegas. “We’re certified judges for the KCBS. We judged last year and thought we should enter this year. We’re going to enter the cook off in Boulder City next year.

“It was very different being on this side of the fence after judging for three years. The whole reason I became a judge was so that I could learn about BBQ.”

Also in the Back Yard BBQ, Isabella’s BBQ Brawlers won the hamburger category for \$500; Sells’ Pimpin’ Q took the Steak victory for \$500; Donald Fletcher took the top money of \$500 in Pork; and Pimpin’ Q took the \$500 prize in Chicken.

Even during a late-summer heat wave that took temperatures to about 105 degrees, the Smokin’ in Mesquite BBQ Championship drew great crowds of enthusiastic followers while also filling the CasaBlanca Resort.

“This has been amazing,” said Cris Crotz, the reigning Miss Nevada who will compete for the title of Miss America next January in Las Vegas. “I love being around all the energy and seeing everyone coming to my hometown. Mesquite has the warmest people and they all work so hard putting us on the map. My goal now is to make sure everyone knows how great Mesquite is.”

Promoter Arlie Bragg, whose BBQ contests cover 10 cities throughout the country, lauded the event.

“I think this year’s event was run much smoother than last year,” said Bragg, who now has four shows in five weeks. “Attendance was up, and we had many nice comments from our cooks.”

Merl Whitebook of the KCBS, who presented a popular class on judging prior to the cook-off competition, also had good things to say.

“I want to congratulate Smoke to the Bone,” said Whitebook. “With the winners being from the Phoenix area and the cancersucks.com team being from Chicago, it shows how our teams come from all over.”

Ann Sunstrum, director of sales for Black Gaming, said the event illustrated a true teamwork effort on the part of all involved.

“There truly was a level of dedication here,” said Sunstrum. “From the competitors to the fans and the staff, this was an event that any city in the country would love to have.”

The never-ending promotional machine in Mesquite continues with the RE/Max World Long Drive Championship Oct. 27-Nov. 5; the Teacher Games in Mesquite Nov. 12-14; the Fall Pro Am Golf Tournament Nov. 14-16; the Southwest Invitational Golf Tournament Nov. 17-19 and the Mesquite Tri-State Marathon Nov. 20.

Rounding out the year will be the World Arm Wrestling Championship USA Dec. 5-11; the Nevada Senior Open Dec. 12-14 and the Nevada Open Dec. 15-17.

Mesquite Motor Mania kicks off next year Jan. 14-16 followed by BransonFest Out West Feb. 7-10 and the USA Senior Softball tournament March 20-27, among others.

Second Annual \$40,000 Smokin’ in Mesquite BBQ Championship

Sept. 2-5, 2010

CasaBlanca Resort

Mesquite, Nev.

Overall Ranking

1. Smoked to the Bone; 2. Cancersucks.com; 3. Santa Ynez BBQ; 4. Smokin’ Triggers; 5. R&R BBQ; 6. Left Coast Q; 7. All Sauced Up; 8. The Smokin’ B.A.R.; 9. McFrankboo BBQ; 10. Sweet Peppers; 11. Rib Tickler BBQ; 12. Notley Q; 13. Rhythm N Que; 14. Jerry King, Midland, Tex.; 15. Big Pappa Smokers; 16. Richard’s Roundup Barbeque; 17. Whiskey Ranch; 18. Mad Max’s BBQ; 19. Slap Yo’ Daddy BBQ; 20. Butcher BBQ.

Chicken

1. McFrankenboo BBQ; 2. Cancersucskschicago.com; 3. Whiskey Ranch; 4. Smokin’ Goatheads; 5. Smoked to the Bone; 6. R&R BBQ; 7. Left Coast Q; 8. Notley Q; 9. Big Pappa Smokers; 10. Casual Smoker; 11. Otis and the Bird; 12. All Sauced Up; 13. Rib Tickler BBQ; 14. The Smokin’ B.A.R.; 15. Jerry

King, Midland, Tex.; 16. Nv Q'n Crew; 17. The Pit Stop; 18. BBQ Junkie; 19. Smokin' Red Rockers; 20. Flyboy BBQ.

Pork Ribs

1. Smoked to the Bone; 2. Sweet Peppers; 3. Left Coast Q; 4. All Sauced Up; 5. Big Q's BBQ; 6. Tropical Heat; 7. T&J's Backyard; 8. Barbeque Heaven; 9. The Smokin' B.A.R; 10. Butcher BBQ; 11. McFrankboo; 12. Texas Rib Rangers; 13. Smokin' Goatheads; 14. Smokin' Red Rockers; 15. Smokin' Triggers; 16. Rhythm N' Que; 17. The Pit Stop; 18. Richard's Roundup Barbeque; 19. R&R BBQ; 20. Big Pappa Smokers.

Pork

1. Santa Ynez BBQ; 2. Cancersucks.com; 3. Jerry King Midland, Tex.; 4. Rooftop Barbeque; 5. Rhythm 'N Que; 6. Mad Max's BBQ; 7. GreatBasin BBQ; 8. Rib Tickler BBQ; 9. Smokin Triggers; 10. R&R BBQ; 11. The Smokin' B.A.R; 12. Casual Smokers; 13. Butcher BBQ; 14. Notley Q; 15. Smokin' Goatheads; 16. Slap Yo' Daddy BBQ; 17. The Rib Doctors; 18. Whiskey Ranch; 19. I.A.B. 30 BBQ; 20. Big Pappa Smokers.

Brisket

1. Smokin' Triggers; 2. Richard's BBQ Roundup Barbeque; 3. All Sauced Up; 4. Pork U BBQ; 5. Jerry King Midland, Tex.; 6. Rib Tickler BBQ; 7. Santa Ynez BBQ; 8. I.A.B. 30 BBQ; 9. Rhythm N' Que; 10. R&R BBQ; 11. Smoked to the Bone; 12. Flyboy BBQ; 13. The Smokin' B.A.R; 14. Cooters Country Catering; 15. B Q's BBQ; 16. Cancersuckschicago.com; 17. Left Coast BBQ; 18. NV Q'n Crew; 19. Barbeque Heaven; 20. Sweet Peppers.

Dessert

1. B O's BBQ; 2. Mad Max's BBQ; 3. Pork U BBQ; 4. The Pit Stop; 5. Smokin' Triggers; 6. HQO; 7. BBQ Junkie; 8. Richard's Roundup BBQ; 9. Tropical Heat; 10. Texas Rib Rangers; 11. I.A.B 30 BBQ; 12. Nv Q'n Crew; 13. West's Best BBQ; 14. Smokin' Goatheads; 15. Santa Ynez BBQ; 16. Barbeque Heaven; 17. The Rib Doctor; 18. Rooftop Barbeque.

Nevada State Championship

1. All Sauced Up; 2. Rhythm N' Cue; 3. Smokin' B.A.R; 4. R&R BBQ; 5. Sweet Peppers; 6. Rib Tickler BBQ; 7. Slap Yo' Daddy BBQ; 8. Casual Smokers; 9.

I.A.B 30 BBQ; 10. Nevada Q'n Crew; 11. Smokin' Goatheads; 12. Pork U BBQ; 13. Whiskey Ranch; 14. Otis and the Bird; 15. Smoked to the Bone; 16. Great Basin Cooking Company; 17. Squat and Gobble BBQ; 18. Big Tease; 19. BBQ Junkie.

CAPTIONS:

WINNER 2: Tom Duncan, left, displays the 2010 Grand Champion award after he and his wife, Jennifer, second from right, led the Smoked to the Bone BBQ team to the title in the second annual \$40,000 Smokin' in Mesquite BBQ Championship at the CasaBlanca Resort on Labor Day Weekend. Also shown are, from left, Miss Nevada Cris Crotz, Black Gaming General Manager Marty Rapson and event promoter Arlie Bragg.

CASABLANCA CROWD: The Casablanca Event Center hosted continual activity for the second annual \$40,000 Smokin' in Mesquite BBQ Championship on Labor Day Weekend.

MALONE 1: Dave Malone of Valencia, Calif., left, and son, Ryan, celebrate winning the first Nevada State Championship during the \$40,000 Smokin' in Mesquite BBQ Championship at the CasaBlanca Resort on Labor Day Weekend. Also shown, Black Gaming General Manager Marty Rapson, second from left, and Miss Nevada Cris Crotz.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=19bAFofGMKc>

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