

World Geography Bowl 2008

For the second straight year, the Middle States Division of the AAG fielded the winning team in the World Geography Bowl at the AAG's Annual Meeting. The team was led by returning members Jamison Conley (Penn State University) and Karen Wertz (Kutztown University), and included newcomers Andrei Israel (Penn State), Nick Cosmas (West Point), Tom Auer (Penn State), and Melody Grewell (Temple University).



Back Row (L to R): Nick Cosmas (West Point), Tom Auer (Penn State), and Andrei Israel (Penn State). Front Row (L to R): Karen Wertz (Kutztown), Melody Grewell (Temple), and Jamison Conley (Penn State). Members of the Middle States team, winners of the 2008 World Geography Bowl.

The World Geography Bowl is an annual question-answer competition which has tra-

ditionally included only teams of students representing different regional divisions of the AAG. However, this year was marked by the participation of a team sent from the U.K., an addition which contributed excitement and anticipation to the event.

Geography Bowls take place at various regional division meetings throughout the fall, and regional teams are formed out of those competitions. Regional teams then face each other one-on-one in a round-robin format at the AAG Annual Meeting. The two teams with the best overall scores at the end of the round-robin are then matched against each other in the final round.

Exciting Final Round

This year, the final round provided an especially intriguing match-up for the boisterous crowd of more than 250 onlookers. While the defending champion had accumulated the most points throughout the initial rounds, the NESTVAL team – their opponent – had actually bested Middle

States when the two teams locked horns earlier in the evening. Adding to the excite-

ment, the more experienced Middle States team would be facing a regional division that had never before sent a team to the World Geography Bowl final round. Could upstart NESTVAL pull off the unanticipated upset?

Initially, the NESTVAL team performed admirably in the final round, but as the competition wore on they gradually succumbed to the eventual champion, who showed a great deal of poise under fire in answering some difficult questions. Both teams should be commended for their strong efforts, however.

Thank You Sponsors!

Generous student travel funding and an assortment of prizes for the 2008 World Geography Bowl was provided by sponsors Rand McNally, the National Geographic Society, Oxford University Press, and the Association of American Geographers. Travel funds allowed students to participate in the AAG Annual Meeting, the world's largest professional meeting of geographers.

The World Geography Bowl is organized by Bill Carstensen of Virginia Tech with the assistance of the AAG. Bill also hosts the event and moderates the final round. AAG President Tom Baerwald attended the final round and congratulated the players at the end of the evening, and assisted in the presentation of awards. ■



World Geography Bowl Seeks Sponsors

Companies and other organizations interested in sponsoring the upcoming 2009 World Geography Bowl in Las Vegas should contact AAG staff member Jim Ketchum at jketchum@aag.org.