

Crown 9B



The Tooth Shoppe staff members involved in the *Challenge: Standing I. to r.:* Zakee Salem; Wesley Vick; Mardelle Blount; and John Watson and his daughter, Lindsey Watson. *Seated I. to r.:* Donna Park; Guy Harris; and Dave Park, who is Donna's son.

Technician team: Mardelle Blount, model and die; Lindsey Watson, model and die; Zakee Salem, waxer; Dave Park, polisher; Wesley Vick, metal finisher; Donna Park, opaquer; and Guy Harris, CDT, ceramist

Laboratory: The Tooth Shoppe, owned by John Watson, is a 15-person full service operation which was founded in 1978 and has been located in Poway, California since 1992. It specializes in cosmetic work—35% of its C&B workload is all-ceramic restorations—and implants, and has

a one-technician removable department.

The gig was up when...: The technician team had no idea it was participating in the *Crown Challenge* because the lab's office manager, Margie McKay, entered the competition and put the case through the normal production cycle under a fake doctor's name. It wasn't until the end of the fabrication process when ceramist Guy Harris said "What is this? It looks like a Typodont model," that they caught on.

The lab's owner, John Watson, is

ecstatic for his team members. "As often as possible, I try to tell them they're doing a good job but being a finalist gave me yet another chance to congratulate them. We recognized the team members at a staff meeting and brought in lunch to celebrate," he says.

Secret to success: Like many laboratory owners, Watson was caught up in doing everything himself for years. But when he took a month off a few years ago, he learned that things could run smoothly without him and credits the staff members, their loyalty, sense of teamwork and dedication to excellence for making that happen.

"Our staff is like a big family; a couple of our staff members are, in fact, related to each other. All of our technical people have been here at least five years and some as long as 25 years," says Watson. "The key to developing a good team is not to micromanage. Let technicians make decisions for themselves and learn from their mistakes. Less is more."

LMT



Crown 9B is lauded for its realistic anatomy; one judge points out the subtle Cusp of Carabelli. Evaluators also like the nicely done contours and ideal glaze.