

JUDGES' FAVORITE

Crown OE

Technician team:

Michelle Foard, model and die; Gerard Marks, waxing and metal finishing; and

Ed Vaterlaus, ceramist and owner

Laboratory: Advanced Dental Ceramics, Inc., a four-person, C&B laboratory in Minneapolis, Minnesota; the other employee is Vaterlaus' wife, Carrie, who is the business manager; www.adcera.com

A dual challenge: At the same time he was participating in *LMT's Crown Challenge*, owner Ed Vaterlaus' two technicians had just resigned so he was training two new employees. Despite this stress, he decided to participate in the *Crown Challenge* because he had never seen a competition like it before. "Usually

when people make judgments about restorative work, they don't know what the technician or laboratory had to work with initially," says Vaterlaus. "*LMT's Challenge* was unique in that all of us made the identical case; we were all on a level playing field. Plus, the competitive nature of it was appealing."

Market position: Since he opened eight years ago, Vaterlaus has positioned Advanced Dental Ceramics, Inc. as a boutique laboratory. The majority of its cases come with photos for the shade, even on posterior teeth. Many patients also visit the lab for shade selection and to have their photo taken.

Vaterlaus attends continuing education courses every chance he gets and has a substantial library of reference books in the laboratory. His wife, Carrie,

handles the business aspects of the laboratory and he intends to remain a small operation so that he can concentrate on what he loves: making crowns.

He has about 12 regular clients, all of which he gained through word of mouth. "I try to position myself so the dentists think of me as part of the restorative team—like the periodontist or endodontist—and not just the provider of a crown as a commodity," says Vaterlaus.

LMT



Ed Vaterlaus (*left*), ceramist and owner of Advanced Dental Ceramics, Inc., entered the competition with his two new technicians: Michelle Foard, model and die, and Gerard Marks, waxing and metal finishing.



As early as round one of our competition, one of our judges called this "a classy crown." All of our judges are impressed with the detailed, curving anatomy; the color transition; and the hairline metal collar. This crown also has the highest rating among the 16 finalists in the marginal integrity and contours categories.