

# First Round of 'Valet Olympics' Held in New Jersey

**A**DVANCED PARKING Concepts (APC), a New Jersey-based valet parking service company and member of the National Valet Parking Association (NVPA), held its inaugural "Valet Olympics" on March 22 in Verona, NJ.

The purpose of the NVPA Valet Olympics is to find the best valets within the member companies by evaluating the skills and experience of each employee competitor. All eligible valets have been employed for at least six months, have had no infractions on their record for the past six months, and uphold and maintain the company's high standards.

In New Jersey in March, 90 sharply dressed and motivated employees were greeted by Ellis M. Dumont, APC's Chief Executive Officer. The tone was set as team captains and drivers prepared their strategies for competition.

Teams were eager to showcase their talents in the Key Jumble, a relay-style event in which four team members had to locate, drive and retrieve a vehicle quickly while operating at less than 10 mph.

Ten sets of keys were placed in a key box with all the tickets mislabeled. Each valet had to locate the proper key and match it to the vehicle to be retrieved. This showcased the talents of APC's experienced valets, who were able to match key styles and shapes learned by years of parking and driving all different types of vehicles.

After a close competition, the team of Darrin Smith, Sohail Sharifsuliman, Lofti Bassa, Johnathan Fernandez and Jose Torrealba negotiated the course flawlessly, and were in first place after the Key Jumble.

Then the Individual Maneuvering Event was used to determine the most skilled driver within the ranks of APC. Several cones were placed at 25-foot intervals, and each team's best driver stepped up to the starting line. Each had to negotiate the cones forward and reverse in the fastest time.

Nenil Mathurin, a veteran APC employee, was able to dominate the field on a difficult driving course in just 53 seconds, a company best time.

Next it was on to the Slalom, an event where each team of drivers navigated a relay through a series of strategically placed cones, just like the Individual Maneuvering Event. This time, all team members were participating, and the results were close. The Slalom highlighted not only APC employees' skills as drivers, but also the company's high safety standards.

After a challenging set of events, the employees were eager



The Key Jumble at the Inaugural Valet Olympics.

to know the four teams that would be heading into the next round. You could feel the excitement as the teams were announced in the following order:

**1st Place** – Harrison Park Towers in East Orange, NJ, led by Kishan Smith.

**2nd Place** – Supervisors Team in Verona, led by Darrin Smith.

**3rd Place** – Crystal Plaza in Livingston, NJ, led by Carlos Raigosa.

**4th Place** – Claridge House 1 in Verona, led by Angel Cailahua.

The top team of employees in the Regional Final will move on to compete in the National Finals in Phoenix in November.

As the remaining four teams prepare their strategies for the next wave of competition, all employees were left with a sense of camaraderie and company pride. The company said each employee's high morale, professionalism and dedication were a testament to APC's commitment to creating the "perfect first and last impression since 1985."

The National Valet Parking Association is dedicated to promoting the professionalism and integrity within the valet parking community and to educate clients about the benefits realized by working members of the association.

For more information on the NVPA, go to the home page of its website ([www.nvpaonline.com](http://www.nvpaonline.com)).

**PT**