

17th Scripps National Spelling Bee

The **17th Scripps National Spelling Bee** was held in Washington, District of Columbia on May 28, 1941. This was the first year that Scripps-Howard (now E.W. Scripps Company) hosted the event.

The winner was 13-year-old Louis Edward Sissman of Detroit, Michigan, correctly spelling the word *initials*.^[1] Phyllis Davis of Ohio placed second, misspelling "chrysanthemum" (which Sissman proceeded to spell correctly), and third went to 13-year-old Homer Lyon, Jr., of Miami, Florida, who fell on "ague".^{[1][2]}

The first place prize was \$500, followed by \$300 for second.^[1]

As of 2017, Sissman is the only winner of the Bee from Michigan.^[3] At the time of his win it was widely reported that he was the first boy to win since 1927, apparently overlooking that Ward Randall won in 1931, which was still a ten-year gap.^[4]

References

- ↑ (29 May 1941). Detroit Boy is Champ Speller (<https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=888&dat=19410529&id=SuNOAAAIAIBAJ&sjid=X00DAAAIAIBAJ&pg=3263,5246580&hl=en>), *St. Petersburg Times* (Associated Press)
- ↑ Boys in the News (<https://books.google.com/books?id=wAD5LXAmhYC&pg=PA25#v=onepage&q&f=false>), *Boys' Life* (August 1941) (No. 7 on page 25 is a picture of Sissman with Dr. W. Hayes Yeager)
- ↑ (2 June 2017). Local student reflects on spelling bee experience (<http://www.grandhaventribune.com/Education/2017/06/02/Local-student-reflects-on-experience-at-National-Spelling-Bee>), *Grand Haven Tribune*
- ↑ (7 June 1941). 14 Year Upset (<https://www.newspapers.com/newspage/222186127/>), *St. Cloud Times* (incorrectly reporting, consistent with other stories, that Sissman was first male winner since 1927)

External links

- Photograph of 1941 top three (https://www.instagram.com/p/_aA4-rEPhr/), Scripps National Spelling Bee instagram post (December 17, 2015)

17th Scripps National Spelling Bee



National Press Building, Washington, D.C.

Date	May 28, 1941
Location	Auditorium of the National Press Building
Winner	Louis Edward Sissman
Age	13
Residence	Detroit, Michigan
Sponsor	<i>The Detroit News</i>
Sponsor location	Detroit, Michigan
Winning word	initials
No. of contestants	29 ^[1]
Preceded by	16th Scripps National Spelling Bee
Followed by	18th Scripps National Spelling Bee

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