

58th Scripps National Spelling Bee

The **58th Scripps National Spelling Bee** was held in Washington, D.C. at the Capital Hilton on June 5–6, 1985, sponsored by the E.W. Scripps Company.

The winner was 13-year-old eighth-grader Balu Natarajan of Bolingbrook, Illinois, in his third appearance at the Bee (he finished 45th in 1983 and 63rd in 1984), the first winner from the Chicago area.^[2] He spelled "milieu" for the win. Second place went to 13-year-old Kate Lingley of Dover-Foxcroft, Maine, who missed "farrago". Another 13-year-old, Tanya Solomon of Kansas City, Missouri, took third, missing "syllepsis".^[3]

168 spellers competed in the Bee, 17 more than competed the previous year. There were 67 boys and 101 girls, including 19 repeat contestants,^[3] one 9-year-old, two 10-year-olds, 19 at age 11, 26 at age 12, 65 at age 13, and 55 at age 14. A total of 719 words were used.^{[4][5]}

Natarajan was the first Indian-American to win the Bee, and has been credited for inspiring the later dominance of Indian-Americans in the bee.^{[6][7][8][9]}

In addition to non-cash gifts, the first-place winner received \$1,000. Total prize money to all finalists was \$10,500.^{[2][3][10]}

References

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- (7 June 1985). M-i-l-i-e-u wins (<https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=2209&dat=19850607&id=2ZorAAAAIBAJ&sjid=ovoFAAAAIBA J&pg=5449,1208962&hl=en>), *The Telegraph* (Associated Press)
- (7 June 1985). And the winner is ... 'milieu' (<http://www.upi.com/Archives/1985/06/07/And-the-winner-is-milieu/6498486964800/>), *UPI*
- A total of 14 young spellers were eliminated in... (<http://www.upi.com/Archives/1985/06/05/A-total-of-14-young-spellers-were-eliminated-in/2089486792000/>), *UPI*
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The Capital Hilton, site of the 58th National Spelling Bee

Date	June 5–6, 1985
Location	The Capital Hilton in Washington, D.C. ^[1]
Winner	Balu Natarajan
Age	13
Residence	Bolingbrook, Illinois
Sponsor	<i>Chicago Tribune</i>
Sponsor location	Chicago, Illinois
Winning word	milieu
No. of contestants	168 ^[2]
Pronouncer	Alex Cameron
Preceded by	57th Scripps National Spelling Bee
Followed by	59th Scripps National Spelling Bee

7. Berger, Joseph (5 June 2005). Striving in America, and in the Spelling Bee (https://www.nytimes.com/2005/06/05/weekinreview/striving-in-america-and-in-the-spelling-bee.html?_r=0), *The New York Times*
8. (6 June 1985). National Spelling Bee reached 'killer round' (<https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=950&dat=19850606&id=jWlQAAAAIBAJ&sjid=elkDAAAIBAJ&pg=4175,1124163&hl=en>), *Evening Independent* (Associated Press)
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External links

- List of spellers and missed words in order, by round (<http://www.upi.com/Archives/1985/06/07/The-following-is-a-list-of-contestants-in-order/5875486964800/>), from UPI.com
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