

SPRING INVITATIONAL April 8-10, 2011
SARASOTA COUNTY CROQUET CLUB

The Sarasota County Croquet Club held its spring invitational on April 8-10, 2011 using three full size courts in Venice, Florida plus one additional court, at University Park in nearby Sarasota. Weather wise (One always talk about the weather in Florida) it was hot and sunny. To handle a couple of additional players six games were played early on Wednesday under cold and windy weather. We all complained about it. Temperatures in the 60's. So they changed the weather for us. Friday on was hot, summer weather, into the high 80's to the low 90's, so what did we do complain again.

Thirty-four players participated. Friday and Saturday consisted of Block play in four flights. Sunday saw everyone back in Venice for the final ladders.

In Championship, with eight players, Blaine Davis, Russ Cuccia, and Ron Huxtable led the pack in block play with four wins each. Blaine held his own in the ladder, while Ron and Russ fell to Don Mathieson, who met Blaine in the finals. Blaine was not to be defeated in the ladder and took the trophy 15 to 9 over Don.

First flight had nine players; with four players with four wins in six games. Vincent Marmo, Sue Lawrence, Thelma Lyle, and Sheila Davis all played well. Sue and Sheila out lasted Vincent and Thelma to meet in the finals. And what a game it was (At least in the six rotations of last turn. There was a mis-calculation of the final score, which was actually a tie, bringing on the additional hour of play. Wickets were missed, run in the wrong direction, excellent angle wicket shots were made, and when all was said and done, with five additional wickets being scored in the end game, Sheila Davis won 16 to 15, making it a husband and wife sweep for the top two flights.

Second flight, was not as evenly matched. Gabriella Tuscano, who had requested to play in first flight if there was an opening (There was not), decided to show her skill at her level. She took the block by storm, winning all six matches, with only Dick Schleiter being close with five wins. Joy Bandy was third out of the block with four wins. Joy took on Dick, and defeated him 12 to 10, and then in a tight match lost to Gabriella 13 to 12 in an overtime match. Gabriella Tuscano, undefeated in the tournament, lowered her handicap, and will not have to request to flight up in the near future.

Third flight saw Julie Schworm come through the block undefeated in six games, working the ladder to meet Antonia Marmo in the final match, in an extremely hot morning, and losing to Antonia 18 to 9.

The opening reception, held at the Bay Indies Club house. Cocktails, and hors d'oeuvres set the tone. Friendships renewed, schedules handed out, and questions were answered. The other social event was a sit down dinner Friday evening at the River Club in Venice. With soup, salad, and a choice of prime rib, salmon, or chicken, plus desert, everyone enjoyed the meal, and the croquet stories ended over coffee.

Sue Doherty and her "kitchen cuties" served delicious lunches courtside each day, followed by "Attitude Adjustment" after play.

Fred Jones, Tournament Director