

The Sixth USCA 9 Wicket National Championship

The 2012 USCA 9 Wicket Championship Flight Nationals was held Friday June 1 - Sunday June 3 at the Mennonite Heritage Center in Harleysville, Pennsylvania. Running concurrent with the 9 Wicket Nationals the Heritage Center put on a big charity fundraising event called the Whack & Roll Croquet Tournament (the 4th annual). There were over 200 participants playing on over 20 separate croquet courts set up on the surrounding grounds.

Friday featured singles competition with two blocks of six players playing five games each. On Sunday morning, the top two in each flight went into a single elimination semifinal with the winners playing in the final. With the doubles, all teams played in a full round robin on Saturday with the top two teams playing for first; and the third and fourth finishers playing for third the last round on Sunday.

The courts and weather were extremely challenging this year (please see the YouTube Video - type in the search box "2012 USCA 9 Wicket Croquet Nationals"). Between the rain and threats of thunderstorms the players endured lots of inadvertent jump shots and good shots that went bad. Despite all that, there were plenty of spectacular shots connecting! Even with the challenging conditions, over half the games were complete (32 points) and many long breaks were played.

This year, the singles Championship final had 11th seed Stephen Morgan (6) victorious over six-time USCA 6 Wicket National Champion Reid Fleming (1). We all wish Stephen a long and successful croquet competition. Doubles Championship finals had the team of John Warlick and two time 9 Wicket Singles Champion George Cochran beating Neil Houghton (1995 9 Wicket Doubles winner) and partner Kenster Rosenberry.

The USCA 9W Nationals started in 1995 with 64 participants playing in the Harvard Commons in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Reid Fleming won the inaugural 1995 9 Wicket Singles Championship. It wasn't until 2008 that the second Nationals were held in Kansas City, Kansas 2008 – 2011 hosted by the Missouri Croquet Association. This event in PA was the sixth 9 Wicket Nationals with 12 players playing both singles and doubles. The handicaps (6 Wicket handicaps) ranged from -2.5 to 8. There were a total of four minus players and one scratch.



Stephen Morgan – Singles Winner



George Cochran/John Warlick - Doubles Winners

Championship Singles

1. Stephen Morgan
2. Reid Fleming
3. Leo McBride
3. Bob Kroeger
5. John Warlick
6. Neil Houghton
7. Kenster Rosenberry
8. George Cochran
9. Chris Loat
10. Roy Morgan
11. Rufus Bayard
12. John Oehrle

Championship Doubles

1. George Cochran & John Warlick
2. Neil Houghton & Kenster Rosenberry
3. Bob Kroeger & Reid Fleming
4. Rufus Bayard & John Oehrle
5. Roy Morgan & Stephen Morgan
6. Leo McBride & Chris Loat