

# USCA Florida Regional Championship

April 18-21, 2013

National Croquet Center, West Palm Beach, FL



Seated: Dolores Gallagher, Thelma Lyle, Sandra Knuth Walsh, Johnny Mitchell, Betty Crisler, Jackie Jones, Rosanne Rosetto  
Standing: Bill Mead (TD), Bill Trower, Jim Dushek, Ray Liberti, John Warlick (TM), Sherif Abdelwahab, Hal Denton, David McCoy, Geoffrey Mattison, Mike Gibbons, Fred Jones, Don Smith, Dick Scherf. Missing: Dick Sullivan

## **Gibbons Takes Champion Singles While Bill Trower Continues His Rapid Rise Toward Zero!**

Mike Gibbons defeated Johnny Mitchell in the finals of the Florida Regional to take the top honors. On a windy day with rain threatening Mitchell took after Gibbons on turn five with a successful attack but failed to peel with a stuck ball. At the sixth turn Gibbons thought it through, with Mitchell five ball dead, and put on the slow cooker. The frog lost its legs on this one.

Mike proceeded to play with caution while Johnny was forced into long shots on wicket two. As the game progressed Gibbons took control and even came through one back gallantly giving Johnny a chance but that was not to be. Congratulations Mike Gibbons, it is great to have your name on the Florida Regional Trophy. A trophy that John Warlick had created with crystal mallets rakishly addressing a crystal ball, rumored to come from the Greenbrier Hotel.

In Championship Doubles, Sandy Knuth Walsh with partner Sherif Abdelwahab bested the duo of Geoffrey Mattison and Johnny Mitchell as time expired. Walsh, who played up from first flight singles, failed to pull Johnny off of the boundary thinking she had lost the game for the partnership. Ensuing play showed her worry to be false as Sherif hit in, once again, to take control decisively for the winners. In the end, Mitchell resigned the game when he concluded that he would be forced to peel Geoffrey's ball through five wickets in the process of pegging out with only three balls left in the game.

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With the weather seasonably unpredictable - it will rain today but we don't know where or when. The Florida Regional was at times wonderful, windy, rainy, too hot and not too hot. Such is late April in Paradise. The games got off to beautiful weather, a bit early, with an opening game time of 8:30 AM (largely to preserve the players vigor) in the face of an afternoon swelter. Continental breakfasts and buffet lunches were eagerly consumed while après croquet found many players swapping tall tales of the day's activities. During Saturday's play the event site also hosted a Super-Sized croquet event, free public lessons attracting the usual 22 participants, numerous croquet lessons, a croquet birthday party with 32 players, multiple member games and practice sessions, as well as, a youthful event in the evening. Where other than the increasingly busy NCC could this have happened?

This year's tournament experiment in belt tightening showed mixed results with the desultory audience in attendance for the final games. Going off property some of the slate enjoyed a lobster dinner at Lantana Jacks a stone's throw from the NCC. Betty Crisler opined, quite rightly, "A Florida Regional Championship should have a beautiful lunch during the finals..." Any thoughts?

In the First Flight Singles finals Bill Trower continued his unbeaten streak pulling ahead of hard charging Don Smith. Smith, who had fought back and tied the game with less than two minutes, could not pull off the victory when Trower calmly took his last time out, plotted his end game and assured his victory.

First Flight Doubles, again, saw Bill Trower and Dick Scherf playing in the finals against Don Smith and newcomer Hal Denton. In a narrow two point victory Dick Scherf finished the game by hitting in from behind one back to take Denton out of the picture and roqueted Smith out of his wicketed one back. He then scored the point giving the opponents an opportunity to clear and destroyed Denton down the court leaving him with a very tough wind influenced shot on the line for Trower's ball, and missed.

Congratulations Bill and Dick on your first Florida Regional Doubles Championship.

Tournament Manager John Warlick  
Tournament Director Bill Mead

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## Championship Singles

1. Mike Gibbons
2. Johnny Mitchell
3. Dick Sullivan
3. John Warlick
5. David McCoy
5. Fred Jones
5. Sherif Abdelwahab
5. James Dushek
9. Jackie Jones
10. Geoffrey Mattison



Bill Mead, Mike Gibbons, John Warlick, Johnny Mitchell

## First Flight Singles

1. William Trower
2. Don Smith
3. Thelma Lyle
3. Sandy Knuth Walsh
5. Roxanne Rosetto
5. Betty Crisler
5. Dolores Gallagher
5. Richard Scherf
9. Ray Liberti
9. Hal Denton



Johnny Mitchell, William Trower, Bill Mead, John Warlick

## Championship Doubles

1. Sherif Abdelwahab & Sandra Knuth Walsh
2. Johnny Mitchell & Geoffrey Mattison
3. John Warlick & Dick Sullivan
3. Jackie Jones & Fred Jones



Bill Mead, Sandra Knuth Walsh, Sherif Abdelwahab, Johnny Mitchell, John Warlick

## First Flight Doubles

1. William Trower & Richard Scherf
2. Hal Denton & Donald Smith
3. James Dushek & Thelma Lyle
3. Betty Crisler & Dolores Gallagher
5. Roxanne Rosetto & Ray Liberti



Bill Mead, Dick Scherf, Johnny Mitchell, William Trower, John Warlick