

2013 Western Regional Championships
Mission Hills Croquet Club, Rancho Mirage, CA
April 17-20, 2013

Ideal weather greeted this year's participants with a gentle wind after a week that definitely spun the turbines in the desert wind farms. Visitors from the east came to battle in the wildwest. South Carolina and Florida residents combined with the Westerners to make up 17 players in two flights.

Ron Hendry returned to form as both a Tournament Manager and doubles player. Ron and Genie arranged a toast and tally courtside in the marvelous evening breeze after block play finished on Thursday. Players enjoyed some relaxing but jubilant golf croquet with some adult beverages encouraging courageous tactics. Some marveled at making the knockout while others cursed the games that slipped away. Ben Rothman took the top seed in Championship with Steve Mossbrook and Peter Bach at 4-2 and Mary Rodeberg playing up to their level, thus surpassing Jim Butts to get the last spot in the semi-final. Rothman and Bach were challenged but survived a few close doubles games to win the small doubles block. Cameron Evans and Nick Gray each made it undefeated through the blocks earning the top two seeds with everyone making the knockout and enjoying a shot at the first flight title. Cam and Nick stalked around the court like pool sharks, hitting any long shot that crossed their mind and finishing with scores in the 20s in singles as well as doubles play.

Play resumed Friday with single elimination singles and double elimination doubles and some surprising upsets along the way. Nancy Crouch reversed her block result and beat fellow 10 handicap Pat Dugan to advance to the semi-finals. Nancy scored 17 but fell just short of Cameron in another 20 point performance on his way to the finals. Marvin Salles returned to the lawns to extend his reign as the dominate player in First Flight beating the undefeated Nick Gray only to meet the other shark in the title game. Cam and Nick dominated doubles and stayed on the top of the ladder while Judy Dahlstrom and Pat Dugan tried and tried to knock them off. In the final Pat and Judy got as close as possible but Nick and Cam won 16-15.

The First Flight singles championship was old guard versus the up and coming. Cameron ran his breaks, but Marvin took a ball around as well. The game was always within reach, but deadness and Cameron's ability to hit any of Marvin's break chances kept him ahead till the end. Cameron managed to win every game that week including the final for a spectacular double gold.

With a double elimination format in Championship doubles, Jim Butts and Ron Hendry took the early exit as Mossbrook and Rodeberg grabbed their first win of the tournament in the loser's bracket and moved on to the final. Rothman and Bach held nothing back and took the honors 26-6 with Peter executing attacks with calm confidence. Championship singles did not fare as well for Peter. Steve Mossbrook doubled up on his block performance over Mr. Bach and moved into the final against the 29 year-old Rothman.

The finals began slowly as Mossbrook chose to keep Yellow out of the game in a Chernobyl position. Rothman dug in with a rush in corner one, but refused to move unless Steve tried something. Passing ensued until Rothman urged "you chose this opening, so do something". Steve seemed content to take his 2-1 deficit into last turns but claimed that "it wouldn't be fair to the spectators". As soon as he came in (to corner 3, with Red in corner 4) Ben pounced. Steve had one shot before Ben ran each of his breaks, but the 80 foot hail Mary's did not connect and Rothman ran away with the game 26-2.

All participants relaxed in the shade with another classic Mission Hills luncheon and a few cool drinks. The celebration was one of the last of the season as the temperature would soon creep into the triple digits, but all were in good humor looking forward to the National Championships that would arrive soon enough. See you in November!

~Ben Rothman, Tournament Director



All Finalists (except Marvin Salles): Cameron Evans, Ben Rothman, Ron Hendry, Judy Dahlstrom, Pat Dugan, Mary Rodeberg, Nick Gray. Kneeling: Steve Mossbrook, Peter Bach

Championship Singles

1. Ben Rothman
 2. Steve Mossbrook
 3. Peter Bach
 3. Mary Rodeberg
 5. Jim Butts
 6. Mijai Pagano
- DNF Harvey Geiger



Ron Hendry, Ben Rothman

First Flight Singles

1. Cameron Evans
 2. Marvin Salles
 3. Nicholas Gray
 3. Nancy Crouch
 5. Judy Dahlstrom
 5. Robert Morford
 5. Pat Dugan
- DNF Richard Engebretson

Championship Doubles

1. Ben Rothman & Peter Bach
2. Steve Mossbrook & Mary Rodeberg
3. Jim Butts & Ron Hendry

First Flight Doubles

1. Cameron Evans & Nicholas Gray
 2. Judy Dahlstrom & Pat Dugan
 3. Mijai Pagano & Nancy Crouch
- DNF Harvey Geiger & Pamela Geiger



Ron Hendry, Marvin Salles, Ben Rothman



Luncheon