

2014 BOCA GRANDE INVITATIONAL
March 6-9, 2014
Boca Grande, FL

The twelfth annual Boca Grande Invitational was played on the three Gasparilla Inn courts. There was a full house of twenty-four players divided into three flights. The courts were in splendid shape. The grass was without a blemish. The weather did not cooperate with us this year. Thursday saw three hours of heavy lightning forcing a shut down for most of the afternoon. By shortening some of the games, deleting others, and a couple of early games on Friday, we got back on schedule. Friday was relatively cold with strong winds. Saturday was a little better, but still cool and cloudy. Sunday was ideal, warm, little wind, and sunny. Back to the shorts weather.

Championship Flight was seeded with eight players with handicaps from minus 1.5 to plus 3, average 1.0. With an extra day added to the schedule this year we were able to schedule block play the first two days, with a double elimination ladder the last two days. All players enjoyed the longer schedule. The results from the block were pretty much as seeded. Webster Bull, playing with a 3 handicap (Down from 12 last year), and coming from a strong showing at Audubon a week ago, emerged from the block #2, with Alan Cottle undefeated in five block games #1 and Jackie Jones #3. The ladder started Saturday morning with Alan Cottle taking all four games to go undefeated through the ladder to win the flight. Statistically Alan averaged 23.5 wickets per game, pegging out in 6 of the 9 games he played, with opponents scoring an average of 7 wickets per game against him. Webster had the unfortunate statistic of losing three games to Alan, one in the block and two in the ladder.

First Flight with handicaps 4.5 to 7 also consisted of eight players Jim McLaughlin, also coming fresh from Audubon, and with a high end 7 handicap took the hard way to the finish. After winning a couple in the ladder (He was seeded #1) he lost and started the additional climb in the loser side of the ladder to come back to defeat Chuck Perry in the Sunday finals. In addition to his trophy he took home 60 tracking points. Rounding out the strong finishers were Sheila Davis 3rd and Jake Johnson 4th.

Second Flight, with handicaps from 7 to 9, again saw the high handicap player come through with increased energy and shot making to upset the seeded block. Kathleen Dainton, seeded #4 in the ladder, started off being defeated by Arthur Olsen in the first game. From the loser side she played an additional five games to again meet Arthur in the finals. But this time it was Kathleen 14-12 over Arthur to win the trophy.

As there are several members who have joint membership in the Gasparilla Mallet Club and the Sarasota County Croquet Club, it was noted that there were nine members of the Gasparilla club playing and fourteen members of the Sarasota club in attendance. Local support is of great advantage, but the players who traveled some distance to play are appreciated and welcomed. Special note was made that three of the six trophy winners

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were members of the Strawberry Banke Croquet Club in Rye, New Hampshire, located on the property of Jim McLaughlin, who was one of the winners.

As usual, the hosts, Gasparilla Mallet Club and the Boca Bay Croquet Club, wined and dined the participants throughout the three-day tournament. An opening party courtside on Thursday set the stage. Friday evening cocktails and dinner at the Gasparilla Inn was an evening to remember. With a delightful menu, consisting of a Gasparilla Salad, a choice of Filet of Beef, or Pan Seared Wild Salmon followed by bread pudding served in the private Pelican Room this was to be the delight of the tournament.

Watching the sun go down on the Gulf of Mexico, with a cocktail in hand is a great way to start an evening. In fact so great that on Saturday evening, we watched the sunset, overlooking the Gulf from the Boca Bay Beach Club, cocktail in hand. Heavy hors d'oeuvres, baby lamb chops, shrimp, stuffed mushrooms and chicken sticks were the order of the day.

Not to be outdone, after three rounds of play Sunday morning, the awards luncheon was held in the Pelican Room, Gasparilla Inn, adjoining the courts. The "luncheon" took second only to the dinner Friday evening. After lunch, and while finishing the key lime pie and coffee, the awards were presented to the winners and runner-ups of the respective flights.

Kudos to Blaine Davis, President of the Gasparilla Mallet Club, Boca Bay resident, and Tournament Manager for a job well done.

Submitted
Fred Jones
Tournament Director
March 10, 2014

Championship Flight

1. Alan Cottle
2. Webster Bull
3. Jackie Jones
4. Blaine Davis
5. Bob Bake
5. Jack Montgomery
7. Jim McGill
7. Kelley Newton

First Flight

1. Jim McLaughlin
2. Chuck Perry
3. Shelia Davis
4. Jake Johnson
5. John Dainton
5. Lucie Bard
7. John Postley
7. Elaine Postley

Second Flight

1. Kathleen Dainton
2. Arthur Olsen
3. Oakley Johnson
4. Bruce Huber
5. Lucinda Sullivan
5. Bob Worrell
7. Ann Nolte
7. Johanna McGill