

USCA FLORIDA REGIONAL MARCH 26-30, 2014 VENICE, FL

The 2014 Florida Regional Championship was held March 26th to the 30th on the three lawns of the Sarasota County Croquet Club in Venice, Florida. Although the calendar said that spring had arrived the previous week, the weather was some of the worst that has been experienced in this area for many a day, or week, or year. The first day opened to 48-degree weather, cloudy and damp. As the week progressed the forecasters called for cool, cloudy weather with frequent showers and thunderstorms in the afternoons. So we went in and out of drizzle, but no thunderstorms or sun until Saturday afternoon. Then came the lightning and thunder, as well as rain, heavy at times, but in the area for the entire afternoon. Rain delays, pegging down the games in progress, caused rescheduling to Sunday of the late Saturday games. Sunday was a little cool, but the sun was out in full force. Spring had come back.

Twenty-six players, with twenty from the local club, filled the courts to capacity. While the majority of the players were from the local club, a majority of these players are snowbirds, and belong to other "northern" clubs as well. They took advantage of the Regional being local.

Championship Flight with 10 players, handicaps from -1.5 to 2 and First Flight with 6 in the block, handicaps from 4 to 7 each played six games in the block with everyone progressing to a single elimination ladder. Second Flight with 6 players, handicaps 8 and 9 played 5 block games, with all seeded in a double elimination ladder. Saturday morning was devoted to doubles play elimination ladder, while the afternoon consisted of singles elimination ladders. Sunday morning was devoted to semi-finals for singles, finals for doubles, and finals for singles.

Programs were distributed at the opening party that included cocktails and dinner, poolside, at the home of Fred & Jackie Jones. Welcoming remarks were made by Jackie Jones, Tournament Manager and USCA District President, Ron Huxtable, recently elected Florida Regional Vice-President, and program for the week by Fred Jones, Tournament Director. Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday following play participants gathered under the awnings courtside for "attitude adjustment" and croquet stories. Friday, the participant's dinner, commenced at 6:30 at the Saltwater Cafe restaurant, and those who chose the Parmesan encrusted tilapia say it was delightful. Prime rib was also an excellent choice.

Championship Singles, playing in a single block, saw Alan Cottle and Jackie Jones emerge as the top two with five wins each thereby gaining a double bye, playing their first game in the semi-finals. Both went down in defeat by #4 seed Hans Peterson, and #6 seed Linda Huxtable. Hans and Linda played a soft defensive for most of the match. One short break by Hans gave him the game 14 to 11, for the Regional title.

First Flight Singles, playing in a block of eight, saw Roni Brazell #1 seed from the block with five wins, and Bill Cole seeded second in the ladder.

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A straight single elimination ladder saw Roni immediately fall to Lee Anderson, and Bill Cole fall to Christine Irwin in his second game. The final game saw Christine #3 seed take the honors from Lee 16 to 11.

Second Flight singles with six playing in the block ended with Bob Worrell and David Owen placing #1 and #2, and Kathleen Dainton placing third. Seeding was such that Bob and David received a bye. As the ladder progressed David was replaced by Kathleen, who in turn lost to Bob Worrell, wound up in the loser side, won a game and came back to play the finals against Worrell. In a close match Bob was the winner, having gone the entire tournament without a loss. The final score was 14-13.

Doubles were the first games each of the first three days, with two flights of six teams each, all played three games, leading to a seeded single elimination ladder. At the end of block play, the number one and two ladder seeds were the eventual winners and runner-ups. In Championship Flight Alan Cottle and Avril Rangoni-Machiavelli went on to defeat Jackie Jones and Ron Huxtable in the finals 17-14, while in First Flight John and Kathleen Dainton bested Dolores Gallagher and Roni Brazell 13-9.

I would be remiss, not to thank the Sarasota County Croquet Club for the all volunteer's work that went into making this tournament a success. Starting with Jackie Jones, as Tournament Manager was responsible for co-coordinating the entire affair, as well as hosting the opening party. The kitchen help, all volunteers, who prepared and served breakfast, lunch and cocktail hours, My thanks to the ground crew, under the direction of Colin Irwin and Bob Lentz, who set up and stripped down the courts each day in the early mornings. The support of the Sarasota Parks Department who maintain the courts, and kept them cut early enough for us to start at 8:30 AM. And the computer program developed by John Taylor, who made it possible for me to program and professionally run this invitational.

At the completion of the finals, the trophies were awarded to the deserving winners and the finalists on the croquet lawns, pictures were taken, luncheon was served and by 5 PM all had departed for home. A very successful regional was complete.

Submitted by,
Fred Jones
Tournament Director

Championship Flight Singles

1. Hans Peterson
2. Linda Huxtable
3. Alan Cottle
3. Jackie Jones
5. Bob Chilton
5. Ron Huxtable
7. Colin Irwin
7. Chris Loat
7. Bill Hartmann
7. Jack Montgomery

Hans Peterson



First Flight Singles

1. Christine Irwin
2. Lee Anderson
3. Bill Cole
3. Doug Johnson
5. Jim McLaughlin
5. Roni Brazell
5. Dolores Gallagher
5. John Dainton

Christine Irwin



Second Flight Singles

1. Bob Worrell
2. Kathleen Dainton
3. David Owen
4. Norm Mulrone
5. Elsie Maxam
5. Gary Anderson

Kathleen Dainton, Ron Huxtable, Bob Worrell



Championship Flight Doubles

1. Alan Cottle & Avril Rangoni-Machiavelli
2. Jackie Jones & Ron Huxtable
3. Bob Chilton & Chris Loat
3. Linda Huxtable & Bill Hartmann
5. Colin Irwin & Hans Peterson
5. Jack Montgomery & Dale Poszgai

Alan Cottle, Ron Huxtable, Avril Rangoni-Machiavelli



First Flight Doubles

1. John Dainton & Kathleen Dainton
2. Dolores Gallagher & Roni Brazell
3. Jim McLaughlin & David Owen
3. Gary Anderson & Norm Mulroney
5. Christine Irwin & Lee Anderson
5. Bob Worrell & Elsie Maxam

John Dainton, Ron Huxtable, Kathleen Dainton

