

2014 Croquet Invitational Green Boundary Club Aiken, SC 29802 November 12 - 15, 2014

The Green Boundary Club in Aiken held its second annual United States Croquet Association sanctioned tournament. The field of twelve players was divided into two flights; seven in the First Flight and five in the Championship Flight. Each flight played for two days.

Both Pat Spratt of Connecticut and Linda Babbidge of Tennessee played in last year's tournament. The new players were Byron Hicks, Sharon Blackington, Hornor Davis, Sheryl Phillips and David Stinson. Byron and Sharon are from Florida, while the other three are Club members from Aiken. This was the first USCA tournament for both Sheryl and David, and both held their own against the rest of the competition.

The players were able to get some practice in the day before, as the court was reserved that afternoon for the tournament players. The weather was colder than normal, but no frost occurred during the first two days. After the first day was over, the players were invited to a wine and cheese party next door at The Balcony.



Byron Hicks, Pat Spratt, Sharon Blackington, Hornor Davis, Sheryl Phillips, Linda Babbidge, David Stinson

Near the end of the First Flight play of the tournament, the two leaders were Byron and Pat. Byron had won one more game than Pat, but the two were scheduled for a head-to-head match. Pat beat Byron, tying their record of five games apiece. Since Pat had a few more net points than Byron, that slight edge meant that she took first place. That evening, Lawrence and Laren Kurland hosted a cocktail party at their home in Aiken. The trophies were presented by Dennis Quinn, the President of the Green Boundary Club.

Results of First Flight

- 1 Pat Spratt
- 2 Byron Hicks
- 3 Linda Babbidge
- 4 David Stinson
- 5 Sheryl Phillips
- 6 Sharon Blackington
- 7 Hornor Davis

Dennis Quinn, Pat Spratt



The third day commenced with Championship Flight. Jim Hall and Frank Crocitto drove



with their wives from Lake Oconee, Georgia. Oakley Johnson and his wife (from Maryland) flew into Columbia and rented a car to drive to Aiken, Mike Farnham and Lisa Barros drove over from Bluffton, South Carolina, and Henry Vaughan, accompanied by his wife, traveled from Hilton Head to serve as Tournament Director and referee. Rich Watson from Aiken rounded out the Championship Flight.

Championship Flight settles an argument about deadness board. Jim Hall, Oakley Johnson, Frank Crocitto, Henry Vaughn, Mike Farnham, Rich Watson

The first day was chilly and the strong wind caused everyone to bundle up. Each player played everyone else in block play. The results at the end of the first day determined where each player would wind up at the start of the second day; the plan was to have a complete “double elimination” ladder. Mother Nature intervened. The cold air that covered the nation caused the air temperature to go down to 27 degrees that second morning. Walking on frozen grass will cause irreparable damage. The tournament had been scheduled to start at 8:15 that morning, but the start of play had to be delayed until 10. So, Henry modified the ladder bracket in a way that would eliminate two of the time slots. The temperature slowly increased and peaked about noon, but at least there was sunshine in the afternoon. The players battled it out all day, and the upset of the day was Mike Farnham (a 10) beating Jim Hall (a 1) by just one point. Mike went on to the finals to play Rich Watson. Mike got off to an early lead, but near the end of the game, Rich pulled ahead winning by only 4 points. Trophies were presented by David Stinson, head of sports activities at the Green Boundary Club.



Rich Watson, David Stinson

Results of Championship Flight

- 1 Rich Watson
- 2 Mike Farnham
- 3 Oakley Johnson
- 4 Frank Crocitto
- 5 Jim Hall

The following people were instrumental in putting together a successful tournament. Mike Babbidge and Hornor helped to reset the court for tournament specs, and Mike also repainted the wickets. Publicity, momento gifts and photography were provided by Melanie Doremus. Mary Lou Dewar worked with the kitchen staff to put together the luncheons. Lawrence Kurland ordered the trophies and lapel pins. Gail Ebner, a local artist, donated to boxes of thank-you cards that we used as third-place prizes. Diane Watson brought coffee, hot apple cider, fruit and pastries out each morning, served courtside.

Rich Watson, TM