

NCC Winter Open Singles Tournament

January 18-19, 2014

West Palm Beach, FL

Tournament Managers: John and Anthea Blamire
Tournament Director: Bill Mead.

With three cold-fronts passing through South Florida that weekend all forty-nine players had one eye on the sky and one eye on the fast as glass grass as they marched out onto the dangerous lawns of the National Croquet Center. It was the start of the popular weekend open singles tournament that, in the past few years, has attracted members and visitors alike to the sun and fun of the NCC - where croquet comes first!

During the next two days, each participant would play six games of singles in five blocks. There would be no playoffs in this sanctioned tournament and winners would be determined by wins, net points and gross points. This format ensures that each player can get out of bed at a reasonable hour, play three games a day, only sit out once and be in the bar, or leaving for home, before the cruel wind and darkness descend for the evening. It is proving to be very popular - too popular and next year there may have to be restrictions on the number of participants.

This year we had a strong Championship Flight with two new players at this level, Pat Colt and David Collie, both of whom did well against proven champions such as Derrick Wassink and Bob Van Tassel and gave them both some bad moments - they will be players to watch in coming tournaments and games. In First Flight Bill Whitman was the one to watch, but he had to keep an eye on Bill Trower (9-wicket champion) and the vastly improved Dick Scherf (who tells us he was playing in the snow up-north before gathering his senses and returning to Florida). They finished 1, 2, and 3 in this very competitive flight.

In Second Flight Ray Liberti showed the confidence he has gained recently from "playing up" in the NCC weekly low-handicap games, but Englishman Barry Sales did not take any prisoners in all his games and ended up only one-win shy of the top prize. In Third Flight all bets were on Vicky Johnston after her recent wins in the NCC Championship Singles (she got the treasured "wooden spoon"), but she could not overcome the surprise winner Mark Ski, who credited his win to being from New York and from wearing all new clothes purchased in the USCA store! Well done Mark and Vicky.

Fourth Flight always produces drama and excitement. As the scorekeepers paced the sidelines, long after all the other games had ended, the ultimate winner, Noriko Shugar wrapped up her fifth win(!) and once again proved that the hours of practice she puts in each week, is definitely paying off. Behind her, Huston Huffman also had five wins, but fewer net points, so went home with a red ribbon instead of a blue one.

This tournament is always fun, enjoyable, fast, tense and well received by all who play. It is great way to revel in our sport. The organizers would like to thank all the players for putting up with the cool wind and the bad jokes. As usual at the NCC, the grass was a tribute to all the dedicated work of David, Carl and Bill, and the Sandy James food could not be left on the plate.

Special thanks to Marie Sweetser for the vast amount of work she patiently and cheerfully does behind the scenes keeping track of all the players, payments and foibles.

Now - if we can only get those cold-fronts to leave!

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Champion Flight Singles

1. Derrick Wassink
2. Bob Van Tassell
3. Michael Todorovich
4. David McCoy
5. Bob Chilton
6. Ed O'Laughlin
7. Pat Colt
8. Geoffrey Mattison
9. David Collie



David McCoy, Bob Van Tassell, John Warlick

First Flight Singles

1. Bill Whitman
2. Bill Trower
3. Dick Scherf
4. Geraldine McCauley
5. Joe Knoll
6. Jerry Waechter
7. Betty Crisler
8. Doug McKeckneay
9. Kevan O'Connor
10. Kiehner Johnson



David McCoy, Bill Trower, Dick Scherf, John Warlick

Second Flight Singles

1. Ray Liberti
2. Barry Sales
3. Bob Crouch
4. Brian Cooke
5. Carla Rueck
6. Gerald Shugar
7. Sharon Kenrick
8. Sandy Feeney
9. Jeannine Bedard
10. Randy Bedard

Third Flight Singles

1. Mark Ski
2. Linda Harris
3. Gail Rubin
4. Vickie Johnston
5. Barb O'Laughlin
6. Tom O'Laughlin
7. Lovejoy Duryea
8. Missy Diack-Chilton
9. Nancy Crouch
10. Bobby Duryea



David McCoy, Mark Ski, Linda Harris, Gail Rubin, John Warlick

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Fourth Flight Singles

1. Noriko Shugar
2. Huston Huffman
3. Clint Fowlkes
4. Erinn Cooke
5. Pat Muir
6. Barbara Missett
7. Lois Sales
8. Susan Cushing
9. Linda Weisheit
10. Al Muren



David McCoy, Noriko Shugar, Clint Fowlkes,
John Warlick