

# **Sarasota County Croquet Club Winter Invitational January 28-February 1, 2015 Venice, FL**

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Sarasota County Croquet Club's Winter Invitational tournament was held January 28 to February 1<sup>st</sup> on three club courts in Venice, Florida. With a final total of 33 players competing, the courts were busy and double banked through the weekend. Local players, to allow the out-of-town players full use of the courts on the three-day weekend, played twenty-eight games on the 28th.

In the singles only, four-flight tournament, the flight handicap spread was fairly close. Championship Flight with handicaps -1.5 to 3.5 with an average of 0.5 demonstrated some fine play for the rest of the players. First Flight consisted of 4-5 handicap players, while Second Flight had 6-7 handicaps, and Third Flight held 8 to 11 handicap contestants.

The Florida weather, while clear, was not very warm. January tends to bring the worst in the way of temperatures. But, although bundled up against the cold weather, we were still able to consider ourselves lucky, with no rain, nor snow to shovel, while four permanent shelters adjacent to the lawns, added to the comfort of the players.

The croquet lawns were in excellent shape, true, level, and with speed of 8 on a stempt meter. Under the direction of Colin Irwin, the wickets were all set with a close and equal clearance. All set-up and take down of the courts, as well as the food service and attitude adjustment is organized and handled by club volunteers.

The opening party, Thursday, was combined with the monthly potluck dinner normally held by the club, and hosted by the members who live at Bay Indies in their clubhouse. Included were cocktails and a full buffet dinner for eighty guests, with never ending deserts.

Saturday evening, players were able to watch the sun set over the Gulf of Mexico on the beach at the Manasota Beach Club in Englewood. With a cocktail hour preceding a private five-course dinner at the club, a great evening capped off the social side of the tournament.

In Championship Flight the top three seeds finished the block in order: Colin Irwin, Alan Cottle, and Jackie Jones. Number four was David Collie, who had to leave at the end of block play, which allowed John Warlick to fill the fourth slot in the single elimination ladder, played on Sunday. Warlick and Cottle fell on the first round to Irwin and Jones. In the finals, Irwin played true to form, not having lost a game during the entire tournament, and finished the winner with a score of 21 to 8 over Jones.

First Flight saw a different spread between the seeds and the block finalists. Robert McQuinn, Frank Buzerak, Charlotte Neagle, and William Cole topped out as the top four. The ladder saw McQuinn and Neagle victors in the first round on Sunday. The final between the two took on a very close game with the final outcome not decided until the very end, with Neagle taking the flight 15-14 over McQuinn.

Second Flight, with some upsets, saw James Feorino, seeded number eight, win the block on net points with Doug Johnson and Dolores Gallagher second and third also with 5 wins, and Arthur Olsen finishing fourth with 4 wins. In the Sunday ladder Feorino and Gallagher lost out in the first round. In the final Arthur Olsen bested Doug Johnson 20 to 10 to take the flight trophy.

Third Flight picked the number one seed Gary Anderson to win the block play, with Roger Measel second, Gail Rubin third, and Theodore Thelin fourth. Again the top three each had five wins in six matches. This block consisted of ten players with a greater spread on handicaps than the other flights. The first round of the ladder dropped Thelin and Rubin with Anderson and Measel progressing to the final. Anderson was not to be denied, with only one loss during the tournament, he bested Measel 9 to 7 in the final game.

This was the second and final invitational for the season. February and March will see the Club Championships in singles and doubles. With a membership in excess of 180, there is play and competition every day on the courts. If in the area, call ahead and join the fun.

Submitted  
Fred Jones  
Tournament Director

Championship Flight  
1. Colin Irwin  
2. Jackie Jones  
3. Alan Cottle  
3. John Warlick  
5. David Collie  
6. Jack Montgomery  
7. Avril Rangoni-Machiavelli

First Flight  
1. Charlotte Neagle  
2. Robert McQuinn  
3. William Cole  
3. Frank Buzerak  
5. Oakley Johnson  
6. Christine Irwin  
7. Steffie Robertson  
8. Richard Palmer

Second Flight  
1. Arthur Olsen  
2. Doug Johnson  
3. Dolores Gallagher  
3. James Feorino  
5. James McLaughlin  
6. John D. Richardson  
7. D. Kay Schneider  
8. Andrée Bothe

Third Flight  
1. Gary Anderson  
2. Roger Measel  
3. Gail Rubin  
3. Theodore Thelin  
5. Robert Lentz  
6. Camelia Monteforte  
7. Robert Fisher  
8. Douglas Ledgett  
9. MaryAnn McDermott  
10. John McDermott