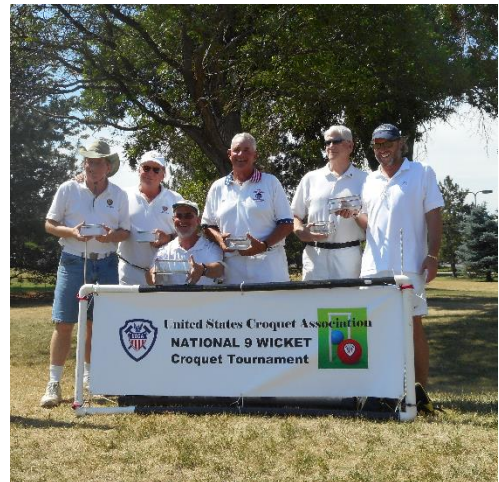


# USCA 9 Wicket Nationals Championship 2016

Pulaski Park  
Denver, CO  
June 17-19, 2016

The National Tournament was hosted by the Denver Croquet Club in beautiful Denver Colorado. Washington Park, the home of the Denver Croquet Club was unable to accommodate the tournament requiring it be moved to Pulaski Park. Located next to the Gates Tennis Center and on one of the busiest intersections in the city of Denver making for great exposure of croquet. However a problem with the sprinkler system changed the beautiful lawn into extreme conditions. The play was on long grass at one end descending to near desert conditions on the other. Unplanned jump shots and balls following gullies between tufts of grass made for interesting, long sighs, eye searches of heaven and many under the breath comments. But all shouldered on with the cover comment "that's 9 wicket". The competition this year was excellent with many experienced players returning and a good mix of new comers.



Play commenced on Friday June 17 continuing to the Finals on Sunday the 19th. The night before the tournament the Denver Croquet Club hosted a cook out on its home court in Washington Park for a meet and greet, including a silent auction. Play schedules were handed out as the guests enjoyed greeting old and new friends shadowed by the Rocky Mountains mirrored in the lake adjoining the lawn. Most all matches were hard fought and many decided by time and a single point. This competitive group had no one coming out of their block undefeated. The high ranked and experienced Championship Flight of 12 challenged each other's skill of the game and mastering the difficulties of the lawn. The 14 players in First Flight over came the Lawn and a quick learning curve to place wins in their blocks. The DCrC contingent found learning on their manicured home lawn and playing in the long grass of the park changed shots and strategies immensely. The learning of the new rules kept the players and tournament director Matt Baird on their toes. On Saturday night, after two long days of play in the Colorado sunshine, players had a strawberries and cream traditional refreshments in honor of the Gates Tennis Center and the croquet and tennis history of "Wimbledon". It was a great way to finish the day.

Sunday for the finals found another Colorado sunny day with the unusualness of humidity. Some commented that it was to make the out of towers feel more at home. The First Flightier's and guests once more gathered under the mighty oak with its shady covering and watched the battles between the experienced and the new comers. Ford Fay came out first in block A and Ken Erkerbrack was first in block B. Then the upsets started to fly. Erkerbrack lost to new comer Charles Berberich in the first round and Fay lost to Bill Berg in the second round. Berberich just eked out a win over Berg to win the final. Congratulations to both for a great finish.

The Championship Singles began on the hard packed river bed, normally known as grass, with Paul Bennet winning the A block and George Cochran conquering the B block. However, upsets were to be the order of the day. John Warlick did battle with his doubles partner George Cochran and finally was successful in defeating him to advance. John then lost by 1 wicket to Matt Griffith to miss the finals. Meanwhile Paul Bennet marched along to meet Matt Griffith in the Finals. The Finals had an exciting

finish with some long bouncy shots helping to decide the outcome. Hoppers a plenty. Paul Bennet held on in a competitive match for the win. Again, congratulations to both.

In Championship Doubles the team of Paul Bennet and Doug Moore defeated George Cochran and John Warlick and depending on whom you ask the bouncy lawn was a factor, but hey "that's 9 wicket".

The Denver Croquet Club was a great host and we appreciated all the help from the players in setting up courts on very hard ground and pick up at the end of each day.

Thanks again to all!!

## CHAMPIONSHIP SINGLES

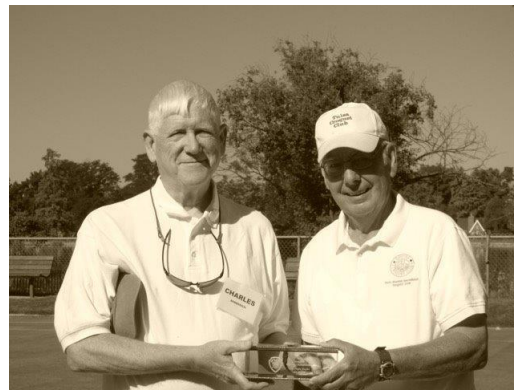
- 1 Paul Bennett
- 2 Matthew Griffith
- 3 John Warlick
- 3 Ronald Millican
- 5 George Cochran
- 5 Douglas Moore
- 5 Kevin McQuigg
- 5 Kent Chapman
- 9 Deborah Millican



Paul Bennett and Matthew Griffith

## FIRST FLIGHT SINGLES

- 1 Charles Berberich
- 2 William Berg
- 3 Ford Fay
- 3 Harold Wambold
- 5 Judy McKeon
- 5 Gail Rubin
- 5 Kenneth ErkenBrack
- 5 Richard Zurn
- 9 Diane Berg
- 9 Todd Marshall
- 9 Craig Sirkin
- 12 Robert Hartman
- 13 Estelle Hanson
- 14 Bernice Bertolli



Charles Berberich and Matt Baird

## CHAMPIONSHIP DOUBLES

- 1 Paul Bennett / Douglas Moore
- 2 George Cochran / John Warlick
- 3 Matt Baird / Kevin McQuigg
- 3 Ron Millican / Deborah Millican

**Matt Baird, TD and Ron Eccles, TM**