

BOCA GRANDE INVITATIONAL

Gasparilla Mallet Club in Boca Grande, FL – March 2-5, 2017

Championship

1 Colin Irwin
2 Alan Cottle
3 Blaine Davis
4 Jackie Jones
5 Bert Myer
5 Bob Worrell
7 Robert Bake
7 Tyler Thomas

First Flight

1 Donald Parker
2 Gene Raymond
3 Sheila Davis
4 Charles Perry
5 Robert Franks Jr.
5 Oakley Johnson

Second Flight

1 Mark Masselink
2 Ralph Curtis
3 James McLaughlin
4 Ann Myer
5 Lucie Bard
5 Lucinda Sullivan

The weather was great, sunny and warm, just right for the annual Boca Grande Invitational held March 2nd to the 5th on the courts at the Gasparilla Mallet Club in Boca Grande, Florida.

Format was three flights, determined by established handicaps, with all players advancing to double elimination ladders in each flight.

Championship flight play was again the flight to watch. In block play, Alan Cottle and Colin Irwin, seeded as the strongest players, each finished with 3 wins in 6 games. The strongest finishes came from Bert Myer and Bob Worrell each with 5 wins. These four would dominate the double elimination ladder that would be seeded as a result of the block play. From that point on, the tournament was strictly Colin Irwin, who in turn defeated Jackie Jones, Bert Myer, and Alan Cottle. Alan had previously defeated Bob Worrell, then he took on Blaine Davis, winning, to come back to face Colin in the finals. The final match was a seesaw game until close to the 75 minute time limit to the game, when Alan managed a run to the peg with one ball. Colin, with a great shot recovered the momentum to also run the court, leaving Alan with one difficult shot to regain the lead. He missed. Colin then wrapped up the win as time had run out. Excellent play, and a pleasure to watch.

While the other flights were not quite as exciting, there were some excellent games played. In First flight, Oakley Johnson, seeded #1, and Gene Raymond went through the block play with only one loss each. The ladder told a different story, with Sheila Davis winning two games, before losing to Gene, who in turn lost to Donald Parker, who had worked his way up through to loser side, and took the final game from Gene and the winner trophy. Sheila finished third.

In Second flight Mark Masselink and Ralph Curtis were the two to watch coming out of the block #1 and #2. Both received a bye for their first game. The ladder was competition between the two players, with Ralph defeating Mark, then a reversal with Mark, after playing Jim McLaughlin, beat Ralph in the final game to win the trophy. Ralph was second and Jim ended up third.

On the social side, this is one wonderful tournament, starting off with an intimate courtside cocktail party at the end of the first days play, setting the stage for the traditional semi-formal dinner in the Pelican Room of the Gasparilla Inn. Opening with a salad, followed by a choice of Filet of Beef or Wild Salmon, the meal was not complete until we were served Gasparilla Inn Bread Pudding for desert. The selection of dinner wines complemented a wonderful dinner.

Saturday, as per tradition, we all gathered at the Boca Bay Club house, overlooking the Gulf of Mexico to watch the sun set in the west. With a clear sky, the sun put on a beautiful display, at the exact time requested. Heavy hors d'oeuvres complimented the evening

Sunday's award luncheon brought forth Chicken Picatta and Fettuccini, followed by the awards presentation, picture taking, and pleasant good-bys

Members of the Gasparilla Mallet Club turned out in force to compete in the tournament. Noted were Blaine and Sheila Davis, Bob Bake, Oakley Johnson, Mark Masselink, and Lucinda Sullivan. Also in attendance were several members of the Sarasota County Club, located in Venice. Adding to this list were several who have traveled great distances to play each year, and are considered part of the mainstay of this Invitational

Thanks go out to all who worked so hard to make this event the success that it is. Blaine Davis, for organizing to tournament, and all the functions that go with it, The Gasparilla ground crew for maintaining the courts in great shape, the Gasparilla for the food and beverage, as well as the location, and last, but not least the players who competed for four days.

Next year, same time, same place (The first week-end in March). See you then.

Submitted
Fred Jones
Tournament Director