

Midwest Regional Championship
August 15-19, 2012
Chicago Area, IL

Mike Weimerskirch (aka "Nate") held off Britt Ruby 16-15 to capture the singles title at the Midwest Regional Championships, held August 15-19 at the Chicago Croquet Club in downtown Chicago and the Prairie Lights Croquet near Joliet. John Brown of Houston TX won two straight over Harold Menzel to take the First Flight Singles title.

The tournament opened on Wednesday with doubles play at the Chicago Croquet Club in Jackson Park, in full view of the regatta on Lake Michigan. A competitive day saw each team go home with at least one loss. The finals were set by the end of the day, with Minnesotans Weimerskirch and Rick Sheely set to play Ruby and George Cochran in the Championship Flight, while Menzel and Brown advanced to play Ronnie Summers and Michael Minieka. The Championship Flight then retreated to the Prairie Lights Club for some singles play and two early upsets, Cameron Coates knocked off Rick Sheely 18-6 and Mickey Huttenhoff held off a late surge to beat George Cochran 24-23.

Thursday began with a downpour which delayed play in Joliet until 1PM. Meanwhile in Chicago, play continued through the morning rain. Again, by the end of the day, every player had suffered at least one loss in block play. The end of the day coming quite late, as play ended under the lights at Prairie Lights after midnight.

Friday's players in Chicago were greeted by the arrival of vintage airplanes for the annual Chicago Air Show. Singles block play was nearing completion when the players headed to the tournament dinner at Luby's in Tinley Park. Cochran and Nate lead the Championship Flight while four players, Menzel, Brown, Sandy Knuth and Douglas McKeckneay scrambled for the top of the chart in First Flight.

Britt Ruby beat George Cochran to start the day Saturday in what was to become a theme in this year's tourney. The two met again in the winner's bracket of the playoffs, where once again, Ruby won. Ruby then lost to Nate 14-13 when on the last ball of last turn, Ruby ran hoop 6 from 9 feet, but ran it too cleanly and sailed out of bounds. In the First Flight, Menzel advanced to the final through the winner's bracket, while Brown won a rematch with McKeckneay.

Tournament participants were treated to a cookout at Prairie Lights on Saturday evening, where Brown and Menzel captured the First Flight Doubles title, followed by Cochran and Ruby winning in the Championship Flight.

On Sunday, Ruby beat Cochran for a third straight time to advance to the Singles Final. Meanwhile Brown defeated Menzel twice (19-9, 15-9) to win the First Flight title. The Championship Flight match came down to last turns once again, as Ruby rushed from the number III corner to score hoop 4 and tie the game at 15-15. Once again, Ruby was too clean and his yellow ball slid out of bounds. Red missed the 15-foot roquet on the line ball, enabling Nate to rush from the number I corner to score 3-back for the victory. ~Nate Weimerskirch

Championship Flight Singles

1. Mike Weimerskirch
2. Britt Ruby
3. George Cochran
4. Rick Sheely
5. Cameron Coates
6. Mickey Huttenhoff
7. Jeff Lee
8. Matt Griffith

First Flight Singles

1. John Brown
2. Harold Menzel
3. Doug McKeckneay
4. Sandy Walsh
5. Ron Millican
6. Ronnie Summers
6. Michael Minieka
8. Russell Dilley
9. Deb Millican

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Championship Flight Doubles

1. Britt Ruby & George Cochran
2. Rick Sheely & M. Weimerskirch
3. M. Huttenhoff & Matt Griffith
3. Cameron Coates & Ken Anderson

First Flight Doubles

1. John Brown & Harold Menzel
2. Ronnie Summers & M. Minieka
3. Sandy Walsh & Russ Dilley
3. D. McKechney & Jeff Lee
5. Ron Millican & Deb Millican



Michael Minieka, Harold Menzel, John Brown, Ronnie Summers