

Mission Hills Croquet Club members and Mission Hills Management...

GRAND PRIX WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Our Croquet Pro Ben Rothman has made history AGAIN!!! Ben's is the *FIRST EVER* consecutive Grand Prix title winner and the *Grand Champ* for 2010. Rich Curtis gives all the details in the story below, but in a nutshell, Ben accumulated 35,150 total points shattering the previous record of 31,150! Way to make history, Ben! We are happy you are our Pro!

And there is MORE good news for Mission Hills Croquet Club.....

In the 3-5 handicap category, our month-long visitor Bill Hamilton captures the title; and taking the title in the 6-8 handicap category is our own Mary Rodeberg along with club member Marvin Salles placing #5 in this category.

Mission Hills Croquet Club also had 6 awardees in the Top 100 places:

- #17 Bob Van Tassell,
- #32 Rich Lamm,
- #44 Donna Dixon,
- #54 Ron Hendry,
- #56 Jim Butts,
- #58 Paul Bennett.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL!!!

Thanks for making Mission Hills Croquet Club "The Best of the Best" for sure!

Here's all the details below.....

++++
++++

Rothman scores first-ever consecutive Grand Prix titles

Former USCA president Rich Curtis directed the laborious work of re-tooling the Grand Prix for its re-introduction in 1999, and has written the story of the year-long contest each year. The new Grand Prix as well as the old one awards points to anyone

who shows up with a mallet in a sanctioned tournament, and every sanctioned USCA event is included. But the re-invented Grand Prix includes a vital provision that only the top six tournament results of each player can be computed in the final tally – ensuring that winners cannot top the list merely by playing in every event to rack up an accumulation of points. The winner of the Grand Prix is, necessarily, a very good player. As Croquet World has noted in the past, Rothman – a recent finalist in the World Championship – is a very good player.

In 2009, Ben Rothman won the Grand Prix and with it, the first of what may be many Player of the Year awards. In that year, he fell a mere 265 points short of the record for most Grand Prix points set by the 2008 winner, Doug Grimsley. But in 2010, Rothman left nothing to chance as he racked up 35,150 points, shattering the previous record of 31,720 and becoming the first player to win in consecutive years since the Grand Prix was re-instituted in 1999. The only other players to garner more than two Player of the Year titles are John Osborn and Jeff Soo.

Rothman's path to the title was simple and direct: big tournament wins, including both the USCA American Rules Single and Doubles National Championships, the USCA Association Rules Doubles National Championship, the USCA National Golf Croquet Singles Championship, the Selection Eights, the Merion Invitational Association Rules, the Greenwich Invitational and the Mission Hills Desert Classic.



Ben Rothman, croquet pro at Mission Hills in California, is living a very croquet life at the age of 27. In the summer season, he teaches in Maine and competes in top-level tournaments.



Spoiler Number One: Danny Huneycutt can be counted on to give Rothman and other top players a tough contest in any form of the sport.

Rothman was a finalist in the only two major events he contested and didn't win. In the USCA Association Rules Singles Championship and the Mission Hills Invitational he was second to Danny Huneycutt and Bob Van Tassell, respectively.

Huneycutt spoiled Rothman's bid to become the only player to ever hold the singles and doubles titles in both American Rules and Association Rules, but he was a distant second in the Grand Prix with 22,098 points (up from third in 2009). Rich Curtis was third, Tim Bitting was fourth and Chris Patmore was fifth. Curtis and Bitting had their best ever Grand Prix finishes.

Patmore, although only in his second year in the Grand Prix (he was 36th in 2009), was a top player in Great Britain before relocating in the United States. He put together an impressive string of singles victories in 2010, capturing the Beach Club Invitational, the Piping Rock Invitational, the Clayton Cup and the combined Mid-Atlantic/Northeast Regionals.



Spoiler Number Two: “Sandy” Bob Van Tassell shocked the crowd by beating Rothman with consistently excellent play in the Mission Hills Invitational.

Completing the top ten were Peter Just, Fred Jones, Derek Wassink, Doug Grimsley and Jackie Jones. Fred and Jackie were one of three husband/wife combinations of note in last year’s Grand Prix. With the exception of Grimsley, who fell from second in 2009 (partly due to his commitment to the MacRobertson Shield), each of these players also improved over their 2009 performance. For Jackie Jones, it was the ninth consecutive year in which she was the top female player and the tenth time overall, a dominating performance. The only other women to hold the honor are Billie Jean Berne (1999) and Audrey Willie (2000 and 2002).

It’s Bill Hamilton in the 3-5 category

In the 3-5 handicap competition, Bill Hamilton took top honors, partly on the strength of his First Flight Singles win in the Palm Beach Invitational and carrying home the coveted President’s Trophy. Charles Christian of North Carolina was second and Jan Balson, a singles winner at the Merion Invitational, was third. The next two places were a family affair with Reine Bitting fourth (matching her husband Tim’s placement in the overall) and Conrad Rugart, Reine’s brother-in-law, fifth.

Rodeberg, Fey, and Glowacke excel in 6-8 group

Mary Rodeberg, a member of the Mission Hills Croquet Club and the winner of the USCA Association Rules First Flight Singles Championship, was first in the 6-8 handicap category. Second and third places went to Chris Fey and Chris Glowacki, respectively, both of whom are from Connecticut. Scott Kennedy and Marvin Salles rounded out the top five.

Fierce competition in the 9-11 range

Zack Watson won the 9-11 handicap grouping, coming third in the first flight of the Virginia/West Virginia State Championship. Rebecca Bergovsky of the New York Croquet Club is always in the hunt in the 9-11 Grand Prix category. She was first in 2009, fourth in 2008 and second in 2010. Randall McAndrews of the Woodside Croquet Club in Maine was third. Fourth was Danna Huneycutt, who with Danny, was the other husband and wife combination with high finishes in the Grand Prix last year. Peter Timmins, also of the New York Croquet Club, was fifth.

Erica scores for the USCA staff

The USCA Tournament Services Director, Erica Sherman, was first in the 12 and over handicap category. Erica was a newcomer to tournament croquet in 2010 and won this distinction despite her nine-to-five job at USCA headquarters at the National Croquet Center in West Palm Beach. Ralph Heinz of North Carolina was second and Tom Stoner of Maryland was third, followed by Ken James and Warren Phillips.

Membership in the USCA and participation in a sanctioned tournament is all that is required to compete in the Grand Prix. The number of members participating in one or more tournaments in 2010 was up by about 7.5% over 2009, a good sign of health for the sport in America in difficult economic times.

Top 100 in the 2010 Grand Prix

RANKING	SINGLES	DOUBLES	TOTAL	
1. Rothman, Ben	21950	13200	35150	
2. Huneycutt, Danny	16590	5508	22098	
3. Curtis, Richard G.	9750	9650	19400	
4. Bitting, Kenneth (Tim)	9116	9283	18399	
5. Patmore, Chris	13892	3930	17822	
6. Just, Peter	12440	5115	17555	
7. Jones, Fred	9960	6515	16475	
8. Wassink, Derek	12390	3990	16380	
9. Grimsley, Doug	8980	7200	16180	
10. Jones, Jackie	9302	6685	15987	
11. Mitchell Jr., Johnny		9780	6105	15885
12. Cumming, Brian	9020	5850	14870	
13. Brackett, Richard	7935	6860	14795	
14. Young III, John	7830	6290	14120	
15. Chilton, Bob	9615	2765	12380	
16. Bast, Jim	10850	750	11600	
17. Van Tassell, Robert	6570	4840	11410	
18. Hunter, John	5787	5345	11132	
19. Summer, Steve	3800	7188	10988	
20. Osborn, John C.	7500	3350	10850	
21. Maloof, David	6100	4740	10840	
22. Ruby, Britt	6464	4202	10666	
23. Whitmore, Robert B.	2457	8003	10460	
24. Morehead, Ben	6602	3830	10432	
25. Huxtable, Linda	6185	4100	10285	
26. Gibbons, Michael	7292	2715	10007	
27. Huxtable, Ron	5600	4370	9970	
28. Hayworth, Horace W.	3929	5919	9848	
29. Soo, Jeff	7580	2100	9680	
30. Ekstrom, David	4082	5510	9592	
31. Davis, Blaine	4945	4468	9413	
32. Lamm, Rich	7090	2100	9190	
33. Hughes, Tom	4605	4165	8770	
34. Lawrence, Stuart	8350	360	8710	
35. Loat, Christopher	5612	2945	8557	
36. Gillmarten, Charles	7660	850	8510	
37. Martin, Bill	5127	3370	8497	
38. Scalpone, Steve	7215	1230	8445	

39. Johnston, Stephen C.		4360	4078	8438
40. Scott, Paul	4350	3900	8250	
41. Whitlow, Charles	4275	3965	8240	
42. Simonds, Jane	5700	2535	8235	
43. Cherry, Bob	6475	1344	7819	
44. Dixon, Donna	3810	4005	7815	
45. Quimby, Ted	3285	3825	7110	
46. Lawrence, Vic	3365	3698	7063	
47. Smith, Matthew B.	5082	1904	6986	
48. Caldwell, Jeff	4032	2800	6832	
49. Spoonhour, James M.	6740	0	6740	
50. Gibson, Barry	4860	1800	6660	
51. Lloyd, Ron	4000	2348	6348	
52. McCoy, W. David	3350	2865	6215	
53. Taylor, Mike	4287	1904	6191	
54. Hendry, Ron	3600	2570	6170	
55. Wilhoite, Richard	3659	2436	6095	
56. Butts, Jim	4910	1130	6040	
57. Harrington, Tommy B.		4460	1402	5862
58. Bennett, Paul T.	3500	2100	5600	
59. Billings, Paul	3455	2100	5555	
60. Rapuano, Timothy	2040	3440	5480	
61. Bent, David	2450	3000	5450	
62. O'Laughlin, Edward	4348	975	5323	
63. Moore, Douglas P.	2140	3070	5210	
64. Turner, James	2324	2680	5004	
65. Yoder, Joe	3520	1400	4920	
66. McBride, Leo	2934	1875	4809	
67. Carmichael, Michael	4800	0	4800	
68. Griffith, Matthew	2482	2184	4666	
69. Hamilton, Bill	1609	2955	4564	
70. Taylor, Jim	981	3570	4551	
71. Bidencepe, Damon	4500	0	4500	
72. Settlemyre, Norris	2400	1910	4310	
73. Bayard, Rufus	2902	1395	4297	
74. Goodwin, Mark Lewis	3575	700	4275	
75. Baird, Matt	3796	476	4272	
76. Herzog, Jim	2490	1680	4170	
77. Williams, Barry	2808	1288	4096	
78. Beck, Micah	2230	1838	4068	
79. Bake, Robert	1055	2975	4030	
80. Warlick, John	2820	1200	4020	
81. Cuccia, Russ	3410	568	3978	
82. Krause, Tom	3000	960	3960	
83. Curington, John	2100	1840	3940	
84. Essick, Jon	2004	1736	3740	
85. Todorovich, Michael	3160	540	3700	
86. Franz, Joe	1456	2240	3696	
87. Cooley, William	2805	778	3583	
88. Houghton, Neil	640	2840	3480	
89. Knopf, Ted	3325	0	3325	
90. Newton, Kelley	3145	0	3145	
91. Seward, Jim	2592	528	3120	
92. Ramey, Martha	1985	1110	3095	
93. Sheely, Richard	2640	450	3090	
94. Christian, Charles	2670	416	3086	
95. Nelon, Keith	2283	772	3055	

96.Balson, Jan	1180	1800	2980
97.Bitting, Reine F.	1488	1430	2918
98.Rugart, Conrad	1676	1201	2877
99.Montgomery, Jack	1824	1051	2875
100.Berbig, Justin	1487	1340	2827

Genie Hendry, Secretary
Mission Hills Croquet Club
"The Best in the West"
(760) 567-5559
Rancho Mirage, CA 92270
Visit our website: www.MissionHillsCroquet.com