

Epic Battle On "Little Mountain"!



Sunday night at Easy Walker Park was the site of one of the finest battles ever witnessed in the history of the Kentucky Horseshoe Pitchers' Association's long and storied history. The Men's State Championship would go down to the wire between two great champions! Charlie Meredith was attempting to set a new record for most Men's titles but six-time champion Tony Hankins stood in his way. Meredith had breezed through his first eight games with only one man being able to make it to the thirty point mark in the regulation forty point contests. Randy Hankins provided the most serious challenge at derailing Meredith's quest for eight. Hankins would capitalize on an uncharacteristic 2 ringer for 12 shoe stretch for Meredith during the match to take a 26-16 lead but Meredith would steam back to take that game 42-30. On the other front, Tony Hankins' road to the end game would prove to take a path loaded with challenge. In the fourth game, Tony would only scrape by newcomer Jody Dishman 41-39. Game five would prove to be another tough match that saw Tony take down the 2010 champion, John Neagle, 40-35. Hankins was also pressed by Don Phelps but held off the "Gatling Gun" 41-30. After making quick work of Gentleman Jim Culver, Tony would have a showdown with his brother Randy on court five. Both players would get off to a strong start with Randy hitting 16 out of his first 20, with Tony trying to keep pace with 15 of his own. Tony

would begin to try and stretch the lead by moving ahead 17-9 in the next 12 shoes but Randy would have none of it, hitting on 15 of his next 18 attempts at the stake and burst ahead in the match 32-17. Tony would stay alive with six straight ringers for 12 points to take it to 32-29 but down the stretch run he could not hang on, losing the game 35-40. This loss set up the round robin final game with undefeated Charlie Meredith. Tony would need this win to force the playoff and he got it! Tony was able to defeat Meredith 41-36 in a back and forth knock down drag out battle as darkness fell. With both players now suffering one defeat, a final playoff game was in order and man was it ever one to remember. In the first twenty four shoes Meredith broke ahead 19-7 during a run of 11 ringers in twelve shoes. Meredith would keep on digging up through 52 shoes to push the score to 31-21 and then something came alive in Tony Hankins game. Tony would step on the gas and power down 19 ringers in his next 20 tosses and knock out 18 points in this run, taking the score to the teetering point of 39-34. Meredith was forced to top a potential Hankins six-pack at the end of that run to stay alive in the Championship. With first pitch, Meredith would toss a double down to clamp on some pressure of his own. Hankins was able to cap one of the Meredith ringers to keep himself alive. With the Meredith three-three, the game stood at 39-37 in Hankins favor. In the next inning Meredith would toss one ringer on and would miss one shoe leaving it resting upward to the rear of the stake. Hankins pitch. One shoe up, one ringer down and one pitch left to taste victory. The shoe is in the air, it clips the right side of the stake with a clang and miss taking the resting Meredith shoe down on to the stake for a winning ringer for Meredith! An elated Charlie Meredith tasted the thrill of victory for the eighth time and Tony Hankins was left to stand in disbelief. It was one for the horseshoe ages. Both players fought hard for the title and gave those who were there something talk about for years to come. Thanks for the great game guys! You are both champions of this sport!



After Meredith's
Two tosses.



Position after Hankins'
Thrown ringer.



Final Position
After 2nd shoe.



Ritchie Captures First State Title!



Laurie Ritchie captured her first Women's State title Sunday after four previous attempts! With Becky Holmes electing not compete this year and Sally Mullins down in percentage, the door was open to make a charge for the 2013 title. Kentucky's top women's players were waiting in the wings for their shot. Ritchie

posted blowout wins over Shelia Williams 40-10, and Gayla Stewart 42-2, Ritchie posting her high game of the tournament at 64.3%. Julie Thompson looked like she might be the one to beat early, posting the high game of the class at 77.3% but she would not be able to maintain that high level of play. Thompson would suffer two



losses in the event, 25-42 against Gayla Stewart and 24-44 against Laurie Ritchie. Gayla Stewart would make a bid for the title, taking care of business against all other competitors since losing to Ritchie. Laurie stood undefeated with only one game to remaining to conclude her pursuit of the Championship. That lone roadblock was defending Champion Sally Mullins. Mullins, after a year of personal struggles, was way off her game and had not won a match all day but was capable of getting it going at anytime...and she did. Laurie was leading 10-8 early and on a 50% pace when Mullins opened up the game with twelve ringers in a row and headed to a 35-10 advantage. Ritchie was unable to fend off the challenge and dropped the game 16-40. This would create an opportunity for Stewart to take another crack at Ritchie to capture the elusive title. Can you feel the nerves and anticipation here with these two players and the opportunity that lay before them? Exciting! Laurie would firm up her game with confidence with a strong start of 12 ringers in her first 20 shoes to bolt out to a 22-4 lead and she never looked back! Ritchie would extend the lead to take the game and Championship as Stewart was unable to mount a challenge. The meaning of the accomplishment was evident as Ritchie collapsed on the court



in tears of joy after the final shoes were thrown! It is always a pleasure to see such elation when a long sought goal has been achieved. Congrats to the new 2013 Women's State Champion!

Hudnall Is Successful In His Title Defense!



“Horseshoe” Bob Hudnall successfully defended his Elder Men’s State Title Saturday afternoon in Mt. Sterling against the top Elder players in the State. Hudnall would seem to breeze through the field of competitors with ease but that would not be the case. With a mind pre-occupied with thoughts of family sickness, the loss of his sister, and an automobile breakdown on the way up to the tournament, Bob was having difficulty concentrating on the task at hand. Hudnall defeated Jim Baker in the opening game by only the narrowest of margins 40-39. Baker had a chance to put the game away with a double, while standing on 39 points and looking at a Hudnall single ringer, but was unable to connect on either of his two tosses, handing the victory over to Hudnall. Bob was able to put Cecil Cook away 40-25 in a lengthy 72 shoe game. Johnnie Jones was next in line to take a jab at the defending champion, skirting out to 25-10 lead in the early going but a 10 ringer in a row stretch by Hudnall can change the boards real quick, and it did, to the tune of 28-25! Jones would fight on to no avail as Hudnall would nail down the game 45-33. Bob shut down Bill Garrett with a blistering 81.8%, 14 doubles and no open pegs in 44

shoes! Ted Sauer had strung together four straight victories in the tournament with a high game of 66.1%



but was going to need to step it if he was going to be able to overcome the Hudnall express. Ted opened up the game well hitting six straight was unable to maintain that pace as Hudnall continued to pour on the steam and head on down the track to the 2013 Championship, winning the game 40-8, pitching 76.2%!

Ben Webb's Goal Is Accomplished!



If you put in the effort you can achieve your dreams and goals. This year Ben Webb did just that. Ben buckled down this year and spent every inch of his free time hitting the practice courts at his club and in his backyard. After a disappointing in loss in last year’s State Championship to the 5-

time Champion Tyler Howard, Ben knew that he would have to work extra hard to give himself a competitive shot at overtaking him. Ben’s game took off this season and he and Tyler would battle all season long with wins on both sides. It all would come to a head Sunday morning after the potential showdown from Saturday night was postponed due to rain. Throw in a consistently

tough competitor in Alex Humes and a capable flipper in Mike Clark and you would have the makings for an exciting 2013 Junior Boy's Championship Class. Tyler Howard started out well with 14 ringers of his first 20



against Humes leading to a 43-16 win, pitching 69.6% and only dropped slightly disposing of Clark 40-17 and hitting a 62.5% game. Meanwhile Webb would defeat Clark & Humes 42-6 and 41-32 with 61.7 and 64.3% efforts. The Howard/Webb showdown was next up. The opening tempo was strong and rapid as these two junior rivals went toe to toe! In the first 30 shoes Tyler Howard pitched 23 ringers out of 30 shoes for a 76.7% pace and on the other side of the score sheet Webb had posted 26 ringers out of 30 for an 86.7 rate. Webb would continue to press the issue and pile on the ringers, winning the game 42-10 and averaging 81.5%. After playing Ben Webb tough in his first

round matchup, Alex Humes' confidence would build when he came to the second round rematch. Hume's was intent on not being an easy mark the second time around. The game was a solid back and forth battle between the two with Humes gaining



more and more confidence as the game wore on. You could see the doubt been to creep in on Webb's game and Humes would give Webb his first loss of the event at 41-32 with Humes averaging 70.9% to Webb's 64.5% game. The loss forced Webb to get off to himself in an attempt to regroup and regain his form and composure. With one loss each, the final Webb/Howard game would decide the Championship. After a slow start and getting

himself into a deep hole at 12-0, Tyler Howard begin to mount a challenge with 12 straight ringers at the 20 shoe mark but Webb would not be denied and went on a run of 19 ringers out of 20 shoes and blowing out the advantage to 36-15. Howard tried to battle back but left a costly open pit with which Webb gratefully closed up. Congrats to Ben as the new champion for 2013! Also a nod to all four boys for two seasons of good battles and fine pitching as Alex Humes and Mike Clark say so long to the Junior Boy's Division.

Seth O'Nan Is A 2-Time Cadet Champ!

Seth O'Nan repeated as the Kentucky State Cadet Champion by pitching excellence! 2013 saw the largest Ky. Cadet Class ever with seven contenders. Seth was a level above the rest hitting seven percent above his average at 22.3% and going undefeated in the tournament! Your practice has payed off as well Seth, Congrats!



Leslie Washer finished second

In the event, losing two games and posting an average of 5.97% Abby Rose was 3rd and Caden Snellen took 4th.

2013 Awards!

Hall Of Fame- Don Hayes

Golden Horseshoe Award- Eugene Brown

Horseshoe Pitcher Of The Year- Ben Webb

Sportsmanship- Dale Snellen

Most Improved- Ben Webb

High Game over Average- Shelia Williams

Rookie Of The Year- Jody Dishman

