

2002 King of the Courts

by Albert Apuzzi

The Saint Albans Handball Association held their annual King of the Courts Big Blue Men's Singles Championships on July 27th 2002 at Roy Wilkens Park in Queens. This Association added to the "pot" money that had been raised selling food and refreshments to the players and spectators. Dwight Woorley was glad because the tournament, which was delayed due to a brief rain shower, couldn't have started on time and been completed in one day had advanced registration not been required.



Ray and Emmitt during their tough fought semi-finals match.

In the quarters Rookie played as if he had something to prove and defeated last year's "King" George Figueroa 21-6. Robert Sostre, this year's Citywide Champion, squeaked by Henry Prieto 21-20. An injured Ray Lopez edged out Cisco Aponte 21-20. Emmitt Fitzpatrick defeated the rising star Jamie Rivera 21-15. In the semis Rookie continued his mission and allowed Rob a meer 8 points. To the delight of many of the bettors, who took Ray and 5 points, Lopez jumped out to a 15-9 lead. Emmitt put Ray on "hold" and surged to a 20-15 lead but Ray eventually tied the score before falling just one point short of victory.

"Prince" Fitzpatrick, who has come in second in all 4 years that this competition has been held, looked as if he wanted to be King and rushed to a 5-0 lead. Rookie kicked it up a gear and advanced to 13-5 before Emmitt clawed his way back to 13 all. Just as things were getting interesting, Rookie scored a flurry of points that left him with a 21-13 advantage. At this point, Fitzpatrick hit Wright, with the return of serve, and the referee awarded Rookie with his 22nd point. Emmitt argued the call and finally decide to quit and take second place for the 5th consecutive year.

Prize money and trophies were awarded to the first 8 places. Rookie received \$1,500 for first place and Emmitt took home \$500. All matches, with the exception of the final (25 points) were 21 point game.

PRELIMINARY ROUND:

Ben Spade d. Allan Walker,
Raymond Faloye d. Adam Gittlitz,
Tyson Cherry d. Ed Maldonado,
Dennis Bouderau d. Luis Castillo,
Cisco Aponte d. Sean Pearlman,
Frank Libroia d. Marvin Jones,
Giovanni Vazquez d. Dikki Kaushal,
Eddie Crespo d. Golan Bokobza,
Carlos Figueroa d. Artie ?

ROUND OF 32:

George Figueroa d. Spade 3,
Roland Brown d. Paulie Yagual 1,
John "Rookie" Wright d. Jose Olivencia 8,
William Hau d. James Reinninger 6,
Reggie McKeiver d. Faloye 6,
Roberts Sostre d. John Necakov 18,
Yuber "PeeWee" Castro d. Cherry 14,
Henry Prieto d. Shaheem Nelson 20,
Tyrone Snell d. BJ Fludd 7,
Ray Lopez d. Joel Yagual 11,
Bouderau d. Chris Irons 3,
Aponte d. Joseph Thompson 19,
Robert Price d. Libroia 18,
Jamie Rivera d. Vazquez 7,
Crespo d. Tony Roberts 16,
Emmitt Fitzpatrick d. Figueroa 5

ROUND OF 16:

Figueroa d. Brown 15,
Wright d. Hau 5,
Sostre d. McKeiver 13,
Prieto d. Castro 10,
Lopez d. Snell 20,
Aponte d. Bouderau 13,
Rivera d. Price 16,
Fitzpatrick d. Crespo 9

QUARTERFINALS:

Wright d. Figueroa 6,
Sostre d. Prieto 20,
Lopez d. Aponte 20,
Fitzpatrick d. Rivera 15

SEMIFINALS:

Wright d. Sostre 8,
Fitzpatrick d. Lopez 20

FINALS:

Wright d. Fitzpatrick 21-13 (by default)