

CMHL Completes 52nd Season

Number Two Seeds Win All Playoff Finals

The Chicago Metro Handball League completed its 52nd season on Saturday, April 7, 2018, at the Glass Court Fitness Center in suburban Lombard. After a season long-battle for league supremacy, the post-season playoffs provide a “second” season for teams seeking the league championship.

As always there were some terrific matches. Ironically the number two seeded team in each division won the playoffs. Each division also featured at least one tie-breaker match that may have decided the final outcome for their teams.

In the CMHL a team match consists of 33 points.

- #1 Doubles – 12 points;
- #1 Singles – 9 points;
- #2 Singles – 7 points;
- #3 Singles – 5 points*
- *(The Green Division plays Number 2 doubles for 5 points).

Each individual match is played following USHA scoring – two games to 21 and an 11-point tie breaker if necessary. Players referee their own matches. Team captains are required to exchange lineups in advance for each individual match.

Players compete in divisions designated by colors indicating their talent level. The Red Division is comprised of the top players, many having won national, regional and state championships. They compete in Open and A tournament brackets.

The Purple Division provides competition for those players who typically compete in A and high B tournament brackets.

The Green Division is for B and C level players. To accommodate older players the Green Division plays two doubles and two singles matches rather than one doubles, and 3 singles played in the upper divisions.

The Red Division playoff finals featured the regular season championship team from Lattof YMCA against Westmont Fitness Club. Westmont won by a score of 28 to 5.

- The Doubles were won by Westmont. Jake Komsthof and Dane Szatkowski prevailed over Ray Burzic and Derrick Contreras in two games;
- Number one singles went to Adam Szatkowski of Westmont over Jason Keasling in two games;

- The number two singles match was won by Shane Conneely, captain of the Westmont team, over Tim Cohen in a tough tie-breaker featuring great shots, returns and saves by both players.
- Jeremy Muscia, Lattof captain, provided his team's only points with a two-game victory over Oscar Zamora at number 3 singles.

The Purple Division featured number one seed Leaning Tower YMCA against South Side Handball Club (SSHB). SSHB won 26-7. This was SSHB's second consecutive playoff championship.

- The Doubles were won by Ron Rose and Dermont McMahon, of SSHB, over Tom Grace and Arturo Herrera in two games;
- James Cooke won number one singles for SSHB over Dave Grzenia;
- Number two singles was the only victory for Leaning Tower as Don Schufman defeated Randy Rose in two games;
- Number three singles turned out to be the match of the day with Mark Murphy, SSHB, prevailing over Bob O'Donnell in a heated 11-10 tiebreaker.

The Green Division Championship was settled by one point. Westmont Fitness defeated BR Ryall YMCA 17 to 16.

- Westmont's number 1 doubles team of Vince Ruggerio and Roland Wilson defeated BR Ryall's veteran doubles team of Gordon Murphy and Tom Newman in two games;
- #1 Singles was won by Andress Jurevics of BR Ryall in two games over Terry McGuire;
- Bob Dillard, BR Ryall, defeated Westmont Captain Bob Anderson in a closely fought tie-breaker;
- In the #2 doubles Jim Vail and Frank Barbaro of Westmont defeated Ed Foley and Bob Derdak in two games.

The Playoffs are played on a Saturday afternoon rather than the usual Tuesday night league matches. As a result, the matches often turn on what players are available and the individual match ups that captains seek.

The winning teams in each division are awarded \$450 typically used towards a team party and/or apparel.

Regular season prizes are \$350 to the first-place team and \$250 to the second-place team.

The regular season is played on Tuesday nights between October and March and consists of up to 18 matches. The final league standings were:

Red Division:

- 1) Lattof YMCA (Jeremy Muscia, Captain)
- 2) Westmont Fitness (Shane Conneely, Captain)
- 3) Lake Forest College (Mike Dau, Coach)
- 4) Melrose Park Handball Club (Dan Valera, Captain)

Purple Division:

- 1) Leaning Tower YMCA (Carlos Rivera, Captain)
- 2) South Side Handball (Rick Whittington, Captain)
- 3) Union League (Steve Fredericks, Captain)
- 4) Oak Park YMCA (Luke Graham, Captain)

Green Division:

- 1) BR Ryall YMCA (Fred Fosnot, Captain)
- 2) Westmont Fitness Club (Bob Anderson, Captain)
- 3) West Cook YMCA #1 (Buddy Bradford, Captain)
- 4) Leaning Tower YMCA (Al Loiben, Captain)
- 5) West Cook #3 (Bob Sharp, Captain)

League Officers are:

- President – James Elsener
- Treasurer – Ray Burzic
- Secretary – Sean Jucas

All results of the regular season and the playoffs have been posted on the league web site - <http://illinoishandball.org/metro/>.

Thank you to the team captains who recruit the players, manage the lineups and keep the league running competitively. There were 197 players listed on team rosters this year including numerous first-time participants.

The next season will begin in October. New teams and new players are always invited and welcome to join the league.

Jim Elsener

CMHL President (April 17, 2018)