

What a two days at the 2012 U.S. National Kubb Championship. With the changes that were made, looking out at the fields prior to teams arriving, it truly looked like the U.S. Championship. The kings were painted, the corner pins were painted, music was playing, team tents/canopies were being raised, club flags and banners were being put up, and the tremendous energy of all the teams, volunteers, and spectators could be felt.

Rain stayed away both days, but the heat, yet again, beat down on all the players and spectators. The day started with team captain meetings, passing out a lot more five-year buttons, introducing the student that received the \$500 UW-Eau Claire Scholarship to study in Sweden, and both the Swedish and American national anthems. As is with any tournament, the round robin was an opportunity to meet three different teams in a team's group. For the teams, some of these teams were new and some were old acquaintances and/or friends. Group play ended at 12:30, and the 12 play-in games started promptly after. Soon, 64 teams were in the Championship Bracket and the other 12 were in the 2nd Consolation Bracket. After the round of 64, 32 moved on in the Championship Bracket while the other 32 went to the Consolation Bracket. One round of 64 match lasted two hours and 10 minutes.

In the round of 16, defending Champion Team Knockerheads were able to get past Fox Valley Kubb's Kubb Snipers. Wolfpack and Ferores Lignum, two teams that have been on the circuit since 2007 and 2008, found themselves, yet again, facing off in the playoffs. The round of 16 determined who was going to make it to Sunday. For two Des Moines, IA teams, they had to play each other. In the end, Kubb'd beat Inkubbus. Perhaps the highlight, at least for us, was the match between The Ringers and Kastpinnar Kings. Kastpinnar Kings beat The Ringers in the round of 16 last year. This year, both teams added players. The Ringers added an 8 year old and 11 year old. After winning the first game, The Ringers were able to move up in the second. There were no baseline kubbs remaining. Dave Ellringer (the grandpa of the family) destroyed a tightly clumped group with two batons. There were two field kubbs standing, but no chance for a double. Aaron (the dad) had two batons, Sy (Aaron's son, age 8) had one baton, and Sy's cousin Colton had one baton. Smart move is that each kid goes for each field kubb, Aaron cleans it up, if needed, and then goes for the king. Game, Match, they move to Sunday. Well, the dad move happened. Aaron asked Sy, "Sy, do you have the king in you?" Sy's response was "yes". Aaron walks up, leans over and drops both field kubbs with his two batons. Sy walks back to the baseline and released the baton at the waiting king. The baton hits the king as solid as it can...game, match, they move to Sunday. Soon after, after waiting almost two hours, Kubbsicles end the day for The Good, The Bad, The Ugly, and they become the last team to reach Sunday.

Sunday morning, teams started arriving at 7am to warm up. The first four pitches were set up and teams got a kubb set to practice. The quarterfinal that most were expecting and looking forward to happened: Tad Kubbler vs. Team Knockerheads. That day, Team Knockerheads took advantage of moving up and were able to beat Tad Kubbler. This match could have been easily a semifinal match and perhaps Final. Kubbitz and The Ringers, both from Eau Claire, and all know each other, battled it out on Pitch 4. Leinenkubbels moved past Wolfpack, and on Pitch 1, Kubbsicles started out a little slow, but quickly found their form and beat Kubb'd. Most people did not have Leinenkubbels or Kubbitz on their radars when Saturday started, but here they were, playing the 2011 Champion and the 2011 3rd place teams, front and center. Leinenkubbels beat Kubbsicles in game one. Game two lasted less than 10 minutes, and Kubbsicles were able to finish them off in game three. The other match consisted of two of the better inkastares in the U.S. (both interviewed in Kubbnation Magazine's article about the drill technique). The well-oiled machine of Team Knockerheads were too much for the combination of Default and Kubbitz. Team Knockerheads were on their way to their second consecutive Final, where they would meet a team that they beat in the semifinals in 2011.

The Final was a heavyweight match. The hometown Kubbsicles versus the 2011 Champs from Des Moines, IA and Kansas City, KS, who travel with a sizeable crowd of other teams and fans (30 plus players made the trip). In 2010 Kubbsicles lost to Tad Kubbler in quarterfinals. In 2011, they beat Tad Kubbler in the quarterfinals. In 2011, Kubbsicles lost to Team Knockerheads in the semifinal. Last year, they were one of the best, if not the best team with the batons. Their one weak point was putting the kubbs in the needed tight space. Well this year, that problem was solved as Mark Blazel quickly has become one of the top inkastare in the country. Mark and Josh Feathers went back and forth. Both teams had opportunities to win game one. With the largest crowd ever in the U.S. watching a Final, Kubbsicles were able to take advantage of a field kubb left up and win game one. Game two started out quick, with four and five kubbs going back and forth within the first couple turns. From there, eight kubbs made it into play, and with no baseline to go after, Kubbsicles were able to get two triples, two singles, and then down the last king of the Championship with their fifth baton to win the 2012 U.S. National Kubb Championship.

2012 RESULTS:

1. Kubbsicles (Eau Claire, WI)
2. Team Knockerheads (Des Moines, IA/Kansas City, KS)
3. Leinenkubbels (Eau Claire, WI)
4. Kubbitz (Eau Claire, WI)



Quarterfinals

Team Knockerheads
Tad Kubbler (Minneapolis, MN)

Kubbitz
The Ringers (Eau Claire, WI)

Leinenkubbels
Wolfpack (Shafer/Rosemount, MN)

Kubbsicles
Kubb'd (Des Moines, IA)

Round of 16

Team Knockerheads
Kubb Snipers (Appleton, WI)

Tad Kubbler
Dark Side of the Kubb (Eau Claire, WI)

Kubbitz
King Pin (Chaska, MN/Des Moines, IA)

The Ringers
Kastpinnar Kings (Shakopee, MN)

Wolfpack
Ferores Lignum (Duluth, MN)

Leinenkubbels
The Beers (Des Moines, IA)

Kubbsicles
The Good, The Bad, The Ugly (Minneapolis, MN)

Kubb'd
Inkubbus (Des Moines, IA)

Consolation Bracket:

1. Kubb de Grace (Eau Claire/Chippewa Falls, WI)
2. Tomah Fury (Tomah, WI)
3. Lakerol Originals (Minnetonka, MN)
4. The Farfars (Cherry Valley/New Milford, IL)

2nd Consolation Bracket:

1. Karls In Charge (Eau Claire, WI)
2. Kubbra Kai (Chicago, IL)
3. Kubbonic Plague (Milwaukee, WI)
4. The Kubbras (Eau Claire, WI)

Round Robin

Group A:

1. Team Knockerheads 3-0
2. NW Minnesota Kubb 2-1
3. Hurmårdur? 1-2
4. Lumber Barons 0-3

Group B:

1. Kubb Snipers 3-0
2. Kubb'd 2-1
3. Vikings 1-2
4. Blazin Kubb 0-3

Group C:

1. Peach Kubbler 3-0
2. Kubba Libre 2-1
3. Team S 1-2
4. Sons of Pitches 0-3

Group D:

1. Dark Side of the Kubb 3-0
2. The Engineers 2-1
3. Los Kubbacabras 1-2
4. The Kubbra's 0-3

Group E:

1. Tad Kubbler 3-0
2. Kubbchucks - GJJ 1-2
3. The Blue Footed Kubbies 1-2
4. Swedish Ice Kubbs 1-2

Group F:

1. Pitch Slap 3-0
2. Feroces Lignum 2-1
3. Skaal 1-2
4. Skipping Stones 0-3

Group G:

1. King Pin 3-0
2. Bork! Bork! Bork! 2-1
3. The Farfars 1-2
4. Karls In Charge 0-3

Group H:

1. Red Cedar River Yacht Club 3-0
2. The Beers 1-2
3. Throw Storm 1-2
4. Kubbesota 1-2

Group I:

1. The Ringers 3-0
2. Tomah Fury 2-1
3. Chicks With Sticks 1-2
4. Kubbang! 0-3

Group J:

1. Kastpinnar Kings 3-0
2. SudoKubb 2-1
3. Amateur Hour 1-2
4. Kubb Kitties 0-3

Group K:

1. Wolfpack 3-0
2. Kubb-A-Divers 2-1
3. Kubb de Grace 1-2
4. Kubb-ra Kai 0-3

Group L:

1. Kubbilicious Maximus 3-0
2. Team CVC 2-1
3. I Pity Da Kubb 1-2
4. Lucky Lefse 0-3

Group M:

1. Kubb Destroyers 3-0
2. Kubb Noobs 2-1
3. The Kubbin' Family 1-2
4. Shenanigans 0-3

Group N:

1. Leinenkubbels 3-0
2. Kubbchucks - IDP 2-1
3. Settlers of Baton 1-2
4. John Kubbar Mellencamp 0-3

Group O:

1. Team Kubboom 3-0
2. Kubbitz 2-1
3. You, Me, and Dupree 1-2
4. Nice Kubbs 0-3

Group P:

1. Kubbsicles 3-0
2. Kubbricks Rubes 2-1
3. Molteberry Magic 1-2
4. Kubbonic Plague 0-3

Group Q:

1. The Good, The Bad, The Ugly 3-0
2. Ice Ice Kubbs 2-1
3. Lakerol Originals 1-2
4. Woodchucks 0-3

Group R:

1. Kubboholics 3-0
2. The Mad Tossers 2-1
3. Show Us Your Kubbs 1-2
4. True Grit 0-3

Group S:

1. Inkubbus 3-0
2. Von Trappe Family Slingers 2-1
3. Norske Knockers 1-2
4. The Uwe Blab Dilemma 0-3



Champion
Kubbsicles
Eau Claire, WI



2nd
Team Knockerheads
Des Moines, IA / Kansas City, KS



3rd
Leinenkubbel
Eau Claire, WI



4th
Kubbitz
Eau Claire, WI



2012 Top Four



Bästa Inkastare
Josh Feathers (Des Moines, IA)
Team Knockerheads
Best Kubb Tosser Award



Consolation Winner
Kubb de Grace
Chippewa Falls / Eau Claire, WI



2nd Consolation Winner
Karls In Charge
Eau Claire, WI / Hugo, MN

Photos: John Connell, Becca Hodges, and U.S. National Kubb Championship