

Carrboro Fall League

Andrew Ross . . . http://home.earthlink.net/~carrboroultimate...www.pbase.com/andrewross/carrboro_fall_league

The second year of the Carrboro Fall Ultimate League began with a challenge. How could we follow up on the wonderful success of the inaugural year while also making the Fall League more fun, more competitive, and also more exciting? The answer: more teams, more players, and more equality throughout the league.

To make this happen, we increased the league from 4 to 6 teams, from 65 to 100 participants, and to games on two nights a week – both Mondays and Wednesdays. But the most successful change that we made was to use a semi-blind draft in forming the teams.

What is a semi-blind draft? It is a draft where the teams are essentially selected at random while also taking into account the skill levels of all the players, the abilities of the captains, as well as requests for pairings. And looking at the league results, this method had the desired effect – even teams and even games where everyone was able to have more fun.

Nearly half of the league games were decided by 3 points or less. The team that was the eventual champion, Derelict, actually went 1-1 against EVERY team in the league for the regular season. And there were three other teams with nearly the same record as the champion by the end of the tournament (Derelict finished 8-5, Incendiary 7-5, O.P.U.S. 7-4, and AIRBORNE 7-5).

All of this, plus the league was played on a wonderful lined field with a scorekeeper/timer provided by Carrboro Recreation and Parks. There was no need to question the score – Mike (our scorekeeper) knew it. No need to wonder how many time-outs one had left – Mike knew. And no games starting late or half-times running long – Mike had a stopwatch!

Many thanks are due to the Carrboro Recreation and Parks department for keeping this league running smoothly, efficiently, and with a

wonderful atmosphere. Players could concentrate solely on playing, games started on time (point penalties would be assessed for starting just 5 minutes late), and thus everyone could have more fun.



So how did the league turn out on the field? Well, the regular season ended with O.P.U.S., captained by Dano Parrish and Ginger Denison, on top – looking to be the team to beat. But a couple of late-season losses showed that this team wasn't invulnerable.

Next in the standings came a very interesting tie for second between Jeff Loperfido and

Wendy Richardson's Incendiary and the AIRBORNE team of Julia Lavell and Pat Inman. A tie that was so even, it had to be decided by multiple

tiebreakers in order to give Incendiary the 2nd place seed and AIRBORNE 3rd place going into the tournament.

The eventual champion Derelict, captained by Derrick Mertz and Ricardo Pollitt, actually started the tournament in 4th place, coming off of a last-minute surge in the standings. And rounding out the standings: I, Pimbot, captained by Blair Holloway and Rocky Payne, in 5th, and Spite, led by Daran Edmonds and DiShon Cain, in 6th.

With these standings, the quarterfinals consisted of a 3 vs. 6 match-up of AIRBORNE against Spite, and a 4 vs. 5 game between Derelict and I, Pimpbot. These two games were played out on a very windy and occasionally drizzling Wednesday night where zone defense was the norm. Both games ran long and hard, highlighted by intense D but also some spectacular O. And as no surprise considering the parity in the league, both games also ended very close – 3-point victories for both AIRBORNE and Derelict.

So these two teams moved on to the semifinals, to meet up with the number 1 and number 2 teams who each had byes and who were thus rested for a week and a half. Would this much time off from play be a blessing or a curse?

The first game of the very cold Monday night was a rematch of O.P.U.S.'s first game of the regular season, where they lost a very surprising match to an extremely undermanned Derelict (who I believe only had 2 subs for the game, and who started the game with the motto "hey, we don't have much of a

chance against the no. 1 team, so let's just go have fun"). Derelict won that earlier game by 2, and yet it was still a huge surprise to see them upset O.P.U.S. once again, this time by a convincing 6 points. Maybe all of that time off had caused O.P.U.S. to lose some of their luster. Or maybe Derelict, playing its 6th game in less than 3 weeks, was looser and more unified as a team from the dense schedule.



Would 2nd place Incendiary suffer the same fate against AIRBORNE? Remember, these two teams had actually finished the league in a tie for second. They had gone 1-1 against each other. Both of those two games were played less than a week apart, each time with the

victor taking home a 5-point win. This game would be much closer, though, with Incendiary eventually pulling out the 15-12 victory to put themselves in the championship game.

So the championship game was set: Derelict versus Incendiary. The two teams who had played the longest game of the league early on, a 17-16 Derelict victory, followed by a mid-season match-up nearly as close, a 15-13 win for Incendiary. Everyone expected a tough, close game, and a large contingent of spectators showed up despite the near-freezing temperatures to see this one fought out at 8:45 on a Wednesday night.

Many long hucks and spectacular plays combined with great D and multiple turnovers to draw this one out for nearly 2 hours. Neal Brincefield and Alan Dibb pulling down high ones in the endzone for Incendiary, Derrick Mertz and Lizzette Pothoff laying out for scores for Derelict, and Jeff Loperfido (Incendiary) and John Kitchens (Derelict) providing more than their share of highlights for the videotape. (Yes, we actually had two video cameras rolling for this one. Look for a "Best of Carrboro League" video coming out soon.)

Although the intense play went all around, Derelict had the advantage on the scoreboard. And despite a couple of strong rallies, Incendiary couldn't keep up. Derelict won the championship title with a 15-11 victory. Many, many congratulations to Derelict for a spectacular season, and kudos to the rest of the teams for a fun league full of great spirit.

Keep your eyes open for next year! The Carrboro Fall Ultimate League isn't a well-kept secret anymore....

