

## Cross State Doubles

Back in the day, (what a clever use of words, huh?) there was a group of avid Disc Golfers in Kingsport Tennessee who loved the game and wanted to find a way to grow the sport. They formed the Lakefront Disc Golf Club in 1985 and began hosting small monthly events. As enthusiasm and participation grew, they hosted the first Pro event in the area, the Lakefront Open. Buoyed by the success of the LFO, they began to look for other events to host.

At that time, the closest Disc Golf course to Kingsport was Horizons Park in Winston-Salem North Carolina. The idea was brought up to host a two-man, best-shot tourney that incorporated both courses and would possibly foster a desire to travel and see other courses. The result was Cross State Doubles, a two-day two-state event that would utilize courses in Tennessee one day and North Carolina on the other. Each year the format would flip to allow both states to enjoy the Sunday "Home Field Advantage".

The first several years the event grew in popularity and a friendly Tennessee vs North Carolina rivalry was born. Every fall, players from both states would meet to decide which state would claim bragging rights for the year and a little money as well!

Streaks of dominance have manifested itself over the years. North Carolina has held the upper hand for many, many years based on the play of some great players and Hall of Famers that you may have heard of ; Larry Leonard, Carlton Howard, Stan McDaniel, Alan Beaver, Walter Haney, Michael Johansen and many others have teamed up to play over the years. Leonard and Haney held the title for several consecutive years as well as other NC teams but memory fails when trying to piece together names and partners. Any help from our NC brethren in this area would be greatly appreciated!

Tennessee enjoyed many successful campaigns as well lead by old-schooler's such as John Whinery, Vern Kimball, Bobby Ellis, Vic Vicars, David Jones, Billy Berry, Dwayne Killebrew, Tim Barr, and Jimmy "Rosebud" Rose. Kimball and Ellis held numerous titles until unseated by Berry - Killebrew who enjoyed multiple years on top before being topped by Barr - Rose in 1997.

More recently, Tim Owston and Jason Light stole bragging rights from Leonard and Haney after several years of falling short and proceeded to win nearly every year until finally being bested by Zach Melton and Weston Isaacs in 2014. Last year's champs, Chris Dickerson and Tyler Starnes have eyes on a repeat title run, while new-comers Jeremy Koling and Nathan Sexton as well as Nathan Tomlinson and Ronnie Huffman along with several other teams look to break Tennessee's recent string of victories and bring the title back to NC!

The lack of computerized record keeping in the early years prohibits naming every year's Open Champion teams. Suffice it to say, if you are a resident of the Tri-Cities, Winston-Salem, Burlington, Raleigh, Charlotte, or Asheville, chances are you have played in Cross State Doubles and know someone who has won it.

The popularity of CSD has grown every year regardless of whether or not it was a PDGA sanctioned event. Many courses have been used as well. Warriors Path and Horizons, Cedarrock Park, Fossil Hill, Harmon Hills, Richmond Hill (Original and Current), Mars Hill, and Winged Deer Park have all hosted CSD players at one point or another. New courses for 2016 include; Jackson Park in Hendersonville NC, Glen Cannon (old ball golf course) in Brevard NC, and Sugar Hollow Park in Bristol VA. Add Harmon Hills in TN to the mix and suddenly this year's event could be re-named Tri State Doubles!

Registration this year filled only a few days after opening with 72 teams ready to vie for CSD titles in 8 different divisions (Open, Masters, Ladies, Advanced, Advanced Masters, Intermediate, Recreational, and Mixed). With 4 teams currently on the waiting list, event organizers are becoming aware that the future of CSD may involve using all 4 courses simultaneously in order to meet potential demand. Regardless of any future format change, CSD will remain a fall tradition in Tennessee and North Carolina for many years to come.

Over the years, CSD has been a source of great fun, serious competition, and lifelong friendships. Every year as summer wanes, players from both states start thinking about finding a partner and making a title run in the iconic Doubles Event. Regardless of who wins or which state claims more titles, players for decades have enjoyed the big drives, big putts, and tense moments that define Cross State Doubles. The biggest reason for the continued popularity has to be the fun factor! What a great feeling it is when you miss a putt and your partner calmly drains it! Or when your partner clips a tree on a crucial drive but you find a way to surgically dissect the same fairway and park the shot! So many great memories have been made in CSD!

This year's event marks the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Cross State Doubles which makes it one of the longest running events in the Southeast. If you are registered for this year's event, you will be a part of history and here's hoping that 2016 will be the year that your team will be named Cross State Doubles Champions!