

CHICAGOLAND'S Champion of Champions Golf Tournament Park Ridge Country Club

An even par round of 70 earned Mike McCloone of Crystal Lake Country Club, Crystal Lake, Illinois, the honor of being this year's "Champion of Champions" in a tournament hosted by Park Ridge Country Club matching the individual champions of sixty-nine private golf clubs in the Chicago metropolitan area. The day started bright but cool, with clouds rolling in later to keep temperatures crisp, and gusty winds and fast greens combining to make scores a bit higher than in previous years. The participants commented favorably on the course appearance and setup while observing that the greens were indeed very quick, but also fair.

McCloone, playing in the second to last group of the day, made birdie at the difficult par 4 sixteenth hole to take a one stroke lead over Steve Sawtell of Skokie Country Club, an early finisher, who was in with a one over par 71. Sawtell watched as one after another of the later finishers fell out of contention in the last four holes, some of the most difficult on the course. McCloone, now leading after sixteen, made par on the longish par 3 seventeenth hole, and with the last group of players no longer in contention, he needed only to par eighteen to clinch victory. But par on eighteen was by no means assured as evidenced by the experience of the earlier finishers on this demanding double dogleg hole. McCloone pulled his drive left into the trees and caution dictated a safe second shot back into the fairway. His third shot to a tricky, sloped and undulating green was crucial since he now had to get up and down with just one putt in order to insure victory. The third shot did make the green, but left him with a slippery downhill putt of some eighteen feet. After studying the putt from all angles and conversing with his caddy, McCloone lined up, took a gentle swing with his putter, and sent the ball rolling towards the hole. As the ball approached the hole, it began to lose pace and waver ever so slightly, but its final turn carried it into the cup and gave Mike an even par round of 70 and a one-stroke victory over a very tough competitor and a field full of worthy champions.

