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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bill Larson and Kray Mims Take Gold 2024 North American 8-Ball and 9-Ball Wheelchair Championships



The BCA (Billiard Congress of America) and NWPA's (National Wheelchair Poolplayers Association) North American 8-Ball and 9-Ball Championships concluded on Saturday, July 13, 2024 at the Oakley-Lindsey Civic Center in Quincy, Illinois. With 14 players representing North America in this year's inaugural tournament.

In the North American 8-Ball Wheelchair Championships Bill Larson (Fort Atkinson, WI) faced Tom Davis (Montpelier, IA) for an excited hill-hill match up. Tom looked like he was about to run out when he fouled and gave Bill ball-in-hand with an open three ball spread left on the table. Bill then quickly approached and cleaned up the table to win his first North American 8-Ball Wheelchair Championship. Charlie Hans (Harrison, OH) and Andrew Blood (Grand Junction, CO) won bronze medals for this year's North American 8-Ball Wheelchair Championship.

For the North American 9-Ball Wheelchair Championship we saw Tom Davis (Montpelier, IA) again in the finals facing Kray Mims (Fayetteville, NC) and again falling just short of the gold with another hill-hill thriller. This time, Tom had his sites on the last 9 Ball for the win and his first gold medal but the ball rattled the pocket and left Kray an easy shot and title of North American 9-Ball Wheelchair Champion. Charlie Hans (Harrison, OH) and Chris Parnell (Lincoln, NE) won bronze medals for this year's North American 9-Ball Wheelchair Championship.

Keith Hill (Dayton, OH) won a secondary trophy event, consisting of a combination of both the 8-Ball and 9-Ball game disciplines, defeating Alan Shepherd (Georgetown, TX) in the championship match. Jeffrey Dolezal (Fairfax, VA) and Charles Interrante (Pottstown, PA) finished tied for 3rd Place.

The competitors in this inaugural event also formed 2 person teams to compete in a scotch doubles 9-Ball event. They elected to play the event on Joy Heyball tables that were brought in to Quincy for the first ever professional Heyball event held on American soil. These tables are taller than standard pocket billiard table and have unique flat rails and smaller pocket openings with rounded edges. This makes pocketing balls very challenging. Overall it was a great experience for the players to compete on a different style of table.

"We were excited to combine the North American Wheelchair Championships with the BEF Junior Nationals Championship this year," said Shane Tyree BCA CEO. "There simply isn't many opportunities to have a tournament like this on 9 foot tables for these para athletes. It was great watching them compete on such a grand stage and we look forward to bringing them back next year."

"It was a great pleasure to help organize, in collaboration with the Billiard Congress of America, these championships for our players who compete from a seated position," said Jeff Dolezal NWPA president. "The NWPA was honored to be invited by the Billiard Congress of America to have our players compete alongside the next generation of North American billiard champions, many of whom are already competing at a professional level. Our players were able to showcase their talents in front of other highly skilled competitors and served as excellent role models for the junior players regarding the will to win and overcome adversity. Our players are looking forward to being part of future similar BCA-hosted events."

The 2024 North American Wheelchair 8-Ball and 9-Ball Championships were honored to be sponsored by industry leaders such as Lucasi Custom Cues, Fort Worth Billiards, Iwan Simonis, Diamond Billiard Products, Aramith Billiard Balls, Predator Group, CueSport Billiard Academy, and Big Dogs Pool Shop.

About Billiard Congress of America

Founded in 1948, the Billiard Congress of America is a non-profit trade organization dedicated to growing a united, prosperous and highly regarded billiard industry through BCA leadership. The BCA seeks to enhance the success of its members and promote the game of billiards through educational, marketing and promotional efforts, annual industry trade shows and other programs designed to encourage billiards as a lifestyle and make pool everybody's game. For more information, visit www.bca-pool.com or call 303.243.5070.

About National Wheelchair Poolplayers Association

The National Wheelchair Poolplayers Association, Inc. (NWPA) is a non-profit organization dedicated to encouraging, developing and regulating wheelchair billiards in the USA. The NWPA serves wheelchair billiards under the umbrella of the Billiard Congress of America (BCA), which is the governing body for billiards in North America. Event schedules, tournament results, and NWPA contact information can be found on our National Wheelchair Poolplayers Association Facebook page or by calling 703.980.2734.