

The Draw: An Eau Claire Look Inside Groups Z and ZZ

Posted by eric anderson on Thursday, July 2, 2015

What a U.S. Championship Team Draw last Saturday. As usual, the Team Draw gave us a variety of story lines and possible story lines that are endless. This year, the Draw was cruel for many of the top Eau Claire teams.

What are the easy story lines that we know for sure?

Well, Settlers of Baton (Kalamzoo and Minneapolis) lost to Kubb'd (Des Moines and Taylor Falls) 1-2 last year in the round of 32, and there were 10 kubbs in play in Game 3. This year, they play their last group play match against each other.

The Draw gave us three POSSIBLE rematches on Sunday. Kubbsicles/Furor Celtica, Chaska JV (last year Kingpin)/X-Kubbed in a battle of Chaska Kubb teams, and Flippin' Baton/Ringers ft. Rekubblikanerna Stockholm (last year Ringers). Now, a lot has to happen for any of these rematches to happen, yes, for sure, and the odds are they all won't happen, but the Draw gave us all three possibilities. Something fun for sports radio to talk about the next week.

Menomonie United played in the Ely tournament. Who did they play in the Final? Espland's Deuce. They are in the same group.

But let's get to Group Z and Group ZZ. The Draw was cruel to these two groups.

Group Z has Dark Side of the Kubb, ConKubbadors, Kings of the Kinni, and 99 Problems But A Bridge Ain't One. We don't know ConKubbadors, but we do know the other three teams. And we do know that both DSOTK and 99 Problems have their eyes set on Sunday. Only one team in the group can win the group. Whoever wins this group will play the winner of Group ZZ...in the Round of 32, if they both win their Round of 64 matches. In Group ZZ, the Draw gave us Tad Kubbler, Pitch Perfect, The Perfect Storm, and The Big Kubbowski. Being what we think is the youngest team to compete this year, we can safely say that Pitch Perfect will not win the group...but they will be winning groups in a few years. That leaves the other three to battle for the first spot in the group. Again, the winner facing the winner of Group Z in the Round of 32, if they win their Round of 64 matches. Like in Group Z, we know that two teams in this group have their eyes set on Sunday...Tad Kubbler and The Perfect Storm. What do DSOTK (3), 99 Problems (3), Tad Kubbler (1), and The Perfect Storm (2) also have in common? They all have at least one player from Eau Claire that also plays under the Berserker Kubb flag (as does a player on Kings of the Kinni and all three on Pitch Perfect).

So, after all is said and done, unless one of the teams that finish 2-4 make a move (more on that coming), only one of these eight teams will make it to the round of 16. Actually, let's get to the ZZ and ZZZ teams. Where do they go, you ask? Remember, these will probably be teams that have their eyes set on Sunday. They move up to the very top of the bracket, and if they both win their Round 1 play-in matches, they will play against each other in the Round of 64. The losing team drops to the Consolation Bracket. Whoever wins the match, moves to Round 3, to play the two-time U.S. Champion from Eau Claire, and also play under the Berserker Kubb flag, Kubbsicles in the Round of 32. From there, only one of those two teams will advance to the Round of 16 with the chance to play to go to Sunday. It is safe to say, that if it plays out, those two matches (Kubbsicles vs. ZZ or ZZZ and Z1 vs. ZZ1) will probably be two of the toughest Round of 32 matches in the whole Championship. And some people would say that those matches would be at the level of quarterfinal matches on Sunday.

OK, back to the Z and ZZ group winners. IF they advance to play each other, you ask what happens after that? Well, IF Ringers ft. Rekubblikanerna Stockholm (from Eau Claire - and this year Stockholm Sweden - and play under the Berserker Kubb flag) win their group and advance to the Round of 16 (again, this is totally hypothetical here and part of a long story line that would need lots of things to happen), they will play the winner of the Z1 vs. ZZ1 matchup. Wow. You read that right. Then, get this, IF it is Tad Kubbler, the pitch will contain 5/6 of the Claire Mni-2014 2014 World Silver Medal team playing on it...2/3 of Ringers ft. Rekubblikanerna Stockholm and 3/4 of Tad Kubbler. Again, a lot of things have to happen for any of this to happen, but the possibility is there.

So think about it, barring a Z3/ZZ3 or Z4/ZZ4 advancing through the bracket, there is only room for two teams of the following to make it to Sunday, and three of the six will be eliminated in the round of 32...or earlier.

99 Problems But A Bridge Ain't One
Dark Side Of The Kubb
Kubbsicles
Ringers ft. Rekubblikanerna Stockholm

Tad Kubbler
The Perfect Storm

They all know each other. Some live on the same block (also with Pitch Perfect and The Big Kubbowski). They all play kubb against each other often. They all see each other around town often. For these teams, kubb is something we think about and talk about 12 months a year here. Eau Claire will always remember the 2015 Groups Z and ZZ.

The Draw.