

EUSPBA VOICE

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Daniel Whatley Wins The Nicol-Brown Chalice and William Ross Challenge Competitions!

By JoAnn Scott

For the first time one player, Daniel Whatley of Houston, Texas, has won the top U.S. Amateur Invitational competitions. On November 19, 1988, two special events were held for the top level amateur players of the United States and Canada. For the eighth consecutive year, the Nicol-Brown Chalice Amateur Invitational and for the second year the William Ross March-Strathspey-Reel Challenge competitions were held.

Daniel Whatley is a 17 year old high school student at St. Thomas Episcopal School. He competes extensively throughout the U.S. and is a student of Gold Medalists Mike Cusack and Jim McIntosh.

This year, a number of fine tunes were played in both events. Mr. Whatley won both events playing *Park Piobaireachd (Setting #2)* in the Nicol-Brown Chalice Competition and *The Duchess of Edinburgh, The Ewe with the Crooked Horn, and John Morrison, Assynt House* in the William Ross MSR Challenge Competition. Campbell Crosbie from Stoney Creek, Ontario, was second in The Nicol-Brown Chalice playing the *MacFarlane's Gathering* and Keri Smith, Hackettstown, NJ, third, *Salute to Donald*. Bill Caudill, Waxhaw, NC took second in the William Ross Challenge with *Hugh Kennedy, Maggie Cameron and Willie Cummings Rant*. Ian Murdock, Laffayette, IN, placed third playing *The Edinburgh Volunteers, Arniston Castle and Ca' the Ewes*.

Competitors for both events were invited to play at the Chancellor's Hall of the New York State Education Department in Albany, New York. To be invited to play, the competitor must have won in the major Grade I & II competitions either in the US or Canada during the current year as well as received recommendations from instructors and or judges. This year the players represented eight different states and two countries with distances as far as Stoney Creek, Ontario to Houston, Texas.

In 1982 the Nicol-Brown Chalice was established to recognize the continuing development of higher piping

standards in North America. This special event was dedicated to Robert (R.U.) Brown and Robert Nicol who shared a deep and abiding enthusiasm for Piobaireachd and who



Daniel Whatley,
Houston, Texas

Courtesy, John France

made a life long commitment to the teaching and perpetuation of Ceol Mor. The William Ross Challenge was established in 1987 to create an arena for top level amateur players in the world today. Modeled after Scotland's Oban and Inverness competitions, the "Olympics of Piping", the invitational competitions allow the enthusiastic top amateur players a prestigious competition which has set a standard by which to judge their piping as well as set a goal to direct their hours of practice. It is hoped that in the future this invitational competition will be extended to outstanding amateur competitors throughout the world.

Next year's event is scheduled for October 7, 1989 at the Troy Music Hall, Troy, New York.