

Racquetball Reporter

quarterly publication of the Racquetball Association of Michigan

February 2004
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Double The Fun – My Recap of the State Doubles Championships - Melody Gorno

Eight Legs, Eight Arms

Four racquets and one ball.

Fair & Honest Competitors

With no "refs" needed to "make the call".

It was nice to see my friends

And see some players shorter than me,

Shorter than Karen Green, Paula Saad

And shorter than "Little Debbie".

I'm talking about the junior players

Who played with enthusiasm and class.

As they experienced the thrill

Of the court with sidewall glass.

The juniors were so much fun to watch

As they ran all over the court.

This tournament really highlighted

The future players of our sport.

Tom and Twayne are really two men

Who truly know what to do.

To keep those matches running on time

Thanks go to the both of you!

The other people I would like to thank

Is a Mann by name, not gender

Thanks Felicia for all you do

And all the contributions you render!

It was great to hear the latests news

Concerning this sport that we play.

During the General Membership meeting

On the eve of Saturday.

I felt more informed on changes

The meeting kept us up-to-date.

Informed on the future of this sport

And the changes affecting our state.

Changes to the ranking system

And the tournaments to come.

Are just a few of the topics,

If I were to name some.

(Cont. Page 4)

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OUR JUNIOR DOUBLES PLAYERS



(Winners Pictures, see pages 5-6)



**2003-04
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THOUGHTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

What a wonderful year it was for racquetball here in Michigan. We saw more racquetball tournaments with more racquetball players than we have seen in a long time. Much kudos to the volunteers, coordinators, and tournament directors for stepping up and taking a lead in a sport that they apparently love. .

I talked about the increased energy and excitement in the last newsletter, and the fervor continues. At our State Doubles Tournament, we had about 135 participants with approximately 20 juniors playing. (Much thanks to Diana, Lewis, and Karen). I don't know about you, but I can't remember the last time that I have seen that many juniors playing in a State Doubles Tournament. And how about the adults – people were coming out of the woodwork. The racquetball competition was friendly but fierce. Lastly, we topped it off with a general membership meeting and a lively auction that raised over \$1200.00 for our developing Women and Juniors programs. WAAAY COOOOOL!

And the pace continues. The MAC in Grand Rapids is hosting a Fran Davis clinic on racquetball, and AmPro is sponsoring its instructional camp. We have the Pen Club Challenge, the Motor City Rollout, the Muskegon Snowfest, the Total Sports Racquetball Challenge, the Capital Challenge, March Madness, the MAC Open, the women's "travel" Saturdays, the women's

"stay put" Mondays, the juniors programs, challenge courts, etc..... And still, there is more to come.

Things are moving right along. Again, I would like to encourage more racquetball players to get involved. RAM is spearheading more than a few new programs, but like anything else, we need MOTIVATED people to help. Come to a meeting, join a committee (newsletter, juniors, women, recreational players programs, tournaments, etc.) – be an integral part of all the excitement. Our meeting times and locations are always cited on our website, michiganracquetball.org.

Also, RAM is looking for venues to host the State Tournaments for the 2004 -2006 racquetball seasons. If your club is interested, please let a RAM Board member know. Additionally, a new tournament and sanctioning system is being put into place by the USRA. Racquetball players will now be placed on a national ranking system based on actual play results, not on the "points" system. The RAM board will contact tournament directors directly regarding the new system and tools available.

Sometimes, when you are in a new position like I find myself in as your State president, I understand that for all that I thought I knew about racquetball and leading an organization, that I really don't know a thing.

(Cont. on Page 8)

NEW MEMBERS TO THE RAM BOARD OF DIRECTORS



At the October meeting, the RAM Board of Directors welcomed two new members for the 2003-04 tournament year. The two new members are Stephanie Cobb and Lewis Forrest. Please congratulate both Stephanie and Lewis when you see them at upcoming RAM sanctioned tournaments and events.

Editorial Correction: In the October edition of The Racquetball Reporter, it was stated that Maureen Pendell earned the Ladies Division Bronze medal at the Riverview Fall Brawl Racquetball Tournament. The winner of the Bronze medal was MARJORIE PENDELL. Congratulations to Marjorie on her play at the Riverview Fall Brawl and apologies for the publication of the incorrect first name.

THIRTY MEMBERS OF TEAM MICHIGAN COMPETE IN THE "BIGGEST RACQUETBALL TOURNAMENT EVER", THE 2003 US OPEN

- Twayne Howard

Tournament Director Doug Ganim called the 2003 U.S. Open "The Biggest Racquetball Tournament Ever" as over 850 players came from all over the world to Memphis to participate and compete for the prestigious title, "U.S. Open Champion". Over thirty Michiganders made the trip to compete, participate, and spectate and together they brought home 21 medals, including four Championships.

Sharon Huczek followed up her National Championship in the 50-60 A/B with another strong performance in Memphis. At the Open, Sharon rolled undefeated through the round robin Women's 55+ Open to earn the championship. She also earned a silver medal in the Women's 45/55+A division.

Felicia Mann continued her great play in Memphis and also made a dominating run through her two divisions. Felicia went undefeated through the Women's 24-/25+A division to win the championship. Felicia also was a semi-finalist in the Women's 35+ Open division.

Chuck Van Hoose earned his first gold after winning the Men's 55+C division. After years of trying, Chuck finally broke through as he only dropped one game on his way to the championship.

John Wilson and **Mike Easthope** teamed up to take the Men's C Doubles championship. Always a tough division at a tournament this size, they won three straight tie-breakers to earn the gold.

Also "breaking through" was **Twayne Howard** who teamed with the current #1 player on the Men's Pro Tour, Jason Mannino to take gold in the Pro/Am Doubles Championship. This was the fifth time Twayne participated in the charity event benefiting St. Jude's Children's Hospital.

Congratulations to our newest U.S. Open Champions. Special congratulations also to the newlyweds **John Wilson** and **Debbie (Reauso) Wilson**,

who celebrated by bringing home three medals. Debbie earned a Silver Medal in the Women's 35/45/55C division, while John made it to the semis in Men's 35+C and the previously mentioned Men's C Doubles gold.

Michigan also had two players who took home two medals each. **Brandon Cortese** earned silver in Men's 24-A and bronze in Men's A. **Pete Harvey** earned silver in the Men's 55+A and was a semi-finalist in the Men's 55+A division.

Jason Carroll finished second in the Men's 25+C division. **Paula Saad** made it to the semi-finals in the Women's 35A division. Mike Easthope teamed with partner John Wilson to earn silver in the Men's C Doubles. **David Lund** earned silver in the Men's 65+ division.

As is often the case, all eyes were on **Jack Huczek** in the Men's Pro Tournament. Jack equaled last year's result and made it to the Semi-Finals. Unfortunately, he ran into eventual champion Kane Waselenchuk who played flawless racquetball to defeat Jack in four games. Even with the loss, Jack maintained his hold on the #2 slot in the tour rankings, in prime position to take the year end title.

Mike Anderson, Tom Blakeslee, Diana Courtney, Jim Easterling, Lewis Forrest, Jennifer Gidner, Steve Goedker, Karen Green, Greg Hodges, Jeff Johnson, Chuck Kaiser, Stanley Kurzman, Jeff Mullins, Augie Pasko, and Stephanie Winfrey also played. Special thanks to everyone who came to support Team Michigan including Tony Coduti, Amy, Edwina, Alex, Alisha, Nancy, and Beth.

I can never say enough about this tournament. Every year, it is the best racquetball show on Earth, and every year it gets bigger and better. Ask any one of the participants listed above, and maybe next year you'll come to see the show. I hope to see you there, even if you don't plan to play, the atmosphere is electric and the additional parties and activities make the trip to Memphis well worth while for any racquetball enthusiast.

ATTENTION TOURNAMENT DIRECTORS

The Racquetball Association of Michigan (RAM) would like to invite you to have your tournament entry form included in our newsletter. The newsletter is mailed to all members of RAM and to racquetball clubs in Michigan. This is an easy way of advertising your tournament for a low cost. There is a \$50.00 charge to include your entry form in the *Racquetball Reporter* and the tournament must be a RAM/USRA sanctioned tournament. Because of the mailing deadlines, please contact Dianne Easterling at djeasterling@earthlink.net to obtain the deadline and the requirements for entry form formatting to include your entry form in any upcoming issues.

UPCOMING EVENTS

February 6-8

10th Annual Racquetball Challenge
Total Sports Complex
Harrison Twp.
(586) 463-2000

February 20-22

Capital Challenge
Michigan Athletic Club
East Lansing
(517) 337-0002

March 6

March Madness
Players Athletic Club
Warren
(586) 774-6900

March 12-14

MAC Open - Grand Rapids
Michigan Athletic Club
Grand Rapids
(616) 956-0941

March 26-28

RAM STATE SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIPS
Players Athletic Club
Warren
(586) 774-6900

STATE DOUBLES -- (from page 1)

The "silent auction" raised funds for the Juniors
And it was the place to be.
Except for the fact that every item I bid on
Was also bid on by Augie !

Augie was intentionally bidding against me
so that my item could not be won
But the biggest winner of the auction
Was the highest bidder – Mike Anderson.

This tournament is one not to be missed
Providing good fun and a whole lot more.
So put it on your schedule to play
In December, 2004!

RAM State Doubles Results**Mens****Open**

1. Steve Goedker Lewis Forrest
2. Rich and John Torres
3. Gus Pasko Shannon Kohl
4. Ron Barton Edwin Moore

A

1. Nick Frontzak Mike Mollema
2. Bob Gravelyn Jim Jazwicz
3. Tony and Mike Garbarino
4. Jeff Johnson Chuck VanHoose

B

1. Mike Wahl Gary Roloff
2. John Wilson Mike Easthope
3. Jim Scheuer Matt Malolepsyz
4. Morris Penner Ron Griggs

C

1. David Chirio Andrew Tucker
2. Greg Fenner Michael Krieger
3. Jim Hamilton Allan Coyle
4. Dan Mullin Bob Shurlow

25/30/**35/****Open**

1. Gus Pasko Jeff Connell
2. Nick Fronzak Mike Mollema
3. John and Rich Torres
4. John Trendell Andre Roy

40

1. Dan Verbeck Jim Woolcock
2. Jackson White Chris Kelly
3. Chuck Vanhooose Jeff Johnson

45

1. Jackson White Tom Blakeslee
2. Dan Verbeck Jim Woolcock
3. Chris Kelly Jim Panasiewicz
4. Bob Gravelyn Jim Jazwicz

50

1. Ric Scott Al Mell
2. Tom Blakeslee Jim Panasiewicz
3. Don Edwards Jim Bruton
4. Keith Vogel Mike Easthope

25/**30B**

1. Dan Mullin Bob Schurlow
2. Jim Kutt Ben Marciniak-Jennings
3. Sherman Gipson Tony Gardner
4. John Kutt Kevin Ammerman

35B

1. Jim Miller Tom Nagle
2. Todd Moen Greg Sporer
3. David Chirio Andrew Tucker
4. Terrell Hill Stanley El-Amin

40/45/**50B**

1. Don Edwards Jim Bruton
2. Barry Dennis Dan Whiston
3. Larry Clayman Dan Sutton
4. Bruce Gluski Ron Hnilica

Womens**Open**

1. Vallana Perrault Stephanie Winfrey
2. Melody Gorno Anthnita Dickerson
3. Paula Saad Stacey Barbas
4. Felicia Mann Laura King

B

1. Mary Horne Marjorie Pendell
2. Veronica Brown Thelma Howard
3. Jennifer Gidner Kim Novak
4. Roseane Backos Diane Berent

35A

1. Terry Fields Darcy Crampton
2. Mary Meeseman Lisa Stemple
3. Diana Courtney Debbie Wilson
4. Lynn Kuczajda Margrit Shemechko

Mixed**Open**

1. Alex Cobb Vallana Perrault
2. Ron Barton Anthnita Dickerson
3. Jeff Connell Paula Saad
4. Mike Anderson Melody Gorno

Mixed**A**

1. Lisa Stemple Todd Moen
2. Joe Romeo Debbie Wilson
3. Mike Easthope Diana Courtney
4. Mel Zurack Lynn Kuczajda

Mixed**B**

1. Christine Todd Tom MacArthur
2. Keith Vogel Margrit Shemechko
3. Ron Hnilica Mary Horne
4. Dan Sutton Mary Meeseman

Junior**10**

1. Eric Sporer Dan Poindexter
2. Kevin White Trevor Sporer

Junior**13**

1. Andrew Price Tim Berent
2. Matt Barbuscak Chris Cardelli
3. Mike Dibble Eric Baker

Junior**18**

1. Andrew Price Michael Krieger
2. Matthew Bernstein Ethean Gottlieb
3. Josh Zeid Tim Berent
4. Drew and Jamie Campanelli
5. Jarrid Antisdale Frank Antonelli
6. Justin Vail Justin Bess

STATE DOUBLES JUNIOR DIVISION CHAMPIONS. . .

Matt Barbusczk and Chris Cardelli
Junior 13 - Second Place



Andrew Price and Tim Berent
Junior 13 - First Place



Eric Sporer and Dan Poindexter
Junior 10 - First Place



STATE DOUBLES ACTION

RAM STATE DOUBLES WINNERS AND

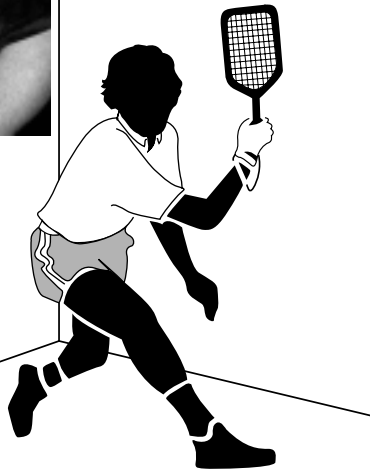


Men's 25/30B - Dan Mullin and
Bob Schulow - First Place



Women's B - Mary Horne and
Marjorie Pendell - First Place

OTHERS HAVING FUN. . .



Men's 40 - Dan Verbeck and
Jim Woolcock - First Place



Will, Terry, Felicia and Thelma
having fun at the Doubles

2003 WEST MICHIGAN OPEN, AN INTERNATIONAL EVENT

- Twayne M. Howard

The popularity of the West Michigan Open has spread beyond US borders bringing our first international competitors. Although Detroit tournaments have been popular with our Canadian friends for years, this was the first time the "Canadian Invasion" has made it to West Michigan. Hopefully, it won't be the last.

But, first things, first. The Juniors played in a combined 12 and under and 10 and under division. Perennial powerhouses **Andrew Price** and **Dan Poindexter** finished on top again. Andrew took the championship in the 12 and under. Dan finished second in the combined division, and first in the 10 and under. Matt Barbuscak and Jarrod Antisdale also competed.

The Women's 35+ Division saw four of Michigan's finest battle it out for the championship. In the final match, **Paula Saad** just got by Felicia Man to take the championship.

Wendy Ford battled through two tiebreakers just to get to the final against Marilyn Kegley, who also had survived one tiebreaker. Marilyn fell just short as Wendy took the championship in a close two games in the Women's A/B Division.

The Women's Open Division featured one of the toughest draws in WMO history. **Vallana Perrault** lost only one game on her way to the championship. Karen Green finished second, and Felicia Mann finished third.

The round robin Men's 60+ Division saw **Tom Sharum** take the championship. Art Murphy finished second.

Men's 55+B was also a round-robin division. **Dick Tedford** went undefeated to take the championship. Roger Kamps finished in second place.

Chuck Van Hoose made a rare visit to West Michigan and took home the Men's 55+A championship by defeating Dave Lund in a very close final.

The Men's 55+ Division was also a round robin event. Local hero **Bob Gravelyn** swept through the draw to take the championship. Dale Graham took second place.

The Men's 45+A Division was a close as possible. In the final, **Mike Finn** defeated Larry Westdorp 11-10 in the tiebreaker to win the championship.

The Men's 35+B Division went to humble host, **Twayne Howard**. Bob Buckingham fell just short in another close tiebreaker.

The Men's 35+A division displayed an all-Holland final featuring **Kevin "Stu" O'Keefe** and Attica "Butch" Mitchell. Stu pulled out his best game and won the championship pulling away.

Steve Goedker and Augie Pakso faced off in the Men's 35+ Division. Steve's consistent play proved too much, and it earned him the championship.

Dennis Dinauer took out Daren Smith to take home the championship of the Men's 25+C Division. A good showing for Daren's first tournament.

Doubling up on his Juniors Championship, **Andrew Price** also took home his first adult championship by winning the Men's D Division. Grand Rapidian Terry Igoe took second place as the last adult to face the young Champion.

Dennis Dinauer also earned a second Championship by defeating Grand Rapidian Patrick Franzoi in the final of the Men's C Division.

Bob Reou made his debut in the B Division a successful one. This battle of the Bob's had Bob Reou take a tough tiebreaker over Bob Buckingham to earn the championship.

Glen Williams' return to the A Division was also a successful one. Glen ran through the division with the tenacious play that earned him the nickname "The Mosquito". "Stu" O'Keefe took second place.

The aforementioned "International Event", was the Men's Open Division as two Canadian youngsters crossed the border to test their mettle against West Michigan's finest. One of the Canadians, second-seeded Eric Desrocher advanced to the Finals to face Grand Rapidian Joel Bonnett. Eric now treads ground once walked by Joel: Junior National Titles, Pro experience, International team play, awesome talent and amazing potential. Tournament Sunday dawned with great anticipation as everyone waited to see this battle between the Young Gun, and the Old Hand. Alas, it was not to be. The Final was called in lieu of childbirth and fans were turned into well wishers as young Jacob Kenneth Bonnett decided it was time to make a grand entrance. No one regretted the Showdown turned into a forfeit, Mother and child were both doing well. Eric won the championship, but Joel and his wife Shelly added a wonderful new addition to their home.

As always, Saturday night belonged to Doubles. It was a very challenging evening as there were far more doubles teams than ever before. Mixed B/C doubles saw Lakeshore pair **Laura Martin** and **Jeff Tloczynski** defeat Grand Rapidians Suzette Szarowicz and Tom Szarowicz to take home the championship.

Mixed Open/A Doubles featured some very tough pairings. In the end **Lynn Kuczajda** and **Mel Zurack** took home another WMO Championship over Stephanie Winfrey and John Coaker.

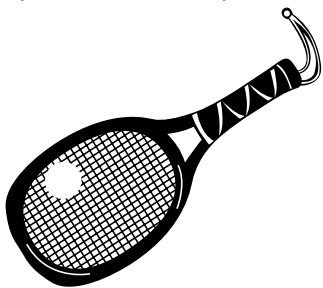
The Women's Open/A Doubles also had some great pairings. **Felicia Mann** and **Maureen Price** defeated Diana Courtney and Debbie Reauso to win the Championship.

The Men's B/C Doubles was a full draw featuring nine teams. The championship went to **Mike Easthope** and **John Wilson**. Mike and John got past Art Murphy and Tom Sharum in the Finals. This was the first time Art and Tom had

(cont. on Page 8)

LATE BREAKING NEWFLASH!!!

With the release of the January 19, 2004 IRT rankings, Michigan's Jack Huczek is now the #1 racquetball player on the tour. Jack is ranked number one with 4039 points followed by Jason Mannino with 3703 points. **WAY TO GO JACK!!!!** (see article below)



Doubles Tournament Director
Twayne Howard with a smile

2003 WEST MICHIGAN OPEN

(cont. from Page 7)

played together, and they are talking about National Doubles. Mike and John play together all the time, and went on to win the Men's C Division at the US Open in November.

The Men's Open/A Division featured most of the big hitters and Canadian **Ryan Montleone** paired with **Paul Stanwick** to take the Championship. They defeated Jeff and Tony Connell in the finals.

As always, sponsors make the world go 'round. Special thanks to the Michigan Hand Center, sponsor of the Men's Open Division, and Head/Penn Racquet Sports for their generous contribution towards the Junior Raffle which generated over \$350.

THOUGHTS FROM THE PRES...

(from Page 2)

I would like to just take a moment and thank the RAM Board, the tournament directors, the coordinators, the club owners, the webmaster, the newsletter editor, the Hall of Fame Committee, and the MANY, MANY racquetball players for their love and support! And as always, if you have any questions or comments, feel free to e-mail me at president@michiganracquetball.org or call me at home at (313)567-5225.

Felicia

A Three-Year-Old's Dream Becomes a Reality

- Sharon Huczek

As a little boy wiping up the court floors for Jimmy Floyd and Nick Rallis, he had a dream to be the #1 Professional Racquetball Player in the world. For some, a goal achieved takes a lifetime. For others, it remains a dream. For Jack, it was a goal accomplished two days before his 21st birthday. It took place at the Cleveland Pro Stop on January 11, 2003 in front of cheering family and friends from Michigan.

The stands were full as the top ranked professionals fired up to battle for a first place finish in front of a very enthusiastic crowd. Victorious in the quarterfinals were Mike Green, Cliff Swain, Jason Mannino, and Jack Huczek. Jack's quarterfinal win was over Sudsy, defeating him in five games (6-11, 11-3, 6-11, 11-5, 11-7). The match was a show of streakiness and shifting momentum on both sides. Jack's fitness level and high-nick-lobs proved effective over the bleeding blisters and increasing fatigue of Sudsy.

In the semi-finals, Cliff Swain edged Mike Green in five games (11-10, 7-11, 11-5, 9-11, 11-1). Huczek dominated Jason Mannino in three straight games (11-5, 11-2, 13-11) with an almost flawless, relentless performance.

The Huczek vs. Swain final was so close...a real classic. The spectators were exhausted and glued to this long, two hour dual, which even captured the interest of the NFL fans in the building. The cheering accelerated with "flying DVD's", and the questionable calls as determined by referee Dave Negrete. The players added excitement by taking polls with the spectators in those cases. Jack classed out the 5th game 12-10 with outstanding diving retrieves, consistent play and a determined mindset. The win in Cleveland pushed Jack into the #1 ranking with a little less than half the season to play. He made all of us proud—a dream came true. Racquetball at its best!

REMEMBER WHEN . . . CONGRATULATIONS, JACK!!!!!!



March 1990 - Regional 8 & Under
First Place



March 1991 - Regional 8 & Under
First Place



1992 Junior World Championships
8 & Under - First Place
10 & Under - Third Place



Jim Hiser congratulates Jack on his
sixth consecutive world title in
February 2, 1998 *Sports Illustrated*



December 1995 - International
Racquetball Federation World Junior
Championship - 12 & Under Singles
12 & Under Doubles - First Place



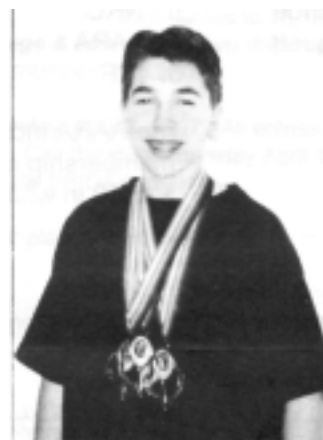
1995 US Junior Olympic Championships with Margo Daniels
12 & Under, 12 & Under Doubles, and Mixed Doubles - First Place



2002 National Junior Championships
18 & Under - First Place



1996 Junior Nationals - 3 gold medals



1996 Ektelon World Junior
Championships

(All pictures courtesy of past issues of *The Racquetball Reporter*)

2004 PEN CLUB CHALLENGE CUP – THE ONLY WAY TO RING IN THE NEW YEAR

by Twayne M. Howard

For the second year, the Peninsular Club in Downtown Grand Rapids opened its doors to welcome fifty racquetball players out of the blustery weather and in to its opulent surroundings.

When they arrived, players found one of the nicest clubs around, great shirts, Championship Cups, over \$1,000 in door prizes and prize money, and some of the best tournament food ever enjoyed. Special thanks to all of the tournament sponsors for their generous support. American Chiropractic, Standard Federal Bank, Comcast, Highland Chrysler Jeep, Marge's Donut Den, George Bailey, Steve Potter, Thousand Oaks Golf Club, Boulder Creek Golf and Dining Club, Gordon Food Service Market Place, Preusser Jewelers, In-Sport Apparel, Anderson Screen Printing, ProKennex Racquetball, and PPKW Racquetball all contributed.

All that was left was the great play on the courts.

The Men's 45+B Division featured a couple players safely over that age, and one of them even won it. **Mike Wahl** squeaked out the Championship by one point over **Rick Duffett** making his tournament debut.

When spectators walked by the Final of the Men's 35+C/D Division, they were shocked and amazed at the players who had played their way into the finals. After defeating several players up to half their age, **Dick Tedford**, age sixty-eight, and **Chuck Kaiser**, age seventy-three, faced off to challenge for the cup. In a seesaw battle, Mr. Kaiser edged out Mr. Tedford in the tiebreaker to claim the championship. Congratulations to both of these venerable warriors.

The Men's 35+A Division was one of the most competitive divisions in this tournament. In the end, **Mark Werthman** made a triumphant return and defeated **Kevin "Stu" O'Keefe** to win the championship.

Gary Balavitch and **John VandeWeerd** both cruised into the finals of the Men's 19+B Division. Gary had a bit more left in the tank, and finished out the championship with a convincing 15-10, 15-10 win.

Rick Foster advanced deep into both the Men's C and the Men's D Division. In D, he ran through the full draw, never giving up more than 15 total points in a match. Chicagoan Peter Colovos was just as dominant on his side of the draw, but fell just short in the final.

The Men's C Division turned into an all-Chicago affair as **Andrew Barker** and **Fred Conforti** squared off in the final. The last match going turned into a nip and tuck slugfest until Andrew finished out the tiebreaker to win the championship.

Every two or three years, **Randy Ransome** gets healthy enough to compete in a tournament. He shows up and pounds everyone into submission. This tournament was no exception as Randy defeated **Al Kohl** in the final to earn the Cup in the B Division. Here's to hoping Randy's back stays fit enough to make this a more regular occurrence.

The Men's A Division featured quite a contrast between the finalists. **Kevin "Stu" O'Keefe** who's been playing tournaments for only a few years advanced to the finals to face tournament veteran **Bob Gravelyn**. In a hard-fought tiebreaker experience won out and Bob won the Championship.

The Men's Open draw was the best in Michigan since last year's State Singles Championship. Why? Two names: Jimmy and Joel. This was the first rematch of last year's Open final between **Jim Floyd** and **Joel Bonnett**. Something we can only hope to see more of in the next few years. Last Spring Jim won 11-7 tiebreaker after two close games.

This Final felt a lot like the last as Joel took the first game 15-11 and Jimmy bounced back to win the second by the same score. These two "old" friends put a great show for the 30 or so spectators crammed around the court. The "shooter" made great gets, the "getter" made great shots, the speed, power,

accuracy, and the occasional good-natured jab and an ongoing commentary all left the crowd amazed at this great display of racquetball. As Joel drew to match point, he went to a high Z-lob serve to Jim's forehand. Jim calmly stepped up and flat rolled an overhead, cross-court reverse pinch...and I mean flat. Truly spectacular! After a side out, Joel tried the same serve. Another crushing overhead pinch winner!?! After another side out, Joel looked up at the crowd and asked, "He can't hit three, can he?" Fortunately for Joel, he could not and the ensuing rally closed out the game 11-6 and the championship for Joel.

Thanks again to all of the sponsors and players for sharing this tournament with me. It's always a great joy. I hope to see you next year.

CAPITAL CHALLENGE TO OFFER TWO CLINICS

The Capital Challenge Racquetball Tournament to be held at the MAC Club in East Lansing on February 21-22 will be offering all players and spectators two racquetball specialty clinics.

The first clinic will be on Saturday, February 21 and will be a Rules/Referee Clinic done by Jim Easterling. This clinic will start at 1:00 pm and run for about one and a half hours. It includes basic rule information as well as information on how to play without a referee.

The second clinic will also be on Saturday, February 21 and will start about 3:00 pm. This will be a Play/Strategy clinic provided by Mike Anderdson from Grand Rapids.

Both clinics will provide great information for the beginning as well as the advanced racquetball player.

If you have any questions regarding the tournament or either clinic, contact either Allan Coyle at (517) 485-8309 or Dan Mullin at (517) 267-0186.

HOPE TO SEE EVERYONE THERE.
(Entry form is included in this newsletter.)

HOW TO REFEREE WITHOUT A "REF" or BASIC SELF OFFICIATING

Reprinted from the USRA website - January 2004

First and foremost in fair play with out a referee; SAFETY IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EVERY PLAYER WHO ENTERS THE COURT! At no time should the physical safety of the participants be compromised. Players are entitled, and expected, to hold up their swing, without penalty, any time they believe there might be a risk of physical contact. Any time a player claims to have held up to avoid contact, even if being over-cautious, they are entitled to a hinder (the rally is replayed without penalty).

SCORE

Since there is no referee or scorekeeper, it is important for the server to announce both the server's and receiver's score before each first serve.

DURING RALLIES

During rallies, it is the hitter's responsibility to make the call. If there is a possibility that a skip ball, double-bounce, or illegal hit occurred, play should continue until the hitter makes the call against their own shot. If the hitter does not make the call and goes on to win the rally, and the opponent thought that one of the hitter's shots was not good, they may appeal to the hitter by pointing out which shot was thought to be bad and request that the hitter reconsider. If the hitter is sure of the call, and the opponent is still sure the hitter is wrong, the rally should be replayed. As a matter of etiquette, players are expected to make calls against themselves any time they are not sure. Unless the hitter is certain the shot was good, it should be replayed.

SERVICE

Fault Serves. The receiver has the primary responsibility to make these calls, though either player may make the call. The receiver must make the call immediately, and not wait until the ball has been hit to gain the benefit of seeing how good a return they have made. It is not an option play. The receiver does not have the right to play a short serve just because it could be a set-up.

Screen Serves. When there is no referee, the screen serve call is the sole responsibility of the receiver. If the receiver has taken the proper court position, near center court, does not have clear view of the ball the screen should be called immediately. Receivers may not call a screen after attempting to hit the ball or after taking themselves out of proper court position by starting the wrong way. The server may not call a screen under any circumstances and must expect to play the rally unless a call is made by the receiver.

Other Situations. Foot faults, 10-second violations, receiving zone violations, and other calls may require a referee. However, if either player believes an opponent is abusing any of

the rules, be sure there is agreement on what the rule is, and a clear understanding that the rules should be followed.

HINDERS

Generally, the hinder should work like the screen serve — as an option play for the hindered party. Only the person going for the shot can stop play by calling a hinder, and must do so immediately — not wait to see how good a shot they can hit. If the hindered party believes they can make an effective return in spite of some physical contact or screen that has occurred, they may continue to play.

AVOIDABLE HINDERS

Since avoidable hinders are usually unintentional, they can occur even in the friendliest matches. A player who realizes that they have caused such a hinder should simply declare the opponent to be the winner of the rally. If a player feels that the opponent caused such a hinder, but the opponent does not make the call, the offended player should point out that an avoidable hinder occurred. However, unless the opponent agrees that an avoidable hinder occurred, it should not be called. Often just pointing out what appears to have been an avoidable hinder will prevent the opponent from such actions on future rallies.

DISPUTES

If either player, for any reason desires to have a referee, it is considered common courtesy for the other player to go along with the request, and a referee suitable to both sides should be found. If there is no referee, and a question about a rule or rule interpretation comes up, seek out the club pro or a more experienced player. Then, after the match, contact your state racquetball association for an interpretation.

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