

Racquetball Reporter

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Racquetball Association of Michigan

TEAM MICHIGAN CLAIMS FIVE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

- Twayne M. Howard

Another Memorial Day weekend, and another trip to Houston for Nationals. It might sound a bit "ho-hum" but this year was different. Thirteen members of Team Michigan made the trek this year, and had unprecedented results. While fewer made the trip, Michigan took home more National Championships than even before. This was truly a banner year and a great way to cap off the season.

Only one member of Team Michigan took home two gold Medals. **Paula Saad** certainly made the most of her trip. Last year Paula came home with a Gold in the 35+A, this year she made off with two Gold Medals and two National Championships. At the end of the week, Paula held the Women's 25+A and 40+A Championships. A tremendous tournament.

Jack Huczek returned to Houston looking to become only the second man to become a three-time National Champion. Jack made his way into the Finals without too many scares. Waiting there was Rocky Carson, who was also looking for his third Gold. Jack and Rocky played juniors together, won the National Doubles together last season, and have taken their place at the top of the Pro Tour. This was another classic match up, they did not disappoint the capacity crowd. Back and forth momentum jumped from one player to the other. In the end Jack claimed yet another National Championship with a narrow 11-9 victory. Jack now only needs one more to match the record of Ed Andrews. Congratulations, Jack on another taste of rare air.

Team Michigan had two other multiple medalists. **Melody Gorno** won the

Women's 35+A Championship and the bronze in the Women's 40+A. Another outstanding performance from one of our ladies.

After losing in the first round of the Men's 30+B division, **Twayne Howard** bounced back to win the Men's 25+B National Championship and the Men's 30+B Consolation Championship. This was the second National Championship for Twayne to go along with his 2003 25+C/D Gold.

Lorna Rose was Team Michigan's final National Champion. Lorna won the Women's 55+B Championship unopposed, before competing in alternate divisions.

For the record, this made the roommate combine of Saad, Gorno, and Rose a combined four Golds and one Bronze. Not bad for one set of roommates.

Team Michigan also had a number of Silver Medalists. **Dan Mullin** made his first trip to Houston and earned the Men's C Silver Medal. Dan fought hard in all of his matches, often winning in tie-breakers before finally losing 11-7 in a tie-breaker in the Finals. Any of us who got to watch Dan play were extremely proud of him throughout the week. He was a welcome addition to the Team.

Karen Green earned the Women's 40+A Silver Medal after falling to Paula Saad. Although not to Karen's usual standards, this was still a great tournament.

Sharon Huczek completed another successful trip to Houston by winning the Women's 55+ Silver Medal. This is always

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Newsletter

The Racquetball Reporter
321 Village Dr.
Lansing, MI 48911
djeasterling@earthlink.net

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THOUGHTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Twayne M. Howard
President

"Summer Sizzles, but Fall has it All." That's the phrase that jumped into my mind as I started to write this. "What the heck does it mean?" Let me elucidate.

Certainly the temperature has something to do with the first part. When summer finally did arrive, it made up for lost time. As I write this, it's a beautiful summer day in West Michigan: blasing sunshine, 96 degrees, but it feels like 109. I love it!

But that's not the only thing.

This summer has seen its share of great racquetball action. Since the last Newsletter, we've had Regionals as well as Nationals, where Team Michigan racked up an impressive record. Not only did our juniors win just about everything at the Chicago Regional, several of our Adults took home Gold as well. To cap off the season, Team Michigan also had an impressive showing at National singles and crowned several repeat and new National Champions. We will give you more detail later in the newsletter.

This summer has also seen the re-birth of Belle Isle Racquetball. This popular tournament series is now being run by Ron Barton, as well as Thelma Howard, Greg Lewerenz, and Joe Romeo. This group has done a tremendous job bringing new life to this great outdoor series. The June tournament had an unprecedented turn out, and the rest only got better.

The three wall season also added a new kid on the block. The "Can You Stand the Heat Doubles Only Championship" brought the outdoor crowd out to the St. Clair Shores to test their best. A good start for a first time event. Tom Blakeslee and Twayne Howard hope to see this event grow for years to come.

The biggest and most exciting news is that the Michigan Athletic Club in

East Lansing was awarded the Host Site for the 2006 Junior National Championships. This event will be held in late July and will host 300-400 Juniors from all across the US coming to earn a spot on the National Team. Preparations have already begun in earnest for the event, and the planners are looking for volunteers. Congratulations to the Host Committee for all of their hard work. Please feel free to contact us if you are interested in helping in any way.

In other news, the RAM Board of Directors saw some officer changes. President Twayne Howard, Secretary Sharon Huczek, and Treasurer Tom Blakeslee retain their officer positions for another year, but Jack White will replace Jack Huczek as Vice President for the 2005-06 season. My sincere thanks to Jack H. for his help and guidance over many years as Vice President, and my considerable thanks as he will continue to find time to stay on the Board, while juggling his other responsibilities. Welcome to Jack W. and my thanks to him for stepping up and taking over this demanding position. I look forward to your guidance.

I think that takes care of our "sizzling" summer. Now, how about the "Fall having it All"? Big words. What's behind it. I think you'll agree a lot. It must be stated that this is when most players think the "Real Season" begins. but now is not the time for that debate.

The RAM Board has finalized the 2005-2006 Tournament Schedule. All of your favorite stops are back, plus a couple more, and we've shaken things up just a little to make it interesting.

First, we have compressed the Fall schedule by a few weeks and extended the Spring schedule by a few weeks. We hope this will align the tournaments closer to when folks are ready to hit the courts in earnest. There is a great tournament nearly every weekend from September 30 through April 23.

(cont. on pg. 11)

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2005-2006 RAM TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

Sept 30 - Oct 2 -- Riverview Fall Brawl
Riverview Athletic Club, Grand Rapids

Oct 7-9 -- West Michigan Open Pro-Am
Michigan Athletic Club, Grand Rapids

Oct 14-16 -- Davison Athletic Club
Davison

Oct. 21-23 -- Spartan Splat
Michigan Athletic Club, East Lansing

Oct 29 -- Halloween Spooktacular
Players Athletic Club, Warren

Nov 4-6 -- Turkey Shootout
Franklin Athletic Club, Southfield

Nov 11-13 -- Racquets for Habitat
Michigan Athletic Club, East Lansing

Dec 2-4 -- **RAM STATE DOUBLES**
Location TBD

Jan 6-8 -- Omni Fitness Club
Muskegon

Jan 20-22 -- Genesys Athletic Club
Grand Blanc

Jan 27-29 -- Motor City Rollout
Courtland Athletic Club, Utica

Feb 3-5 -- Davison Athletic Club
Davison

Feb 10-12 -- Total Sports Challenge
Total Sports, Mt. Clemens

Feb 17-19 -- Capital City Challenge
Michigan Athletic Club, East Lansing

Mar 4-5 -- March Madness
Players Athletic Club, Warren

Mar 17-19 -- MAC Open
Michigan Athletic Club, Grand Rapids

Mar 31 - Apr 2 -- **RAM STATE SINGLES**
Location TBD

Apr 7-9 -- USA RACQUETBALL REGIONALS

Apr 21-23 -- South West Michigan Shootout
Bronson Athletic Club, Kalamazoo

June 21-24 -- USA RACQUETBALL JUNIOR
NATIONALS, Michigan Athletic Club
East Lansing

JOIN THE EXCITEMENT . . .

- Allan Coyle

Wow, are you ready for an exciting season of Michigan racquetball? There seems to be a tournament scheduled for almost every weekend now through the State Singles! In East Lansing alone, there are four tournaments sponsored by the Capital Area Racquetball Association (CARA); Double Vision in September; the Spartan Splat in October; Racquets for Habitat in November; and finally the Capital Challenge scheduled for February. All CARA tournaments are held at the awesome, nationally recognized, Michigan Athletic Club (MAC).

Double Vision is our first tournament dedicated to those wanting only to play doubles. This one-day Saturday tournament is open to any player wanting to enjoy the pace, strategy, and excitement of team play (*registration form enclosed*). The **Spartan Splat** is a skill-based tournament along with age divisions ranging from seven to well actually, we don't have an upper age limit! **Racquets for Habitat** is another first for us, where we have partnered with **Habitat for Humanity**; a portion of the proceeds will go back to the community and also a portion supports our CARA Juniors program. Our February tournament, the **Capital Challenge**, is our original tournament, started in the spring of 2003.

We are not necessarily the new kid on the block any more, but we do represent a resurgence of racquetball in Michigan. We have learned from the pioneers of the sport (you know who you are) and have also added our own twist in hopes of making our tournaments memorable, fun, and well-organized. Last year we initiated pocket pagers, where players were "buzzed" to be ready courtside for their next match. It worked so well at the Capital Challenge that we had the novel situation of running ahead of schedule! Of course, a nagging problem that gets in the way of staying on time is players showing up at the club right at their scheduled time to play or even after, which as we all know is impossible from that point to stay on schedule. Please be courteous to all the tournament directors and your opponents, show up at the club early and report for registration a half-hour before your scheduled starting time, ok, enough whining!

After a hard day of play, CARA values a time to kick back and enjoy the comradery from the same players that you battled on the court. Interest in our Saturday evening, "Thank You Pizza Party" continues to grow; last winter we had over forty players come and enjoy friends, food and drink.

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JUNIOR'S CORNER . .

MICHIGAN SET TO HOST THE JUNIOR NATIONALS IN 2006

- Dan Mullin, Executive Chair

After a long year of planning and organizing, a coalition of tournament directors from across the state, the Michigan Athletic Club, the Racquetball Association of Michigan, and the Greater Lansing Convention and Visitors Bureau submitted the winning bid to bring the USAR National Junior Racquetball tournament to Michigan in 2006!

To be held June 21-24, 2006 at the Michigan Athletic Club in East Lansing, the event is expected to bring over 300 players and their families from across the USA to experience our Great Lakes hospitality. On July 20, 2005, the coalition met for the first time after winning the bid to set into motion the committees that will be needed to make the 2006 tournament the hallmark on which other events will be judged!

You always hear, "Get 'em while they're young!" And it's true; this is a grand opportunity for promoting, and expanding the sport of racquetball in Michigan! Just think of the excitement building toward the Junior Nationals and the chance for Michigan's juniors to play the top players from across the country. Here is a rare opportunity to watch the stars of tomorrow right in your own backyard. A chance to build interest in your players and carry the excitement for years to come!

Though the committees have been formed, we are still eager to include anyone interested to help make this event a spectacular success. We are looking for fundraisers, or ideas for fundraising, people to organize family events for when the kids are not on the court, and did I mention FUNDRAISING. Just to scratch the surface, we have a banquet to put on, shuttle service

to and from the hotels and banquet site, hospitality during the tournament, and tickets to purchase for our minor league Lugnugs evening at Oldsmobile Park. We need SPONSORS for all events willing to step up to the plates so we can hit the ball out of the park!

If you are interested in working on any of the committees, please contact the committee chairpersons listed below:

Executive Committee

Dan Mullin
mullindan@gmail.com
517-881-8584

Fundraising

Steve Gruber
AGASON@aol.com

Public Relations

Ruth Beier
Rbeier@mea.org

Twayne Howard
howardt@rightplace.org

Hospitality/Banquet

Sandy White
swhite@amerisure.com

Activities

Dan Mullin
mullind@gmail.com

Team Michigan

Karen Green
greenk55@att.net

Don Schopieray
dschopieray@newtechnologies.com
don113x@comcast.net

Registration/Tournament Desk

Ruth Beier
Rbeier@mea.org

Pro Involvement

Don Schopieray
dschopieray@newtechnologies.com
don113x@comcast.net

Please volunteer, be a sponsor, or even donate product or services. Remember it's for the kids; help us make this an unforgettable event. With your support, we can make this tournament one to be remembered both on and off the court!

TEAM MICHIGAN WELCOMES 2006 JUNIOR NATIONAL TOURNAMENT

- Karen Green

We are very excited to announce the Junior National Championships are coming to Michigan June 21-25, 2006! The tournament will be held at the Michigan Athletic Club in East Lansing, Michigan. Players of all ability levels, ages 6-19 may participate. This tournament has not been held in Michigan since 1984.

We are hopeful that Michigan players will be well represented in the tournament. An informational parent meeting to talk about the Junior Nationals will be held at Davison Athletic Club on October 15, 2005 from 6:00-7:00 pm. Juniors participating in the tournament at Davison that day will play their matches and the meeting will begin after play is completed at 6:00 pm.

Don Schopieray will be sending out a separate mailing to parents of junior players asking them to provide an email address where we can contact you to keep you informed throughout the year.

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TEAM MICHIGAN WELCOMES THE JUNIOR NATIONALS

(cont. from pg. 4)

We hope to make the entire 2005-2006 season memorable for our juniors with culminating event being the Junior National Championships. So mark your calendars now for June 21-24, 2006. Team Michigan players will also have a special team gathering for food and fun on June 20, 2006, the night before play begins. We hope to "fire-up" all Michigan players for this event.

If you need additional information, please contact either Karen Green or Don Schopieray. (Note: email addresses for Karen and Don are found in the Junior National article on the Junior Corner, page 4.)

2005 USAR NATIONALS IN HOUSTON

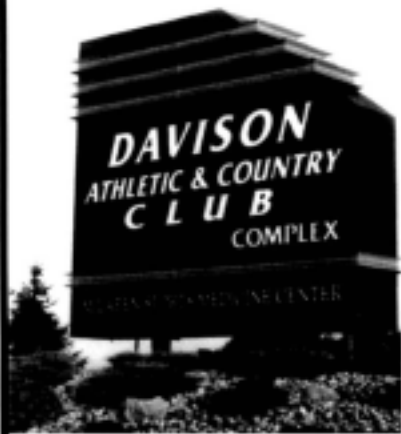
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a tough division. It just shows what a great and accomplished player she is.

The Women's 35+ Open Bronze went to **Anthnita Dickerson**. This division is filled with former Pros, and any medal is a huge feat.

Tom Blakeslee, Alex Brown, Tim Couch, and **Chuck Van Hoose** also competed representing Team Michigan.

Another great Nationals for Team Michigan. Hopefully, some more of you will make the trip next year. Hope to see you there!



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The Racquetball Reporter is published quarterly throughout the year - August, November, February, and May. Items to be included in the Racquetball Reporter for the **2005-06** year must be submitted by the following dates:

August 3, 2005	January 5, 2006
October 4, 2005	April 20, 2006

Advertisement material is subject to approval by the RAM Board of Directors. The prices for advertisement material are:

\$400 - Full page ad to run in all four issues (7"w x 9.5"h)

\$250 - Half page ad to run in all four issues (7"w x 4.75"h)
 \$150 - Quarter page ad to run in all four issues (3.5"w x 4.75"h)
 \$100 - Club listing for all four issues (3"w x 2"h)

All advertisements must be submitted in camera ready format in the appropriate size. E-mailed graphics can be accepted in either a **.TIFF** or **.JPG** format. All advertisements will be in black and white for all issues, except the May issue which will be in full color. Payment must accompany submission of all advertisement material. Information may be mailed to The Racquetball Reporter, 321 Village Dr., Lansing, MI 48911 or sent electronically to djeasterling@earthlink.net.



Racquetball Association of Michigan

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USAR ELITE RACQUETBALL TRAINING CAMP

- Ed Arias

What's it like to train like a National Champion or even a Pro? To be coached and instructed in every facet of racquetball to make you the best player you can become? To find out things about yourself you never knew about or to do things you couldn't even imagine doing?

This is what the USAR Elite Racquetball Training Camp is all about. At one time, the camp was reserved for the top athletes in the country but recently has opened up to the general racquetball community, as long as you compete at the Regional level. Still, this camp is not one to take lightly. There aren't any favors; no one is going to hold your hand because you're tired or go easy on you because you're a little girl or an old man or even a coach! The camp environment is based on some simple rules. You will receive the best racquetball training and instruction and you just have to pay attention, don't lose your notebook and don't be late. If you fail to follow any of these simple rules, you will do some type of physical penance (push-ups, wall sits, etc).

This summer, the camp was from July 17-23. The camp was originally the creation and dream of Jim Hiser as a place to gather the best coaches, trainers, and athletes in one of the best locations, the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs (OTC/CO). Since 1984, the camp has been run by Jim Winterton, who each year contracts other top coaches and pro players to assist him. Dr. Hiser still leads the calisthenics each morning and the simulated match. This year, Coaches Dennis Fisher and Jo Shattuck were joined by IRT Pros Shane Vanderson and Josh Tucker, and WPRO Pro Rhonda Rajsich. Local legend, Eddie Meredith was also on hand to help out and to keep the coach/instructor to student ratio to a minimum.

The cost of the camp was \$475 for US athletes and \$675 for interna-

tional athletes. This pays for room and board at the OTC and the week of coaching/instruction. That is approximately \$10/hour for some of the best coaching and training in an Olympic atmosphere. Of course, you have to get to the camp so that may cost another \$200-\$500 but still, if you are a serious player, this is the best racquetball deal you will ever have the pleasure to participate in.

I heard about the camp ten years ago and have always wanted to come, but never had the right opportunity until this summer, when I brought my 13 year old son, Lucas. This was a very big thrill for me as I have been teaching him the sport since he was 5. Although I am an AmPRO Certified Pro Level Instructor and Level II Coach, I realized that this camp could give him the confidence and knowledge that he needs to go to the next level. And since we have returned from the camp, I've had several comments from other club players that they see something different about him.

Aside from the coaching staff, training program and location of the camp; there is something else that really adds to the entire experience and that is that players come from all over the world. In no other racquetball experience, aside from national or international competitions will you get to learn and compete with 40 such diverse players. There were players from every part of the US as well as from Puerto Rico, Mexico, Costa Rica and Guatemala and the ages of the players were spread out uniformly from 13 to 62.

There players were divided into six teams of 6-7 players. Each team had to come up with a team name and was lead by one of the coaches. There was Team Bring It, the Juniors, the Krispy Kremes, and others I can't remember. This led to a great sense of spirit and camaraderie among and between all the participants. It also made for a lot of fun while trying to endure the hardest week of racquetball I have

ever experienced in my 34 years of playing.

So what was the camp actually like? Lucas and I arrived early on Sunday so we'd have time to settle in before the evening meeting. The meeting was one of introductions, as all the coaches and the campers introduced themselves.

The over theme was "why am here?" Many were there of course to improve various facets of their game ... "I want a better forehand/backhand, "I want a better serve/receiving game", etc. Personally, my forehand had been flat lately so I wanted to get some help on that but I really went to get the latest on training techniques for racquetball. I'd gone through some of it during the Level II Coaching Camp, but I wanted to live it, to really feel it. We all met, split into teams and talked a bit. Some of the campers had been there before and were asked by the coaches to express their previous experiences and why they were back. Most didn't like the morning runs, some particularly pointed out their dislike for the simulated match but they would all come back because of the high level of instruction and coaching and to see how they had progressed from the previous year.

The real camp began the next morning. By 6:45 am, we were on an OTC bus and driving out to a nearby lake. Training began with a mile run around the lake. Then we took a short water break and it was on to the tennis courts for 30 minutes of stretching and calisthenics. The altitude affected my breathing while running a little but so far so good... suddenly I enjoyed the stretching. Then we split into 4 stations around the courts for a variety of exercise drills; shuffle/sprint drills, ladder/footwork drills, lunges/wall sits, and mountain climbers/burpees. We spent only three minutes at each of the station but it seemed like forever. By the end of the drill stations, I was raining sweat. Each day these

(cont. on pg. 9)

JOIN THE EXCITEMENT

(cont. from pg. 3)

Did you know that Lansing is 90 minutes from 90% of the Michigan's population? I know I can drive from Lansing to most Michigan tournaments in just over an hour. Yet, we make travelling to our tournaments even more inviting by suggesting you consider staying at our preferred host hotel, when available, TownPlace Suites by Marriott which is adjacent to the MAC. Once again (Friday and/or Saturday evening) during the tournaments, Racquets for Habitat in November, and the Capital Challenge in February, TownPlace Suites is offering us room rates of \$59 for a suite, and \$89 for a double, hard to beat the value and the convenience.

"MexiMelt Dan" and I are not interested in playing at just our own tournaments. Frequently, you will see us at tournaments around the state, so say hello! Offer suggestions and tell us how we can continue to improve; your comments are truly appreciated.

How can anyone talk about the upcoming season of Michigan excitement without mentioning Junior Nationals coming to the state June 21-24, 2006 at the MAC in East Lansing! CARA is proud to be a part of the coalition of volunteers including prominent racquetball players, tournament directors, and RAM Board members that are organizing the event, and we can't think of a better climax to the incredible 2005-2006 tournament season than having the Junior Nationals in Michigan! If you would like to be involved with this great opportunity, please contact myself or Dan at cararball@gmail.com (see related article, "Junior Nationals 2006, on Page 4 for further details).

See you at the tournaments,
Allan and Dan
CARA Co-Directors

USA RACQUETBALL'S NEW RANKING SYSTEM

- Twayne M. Howard

As I often joke, "the bane of my existence" as a member of Board has been the rankings. This is because for years, the system hasn't worked to meet the needs of the players. This is all about to change.

For several years we have heard about the new USA Racquetball ranking system. We have also gotten periodic updates that implementation was going slower than originally hoped for. But perhaps, I've gotten ahead of the story. First, the old system.

The old system was based on points. You win a tournament, you get points. You win another, you get more points. I'm going to pick on my buddy Joel Bonnett. If I played 15 tournaments a year, and made it to the semi's in Open at each one (a guy can dream can't he), I would accumulate a lot of points for showing up and doing "okay". Now, if Joel showed up just at the 16th tournament, he would club me (Joel is that way). He would get points for winning. At the end of the year, I would be ranked above Joel because I played far more tournaments, even though Joel is a far better player. Not exactly fair, right?

The new system will help fix that over time. The new system is based on direct results. After the same fifteen tournaments, I would be fourth in the rankings, assuming the same 3 guys finished 1st, 2nd, and 3rd. When Joel defeated me in the 16th tournament, he would jump ahead of me in the rankings to reflect the beating I took. Joel would now be ranked 4th, and I would slip to 5th. Far more fair.

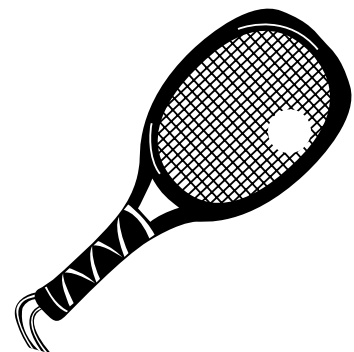
The good news is that the new ranking system is up and operational, and you can see the results on the USAR web page. The bad news is that it will take quite some time for enough history to be input for the rankings to be relevant. For example, as of August 5, 2005, I hap-

pen to be ranked #12 in the state of Michigan and Joel Bonnett is ranked #19. And we all know that is not accurate. Preference appears to have been given to the first results entered into the system which were from National events.

As more events are entered, the rankings will become more relevant. USAR is currently entering calendar year 2005 tournaments. RAM will be entering data from the Fall 2004 tournaments as time allows. The more data, the better. This is what I will call the long term solution.

The short term solution comes in the person of our very own **Jay Kargula**. Jay has volunteered to help create an interim solution for Michigan rankings. We are working out the mechanics, but basically, we are going to use a points-based system, like the old system, to come up with interim rankings over the next few years. This way we can maintain a current ranking system within the state while the USAR works in to shape.

Hopefully, this will shed some light on the situation. It may seem otherwise, but there is progress. I have been to several discussions and demonstrations of the new system and I am very excited about the prospects. As always, feel free to contact me for further information.



USAR ELITE CAMP

(cont. from pg. 7)

varied a little but just as intense. There was no slacking off or everyone would do more.

Since this was the first day, it was an easy morning. The other mornings we ran twice around the lake before the calisthenics and station drills, except for Thursday when we did the simulated match.

Then it was on the bus heading back to the OTC for some breakfast. Each morning, I would push myself as hard as I could go and I'd be drained. It wasn't like a military camp, but the coaches pushed you as hard as you wanted. If someone pushed too hard, the coaches pulled them back until they recovered.

After breakfast and a shower we were back on the bus arriving at the Lynmar Racquet Club around 10:00 am. Next we were videotaped playing singles in groups of three, which was reviewed by a coach. It's always interesting to see the simple mistakes we all make during play. Lunch at the club was followed by an afternoon lecture and open play to work on what we'd learned. Then it was back to the OTC for dinner and an evening lecture (goal setting, video analysis, setting up a training schedule) with lights out by 10 pm.

That was a typical day. Instead of videotaping, subsequent days at Lynmar included 30-45 minutes of on-the-court talks covering forehand, backhand, drive serve, lobs/specialty serves, service return, and doubles. Other specialty lectures included nutrition for competition, functional weight training, meditation, and visualization. Thursday afternoon was a chance for every player to go over everything again

(remedial training) and get some final instruction. While Friday started out with the same training, the afternoon was reserved for a singles and doubles tournament. Lots of fun as we (especially the geezerjocks) were banged up a bit. That evening various awards were distributed to campers and coaches, and each camper and coach addressed everyone and put their experience into words and how we had come closer to achieving the goals we identified on the first night. I believe the common theme was we were all coming back next year. That evening everyone went out to a local eatery and had a great party to finish a great week. The next morning was bittersweet . . . I wanted to stay but my body said it was time to heal. One young camper expressed how he would love to live there for months as a member of the U.S. Olympic Racquetball Team.

Aside from all the instruction and good times we had, we each also received a CD which included video analysis of our play from Day 1, videos of various footwork drills, and a myriad of articles on nutrition, mental preparation, and setting up a personalized training schedule. We also received a camp t-shirt, Coach Winterton's new DVD and book, featuring Tim Doyle and Cheryl Gudinas, and a demo DVD from a sports training company.

Well, that was the essence of the week long USAR Elite Racquetball Training Camp, except for one other little event, the simulated match. The simulated match was by far the hardest part of the camp. I think I'll leave it as a mystery, perhaps some of you will make it out to OTC next year and find out about it. As for Lucas and I, when the camp was over and we were homeward bound, he said something to me that made me smile, "So, we're coming back next year. . . right?"

THE NEW AND IMPROVED WEB SITE

- Randy Pagels

Greetings from the webmaster! The RAM website has recently undergone significant changes. Check it out at www.michiganracquetball.net. To better serve the members, the following web enhancements include:

Photo Albums - over 100 pictures already uploaded. Email me, or even submit your OWN photos to contribute to the site.

Media - Download matches, instructional videos, pointers, and tips! Let us know what you would like to see.

Forums - Need help with your form? Not sure how to swing properly, follow through or serve? Need a place just to chill sometimes? Well, you're in luck.

Newsletters - Become a member to receive newsletters. Information on "Hey, how's it going? Don't forget the tournaments coming up". You'll never miss an important event or any racquetball news again.

Documents - We now can share and organize documents, sign up sheets, schedules, and just about everything that can be read.

Opinion Polls - We are waiting for you to vote on your favorite topics. We will use this area to create easy to complete quick surveys for registered users. This will give us a quick snapshot overview on the questions asked and give us results in a bar chart showing the number of individual responses.

News Feeds - RSS News Feeds will provide you with up to date information on a wide range of topics like headline news, weather and sporting events.

That and much more is waiting for you on michiganracquetball.net. So stop by and register today to become a member of the NEW and IMPROVED premier Michigan racquetball portal, your RAM website. See you at the next event!

Nominations for the Michigan Racquetball Hall of Fame for the 2005-06 Year

- Jim Easterling

The Michigan Racquetball Hall of Fame developed in 1984 by the Racquetball Association of Michigan honors those recipients who demonstrate outstanding achievement, leadership, or contribution to the sport of racquetball in the state of Michigan. The award is based upon **YEARS OF CONSISTENT EXCELLENCE** in one or more of the following areas:

ABILITY

Through demonstration of exceptional playing skill in state, regional and/or national tournament competition.

LEADERSHIP

Through generous giving of time and talent for the advancement of

racquetball in the state of Michigan by running tournaments, conducting leagues, lessons, serving on the state racquetball association board or other racquetball activities.

Contribution

Through the generous support, including money, facilities, or products for the advancement of racquetball in the state of Michigan.

If you know someone who qualifies (see the Hall of Fame Criteria found on the RAM home page at www.michiganracquetball.net) that you would like to see in the Hall of Fame, please submit a letter with their full name, address, phone number (including area code) and a brief description of why you think that person deserves to be in the Michigan Racquetball Hall of Fame to:

Hall of Fame Inductee
321 Village Dr.
Lansing, MI 48911-3760

Also, include your name, address and phone number (both day and evening) in case we have to contact you for additional information. The **DEADLINE** for nominations for the Hall of Fame for the 2005-2006 year is **October 21, 2005**.

If you have further questions on the Hall of Fame process, contact Jim Easterling at (517) 887-0459.

Who will join Tom Blakeslee inducted in 2004 and Ken Bonnett inducted in 2005 as the newest member of the Michigan's Racquetball Hall of Fame. Nominate your choice today.

Members of the Michigan Racquetball Hall of Fame committee include: Jim Easterling, David Brower, Irene Ackerman-Chmura, William Gottlieb, Lynn Hahn and Jim Woolcock.



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Duane Russell Medals at Senior Tourneys

Duane Russell, of Lansing, won a silver medal in the doubles and a bronze medal in the singles at the National Masters International Championships held July 12-16 at the Hall of Fame Fitness Center in Canton, Ohio. Duane played in the 75+ division. For his doubles victory Duane partnered with Marvin Schinagle of Beachwood, Ohio.

Duane, who is 79, also won the silver medal in the Men's 75+ singles at the Senior Olympics held on June 3-18 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

When asked about the victories, Duane said "The divisions go in five year increments and when I was 75, I played five tournaments and won them all. I turn 80 in June, so I'll be the young kid on the block for the 80+ division at next year's tournaments and I'm hoping to do the same."

Thoughts from the Prez

(cont. from pg. 2)

The past two years, the schedule has started with several West and Central Michigan Tournaments back-to-back-to-back. This year we moved a Davison tournament so that it is the third event on the schedule, so that things are broken up a bit. Kalamazoo has moved to late April to stretch out the season. We are also going to give a few extra weeks around New Years to allow people to recover. We think this will be a much better alignment of the schedule and we hope it works for everyone.

The New and Improved Fall schedule begins September 30 with the third Fall Brawl Racquetball Round Robin event in Grand Rapids. This event has been a "sleeper" since its inception offering lots of play and hospitality and is a great way to jump back into the indoor season.

The next weekend is the return of the West Michigan Open. This year, we will again welcome the Pros back

to Michigan. This year with more prize money, a bigger Pro Draw, and a better date, we hope to have well over 150 players out to play. Come on out and see if Jack Huczek can defend his title.

October 14-16 is the first of two events at the Davison Athletic Club. A great new tournament last year, let's see if Don Schopieray and Randy Minto can outdo even themselves. A first class facility, I know I am thrilled to have them back in the regular rotation.

October 21-23 is the first of several events at the East Lansing Junior MAC. You already heard about the Junior Nationals, but this will be the first event for little-ole-us. Dan Mullin, Allan Coyle and the gang will do their usual great job at this world class facility. Their next event is November 11-13 as they take over the "Benefits Tournament."

October 29 sees the return of the Annual Halloween Spooktacular event at Players. Diana Easthope and her staff do a great job with this round robin event. Again, lots of great play to enjoy, and hopefully, it's not as scary as the Goblins that are sure to visit.

Karen Green and her staff at Franklin Athletic Club will host the Turkey Shootout November 4-6. One of the nicer clubs on the schedule, Franklin will show off her new facelift for your pleasure. Should be a great weekend.

The Fall ends with the State Doubles the weekend of December 2-4. This location is being finalized by the Board, but you can mark the date in your calendar now. Expect the same great competition.

So what do you think. Sounds like a great Fall, and I can't wait to see how it unfolds. Only a few more weeks and it will be here. See you all on the courts. Enjoy!

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