

# RACQUETBALL



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•Ruiz/Tisinger win their 4th title together  
•Carson/Diaz win their 1st title together

**U.S. National High Schools Recap**  
•Parkway West Wins Overall Team Title

**Where Are They Now?**  
•Featuring Andy Roberts



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U.S. Racquetball Association  
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# USA RACQUETBALL NATIONAL SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIPS



US TEAM  
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Can someone take our picture? All phones were on hand as players claimed their medals at the USA Racquetball National High School Championships presented by Penn.  
Photo by Gallemore Photography

#### ON THE COVER

2017 U.S. National Doubles Team Qualifying Division Champions Aimee Ruiz/ Janel Tisinger win their 4th title. Photo by Roby Partovich. Insert: Rocky Carson/Jose Diaz team up for the first time together to be crowned Men's U.S. Team Qualifying Doubles Champions. Photo by Jonathan Clay.

#### USA RACQUETBALL STAFF

**Jason Thoerner**

Executive Director

[jthoerner@usaracquetball.com](mailto:jthoerner@usaracquetball.com)

**Renée Gundloff**

Membership Manager

[rgundloff@usaracquetball.com](mailto:rgundloff@usaracquetball.com)

**Nick Irvine**

Programming Manager

[nirvine@usaracquetball.com](mailto:nirvine@usaracquetball.com)

**Peggin Tellez**

Sport Development Manager

[peggin@usaracquetball.com](mailto:peggin@usaracquetball.com)

**Barb Pyle**

Accounting Assistant

[bpyle@usaracquetball.com](mailto:bpyle@usaracquetball.com)

#### Submissions

Racquetball Magazine welcomes submissions from our members and readers. If you have an idea for an article, propose it by email to: [magazine@usaracquetball.com](mailto:magazine@usaracquetball.com). All submissions are subject to editing.

#### Editorial Consultant

Aimee Ruiz | ABR Communications  
[abrcommunications@gmail.com](mailto:abrcommunications@gmail.com)

#### Publisher

USA Racquetball  
2812 West Colorado Ave. Suite 200  
Colorado Springs, CO 80904-2444  
(719) 635-5396 | [USARacquetball.com](http://USARacquetball.com)

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## USA RACQUETBALL MISSION STATEMENT

*USA Racquetball, recognized by the United States Olympic Committee as the National Governing Body for the sport, is committed to our members and the growth of racquetball from recreational play to international competition.*

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## NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS & TEAM QUALIFYING

All future National Championship details remain tentative until entries are published.

### 2017 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP DATES

National Singles: May 24-28, 2017

Junior Olympics: June 21-25, 2017

### U.S. NATIONAL TEAM QUALIFYING

In an effort to help ensure that the top American racquetball players have an equal and fair opportunity to qualify for the U.S. National Team, USA Racquetball adopted changes to the qualification process beginning with the 2016-17 U.S. National Team.

While the process for qualifying for the Team as a doubles team is generally the same, the singles selection procedure will be determined by performance at three selection events, including:

- UnitedHealthcare US OPEN Pro Division
- U.S. Team Singles Qualifying Division at USA Racquetball National Doubles Championships
- U.S. Team Qualifying Division at USA Racquetball National Singles Championships

To learn more and for complete details, including the process to qualify for Elite Athlete Health Insurance, please visit <http://www.teamusa.org/usa-racquetball/programs/team-usa>.

### U.S. NATIONAL TEAM QUALIFYING RULE CHANGE EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1, 2016:

**ALL U.S. TEAM QUALIFYING DIVISIONS WILL BE USING THE NEW TWO SERVE RULE THAT WAS RECENTLY ADOPTED BY THE INTERNATIONAL RACQUETBALL FEDERATION (IRF).**





FROM THE  
Executive Director

By Jason Thoerner  
Executive Director  
USA Racquetball

## National Headquarters

# 2017 1st Quarter Update

**W**e are through the first quarter of 2017 and have just completed our 50th National Doubles Championships. It was great to see the energy and enthusiasm on display while everyone gave their all chasing a National title. We had a huge turnout of over 370 players from 34 states, an increase of about 50 players from 2016. USA Racquetball has committed to making our National Championships a better value for your dollar. Those who attended were treated to more items in their 50th Anniversary Player bags, more food each day, a 50th Anniversary barbecue party with the U.S. Team awards celebration, and the best doubles competition in the country.

Congratulations to our newly crowned U.S. National Team Doubles Champions, Rocky Carson/Jose Diaz and Aimee Ruiz/Janel Tisinger. Along with these great champions, we also crowned National Champions in 30 different age and skill divisions. Kudos to each of you on your accomplishments!

For those who attended, we hope you will be USA Racquetball Ambassadors \*\* and spread the word about the fun you had when you get back to your home club. Our goal is to grow this championship next year so even more people compete and enjoy the experience of the largest doubles tournament of the year!

The 30th National High School Championship held in St. Louis hosted 392 players from over 40 schools. The kids each all played their hearts out to earn points for their schools in singles, doubles, and mixed doubles divisions in the Olympic format which gave each player plenty of matches during the week. At the end, Parkway West High School (St. Louis) came out on top in the Overall Team competition. It was great to see how emotional the kids were when presented with their individual medals and how proud the coaches and parents were no matter what medals were received. We hope to see many of these athletes at the USAR Junior Olympics this summer in Stockton, California.

\*\* In order to keep growing these events, we would like you to become a USA Racquetball Ambassador in your club by signing up at [www.usaracquetball.com](http://www.usaracquetball.com). In this way, you can help spread the word and grow racquetball on the local level. We want to bring the same excitement from our National Championships to everyone in your area through our Free E-membership program. Your local club members will get the latest racquetball news, and they will receive partner discounts by signing up for this program. You will be helping grow racquetball and be entered to win monthly Ambassador prizes from our Official Partners.

# THANK YOU!

## 2016 TEAM USA CHALLENGE DONORS

### TEAM USA Challenge Benefactors - \$2,500

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Dan Whitley

# HOW WE CAN WORK TOGETHER

**H**ow awesome was National Doubles? To see such a significant increase in participation, combined with a competitive and fun week of doubles, was incredible. What a great tribute to celebrate 50 incredible years of this annual event! Congratulations to all of the division champions and medalists. It was a fun week for everyone.

I want to also extend a special “thank you” to the staff, sponsors, volunteers, hosts, and participants that made this event so successful. The subtraction of support from any one of those variables would have dramatically impacted the event. Championships like this are not possible without a great deal of assistance. USA Racquetball does not receive monetary support from the United States Olympic Committee, so membership fees, entry fees, sponsorships, and donations are vitally important. National Doubles had an “extra-special” feel this year thanks to additional sponsor dollars and increased participation.

Additionally, High School Nationals was equally impressive. This was the second largest number of entries ever for this championship event! It was so neat to see so many kids playing so much racquetball; almost everyone played in 2-3 divisions. Congratulations and thanks to all of the kids, coaches, parents, staff, and volunteers for such a fun week!

In the last issue, I encouraged readers to find a way to give back to racquetball through volunteerism. I want to suggest that we all work together to help find more sponsors and donors for USA Racquetball.

Sponsors can help grow all of our national championships. Whether it is financial support that helps offset the expenses of an event or a donation, such as a restaurant making a food contribution that reduces our costs, every bit helps!

Donations don't just have to be earmarked exclusively for national championships. There are a number of grassroots programs within racquetball that can use your support. USA Racquetball is also seeking donors (individuals or your state board) for our College Scholarship fund, U.S. Team fund, Junior/High School programming, and a General Fund.

- Graduating high school seniors and college undergraduates can apply annually for the USA Racquetball Scholarship. Funding for the program comes exclusively through donations. Continued support of the scholarship helps ensure that young players will continue to receive educational assistance from their racquetball family.
- The Team USA Challenge is a unique program that supports both the U.S. Adult and Junior National Teams. Support for this program is vital to help our athletes and coaches represent the United States in international competition. All donations to this program of \$100 or more are matched by a group of team benefactors. Help us hit our goal of raising \$25,000 for the teams!
- Grassroots programming is critical for the future of our sport. USA Racquetball has established a Junior/High School programming fund to help kick-start youth racquetball programming around the country. Help support the next wave of lifetime racquetball players!
- USA Racquetball also has a General Fund to which you can donate directly. You may either earmark your donation for a specific purpose or allow us to designate it for help in a particular area, such as the Instructor program or Collegiate racquetball.

Donations to any of these funds will help us continue to grow racquetball on all levels. Even if you cannot donate, perhaps you can help us connect with sponsors and possible donors in your personal network who can contribute to our sport. Please note that all donations are tax deductible -- USA Racquetball is a 501(c)3 organization.

Everyone can help! Thank you!

# THANK YOU!

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WITH YOUR SUPPORT, WE CAN RAISE MORE THAN **\$25,000** FOR THE TEAMS!

**S**upport the U.S. Adult and Junior National Teams with a tax-deductible contribution today. Your support is vital to the players and coaches as they prepare to represent the United States in international competition. Funds are primarily used for travel expenses, entry fees, and training.

Donations of \$100 or more, made in 2017 to the TEAM USA CHALLENGE, *will be doubled* by the group of generous Team Benefactors at right, who have each pledged up to \$2,500 to support the cause. With your support, the USA Racquetball family can raise more than \$25,000 for your U.S. National Teams!

## TEAM USA CHALLENGE BENEFACTORS

Usher Barnoff • Rick Betts • Cheryl Kirk & Kit Lawson •  
Michael Lippitt • Chris Poucher • Jason Thoerner

*For the first time under the TEAM USA CHALLENGE, donations will be used to support direct travel costs of U.S. Junior and Adult National Team Members.*

*To become a benefactor for the 2017 Team USA Challenge, please contact USA Racquetball at 719-635-5396, ext. 129.*

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# New Champions Crowned AT HIGH SCHOOL NATIONALS



By Jason Thoerner

Photos By Gallemore Photography

The 30th Annual USA Racquetball National High School Championships presented by Penn were held in St. Louis, Missouri, March 1-5. Over 40 schools from 13 states were represented by 392 players playing their hearts out to earn points for their individual schools. This event was hosted by Missouri Athletic Club and Vetta Racquet Sports Concord which showed the players championship level hospitality by going above and beyond for the players and tournament staff. This is no easy task as about 400 players with coaches and parents take over these facilities for up to 16 hours a day over the course of a week. A huge “thank you” goes out to all of the staff members who went above and beyond to make this a great week for the players.

This Championship emphasizes team play, and players are slotted into divisions based upon their rankings at their schools in singles and doubles. In singles, each team can roster a player in #1 through #6 divisions, and in doubles they can roster one team in divisions #1 through #3. The event is run in Olympic format to ensure that each player gets to play at least three matches in their respective divisions. Each player starts out in the Gold section of his/her division but drops down to Red, White, or Blue based on which round they lost. Medals and team points are given out in each of these divisions so each round advanced means a lot to the team totals. It was great to see someone who earned a medal in the Red division take as much pride in that accomplishment as the player who earned a medal in the Gold division. Parents and coaches beamed with pride as players received their medals and had the opportunity to get their pictures taken in front of the championship banner.

## The Main Events

The Girls #1 Gold division was highlighted by several current and former U.S. Junior National Team members as the top seeds. Hollie Scott from Lynden Christian High School in Washington state came in as the #1 seed and proved throughout the tournament that she deserved that spot; she moved into the semifinals easily. Waiting for her in the semifinals was upset-minded Elyse Duffie from Parkway West High School who had defeated the #4 seed Annie Roberts from Barlow High School in a close 15-10, 8-15, 11-9 quarterfinal match. Hollie used a great mix of serves to keep Elyse off balance to win her semifinal 15-11, 15-6. On the other side of the draw, #2 seeded Kaitlyn Boyle from Beaverton, Oregon, met the #3 seeded Briana Jacquet from Living Waters Christian Academy in Arizona. Briana came out dominating game number one of the semifinal with a serving exhibition. Kaitlyn regrouped in game two to keep it close but eventually lost the match 15-2, 15-13. In the final, Hollie continued her serving dominance. Briana never looked comfortable on the stadium court, succumbing 15-6, 15-2. Congratulations to Hollie Scott on her gold medal performance and appointment to the 2017 Junior National Team!

The Boys #1 Gold division also had a deep field of high level players gunning for the top-seeded Dane Elkins from Palisades Charter



Overall Team Champions:  
Parkway West High School



Above: Boys Singles Action  
Below: Triple Gold Winner in Boys #1 Singles, Boys Doubles, and Mixed: Dane Elkins with his coach, Cliff Swain





High School (California). Dane received a scare in the quarterfinals from local John Dowell of Kirkwood High School but pulled out the tiebreaker to move on to the semifinals, 15-6, 13-15, 11-4. Seeded in the #4 spot, Mitchell Turner had his hands full as well in the quarterfinals against #5 seeded Brian Barberis from McKinney North High School (Texas). This match had a packed house watching on the stadium court as the two players went back and forth right down to the wire in the tiebreaker. Mitchell finally closed out the match, 15-14, 12-15, 11-9. In the semifinal, Dane never let up on Mitchell who seemed to have suffered a back injury in the quarterfinals and could not mount much of an offense against Dane's power. Dane moved into the final with scores of 15-5, 15-9. On the other side of the draw, #2 seeded Micah Farmer from International Leadership of Texas was defeated in the quarterfinals by local Chris Schulze from St. Louis University High School by scores of 15-13, 15-10. Chris met #3 seeded Cayden Akins from Timber Creek High School (Texas) who survived a scare of his own in the quarterfinals against Lucas Shoemaker of Bettendorf High School (Iowa), 15-7, 10-15, 11-4. Cayden squeaked out two hard-fought games, 15-11, 15-12, against Chris to advance to the Final. In the Final it was all Dane as Cayden couldn't find an answer to the powerful serve-and-return game he faced. Congratulations to Dane for not only winning the Boys #1 Singles but also the Boys #1 Doubles with partner Jared Anwar and the Mixed #1 Doubles with partner Atossa Rejaei. Winning all three divisions has only been accomplished one other time in the 30-year history of this Championship, by Taylor Knoth in 2009. Dane has also been appointed to the 2017 US Junior National Team for winning the Boys #1 Gold!

#### Overall Results

After almost 1,200 matches were played, the Boys, Girls, and Overall Team Champions were announced. Congratulations to Parkway West High School of St. Louis, Missouri, for winning the prestigious Overall Team Championship. They beat out a very strong second place team from Sprague High School of Salem, Oregon, by 1,534 points. In the Boys Team competition, St. Louis University High School (St. Louis) took home the title by 1,025 points over Sprague High School. The Girls Team competition came down to a mere 766 points separating eventual champion, Parkway West High School over Cor Jesu Academy (St. Louis).



Above: Hollie Scott - Girls #1 Singles Gold Medalist  
Center: High School Coach of the Year Mike Williams (Parkway West) with Jason Sauer  
Bottom: The kids enjoying watching the matches around the show court



# 2017 NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Missouri Athletic Club & Vetta Racquet Sports Concord, St. Louis, Missouri • March 1-5

## TEAM COMPETITION

### Overall

1. Parkway West HS, MO (5,691)
2. Sprague HS, OR (4,517)
3. Lindbergh HS, MO (3,491)
4. Kirkwood HS, MO (2,338)
5. Southridge HS, OR (2,177)
6. Beaverton HS, OR (1,935)
7. Sunset HS, OR (1,587)
8. Palisades Charter, CA (1,534)
9. Lafayette HS, MO (1,290)
10. Sam Barlow HS, OR (904)

### Boys

1. St. Louis University HS, MO (3,499)
2. Sprague HS, OR (2,474)
3. Parkway West HS, MO (2,055)
4. Lindbergh HS, MO (1,490)
5. Sunset HS, OR (1,098)
6. Palisades Charter HS, CA (1,009)
7. St. John Vianney HS, MO (945)
8. Kirkwood HS, MO (938)
9. Lafayette HS, MO (554)
10. Wayzata HS, MN (544)

### Girls

1. Parkway West HS, MO (2,899)
2. Cor Jesu Academy, MO (2,133)
3. Lindbergh HS, MO (1,601)
4. Southridge HS, OR (1,493)
5. Beaverton HS, OR (1,434)
6. Sprague HS, OR (1,257)
7. Notre Dame HS, MO (1,192)
8. Kirkwood HS, MO (1,037)
9. Nerinx Hall, MO (818)
10. Lafayette HS, MO (683)

## BOYS SINGLES

### Champion:

- #1 Dane Elkins
- #2 Mark Duffie
- #3 Joshua Nelson
- #4 Jacob Sullivan
- #5 Matthew Hayes
- #6 Adam Hanson

### Runner Up:

- Cayden Akins
- James Storgion
- Carlos Ayala
- Zach Layton
- Jacob Scheuble
- Steven Zak

## BOYS DOUBLES

### Champion:

- #1 Dane Elkins/Jared Anwar
- #2 Hayden Bridgeman/Joshua Nelson
- #3 Adam Hanson/Matthew Hayes

### Runner Up:

- Mitchell Turner/Nathan Buring
- Carlos Ayala/Jacob Sullivan
- Carson Smith/Jason Sauer

## GIRLS SINGLES

### Champion:

- #1 Hollie Scott
- #2 Katy Moran
- #3 Amber Hayes
- #4 Erin Slutzky
- #5 Kristen Eads
- #6 Sabrina Bolt

### Runner Up:

- Briana Jacquet
- Julia Ide
- Nicki Horn
- Maggie Porterfield
- Emily Schaper
- Natalie Bell

## GIRLS DOUBLES

### Champion:

- #1 Elyse Duffie/Katy Moran
- #2 Amber Hayes/Erin Slutzky
- #3 Bella Bertarelli/Jillian Bommarito

### Runner Up:

- Kaitlyn Boyle/Kimaia Gassner
- Asyisha Tamerhoulet/Makena Johnston
- Andrea Corkal/Megan Kiser

## MIXED DOUBLES

### Champion:

- #1 Atossa Rejaei/Dane Elkins
- #2 Daniel Barrett/Katy Moran
- #3 Erin Slutzky/Jason Sauer

### Runner Up:

- Grayson Wong/Kaitlyn Boyle
- Makena Johnston/Nathan Buring
- Amber Hayes/Blake Selm

## 2017 HIGH SCHOOL ALL AMERICANS

### Boys

Cayden Akins  
Jared Anwar  
Brian Barberis  
Lukas Bell  
Ian Bjorn  
Nathan Buring  
John Dowell  
Mark Duffie  
Dane Elkins  
Micah Farmer  
Chris Schulze  
Lucas Shoemaker  
James Storgion  
Mitchell Turner  
Ian Wolf  
Grayson Wong

### Girls

Kaitlyn Boyle  
Lindsay Briglia  
Allison Darmody  
Elyse Duffie  
Kimaia Gassner  
Julia Ide  
Briana Jacquet  
Brooke Johnson  
Katy Moran  
Kayla Rae  
Alice Reider  
Atossa Rejaei  
Annie Roberts  
Hollie Scott  
Graciana Wargo



Girls #1 Doubles Finals - Beaverton HS vs. Parkway West HS





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### RACQUETBALLERS SUPPORTING VETERANS -- MEL CLARKE OPEN

Parkpoint Club in Santa Rosa, California, once again hosted their annual Mel Clarke Open in early November. This event, which has become a local tradition, is an opportunity to honor the memory of their friend Mel and his military service by raising funds for the Military Racquetball Federation and its Racquetball Rehabilitation Clinics. The Clarke family plays a huge part in this tournament every year; players were pleased to see Nancy Clarke and her children Marcus and Kathie in attendance. Nancy also donated the breakfast and organized a raffle and silent auction to raise additional funds.

Players numbering 32 participated in a round robin format, and spectators were treated to some high level racquetball. After a day of spirited competition, brothers Brian and Scott Ferrell won the final in a tiebreaker against Scott Steffen and Steve Wattz.

Parkpoint Club graciously donated lunch and dinner for the players, and the result of this great day of racquetball was a donation of \$2,000 to the Military Racquetball Federation.

The MRF is forever grateful to the efforts of Barry Lynes and the Clarke family for their continued support. What a great way to honor Mel for his service and his love of racquetball. We know he is very proud of all of you!

### MULTNOMAH ATHLETIC CLUB HOSTS "LIVE LIKE JOHN" FUNDRAISER

The third annual John Pelham Memorial racquetball tournament was held December 3, 2016, at the Multnomah Athletic Club in Portland, Oregon. This is an annual event to pay our respects to our fallen brother-in-arms, and the event has sold out completely with over 110 entrants, up from 85 last year. Specialist John Alexander Pelham, 22, was killed by enemy gunfire on February 12, 2014, while serving in Kapisa Province, Afghanistan. He was there on his second tour of duty with the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group - the Green Berets.

John was a big personality and a gifted athlete who made friends easily. Two years ago, his family created the Live Like John memorial nonprofit, dedicated to sharing John's legacy and supporting causes he loved. Money raised from the event will benefit the Military Racquetball Federation, Green Beret Foundation, and Oregon Youth Challenge Program in Bend, an Oregon National Guard program for at-risk teens. In addition, a new tradition called Give Like John was started where players donated used racquets, eyewear, bags, etc. These products were distributed to Oregon High School & Junior players learning the sport.



Top: Participants from the Live Like John Fundraiser. Photo By KS Photography  
Middle: Participants from the Mel Clarke Open. Photo By Barry Lynes and Nancy Clarke  
Bottom: Cake from the Mel Clarke Open. Photo By Barry Lynes and Nancy Clarke





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# Former MLB Pitcher Jeremy Accardo

## Plays Lifelong Sport: *Racquetball*

By David Zingler

**W**hen you are a professional athlete, there is no blueprint for retirement. Young men, typically in their early 30s, are forced to find a new direction and purpose for their lives. And, unless you are a superstar like David Ortiz or Derek Jeter, it's forced upon you. The games end, the cheering stops.

Former Major League Baseball (MLB) pitcher Jeremy Accardo found solace in racquetball, using the sport as an outlet for his natural competitive drive. "The biggest challenge for me was that when you are used to doing something so competitive for over 162 days out of the year, it's hard to fill that gap," he said of the void created by retirement. "That is where guys usually start playing basketball, but I play racquetball and golf when my schedule allows. Even when I was playing, I still played (racquetball) almost every day in the off-season. It kept me in shape and I just really enjoyed doing it."

A right-handed reliever, Accardo appeared in 262 games over eight major league seasons from 2005-2012, with San Francisco, Toronto, Baltimore, Cleveland, and Oakland. In 2007 with the Blue Jays, he racked up 30 saves with a stellar 2.14 earned run average (ERA). After spending the 2014 season in the independent Atlantic League, he hung up his cleats for good.

"Looking back, I would have to say the thing that stands out the most would be the friends I've made and the places I have been able to travel," Accardo reflected. "Almost every (former) player misses the locker room atmosphere and the camaraderie that goes along with it. As far as on the field, there are too many to

mention -- from facing guys that I grew up watching as well as playing with some of them. Also, the on-field milestones mixed with family being at games and watching me play are some things that stand out the most."

Today, Accardo has redirected his passion for baseball into fitness and education with an eye toward coaching the game he loves. The Arizona



Photos Courtesy of Jeremy Accardo

native is currently enrolled at Illinois State University in Normal, Illinois, pursuing a Master's Degree in athletics and serving as a graduate assistant for the school's baseball team.

"When I was done [playing], I decided that I wanted to finish my degree," the 34-year-old pointed out. "I was fortunate enough to get the opportunity to coach, both for the experience and to finish what I started so long ago. It is pretty amazing how much easier school is when you are a bit older. You don't have as many distractions."

Accardo discovered racquetball as a 10-year-old in the Mesa, Arizona, area. "A friend of mine...was ranked in the state of Arizona," he explained. "After going to one of his tournaments, I began to start playing with friends at the gym up the road. There were about four of us who would go to the gym together, and being as competitive as we were, nobody wanted to lose. We would play four to five times a week, depending on our baseball schedule."

Although his fitness routine is less focused and less rigorous than during his baseball days, staying in shape is still a priority for Accardo. He hits the weights and relies on racquetball for a "fun" form of cardio.

While Accardo will always proudly carry the label of "former big leaguer," it's racquetball that has become his lifelong sport. "Nowadays while I am in Illinois, there is a group of guys who play on Monday nights and Saturday mornings, mostly doubles," he commented. "When I am in Arizona, I play every weekday morning. Both of the groups I play with are quite competitive."

*About the Author:* David Zingler has been a freelance writer on the Minnesota sports scene for 15 years. He has done work for Minnesota Public Radio, Minnesota Score magazine, and Internet Broadcasting, among others.



# Charlie Pratt and José Rojas

## Host Clinic for 360 Health Club Members

By: Jen Sinclair Johnson

**A**mateur night in Reseda, California, hit Thursday, when former IRT head referee and top pro Charlie Pratt and #5 José Rojas flew in a day early to hold a clinic with local players at the Coast to Coast California Open, where the 360 Health Club hosts the annual tournament.

Pratt has been playing the Coast to Coast for almost a decade. “I always love this event. It’s usually sunny and warm, which is always nice in January. The stadium court is great, and there’s a lot of good food everywhere.”

Tournament Director Debbie Tisinger-Moore jokes that she feels like a “mother” to all the top players because she has watched them grow up. Pratt has known Debbie for 20 years now, and more so recently. “She is quite the player, too! Very enthusiastic, loves the game and always will. I have had the honor of playing mixed doubles with Debbie’s daughter, Janel Tisinger. Between the two of them, they probably have 30+ national titles. Maybe more.”

According to Pratt, he and Rojas went in with the plan of a 30-60 minute Q&A to start the clinic, then a “Play the Pro” session for another hour or so. “We really just wanted to make sure everyone had a good time and learned what THEY wanted to learn. That’s what the Q&A is all about. Then we got on the courts and played like a regular night at the club. It was a good number with about 20 people total, including 12 players spectators.

“I think I speak for both José and myself,” Pratt continued, “and probably all the other pros as well in saying that we love doing what we do -- traveling to tournaments and competing. We want to continue to do this as long as possible, and we are happy to give back to the public and sponsors who support these events.”

*About the Author:* With a degree in communications from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Jen worked in financial marketing until pursuing freelance writing for newspapers and magazines, including a gardening column for three local and one state-wide newspaper. After discovering racquetball at her local YMCA, she quickly became a certified instructor, racquetball director, and tournament regular. She’s now finalizing her first novel: a mystery set within the quirky communities of her favorite sport and luxury taxidermy, making sense of the world by finding humor and beauty in how ordinary life is not.



José Rojas and Ben Gomperz  
Photo By Debbie Tisinger-Moore



Charlie Pratt and Nicholas Ware take a break during the clinic  
Photo By Debbie Tisinger-Moore

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L-R: Rocco Vega, Cheyenne Hayes, Linda Tyler, Cristina Amaya, Susy Acosta, Paola Longoria, Hollie Scott, Adrienne Haynes, Samantha Simmons, Ceci Pratt, Jessica Parrilla, Fran Davis

Photo Courtesy of Rocco Vega

To complete a very busy fall schedule, the LPRT packed in four events before ringing in the new year. Top-ranked player Paola Longoria, after winning her 7th US Open title, finished another calendar year undefeated.

Thanks to tournament director Stewart Solomon, the LPRT traveled to Boston, Massachusetts, for a first-time visit. The professional ladies were welcomed by a large crowd of local fans who cheered on players starting with first round matches on Friday morning all the way through to the singles and doubles finals on Sunday. They were a cheerful and rowdy crowd, which just added to a successful, fun event!

The Boston Open finals saw #1 Longoria face off against #2 Frédérique Lambert, but not before an upset in the quarterfinals saw #6 seeded Cristina Amaya advanced to the semis against Lambert. Amaya eventually lost to Lambert after taking one game. In doubles action, we had the most interesting pairing of players to date. Long-time rivals Paola Longoria and Rhonda Rajsich paired up, and won, the pro doubles division. They played surprisingly well together, winning every match in two games.

The Paola Longoria Invitational in Nuevo León, Mexico, was the next stop for the LPRT. A top-notch, country club-style facility was the venue, and the #1 ranked tour player hosted the event. The bottom half of this draw featured some excitement with four 5-game matches and an upset by young Mexican player Monserrat Mejia. Mejia bested #6 seed Cristina Amaya in five games then took #3 seed Jessica Parrilla to five games in the quarterfinals. Lambert and Longoria advanced to the final with the host winning in three games. Longoria and partner Samantha Salas Solis prevailed over Lambert and Parrilla in the doubles final tiebreaker.

Tournament Director Rocco Vega invited the LPRT to Bremerton, Washington, in November. Vega and local fans welcomed the players enthusiastically to their club about an hour southwest of Seattle. Washington state residents and past tour players Cheyenne Hayes and Grace Hughes enhanced the draw both in competing and supporting the event.

## 2016 Fall Recap

By T. J. Baumbaugh with Adrienne Haynes

Paola Longoria won the “Kitsap Splat” in Bremerton by defeating second-time pro finalist Alexandra Herrera. Herrera upset #2 seed Jessica Parrilla in the semis. LPRT Player Representative Adrienne Haynes gets the honorable mention for this event. For the first time since her daughter Olivia was born, Haynes made the semifinals.

After its original location in Arlington, Virginia, closed last season, the 26th Annual Christmas Classic found a new home in Laurel, Maryland. Situated about halfway between Baltimore and Washington D.C., the Sport Fit Club in Laurel drew pro and amateur players from 13 states and 6 countries. It was one of the most festive events of the year and a great way to start the holiday season. Many thanks to Karen Turner, Tracie Valentine, Bill Milbach, and the Maryland-Washington Racquetball Association for hosting the LPRT again.

Longoria defeated Lambert in four games in the Classic final while Jessica Parrilla and Samantha Salas Solis made semifinal appearances. Parrilla moved into the spot of #3 ranked tour player following this event. Longoria and Salas defeated Lambert and Parrilla in an exciting 11-7 tiebreaker in the pro doubles final.

The players of the LPRT lost a good friend in October. He was a “father” to many players, encouraging each to be the best player she could be. The biggest cheerleader of racquetball and especially of his daughter Rhonda, you could find him courtside, smiling, at so many of our LPRT events. Dennis Rajsich was loved and will be missed so very much.



L-R: Tracie Valentine, Karen Turner, Samantha Salas Solis, Paola Longoria, Simon Williams, Jessica Parrilla, Frédérique Lambert  
Photo By T.J. Baumbaugh





*Paola Longoria*

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IN THE WORLD



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Photo By Restring Magazine

# GABY MARTINEZ

## LPRT RISING STAR



By T. J. Baumbaugh

as best as I could and return to my country with a medal. (Gaby also defeated Samantha Salas before losing the final to Paola Longoria).

### Are you working with a coach?

**Gaby:** I have two coaches, Juan Jose Salvatierra, with whom I train everyday in Guatemala, and Thomas Travers who comes to Guatemala 1 week per month to train with us (the Guatemalan Team).

### Do you have any goals for your racquetball career?

**Gaby:** I want to become #1 player in two years and grow racquetball in Latin America.

### Are there any players that you look up to?

**Gaby:** I look to Paola's example of how training hard pays off, but I never have had an idol.

### If you could play a tournament anywhere in the world, where would it be?

**Gaby:** China is one of the places I would like to visit and to get to know the cultures.

### Have you had a favorite racquetball moment yet?

**Gaby:** When I won semifinals at Worlds last year, it was one of the best moments in my life!

Ana "Gaby" Martinez is one of the LPRT's shining young talents. She is only 17 (she will be 18 in August 2017) and will graduate High School in October 2017. Gaby lives in Guatemala City, Guatemala.

### How old were you when you started playing racquetball?

**Gaby:** I was 8.

### How did you get started playing racquetball?

**Gaby:** I was a very active kid and my parents loved sports. I practiced about six different sports at the same time. One of these sports was tennis, where I played in a very big club. As we know, racquetball is a noisy sport, and it was in the same club as tennis. I got interested and tried it, and after six months of practicing racquetball, I quit all other sports. I was also already a member of the Guatemalan Team for Junior Worlds.

### When did you play your first LPRT event?

**Gaby:** The last time the LPRT played in Miami. I lost to Rhonda in the first round.

**You had a very impressive finish at the 2016 World Championships, defeating 3 of the top LPRT players, and earning the silver medal. Were you surprised that you did that well? What was your goal for the event?**

**Gaby:** Yes, I was really surprised! My goal in that tournament was just to do better than I did at Worlds in 2014, where I placed 16th. After beating Vero (Sotomayor) and Rhonda (Rajsich), I just wanted to play

L-R: Susy Acosta, Carla Muñoz, Monserrat Mejia, Gabriela Martinez, Frédérique Lambert

Photo By T.J. Baumbaugh





## LPRT RANKINGS AS OF MARCH 14, 2017

Rank	Name - Hometown	Total Points
1	Paola Longoria, Monterrey, Mexico	2660.00
2	Frédérique Lambert, Montréal, Canada	1638.50
3	Jessica Parrilla, San Luis Potosí, Mexico	956.50
4	Alexandra Herrera, Guadalajara, Mexico	845.25
5	Cristina Amaya, Cali, Colombia	795.00
6	Rhonda Rajsich, Phoenix, Arizona	758.00
7	Samantha Salas Solis, Monterrey, Mexico	628.00
8	Carla Muñoz, Santiago, Chile	480.50
9	Suzy Acosta-Mendoza, Chihuahua, Mexico	468.00
10	Adrienne Fisher Haynes, Memphis, Tennessee	396.75
11	Adriana Riveros, Argentina	302.59
12	Montserrat Mejia, Monterrey, Mexico	253.00
13	Michelle Key, Gilbert, Arizona	195.50
14	Natalia Mendez, Buenos Aires, Argentina	190.00
15	Maria Jose Vargas, Buenos Aires, Argentina	190.00
16	Gabriela Martinez, Guatemala City, Guatemala	189.50



Rhonda Rajsich & Paola Longoria  
Photo By T.J. Baumbaugh

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# National Doubles Championships

## SHINES IN TEMPE

By Leo R. Vasquez  
Photos By Roby Partovich



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The racquetball world comes to a screeching halt for five days in February! The USA Racquetball National Doubles Championships presented by Head/Penn Racquetball and Tempe Tourism has earned its title as the toughest week for doubles competition at the highest levels. Just ask the 378 players who entered 58 different divisions separated by skill, age/skill, and the newly added Heroes divisions in support of our Service members and First Responders. There was also a very noticeable 16% increase in participation from the previous year (378 participants in 2017 vs. 327 participants in 2016) which made the draws bigger and the matches a little tougher with some tenacious competitors from 34 states all battling for a national doubles title and a place in the record books.

One of the highlights of National Doubles is the Men's and Women's U.S. National Team Qualifying divisions in which finalists in both divisions earn one-year appointments to the U.S. National Racquetball Team. These divisions are offered in both doubles and singles as part of the qualification process for the 2017-18 U.S. National Racquetball Team selection.

Hosted at the beautiful Sun Devil Fitness Complex on the campus of Arizona State University, the first few days of the Championships saw most of the men's and women's skill and age/skill doubles divisions take the stage and most of the courts. Round after round, the grind began for some with visions of either winning their first national title or others who were looking to add to their collection. Numerous social activities were scheduled throughout the week including the player parties in the evening. For example, the USAR

Women's Committee for all the ladies who were either playing or attending the Championships coordinated the ever-popular "Ladies Night Out". The night was filled with fun and games, free appetizers, and great raffle prizes on the rooftop of the host hotel, The Graduate.

Another enhancement to the event were all the fun and interactive courtside games and challenges emceed by USA Racquetball staff member Nick Irvine who selected players from the crowd and invited them to participate in the Penn Radar Gun Challenge and the Penn Hit the Target Challenge. A very special thanks goes to Ben Simons and Doug Ganim for providing all the cool prizes and giveaways for the contests.

Thursday was filled with plenty of early action as the Men's and Women's U.S. National Team Qualifying divisions took the championship court and things heated up quickly. In the Men's Doubles Qualifying division, David Horn (CA) / Robert Collins (HI) defeated Anthony Herrera (AZ) / Jake Bredenbeck (MN), 15-10, 15-6. Then the fans and spectators watched Charlie Pratt (OR) / Jansen Allen (TX) defeat Thomas Carter (PA) and Zachary Patterson (AZ), 15-10, 15-11.



Our 2016 Team USA Benefactors who were acknowledged during the Saturday night party.  
Pictured: Rick Betts & Cindy Tilbury, Usher & Marie Barnoff, Kit Lawson & Cheryl Kirk



The only scheduled match for the day in the Women's Doubles U.S. Team Qualifying division featured Sharon Jackson (GA) / Kelani Bailey (VA) who defeated Miriam McCloskey (HI) / Fran Transfiguracion (HI), 15-9, 15-7.

Friday was one of the busiest days of competition with over 150 matches scheduled and most divisions narrowing the field down to the quarterfinals and semifinals. The Men's and Women's U.S. National Team Qualifying divisions were also in full swing in both singles and doubles. The first upset of the day came at the hands of Jacqueline Paraiso (CA) / Damonique Davis (TX) as they defeated the #2 seeded team Rhonda Rajsich (AZ) / Sheryl Lotts (OH), 15-13, 15-10. While Rajsich and Lotts were contenders, they weren't the favorites coming in as Paraiso and Davis came in seeded #3 and were headed to the finals. This was familiar turf for Paraiso; Davis was making her first finals appearance.

Next up were defending champions. Janel Tisinger (CA) / Aimee Ruiz (NJ) took the court to defeat Sharon Jackson / Kelani Bailey, 15-9, 15-2 before a standing room only crowd to advance to the finals. Ruiz previously won this division with Tisinger in 2016, 2014, and 2013. She has won this same division with two other partners, Laura Fenton (2005 and 2006) and Jacqueline Paraiso (2007-2011).

It was time for the men to get down to business as the bottom half of the draw saw the Rojas brothers, José and Marco (both of Stockton, CA), come in and knock off Charlie Pratt / Jansen Allen, 15-14, 5-15, 11-4 to advance to the finals. José won this same title with two different partners, in 2015 (Jansen Allen) and in 2014 (Rocky Carson). This was Marco's first U.S. Team qualifying division finals appearance.

In the top half of the draw, Rocky Carson (CA) / Jose Diaz (CA) defeated David Horn / Robert Collins, 15-10, 15-10 in the semifinals before a packed gallery of fans and students. Carson and Diaz kept the scores close in both games up to 10-10 before running out the last few points to close it out and advance to the finals. With their titles and ranking points, Carson and Diaz rode into Tempe as the #1 seeded team in the draw. Carson previously won this division with José Rojas (2014), Ben Croft (2012), and Jack Huczek, (2011, 2009, 2008, 2006- 2004). Diaz won this event last year with Jake

Bredenbeck. After Bredenbeck's injury at the US OPEN last October, Diaz and Carson decided to partner for this event after playing doubles together for the first time in South Dakota.

As part of the qualification process for the 2017-18 U.S. National Racquetball Team selection, Men's and Women's singles divisions were also featured, and some

of the top players from the doubles divisions were playing singles as well. In the Men's division, Rocky Carson defeated Majeed Shahin (CA), 15-2, 15-1, while Jose Diaz defeated Charlie Pratt, 15-10, 15-13. David Horn was pushed to the limit but prevailed over Thomas Carter, 15-8, 7-15, 11-5, and Robert Collins defeated Jake Bredenbeck, 15-12, 15-14.

The Women's singles division began with Sharon Jackson taking down Da'monique Davis, 15-8, 15-5 in two straight games. Jacqueline Paraiso went up against a relentless Sheryl Lotts with Paraiso winning 14-15, 15-13, 11-8. Janel Tisinger was pushed to the brink of elimination but found a way to win against Cheryl Gudinas (IL), 8-15, 15-11, 11-6. The last match of the women's singles was another back-and-forth bout going tiebreaker as Rhonda Rajsich defeated Kelani Bailey, 15-14, 6-15, 11-7.



**Finalists in the Men's Classic Racquet Division**  
Photo by Ron Denler

With only two days left, there were still plenty of matches and players were starting to feel the pressure as the draws were down to the championship rounds. Super Saturday was the day for twists, turns, and consistent top-level racquetball from everyone still in the tournament. Just as the Men's and Women's U.S. National Team Qualifying divisions were whittling down, so were divisions such as the Men's Centurion A doubles, as both semifinal matches went the distance. David DeCicco (AZ) / Brian Campbell (AZ) had to leave it all out on the court as they defeated Luis Villarreal (TX) / Gary Durbin (TX), 9-15, 15-12, 11-4, to advance to the finals. On the bottom half of that draw, Curtis Webb (CA) / Duane Harcrow (CA) did all they could to defeat Richard Aal (CA) / Steve Strahler (CO), 14-15, 15-10, 11-2, to move into the finals to face eventual champs DeCicco and Campbell.

The stage was set for the finals of the Women's Doubles U.S. Team Qualifying as Ruiz and Tisinger came out fast and furious, taking the first game 15-5 and looking unstoppable. The second game was a carbon copy of the first as Ruiz and Tisinger won 15-5 and captured gold to win their fourth Women's Doubles U.S. Team title together. This was Women's Doubles title #11 for Ruiz as she continues to cement her place in the record books as arguably one of the best women's doubles players in the history of the sport.



During their post-match interview Tisinger was all smiles and said, "That felt amazing, I am not going to lie. That was surreal." Asked about how it felt to capture her 11th Women's Doubles title Ruiz said, "I don't play a lot of singles, so there is a lot of preparation that goes into this tournament. I work really hard at it and so does Janel. We had a specific goal in mind, and we achieved our goal."

The Men's Doubles U.S. Team Qualifying finals match was set as the Rojas brothers came out and jumped all over Carson and Diaz early by winning the first game 15-4 and looking very sharp. The second game was different with both teams keeping it close until Team Rojas jumped out front with a 9-5 lead. Then the momentum changed. Carson and Diaz started chipping away and finished up strong, winning game two, 15-12 and forcing the tiebreaker for the championship title. Both teams were fired up and ready for prime time as the score stayed tight point-for-point all the way to 10-10 before Carson ended the match with a forehand winner in the left corner to win the championship title.

"Credit to them, they played a tough match all the way through. After that first game, I looked at Jose and I said, 'We're not playing that bad.' And then down 7-5, I'm looking at him like, 'I think we still have another gear,' and we were able to hit that other gear and we got some breaks and we executed," said an elated Rocky Carson.

Jose Diaz added, "Hats off to them, they played amazing the first game. José was just rolling balls, and Markie was not far behind. They played really tough and kind of killed us the first game and then we kind of got the momentum in the second game. The tiebreaker was who wants it more, and it was a battle. They played well. Glad we got the job done."

With a full day of racquetball coming to a close, it was time for everyone to get ready for the Saturday night party that was being hosted on the rooftop and inside the ballroom at The Graduate. Players were treated to a delicious barbecue dinner and tasty appetizers. After the awards and banquet ceremony concluded, everyone moved upstairs to the rooftop bar and lounge where games of cornhole, giant tumbling towers, and table tennis awaited. All of this overlooked the city of Tempe and the campus of Arizona State University. It was a great way to end the evening before heading into the last day of competition at the National Doubles Championships.

Championship Sunday came bright and early for some as the final matches were played in most of the divisions. The event was capped off with the Men's and Women's U.S. Team Singles Qualifying finals. Rocky Carson and Rhonda Rajsich emerged as the top point winners in this second part of the three-event qualifying process that will conclude at the USA Racquetball National Singles Championships back in Tempe at the end of May.

Hopefully all of the players who attended the 2017 USA Racquetball National Doubles Championships will look back at this event and remember all the great matches played and new friends made that week.

Congratulations to all of the winners, final finishers, and everyone else who traveled to Tempe to celebrate USA Racquetball's 50th Anniversary. Kudos to the USA Racquetball staff and volunteers for organizing and hosting an amazing week of racquetball!

For all of the results and final finishers of the 2017 USA Racquetball National Doubles Championships, click the link below or visit [www.USARacquetball.com](http://www.USARacquetball.com).

<http://www.r2sports.com/tourney/viewResults.asp?TID=18724>

## Ruiz/Tisinger Racquetball Runs in the Family

By Cheryl Kirk

Aimee, 42, and Janel, 34, have been playing for a combined total of over 60 years! They didn't just pick up the sport on their own. Indeed, they had a little help from their mothers. Their backstories are remarkably similar...

### Aimee's Account

"My mom, Donna Keller-Houser, was working full time and going back to school part time, taking classes at the local community college. She had to take some sort of gym/health and fitness class, so she signed up for "Intro to Racquetball." I was about 11 years old at the time, and I would have to go along with her and do my homework while she took her course. My mom picked up the game and loved it. She took me on the court and taught me how to play. After that she started playing tournaments, and I started entering tournaments as well. I was hooked from then on."

### Janel's Tale

"I started playing racquetball when I was 4. My mom, Debbie Tisinger-Moore, and dad, Kevin Tisinger, both played and they dragged me to every tournament in the state every weekend. I grew up watching and listening to the game. Then my mom became a single mother of three and had to bring all of us to work every day where she taught racquetball and ran leagues and tournaments. I started competing in tournaments at 9 years old and played every day my mom worked. I didn't play national events until I was 12, and then a whole new racquetball world opened up."

...and the rest is history! Aimee and Janel have done themselves and their families proud, sticking with the game and excelling every step of the way. They became the reigning World Champions at the IRF World Championships last July in Cali, Colombia, where they defeated Paola Longoria and Samantha Salas of Mexico (with Debbie Tisinger-Moore on hand as their US Team Assistant Coach!). Add in four USAR National Doubles titles together, the most recent in February of this year, and any way you slice it, it's safe to say our Women's Doubles Champions are Racquetball Royalty!



# 2017 NATIONAL DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIPS

## Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona · February 8 - 12

### WOMENS

Division	Champion	Runner Up
Women's 35/40/45	CJ Herceg/Debra Tisinger-Moore	Louise Winter/Tammarrian Rogers
Women's 50+	Debra Tisinger-Moore/Malia Bailey	Polly Reuther/Linda Reeves
Women's 60/65/75	Linda Moore/Marsha Berry	Carla Francis/Cheryl Conrad
Women's Open/Elite	Sarah Houghtailing/Fran Transfiguracion	Lisa Bu/Linda Moore
Women's A/B	Cheryl Jones/Wendy Miller	Kelly Johnson/Julie Dixon
Women's 30A/40A/40B	Maddie Melendez/Arlene Swinney	Kim Holderness/Nancy Bortfeld
Women's 40/60 Elite	Laura Goo/Laura Morin	Kerri Brown/Susie Boulanger
Women's 50+ A	Connie Wong/Laura Goo	Sonya Leitner/Teresa Sefcik

### MENS

Division	Champion	Runner Up
Men's Open	Jonathan Clay/Brent Walters	Harold Jagoda/Jose Diaz
Men's 24/25+	Bryan Crosser/Jose Rojas	Herman Deluna/David Piper
Men's 30+	Bryan Crosser/Anthony Herrera	George Bustos/Sam Hojat
Men's 35+	Charlie Stadler/Erik Blood	Luis Rivero/Sean Lyng
Men's 40+	Jason Richard Conway/Mark Monje	Jeff Stark/Keith Minor
Men's 45+	Jeff Stark/Keith Minor	Doug Ganim/Tim Doyle
Men's 50+	Jimmy Lowe/Tim Hansen	Eugene Coyle/John Amatulli
Men's 55+	Russ Bonanno/Troy Stallings	Michael Stoner/Mike Lubbers
Men's 60+	Howard Walker/Mark Baron	Frank Taddonio/Joe Lee
Men's 70+	Jeffrey Leon/Mike Pawka	Doug Carmichael/Herb Laney
Men's 75+	David Zabinski/Joe Capozzoli	Donald Sperber/Jim Calvin
Men's Elite	Israel Torres/Will Reynolds	Hubaldo Hernandez/Michael Myers
Men's A	Jerry Reyes/Juan Mendoza	Hubaldo Hernandez/Jose Hernandez
Men's B	Andrew Gleason/Timmy Hansen	Michael Natale/Sandro Aponte
Men's 30/40 Elite	Israel Torres/Will Reynolds	David Piper/Gary Desanti
Men's 30+ A	Keith Sapp/Steve Strahler	Troy Cook/CJ Sanders
Men's 30+ B	Takashi Yamashita/Kevin Scroggins	Alan Bennett/Freddie Villalon
Men's 40+ A	Rod Southwood/Terry Kisling	Keith Kauai/Steven Kauai
Men's 40+ B	Curt Baumgarth/James Lamont	Jake Ryan/Jeffrey Hill
Men's 40/50 C	Bruce Adams/Lynn Stephens	Andrew Blasquez/John Wilson
Men's 50+ A	Joe Belardo/Shawn Fernandez	Ro Blackwood/Thomas Baker
Men's 50+ B	Dan Dryden/Mark Bolotte	Bill Bearden/Carter Jaynes
Men's 60+ B	Barry Clyde/Harold Jagoda	Greg Kearney/Robert Rivas
Men's Centurion Open	Jeff Stark/Tim Hansen	Richard Eisemann/Russ Bonanno
Men's Centurion A	David DeCicco/Brian Campbell	Curtis Webb/Duane Harcrow
Men's Centurion B	Jim Pruett/Todd Meendering	Alfred Muranaga/Harold Jagoda
Men's Centurion C/D	Rene Saucier/Tom Farley	John Wilson/Andrew Blasquez
Men's Heroes Open	Dean Lavilla/Rabbit Rogers	Ricky Villanueva/Richard Dew
Men's Heroes A/B/50	Jose Castro/Danny Sardina	Bill Bearden/David Bandelier
Men's Classic Racquet	Tim Herman/Michael Myers	Luis Villarreal/Gary Durbin



Men's Open Doubles Champions Jonathan Clay/Brent Walters

### MIXED

Division	Champion	Runner Up
Mixed Open/35	Melania Sauma/Jesse Giron	Brent Walters/Debra Bryant
Mixed 45/50	Jimmy Lowe/Malia Bailey	Laura Fenton Kovanda/Richard Eisemann
Mixed 55/60	Cindy Tilbury/Mike Gris	Linda Moore/Doug Kite
Mixed 65	Joe Lee/Shirley Parsons	Frank Taddonio/Nancy Kronenfeld
Mixed 70/75	Nidia Funes/Fredrick Roe	Price Thomas/Mildred Gwinn
Mixed Elite	Jazmin Trevino/Will Reynolds	Devon Pimentelli/Israel Torres
Mixed A	Stephanie Bankes/Pierce Johnston	Bruce Mawby/Susie Boulanger
Mixed B/C	Kimberly Randolph/Brian Laney	Ann Draudt/Joel Lawrence
Mixed 30/40 Elite	Kenneth Courtney/Vivian Schneider	Laura Morin/Tyler Vorhies
Mixed 30/40 A	Kimo Hansen/Arlene Swinney	Laura Morin/Tyler Vorhies
Mixed 30/40/50 B	James Rupert/Nancy Bortfeld	Joel Lawrence/Julie Dixon
Mixed 50/60 A	Rabbit Rogers/Sue Patterson	Lisa Bu/Mel West
Mixed Centurion Open	Paul Julbes/Polly Reuther	Lance Lacour/Sandy Rios
Mixed Centurion A	Eric New/Debra Bryant	Aaron Parsons/Shirley Parsons
Mixed Centurion B	Maryam Yezdi/Alfred Muranaga	Stacey Rabanal/Vic Mandella













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# "...MOST BACKSWING HINDERS...SHOULD BE CLASSIFIED AS PENALTY HINDERS..."

by Otto Dietrich, USA Racquetball National Rules Commissioner

**H**ave you checked out the new Rules page at USA Racquetball's website? It now features a new rulebook index feature that you can use to more rapidly find a specific rule that applies to various issues. Here's the link to visit our website: <http://www.teamusa.org/USA-Racquetball>. Once there, just select "Rules" and "Racquetball Rules Online." While there, download your own printable (pdf) copy of the entire rulebook. There's also an easy way to email me called "Ask Otto." Many thanks go out to Leo Vasquez for the time and effort he spent preparing that new index tool!

## Now for some Q&A:

**Jim W. wondered:** On a serve, is it in or out if it lands on the "back service zone line" (the short line)?

**I responded:** The Service Zone extends exactly 5 feet as measured from the very back edge (closest to the back wall) of the Short Line to the very front edge (closest to the front wall) of the Service line. Please see pages 2 and 3 in the current rulebook for details and a diagram. Since the entire Service Zone is considered in as far as the server is concerned, then the served ball must not touch the floor until it is at least beyond the Service Zone to be judged a good serve. If it doesn't, but instead bounces on or in front of the Short Line then that is a fault serve with all the outcomes associated with it being a fault. So, the server can step on those lines as part of his service motion, but not over them except, that is, at the conclusion of the service motion as described in Rule 3.9(a)2.

**Ernie P. said:** During a recent rally, I hit the ball in such a way that it hit the front wall first, then hit the floor after hitting the front wall. The ball then went out of the gallery opening on the back wall. I know that a ball that hits the front wall and goes out of the court without hitting

a return. Can you tell me if I should have lost that rally? I am thinking it was a good shot that happens only rarely and would fall into an unreturnable shot category – like a rollout off the front wall.

**I replied to Ernie:** Any ball that hits the



Girls #1 Singles Finals featuring Hollie Scott and Briana Jacquet at the USAR National High School Championships  
Photo By Gallemore Photography

the floor first is a lost rally for the person that hit the ball. But I do not know the rule for my recent situation. My first thought was that I could not have lost the rally since I met the criteria of a good shot by hitting the front wall and then the floor, before the ball did exit the court into the gallery opening. The guy I was playing against felt that it was a lost rally for me since the ball went to a place he did not have a chance to make

front wall and then goes out of play immediately after touching the floor is a Replay Hinder (not a loss of rally). Please see the last sentence of Rule 3.14(a)1 on page 13 of the rulebook.

**Greg F. inquired:** I recently made an illegal drive serve call that was disputed not only by the team that the call went against, but by several spectators as well. I've watched your videos and reread the

## DO YOU HAVE A RULES/REFEREEING QUESTION?

Be sure to email it to me at [ODietrich@usaracquetball.com](mailto:ODietrich@usaracquetball.com) and you might find it featured in an upcoming issue of *Racquetball* Magazine. I will personally answer every question I get, no matter how simple or complex it may be!

## Always Play by the Rules

...and, if you don't have a copy of them, I encourage you to go online where you can find, review, and/or download them – especially to your Smartphone – at: [teamusa.org/USA-Racquetball/How-To-Play/Rules](http://teamusa.org/USA-Racquetball/How-To-Play/Rules).



rules and have concluded that I made the right call, but wanted to run it by you as well. The server started his service motion inside the 3-foot line on the left side of the court continuing into the service zone striking the ball so that it traveled behind him at the completion of his service motion. I assessed a fault serve for an illegal drive serve. Was this the correct call?

**I told Greg:** From your description, it sounds like you did get it right. If he started his continuous service motion that resulted in a drive serve from inside the 3-foot Drive Serve Zone without stopping for a moment (thus a new beginning of his service motion) then a drive serve to the side that he started from is, as you noted, an illegal drive serve. Why not download the copy of the rulebook to your cell phone and if you are questioned again, you can just show them Rule 3.3 and Rule 3.6.

**Elizabeth B. asked:** Will you please explain the difference between “backswing hinder” and “stroke interference”? I thought any interference on someone’s backswing should be a penalty.

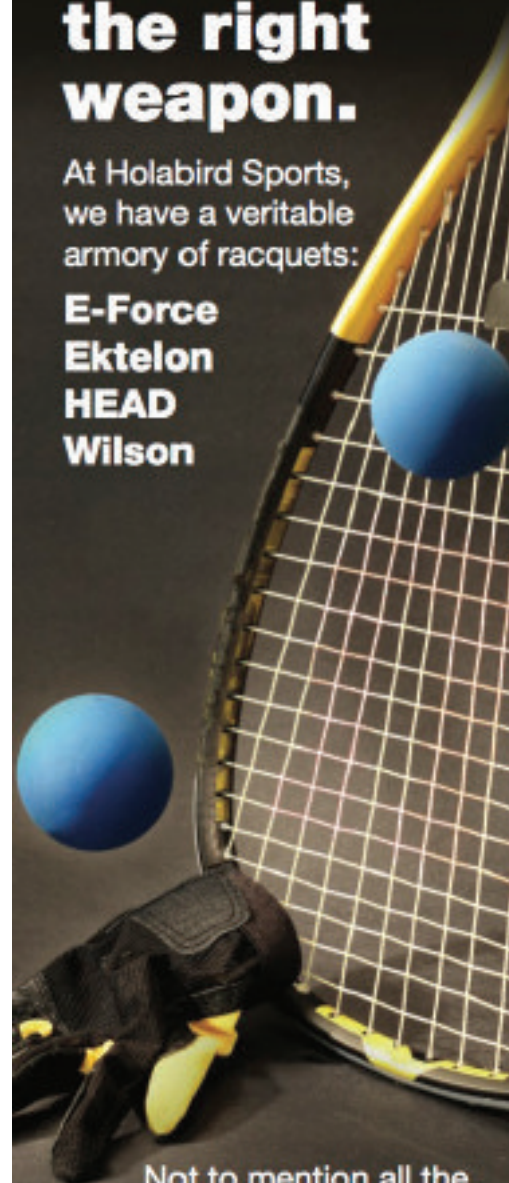
**I answered:** Backswing hinders occur when the hitter draws back his racquet to increase the starting point of his full stroke. In doing that he might touch an opponent with his racquet. When he does that, it may or may not be significant enough to disrupt his attempt to hit the ball. If there is only a slight disruption of the hitter, he might continue his attempt uninterrupted, then the referee can just let them “play on.” Sometimes play happens so quickly that backswing contact simply can’t be avoided. In that case, the referee might call it a simple replay hinder. Note that while this concept is under Rule 3.14(a)5 (Replay Hinders), that rule also says that it might

be a penalty hinder. Backswing hinders, especially the slight ones, are usually very hard for a referee to detect. The players are often close together and any such contact could occur in that rather small space between them. That is why the rules do allow the person hitting the ball to call that type of hinder himself, even if there is a referee. He is required to call it at once and not try to claim it happened after seeing how “good” his eventual shot turned out. Some players will simply “play on” through a very slight backswing contact in favor of accepting the resulting shot on which they think they still may have an advantage. Incidentally, I will add that the player touched by an opponent’s backswing should never try to call it because the other player could just deny that it ever happened and then the referee will have a mess on his hands – especially if he didn’t see it happen. Stroke interference, on the other hand, is any contact that happens on the forward motion of the racquet -- that part of the swing that goes directly toward the ball (i.e., everything that happens once the backswing ends). Even a very slight contact on that part of the swing can be very disruptive, so the rules envision that the only proper action is to call such contact a penalty hinder. This type of hinder is usually more visible to the referee as well, and the adverse effect of the contact is often much more obvious. In my experience, most backswing hinders probably should be called as penalty hinders for obvious reasons.

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# CONTINUING THE Making of a Champion



by **Fran Davis** (The Coach) • **Diana McNab** (Sports Psychologist) • **Dan Obremski** (Fitness Expert)

Okay, let's continue "Making You a Champion" using the core principles of "Building Your Racquetball Dream House" as you build your championship racquetball game one assessment at a time.

In the last issue, I discussed the "Z Ball," a defensive shot that is used at the higher levels. You hit this when you are off balance and out of position, especially in the front half of the court, moving your opponent out of the middle into the back of the court as you regain center-court position.

Now we are going to move our focus to learning how to develop a "Service Game Strategy." Since the serve is the #1 shot in the game of racquetball and since it is the only time you can score a point, why not have a plan when you get up to serve? Too many players just go up to the service area and serve the serve they "like," or they serve the ball with "no thought" and just put the ball into play. This can be detrimental to a server...not to have a plan.

Remember, a game plan is a plan of action determined by your strengths and weaknesses coupled with your opponent's strengths and weaknesses, so developing a "Service Game Strategy" is no different from developing a game plan for your overall match. In essence, it is your strengths and weaknesses on your serves coupled with your opponent's strengths and weaknesses on their serves. With that information, I can teach you how to develop a winning Service Game Strategy.

First, analyze your opponent:

- Is he a power or control player?
- Is he a tall or short player?
- Does he have a weak backhand or forehand?
- Does he have any injuries...e.g. knee problems?
- How is his footwork?
- Is he in or out of shape?
- Is he a righty or lefty?
- Where does he stand to return the serve? Too far up or too far over to one side or the other?

After gathering this information, you can develop a precise "Service Game Strategy." Use the chart here to assist.

Type of Player	Service Strategy
Power	Change the pace: off-speed drive and drive Z serves mixed in with hard drive serves High out of hitting zone: lobs, 1/2 lobs, soft high Z's
Control	Hit hard drive serves: drive Z's, jams, wrap around
Tall	Hit right at them: drive Z's, jams, right at their feet
Short	Hit hard drives away from them into the corners; make them reach
Knee Problems (injury)	Hit hard and make them move and change direction abruptly: hard drives and hard Z's (all kinds depending upon your level)
Unconditioned	Hit low and hard away from them: hard drives into corners and wraparound serves; make them move
Weak Backhand	Pound their backhand with low hard serves, or lob their backhand
Weak Forehand	Same as above, but to forehand side
Poor - Reaction Time/Footwork	Hit low and hard away from them: hard drives into corners; make them move
Righty or Lefty	Make sure while they are warming up you notice and then concentrate on the weaker side, usually the backhand



Keep in mind that someone you play is generally not going to be only one of these types of players but indeed a combination of these types. With the information in the above chart, you can come up with a more detailed game plan as necessary.

I recommend spending quite a bit of time on this area because "the serve is the #1 shot in the game of racquetball and it is the only time you can score a point." You drop the ball out of your hand based on the serve you want to hit, whereas during a rally the ball is coming at you from different angles, with different speeds, and possibly with spin. The serve sets the tone for the match, and you are in total control. Take advantage of the time you are serving and come up with a winning "Service Game Strategy."

For more details on the "Service Game Strategy," see my book, "Championship Racquetball."

Hope to see you at one of my camps for live personal instruction. Or, purchase my video, "Building Your Racquetball Dream House" or my book, "Championship Racquetball" if you can't make a camp at this time. For details go to [www.FranDavisRacquetball.com](http://www.FranDavisRacquetball.com).

**Fran Davis** coaches Paola Longoria (6X #1 LPRT, 5X World Champion, 4X Pan American Champion, 7X US Open Champion), Rocky Carson (#2 IRT, 5X World Champion, 2X Pan American Champion, US Open Champion), and junior sensations Jordan Cooperrider (Junior National Champion & USA Junior National Team), Wayne Antone (Junior National Champion & USA Junior National Team), and Mitchell Turner (Junior National Champion & USA Junior National Team). Fran's additional credentials include USAR Hall of Fame 2004, Woman of the Year 2009, former U.S. National Team Coach, and Master Professional (USAR-IP).



Sheryl Lotts, Rhonda Rajsich, and Fran Davis at the 2017 U.S. National Doubles Championships  
Photo By Roby Partovich

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Jason Mannino  
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Rocky Carson  
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Paola Longoria  
2X #1 Pro Player

Sudsy Monchik  
5X #1 Pro Player

## Fran's Credentials

- 25+ Years Camp Experience
- Woman of the Year 2009
- 2004 Hall of Fame
- U. S. National Team Coach 1989-1996, 2002
- Pan American/World Championship Coach
- USOC National Coach of the Year 1997
- Coaches Rocky Carson, Paola Longoria, Taylor Knoth, Sharon Jackson
- Coached Legends Jason Mannino and Sudsy Monchik
- USAR-IP Master Professional

## Jason's Credentials

- #1 IRT Professional Player 2003
- 2X U.S. Open Champion
- IRT Most Improved Player 1998
- IRT Rookie of the Year 1996
- International Racquetball Tour President

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TBA	St. Louis, MO
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# WHERE ARE THEY NOW? -- ANDY ROBERTS

By Aimee Ruiz



**W**here Are They Now? is a new column in *Racquetball* magazine that will feature past pros from both the men's and women's tours throughout the years. We'll interview them and see what they have been up to since they stepped away from playing professionally. We'll also see what they think of today's game and the players who are currently competing.

Our second interview is with former U.S. National Doubles and Singles Champion Andy Roberts. Andy was also ranked as high as #2 on the IRT when he was playing full time. Let's check in with Andy:

**Your last year on tour was 2000. What have you been up to since then?**

In 2001, I began working for FedEx in sales. Sixteen years later and after two moves for the family, I have returned to my hometown of Memphis.

**Can you tell us a bit about your family?** I met my wife Kim while we both were attending the University of Memphis. She played racquetball as well, and we have been married for 27 years. I have four children: Lauren, 24, attended DePaul University in Chicago and currently resides in Chicago; Olivia is 20 years old and is attending the University of Kansas; Abbigayle is 18 years old and will be attending Fresno State University next fall; and our youngest Ethan, is 14 and will be a freshman in high school next year.

**What do your children think about your accomplishments in racquetball, or are you just "Dad" to them?** I'm not sure they really think about it much. Recently I was inducted into the Hall of Fame for the City of Memphis. I think they were amazed when the announcer read all my accomplishments spanning my career in the sport.

**Who was a player you looked up to when making your start on the tour, and why?** Mike Yellen. I thought he was the total package. As I came up the rankings, I remember other players would say in order to beat Mike you had to play great -- he never beat himself. He really knew how to play and could win tournaments while not playing at the top of his game. Mike was a true champion on and off the court. I also had three very close friends on the tour and respected each of their games: Ruben Gonzalez, Mike Ray, and Jack Newman. All three were credits to our tour and to the sport.

**Do you watch any of the current men's pros play? What do you find different about the game now than when you played?** Not recently. Kane is the best player to ever play this game in any era, without question. I do feel he would have been pushed more in different eras as I am not certain anyone on the tour believes they can beat him, and they probably can't. When I was watching the pros, I was amazed at the lack of game planning and total lack of adjustments during the match. The ability for a player to have the knowledge to beat someone better or more skilled has left the game.

**Is there anyone in today's game you are most impressed with or who has a game style that is similar to yours?** Kane. I'm not sure anyone would be impressed with anyone else. Kane has set the bar so high and he is so skilled even on the rare occasions he plays bad, he will still win.

**You have been all over the world playing for Team USA in international competitions. What was one of your fondest memories representing Team USA or one of your favorite countries to visit and why?** The honor of representing Team USA and the relationships forged were priceless. The USA was so dominant and we were such a fun group, those truly were the good old days. I loved all the South American countries; they were so beautiful and the people were very nice.

**Your racquetball career is very impressive. What was one of your accomplishments that meant the most to you?** Winning the World Championships in Hamburg, Germany, in 1988. My parents and oldest brother were there as well as my college coach Larry Liles, and I had the pleasure of playing my good friend Ruben Gonzalez in a tightly fought tiebreaker match. That one stands out. As I get older some others have faded but there are more.

**You're an accomplished singles and doubles player. Which did you enjoy more and why?** I loved them both. Two completely different games to master. I think I won National Doubles four times with three different partners. I really knew how to pick good partners. The best doubles team to EVER play (at least that I saw live) was Mike Ray and Ruben Gonzalez -- unbeatable.



Photo By John Gillooly/PEI



**Do you play at all now, and do you miss the competition?**

No, my knee prevents me from playing the game I still love today. I am due for a knee replacement when I get time. I wish I could play, but when I get my knee replaced, I will be back at the National Doubles.

**Is there anyone you still communicate with from your days on tour?**

Not as often as I would like, shame on me. I had the pleasure of meeting so many quality individuals over the years who helped shaped my life.

**What would you say to someone who wants to break into that next level and begin playing the pro tour full time? Any words of wisdom?**

Learn to play the game, recognize your strengths and weaknesses, get a coach who has the ability to build game plans, learn to make adjustments. THINK. Learn how to serve and be aggressive on returns. Most players will never reach the top of the rankings for three key reasons:

1. They cannot serve the ball effectively.
2. They have no idea how to play center court so that their opponent feels pressure.
3. The single biggest issue is skipping the ball WAY TOO MUCH.

My career is a product of people along the way who taught me how to win. When you understand how to win, then you can play. I loved to practice, and I understood my weaknesses. In order to win tournaments, I needed to kill the ball at a high percentage from both sides and have an array of serves that could produce opportunity. I hope my peers would support this, that I game planned very well and had

the ability to make adjustments that produced wins. I would one day love to coach racquetball and maybe even the U.S. Team if the opportunity came about. What knowledge I have, I would love to pass it on.



Photo Courtesy of Andy Roberts



Photo By John Gillooly/PEI



## Andy's Accomplishments:

- Finished six seasons on the IRT in the Top 5
- Two of the six seasons with a year-end ranking of #2
- 15+ Tour Wins
- 1985 and 2000 U.S. National Doubles Champion
- 1988 U.S. National Singles Champion
- U.S. Olympic Festival Singles Champion
- IRF Men's Singles World Champion
- IRF Tournament of Americas Singles Champion
- Member of the U.S. National Team for eight consecutive years
- USA Racquetball Athlete of the Year (1988, 1990)
- Inducted into USA Racquetball Hall of Fame (2002)
- Inducted into University of Memphis Athletic Hall of Fame (2003)
- Inducted into Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame (2004)

## The Race for the 2017-18 U.S. National Team

The second qualification event for the 2017-18 U.S. National Team is in the record books with the conclusion of the 2016 U.S. National Doubles Championships with a US Team Qualifying Singles Division during the event. Team Qualification points were awarded based on finishing position as follows:



Champion	100 Points
Runner-Up	80 Points
Semifinalist	60 Points
Quarterfinalist	30 Points
Round of 16	10 Points
Round of 32	5 Points



The UnitedHealthcare US OPEN comprises 20 percent of the Team Qualification process, with a Team Qualifying Singles Division held at National Doubles contributing 30 percent and the National Singles Team Qualifying Division comprising the remaining 50 percent.

The top four point recipients for both Men and Women receive invitations to join Team USA.

### Current U.S. National Team Singles Qualification Standings Top 5 Men

STANDING	PLAYER	US OPEN IRT DIVISION POINTS	WEIGHTED POINTS 20%	SINGLES DIVISION AT NATIONAL DOUBLES POINTS	WEIGHTED POINTS 30%	TOTAL POINTS
1	Rocky Carson	80	16	100	30	46
2	David Horn	10	2	80	24	26
3	Charlie Pratt	5	1	60	18	19
4	Robbie Collins	0	0	60	18	18
5	Jake Bredenbeck	30	6	30	9	15

### Current U.S. National Team Singles Qualification Standings Top 5 Women

STANDING	PLAYER	US OPEN LPRT DIVISION POINTS	WEIGHTED POINTS 20%	SINGLES DIVISION AT NATIONAL DOUBLES POINTS	WEIGHTED POINTS 30%	TOTAL POINTS
1	Rhonda Rajsich	30	6	100	30	36
2	Sharon Jackson	5	1	80	24	25
3	Janel Tisinger	5	1	60	18	19
4	Jacqueline Paraiso	0	0	60	18	18
5	Sheryl Lotts	10	2	30	9	11

The qualification process for doubles teams continues to be based on the Team Qualifying Doubles Division at National Doubles.



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## 1st WOR Event of 2017 Brings Mixed Weather

By Rob Mijares

The first Florida tournament of 2017 took place at Holiday Park in Fort Lauderdale, January 7-8, with 74 participants. Saturday was touch-and-go with a cold front that had our crews drying off the courts four times, but we managed to complete the Men's Pro/Open Doubles Division that day. Sunday saw temperatures below 50 degrees with a warm-up to 67 degrees. We were able to complete all three divisions on Sunday: Men's Elite Doubles, Men's A Doubles, and "Pick out of the Hat" Women's Pro/Elite/A Doubles.



Some of the action in Florida this past January

Photo on Left By Susan Suid

Photo on Right By Joshua Mancebo

## Eighth Annual 3 Wallball World Championships to be held at Stratosphere Casino, Hotel & Tower in Las Vegas

Outdoor Tournament Returns to Las Vegas Strip with Live ESPN Broadcasts

The Stratosphere Casino, Hotel & Tower joins World Outdoor Racquetball, World Players of Handball, and the National Paddleball Association to bring the richest tournament in outdoor court sports back to the Las Vegas Strip, on September 20-24, 2017. On its traditional late September weekend, the event will take advantage of the great fall weather with highs forecasted in the low 90's and lows in the mid 60's. With over 500 players expected and over a thousand matches to be played, the players and fans will enjoy great special events, exciting play, and, of course, all the day and night life of Las Vegas. ESPN3 film crews are scheduled to return in 2017 after a successful broadcast of the 2015 and 2016 3WallBall Championships when over 400,000 viewers tuned in to capture exciting racquetball, handball, and paddleball play on the WatchESPN App.

Plans for 2017 include the addition of new 3-wall and 1-wall courts with a projected total of 23 courts to be used for play. Indoor four-wall play may supplement the already-ambitious 3Wallball Championship weekend schedule (to be determined).

More additions and information regarding event details and specifics will be released on the event website at 3wallball.com and on the player and fan entry system at R2Sports.com, pending its activation.



Alvaro Beltran vs. Rocky Carson

Photo By Randy Lam



# NPRA Pays It Forward

Article & Photos By Bill Bearden



NATIONAL POLICE RACQUETBALL

NPRA coordinated its annual Blue Santa Toy donation initiative. Supporters from all over the Houston area traveled to League City, California, to play and to support NPRA's mission of paying it forward during the holiday season. The toys collected were given to the Pasadena Police Officers' Santa Program to be distributed to families in the community.



Above: NPRA Vice President Mike Welch delivering the donated toys to Pasadena's Santa Program  
Left: NPRA Officers Bill Bearden, Mike Welch and honorary board member Kyle Welch working the desk  
Photos Courtesy of Bill Bearden

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## 28th Annual Women's Senior/Masters National Championships

By: Cheryl Kirk

Participants at the Women's Senior Masters National Championships  
Photo By Kit Lawson

### Q1. Why do we play racquetball?

A1. Well, for lots of reasons, actually. We know there are many factors that figure into it: fun, camaraderie, exercise, competition, stress relief, weight loss, and more...we're family!

### Q2. Why, for heaven's sake, would you go to Lombard, Illinois (suburb of Chicago) in mid-January?

A2. See Q1 above. With the possible exception of weight loss (no one went hungry), the WSMRA Annual event provided players with reasons to brave the cold and show up in decidedly nippy weather on January 12th at O'Hare or Midway airports.

Believing in full disclosure from the very first, the tag line on the event entry was "Balmy Weather definitely NOT guaranteed; a great time absolutely ENSURED!" Tournament Directors Cheryl Kirk and Laurel Davis, in partnership with the WSMRA Board, great sponsors, and many dedicated volunteers, are proud to say that all indications were "Mission Accomplished." Heck, the weather wasn't even that bad (unless maybe you ask someone from the south). It appears everyone survived and thrived.

Since this is a magazine and not a book, let's embrace brevity and quickly highlight aspects of this year's soiree that received positive feedback from the 80 women in attendance: a young and trendy lime green and gray souvenir jacket; high-end lo-goes awards; the silent auction with an array of items on which to bid (add "shopping opportunities" to Q1 above); pleasant and economical accommodations at the Marriott Suites Downers Grove; the hospitable and welcoming club -- Glass Court Swim & Fitness; the Illinois State Racquetball Association

men (led by Geoff Peters) ran the desk so the women could enjoy their event; fun banquet at the host hotel. It was great to see the pleasantly surprised reaction from DJ Greg Vazquez who never expected a "Women's Senior Masters" group to rock the dance floor!

So 80 players ages 36-76 arrived from 21 states and Guatemala (which actually made this an INTERNATIONAL event). The round robin format ensures play on every day of the three-day tournament. The women competed in singles and doubles age divisions -- seven round robins and three pool-play-with-playoff formats. Forty-eight played in both singles and doubles (see "exercise" in Q1).



Tournament Desk Hard at Work  
Photo Courtesy of Cheryl Kirk



Have to share this: a Fun Doubles activity is tradition on Thursday afternoon before the action heats up on Friday. This gives the players a feel for the courts, and it's a fundraiser for breast cancer awareness and research. This activity raised \$575 this year -- it could be a record! And speaking of the international nature of this year's WSMRA event, the silent auction raised over \$2k that was split between the WSMRA and The Tracks, a kids' racquetball development program in a disadvantaged area of Guatemala City. Marie Gomar was thrilled to pack her luggage with a number of donated racquets (thanks especially to Paula Lemon) and a goodly sum back to Guatemala to help jumpstart The Tracks Project. (BTW, donations of eye guards are the #1 need right now -- contact Cheryl Kirk.)

The 29th Annual WSMRA Championships will be back in sunny Tucson next January (always on the MLK holiday weekend) where Tournament Directors Linda Moore and Cindy Tilbury will likely ENSURE lovely weather along with a great time!

Check out the draws, match by match, at:  
[www.r2sports.com/tourney.asp?TID=17584](http://www.r2sports.com/tourney.asp?TID=17584)



Top: Silent Auction Goddesses Paula Sperling and Carol Gellman  
 Bottom: Guatemalan Marie Gomar came to Chicago prepared  
 Photos By Cheryl Kirk

## RESULTS

### SINGLES

35+BC: Amy Anderson (IL); Melissa Musick (IL)  
 45+: Sheila Champion (WI); Karin McCauley (IL); Kim Reimschisel (IN); Lynn Yeazell (IL)  
 45+BC: Susan Mueller (IL); Victoria Pickard (PA); Chris Cerny (IN); Cindy Streif (OK)  
 50+: Jean Halahan (NY); Marie Gomar (Guatemala); Laura Brandt (FL); Page Kern (MN)  
 55+: Cindy Tilbury (CA); Ann Fingerhood (MO); Diane Bunker (IL); Carmen Hernandez (FL)  
 55+BC: Ingrid Callman (DE); Pat Kwasigroch (IL); Mary Crambes (IL); Audrey Sorrento (NY)  
 60+: Liz Molitor (IL); Susan Adams (FL); Marsha Berry (KY); Brenda White (IL)  
 65+: Shirley Parsons (CO); Laurie Kitchen (NY); Jane Snyder (TN); Carol Gellman (NM)  
 65+BC: Barbara Vagedes (IL); Patricia Meyer (NY)  
 70+: Paula Sperling (NM)  
 75+: Mildred Gwinn (NC); Marquita Molina (CA)

### DOUBLES

35+ Doubles: Lynn Yeazell (IL)/Rebecca Bowman (IN); Carolyn Watkins Vazquez (IL)/Letty Maldonado (IL); Melissa Musick (IL)/Susan Mueller (IL)  
 45+ Doubles: Jean Halahan (NY)/Marie Gomar (Guatemala); Carrie Reitmeier (NE)/Linda Moore (AZ); Cheryl Jones (MN)/Wendy Miller (MN); Janet Eminger (IL)/Nancy Amaro (IL)  
 55+ Doubles: Ann Fingerhood (MO)/Page Kern (MN); Carmen Hernandez (FL)/Susan Adams (FL); Susan Pfahler (FL)/Karen Bouchard (FL); Joanna Nache (NC)/Kathy Stellema (MI)  
 65+ Doubles: Nancy Kronenfeld (IL)/Shirley Parsons (CO); Jane Snyder (TN)/Laurie Kitchen (NY); Patricia Meyer (NY)/Terry Rogers (NV); Barbara Vagedes (IL)/Patricia Moser (IL)  
 75+ Doubles: Mildred Gwinn (NC); Marquita Molina (CA)

## WSMRA PLAYERS CAME FROM

Arizona 1	Kentucky 1	New York 5
California 3	Maryland 1	North Carolina 3
Colorado 1	Michigan 1	Oklahoma 3
Delaware 2	Minnesota 3	Pennsylvania 1
Florida 7	Missouri 1	Tennessee 1
Guatemala 1	Nebraska 2	Wisconsin 2
Illinois 32	Nevada 1	
Indiana 4	New Mexico 4	



# CALENDAR of EVENTS

For the latest in USA Racquetball Sanctioned Events visit [USARacquetball.com](http://USARacquetball.com)

Date	Event	City	State	Location	Email
Apr 14-16	Cliff Swain Clinics - Romeoville & Orland Park	Orland Park	IL	Lifetime Fitness	southpaw1999@gmail.com
Apr 15	SoCal Doubles Shootout presented by Pro Kennex	Huntington	CA	Marina Park	justarroz@hotmail.com
Apr 22	Ochsner Fitness Center's Spring Fling Shootout	Harahan	LA	Ochsner Fitness Center, Harahan	racpres99@aol.com
Apr 22	Makeup Shootout	Boca Raton	FL	South County Regional Park	scott@appsbar.com
Apr 21-23	USA Racquetball Regionals - Illinois	Lombard	IL	Glass Court Swim And Fitness	petersgeoff@hotmail.com
Apr 21-23	USA Racquetball Regionals - Pennsylvania	Harmarville	PA	Fitness 1440	adam@pa-racquetball.com
Apr 21-23	Battle at The Alamo - REGIONALS/LPRT/IRT	San Antonio	TX	YMCA, Thousand Oaks	tournamentdirector@alamoracquetball.org
Apr 21-23	9th Annual Liberty University James River Open	Lynchburg	VA	Liberty University - LaHaye	rolloutva@gmail.com
Apr 21-23	No Strings Attached Open	Tucson	AZ	Tucson Racquet & Fitness Club	renee@tucsonracquetclub.com
Apr 21-23	Idaho State Singles	Boise	ID	IAC - State	cambistone@yahoo.com
Apr 21-23	Spokane Club Open Racquetball Event	Spokane	WA	Spokane Club - Downtown	premierracquet@gmail.com
Apr 22-23	USA Racquetball Regionals-Maryland	Laurel	MD	Sportfit	MSFEB14TH@icloud.com
Apr 22-23	Wyoming state single championship!	Casper	WY	Wyoming Athletic Club	dwhoover72@gmail.com
Apr 28-29	Iowa State Doubles & Junior State Singles	Des Moines	IA	Wellmark YMCA	joshpaul1982@gmail.com
Apr 27-30	IRT Pro-Am with Regional Singles	Sarasota	FL	Sarasota Family YMCA	auchad99@hotmail.com
Apr 28-30	Fran Davis Racquetball Camp - Warren	Warren	NJ	Warren Health & Racquet Club	camps@frandavisracquetball.com
Apr 28-30	Dee Patalano Memorial Tournament	E. Providence	RI	Healthtrax Fitness	killshotsports@gmail.com
Apr 28-30	Egg-Splat	Reseda	CA	USA Fitness MegaCenter	rjlam@hotmail.com
Apr 28-30	Rhema Spring Shootout	Tulsa	OK	Ninowski Recreation Center	kindschi@cox.net
Apr 29-30	Indiana State Singles Championships	W. Lafayette	IN	Purdue University	ksmith@centurytube.com
Apr 29-30	USA Racquetball Regionals - New York	Briarcliff	NY	Club Fit, Briarcliff	tkeogh1070@gmail.com
May 5-7	WRT GRACE WARRIOR MINISTRIES GEORGIA OPEN	Lilburn	GA	Recreation ATL	info@recreationatl.com
May 5-7	National Police Racquetball Association Tournament	Lombard	IL	Glass Court Swim & Fitness	cherylkkirk@aol.com
May 5-7	Military Classic / Limited VA State Singles	Herndon	VA	Greenbriar North YMCA	billracquetball@gmail.com
May 5-7	VA Military Classic / State Championships	Chesapeake	VA	Greenbriar North YMCA	mbailey@ymcashr.org
May 5-7	Cliff Swain - Racquetball Camp Denver	Centennial	CO	Life Time Fitness	southpaw1999@gmail.com
May 6	WOR Spring Shootout	Sacramento	CA	Florin High School	billgeo01@yahoo.com
May 12-13	PSRA Hosts Winterton Racquetball Camp	Pittsburgh	PA	Fitness 1440	adam@pa-racquetball.com
May 19-21	WORstock III	Jackson	TN	Racquetball Ranch	brad.tursky@worldoutdoorracquetball.net
May 19-21	2nd Annual Indy Open Charity Tournament: Lighthouse Charter	Indianapolis	IN	Jordan YMCA	summerracquetball@gmail.com
May 19-21	NORCAL Doubles	Redding	CA	Shasta Athletic Club	billgeo01@yahoo.com
May 19-21	Soda Man 3WB May Shootout at the Stratosphere	Las Vegas	NV	Stratosphere Hotel & Casino	rjlam@hotmail.com



# CALENDAR of EVENTS

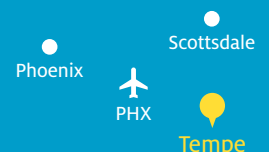


Date	Event	City	State	Location	Email
May 19-21	22nd Annual Tournament of Aces	West Columbia	SC	Tri-City Leisure Center	tournamentofaces@gmail.com
May 19-21	DPJCC 9th Annual Racquetball Tournament	Davie	FL	David Posnack Jewish CC	rballrick1@gmail.com
May 23	Instructors Program Clinic at National Singles	Tempe	AZ	ASU Sun Devil Fitness Complex	coachrball@gmail.com
May 24-28	USA Racquetball National Singles Championships	Tempe	AZ	ASU Sun Devil Fitness Complex	peggine@usaracquetball.com
June 3-4	WOR WARM-UPS	Huntington	CA	Marina Park	gregsolis5@yahoo.com
June 10	Ochsner Fitness Center's June Classic Shootout	Harahan	LA	Ochsner Fitness Center	racpres99@aol.com
June 10	RR Summer Challenge Fundraiser for Parkinson Dis.	Port Richey	FL	Richey Racquet Fitness Gym	racquetgym@gmail.com
June 10	WOR Beat the Heat Shootout	Sacramento	CA	Florin High School	billgeo01@yahoo.com
June 21-25	CA National Guard Junior Olympic Championships	Stockton	CA	In-Shape Sport: West Lane	peggine@usaracquetball.com
June 24-25	Hot Summer Nights	Indianapolis	IN	Jordan YMCA	summerracquetball@gmail.com
July 6-9	WOR CHAMPIONSHIPS	Huntington	CA	Marina Park	geoff25@icloud.com
July 12-15	NMRA International Championships Milwaukee	West Allis	WI	Wisconsin Athletic Club	cindy.tilbury@att.net
July 21-22	Sunflower State Games Racquetball Tournament	Topeka	KS	Downtown Topeka YMCA	lisacarlton55@gmail.com
July 21-23	Rocky Mountain State Games	Colorado Spr.	CO	YMCA Downtown Colorado	eddiemeredit@earthlink.net



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## WHAT DO YOU VALUE IN A TOURNAMENT?

By Cindy Tilbury, NMRA President

People play in racquetball (and other sports') tournaments for a lot of reasons. Which reasons are the most important to you?

- Low price?
- Being able to watch the professionals?
- Hanging with your friends?
- Playing close to home?
- Running on time?
- Getting a great t-shirt?
- Pizza for lunch?
- Getting a lot of court time?

Those are all key aspects of a racquetball tournament, but they boil down to one thing: appreciating the VALUE that you get from playing an event.

The NMRA founders came up with the all-round-robin concept where everyone plays every day and no one is ever eliminated. The fittest (and least-injured!) emerge victorious, but all players have a great time. Friendship, sightseeing, and good food have become more important than winning and medals, and we have continued that model since 1971.

The three international NMRA tournaments each year provide a great value for your tournament travel dollar. Look down our list of important value-adding concepts and see if you think you might like to join us soon:

- Provide all round-robin play in singles, doubles, and mixed doubles
- Provide all age-group play in five-year increments starting at 45 (or 40 for doubles-only)
- Move tournaments around the country (and the world, eventually) to find new local players
- Play Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday to allow plenty of racquetball for everyone
- Schedule matches back-to-back each day so players can have the rest of the day for relaxation and sightseeing
- Have a banquet for a little food, fun, drinking, announcements, memorials, and honors
- Provide a quality jacket or other giveaway to remember the event
- Provide great lunches and evening hospitality all week from local caterers
- Find doubles partners, roommates, and rides for players
- Make sure you make at least three new friends before you head home!

If these aspects sound like they would add value to your tournament experience, sign up online for our next event(s) or call us to talk about the NMRA and the way we work. For more information, head on over to our website: <http://www.nationalmastersracquetball.org>.



Steve Wattz and Mildred Gwinn

Photo By Leo Vasquez



Jerry Prentiss and NMRA Hall of Famer Dan Jones

Photo By Bruce Adams





### @internationalracquetball

March 1, 2017 | "The IRF has signed an agreement with the Olympic Channel!"



The Olympic Channel today announced that it has reached an agreement with the International Racquetball Federation (IRF) to collaborate on content for the Olympic Channel. The new cooperation agreement makes IRF one of the global platform's 49 federation partners.



### @markierojasrball

March 15, 2017 | "Hanging with the @wgnmorningnews and @ana.belaval racquetball this morning! #racquetball #professional #athlete #markierojasracquetball #playingwithballs #lol #letthejourneybegin"



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**Livestream Channel**



**For all the action visit**  
**www.USARacquetball.com**

## DOES YOUR PROGRAM COVER ITS LEGAL OBLIGATIONS?

The goal of risk management programs is to identify legal obligations for coaches and instructors, then translate them into coaching conduct or behavior.

The USA Racquetball Instructors Program (USAR-IP) does this by requiring students to take risk management courses, become CPR certified, complete a background check, and continually provide students with updated educational information.

The USAR-IP fulfills the legal obligations of a certification program through:

### 1. Effective Teaching

**Legal Obligation:** Coaches/instructors are supposed to be teachers first and foremost. The USAR-IP CEU (Continued Education Units) program provides updated information to keep instructors informed and current.

**Coaching/Instructor Behavior:** Enroll in certification and continuing coaching education programs. Begin a personal reading education program in coaching/instructor and communication skills.

### 2. Effective Supervision

**Legal Obligation:** Coaches/instructors are responsible for player supervision whenever the player and coach/instructor meet. The USAR-IP should require that all coaches/instructors to complete a background check. Although issues can still occur, the background check provides parents with a level of confidence and security regarding the background of the instructor.

**Coaching/Instructor Behavior:** Coaches/instructors should require all assistants/helpers also have a background check. The head coach/instructor is responsible for the conduct of all assistants/helpers.

### 3. Effective Action to Medical (and Other) Emergencies

**Legal Obligation:** Coaches should be trained to be able to identify medical emergencies when they see them and to know how to respond quickly and responsibly. The USAR-IP requires all coaches/instructors to be CPR certified and to renew that certification every two years. The program also provides continuing education courses in sports injuries and how to develop an effective medical support team.

**Coaching/Instructor Behavior:** Take a certification course in emergency medical procedures, or minimally sign up for a first aid course. Establish a plan for prompt reaction to medical emergencies. Maintain education in current emergency procedures and sports injuries.

### 4. Providing Safe Equipment and Playing Facilities and Knowledge of the Rules

**Legal Obligation:** Coaches/instructors should require that all students wear protective eyewear, have a properly sized racquet (especially for juniors), and have knowledge of the basic rules of play and safety. The USAR-IP provides a list of nationally approved eyewear and offers rules tests for all levels of players from junior to adult.

**Coaching/Instructor Behavior:** Instructors should be nationally certified and make sure their students know the rules of racquetball, especially those pertaining to safety and court etiquette. Coaches/Instructors should ensure facilities are safe (dry courts, doors are flush, etc.).



## Become Certified!

We host Certification Clinics at all national events. Our next Clinic will be at the USAR National Singles Championships in Tempe, Arizona.



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**Rocky Carson**