

RACQUETBALL



RECORD-SETTING OPEN

PAOLA LONGORIA TAKES TITLE #5 AT
THE UNITEDHEALTHCARE US OPEN
WASELENCUK DOMINATES
WITH #10



PRESENTING SPONSOR OF USA RACQUETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS



NATIONAL DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIPS

FEBRUARY 11 - 15, 2015 - TEMPE, AZ

NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL CHAMPIONSHIPS

FEBRUARY 25 - MARCH 1, 2015 - ST. LOUIS, MO

NATIONAL INTERCOLLEGIATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

MARCH 25 - 28, 2015 - TEMPE, AZ

NATIONAL SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIPS

MAY 20 - 24, 2015 - DENVER, CO

NATIONAL JUNIOR OLYMPIC CHAMPIONSHIPS

JUNE 24 - 28, 2015 - STOCKTON, CA



UnitedHealthcare

US OPEN

OCTOBER 7 - 11, 2015 - MINNEAPOLIS, MN



GET MORE INFO AND ENTER AT
USARACQUETBALL.COM

Get in the Game with a FREE USA Racquetball eMembership at USARacquetball.com



UnitedHealthcare US OPEN pro singles finalists (L-R):
Maria Jose Vargas, Kane Waselenchuk, Paolo Longoria, Alvaro Beltran.
Photo: RestrungMag.com

ON THE COVER: RECORD SETTERS

Paola Longoria set an LPRA record as the first woman to win five US OPEN titles. Photo: RestrungMag.com.

Inset: Kane Waselenchuk earned title #5 in 2009, then 5 more, non-stop, to reach ten and claim over half of the IRT titles ever awarded at the event. Photo: Ken Fife

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Submissions

Racquetball Magazine welcomes submissions from our members and readers. If you have an idea for an article, you may propose it by email to: magazine@usra.org. All submissions are subject to editing.

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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.

USA RACQUETBALL CORE VALUES

Communication • Customer Service • Dedication • Excellence • Integrity



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NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS & TEAM QUALIFYING

U.S. National Doubles Championships

February 11-15, 2015 | Tempe, AZ

U.S. National High School Championships

February 25 – March 1, 2015 | St. Louis, MO

U.S. National Intercollegiate Championships

March 24-28, 2015 | Tempe, AZ

U.S. National Singles Championships

May 20-24, 2015 | Denver, CO

U.S. National Junior Olympic Championships

June 24-28, 2015 | Stockton, CA

UnitedHealthcare US OPEN Championships

October 7-11, 2015 | Minneapolis, MN

U.S. National Team Qualifiers & Process

USA Racquetball has released the 2015-16 U.S. National Team Qualification Process that will define the 2015 Pan Am Games delegation. The revised qualification process includes:

Singles Players (in order of qualification)

- #1 American on the IRT and LPRT Tours
- #2 American on the IRT and LPRT Tours
- National Singles U.S. Team Qualifier Champions
- #3 American on the IRT and LPRT Tours
- National Singles U.S. Team Qualifier Runners-Up
- Intercollegiate #1 Gold Singles Division Champions

Doubles Players (in order of qualification)

- National Doubles U.S. Team Qualifier Champions
- National Doubles U.S. Team Qualifier Runners-Up

All appointments to the 2015-16 U.S. National Team will run from June 1, 2015 through May 31, 2016. Pro Tour qualifiers are based on rankings following the last event that concludes prior to June 1. Added details can be found on USARacquetball.com.



FROM THE
Executive Director

By Steve Czarnecki, Executive Director
USA Racquetball

Charting the Course

Please join us in re-committing to some key, distinct and important core values

Throughout much of this past year, USA Racquetball has been seeking input from its constituents as we worked to develop a Strategic Plan for the organization that would chart our course for coming years. While challenging, this has been an enjoyable process, and the prospect of implementing this plan and positively impacting our sport is incredibly exciting.

I'm pleased to share the primary components of this plan and what you can expect to see from USA Racquetball going forward.

As with any organization, and especially non-profit organizations, it all starts with our mission – our purpose for being. USA Racquetball's updated mission statement, which will be found in all issues of *Racquetball* going forward, is:

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.

Additionally, we as a staff and our Board of Directors have committed to these five distinct Core Values in our everyday actions on behalf of USA Racquetball: *Communication, Customer Service, Dedication, Excellence, Integrity.*

The USA Racquetball Strategic Plan covering the next 3-5 years is comprised of three Core Strategies:

- 1) *Expand the Reach of USA Racquetball*
- 2) *Continue to Serve Competitive Players*
- 3) *Increase Revenues to Fund the Achievement of our Mission and Goals*

So you'll see us focus on some of these areas in coming months:

- *Develop a free eMembership program to help connect with the millions of players who participate in the sport outside sanctioned events*
- *Build a facility membership program to better serve racquetball facilities and connect with the players that play there*
- *Invest in the development of collegiate racquetball to increase the number of collegiate club teams and players on those teams*
- *Increase the number of sanctioned leagues by developing a first-rate league management product and working with facilities to implement*
- *Improve the USA Racquetball brand by delivering on our promises and improving our communications*
- *Enhance the player experience at sanctioned events and National Championships*
- *Train and certify instructors to operate engaging programming and enhance the skill level and enjoyment of players*
- *Increase the value of USA Racquetball sponsorship and solicit increased investment, particularly from outside the industry*

This is a bold set of goals and we can't do this alone! What we ask of you is to support us in our pursuit of these shared goals, which are really focused on benefitting the sport overall. There may be times we ask for your help, just as there may be occasions for you to proactively offer your ideas or assistance. Additionally, we ask that you, as primary constituents of USA Racquetball, hold us, as leaders of this organization, accountable to pursue this strategy with the energy and fervor that you and our great sport deserve.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS BALLOT

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO THROW YOUR HAT IN THE RING!

Here is the information needed to utilize the Petition process to gain a position on the Official USA Racquetball Board of Directors Ballot. You must be a citizen of the United States, current USAR member and at least 18 years of age.

You and anyone you authorize to act as your agent may circulate the Official Ballot Petition Form provided your photo and statement are attached for potential signers to review. Note that the Form may be duplicated but not recreated or altered.

The Statement shall consist of 200 words or less "Why I want to serve on the USA Racquetball Board of Directors." After you have collected the requisite 200 or more signatures from current USA Racquetball members, please review them for legibility of both the printed and signed name. Any corrective action will need to be taken before the submission deadline.

The petitioner is responsible for personally reviewing and submitting all Official Ballot Petition Forms. Do not sign and date the forms until you have collected all your signatures. Forms are available for download from USARacquetball.com.

Official Ballot Petition forms are due by February 20 of the election year.



FROM THE President

By **Larry Haemmerle, President**
USA Racquetball Board of Directors

How Passionate **ARE YOU?**

How passionate are you when it comes to racquetball? I know we all love to play the game. We examine equipment, apparel, shoes, and string tensions ... but how far beyond the playing of the game does your dedication go? Our sport has a very diverse community comprised of State Association Boards, Tournament Directors, Program Coordinators, Organizers, Instructors, Industry Leaders, and the list goes on and on.

I am very proud of our USA Racquetball Board of Directors. They all invest a great deal of time, energy and their own money in support of our sport. We meet twice a year and have monthly phone conferences, all in support of racquetball. They each deserve individual recognition, so here goes: Jason Thorne, Vice President, and my right-hand man; Leo Vasquez, Secretary and Tournament Jack-of-all Trades; and Laurel Davis, Treasurer and financial guru. These officers comprise our Executive Committee and devote time beyond the bi-annual meetings and monthly phone conferences.

We are also supported by the remainder of the Board of Directors, including at-large members: Mike Ladge, Peter McMillin, Terry Rogers, Don Schopieray, TJ Baumbaugh, Shane Vanderson, and two new appointees Chris Poucher and Scott Fish. All of these individuals possess varied backgrounds and

skills instrumental to making our Board of Directors effective. If you know any of those listed, please thank them for the work they do and ask them questions about our organization. They are very knowledgeable and I am very proud of each and every one of them and their contributions.

Each State Association also has its own Board of Directors. Their hard work and dedication is instrumental in assuring the health and growth of our sport at the local level. Many of them generate program revenues by running events or fundraisers. USA Racquetball also supplements those efforts by providing rebates from your membership fees to help state organizations operate. We have worked very hard at bringing these rebates up-to-date and should be current in the near future.

A number of State organizations are utilizing this funding in a variety of ways. As examples, States are purchasing new supplies and equipment to improve the tournament experience, certifying energetic instructors to assist in local programs, funding Junior players – entry fees and sometimes travel, lodging and apparel expenses for National and International events, and more! As you notice these initiatives, please make certain you thank all of the volunteers that are helping to make our sport successful. Whenever someone does so, I know it makes all of the hard work worthwhile.

2014 USA RACQUETBALL SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

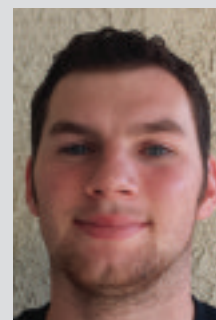
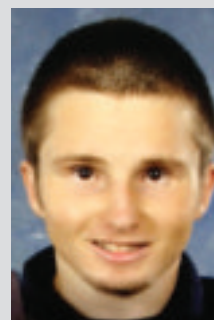
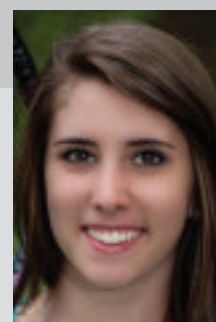
\$2000 SHARED BETWEEN FOUR RECIPIENTS

Sam Bredenbeck, 18, Marine, Minnesota — This 2014 Forest Lake High School graduate ranked 38 out of 420 in his class and graduated with a 3.76 GPA. Currently attending Buena Vista University in Storm Lake, Iowa, he plans on studying Exercise Science. Member of National Honor Society 2012-2014 and a member of 2013 Junior National Team; alternate in 2014. *Pictured top left.*

Brittany Click, 18, Huffman, Texas — Brittany is a 2014 graduate of Hargrave High School and was ranked 6 out of 206 in her class and was twice named to the National Honor Society. She has been very active with community service throughout High School and is attending the University of Texas at Arlington where she is pursuing a degree in nursing. Currently the #14 ranked woman in the state of Texas. *Pictured top right.*

Robert Hemphill, 19, Fosters, Alabama — A 2014 graduate of Holy Spirit Catholic High School and a Honor Roll member with a GPA of 3.81, Robert is also an Eagle Scout and 3-time member of the National Honor Society. Very active in community service, Robert is attending Auburn University and is studying Agricultural Economics. He is currently ranked #4 in the state of Alabama. *Pictured lower left.*

Connor Laffey, 19, Salem, Oregon — This 2013 graduate of Sprague High School currently attends Colorado State University at Pueblo where he plans on studying Psychology. Ranked #179 in the world, Connor was a member of the Junior National Team in 2012, 2013 and 2014. He is also a certified referee and





ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE

WITH YOUR SUPPORT, WE CAN RAISE MORE THAN **\$30,000** FOR THE TEAMS!

Support 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 2014 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 \$30,000 for your U.S. National Teams!

INAUGURAL TEAM USA CHALLENGE BENEFACTORS

*Rick Betts • Steve & Rosanna Czarnecki • Cheryl Kirk & Kit Lawson
Mike Lippitt • Eric & Lydia Mueller • Chris Poucher*

For the first time under the TEAM USA CHALLENGE, donations will be used to support direct travel costs of U.S. Junior National Team members attending the Junior World Championships!

DONOR LEVELS & GIFTS



\$100 or more will receive a Bag Tag and a **Team USA Rolls T-shirt.**



\$250 or more will receive a Bag Tag and a **Team USA Uniform Crew.**



\$500 or more will receive a Bag Tag and a **Team USA Pullover.**



\$1,000 or more will receive a Bag Tag and a **Team USA Podium Jacket.**

All donors will be recognized in USA Racquetball Communications

● **DONATE TODAY at USARacquetball.com**



**FEBRUARY
11 - 15, 2015**
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Tempe, Arizona

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at USARacquetball.com
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YOU'RE INVITED TO THE PREMIER DOUBLES RACQUETBALL EVENT OF THE SEASON!
The athleticism and skill is second to none. Seeing the best players compete in the fastest version of the sport is truly unforgettable. So get up close to the action at ASU's wonderful stadium court, in between your own court times!

FUN, FUN AND MORE FUN — National Doubles in Tempe, Arizona makes for a perfect mid-winter getaway and an opportunity for you to play-cation with your favorite partners, plus enjoy the challenge of facing worthy opponents from across the country. Re-connect with a like-minded crowd of fascinating people for great camaraderie and competition!

ENJOY WARM WEATHER — With February average high temperatures in the 70s, Tempe is great place to get away from the cold and dreary winter. Grab the sunscreen and join your friends in sunny Arizona!

NATIONAL TEAM/AMATEUR DOUBLES — Don't miss a great opportunity to play Doubles with a National Team Member. Donors of \$250 will be matched up with National Team Qualifier Division entrants for a single-elimination (one game to 11) Doubles Challenge. Proceeds support the TEAM USA Challenge that benefits the U.S. National and Junior National Teams. Matches in other divisions will be scheduled around the Doubles Challenge.

AWARDS/PRIZE MONEY

National Team Qualifying Divisions - 1st Place - \$1,000
1st Place - Commemorative Gold Coin, Qualify for U.S. National Team
2nd Place - \$500 & Qualify for U.S. National Team
Mixed Open Division: 1st Place - \$500
All Divisions: 1st - 4th - Newly designed National Championship medals

THE ROAD TO TORONTO — The 2015 National Doubles Championships will also identify the Men's and Women's Doubles Teams who are likely to represent the United States at the 2015 Pan Am Games.



PLENTY TO DO IN THE VALLEY OF THE SUN

— Tempe and the surrounding areas offer many activities for all age groups. The popular Mill Avenue District and Downtown Tempe offer shops, restaurants and bars within walking distance of the Recreation Center, and the area is known for its golf courses and Desert

Botanical Gardens. Those interested in casino gaming can find great options in nearby Scottsdale. Find more information at TempeTourism.com.

CLASSIC RACQUET DIVISIONS — Have some fun and go back in time with the new Classic Racquet divisions. Racquet length is limited to 18.5 inches. Break out the old duds and compete for the best dressed in the divisions. Don't have a classic racquet? Hit up your local thrift store or borrow one from the Championship desk.

VIP HOSPITALITY — USA Racquetball Lifetime Members, National Team Members and other special guests enjoy wonderful VIP Hospitality, including expedited check-in. Become a Lifetime Member today or purchase a pass to experience these first-rate benefits.

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"I love the Pro Penn Green ball. The fast crisp action off my racquet helped me win GOLD Medals at the 2011 Pan American Games and 2012 World Championships. No other brand compares to Penn!"

Paola Longoria

"All the Pro's on the IRT know that the Pro Penn HD ball is second to none. With today's lightweight racquets this is the only ball to play with. Its lightweight design and softer feel offers players of all levels the most comfortable experience on the court, even with shots exploding over 180 mph!"

Rocky Carson

2015 U.S. NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP PREVIEWS

ACCOMMODATIONS — SAVE with these BELOW MARKET RATES by mentioning USA Racquetball when making your reservation! Room blocks are LIMITED, so book early to receive the best rate; when blocks are filled, all discounts expire!

Holiday Inn Express and Suites

1031 E. Apache Blvd., Tempe (480) 966-7202
\$84 King, \$104 Double. (if reserved by 01/27/15 and rooms are available).

Graduate — Tempe (remodeled Twin Palms)

225 E. Apache Blvd., Tempe (480) 967-9431
\$119 Single/Double. (if reserved by 01/11/15 and rooms are available).

Four Points by Sheraton — Tempe

1333 S. Rural Rd., Tempe (480) 968-3451
\$139 Single/Double. (if reserved by 01/10/15 and rooms are available).



PHOTO COURTESY TIM TRUMBLE

All host hotels are conveniently located within minutes of the Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport and provide airport shuttles. Room block rates include complimentary breakfast, wi-fi and airport transportation. The Hotels are within a short walk of the ASU Student Recreation Center.

TRAVEL — 17 airlines serve the Phoenix Sky Harbor International airport with more than 100 non-stop destinations. Save on United fares to National Doubles with discount code ZRCH771762 at United.com.



TAKE ADVANTAGE OF COLORFUL COLORADO

The Mile High City offers 300 days of sunshine, a thriving cultural scene, diverse neighborhoods, and natural beauty to create the world's most spectacular playground. A young, active city at the base of the Rocky Mountains, Denver features stunning architecture, award-winning dining and unparalleled views to combine with seven professional sports teams for entertainment year-round. See denver.org

Highlands Ranch is a 22,000-acre master-planned upper-middle class community located 12 miles south of Denver along C-470 and approximately one mile west of Interstate 25 (I-25). This location provides easy access to transportation (Denver International Airport, regional light rail), the mountains, Denver, Boulder, Aurora and Colorado Springs metropolitan areas. See highlandsranchchamber.org

PHOTO COURTESY RICH GRANT AND VISIT DENVER



COLORADO ROCKIES TICKETS — Take in a Colorado Rockies game at Coors Field on Tuesday, May 19 with fellow National Singles participants for the special group price.

HALL OF FAME INDUCTION/ANNUAL AWARDS — Experience the best evening in racquetball as annual award recipients and the legends of the sport are recognized and celebrated.

HOST CLUBS

Highlands Ranch Rec Center at Northridge
8801 S. Broadway, Highlands Ranch
(303) 791-2500

Littleton Family YMCA
11 W. Dry Creek Ct., Littleton
(303) 797-9622

Life Time Fitness, Centennial
5000 E. Dry Creek Rd., Centennial
(720) 489-1400

ACCOMMODATIONS — SAVE with these BELOW MARKET RATES by mentioning USA Racquetball when making your reservation — but book early, since discount rates are available only until limited room blocks are filled!

Hilton Garden Inn Denver/Highlands Ranch
1050 Plaza Drive, Highlands Ranch
Site of Annual Awards/Hall of Fame event
(303) 683-4100 ~ Operates shuttle to/from all clubs. Rate: \$134

Fairfield Inn & Suites Denver Tech Center South
7056 E. County Line, Highlands Ranch
(303) 290-6700 ~ Shuttle may not be provided.
Rate: \$104

Comfort Suites Highlands Ranch/Denver Tech Center
7060 E. County Line, Highlands Ranch
(303) 770-5400 ~ Shuttle may not be provided.
Rate: \$90

Room block rates include complimentary breakfast and wi-fi.

TRAVEL — 7 airlines serve Denver International Airport with more than 180 non-stop destinations. Save on United fares to National Singles with discount code ZRCH771762 at United.com.



For over 40 years, the Ektelon Flame has illuminated the path and led the journey of racquetball from obscurity to world class competition. It has grown to represent game-changing innovation, revolutionary technology, and a competitive edge leading to championship results. And, we're just getting started.

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Racquetball Rejuvenates

Spirit and Soul

AILING RACQUETBALL BROTHER ATTENDS US OPEN AS VIP

Story & Photos by Jen Sinclair Johnson

Lenny Estrada says he remembers his younger days as a “typical racquetball gym rat” in the 1980s while playing at a club in Anaheim owned by RO Carson, Rocky Carson’s father. “I worked there, so I got free court time. I played every day if I could. It was like I lived there,” said Estrada, 51, who now lives in Bend, Oregon. “In fact, I remember when Rocky’s mother was pregnant with him. That’s how far back I go with the Carson family.”

A tournament B-level player, Estrada maintained his active love affair with racquetball until eight years ago when he was diagnosed with a rare form of brain cancer. “This type of cancer typically affects children, not adults,” Estrada said. “I have been fighting it since then, and four surgeries and radiation treatments left me exhausted.” He now walks with a brace on his left leg and uses a cane. “I often feel off-balance, sometimes I fall down. Still, I am here. But I love and miss racquetball.”

Earlier this year his sister, Lisa, helped arrange a “special wish come true” for Lenny to visit an IRT pro stop in May. However, other issues related to the cancer forced that trip to be cancelled. He was able to travel to Portland a short time later to watch the ProKennex Tournament of Champions where he was reunited with family, old racquetball friends, and Rocky Carson. “The Tournament of Champions was an unbelievable experience, a dream. The last time I watched a pro tournament in person, Marty Hogan was the top player and the tournament was in California.”

Recently Estrada was given a second chance to experience a professional tournament, this time at the UnitedHealthcare US OPEN Championships. “I didn’t believe it at first, because I’d heard the US Open was really something else.” Estrada was “humbled and overwhelmed” that strangers like Jason Mannino, president of the IRT, US OPEN Tournament Director, Doug Ganim, Carson and Kane Waselenchuk all reached out to him to lend their assistance

The Estrada family shares a memorable week in Minneapolis. Facing page: Lenny has a one-on-one with Rocky Carson





in making sure his journey to the OPEN would be seamless.

"I was given VIP seating, got to talk with all the pros ... guys like Rocky and Kane ... it was really unbelievable. It was very gratifying to have so many people help me achieve this dream."

The trip reunited Estrada not only with players and friends, but with a racquetball life that's now

a distant memory. "For a long time racquetball was an important part of my life, the best part of my life."

Estrada added he is aware of the challenges he faces after eight years of cancer treatments. "I understand how serious this is. Cancer takes lives." Estrada lost his wife to cancer in 2013. "She was healthy and took care of me until she developed cancer. Still, I believe God put me here for a purpose, and has something for me to do. Right now I feel strong."

Estrada credits his years of playing racquetball for his ability

to deal with his illness now. "I truly believe racquetball kept me in good physical condition and strengthened me. It made me what I am today and gave me the strength to fight through this." Estrada had another surgery in August to remove more tumors, but for now says he is at his best. "I really feel good right now, and had no problem traveling to Minneapolis." said the American Cancer Society volunteer. The generosity of others rejuvenated his spirit and soul, and he was invigorated by watching top level play, and hearing the familiar smack of racquetballs against the wall.

"I wish I could get out there on a court playing myself, although I know I can't. Still, I love racquetball, the competition, the social aspect, the whole culture of it. I am blessed."



SCHEDULE

January 8-11	T1 Coast to Coast California Open	Fountain Valley, CA
January 15-18	T1 Cactus Salon NYC Pro/Am	Long Island, NY
January 22-25	T1 Lewis Drug Pro/Am	Sioux Falls, SD
March 6-8	T1 Florida IRT Pro/Am	Florida
March 12-15	T1 Shamrock Shootout	Lombard, IL
April 23-26	T1 IRT Pro Nationals	TBD
April 30 - May 3	T1 Stockton Pro/Am	Stockton, CA
May 14-17	T1 Pro Kennex Tournament of Champions	Portland, OR

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- ROCKY CARSON
FOUR-TIME WORLD CHAMPION



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- *Go to rballfuel.com where 100% of the net proceeds support USA Racquetball for Junior Programs and to Grow the Sport!*



RBALLFUEL.COM



Finalists Paola Longoria and Maria Jose Vargas warmed up in Mexico, and Vargas was later pleased with her second place winnings.

Story & Photos by TJ Baumbaugh

The 2014-2015 LPRT season started off with a bang. The “Torneo Fenapo 2014 Paola Longoria Experience” held in Longoria’s hometown of San Luis Potosi, Mexico, awarded the largest purse that women’s professional racquetball has ever battled for. Longoria did not disappoint her local fans. She won the pro singles division defeating Maria Jose Vargas in the final, and won the doubles final with partner Samantha Salas, defeating the team of Michelle Key and Frederique Lambert.

Before heading to the US Open, the LPRT stopped in Las Vegas for a satellite event and then in Huixquilucan, Mexico, for the second of four Grand Slams on the first half of the LPRT schedule. Singles at the LPRT satellite event, The WOR 2014 3 Wallball World Championships, was won by Janel Tisinger while the prevailing doubles team was Rhonda Rajsich and Michelle Key. At Grand Slam number two, the Abiertos Mexicano de Raquetas, Longoria and Vargas made the singles finals again with Longoria coming out on top.

This season the LPRT welcomed Jonathan Clay of Rollout to the Tour’s management team. Jonathan commented, “I am honored to now be working alongside T.J. Baumbaugh and Andy Kulback as the Marketing Director for the LPRT. The LPRT is one of the premier organizations in racquetball and is putting on some of the biggest and most exciting events in the sport right now. I am looking to capitalize on all these great things and bring as many eyeballs to the events, players, and excitement of the LPRT as I possibly can. Through our brand new website, LPRTOUR.com, our growing social media platforms, and the partnerships we have with the players of the LPRT, I know the tour is poised for its largest period of growth and expansion in the history of women’s racquetball. To be a part of that is tremendous, and I believe that the team we have in place is exactly what we need to put all the pieces together and grow not only women’s racquetball but the entire sport worldwide.”

Our scholarship players for the 2014-2015 season are a talented group of ladies representing three countries: United States, Mexico, and Guatemala. Keep an eye on this group as they upset some draws and rise in the rankings. They each took some time to answer a few racquetball related questions, here are some of their answers.

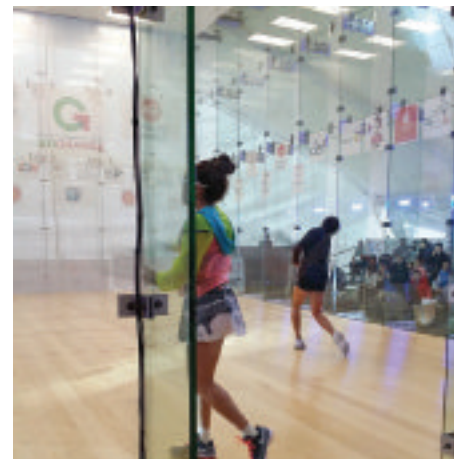
LUCIA GONZALES – JUAREZ, CHIHUAHUA, MEXICO

At what age did you start playing racquetball?

I started playing at the age of 6. One day I went with my brother to his racquetball class and that day I realized I liked racquetball. Weeks later I started also with racquetball classes.

THE NEW SEASON RAMPS UP

SCHOLARS ON DECK



Which players inspire you and why?

I can say that there are many racquetball players that inspire me but specifically I would say Samantha Salas. I like the way she plays, she is very aggressive, she plays fast and is very brave. Another thing I like about her game is that she never gives up, even if the score is not very good.

ALEXANDRA HERRERA – SAN NICOLAS DE LOS GARZA, NUEVO LEON, MEXICO

How did you start playing racquetball?

I started at the age of 11 because a fronton coach invited me to play in the nationals Olympics of racquetball, just like a try, and at the end I liked it.

Which players inspire you and why?

I get inspired by Paola Longoria because of her mental strength, Maria Jose Vargas because she is a warrior and never gives up, and Veronica Sotomayor because of her game style.

What would you like to accomplish this season on Tour?

My goals are to be ranked in the best 13 players of the season, win the junior world championships, and improve my game.

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GRAPHENE



Tour regulars (L-R): Sheryl Lotts, Sharon Jackson, Paola Longoria, Linda Tyler and Da'monique Davis.
Photo: TJ Baumbaugh

MARIA RENEE RODRIGUEZ – SANTA CATERINA PINULA, GUATEMALA

How did you start playing racquetball?

I started playing racquetball when I was 12. In 2006, the Pan-American Racquetball tournament was held here in Guatemala at a club near my house. When my dad heard the news he took me to watch some games. I didn't know racquetball existed until that day. My dad then told me he had been the racquetball national champion many years before, and I started playing the next year.

Which players inspire you and why?

Many players inspire me. I have been inspired many times watching different players at different tournaments. Every time I see someone putting his or her heart on the court, and refusing to walk out without giving a 100%, I get inspired. But if I had to choose one player it would be Paola. What I admire most from her is her mental strength. The way in which she manages pressure and keeps winning every tournament is admirable. Watching her play makes me want to become a mentally strong player.

because she used to train for the USA team in Ohio and I would always come watch and I wanted to be like her! She has a great game and is an awesome person on and off the court.

What would you like to accomplish this season on Tour?

My goal by the end of the season is to be top 8 and make the USA team!

SOFIA RASCON – PLAYAS DE ROSARITO, BAJA CALIFORNIA, MEXICO

How did you start playing racquetball?

I started to play racquetball in Rosarito, Mexico, at the age of 12. Before that I practiced a lot of sports like soccer, basketball, and karate. My Dad played Fron Tennis, and I used to hit the ball off the walls of my house when I was little. My dad noticed my racquet skills and he took me to Rosy Torres who was in that moment the number one player in Mexico and in the Pan-Am Games. She was my first coach, and she taught me a lot of things about the sport. She also taught me to enjoy and love racquetball.

Which players inspire you and why?

Players like Alvaro Beltran (with his natural talent), Samantha Salas (with her big heart that never gives up), Paola Longoria (how she is so dedicated 110% to training, and now doing a lot of things for the sport of racquetball). Although I have to say that I find inspiration in every player I see or meet, it doesn't matter if they are a top ranked player or amateur player. If I see someone who is giving his or her soul on the court and enjoying and trying to get better player, that is a real inspiration for me. I see this in every LPRT tournament. It's amazing how racquetball can unite us!

MICHELLE KEY – PHOENIX, ARIZONA

How did you start playing racquetball?

I was born into racquetball. My parents met playing and it's been in the family ever since.

Which players inspire you and why?

My family has always been really inspiring to me. They have taught me everything I know and they have always been there to support me. The newest inspiration would have to be Daniel (De La Rosa) simply because he is the best!

What would you like to accomplish this season on Tour?

I would like to finish the season in the top 5 for singles and be number one in doubles. As always, I love to meet new people and make new friends along the way!

SHERYL LOTTS – COLUMBUS, OHIO

How did you start playing racquetball?

I started playing racquetball at the age of 9, with my dad. He had always played and I just liked to tag along. He taught me everything about the game and then we came across Jr. Team Ohio where I started to compete.

Which players inspire you and why?

Cheryl Gudinas has always been the player I've looked up to most. Not because we have the same name, but



2015 SCHEDULE

DATE	TOURNAMENT	LOCATION	LEVEL
Jan. 23-25	Mercedes Benz Open	Cincinnati, OH	Tier 1
Feb. 20-22	Winter Classic	Overland Park, KS	Tier 1
March 6-8	New Jersey Open	Warren, NJ	Tier 1
March TBD	California Regionals	Reseda, CA	Tier 1
April TBD	Battle at the Alamo	San Antonio, TX	Tier 1
April 17-19	Mile High Pro/Am	Denver, CO	Tier 1
May TBD	Ektelon LPRT Pro Nationals	TBD, VA	Tier 1



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MORE WIN.



3 WallBall Extravaganza AT THE STRATOSPHERE

by 3 WallBall Staff



PHOTOS BY RANDY LAM



Top: Women's Pro Singles (L-R), Janet Tisinger and Jessica Parilla.
Above: Hemborg Ford Cup Winners (L-R): Daryle Urich, Rhonda Rajsich, Mike Coulter, Robert Sostre.

Right: Men's CPRT 40+ Doubles finalists: Gabe Medina, Cliff Swain, Robert Sostre, Craig Lane.

Facing: ESPN's Molly Sullivan interviews "Racquets vs. Hands" winners Joe Young and Robert Sostre.

With perfect fall weather, over 550 players descended upon the Stratosphere Hotel & Casino for the fifth annual 3 Wallball World Championships, making it the largest and most successful event in its brief history. Almost equally divided among racquetball and handball players, along with a great group of paddleballers, players entered nearly 1,200 events and played long into the night under the bright lights of the Las Vegas Strip.

A number of special events highlighted the week, starting Wednesday night with a clinic by racquetball and handball pros for the Boy Scouts of America and a racquetball Pro-Am to benefit the Military Racquetball Federation's Wounded Warrior program. Thursday was the second annual Ladies Night and Friday night featured a 1 wall Hands vs. Racquets exhibition that was taped for ESPN (and won by racquetball partners Robert Sostre and Joe Young). The best of the annual special events is always the Saturday night color guard presentation at dusk on the Championship courts featuring recognition of our military, police, and fire participants and our Wounded Warrior guest presented by the MRF.

For racquetball, this was the final event of the Hemborg Ford 3 WallBall Cup Championship Series which, for the last three years, has grown from coast-to-coast. For the men, the repeat champion was Robert Sostre who capped a great year in which he was inducted into the WOR Hall of Fame. On the Women's side, Rhonda Rajsich had to defeat Janel Tisinger in the Women's Doubles semi-final in order to unseat the defending Cup Series Champion and earn her first Series title.

In some of the feature racquetball divisions; Rocky Carson once again dominated men's play, winning both the Pro Singles and Pro Doubles teamed with Alvaro Beltran. On the women's side, Janel Tisinger captured the Pro Singles while Rhonda Rajsich & Michelle Key took home the Pro Doubles title. Cliff Swain and Craig Lane continued their domination of the CPRT Doubles and it was Daniel De La Rosa and Michelle Key winning the Pro Mixed Doubles.

As always, 3 Wallball sponsors make the event possible, including presenting sponsor Ektelon Outdoor and host Stratosphere Hotel & Casino, along with all of the organizing bodies that cooperate to put on this great event; World Outdoor Racquetball, World Players of Handball, National Paddleball Association, International Racquetball Tour, Ladies Professional Racquetball Tour, USA Racquetball, and the Military Racquetball Federation.

Please mark your calendars for September 23 – 27, 2015 when the 3 Wallball World Championships return to Las Vegas!





MILITARY RACQUETBALL FEDERATION



The Military Racquetball Federation would like to thank the 3 WallBall tournament directors for allowing them to be a partner of this great event. The MRF kicked off the tournament with the Pro-Am Doubles raising \$1,900. Pros Scott Davis, Daniel De La Rosa, Aimee Ruiz, and Janel Tisinger paired up with amateurs Jared Campos (sponsored by Tom Moore), Steven Harper (sponsored by Sam Neer), Geoff Holmes, and Bree Paganetto as the amateurs played with each of the pros. Also contributing but not playing were Robbie Johnson and Bobby Friedman. Jared was presented the first place plaque and Geoff second. Congratulations and thanks to all of the contributors and pros for making this a successful fundraiser for the MRF. Pictured: Military, Firefighters and Police assembled for the Presentation of Colors.

The MRF supports racquetball activities and tournaments at bases all over the world. It also works with our wounded service members through their Racquetball Rehabilitation Clinics. The MRF representatives were on site for the entire tournament spreading the word and continuing with their fundraising through shirt sales, an auction, and a bean bag toss competition. When all was said and done an additional \$500 was raised. The finale for the MRF weekend was the color guard ceremony, Nellis Air Force Base, Saturday evening where Executive Director Steven Harper USN, LCDR (RET) assisted by Marcia Roberts, RRC participant, said a few words about the MRF. Steven also received a surprise presentation from Joe Coniglio, MRF Florida State Director, for his service to the MRF.



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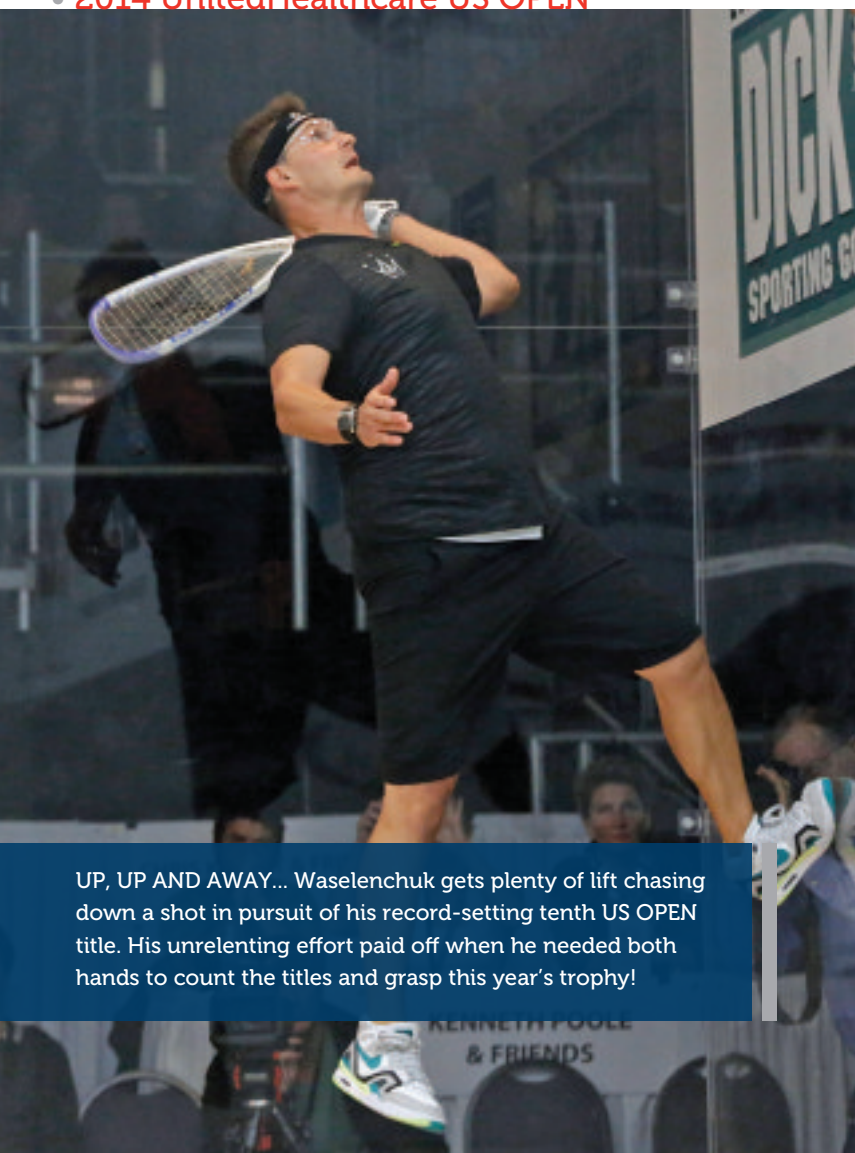
◆ Story by Doug Ganim

Photos by RestrungMagazine.com & Ken Fife

It's hard to believe we just completed the 19th US OPEN Racquetball Championships, nearly two decades have flown by, and that the tournament has gotten better and better each year. The 2014 UnitedHealthcare US OPEN was no exception, drawing more than 700 players from 15 countries, and a record turnout of fans (over 2,500!) to watch pro matches throughout the week. All the top players from the men's and women's pro tours, plus every major industry leader and manufacturer, were in attendance. The entire week was an incredible celebration of the sport so, for those who couldn't make it, my condolences :) ... you missed one heck of a party!

Before I begin reviewing the incredible on- and off-court action, I want to thank my staff of more than 100 people that made the event happen. Few realize the huge effort required to pull off an event of this magnitude, but the entire US OPEN staff knows what it takes. They pull together every year to make sure everyone who attends has a great experience. There are too many to list here, but each and every one of you deserves the gratitude of the entire sport.

I also want to thank USA Racquetball and its Board of Directors, owners of the US OPEN, for allowing our team to execute the event. We're also grateful to all the sponsors and Gold Box holders who provide the financial support to make the US OPEN possible. And, of course, we're indebted to UnitedHealthcare for taking on the important Title Sponsorship – with a dedication that's unmatched in the sport's history - and for renewing their two-year contract at the 2014 event. For our part, we should all remember UnitedHealthcare when choosing health insurance for our families and businesses. See a complete list of US OPEN sponsors and supporters on the facing page – and be sure to express your appreciation accordingly!



UP, UP AND AWAY... Waselenchuk gets plenty of lift chasing down a shot in pursuit of his record-setting tenth US OPEN title. His unrelenting effort paid off when he needed both hands to count the titles and grasp this year's trophy!



PROS, PROS AND MORE PROS

Pro players from the Men's International Racquetball Tour (IRT), Ladies Professional Racquetball Tour (LPRT) and the Classic Professional Racquetball Tour (CPRT & M40+) are always the "main event" in singles. This year, Men's and Women's PRO Doubles became an incredible new addition to the competitive lineup, and all the top athletes, without exception, played in both singles and doubles. Although the singles is always fantastic, tournament buzz focused on the incredible on-court action in this year's new pro doubles. More on that action later!

MEN'S PRO SINGLES

In IRT singles, defending champ Kane Waselenchuk once again stormed through the draw without losing a single game. In fact, the most anybody scored in one game was 6 points! It was a classic, dominating "King Kane" road trip, as he dispatched Cliff Swain in the round of 16, Tony Carson in the quarterfinals, Alejandro Landa in the semifinals, and Alvaro Beltran in the finals – to capture a 10th US OPEN title.

While Kane dominated his side of the draw, there were exciting matches and some major upsets all week long. Doubles partners No.8 Tony Carson and No.9 Jansen Allen

faced off in an early-round marathon that lasted nearly three hours before Carson edged it out 13-11 in the fifth and final game. The first of two quarterfinal standouts was the emergence of No.13 Alejandro Landa as a future superstar. He not only upset No.5 Daniel De La Rosa, but did it emphatically, with scores of 11-2, 11-8, 11-6, to reach his first US OPEN semi. The second was a 2.5 hour barnburner that saw Ben Croft jump out to a 2-0 game lead over Rocky Carson, then hold match point on his racquet in game three. But Carson managed to creep out a game three win, 12-10, for the glimmer of hope he needed to mount an incredible comeback. Both players laid out everything they had on the court, as Carson went on to take the next two games 11-7 and 11-5. The fans loved every minute of it and rewarded them both with a standing ovation.

In the semifinals, Carson again found himself in a five-game war with long-time nemesis Alvaro Beltran. This match lasted 2 hours and 40 minutes with Beltran emerging victorious 11-4 in the fifth game.

In the finals Beltran gave it all he had but Kane was just too much for him, logging straight game scores of 11-6, 11-1, 11-6. Despite the blowout, no other player scored 6 points in a game on Kane all week. Beltran did it twice in the finals.



WASELENCHUK TOOK HIS FIFTH TITLE IN 2009, THEN THE NEXT FIVE STRAIGHT ... LONGORIA SET AN LPRA RECORD

WOMEN'S PRO SINGLES

The LPRT singles echoed the IRT, with defending champion Paola Longoria completely dominating the field to win her 5th US OPEN title without losing a single game. She defeated Maiko Sato in the round of 32, Jessica Parrilla in the round of 16, Diane Aguilar in the quarterfinals, Cristina Amaya in the semifinals and Maria Jose Vargas in the finals.

Plenty of great matches provided some important upsets along the way. Mexico's Diana Aguilar, ranked No.25 at the beginning of the week, went on to beat No.8 Da'Monique Davis in the Round of 32 and No.9 Michelle Key in the Round of 16 to make her first quarterfinals appearance, where she lost to Longoria in straight games. Another upset was Sofia Rascon from Mexico, ranked No.11, who eliminated No.6 Susana Acosta in the round of 16 with scores of 11-4, 11-6, 11-7, before losing to Vargas in their quarterfinal.

The matchup everyone was talking about all week was the potential semifinal between the hottest young player on tour, No.3 Maria Jose Vargas, and veteran champion No.2 Rhonda Rajsich. Both players did their jobs and made it through to the semifinals for the marquee match. Vargas had beaten Rajsich in the three stops leading up to the US OPEN but had never played well at the US OPEN in the past, especially on the glass stadium court. Despite all the anticipation, Vargas showed why she is the next real threat to the LPRT crown, with her defeat of Rajsich 11-3, 11-6, 8-11, 11-0.





MEN'S 40+ SINGLES

At the US OPEN the entire Men's 40+ division is designated as the Classic Professional Racquetball Tour draw. In the bracket, 22 players lined up to make a run at the US OPEN title with some familiar faces in the seeded positions. Defending Champion Jimmy Lowe was seeded No.1 with two-time past runner-up Corey Osborne in No.2; Keith Minor and Brad McCuniff rounded out the top four. However, as with all the age divisions, newcomers are always having birthdays and breaking into the action. This year it was debuts by Jeff Stark and Tom Fuhrmann that made a tough draw even tougher.

Jimmy Lowe worked his way to the finals defeating Scott Wolford in the round of 16, Aduardo Avila in the quarters, and Brad McCuniff in the semis. Claiming "match of the week" status, Tom Fuhrmann eliminated Corey Osborne in the quarters, with scores of 7-9, 9-8, 5-9, 9-6, 10-8! Fuhrmann went on to beat Doug Ganim to reach his first US OPEN CPRT finals, where he got off to a hot start against Jimmy Lowe by taking the first game 9-3, then losing game two by the same margin. In the pivotal third, Fuhrmann regained his advantage with a 9-6 game win. However, the always tenacious and incredibly fit Lowe came storming back to take the next two games 9-5, 9-1.

PRO DOUBLES

For the first time in US OPEN history, Pro Doubles divisions added an incredible treat for the fans with non-stop diving, long rallies, and breathtaking teamwork on display. Special thanks to all the top pro players for committing that extra effort in an already-demanding week.

On the men's side, the burning question was: Who would the top players team up with? Would they grab a lower ranked player that might specialize in doubles or choose an arch-rival in singles to try and create a dream team? Once the draws were posted, some incredible pairings were revealed among the 23 teams that had entered, including Kane Waselenchuk with Ben Croft (nobody saw that one coming!) and IRT No.2 Rocky Carson with his biggest rival Alvaro Beltran (most thought Carson would team with Jose Rojas after winning the 2014 National Doubles title).

Other top seeded pairings included Daniel De La Rosa with Jose Rojas and Alejandro Landa with Chris Crowther. Despite all the unpredictability and the incredible talent loaded in the qualifiers, it was the top four seeds that found their way to the semifinals. Top seeded Waselenchuk/Croft dispatched Landa/Crowther easily in two, but Carson/Beltran needed a strong 11-8 tiebreaker finish to overcome De La Rosa/Rojas.



TOP: LPRT FINALISTS MARIA JOSE VARGAS (FOREGROUND) AND PAOLA LONGORIA. ABOVE: CPRT'S JIMMY LOWE AND TOM FUHRMANN FACE OFF FOR THE TITLE.



ALVARO BELTRAN TURNS ON A FOREHAND AGAINST WASELENCHUK IN THEIR FINAL. PHOTOS THIS SEGMENT

The finals did not disappoint! In front of one of the biggest crowds in US OPEN history, fans were treated to an incredible display of speed, power, and talent. Carson/Beltran took the first game 15-9 but quickly got in a large 0-7 hole in the second, allowing Waselenchuk/Croft to cruise on to win that game 15-8. In the tiebreaker Waselenchuk found another gear to take control of the court and guide his team to an 11-5 win. Waselenchuk/Croft are the first-ever US OPEN Pro Doubles Champions!

On the women's side, the pairings were just as exciting, with even more surprises when announced. The No.1 seed was a shocking combination of Rhonda Rajsich and Maria Jose Vargas, followed by No.2 Paola Longoria and Veronica Sotomayor (Paola's regular international partner, Samantha Salas, was injured and unable to attend the event). Both top seeds cruised to the finals, each without losing a game.

This final shaped up to be one of the best matches of the tournament, as Longoria/Sotomayor cranked up the power right out of the gate and took the first game 15-7. Vargas/Rajsich came storming back in the second game to win 15-12. In the tiebreaker it was neck and neck until Longoria/Sotomayor got on a late run to take the US OPEN Ladies Pro Doubles Title with an 11-7 tiebreaker victory!



UnitedHealthcare US Open Tournament Director
Doug Ganim for putting the USRF Juniors Clinic on the program



Coach Jim Winterton for putting kids through paces at the 2014 US Open Juniors Clinic



Pros Rhonda Rajsich, and Rocky Carson for making the 2014 US Open Juniors Clinic an unforgettable experience



Andrea Beugen-Hartman for bringing passion & energy to organization of US Open and Midwest Juniors Clinics

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PHOTO BY GREGORY LOTTIS



PHOTO BY KEN HEE



TOP: DOUBLES CHAMPS CROFT & WASELENCHUK COMPARE MEDALS.
CENTER: HISER & GANIM AT AWARD CEREMONY; ZOMBIE CRAWL
BOTTOM: BEN CROFT VS. ROCKY CARSON

AMATEURS

Although the professionals take center stage at the UnitedHealthcare US OPEN, it is the amateur competition that really makes up the backbone of the event. More than 72 divisions crowned US OPEN Champions in 2014. A complete list can be found by visiting www.UnitedHealthcareUSOPEN.com.

There were hundreds of incredible amateur matches played throughout the week and far too many good ones to describe here. But the Men's Open Singles started with 40 players who formed perhaps the highest quality field in US OPEN history and, in the end, it was Alejandro Herrera and Coby Iwaasa left standing. Herrera came out on fire, torching the young Iwaasa 15-4 in the first game. Iwaasa, fresh off his World Racquetball Tour victory the week prior in Chicago, found the strength and will to battle back for a 15-10 win in game two. The tiebreaker alone took nearly an hour to play with more than 20 side-out changes of serve. Both players inched towards the finish line but neither could pull away, as crowds swelled to find them deadlocked at 10-10. After two changes in serve it was Coby Iwaasa that rolled the last shot for an exciting 11-10 victory!

PARTIES

As always, it's racquetball all day, followed by fun and camaraderie at night. This year we started with a Thursday Players Gathering featuring racquetball's own Joe Conti on the guitar/vocals and Gary DeHaven on drums, then a huge turnout for the RACQUETWORLD Players Party hosted by Rocky Carson the next night. The "Party with the Pros Grand Gala" at the incredible Pourhouse Saloon on Saturday coincided with the city's outdoor concert and Zombie Pub Crawl. More than 15,000 Twin Cities natives dressed as zombies rocked downtown nightclubs until 2:00 a.m., including the Pourhouse!

SPECIAL AWARDS

The UnitedHealthcare US OPEN presented two very special Lifetime Achievement Awards. The first was to Mark Griffin, CEO of Lewis Drug, who has executed the longest-running pro event in the sport —The Lewis Drug Pro-Am in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. The 37-year event is back on the docket in January of 2015 and Lewis Drug is also a long-time national co-sponsor of the US OPEN. Mark was recognized for his incredible generosity to the sport as a player, promoter, and ambassador.

The second award was presented to Dr. Jim Hiser, who recently retired from USA Racquetball after devoting his entire adult life to the sport. What may not be as well known is that he was a huge early influence on this author, having helped me get started in the business of running racquetball events back in the early 80's. When I came up with the idea for the US OPEN 20 years ago it was Jim Hiser who was at my side to help turn my vision into reality. Quite simply, without Jim Hiser there would likely have never been a US OPEN Racquetball Championships. For that reason and many others, I was honored to present Jim with this prestigious award.

START PLANNING NOW!

So by now you should know that you may have missed one of the greatest racquetball events ever! But there is good news: In 2015 we'll "pull out all the stops" to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the UnitedHealthcare US OPEN, and our team is already hard at work planning major upgrades. Put OCTOBER 7-11, 2015 on your calendar now, along with the notation "MUST ATTEND!" It's going to be a party like none other, and we all want YOU there.

2014 UnitedHealthcare US OPEN • RESULTS

MEN'S SINGLES

Open	Coby Iwaasa	Alejandro Herrera
Elite	Nicolas Bousquet	Maurice Miller
A	Juan Francisco Cueva	Luis Ricardo Paez Trujillo
B	Jake Ryan	John Starks
C	Nicolas Zhindon	Pierce Johnston
D	Darryl Lewis	Jeffrey Thompson

MEN'S AGE SINGLES

24-	Cristian Chávez	Juan Francisco Cueva
24- A	Set Cubillos	Roberto Leyes Jr
24- C	Nicolas Zhindon	Pedro Andrés Reyes
25+	Andrew Gale	Bryan Crosser
25+ A	Kyle Smith	Ryan Rowlands
25+ B	Nic Koch	Brett Eksuzian
25+ C	Aby Thottiyil	Keith Bryan
30+	John Goth	Mike Harmon
35+	Aaron Granberg	Eduardo Avila
35+ A	Bryan Shaw	Terry Kisling
35+ B	John Starks	Alcides Gutierrez
35+ C	Roberto Marcillo	Josh Forsythe
CPRT 40+	Jimmy Lowe	Thomas Fuhrmann
45+	Brad McCunniff	Troy Vanbemmelen
45+ A	Giovanni Luciano	Terry Kisling
45+ B	Kurt Ross	Stephane Parent
45+ C	Kevin Deyo	Eduardo Esparza
50+	Jimmy Lowe	Keith Minor
55+	Wes Snead	Ivan Sanchez
55+ A	Don Checots	Larry Matula
55+ B	Bob Mayo	Dan King
55+ C	Brian Rissinger	Oscar Uribe
60+	Frank Taddonio	Joe Lee
65+	Tony Alfaro	Doug Toth
65+ A	Tony Alfaro	Pete Harvey
65+ B/C	George Goudie	Lee Churchill
70+	Robert Lattanzio	Jeffrey Leon
75+	David Zabinski	Arthur Hotchkiss

WOMEN'S SINGLES

Open	Susana Acosta	Jessica Parrilla
Elite	Danielle Drury	Elizabeth Simmons
A	Kanesha Madison	Sheila Champion
B	Maria Munoz	Ivana Sempertegui
C	Kelly Johnson	Chris Cerny
D	Jessica Kisling	Vickie Onesti

WOMEN'S AGE SINGLES

24-	Maria Renee Rodriguez	Valerie Fallu
24- A	Ana Velez	
25+ A	Heather Hojat	
35+ A	Dragana Bulatovic	
55+ A	Cheryl Jones	Dotti White
W24/25/35/55A	Ana Velez	Dragana Bulatovic
24- B	Ivana Sempertegui	Maria Munoz
35+ B	Joy Herth	Tracie Valentine
55+ B	Ly Abbott	
W24/35/55B	Ivana Sempertegui	Maria Munoz
35+	T. J. Baumbaugh	Shannon Feaster
45+	Marie Gomar	Hiroko Asari
W25/45/55/65BC	Marquita Molina	Jackie Wray
W35/45	Marie Gomar	T. J. Baumbaugh
40+	Tammarrian Rogers	Marie Gomar
45+ B	Esther Lozano	Therese Zadnik Klecker
50+	Laura Fenton Kovanda	Laura Brandt
55+	Debra Tisinger-Moore	Cindy Tilbury
W60/65/70	Marsha Berry	Nancy Kronenfeld

Winner

Runner-Up

IRT MEN'S PRO SINGLES

Kane Waselenchuk

Alvaro Beltran

LPRT WOMEN'S PRO SINGLES

Paola Longoria

Maria Jose Vargas

IRT MEN'S PRO DOUBLES

Ben Croft / Kane Waselenchuk

Alvaro Beltran / Rocky Carson I I I

LPRT WOMEN'S PRO DOUBLES

Paola Longoria / Veronica Sotomayor

Maria Jose Vargas / Rhonda Rajsich

MEN'S DOUBLES

Open	Nicolas Bousquet / Samuel Murray	Daniel Maggi / Fernando Kurzbard
Elite	Hanzel Martínez Pérez / Juan Salvatierra	Marquis Miller / Maurice Miller
A	Jared Schnee / Justin Schnee	Gordon Henry / Kyle Smith
B	David Singer / Lee Frick	Brian White / Josh Paul
C	Grant Taylor / John Aldritt	Jay Kleffman / Jim Unterberger
19+	David Marrero / Kenny Green Jr.	Michael Myers / Tim Herman
35+	Alex Ma / George Bustos	Miguel Escobedo / Mike Cantu
45+	Cliff Swain / Mike Ladage	George Bustos / Ivan Sanchez
55+	Mark Baron / Mike Grisz	C. Bruce Bagwell / Ruben Gonzalez
Centurion+ Open / Elite	Richard Eisemann / Troy Vanbemmelen	Jonathan Burns / Marc Burns
Centurion+ A	Harlan Faircloth / Salvatore Perconti	Jim Koepl / Terry Kisling
Centurion+ B	Brian Rissinger / Chuck Smalley	Grant Taylor / John Aldritt

WOMEN'S DOUBLES

Elite	Elizabeth Simmons / Samantha Simmons	Janice Kennedy / Terri McWilliams
A	Ana Velez / Page Kern	Kerri Brown / Susie Boulanger
B	Ivana Sempertegui / Maria Munoz	Esther Lozano / Therese Zadnik Klecker
C	Jessica Kisling / Kelly Johnson	Chance Manley / Kim Jenkins
35+	Kerri Brown / Susie Boulanger	Sara Noyes / Susan Spinella
45+	Janet Tyler / Susan Pfahler	Janice Kennedy / Terri McWilliams
55+	Debra Tisinger-Moore / Linda Moore	Jean Trimble / Renee Fish
45/55	Janet Tyler / Susan Pfahler	Janice Kennedy / Terri McWilliams

MIXED DOUBLES

Open	Samantha Simmons / Sebastian Franco	Corey Osborne / Sofia Rascon
Elite	Sara Noyes / Tom Bevelock	Jennifer Hunter / Jerry White
A	Dylan Scattolon / Valerie Fallu	Kanesha Madison / Marquis Miller
B	Marco Rodriguez / Michele Biese	Andrea Hartman / Bruce Greenberg
C	Grant Taylor / Kelly Johnson	Jill Avery / Skip Lecy
30+	Jesica Haak / Ryan Ratchford	Kipp Atwell / Maiko Sato
40+	Sara Noyes / Tom Bevelock	Marie Gomar / Stephen Wattz
50+	Laura Fenton Kovanda / Troy Stallings	Anita King / Jody Morris
Centurion+ Open / Elite	Chris Evon / Troy Vanbemmelen	Susan Spinella / Tom Bevelock
Centurion+ A / B	Tom Janke / Deb Stefandel	Harlan Faircloth / Renee Fish



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. This will allow you to always complete the "Racquetball Success Triangle" we introduced in the Winter 2010 issue of *Racquetball*.

In the Fall 2014 issue, I discussed the concept of making your serve "deceptive," which is a key element in creating your championship game.

Now I'd like to expand upon the serve and discuss how to create more variety in your service game. The old saying "Variety is the spice of life" is true in racquetball, too. Having a variety of serves makes you a more powerful racquetball player because no matter whom you play and what their weaknesses are, you will have a good pool of serves to choose from.

You want to be just like a pitcher in baseball. To keep the batter off balance and guessing, the pitcher throws different pitches (e.g., fastball, knuckleball, slider) to force a strikeout, a grounder, or a fly ball. The pitcher might be known for his fastball, but if he throws only fastballs, the batter will get used to this pitch and become comfortable with it, making it more likely for him to hit the ball and hit it effectively. The same is true for a serve in racquetball. If the server has only one, two, or three types of serves that they are good at, the receiver will get used to them, will be physically and mentally prepared for those serves, and will be comfortable returning them and returning them well. Therefore, variety is key. The higher the level of player you are, the more important variety is in your game.

There are four variables you can change in your serve to force weak returns:

- 1. Height:** By changing the height at which the ball hits the front wall (low, one-half, three-quarters, high), you can find a height that your opponent is uncomfortable receiving.
- 2. Speed:** There are low and hard drive serves as well as soft and high lob serves. Not all your opponents will be able to handle or feel comfortable at the different speeds. It is your job to find out which speeds they are uncomfortable receiving.

3. Angle: By moving around in the service zone and utilizing all three positions you will create different angles, which can cause problems for some receivers.

4. Type of Serve: Changing what serve you hit based on your opponent's weaknesses will help create that weak return you are looking for.

With this information let's address the 4 skill areas needed to help make you a more consistent and positive player, which is a must in developing your championship game.

1-RACQUETBALL SKILLS

Practice the serves by changing the four variables first from different positions. Practice one position at a time, pick one type of serve at a time, and then perform the serve to both sides of the court (15 or 20 to the right and then 15 or 20 to the left, depending upon your level of play).

Rocky, Jason, and Paola as well as the rest of my championship team do this to make sure they keep their opponents guessing. This pays big dividends for them to play at the top of their games.

2-MENTAL SKILLS

Winning consistently takes more than just preparation of the mind, body, and emotions. You have to be filled with self-confidence. You need to believe in yourself, your preparation, and your game. Self-confidence comes from the willingness to prepare and take total responsibility for all aspects of your preparation and your game. Self-confidence is earned from hard work. If you are totally prepared, that is when all your hard work meets with perfect opportunity, and success happens.

Jason, Paola, and Rocky prepare their minds, bodies and emotions and spend a tremendous amount of time on creating lots of variety in their serves that builds their self-confidence. This is evident in their games.

3-FITNESS SKILLS

Make sure you have a conditioning and stretching program included in your training schedule. Your program should include all these sections: speed, agility, power and strength, balance, and stretching. My fitness expert, Dan, recommends that you

use this sample program two times each week, allowing a two-day rest between workouts: two flexibility, one agility, two flexibility, two agility, two balance, three speed, two power and strength, and four flexibility. This gives you a nice variety of all the elements needed to build your championship game.

Paola, Rocky, and Jason have fitness trainers that work with them on a regular basis and focus on developing more variety in their training routines.

4-NUTRITION SKILLS

Like your fitness skills, your nutrition skills are usually overlooked as many athletes suffer from dehydration, cramping and often run out of energy and cannot perform at their best. This is when you start to feel weak and can lose power in your serves.

You want to make sure your eating habits are second to none and that you drink lots of water. Your body and mind need

this in order to allow your body to hit serve after serve. Good nutrition and hydration allow your mind to think more clearly about creating the variety you need on your serves to keep your opponent off balance and guessing.

Jason, Paola, and Rocky all know how to enjoy themselves, but it's about making better choices. This is a way of life for them.

Fran Davis coaches Paola Longoria (#1 LPRT), Rocky Carson (#2 IRT), Taylor Knoth (#1 Jr. National and World Champion, and Sharon Jackson (#1 National Intercollegiate Champion). Hall of Fame 2004, Woman of the Year 2009, former US Team National Coach, Master Professional Instructors (USAR-IP)

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Taylor Knoth
Jr. World Champion

Sharon Jackson
Jr. Nat'l Champion

Jason Mannino
#1 Pro Player 2003

Rocky Carson
#1 Pro Player 2008

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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March 13-15	Findlay, OH
April 10-12	Las Vegas, NV
May 1-3	Warren, NJ
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TBA	San Francisco, CA
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WHAT HAPPENS IF THE BALL BREAKS On the **SECOND** Serve?

■ by Otto Dietrich, USA Racquetball National Rules Commissioner

Rule 3.8 lists three conditions where the serve is termed a “deadball serve” ... Do you know what they are?

photo by Geoff Thomsen



Do you know that - on the return of serve - unless there is an exception listed in Rule 3.11, then all of the Rules in Rules 3.13 through 3.15 apply, per Rule 3.11(d)? Before that rule existed, if the server were hit by the return of serve, it could NOT be considered a hinder of any kind since all of the hinder rules applied only to the rally (which does not start until the return of serve touches the front wall).

Another somewhat obscure rule provision that you should note is Rule 3.8. It lists three conditions where the serve is termed a “dead-ball serve.” The aspect of that rule overlooked is that when one of them happens, it does not cancel a previous fault serve. So, should it happen on second serve, then only that second serve is repeated. Conversely, a broken ball during an on-going rally gives the server his first serve back. By the way, if the receiver breaks the ball on his return of a second serve, then the server also gets his first serve back per Rule 3.11(d). It's somewhat complicated, but it's good to understand the various outcomes.

Now for a few questions/answers:

Vic M. from New York asked: *What is the ruling if I hit my opponent with my racquet on my follow-through (either backhand or forehand and even if it just touches him)?*

I answered: Actually, any type of racquet contact on the follow-through (assuming that you took a full swing, that is) is simply a “play-on” situation as described the last sentence of Rule 3.14(a)3 of the current USAR rulebook. Remember that the follow-through occurs after the ball has left the racquet.

Then Vic replied: *I recall a lesson on the backhand where one of the pros said to take a giant swing because the other person cannot be in your swing. Doesn't Rule 3.15(a) require the opponent to allow you to swing freely, without obstruction, all the way through? This is where it is a little ambiguous. Isn't that other person creating a penalty hinder situation? To me, the opponent is creeping in on your space and trying to get an advantage, therefore creating a hinder. How do you interpret this?*

I followed up with: Of course you're entitled to a free, unimpaired swing and basically any interference with your swing (that affects the resulting shot) should be called a penalty hinder (formerly

termed “avoidable”) on the person who was hit! But should any racquet contact occur on the follow through (meaning the ball has already left the racquet), and if you didn't have to hold back on your swing, then that contact is totally ignored and is not a hinder of any kind, for either the hitter or the person who was hit per the last sentence of Rule 3.14(a)3.

Frankly, I sometimes refer to this as being the “cruellest rule” in the game. What often happens is the person who swung expresses sincere concern for the person hit while that person is still playing the game and goes on to return the ball in rally. That player would win that rally, while his opponent is still expressing concern for his physical well-being. Sad, but often true.

While some might well advocate taking a full swing at the ball every time, but overly exaggerating one's swing as to try to create a hinder would at some point (as that pro surely knows), become unsportsmanlike. In that case, the hitter might lose the rally instead, due to a penalty hinder, or perhaps even lose a point due to unsportsmanlike action.

We don't want reckless play on the court. That's why we instituted the safety hold-up rule (Rule 3.14(a)6) -- to encourage players to hold up on shots like that rather than hit their opponents with the ball or racquet. And if the opponent is clearly in the way, the referee can declare that the hold-up warrants a call of penalty hinder, i.e. a loss of rally.

Mike W. from California asked: *I am playing a “new” guy who serves a backhand lob serve. He bounces the ball inside the box between the two red lines that a doubles partner would stand in. Is that a legal serve?*

I replied: Those lines that are three feet from the nearest wall on each end of the service zone only come into consideration on the serve and then only when the server hits a drive serve. Please see Rule 3.6 and other related rules for the details regarding the limitations on a drive serve. So, the simple answer to your question is YES, the serve you described is legal – since it was a lob!

DO YOU HAVE

A RULES/REFEREEING QUESTION?

Be sure to email it to me at rules@usra.org 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.

CLIFF SWAIN ON STRING

■ By Steve Crandall, Vice President, Sales & Marketing
Ashaway Racket Strings

Ashaway recently announced its sponsorship of Hall of Famer and racquetball legend Cliff Swain. As part of that deal, Cliff has offered to share some of the wisdom he has accumulated over a 30+ year career about a subject near and dear to us: string.

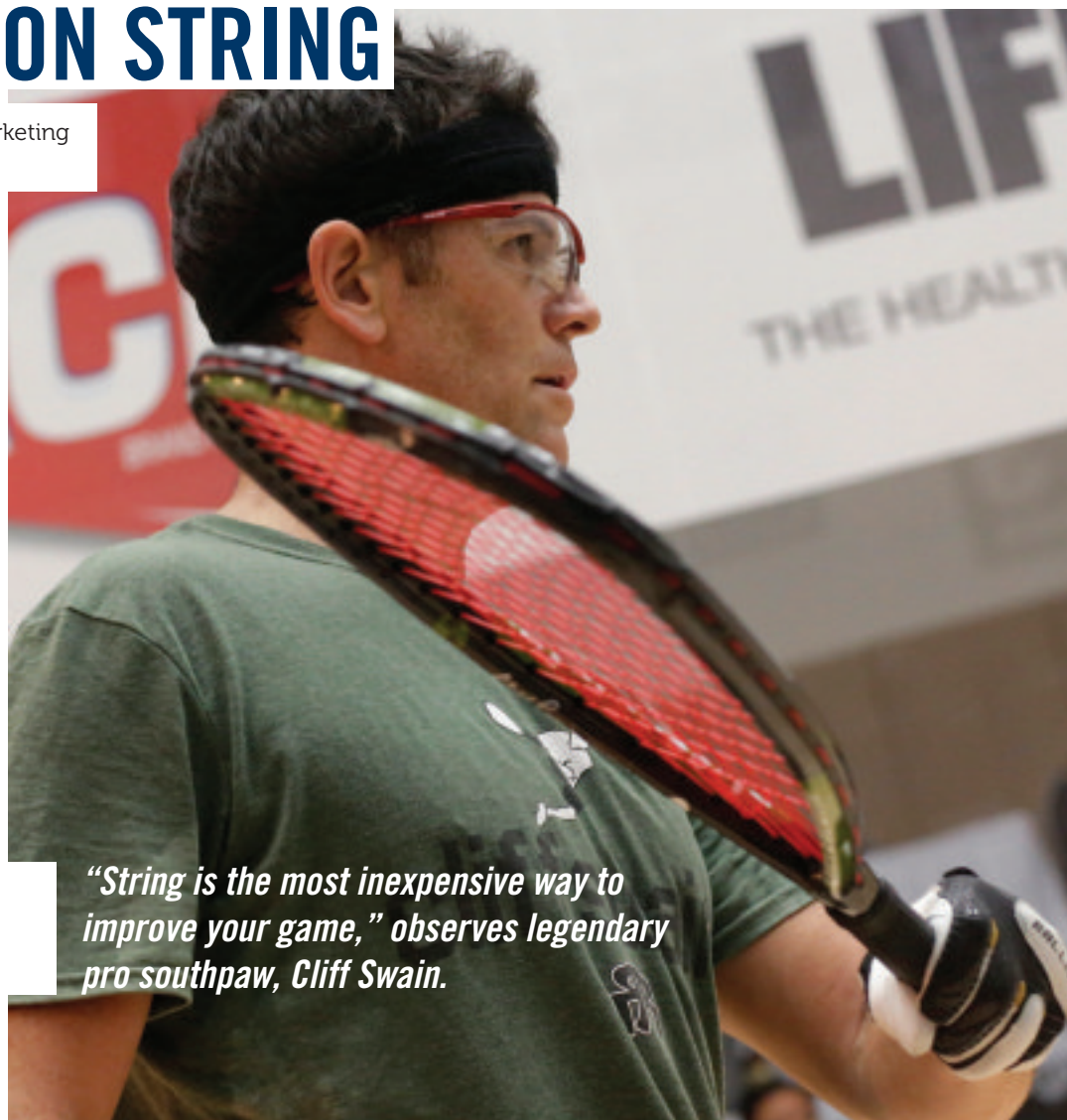
Although Cliff is officially retired from the IRT, this unusual sponsorship is based on the fact that he's won 71 IRT tournaments, has played in more IRT tournaments than any other (277), and has more professional match wins than any other player in history (730). Everybody in racquetball knows Cliff Swain ... that he plays with Ashaway string is just fine with us!

Following his 2007 retirement, Cliff stayed active in doubles and outdoor racquetball, and he's now a very sought after coach. His current roster includes Maria Jose Vargas, Jose Rojas, and Coby Iwaasa, among others, and he's very active with youth leagues, teaching lessons and hosting clinics. This past July, Cliff introduced his own Signature Series racquet, factory strung with Ashaway.

"String is the most inexpensive way to improve your game," he said. "It's silly to me that people would pay so much for a racquet, lessons and all the other gear you can buy, and then not pay attention to their string."

For his own game, Cliff uses Ashaway PowerKill® 17, which he says, "Is both lively and durable. I've had lively strings before and durable strings, but never both in the same string, until I started using Ashaway."

"You don't want your string to break in the middle of a match," he added. "I mean it happens, but a game is only 11 points. You can't afford to lose too many changing racquets. And when you do pick up a new racquet, you want it to play as close to the same way as possible to the previous racquet. Otherwise, the adjustment will probably cost you another point or two."



"String is the most inexpensive way to improve your game," observes legendary pro southpaw, Cliff Swain.

Cliff says he always has three racquets freshly strung before a tournament. "That way, if a string does break, I can pick up another racquet and feel sure it is not going to interrupt my play."

We asked Cliff how much the "right" string can affect a professional's game, and what advice he can offer players on how to choose the correct string for their game.

"The right string is critical to playing your best, Cliff said. "Racquetball is a power sport. The trick is to get the most power without breaking strings or losing control. For me, the PowerKill feels as lively as an 18 gauge string, but is as durable as a 16 gauge."

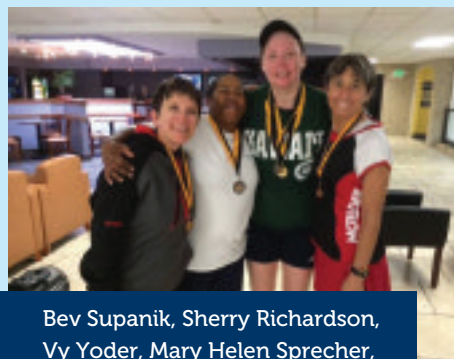
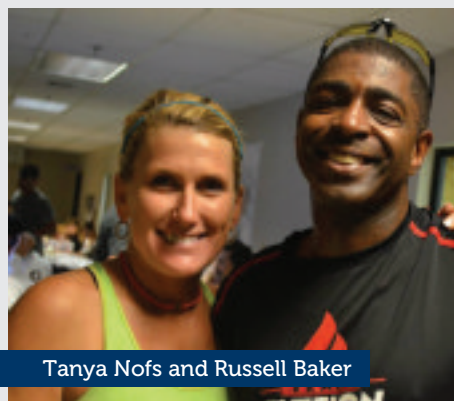
It all comes down to how the string feels," he said. "That is true for all players at all levels. Some players say they are control players, but they still need to get as much power as they can.

A bad string will feel heavy or dead. A good string will feel lively and make the ball feel lighter. But if the string is too light, you will start breaking string. For a pro, this usually means loss of a point. For an amateur, it means paying for another restringing job."

Cliff also has four hard and fast rules about stringing that should apply to all players. "After you figure out what string is best for your game you should: 1) always string at the same tension; 2) use the same stringing machine; 3) restring regularly; and 4) use a quality string."



Butch Harris

Bev Supanik, Sherry Richardson,
Vy Yoder, Mary Helen Sprecher,
at Maryland Senior Olympics

Tanya Nofs and Russell Baker

2014 DOUBLE BUBBLE SPLAT, MICHIGAN

STATE ASSOCIATION NEWS

ALABAMA The ACA Alabama Fall Classic Shootout saw Matt Fontana defeat Destry Everhart in the Men's Open Final, 11-6 in the tiebreaker. Craig Herr and Phil Shoemaker bested Bill Deluca and Billy Cannon 8 and 5 in the Men's Open Doubles.

CALIFORNIA / NEVADA The CNRA congratulates Geraldine Villa as the recipient of the 2014 Jack Hughes Scholarship Award. Geraldine is attending Sacramento State and is a member of the Sac State Racquetball Team.

FLORIDA Congratulations to Evan Wargo, Graciana Wargo, Timmy Hansen, and Jordan Cooperrider who made up the "Team Florida" contingent on the US Junior National Team in Colombia in October. Florida 2014 State Doubles Champions were crowned at the end of the summer with Mike Harmon and Wes Miller on the Men's side. Sara Noyes and Jordan Cooperrider took the Women's Championship.

IOWA After a seven-year hiatus, the Quad City Open was played with Jimmy Lowe defeating Brad Hansen in an epic finale, winning the fifth and deciding game 15-13 (winner by 2 in a pro match format). Also, the IRA is proud to offer three scholarships to Junior players in 2014/2015. This investment aims to increase the number of young athletes playing racquetball in Iowa.

MARYLAND / DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA recently said goodbye to one of its patriarchs, Butch Harris. A longtime player and Ektelon stalwart, Butch was the father of current player and MWRA board member Jamal Harris. Butch made many contributions to racquetball, enjoyed working with new players and organized the annual Turkey Shootout. The Maryland/ Washington racquetball community will honor his memory at the Thanksgiving event and will help to set up a scholarship in his name.

MWRA volunteers and members recently participated in the Maryland Senior Olympics, held at Severna Park Racquetball & Fitness. Hoping to see plenty of members at the National Senior Games in Minneapolis in 2015.

MICHIGAN RAM's new season kicked off with The Red Swain Tier 1 in November at the Davison Athletic Club, followed by the RAM State Doubles Championships in December. Nominations for the Michigan Racquetball Hall of Fame are now open.

MISSISSIPPI The 2015 Jan Jam / State Doubles has been scheduled for January 30 - February 1, and is open to residents of Mississippi and Louisiana, plus other out-of-state players who participate in a minimum of two (2) MSRB events per year. Keep an eye out for upcoming free beginner/welcome back racquetball workshops, presented by local Ektelon and Head sponsored players. Mississippi Racquetball - Where Intensity Meets Hospitality!

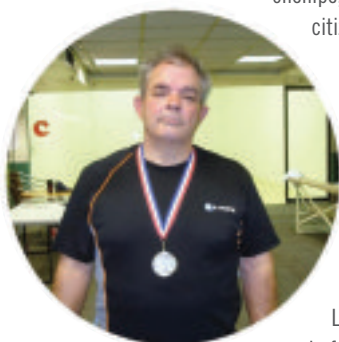
MISSOURI has a new website ... www.MOHSRBALL.com ... for the Missouri High School Association's League of almost 500 kids. With R2 Sports, we can now run our team league and have all participants' individual matches count towards the players' national rankings.

OHIO Kyle Ulliman was selected as the winner of the 2014-15 E-Force/ORA Collegiate Scholarship Award. Kyle is a freshman attending Baldwin Wallace in Berea, Ohio, where

2015 JOHN LOMONACO MEMORIAL GRANT

Earn a Trip to National Singles in Denver

An avid player, John LoMonaco passed away unexpectedly in 2009, after claiming many wins on the USAR National and NMRA circuits. In John's memory, an anonymous friend established this grant to underwrite an annual trip to the National Singles Championships for a lucky winner. This year the National Singles will be held May 20-24 in Denver, Colorado.



To be considered for the grant, applicants must: NOT have competed in a previous National Singles Championships, be 18 years of age, be a U.S. citizen, and submit an application form and essay. If you qualify, visit the Programs section of USARacquetball.com for more information, and get your application submitted no later than February 28, 2015.

Last year, Josh Paul of Bettendorf, IA was selected from among a record 29 applicants to receive the

all-expense paid trip. As an active-duty police officer and trained first responder, Josh also qualified for the Heroes Divisions, for having saved a life on the court. At the 2013 US OPEN Josh was the first to perform CPR on Rick Schacht, who had suffered a heart attack while competing. Along with a team of good Samaritans and trained professionals, he helped save Rick's life that day, despite the odds.

Past LoMonaco Grant Recipients

2014 Josh Paul (IA)
2013 George Goudie (MI)
2012 Jessica Amezcua (OR)
2011 Danny Rodriguez (VA)
2010 Michelle Sikorski (CO)

he is competing in football and racquetball. Congratulations to Andy Hawthorne, recently inducted into the Seven Hills, Ohio HALL OF FAME.

TEXAS Registration closes soon for the Longhorn Open which is January 16-18, 2015, on the campus of the University of Texas. All proceeds benefit the travel for the UT Racquetball Team to National Intercollegiate Championships in Tempe, Arizona, March 25-28.



UT-Austin Racquetball Team- October, 2014

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COLLEGIATE NEWS AND NOTES

- The Eastern Collegiate Racquetball Conference held its annual Alumni Golf Tournament on August 2 in Leicester, Massachusetts. Nearly 100 "golfers" enjoyed a beautiful Northeast summer day with fellow ECRC legends. Congrats to Smokey Van Schalkwyk for putting on a tremendous event.
- Texas-Arlington freshman Brittany Click rolled through the 18 Red Division at Juniors to take Gold.
- Rutgers University kicked off their inaugural college campaign this fall. Under the leadership of Providence College alumnus Jonathan Clay, Rutgers will compete in the ECRC.
- North Carolina State alum, Brad Williams ('14) will attend Florida State this fall and compete on the FSU team while pursuing a Masters degree in Science.
- Purdue University kicks off their 39th year of sponsoring a Club Team, making it one of the longest active programs in the country. It even survived a two-year hiatus while the Rec Center underwent renovations, and they expect 20 Boilermakers to compete this season.
- Darrin Schenck reports from Arizona State that he has a strong group returning for 2014/2015, and they are looking forward to hosting the National Championships in March.
- Great things are happening in Year Two of the Southeast Collegiate Racquetball Conference led by Commissioner Jerry Wickliffe with lots of growth expected over the coming years.
- DID YOU KNOW? The Southern Collegiate Racquetball Conference sponsored a Conference Logo Contest a few years back....which is a great idea for your teams and conferences!



Now is the time to plan for National Intercollegiates on the Arizona State University campus in Tempe, Arizona, March 25-28. Let's break a record this year! More players and Colleges than ever before will send the loudest message possible that Collegiate Racquetball is BIG TIME.

Any news you want to share for an upcoming magazine? Please contact Bob Bodor at bbodor@usra.org

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USRF 2014 US OPEN JUNIORS CLINIC

■ By Owen Forsythe, 10 year old clinic participant

Nine-year-old Ava Kaiser agreed, saying "It was awesome!"

There was productive racquetball at every station, the instructors were great, and we got to play. This clinic is trying to help promote juniors racquetball. It was also really exciting to have the pro instructors there with us.

The pros showed that they love this game as much as us and maybe a little more. Rhonda Rajsich, one of the pros, said "I think that this is on the right track, and I think the only thing I would change is that it would grow."

"I think it would be really cool to have even more kids joining and even more instructors and even more pros so it to be a massive development." Rhonda also said.

The glass court was amazing! I got there early and watched from the back wall some. They can hit it hard! I think that just having that there and the US Open here really helps people to start playing racquetball. Rocky is a very tough player. He was very capable of playing with people at any level of skill. He made it fun and enjoyable.

Andrea Hartman, organizer the Juniors Clinic, said, "A huge thank you to Doug Ganim, The United States Racquetball Foundation, Rocky and Rhonda, Coach Winterton, and all the lifetime instructors. This clinic was a success and I look forward to many more years of memories for these kids."

On Tuesday, October 7, 2014, the United States Racquetball Foundation (USRF) hosted a Juniors Clinic with racquetball pros Rocky Carson and Rhonda Rajsich, Dr. Bud Muehleisen, Coach Jim Winterton, and Lifetime Instructors at the US Open in Minneapolis, Minnesota. I thought that the clinic was great.

PHOTO COURTESY KEN FIFE

Stockton, California

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IRF WORLD JUNIORS

October 19-25, 2014 • Cali, Colombia

After much preparation on the parts of everyone on the US Junior Team, the US Delegation made the journey to the XXVI IRF World Junior Championships in Cali, Colombia.

The 58-person delegation was made up of 26 players (15 boys, 11 girls), 27 parents and cheerleaders, four coaches, and a team leader. The players represented nine states: Colorado, Oregon, California, Wisconsin, Minnesota, New York, Florida, Washington, and Pennsylvania.

The categories at World Juniors are divided up into World Cup (18's, 16's, 14's singles and doubles), Esprit Cup (12's and 10's singles and doubles), and Challenger Cup (non-qualifying divisions). World Cup and Esprit Cup players qualified at the USAR Junior Olympics held in June in Denver.

The US Junior Team members competed against 17 other countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Ireland, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Panama, and Puerto Rico.

And here are the rest of the members of the delegation who traveled to Cali:

Coaches/Staff

Head Coach Cheryl Gudinas, Assistant Coach Nick Montalbano, Esprit Coach Jen Meyer, Athletic Trainer Jody Nance, and Team Leader Cheryl Kirk

Parents

Tony Antone, Meadow Barth, Jeff Benson, Deborah Carver, Richard Carver, Anuj Chauhan, Kirti Chauhan, Daryl Cooperrider, Sue Cooperrider, Tim Hansen, Sarah Hansen, Eric Jacquet, Rachel Jacquet, John Mahoney, Nancy Manilla, Victor Manilla, Atul Ramayani, Mauro Rojas, Adam Stein, Rajesh Thakur, Gary Wargo, Kathleen Wargo, Melissa York

Cheerleaders & Esprit Team Players

Bill Halvorson, Ashlyn Carver, Robert Santoro, and Ayde York supported on the sidelines, while Vedant Chauhan (CA) played Boy's 10 Esprit singles and Megan Carver played Girl's 12 Esprit singles. The US had two participants in the Challenger Cup – Evan Wargo (FL) in the Boy's 16's and Megan Carver in the Girl's 14's.

OPENING CEREMONIES

Opening Ceremonies were held on Saturday, October 18, across from the Radisson Hotel at the UniCentro Mall. Coun-

2014 JUNIOR WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS ROSTER

WORLD CUP

SINGLES	BOYS ADAM MANILLA (CO) CONNOR LAFFEY (OR)	GIRLS LEXI YORK (OR) DANIELLE FALVEY (WI)	18s		BOYS MAURO (DANIEL) ROJAS (CA) WAYNE ANTONE IV (OR)	GIRLS JORDAN COOPERRIDER (FL) ERIKA MANILLA (CO)	SINGLES
SINGLES	BOYS JORDAN BARTH (MN) AKUL RAMAYANI (NY)	GIRLS BRIANA JACQUET (CO) HANNAH CARVER (WA)	14s		BOYS ADAM MANILLA (CO) SAWYER LLOYD (CA)	GIRLS DANIELLE FALVEY (WI) LEXI YORK (OR)	DOUBLES
DOUBLES	BOYS JORDAN BARTH (MN) JUSTUS BENSON (WI)	GIRLS ERIKA MANILLA (CO) JORDAN COOPERRIDER (FL)	16s		BOYS DANE ELKINS (CA) RICARDO (RICKY) DIAZ (CA)	GIRLS BRIANA JACQUET (CO) NIKITA CHAUHAN (CA)	DOUBLES
SINGLES	BOYS AKUL RAMAYANI (NY) ANTONIO (TATO) ROJAS (CA)	GIRLS NIKITA CHAUHAN (CA) GRACIANA WARGO (FL)	12s		BOYS KRISH THAKUR (CA) TIMMY HANSEN (FL)	GIRLS HEATHER MAHONEY (CA) JULIA STEIN (PA)	SINGLES
DOUBLES	GIRLS HANNAH CARVER (WA) GRACIANA WARGO (FL)	BOYS KRISH THAKUR (CA) TIMMY HANSEN (FL)	12s		GIRLS HEATHER MAHONEY (CA) JULIA STEIN (PA)	BOYS KRISH THAKUR (CA) TIMMY HANSEN (FL)	DOUBLES

tries lined up alphabetically and were announced one by one to applause from delegations and visitors as they entered the main court of the center. Comments were delivered by IRF and local dignitaries, the athletes' and referees' oaths were administered, and the audience was treated to world class salsa dancing complete with sequined outfits and incredible skill. Some acrobatics were included, to everyone's delight.

AN UNUSUAL DAY

Club Cañasgordas is a sports complex that includes the eight-court open-air racquetball facility where Junior Worlds took place. It is located about 15 minutes from the hotels by buses that travel down several roads to a jungle-like area, "off the beaten path." The motif is reminiscent of a bamboo tiki-hut type of structure. The roof covering over the courts and is adobe tile and bamboo. The court floors are unfinished wood.

At about 4:00 pm on Monday, October 20, the skies darkened and opened up. This was not your average storm. A huge front moved in with thunder, lightning, and monsoon-like torrential downpours. Just when we thought it was over, along came Round 2. The courtyard area in back of the courts became a lake.

Water started dripping onto the courts through the roof, quickly creating a significant situation. The power went out for a short time. All matches stopped play except for one of the stadium courts. The bleachers at the back and on the sides filled up as matches that had been in progress on several of the other courts were completed there.

IRF Vice President Rafael Fernandez made an announcement to the crowd (perhaps 300 people) in Spanish and English describing the situation: flash flooding had occurred and at that moment it was not known when people could leave. He said that matches would continue to play as soon as the courts dried (which actually happened fairly quickly after the storm subsided since the unfinished wood effectively absorbs moisture).

Play resumed (three hours later than planned), and the cool evening grew much longer as all matches were played (except the 10 and 12 doubles), with a delay of 3-5 hours.

Buses started running again after while, but the club stayed pretty heavily populated as matches continued.

Jordan Cooperrider had a 16th birthday she'll never forget...the relatively unfazed players continued to have a good time hanging out together...and the parents were calm and collected.

We weathered the storm together...literally!



TOP: PARENTS WERE ON HAND TO CHEER FROM THE SIDELINES.
MIDDLE: COACHING STAFFERS (L-R) CHERYL GUDINAS, JODY NANCE, CHERYL KIRK, JEN MEYER, NICK MONTALBANO.
BOTTOM: OPENING CEREMONIES



OPEN AIR COURT SPACE MARKED THE NEW FACILITY

SUPPORTIVE PARENTS

Parents really are the unsung heroes of the Junior Worlds event. I have observed parents in the background, quietly assisting their players and the entire US Junior Team. The players' parents check match schedules, ensure optimum nutrition, cheer for their and other players on the team, supplement the coaches' efforts, and offer encouraging words as necessary to ease the sting of a loss. They took time off from work and financed this experience so that their kids could enjoy competing on a team and learning about another country's culture.

Nancy and Victor Manilla (Adam and Erika's parents) led the charge in finding donations and recruiting the sponsors/volunteers in providing the World Cup Team's meals together each night of competition. Please join USA Racquetball in thanking Nancy and Victor and those who stepped up to assist: Elkins/Rojas families, Cooperrider family, Illinois State Racquetball Association, Benson/Barth/Falvey families, American Motors (Victor and Nancy Manilla), Oregon parents, the Chauhan family, and the Lloyd family.

COACHES RULE

It's highly appropriate to recognize the coaches who give so much to the sport and to the World Juniors experience. Cheryl Gudinas, Nick Montalbano, Jen Meyer, and Jody Nance take off work and call it vacation, making sure they're here to support the players with everything they need for success. Their duties are not only to sit courtside at match after match and

offer coaching based on their long experience, but also to talk with the players, make sure they know their start times, deliver encouraging content at team meetings, ensure the players are wearing the correct uniforms, making certain they have enough water... all of that and more! We're so lucky to have this group of successful athletes and seasoned coaches heading up our US Junior Team!

The seven days of the competition were long ones, with an average of well over 20 U.S. matches played most days. One or more coaches were courtside with the players, and parents with firsthand knowledge of their player's strengths and opportunities supplemented the coaching efforts.

MEDALS CEREMONY AT THE CLUB

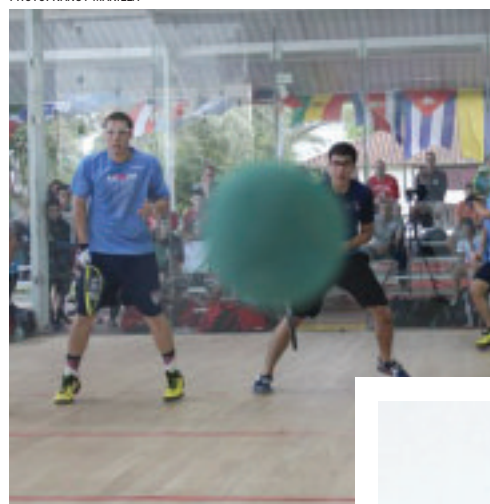
After the doubles finals were played, the LOC and local volunteers were on hand to assist with the awarding of the medals, the bearing of country flags, and the playing of the national anthems of the winning Gold division individuals and countries.

On these long ten-day journeys, it seems at the beginning that the trip will last forever, but all of a sudden it's Saturday: time for the finals, time to pack, time to say goodbye. At the airport in Miami, delegation members lingered on the concourse...no one wanted to say farewell. There's so much emotion in the final days and hours. It's hard, but it's all good. This type of experience bonds people strongly together. What a blessing to be a part of this team and this sport.

Great Job, Junior Team USA!!



PHOTO: NANCY MANILLA



TOP LEFT: ESPRIT GIRLS
TOP RIGHT: BARTH & BENSON
CENTER: BOYS 18 DOUBLES FINAL
ABOVE: LEXI YORK ON THE GIRLS 16 PODIUM
RIGHT: ERIKA MANILLA & JORDAN COOPERIDER



MEDALISTS

WORLD CUP

Girls 18 Singles - Lexi York - Bronze
Boys 18 Doubles - Sawyer Lloyd/Adam Manilla - Silver
Girls 16 Singles - Jordan Cooperrider - Bronze
Boys 16 Singles - Mauro (Daniel) Rojas - Bronze
Girls 16 Doubles - Erika Manilla/Jordan Cooperrider - Bronze
Boys 16 Doubles - Justus Benson/Jordan Barth - Silver
Boys 14 Singles - Jordan Barth - Gold

ESPRIT

Boys 12 Singles - Akul Ramayani - Bronze
Girls 10 Doubles - Julia Stein/Heather Mahoney - Bronze
Boys 10 Doubles - Krish Thakur/Timmy Hansen - Bronze

Girls 12 Singles Blue - Nikita Chauhan - Bronze
Girls 12 Singles White - Megan Carver - Bronze
Girls 12 Singles White - Graciana Wargo - Bronze
Boys 10 Singles Blue - Krish Thakur - Gold
Boys 10 Singles Blue - Timmy Hansen - Silver
Boys 10 Singles Red - Vedant Chauhan - Bronze

STANDINGS

World Cup Girls 3rd

World Cup Boys 3rd

Overall World Cup Team 3rd

Esprit Girls 3rd

Esprit Boys 3rd

Overall Esprit Team 3rd

FINAL STANDINGS BY COUNTRY Combined Overall World Cup Team

1. Mexico
2. Bolivia
3. USA
4. Costa Rica

Combined Overall Esprit Team

1. Bolivia
2. Mexico
3. USA
4. Costa Rica

A full listing of individual and team results can be found at www.internationalracquetball.com.

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CALENDAR of EVENTS

For the latest in USA Racquetball Sanctioned Events visit USARacquetball.com

Date(s)	Event Name	City	State	Venue
Jan. 9-10	Missouri Racquetball Blizzard -IRT Series	St. Louis	MO	Vetta Sports-Concord
Jan. 15-18	Ohio State University Invite	Corvallis	OR	Timberhill Athletic Club
Jan. 16-18	Women's Senior/Masters National Championships	Fridley	MN	Life Time Fitness Moore Lake
Jan. 16-18	Longhorn Open	Austin	TX	Gregory Gym
Jan. 16-18	Fran Davis Racquetball Camp	Sarasota	FL	Sarasota Bath & Racquet Club
Jan. 16-19	Adcope Winter Classic	Lewiston	ID	Adcope Athletic Club
Jan. 17	5th Annual DAC Racquetball Invitational	Detroit	MI	Detroit Athletic Club
Jan. 17	Hoover's Annual One Day Shoot Out!	Casper	WY	Casper YMCA
Jan. 17-18	Delaware State Doubles	Wilmington	DE	Kirkwood Fitness & Racquetball Club
Jan. 17-19	YMCA Mid American Racquetball Classic	Salina	KS	Salina Family YMCA
Jan. 23-25	Mid-Atlantic Collegiate Racquetball Conf. #4	Lynchburg	VA	Sports Racket
Jan. 24	Southwest Shoot Out	Kalamazoo	MI	Bronson Athletic Club
Jan. 30-Feb. 1	Pinchshot.com Midwest Championships -IRT Series	St. Louis	MO	Vetta Sports-Concord
Jan. 30-Feb. 1	Eastern Collegiate Racquetball Conf. - Meet #4	University Park	PA	Penn State University Recreation Hall
Jan. 30-Feb. 1	Fran Davis Racquetball Camp	Seattle	WA	Harbor Square
Feb. 6-8	Florida State Singles	Sarasota	FL	Sarasota Bath & Racquet Club
Feb. 7	Edmonds Juniors and Adults Shootout	Edmonds	WA	Harbor Square
Feb. 7	Mid-East Racquetball Conference Tournament #3	Columbus	OH	Ohio State University
Feb. 11-15	USA Racquetball National Doubles Championships	Tempe	AZ	Arizona State University
Feb. 14	High School, JV3 and Middle School State Champs	St. Louis	MO	Vetta Sports-Concord
Feb. 19-22	Court Sports Classic	Eugene	OR	Courtsports Athletic Club
Feb. 20-22	41st Annual Tornado Alley Racquetball Classic	Wichita Falls	TX	Bill Bartley Branch Family YMCA
Feb. 21	Icicle Open	Chalfont	PA	Philadelphia Sports Club at Highpoint
Feb. 21	DARA Snowball	Wilmington	DE	Kirkwood Fitness & Racquetball Club
Feb. 21	High School Racquetball Boys State Championships	St. Louis	MO	Vetta Sports-Concord
Feb. 21-22	Multi Day Tournament	All	MI	Various Clubs
Feb. 21-22	Mid-East Racquetball Conf. Tournament #4	Berea	OH	Baldwin Wallace University
Feb. 22	High School Racquetball Girls State Championships	St. Louis	MO	Vetta Sports-Concord
Feb. 25-Mar. 1	USA Racquetball National High School Championships	St. Louis	MO	Missouri Athletic Club
Feb. 27-Mar. 1	WRT Pleasanton Open	Pleasanton	CA	ClubSport Pleasanton
Feb. 28-Mar. 1	Meijer State Games of Michigan Winter Games	Grand Rapids	MI	Riverview Athletic Club
Mar. 6-8	Capital Challenge	East Lansing	MI	Michigan Athletic Club
Mar. 11-15	Oregon State Championships	Portland	OR	Lloyd Center Athletic Club
Mar. 12-15	Ektelon Beach Bash presented by Splathead	Hollywood	FL	Garfield Street Courts
Mar. 13-15	Jewusiak Memorial	Newport News	VA	Riverside Wellness and Fitness Club
Mar. 13-15	Fran Davis Racquetball Camp	Findlay	OH	Findlay YMCA
Mar. 14	Bay City Rollout	Bay City	MI	Bay Area Family YMCA
Mar. 14	Pennsylvania State Singles Championships	Chalfont	PA	Philadelphia Sports Club at Highpoint
Mar. 14-15	Delaware State Singles	Wilmington	DE	Kirkwood Fitness & Racquetball Club
Mar. 20-22	7th Annual Raising Some Racquet for Kids	Cincinnati	OH	Waycross Athletic Club
Mar. 25-28	USA Racquetball National Intercollegiate Championships	Tempe	AZ	Arizona State University
Mar. 27-29	North Carolina State Singles Championships	Charlotte	NC	YMCA - Dowd
Mar. 27-29	RAM State Singles Championship	Davison	MI	Davison
Mar. 28-29	John Pelham Memorial	Portland	OR	Multnomah Athletic Club
Apr. 9-11	The Long Beach Open	Long Beach	CA	Belmont Athletic Club
Apr. 10-12	Fran Davis Racquetball Camp Las Vegas	Las Vegas	NV	ClubSport Green Valley
Apr. 10-12	USA Racquetball Regional Championship	Harmarville	PA	Alexander's Athletic Club
Apr. 11-13	USA Racquetball Regional Championship	Athens	GA	University of Georgia Ramsey Center
Apr. 15-19	USA Racquetball Regional Championship	Gresham	OR	Cascade Athletic Club
Apr. 16-19	USA Racquetball Regional Championship	Denver	CO	Denver Athletic Club
Apr. 17-18	USA Racquetball Regional Championship	Laurel	MD	SportFit Total Fitness Racquet Club
Apr. 17-19	USA Racquetball Regional Championship	Port Richey	FL	Richey Racquet Club
Apr. 17-19	USA Racquetball Regional Championship	St. Louis	MO	Vetta Sports-Concord
Apr. 17-19	USA Racquetball Regional Championship	Chalfont	PA	Philadelphia Sports Club at Highpoint
Apr. 25-26	USA Racquetball Regional Championship	Syosset	NY	Synergy Fitness North

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PASO COACHING CLINIC

Guatemala City, Guatemala

Article & photo by Steve Wattz [pictured third from right]

At the IRF World Seniors in August, I was asked if I would like to go to Guatemala City to the PASO Coaching Clinic being held there just three weeks later.

I had never been to Central America, so after getting some very helpful travel information from Cheryl Kirk (IRF Secretary/Press Officer), and Guatemalan Olympic team member and native Marie Gomar, I was on my way.

When I arrived, the Guatemalan Olympic Committee had a driver waiting to take me from the airport to a beautiful five-star hotel in Guatemala City, where I met with Gary Mazaroff, who introduced me to the other coaching instructors. Among them was Osvaldo Maggi from Buenos Aires, Argentina; Ricardo (Richey) Monroy from Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia; and Aaron Palomino from Chihuahua, Mexico. In all, there were about 30 attendees from 17 countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Puerto Rico, Uruguay, and USA.

Everyone spoke fluent Spanish and some English, except for Ross Richardson from Canada and myself. The lectures were all in Spanish and we each had a headset with an interpreter so we could follow along. I had never worked with an interpreter and the first hour or two was a little difficult, but by the second day I started to understand some of the words in Spanish. Everyone was very helpful and understanding, and that made it much easier for us.

The presentations were informative from several points of view, followed by open discussion. The guest speakers included a psychologist, a nutritionist, and coaches from various countries, and most of the participants were coaching at a club level or above. We could focus on a particular element of our sport, examine it, ask questions, and get immediate feedback. Being from varied countries and cultures, there were several different schools of thought. We spent a lot of time on game fundamentals and what it takes to be an effective coach, how to motivate, and how to get the most out of our athletes, no matter their playing level or experience. We discussed that what works for some players may not work for others.

We divided up into groups to consider how we would handle certain coaching situations, and shared our own experiences about how to approach training, the importance of nutrition, and how athletes handle themselves on and off the court, under stress, when winning or losing.

After two days of clinics and workshops, we were transported to the local racquet club for instruction and play, where several of the instructors showed us their techniques for drilling, stretching, and footwork. It was interesting seeing the different coaching approaches and styles.

More workshops, lectures and discussions followed and, on Friday afternoon, the Guatemala Olympic Committee organized a bus ride to Antigua. When

INTERNATIONAL UPDATE

we arrived, we had a couple of hours to explore the beautiful colonial town and its old churches, street vendors, and horse-drawn taxis. You felt like you had been transported back in time. We had fun taking pictures and wandering through the gift shops and art galleries. Later we met at a world-class hotel for dinner and the awards ceremony.

The next morning we said our goodbyes at breakfast, and everyone made their way back home. It was an experience I will not forget, and I'm grateful for having had the opportunity to represent my sport and my country.

THANK YOU

The US Junior Team Delegation wishes to deliver our gratitude to those who made this event so truly memorable:

All the individuals who made contributions large and small...every bit counts! The Team USA Challenge on www.usaracquetball.com provides the opportunity for racquetball players to support the US Teams with their participation at international competitions.

The Local Organizing Committee, headed by Juan Manuel Gutierrez, for putting on this great event. The work behind the scenes to pull off a tournament of this magnitude is extensive. The transportation logistics alone were a full-time job!

The tournament staff (Osvaldo Maggi, Francisco Kurzbard, Amanda Kurzbard, Mauro Grandio, et al.)

The referees who came in from several countries to provide a top-notch experience to the players, including the happy gift that no player had to ref the next match!

Rick Glazebrook of eNetLive.tv for bringing quarterfinals, semifinals and finals action to viewers on the IRF Network, and Gary Mazaroff and Tim Baghurst for providing entertaining commentary

The parents and cheerleaders who were there for every match, living every point as if they were out there playing themselves, and pitching in to provide/arrange meals and snacks (a shout-out to Rachel Jacquet and Melissa York for their bottomless bags-o-treats!).

Greg and Julia Hayenga of Personal Touch Travel — making plans for a large delegation is so much easier with their assistance.

Jonathan Clay (Rollout Racquetball) for making the US Junior Team look so great as they compete

Last but not least, Leo Vasquez who stopped whatever else he might have been doing as soon as a blog and photos were ready for posting.

The team sends their heartfelt gratitude for all the support via Facebook, Twitter, email, text messages, and telepathy.

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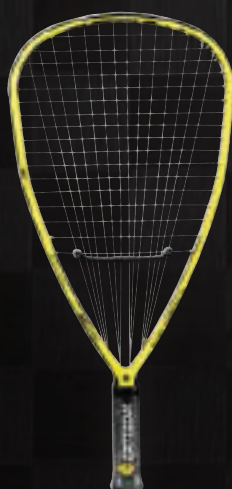
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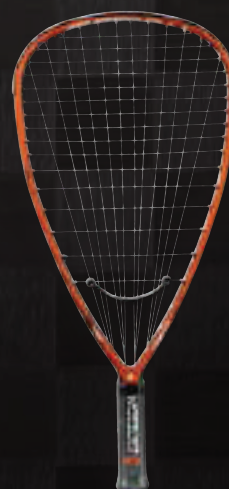
EXO³ TORON 160

POWER LEVEL: 4700
WEIGHT: 160g
BALANCE: Even



TORON PRO 170 ESP

POWER LEVEL: 4900
WEIGHT: 170g
BALANCE: Even



TORON PRO 180 ESP

POWER LEVEL: 4900
WEIGHT: 180g
BALANCE: Even



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