

Racquetball Reporter

Second Quarter

Volume XII, Issue 2

Hall of Fame welcomes Fecher, Minto in 2002

The Michigan Racquetball Hall of Fame has two new members in it, which brings the total up to 21 people. Lou Ellen Fecher and Randall Minto are the inductees for this year.

The RAM State Singles Championships were held on April 6-7 at the Players Athletic Club in Warren, Michigan. On Saturday, April 6, during the tournament there was a small ceremony to honor the two new inductees. The ceremony was held upstairs at the club around 2:15 p.m. in the lunch room area.

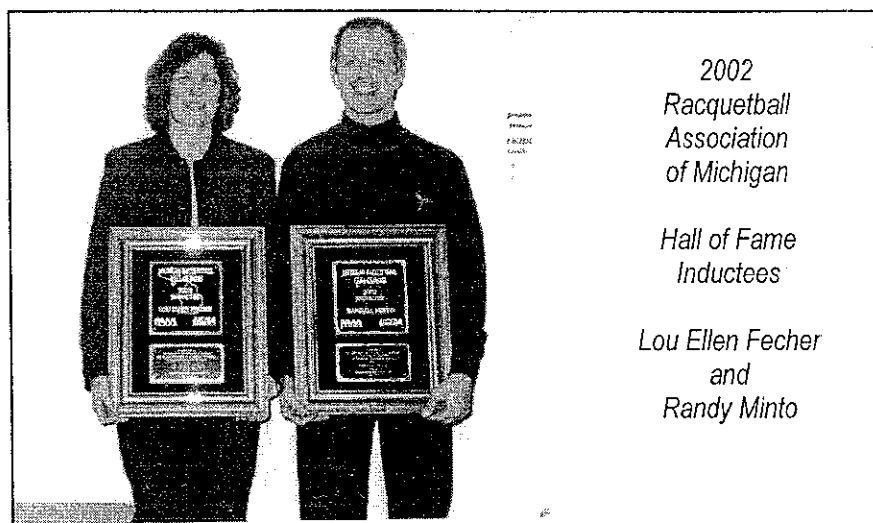
Jim Easterling thanked those in attendance for their support of the Hall of Fame Induction. Chris Kelly spoke on behalf of Randy Minto and the things he had done with the Davison Racquet Club over the years to help host tournaments, promote racquetball and encourage junior play. When accepting his plaque, Randy expressed his

thanks and felt honored for being selected to be included in the Michigan Hall of Fame.

Tom Blakeslee spoke on behalf of Lou Ellen Fecher. Lou Ellen served on the RAM Board of Directors for many years as treasurer and tournament director for the state events. According to Tom, having Lou Ellen on the board made his job as President much easier. Lou Ellen thanked all involved in

her being selected to the Hall of Fame and felt very honored. She said she never felt like she did all that much work because she just enjoyed being around all of the people so much.

The Michigan Racquetball Hall of Fame is located at the MAC Club in East Lansing. Please stop by the club and take a look at the Hall of Fame and the plaques for the newest members.



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View of the President

By the time you are reading this short article summer will be half over with Fourth of July behind us. I thought I would add a few summer notes

Jack didn't win the USRA National singles; he did set a record no one will ever beat, and he won the National Juniors again winning every singles match he played in since the age of eight, actually nine titles which means he can only be tied.

He is currently ranked five on the pro tour, and he will be upset at me for saying this, he's in a bit of a slump right now after beating Swain late in 2001.

The USRA seems normal with Hiser running the show, but Racquetball growth continues to be flat. Somehow we need to get more interest. The new lifetime fitness clubs that keep building up around the Metro Area continue to have four courts, and is good news to be included in their programs. We as a board are working on next year's schedule all ready and will keep it on the website.

The State Doubles tournament will be December 7 and State Singles will be March 28, mark your palm pilot, computer or calendar. I will try to have them somewhere in the Detroit Metro area. As we sanction the rest of the schedule check the Web for all the tournament action. The Detroit Amateur Racquetball Association will be having their

tournament on August 18 again on Belle Isle.

Finally, Jim Easterling has reminded us that this is the 25 anniversary of a racquetball association in Michigan and wants to have a banquet at this year's State Singles tournament to celebrate it and also honor the Hall of Fame. Sounds like a good idea to us. This should make you smile, the heat index is a 106 and I've got to go play outdoor racquetball, it's a great game!!

UPCOMING TOURNAMENTS

September 21, 2002

No Frills Doubles
Players Athletic Club
Warren

October 18-20, 2002

West Michigan Open
MAC Club
Grand Rapids

October 26, 2002

3rd Annual
Halloween Spooktacular
Players Club
Warren

Racquetball Association of Michigan

RAM
Board of Directors

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President
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Jack Huczek
Vice-President
(810) 373-5255

Sharon Huczek
Secretary
(810) 373-5255

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Junior's Committee
Sharon Huczek
(810) 373-5255

Newsletter
The Racquetball Reporter
2834 Yale St.
Flint, MI 48503

2002 RAM State Singles Results

Mens Open

Jimmy Floyd
Steve Goedker
Shannon Kohl
John Kundrot

Mens 25 C

Twayne Howard
Dan Mullin
Dave Verduyn
Tony Gardner

Mens 45 B

Chuck VanHoose
Al Klann
John Coaker
Jerry Leija

Womens Open

Laura Patterson
Laura King
Karen Green
Stephanie Cobb

Juniors Multi-bounce

Trent Chester
Kevin White

Mens AA

Chuck White
Ron Barton
Dave Bushen
Scott Goudie

Mens 30 B

Andre Roy
Paul Adams
Kevin OKeefe
Dave Combs

Mens 50 A

Jim Santino
Robert Gravelyn
Tom Blakeslee
Jim Easterling

Womens A

Diana Courtney
Delois Leapheart
Wendy Ford

Juniors 8 under

Dan Poindexter
Chris Symons

Mens A

Mark Werthman
Craig Dennings
Jason Kennedy
Ron Papke

Mens 35 A

Steve Goedker
Jack White
Paul Licari
Chris Kelly

Mens 50 B

Al Kohl
Roy Perovich
George Goudie
Don Edwards

Womans D

Judy Porter
Theresa Brodzik
Kim Novak
Janice Hermann

Juniors 10

Matt Barbusak
Trenton Balavitch
Fred Poindexter

Mens B

Kevin OKeefe
Mike McMillian
Jim Scheuer
Al Kohl

Mens 35 B

Jim Scheuer
Matt Malolepszy
Kurt Hetke
Thomas Mcarther

Mens 55 A

Rick Parkhurst
Bill Hagedorn
Dan Greene
Ed Barter

Womans 35/40

Paula Saad
Felicia Mann
Delois Leapheart
Melody Gorno

Juniors 12

David Henkin
Scott Reitman
Kevin Clark
Thomas Kolpasky

Mens C

JD Brown
Roy Perovich
Chad Ignatowski
Keith Vogel

Mens 40

Jack White
Chris Kelly
Randy Minto
Ron Papke

Mens 60 A

Jess Madden
Tom Sharum
Dan Ross
Gary Giblin

Womans 45/50 A

Laura Patterson
Lesley Kishigan
Sharon Huczek
Karen Green

Juniors 14

Jermaine Brock
Nick Tloczynski

Mens D

Gary Balvitch
Alex Brown
Jermaine Brock
Jeff Young

Mens 40 B

Jeff Johnson
Jeff Tloczynski
Gary Balvitch
Paul Schultz

Mens 65 A

Dave Lund
Jim Emerson

Mens 70

Charles Kaiser
Jerry Leone

Juniors 16

Alex Brown
JD Brown
Drew Campanelli
Mark Chester
Jordan Balavitch

Mens 25/30 A

Ryan Covell
Mark Werthman
Augie Pasko
Kevin Thomas

Mens 45 A

George Yarbenet
Tom Blakeslee
Bob Buckingham
Len Kleparek

Girls 16

Rochelle Zimmerman
Jaime Campanelli

Junior racquetball on the rise in Michigan

by Twayne Howard

If you've played any tournaments this year, you might have noticed something a little different. A few of the players banging around on the court this year are a bit, well, um, how do I put this delicately, uh, well short. Tiny, even. Quite a bit under the usual size, if there is such a thing in racquetball. Now, some of you may have noticed the return of Jim Floyd to tournaments, but "No, that's not him", you think. And there do seem to be a lot of them. What's up with that? The answer to the question is "Juniors!" Yes Juniors! Kids, lots of them. Piles and piles. How cool is that?!?

Here's a news flash: Junior Racquetball is on the rise in Michigan! (Is that cheering I hear across the land?) Yes, after many years of dwindling numbers, we had thirty (THIRTY!!) kids play State Singles this year. In fact, nearly every tournament this year has had large Juniors divisions.

Several groups have sprung up across the state where Juniors can go and learn how to play.

Dale Brown began a group at Orchard Hills Swim and Sport Club in Grand Rapids approximately three years ago. Lewis Forrest started a group last year in Detroit already introducing many kids to tournament racquetball. Other groups are start-

ing throughout Michigan.

Support for our fledgling program has come from many people. Tournament Directors have been great and have kept entry fees as low as \$15 per division for the Juniors. The RAM Board also stepped up for the kids. Every Junior that played State Singles this year received a free USRA membership donated by the Board, as well as reduced entry fees.

Another big event this year was the Michi-Illi Cup Tournament. Orchard Hills played host to 32 kids from all over Michigan played 32 kids from Illinois in round-robin team competition. Although Junior Team Illinois won the overall championship and took home the trophy, many of our kids took individual trophies. The kids had a great time, and everyone is looking forward to next year's meeting.

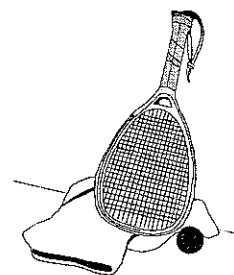
This is not to say that we're all set and everything is on autopilot. This is only the beginning

Juniors Programs require a lot of time, effort and energy, not to mention money. Consider this a call to action. If you have any ideas for Junior Development, if you know and Juniors who want to learn to play our great sport, if you want to help out in any way, please contact one of the people mentioned in this article, or any one of the Board members. We'd love to have you help in any way you can. Michigan Junior Racquetball is off to a great start, but it is only a start. It is the start of the resurgence of Junior Racquetball. I for one can't wait.

If you haven't gotten the opportunity to see a seven-year old whack the ball around and grin ear to ear when he gets a trophy at the end of the day, you are missing out. Next season, look for the average height of tournament participants to drop dramatically. Don't be concerned. You're not shrinking. They're growing. Wanna help?

RAM Juniors Committee

Sharon Huczek
(810) 373-5255



RAM Celebrates 25 Years

This tournament season Michigan will be celebrating 25 years of organized racquetball.

The first state association, Michigan Racquetball Association (MRA), started its official season October 1, 1977. Our state association now, Racquetball Association of Michigan (RAM), will be 25 years old this season.

Throughout the racquetball season we will be celebrating our 25th anniversary. One way of doing this is putting some important racquetball facts and/or articles from past newsletters in our newsletters this season. Some of you "MORE EXPERIENCED" players out there will have fun reminiscing and you younger ones I hope will just read and enjoy some racquetball history from Michigan.

Articles will be submitted by Jim Easterling.

Winter 1989 Newsletter:

- Sandy Conlen does 1st newsletter.
- Jim Hiser left Michigan in June 1989 and is now Assistant Executive Director of Programs for the AARA.
- Jim Easterling runs 1st Seniors Masters in Michigan at Coliseum Club
- 12th Annual Pro-Am Stop at Davison Racquet Club.

July 1989 Newsletter.

- After 3 years of doing the newsletter this issue will be the last one done by Jim Easterling.

April 1989 Newsletter.

- In the RAM minutes: The National Racquetball Hall of Fame will be patterned after the one in Michigan

December 1987 Newsletter:

List of ALL past Presidents:

MRA

- Denny Wood 1977-78
- Denny Wood 1978-79
- Denny Wood 1979-80
- Denny Wood 1980-81
- Gary Doty 1980-81
(2 months)
- Jim Easterling 1981-82
- Jim Easterling 1982-83

MARA

- Larry Cole 1982-83
- Bob Szuch 1983-84
- Larry Cole 1983-84

RAM

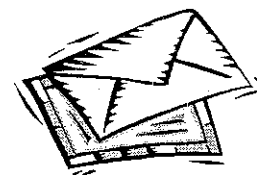
- Bob Wilhelm 1984-85
(2 months)
- Lee Frederickson 1984-85
- Jim Easterling 1985-86
- Lee Frederickson 1986-87
- W T Blakeslee 1987-88



Letters...

Your input is needed! Anyone wanting to submit an article, photo or letter for publication in the *Racquetball Reporter*, please send it to:

The Racquetball Reporter
2834 Yale St.
Flint, MI 48503



Michigan players shine at 35th Annual

Twenty-two members of Team Michigan traveled to Houston for Memorial Day to compete in the Ektelon 35th U.S. National Singles Championships. When the dust had settled, Team Michigan claimed eleven medals, and crowned two National Champions. Diana Courtney claimed the 45+C/D National Championship, and Duane Russell won the 75+ National Championship.

To win the Men's 75+ Division Duane Russell had to win a tough round-robin division. The key match in his march to the championship was a third round victory over top-seeded Earl Acuff. Acuff is a National Champion many times over, and always a threat in any division. Russell proved too much for him and took the match and the championship 15-7, 15-5.

Diana Courtney's Championship came with a healthy dose of controversy. Diana's competition in this division was challenged before the Finals. She had finished second in the B Division at Regionals, and had signed up for B and 45+C/D in Houston. This was brought to the attention of the tournament desk. Diana was about to be forfeited out of the division, when it was discovered that her opponent for the Finals had won her B Division Region. The tournament desk decided that since they were on equal

ground, and it was too late in the tournament to make a change, the match would go on. With off-court challenges behind her, Diana beat her competitor 11-5 in the tiebreaker, capping off a close match. Diana also finished 3rd in the B Division.

Congratulations to both of our National Champions.

Several others made it to the Finals of their divisions, only to come up just short.

Jack Huczek came to Houston looking to repeat as Open Division Champion. After defeating former top-six touring pro Adam Karp in the Quarters, and former National Champion Michael Bronfeld in the Semis, the stage was set for a showdown with current #10 Pro Mike Guidry. Both players came into the Finals without dropping a game and a packed house knew they were in for a battle. Jack looked tight as the match

USRA 2002 Tournament Schedule

October 2-6

Ektelon 35th U.S. National
Doubles Championships
Minneapolis, MN

November 20-24

Choice Hotels 7th U.S. Open
Racquetball Championships
Memphis, TN

December 18-22

IRF 14th World Junior Championships
Orlando, FL

USRA National Singles Championships

started, and seemed to be a bit off all day. Guidry played nearly perfect racquetball, his retrieving and diving re-kills putting pressure on Jack, and Guidry took the first game 15-10. In the second game, Jack was able to re-focus, and get out to an early lead. He slowed the pace, and seemed ready to blow Guidry away. To everyone's surprise, Guidry stayed close, and pressured Jack all the way until Jack finally closed out the second game 15-12. There was no margin for error in the tie-breaker as both players traded blows and momentum went back and forth. Guidry put on a late charge and went up by several points, looking as though he was ready to close it out. Jack was not done yet, and pulled back to 9-10. After several tough rallies, Guidry finally put the match away to claim his first National Championship. Twayne Howard said, "I've seen Mike Guidry play at a dozen pro tournaments, and I've never seen him play that well, and that consistently ever". Clearly it was his day.

Chuck VanHoose came home with two medals. He finished Second in the 50+C/D and Fourth in the 45+C/D. Chuck was smart enough to bring his own cheering section to Houston and his wife Carol and daughter Amy were able to enjoy the shopping and the sights

while still managing to support their boy. And as we all know, Chuck can use all the support he can get.

Shannon Kohl finished Fourth in the Elite Division. Defined as being for "State Open" players, this division featured a wealth of young, talented players. Now that he is able to commit more time to racquetball, Shannon has made tremendous strides in the past few months.

Jeff Johnson finished Second in the 40+C/D Division. He also brought his wife to cheer him on. Jenny helped make sure Carol and Amy Van Hoose didn't miss anything. Jeff clearly was satisfied with his first trip to Houston. Look for Jeff to use this to be a springboard for next season.

Twayne Howard also finished with two medals. Twayne lost the Finals of the 30+C/D Division, ceding match point on a skip that the referee didn't see. After losing in the first round of 35+C/D, he went on to win the Consolation Gold.

Melody Gorno closed out the medal run with a Third place finish in the 35+A/B Division. Melody celebrated her medal by hosting a sandwich and cheese-cake party by the hotel pool with two other medallists. Melody, Diana and Twayne spent the afternoon poolside, basking in the sun (even when covered by that darn building) and wait-

ing for that evening's Red Wings game.

Tom Blakeslee, Alex Brown, John Coaker, Chris Cole, David Combs, Brandon Cortese, Karen Green, Pete Harvey, Sharon Huczek, Charles Kaiser, Mike McMillan, Kevin O'Keefe, Augie Pasko, and Dan Whiston also competed. Debbie Reauso also made the trip to cheer on Melody and Diana.

As always, Nationals is a first-class event. The tournament featured over 700 top amateurs, lots of play, parties, events and a chance to see many, many friends, both old and new. From the great hotel only two blocks away from the club (with the brand new and empty ENRON world headquarters in between), to Astros games, to seeing all the new racquets, to late night debates over the state of racquetball, to a 2:00 am ice bath (thanks Augie, Kevin, Shannon and the other co-conspirators), to tracking everyone's results, to refereeing a match for Chuck in the 70+ Division, to watching Shannon wow the "Karaoke Night" crowd, to watching two young men I've known for years grow and mature, to watching the Red Wings with the "homegirls"; Melody, Diana and Debbie, I will take with me many great memories of Houston. Hopefully, next year, you'll join us and make a few memories of your own.

JOIN THE RACQUETBALL ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN

Membership includes

- *Membership card, USRA official rule book, travel and equipment discounts*
- *USRA medical, life and liability insurance at sanctioned events*
- *Four issues of the RAM newsletter, The Racquetball Reporter*
- *Six issues of the USRA national publication, Racquetball Magazine*
- *RAM sanctioned tournament entry forms mailed to your home*
- *Eligibility to play in all sanctioned tournaments and receive state and national ranking points*

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

SUPPORT THE US NATIONAL TEAM DONATIONS TAX DEDUCTIBLE

DATE _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

DATE OF BIRTH ____/____/____ HOME PHONE _____

- _____ \$30.00 Adult competitor
- _____ \$20.00 Junior Competitor (without *Racquetball Magazine* subscription)
- _____ \$20.00 *Racquetball Magazine* subscription only

MAIL TO: RAM, 111 Pearl St., NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503

The logo for 'Racquetball Reporter' is presented in a stylized, serif font. The text is white and set against a dark, rectangular background. Above and below the text are small, light-colored diamond shapes, creating a symmetrical, arrow-like appearance.

Racquetball Reporter

111 Pearl St. NW
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