A Quarterly Newsletter For
Montana Racquetball Association Members

CENTER COURT

MRA

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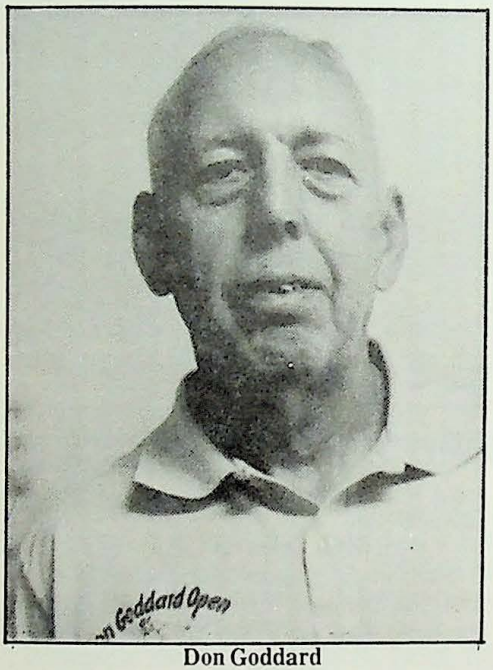
Goddard captures national title



Don Goddard

By RITA BALOCK
Center Court Editor

HAVRE — It took a decade, but Don Goddard won his second national racquetball championship in late-October at the AARA-Ektelon National Doubles tournament in Phoenix.

Ten years ago, Goddard captured a singles title in the 60-year-old age division.

"It's my first in doubles," Goddard said via telephone from Glasgow in early November. "I've got a bunch of second places in doubles. I don't know how many.

"One year, I had a partner out of Boise," Goddard added. "We took second place in 11-10 tie-breakers in two events."

This time, however, there would be no denying Goddard's championship quest.

At national singles last May, Irving Zeitman of Louisville, Ky., scouted the 70-year-old Goddard's game. "We didn't get to play, but he watched me play and asked me to be his partner, so I did," Goddard said.

"He was real honest and said he didn't have a backhand at all," Goddard added.

The five teams in the age 70 bracket at national doubles played round robin. Goddard and Zeitman were the No. 5 seed. "Of those 10 people, eight were former national champions either in singles or doubles," Goddard said.

Goddard and Zeitman played well, going undefeated and playing just one tie-breaker.

The extra game match was saved for last, as Goddard and Zeitman met top-seeded an also unbeaten Luzell Wilde of Utah and Earl Acuff of North Carolina. Goddard and Zeitman prevailed 15-14, 11-15, 11-3.

"My partner was the kind who staked out a small section of the court and he played that small section well and let me do the running, and I did a lot of it," Goddard laughed.

Goddard also got one match in with Ivan Bruner of Wisconsin in the 65-69 age division, but Bruner was forced to return home unexpectedly forcing them to withdraw from that bracket.

Goddard saw a handful of other Montana players at the tournament, noting that Mary Allaman of Billings and Tawn Wolfe of California took the consolation side of the women's 45 division.

The doubles finals drew 600 players.

Kennis, Koski win in Bozeman

BOZEMAN — John Kennis of Butte won two events at the annual Bozeman Open tournament in early November.

Kennis topped the men's Open singles and doubles brackets.

In the women's Open singles, Kim Koski of Bozeman won the championship over Lori Jurenic of Butte.

Billings' Connie Ryals and Laurie Perino knocked off the defending state women's Open doubles champions in Koski and Nancy Rios of Bozeman.

Kennis and Koski are the defending state singles champs.

Here are the results of the Bozeman Open. Match scores and hometowns of players were not reported.

MEN
SINGLES
OPEN

1. John Kennis (Butte), 2. Rob White (Bozeman), 3. King and Richter (Missoula). Consolation: Alan Mader (Billings).

B

1. Crabe (Butte), 2. Gerlach, 3. Reisig. Consolation: Gray

See BOZEMAN

Steve Pinnow

MRA President

Ranking system set nationally

BILLINGS — Traveling to the tournaments around the state, I have had quite a few players ask how the ranking system works.

The Montana Racquetball Associated uses the national ranking system for its standards. They include:

LEVEL 1
CLOSED STATE

1. 30 points, 2. 20, 3. 15, 4. 10, 5-8. 5, Consolation 5.

LEVEL 2
OPEN

1. 50 points, 2. 30, 3. 20, 4. 15, 5-8. 10, Consolation, 10.

LEVEL 3
STATE

1. 150 points, 2. 100, 3. 75, 4. 50, 5-8. 25, Consolation, 25.

LEVEL 4
REGIONAL

1. 250 points, 2. 150, 3. 100, 4. 75, 5-8. 50.

LEVEL 5
NATIONAL
INVITATIONAL

1. 300 points, 2. 200, 3. 150, 4. 100, 5-8. 75.

LEVEL 6
NATIONALS

1. 600 points, 2. 400, 3. 300, 4. 200, 5-8. 100, 9-16. 50.

The local state tournaments are a little tougher to decide as far as to which level, one or two, is used.

The number of tournament players determines which level is used. If most draws are at least 16 players or more, level 2 is used. If the tournament brackets have to be combined, then level 1 will be used.

I hope this helps to explain how the ranking system works.

If you have any questions on this, or anything else, feel free to ask.

Havre juniors busy courts; Helena to host camp

HAVRE — Dust is finally settling at the Sagebrush Athletic Club here. An extensive remodeling project has left us with a two-floor weight room and soon a lounge will be completed.

It'll be even better when aerobics and ballet classes move off the courts.

The club is especially busy on Saturday mornings when 24 youths, ages 7-12, take to the courts for junior racquetball league play.

The league is broken into three divisions, including two for no-bounce rules and another of regular rules. The league goes for 12 weeks and concludes with playoffs.

Rita Balock

Center Court Editor

Havre juniors also can play two tournaments here. In October, the Gallery Lounge-sponsored junior event drew 12 players prior to the Montana Racquetball Association-sanctioned adult play.

Another junior tournament will preceed the Havre city championships in March.

I'm also seeing more juniors as court regulars than some of my old playing partners.

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I found a renewed appreciation for my home Sagebrush club atmosphere during a November vacation to Minneapolis.

There is a chain of 13 athletic clubs in the Twin Cities and membership is universal. I purchased a week-long pass and played challenge courts at four clubs, which open at 6 a.m. and close at midnight.

The court time was good. Walls were bare cement and fast. Glass side and back walls were interesting. I saw very few women playing and none on challenge courts. The men I played were comparable to Montana's B players.

What I didn't like was being greeted by a security gate and guard at the front entrance, nor the desk attendants who said they couldn't set up matches for me. It also scared me that eye guards were not required.

It was good to get back to Sagebrush where I can sit on the counter and drink a pop, which I might pay for a week later, plus tease the help without fear of being handcuffed and hauled out.

••••••

Watching some of the 1991 AARA-Ektelon national doubles tournament on cable television was fun, especially since Jeff Evans of Oregon reached the men's Open final.

Evans was a late pickup by Doug Ganim of Ohio. The two ran into trouble in the form of youth in John Ellis of California and Eric Muller of Kansas, who are ranked in the top three of the AARA's boys' 18 national standings. Ellis and Muller won 15-10, 13-15, 11-8.

Evans did pick up a national mixed Open doubles championship with hard-hitting Michelle Gilman of Boise, Idaho.

A year ago, Evans and ex-Montanan Helen Shields-Houlihan reached the mixed Open semifinals at the national tournament. Evans has also played past Pro-Ams in Missoula and Billings.

Center Court/MARGIE MORSE

THERE WERE no losers in Havre's junior racquetball tournament in October. Some 24 youths, ages 7-12, are currently involved in league play at the Sagebrush Athletic Club.

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Since last fall, I've talked off and on with Chicago racquetball professional Jack Newman about instructing a weekend camp in Montana.

Helena's Crossroads Fitness Center has been selected as the site for the May 2-3 camp.

Newman, one of the nation's top-ranked touring pros, met a couple of Montana players at a fall Oregon camp. He was amazed that they'd traveled so far to improve their games and has decided to bring a camp closer.

Helena is a central location for MRA players and the camp is not quite one month after state singles.

Newman played the Billings Pro-Am last year, but a schedule conflict prevents him from making the upcoming Jan. 24-26 tournament there.

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Tournament players should note the name and date changes for Glasgow. Originally set for November, the event will be played Jan. 17-19 and has been appropriately renamed the Don Goddard Open.

The Billings Athletic Club will be the site for the regional singles tournament to be played April 24-26. It is mandatory for players who want to compete at the May national singles in Houston to play the regional.

Now is time to find partners and start practicing for the 1992 state doubles championships which return to the Crossroads Fitness Center in Helena on Feb. 21-23.

•Bozeman

C

1. Hovland, 2. Sauther, 3. Garcia. Consolation: Busta (Bozeman).

SENIOR B

1. Joe Luckman (Great Falls), 2. Baldwin, 3. Ray White (Lewistown). Consolation: J.R. Carr.

DOUBLES

OPEN

1. Kennis Robbie Gunderson (Butte), 2. King Thompson, 3. Coe Shute. Consolation: Lance Reitmeier, Rob White (Boz).

A-B

1. Norgaard Garcia, 2. Williams Gardiner, 3. Gerlach Baldwin. Consolation: Crase Donnelly (Butte).

WOMEN

SINGLES

OPEN

1. Kim Koski (Boz), 2. Lori Jurenic (Butte), 3. Denise Moerkerke (Hamilton). Consolation: Nancy Rios (Boz).

A

1. Tina Sandbourgh (Boz), 2. Melton, 3. Carmen McSpadden (Boz). Consolation: McLean.

B

1. Benvenga, 2. Richards, 3. Edmonds. Consolation: Cindy Otter (Helena).

DOUBLES

OPEN

1. Connie Ryals Laurie Perino (Billings), 2. Kim Koski Nancy Rios (Boz), 3. Marie Hawkins Lori Jurenic (Butte). Consolation: Moerkerke Melton.

A-B

1. Edmonds Sandbourgh, 2. Mary Allaman (Bigs) Meredith, 3. Vi Schurman Cindy Otter (Hel). Consolation: Enges Richards.

The next issue of Center Court will be published in March. Deadline for copy is March 16.

George breezes through Havre

HAVRE — Top-seeded Mike George of Great Falls never dropped a game en route to the men's Open singles championship of the Gallery Lounge Racquetball Tournament played in mid-October at the Sagebrush Athletic Club.

George defeated Lance Reithmeier of Havre 15-10, 15-6 for the title.

Here are the results of the Gallery Lounge Racquetball Tournament:

MEN

SINGLES

OPEN

Championship: Mike George (Great Falls) def. Lance Reithmeier (Havre) 15-10, 15-6. Third: Daryl Ness (Hav) def. Alan Mader (Billings) 14-15, 15-5, 11-1. Consolation: Bucky Lindstrand (Hav) def. Steve Pinnow (Blgs) 15-10, 15-8.

A

Championship: Perry Jacobson (Hav) def. Butch Albertson (Hav) 15-2, 15-9. Third: Steve Strand (Hav) def. Dennis Humphries (Glasgow) 12-15, 15-14, 11-9. Consolation: Matt Thompson (GF) def. Gary Baltrusch (Hav) 15-11, 15-12.

B-C

Championship: Dave Wolter (Hav) def. Tim Dutter (Kalispell) 15-6, 15-0. Third: Mike Busta (Bozeman) def. Charles Busta (Boz) 8-15, 15-4, 11-7. Consolation: Jack Judd (Hav) def. John Babcock (Kal) 15-7, 15-5.

DOUBLES

OPEN

Championship: George-Thompson (GF) def. Reithmeier-Ness (Hav) 15-14, 12-15, 11-8. Third: Pinnow-Mader (Blgs) def. Lindstrand-Rod Morse (Hav).

B-C

Championship: Ron Mallery-Dutter (Kal) def. Connie Ryals-Laurie Parino (Blgs) 13-15, 15-1, 11-8. Consolation: Debbie Morse-Margie Morse (Hav) def. Roger Winchester (Hav)-C. Busta (Boz) 15-13, 15-4.

WOMEN

SINGLES

OPEN

Championship: Connie Ryals (Blgs) def. Laurie Perino (Blgs) 10-15, 15-7, 11-2. Third: Rita Balock (Hav) def. Mary Allaman (Blgs) 15-6, 15-4. Consolation: Kelly Robertson (Boz) def. Janet Church (Helena) 15-2, 15-10.

B-C

Championship: Beth Buchanan (Hav) def. Chelsea Bussey (Kal) 10-15, 15-6, 11-9. Consolation: Debbie Friesen (Hav) def. Boots Gifford (Hav) 15-6, 15-4.

DOUBLES

B-C

Championship: Bussey-Kathy Ake (Kal) def. Pam Booth-Karen Scheuerman (Hav) 15-7, 15-6.

Center Court/RITA BALOCK

MRA PRESIDENT Steve Pinnow of Billings stretches and follows through during the October Gallery Lounge tournament in Havre.

OPEN

Championship: Reithmeier-Debbie Morse (Hav) def. Lindstrand-Margie Morse (Hav) 15-9, 15-11. Third: Ron Brenna-Balock (Hav) won by forfeit over Pinnow-Ryals (Blgs). Consolation: D. Ness (Hav)-Allaman (Blg) def. Albertson (Hav)-Church (Hel) 15-4, 11-15, 11-10.

B-C

Championship: M. Busta-Robertson (Boz) def. Gary Friesen-V. Ness (Hav) 15-10, 15-11. Third: R. Johnson-Scheuerman (Hav) def. Jim Brenna (Blgs)-Laurie Glass (Hel) 15-4, 9-15, 11-6. Consolation: Evans-Buchanan (Hav) def. Jack Brady-Booth (Hav) 15-5, 11-15, 11-7.

Canadians square off in Missoula

MISSOULA — Two Canadians squared off for the men's Pro singles championship of the annual Court House Winter Pro-Am Racquetball Tournament here in early December.

Rob Pratt defeated Cliff Hendrickson for the title, while Ronnie Roesti of Butte claimed the third place prize money. Pratt and Hendrickson are both of Calgary, Alberta.

Pratt was a double-winner,

Center Court/LANCE REITHMEIER

MONTANA'S HOTTEST women's Open doubles racquetball team is Connie Ryals and Laurie Perino (foreground left, right) of Billings.

Here are the results of the Court House Winter Pro-Am tournament. Match scores were not reported.

MEN

SINGLES

PRO

Championship: Rob Pratt (Calgary, Alberta) def. Cliff Hendrickson (Calgary). Consolation: Ronnie Roesti (Butte).

OPEN-A

Championship: Mark Sherman (Spokane, Wash.) def. Ryan Knee (Missoula). Consolation: Perry Jacobson (Havre).

B

Championship: Brad Salonen (Msla) def. Tom Morrison (Deer Lodge). Consolation: John Quackenbush (Msla).

C

Championship: Al Gilfillan (Msla) def. Curtis Rich (Msla). Consolation: Don Keel (Great Falls).

MASTERS

Championship: George Sherman (Spokane) def. Ken Colbo (Msla). Consolation: Joe Luckman (GF).

SENIOR OPEN

Championship: Usher Barnoff (Calgary) def. Dennis Jupka (GF). Consolation: Gary Peterson (Msla)

SENIOR B

Championship: John Quackenbush (Msla) def. Robert French (Kalispell). Consolation: Mike Pitman (GF).

DOUBLES

A-B

Championship: Knee-Salonen (Msla) def. M. Sherman-Brian Barrier (Spokane). Consolation: French-Noel Kirack (Kal).

WOMENS

SINGLES

PRO

Championship: Tammy Brockman (Boise, Idaho) def. Patti Nishimura (Spokane). Consolation: Denise Moerkerke (Hamilton).

A

Championship: Michelle Draggoo (Kal) def. Cynthia Ford (Msla). Consolation: Carol Surratt (GF).

B

Championship: Diana Meredith (Livingston) def. Jane Quadros (Hamilton). Consolation: Deanna Hugelen (Msla).

C

Championship: Eva Chalmers (Calgary) def. Tracey Wentz (Helena). Consolation: Tricia Clark (Anaconda).

DOUBLES

OPEN

1. Connie Ryals-Laurie Perino (Billings), 2. Helen Houlihan (Kansas City)-Rita Balock (Havre).

A-B

1. Cynthia Ford (Msla)-Annie Shea (Butte), 2. Moerkerke-Rhonda Meiton (Hamilton). Consolation: Carol Surratt-Charlene Luckman (GF).

Kennis doubles in Great Falls

GREAT FALLS — Don Skadeland of Williston, N.D., pushed John Kennis of Butte to a tie-breaker in the men's Open championship match of the Bud Light Autumn Racquetball Shootout at Universal Sports and Courts here in late September.

Kennis took the opening game 15-2, then fell 3-15, before winning 11-6.

Here are the results of the Bud Light Autumn Racquetball Shootout:

MEN

SINGLES

OPEN

Championship: John Kennis (Butte) def. Don Skadeland (Williston, N.D.) 15-2, 3-15, 11-6. Third: Mike George (Great Falls) def. Robbie Gunderson (Butte) 15-6, 15-2. Consolation: Rob Starz (Helena).

A

Championship: Scott Shoe (GF) def. Rod Cline (Cut Bank) 15-7, 15-13. Third: Kent Coe (Helena) def. Wayne Surratt (GF) 15-10, 15-10. Consolation: Kirk Nilson (Billings).

B

Championship: Mike Churchill (GF) def. Gary Williams (Hel) 15-8, 15-11. Third: Mike Schrapps (Butte) def. Rod Hessler (Bigs) 15-7, 15-9). Consolation: David Wolter (Havre).

C

Round robin: 1. Don Cherry (GF), 2. Don Keel (GF), 3. Roy Perez (Kalispell).

MASTERS

Round robin: 1. Bud Talbott (GF), 2. Joe Luckman (GF), 3. Ross Hannon (Lethbridge, Alberta).

SENIORS

Championship: Mike Pitman (GF) def. Jay Tuomi (GF) 15-5, 15-5. Third: Terry Barber (GF) def. Terry Hess. Consolation: Ron Bescich (Fairfield).

DOUBLES

OPEN

Championship: Kennis-Gunderson (Butte) def. George (GF) Skadeland (Williston) 16-14, 15-4. Third: Monaco Richards (GF) def. Kelly Hoover-Steve Pinnow (Bigs). Consolation: Russ Noonan-Starz (Hel).

B-C

Championship: Surratt (GF)-Cline (Cut Bank) def. Gary Levinsky-Olson (Kal) 15-7, 15-13. Third: Thompson-Chamberlain (GF) def. Shea-Flowers.

SENIOR

Round robin: 1. Lose Goddard, 2. Iwaasa-Hannon, 3. Barber-Tuomi.

WOMEN

OPEN-A

Championship: Chris Martin (Bigs) def. Carla Chrisman (Conrad) 15-11, 15-4. Third: Connie Ryals (Bigs) def. Charlene Luckman (GF) 15-2, 15-7-8. Consolation: Laurie Perino (Bigs).

C

Round robin: 1. Wendy Richards (GF), 2. Tricia Clark (Anaconda), 3. Diane Duffy (Lethbridge).

DOUBLES

Round robin: 1. Ryals-Perino (Bigs), 2. Jan Shelton-Bonnie Talbott (GF), 3. Carol Surratt (GF)-Mary Ann Schrapps (Butte).

MIXED DOUBLES

Championship: Martin-Pinnow (Bigs) def. McGuire-Shelton (GF) 15-6, 15-14. Third: Talbott-Talbott (GF) def. Olson-Draggoo (Kal) 15-7, 9-15, 11-4. Consolation: Luckman-Luckman.

Center Court/RITA BALOCK

RON BRENNA of Havre (left) puts the ball on the backhand side against Kent Coe of Helena during a men's A singles match at the Missoula Pro-Am.

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CENTER COURT

MRA

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MRA calendar

Here is the 1991-92 Montana Racquetball Association calendar:

JANUARY

24-26 — Billings Pro-Am, Billings Athletic Club, Billings.

FEBRUARY

7-9 — Winternationals, YMCA Fitness Center, Butte.

21-23 — State Doubles, Crossroads Fitness Center, Helena.

MARCH

6-8 — Kalispell Pro-Am, Kalispell Athletic Club, Kalispell.

13-15 — Shamrock Shootout, Cut Bank Civic Center, Cut Bank.

20-22 — Hot Shots, Goosetown Racquet & Health Club, Anaconda.

APRIL

3-5 — State Singles, Universal Sports & Courts, Bozeman.

JUNE

19-21 — Super 8 Summer Sizzler Doubles, Sagebrugh Athletic Club, Havre.

JULY

17-19 — Big Sky State Games, Billings Athletic Club, Billings.