

The Racquetball Reporter

WINTER 1995

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Quarterly Publication of the Racquetball Association of Michigan

State Doubles Championships prove successful for many

Once again the One on One Racquet and Fitness Club in Ann Arbor was host to our RAM State Doubles tournament in December. The competition this year seemed unusually competitive and everyone had a good time. The open finals was thriller to watch as Ryan Covell and Jim Floyd edged out last year's champions Nick Rallis and Jim Hamilton in an 11-10 tiebreaker. There were many formidable challengers including Mike Anderson and Mike Johnston, the Melvins and Jess Graves and Jack White, all of who played excellent matches.

In the A division two old timers and very experienced A players in their younger days showed the gang they still have it. Ken Bonnett and Bob Gravelyn defeated Chris Kelly and Jim Panasiewicz in the finals. Rick Davenport and Larry Panetta, and the team of Bill Hughes and Al Mell lost in the semi-finals. Men's B saw Gary Gron and Augie Pasco defeat David Starr and Bill Lott, with Ron Papke and Dave Erdmann, Arnold Byrd and Ron Harris losing in the semis. In the Men's C division, Mike Mollema and Rob Moelsa defeated Chuck and Brad VanHoose. Dan Logan /Dave Fear and Tom Deloach/Ron Cunningham lost the previous round.

The age divisions were particularly difficult with a lot of the very best players in the State present and ready to claim titles. In the 30/35 division, Jim Hamil-

ton and Mike Anderson defeated Jess Graves and Jack White. Dan Verbeck, Jim Woolcock and Gordon Kelly and Roy Thesis lost in the semi's.

The 40/45 age division saw a very close match with Tom Brownlee and Tom Blakeslee edging the A winners Bonnett and Gravelyn. In the 40B division Marvin Riley and Mark Niedzielski emerged vic-
continued on page four

1995 STATE SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIPS RESCHEDULED FOR MAY

Due to scheduling conflicts, the date for the 1994-95 RAM State Singles has been changed. The tournament will be held one week later than normal on May 5-7.

Once again the tournament will be held at the Rose Shores Fitness & Racquetball Club in Roseville. We received many positive comments about last year's tournament and look forward to a repeat performance. The details haven't been finalized, but this year we will probably return to our old format of the traditional sweatsuit as the tournament souvenir and last year's prices for entry. Please mark your calendar.

View of the President

by W.T. Blakeslee

As I write this article, I have just returned from the AARA directors meeting in Colorado and, if you notice my optimism, I won't apologize. Racquetball is still alive and well. The Junior Regional will be held in Dayton February 24-26, and their Nationals June 24-28. The High School Championships are March 3-5, National Intercollegiates March 29-April 2 and of course, the AARA Singles May 24-29. Call me if you need more details or entry forms.

There will more than likely be major changes in the Regional format next year. The AARA is planning to have all Regionals take place on the same weekend. There is also some plans to have Regional Doubles within the next three years, Regional qualifying would be mandatory. For Michigan, some of the changes may cause some problems as Regional timing may drift toward late April which could effect our State Singles date. Finally, write the AARA if you think the Singles Regional should rotate between Ohio and Michigan.

Racquetball seems to be

stabilizing according to the Manufacturers. They are going to try to discuss the industries problems as a group at the Super Show. Of immediate concern is the continuation of court removal and how to help club owners make a profit from racquetball. In my opinion there seems to be a lot of renewed interest by a bigger group of manufacturers, where there is smoke there is fire!

Racquetball One's tournaments have received a lot of positive comment on the thirty dollar entry fee and the excellent job Ken has been doing this year. Please continue to support his events. Membership is a very important goal for RAM's future success. For twenty dollars you get the National AARA magazine, four issues of the RAM newsletter, RAM and AARA information mailed to your home, membership cards, rule books and eligibility to play in all sanctioned events. We need memberships to survive — sign up today and pass the word.

Finally, the doubles was better than ever and our thanks to all that played, see you next year.

Racquetball Association
of
Michigan

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W.T. Blakeslee
Ken Bonnett
Marta Rubcich
Jim Easterling

FEBRUARY RACQUETBALL ONE STOP NEW FORMAT FOR ALL AGE GROUPS

The February 17-19 scheduled Senior's Plus event will include all age groups, not just senior's. Each age group will offer open/A and B/C level divisions. In this round robin play event, a player will compete against players approximately the same age and same level. This has always been done for the older players, and it will now be made available for the younger players as well.

For excitement a special "Top Gun" exhibition is being planned. Joel Bonnett and one or two other top American players will compete! \$5 per point and \$10 a service ace and perhaps a special bonus to the winner. Admission is free to tournament players.

RACQUETBALL ONE FINALE WILL BE A ROUND ROBIN EVENT

Due to popular demand, the March 24-26 Grand Finale at the Lansing MAC will be a round robin event instead of the previously schedule double elimination.

All entries will receive a quality shirt and the fine hospitality of the Michigan Athletic Club in East Lansing. In addition to all the nice prizes, the winner of each event will receive a Grand Finale Champion Sweat-shirt.

For additional information see the entry form enclosed in this issue.

GRAND RAPIDS CITY INVITATIONAL APRIL 22-23 IS OPEN TO ALL, REGARDLESS OF RESIDENCE

This event, the last of the Racquetball One series, is a great warm-up for the State Singles Championships the end of April. This round robin event will be held at the very popular Grand Rapids MAC. Lots of fun, food and prizes at these G.R. events.

1995 RAM TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

Feb. 17-19

**Racquetball One
Michigan Athletic Club
Grand Rapids**

Mar. 3-5

**Kill-Shot Klassic
One on One Athletic Club
Ann Arbor**

Mar. 10-12

**AARA Regional Championships
Sawmill and Westerville Athletic Club
Columbus, Ohio**

Mar. 24-26

**Racquetball One Finale
Michigan Athletic Club
Lansing**

Apr. 7-9

**Women's Only/State Warm-Up
Total Sports Club
Mt. Clemens**

Apr. 21-23

**Grand Rapids City Championships
Michigan Athletic Club
Grand Rapids**

May 5-7

**RAM State Singles
Rose Shores Athletic Club
Roseville**

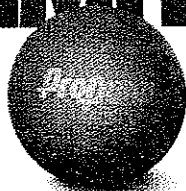
WOMEN'S SIDE-OUT

by Marta Rubcich

I am very concerned about the state of women's racquetball in Michigan. Where are the players in the lower skilled divisions? During a recent tournament at Maple Athletic Club, there were a total of 13 women competing. Ten of the players were open players, and the other 3 ladies were forced to compete in the open draw because of the small numbers. This is unfair to these ladies, and certainly does not encourage them to return to tournament play. It is time we each make an effort to change this situation.

I am soliciting the Open and A players to encourage, beg, bribe or whatever it takes to bring a new players to the tournament scene. Let's start by inviting someone new to play at the RAM Special Event at Total Sports on April 8. I also challenge you to come out and help at this tournament. We are asking the Open and A players to encourage and support the lower skill level players by refereeing their matches and providing tips on ways to improve their game during this tournament. If you are willing to help, come out to the tournament. We need you to get involved.

THERE ARE NO SPEED LIMITS.



The new Pro Penn Racquetball is faster and highly visible. As for its top speed, we don't know that all depends on how hard you can hit it.

Michigan players face off in State Doubles Tournament

continued from page one

torious over long time racquetball supporter Ron Slavic and his partner Van Conway.

In Women's A, Julie May and Michele Moore defeated Maggie Kurzava and Tracey Goodell. In Women's Open, Laura Patterson and teammate Melody (can you hear the music) Gorno lost in a double elimination event to Janet Insko and Kathy Trotter. Paula Saad, Stacey Barbas and Lesley Kishigan, Kathy Motyka Lost in the elimination rounds. Womens BCD saw Sue Papke and Loraine Gohr defeat the team of Eldred and Visgar.

The mixed events were very interesting and also hard to schedule. In A Michele Moore and Mark Ohs lost Karen Green and Scott Sargent in one of the very last matches and finally Ron and Sue Papke lost to Karen and Chad Visgar in the B event.

Thanks to all who attended and a special thanks to the club, Lou and Anne.

AMERICAN AMATEUR RACQUETBALL ASSOCIATION APPROVED LENSED EYEWEAR

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Black Knight Sight Guard

Ektelon

Olympus
Spector
Odyssey
Scopa
Quantum
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Itech Super Sonic

Kleershot

Kleershot

Leader

New Yorker
Maxum

Leader

Brittany
Albany
Ultima
Vizion 2
Champion

Liberty Optical

Wrap I, II by Rec Specs
Rec Specs
All Pro Rec Specs
Rec Specs for kids
Pro Guard Rec Specs
Sport Lock
Sport Goggle
Helmet Spec
Helmet Specs for kids
Junior Rec Specs
Super Rec Specs

North Atlantic Services

Thor

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Switch Hitter

RPM Distributors

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Hall of Fame inductees honored

The Michigan Racquetball Hall of Fame inducted seven new members on Saturday November 12, 1994. Actually these seven people were inducted in 1993 at the State Singles Championships, but due to some problems did not receive their recognition until now.

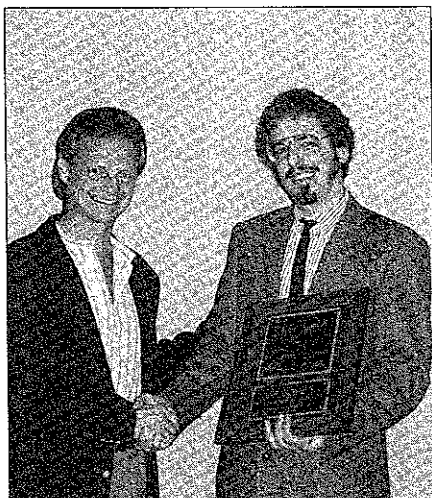
The Hall of Fame awards were presented at a banquet on November 12, during the Seniors Masters racquetball tournament, at the Davison Country Club. Jim Hiser, Assistant Executive director of AARA programs, flew in from Colorado to make the presentation to the Hall of Famers.

Inductees included Donna Henry-Brewer, Irene Ackerman-Churma, William Gottlieb, Gordon Kelly, Larry Fox, Kathy Williams-Harrison and Steve Keeley.

The Michigan Racquetball Hall of Fame display is being refurbished right now and will be on permanent display at the Michigan Athletic Club in East Lansing, hopefully by April.

Those inductees not in attendance and therefore not pictured were Larry Fox, Kathy Williams-Harrison and Steve Keeley.

Thanks to all those in attendance and congratulations to all!



WILLIAM GOTTLIEB



GORDON KELLY



DONNA HENRY-BREWER



IRENE ACKERMAN-CHURMA

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL!

Women's Only Tourney set for State-Warm Up

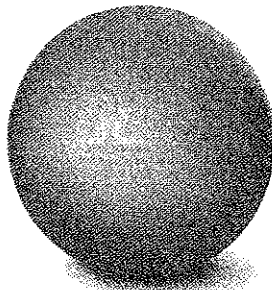
Women's divisions will be featured in a special RAM event at the State Warm-Up tournament on April 8. The tournament will be held at Total Sports in Mt. Clemens. While the men play a 2-day event, the women's will be held as a 1-day "tournament within a tournament," using round robin format. Prizes will be awarded in all women's divisions. Let's come out and support this tournament and make it a truly special event for all women players. Bring someone new along from your league or club and introduce them to the fun and competition of tournament play. Watch your mail for an entry form or contact Marta Rubcich.

**1995
AARA
Junior Regionals
February 24-26**

**Congree Park
Athletic Club
Dayton, Ohio**

**For info contact:
ORA
(614) 548-4188**

IF YOU CAN'T STAND THE HEAT, STAY OUT OF THE COURT.



But if you like it hot, play the Penn Ultra Blue Racquetball. And if your opponent objects, hey, just point out that the door's not locked.

1995 Regional Tourney set

On the weekend of March 10, 11 and 12, Sawmill and Westerville Athletic Clubs of Columbus, Ohio will host what promises to be one of the largest racquetball events held in the state of Ohio. This national qualifying event is expected to draw over 900 entries from seven different states. Given the high level of prestige associated with a Regional Championship, an extremely high quality event is again being planned for your competitive pleasure. Players who attended last year's Regional Championships have a good idea what's in store. The Olive Garden Italian Restaurants have put together an incredible "Tour of Italy" hospitality menu for the weekend.

High quality awards will be given to the top three players in each division and the top eight of each championship division will be invited to attend a U.S. Elite training camp at the U.S.O.C. training center in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Any player that competes in a Regional Championship event is eligible to compete at the 1995 Ektelon/AARA U.S. National Singles Championships in Houston, Texas May 24-29 and players may compete in more than one regional. Entry forms for the Nationals will be inside each players tournament program in Columbus. For more information regarding the Nationals, contact the AARA at (719) 635-5396.

Due to the large number of players expected, play will begin as early as 10:00 am on Friday March 10. Please make proper arrangements so that you will not be taken by surprise with an early starting time. Once matches have been scheduled and starting times distributed, no changes will be permitted.

Players raise money during holidays

by Marta Rubcich

Racquetball players competed in a local tournament in November to raise money to help feed some needy people at Thanksgiving. A small draw of 16 players had a full day of round robin matches as they raised \$216 for the Midland Emergency Food Pantry. This donation was made possible by the generous contributions of the Midland Community Medical Center and MG Deli. The money was used to provide food baskets and gift certificates to the needy Midland County residents during the holidays.

Tournament winners included Dennis Darzinski and Joel Schneider in the singles events, while Dale Hollo and Marta Rubcich paired up to capture the doubles.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

**1995 STATE SINGLES
CHAMPIONSHIPS
MAY 5-7**

**ROSE SHORES FITNESS
& RACQUET CLUB
ROSEVILLE, MI**

**COMPETE WITH THE
STATE'S BEST**

Midwest Seniors/Masters tourney continues success

Michigan's Midwest Seniors Masters Racquetball tournament was held on November 11-13, 1994 at the newly remodeled Davison Athletic Complex in Davison, Michigan. Sponsored by PENN Athletic Products, this was another fun and successful event.

The tournament is the only one of the Midwest Seniors Masters Series that is held in Michigan and draws players from Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Canada and Colorado. In operation for six years, the tournament is geared toward players age 35 and older and runs on a

round robin format.

Saturday night featured an exciting banquet where Hall of Fame inductees were honored and an auction held to raise funds for the U.S. National Racquetball Team and refurbishing the Hall of Fame display. Thanks to those in attendance, \$550 was raised to be divided equally between the above mentioned causes.

Thanks to Randy Minto and his staff for their hospitality and to PENN Racquetball for their continual sponsorship of the tournament. Thanks also to the players who continue to support this event.

WOMEN'S 35/40

1ST

JANET INKSO

2ND

KATHIE TROTTER

MEN'S 35

1ST

CLEE MELVIN

2ND

DAN VERBECK

MEN'S 40

1ST

DAVID NOWACK

2ND

JIM HISER

MEN'S 45

1ST

DOUG TOTH

2ND

JIM SANTINO

MEN'S 50

1ST

GORDON KELLY

2ND

TOM PERNA

MEN'S 55

1ST

RON HUTCHERSON

2ND

PAUL BECKER

MEN'S 60/65

1S

LYNN HAHN

2ND

JD DRIVER

CONGRATULATIONS
TO ALL!

Updates from sunny Texas

by Chris Cole

Belated Happy Holidays to all!

Exciting things have been happening for me here in Houston. I received an offer to become General Manager at another racquetball and fitness center. The club is one of the best places to host a racquetball tournament in Texas and it is in a great location in the midst of an office park. Corporate membership would be a major draw with all the offices within a one block walk. Keeping me back right now is the relationships and reputation I have developed at Chancellors. I would hate to leave after fighting so hard to get Chancellor's racquetball programs off the ground, but the chance to run my own club and earn a decent salary will be tough to turn down.

I have also completed my first coaching experience as Head Coach for the Junior Olympic Team in Jacksonville, Florida. I am more excited however, about the summer trip planned to the Netherlands to compete in the prestigious European Sports Festival. After that it is on to Ireland to visit the countryside and give a few racquetball clinics. However, to accomplish all of this, we need to come up with about \$45,000 to cover all our costs. I have already raised \$25,000 towards our goal and hope to get a major airline to sponsor the team.

Nancy and I missed seeing all of you when we visited for Thanksgiving. Take care and keep warm during the coming months. You

Join the Racquetball Association of Michigan

Membership includes:

- * Membership card, AARA official rule book, travel and equipment discounts
- * AARA medical, life and liability insurance at sanctioned events
- * Four issues of the RAM newsletter, The Racquetball Reporter
- * Six issues of the AARA 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 U.S. NATIONAL TEAM
(DONATIONS TAX DEDUCTIBLE)



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NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

 STATE

 ZIP CODE

Date of Birth _____ Home Phone _____ Business Phone _____

**CLASS A
MEMBER**



- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| ☐ \$20.00 | Adult Competitor |
| ☐ \$15.00 | Junior Competitor |
| ☐ \$10.00 | Junior Competitor
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| ☐ \$15.00 | Racquetball Magazine Subscription Only |

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