

Racquetball Reporter

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2006 STATE DOUBLES
ENTRY FORM



Racquetball Association of Michigan

Michigan's Newest National Champions Crowned at the 2006 National Junior Olympic Championships in East Lansing

- Don Schopieray

Over 250 of the best junior racquetball players from around the country arrived at the MAC in East Lansing to battle for pride and a spot on the USA Junior team at this year's finals. Champions would be crowned in divisions ranging from the 6-year-old multi-bouncers to the premier 18 and under group.

Junior Team Michigan had 25 of our best players ready to defend the home soil and at the end of the week they didn't disappoint, winning a State record 23 medals during the tournament and taking home Gold in 4 different divisions.

Mercedes Arias and **Ines LeCland** became Michigan's newest National Champions winning the Girls 10/12 Doubles in a very exciting match against last year's defending champs, Abbey Lavelly and Elizabeth Vargas. Way to go ladies! These two have truly established themselves as the new Queens of the Court.

Other Championship division action saw **Brad Schopieray** and his Ohio partner Andy McGuffey lose a heartbreaker to the powerhouse Stockton California team of Marco Rojas and Jose Diaz in the final of Boys 12 and Under Doubles.

Mercedes and Brad joined forces for the 12 and Under Mixed Doubles competition and narrowly missed a trip to the final losing to the eventual winners. Not ones to ever give up, they came back and easily won the third place match over a pair from Oregon, giving them the bronze medal in their first outing as teammates.

Andrew Price made it through to the quarterfinals in the ultra competitive Boys 14 and Under Gold Division in both singles

and doubles, with home state partner Matt Barbuscak. These guys were playing for the first time as a team and were doing very well in National level competition.

Connor Cowan brought home gold in the Boys 8 and Under Red Division beating downstate rival, **Kurtis White** in the final. Kurtis got the job done in the 8 and Under Multi-bounce Red Division getting the win over Ohio tough guy Christian Ulliman. **Mary Zeng** held up the ladies end of things bringing home the gold in the Girls 6/8 Multi-bounce Red Division.

WOW, what a week...we kicked things off with a one day training camp at the Davison Athletic Club where all of our Team Coaches: Lewis Forrest, Ed Arias, Jim Woolcock, Joe Budzinski, Jack and Sandy White, Don Schopieray, and club volunteer, Marshall McFarland, worked with our kids to prepare them for what was to come. Without their help we would not have been as successful as we were, Thank you all!

After the first day of the Tournament we had a team dinner with special guest, Jack Huczek. Jack hung around signing autographs and taking pictures with all of the kids. Then Jack gave a very good speech on the value of teamwork and having fun on the courts. This was definitely one of the week's highlights and a big hit with the kids, thank you Jack!!

I think the biggest thing for the week was the way Team Michigan rebounded from losses in the initial rounds. Our coaching staff is second to none and they were kept very busy all week, keeping up with the matches our players were involved in, and helping out with pointers and encouragement. Without them it would have been

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Newsletter

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THOUGHTS FROM THE PRESIDENT . .

- Twayne M. Howard
President

Here we sit on the cusp of a new season. And like March's anticipation of the first glorious day of Spring, we sit in anticipation of the indoor racquetball season. And what a season it's going to be. But first, a brief look back.

June saw the return of the Junior National Championships to Michigan. After many months and hundreds, maybe thousands of hours of work, the tournament went off spectacularly well. USA Racquetball staff and friends who brought their kids commented this was one of the best tournaments they could remember. There was a ton of activities, the facility was first-rate, and the food was incredible. These comments were the highest praise I've heard for a tournament this size. I would like to congratulate the organizing committee, the volunteers, the sponsors and everyone who contributed for a tremendous job well done. All the hard work certainly paid off. There are more details here in the Newsletter, but I wanted to make sure they heard it here as well.

I would also like to congratulate our new Champions from Junior Nationals and Adult Nationals. Both tournaments were very successful for Team Michigan, and continued our great success in National tournaments.

And now a look ahead. As I said, this is going to be a great season. We are pleased to announce that the State Championship tournaments are returning to two of the great host clubs in the State on Michigan. This December, State Doubles will be held at the Michigan Athletic Club in East Lansing. This world class location should make an excellent home for the tournament, and we are looking forward to enjoying their great hospitality. It has been several years since Lansing hosted a State Championship and I think it's high time to make a return trip.

And speaking of great clubs, few clubs in Michigan have a greater history than the host of the next State Singles. We are proud to announce that the Davison Athletic Club will be the host of the 2007 State Singles Championship. Davison is one of the great racquetball clubs dating back to the sports heyday. And now that we are seeing the onset of the sport's next heyday, what better way to celebrate than return to this great tournament house.

As for the rest of the season, we have a great lineup of tournaments set for the season. Most of the usual suspects are back to offer up all the great racquetball you can handle. Pick a weekend; we have a great tournament for you to play in. We have Pros, we have Amateurs, we have Juniors, and a full slate of Men, Women and Mixed divisions. No matter who you are, we have an event, or two, for you. Come on out and see what it's all about.

But now, the major topic in this Newsletter: Juniors. This Newsletter is a celebration of Juniors and an acknowledgement of their importance to Michigan Racquetball. We have articles highlighting their accomplishments as well as an exciting new program for Juniors. It has been exciting to see the growth of Junior racquetball in Michigan, certainly a highlight of the past ten years.

Whew. What a start. A great start to another great season. I can't wait. The anticipation is killing me. See you on the courts.



*The Racquetball Reporter is printed courtesy of
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TEAM MICHIGAN CROWNS A NATIONAL CHAMPION IN HOUSTON IN MAY

- Twayne M. Howard

Another National Singles has come and gone, and Team Michigan has put in another outstanding performance. Congratulations to our newest National Champion, **Dave Lund**.

Mr. David Lund made his first trip to Houston to vie a National Championship in the Mens 70+ Division. This is always a tough division with great play, and even more camaraderie. After a hard week of play, David Lund defeated a world-class player, Francis Florey 15-2, 15-1 to win his first National Championship. He added this Championship to his US Open Championships and several State and Regional Champions. Congratulations to David Lund, Team Michigan's newest National Champion.

Jack Huczek was looking to become the first man to win the Open Championship three years in a row. He advanced to the finals against Rocky Carson, who is also a top pro on the IRT. These

two have met in the Finals in Houston several times, each one coming away with victories. This year, Rocky was just too much and he defeated Jack 11-3 in the tie-breaker. Rest assured, Jack will be back next year to start another streak.

USA Racquetball implemented an "Olympic" style format for all of the Womens divisions. That means that all of the players who signed for 35+ divisions or A divisions would be combined into one division. If they won the first round, they would advance in the Gold bracket. If they lost the first round, they would drop down to the Blue bracket. If they won, they would advance, if they lost, they would drop down again.

Melody Gorno has made quite a habit of going to Houston, and coming home with medals. 2006 was no exception. In the new format, Melody competed in the 35+A, and 45+A Divisions losing to two former professional players. She made the Quarters in the Gold brackets, and

moved to the 45+A Blue division where she earned a Silver Medal.

Pete Harvey has become a regular Houston and this year was a great trip. After making it to the Quarters in the 55+B Division, Pete finished with a Bronze in the Mens 55+A Division. Another great trip Houston.

Another perennial medalist is **Sharon Huczek**. This year was no exception. Sharon made it to the Semis of the Womens 55+ Division.

As for yours truly, I made the trip, but left my game in Michigan.

This is always a great event and a great way to close the season. It's another chance to see old friends, and make some new ones. You get to see the top amateurs in the world and hear what is going on in the industry. And Houston has always been a great host. Next year, why don't you join us?

2006-07 RAM TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

Sep 30- Oct 1	Double Vision Doubles Only, Michigan Athletic Club, Lansing
Oct 6-8	Whaley Children's Classic, Davison Athletic Club, Davison
Oct 20-22	West Michigan Open Pro-Am, Michigan Athletic Club, Grand Rapids
Oct 28	Halloween Spooktacular, Players Athletic Club, Warren
Nov 3-5	Riverview Fall Brawl, Riverview Athletic Club, Grand Rapids
Nov 10-12	Spartan Splat, Michigan Athletic Club, Lansing
Dec 1-3	STATE DOUBLES, Michigan Athletic Club, Lansing
Jan 12-14	OMNI Fitness Club, Muskegon
Jan 19-21	Tie-Breaker Open, Davison Athletic Club, Davison
Feb 2-4	Motor City Rollout, Courtland Athletic Club, Utica
Feb 10-11	Aloha Open, Genesys Athletic Club, Grand Blanc
Feb 23-25	Capital Challenge, Michigan Athletic Club, Lansing
Mar 3-4	March Madness, Players Athletic Club, Warren
Mar 9-11	MAC Open, Michigan Athletic Club, Grand Rapids
Mar 23-25	STATE SINGLES, Davison Athletic Club
Mar 30-Apr 1	South West Michigan Racquetball Shootout, Bronson A C, Kalamazoo
TBD	REGIONALS

JUNIOR'S CORNER . .



Girls 10/12 Doubles Gold Medalist
Ines Lecland (left)
Mercedes Arias (right)



Boys 12 Under Doubles Silver Medalists
Brad Schopieray (left)
Andy McGuffie from Ohio (right)



14 & Under Singles White
Lucas Arias (left) - 2nd
Bryan Schopieray (right) - 4th

NEXT RAM BOARD MEETING

FRANKLIN ATHLETIC CLUB
29350 Northwestern Hwy.
Southfield, MI 48034

SEPTEMBER 27, 2006
Time - To be determined



8 Under Multi-bounce Red Gold medalist
Kurtis White (left)
USAR Executive Director
Jim Hiser (right)

JUNIOR NATIONALS (cont from pg 1)

chaos. Next time you see them at a tournament take a second and thank them, they put in a lot of time supporting the future of our sport. I for one could not have done it without them, THANK YOU!!!

At the end of a long week it looked like this: Michigan finished in the top 10 overall. Team Michigan earned four gold medals, six silver medals, six bronze medals, and seven platinum medals. We made new friends and are working on some new and exciting things for this upcoming season. Thank you again to all of the parents and players for being wonderful representatives of our state.



Results from the 2006 Junior National Championships

Mercedes Arias

Girls 10/12 Doubles Gold 1st
Mixed 12 Doubles Gold 3rd
Girls 12 Singles Red 2nd

Lucas Arias

Boys 14 Singles White 2nd
Boys 14 Doubles Consolation 4th

Matt Bernstein

Boys 16 Doubles Consolation
quarterfinals
Boys 16 Singles Blue Quarterfinals

Conner Brown

Boys 10 Singles White 4th

Matt Barbuscak

Boys 14 Doubles Quarterfinals
Boys 14 Singles White 3rd

Alex Banks

Boys 12 Singles White 3rd

Connor Cowan

Boys 8 Singles Red 1st
Boys 8 Multi-bounce Blue 2nd

Weston Cowan

Boys 12 Doubles Consolation 3rd
Boys 12 Singles White quarterfinals

Brody Kutt

Boys 12 Singles White quarterfinals

Sydney Kutt

Girls 8 Singles Round Robin 5th

Shelby Kutt

Girls 12 Singles Red 4th

Ines LeCland

Girls 12 Singles Red 3rd
Girls 10/12 Doubles Gold 1st

Veronica Mills

Girls 8 Singles Round Robin 4th
Mixed 10/12 Doubles Consolation 4th

Vincent Mills

Boys 10 Singles White 3rd
Mixed 10/12 Doubles Consolation 4th

Andrew Price

Boys 14 Singles Gold Quarterfinals
Boys 14 Doubles gold quarterfinals

Dan Poindexter

Boys 12 Dingles Red quarterfinals

Stuart Robbennolt

Boys 16 Singles White quarterfinals

Brad Schopieray

Boys 12 Singles Gold quarterfinals
Boys 12 Doubles Gold 2nd
Mixed 12 doubles gold 3rd

Eric Sporer

Boys 12 Singles Red quarterfinals

Bryan Schopieray

Boys 14 Singles White 4th
Boys 14 Doubles consolation 5th

Trevor Sporer

Boys 12 Singles Red quarterfinals

Kevin White

Boys 14 Singles White quarterfinals
Boys 14 Doubles consolation 5th

Kurtis White

Boys 8 Multi-bounce Red 1st
Boys 8 Singles Red 2nd

Mary Zeng

Girls 6/8 Multi-bounce Red 1st
Girls 8 Singles round robin 2nd

Sam Zeng

Boys 12 Doubles consolation 3rd
Boys 12 Singles Blue quarterfinals



JUNIOR NATIONALS . . . PASSION AND COMMITMENT

- Twayne M. Howard

It all started the autumn of 2004, as a thought shared by Don Schopieray to bring Junior National Racquetball Championships to Michigan. Don approached the CARA gang in Lansing with the idea of the Michigan Athletic Club (MAC) being the venue for the event. Allan Coyle brought in the Lansing Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) to help win the bid, and Dan Mullin, with the help of Ruth Beier, set out to win the support of the MAC, RAM and USA Racquetball (USAR). From these beginnings the Michigan Coalition for Junior Olympic Racquetball Championships was formed.

From the beginning, the intention was to bring players, tournament directors, and racquetball enthusiasts together to set a new standard on which future Junior National Championships would be judged. A lofty goal, yes...but one accomplished. Here is what Jim Hiser, USAR Executive Director had to say, *"On behalf of USA Racquetball, the junior council and all the juniors and parents, I wanted to thank you for hosting such a great event. I did not hear one complaint about the club, the hospitality, the special events or anything associated with your volunteers. A true rarity...You and your volunteers should be congratulated for all your work, extra effort and superb organization. You have set a standard that will be difficult to meet! Again Congratulations!"*

Listening to parents, players, and organizers of past tournaments and events, we set out to provide a welcoming and hospitable venue. We accomplished "Welcoming" right off the bat by telling families they had the full use of the MAC facilities; apparently not a common policy at other tournaments. We provided excellent lunches starting with Chef Mike Manista of Nestle's cooking up plentiful amounts of pasta with three delicious Stouffer sauces (I particularly enjoyed using friendly persuasion to entice the kids to try the Pesto sauce); each day we provided a different lunch like the now nationally famous Menna's Grilled Dubs, Pitas from Mr. Pita, and pizza from Hungry Howie's. We also provided fruit, snacks and Gatorade throughout the day in the hospitality room for the players.

Actually, hospitality started each day at our "Welcome Table" where families could stop by and pick-up gum, nuts and snacks upon entering and leaving the MAC. And least we forget, a huge thank you needs to go out to the Welcome Table Staff, Robin and Jim Woolcock, Ruth Beier, and Caryn Coyle; they provided friendly faces all throughout the tournament, all week long, offering information on daily events and activities, and suggesting area attractions and directions when the CVB staff were not present. Though she may try to down play her role, a seemingly constant presence, Caryn arrived at the MAC a half to an hour before play times and was always one of the last to leave.

A week full of excellent play, great food and good times were not limited to day time hours. The talk of the tournament was the Pool Party open to all families, hosted by Team Michigan. Grilled hot dogs with all the fixings, chips and punch were served pool side, as families relaxed, swam and the kids used the giant slide. This all took place with the vibrant live entertainment from the band "Taste This!" (they also played at the Awards Banquet). All of this at the pool party, and still more...there was also a Euchre Tournament, a mini-bike raffle, and yes, outdoor racquetball matches for the insane who couldn't get enough during the day or could only remember when they were young enough to play juniors.

We tried so hard to make every aspect of this event special; even the banquet at the Kellogg Center drew rave reviews. One father from California stated, "...I've been involved in tournaments for 13 years, and this, by far, was the best food." Other parents commented on the Kellogg waitstaff and how well they interacted with the kids.

The whole reason for being was to provide Michigan players the opportunity to play against and watch the best players from across the nation, and to vie for a spot on the USAR Junior Olympic Team. We accomplished this and so much more. We showcased Michigan, and our state capital, Lansing, and we provided an outstanding opportunity for youngsters to see what can be accomplished with teamwork and caring passionately with a goal in mind. Sometimes hard to value, or measure, we provided positive, supportive role models. Charles and Anita Mills stated it well in a note to RAM President Twayne Howard, *"We wanted to thank you and the entire committee who worked to put together the Junior National Tournament. It was the experience of a lifetime for our children (Vincent and Veronica). They are still talking about it!! We were so impressed with how smoothly it was run. Even more importantly, we want to thank everyone for the positive feedback and support that our children received during the tournament. The sport has an overwhelming positive atmosphere and we know that is a tribute to the wonderful adults that helped make the tournament happen...Thank you once again!!"*

The passion and commitment was astonishing on the part of players also, well illustrated on opening day, when a young lady (18) checked in at our Welcome Table. Astonishing because she traveled from Utah, spoke little English and unbelievable as it seems, she had not booked a room for her stay! Some would say this was foolishness, but undeniable was her driving passion to be at the games! All worked out in the end with her dilemma resolved when compassion and "the right thing to do" drove a family to convince their dad

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CHRIS COLE AND JIMMY FLOYD INDUCTED INTO THE RAM HALL OF FAME 2006

Chris Cole and Jimmy Floyd became the 26th and 27th persons to be inducted into the Michigan Racquetball Hall of Fame. The Hall of Fame was developed in 1884 by the Racquetball Association of Michigan (RAM) to honor those recipients who demonstrate outstanding achievement, leadership or contributions to the sport of racquetball in the state of Michigan.

Both of these inductees know each other well and grew up together in the Flint area. They played a lot of racquetball at the Davison Racquetball Club together. Both of these gentlemen have done many things and won a lot of tournaments over the years to deserve to their induction into the Hall of Fame.

A few of Chris's accomplishments include:

1. Won a Michigan Junior State Championship in every age division.
2. Won at least five Michigan Men's Open State Singles Championship.
3. Won five Michigan Open State Doubles Championships with different partners.
4. In 2001 won Bronze at National Doubles in Mixed 30+ with Sandy White.
5. In 1992 Won Tournament of the Americas, World Championship Singles and US National Singles
6. In 1994-95 was Head Coach for US Junior Nationals Team.
7. For 8 years was an instructor at the US Olympic Training Center in Colorado.
8. In 1995 received Award for Fair Play by IOC in Rome.
9. From 1990 to 1994 was on the Board of Directors of RAM (1992-94 was President).
10. From 2000 to 2003 was on the Board of Directors of USRA and USOC.



Chris Cole (left), Jimmy Floyd (right)

A few of Jimmy's accomplishments include:

1. In 1980 won the 10 and under division at the AARA Junior National Championships.
2. In 1988 was the Michigan Junior Athlete of the Year.
3. In 1988 was a High School National Champion.
4. In 1989 was the Michigan Male Athlete of the Year.
5. Came in 2nd place in the Men's Pro at the Davison Bud Light Open.
6. In 1989, 90, & 91 he was a member of the US National Team.
7. In 1990 won 1st place in the Men's Open at the AARA National Doubles Championships.
8. In 1991 won 1st place in the Men's Open Doubles at the Tournament of the Americas.
9. In 1991 won 1st place in the Men's Open Doubles at the Pacific Rim Championships.
10. In 1992 came in 2nd in the Men's Open Doubles at the AARA National Doubles Championships.

The Michigan Racquetball Hall of Fame is located inside the Michigan Athletic Club in East Lansing. It is Michigan's most prestigious racquetball honor.

FUND RAISER FOR USAR HALL OF FAME & THE SUSAN G. KOMEN BREAST CANCER FOUNDATION

There will be a "**PLAY THE PRO DAY**" coming this October of 2006. This will be a fundraising event for both the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation and the USAR National Hall of Fame. The fund raiser will be held at the Michigan Athletic Club in East Lansing. The exact Saturday in October will be announced soon.

Each participant who signs up to "play the pro" will receive a can of balls. You can sign up for a 15 minute mini-lesson or to play for \$25; or play for 30 minutes for \$50; or play for an hour for \$100. Remember all monies will go toward the USAR Hall of Fame and the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation.

We will start play at 9:00 am and finish play at 5:00 pm. You will have to sign up in advance for your slot and tell us what time and who you would like to play.

More details on the exact date and who the PROs are will be announced in the near future. If you have questions, please contact Jim Easterling at (517) 887-0459 or (517) 449-8942. Hope to see you there and for your support for this worthy cause.

PRO NATIONALS - ANOTHER GREAT SHOW AND ANOTHER GREAT SHOWING FOR TEAM MICHIGAN

- Twayne M. Howard

In April, twenty-three members of Team Michigan traveled to Chicago to participate in the Pro National Championship. In only its second year in Chicago, Pro Nationals has solidified itself as a true Grand Slam event. It has all the flair of the US Open, but it is far closer to home, which makes it a great event for Michiganders. The Pro Nationals is also the Adult Regional Championship making it a qualifier for the National Championships.

The work done by Dave Negrete, Commissioner of the IRT, Doug Ganim, the Executive Director of the US Open, Jim Hiser the Executive Director of USA Racquetball and their team cannot be overstated. This has become a true world class event.

As for the on-court action, by the end of the weekend, Team Michigan had earned five Gold Medals and several other Medals.

Mr. **Dave Lund** has celebrated his 70th birthday by beating up every 70+ player that has gotten in his way so far. That trend would continue in Chicago as he earned the 70+ Pro National Championship. This certainly would bode well for his seeding and play at the Nationals.

Karen Green is no stranger to impressive wins and has garnered several championships in recent years. In Chicago, Karen worked her magic to win the Womens 50/55 Championship.

Mercedes Arias is another proven winner. Mercedes had to play all the boys at this tournament as well. Fortunately, she gets a lot of practice. And, as usual, Mercedes beat up on this group as well, winning the 12- under Championship.

Mercedes also made it to the Semis on the Womens C/D Division.

In what was dubbed "The continuing adventures of Fat Boy and the Cripple Kid", **Dan Mullin** and **Twayne Howard** won the Men's B Doubles Championship. These long-time sparring partners had never teamed up before, but put up a good fight and even pulled off a "righteous win" on the way to the win. Dan also made it to the Quarters and Twayne made it to the Semis of 25+B.

Unfortunately, **Mary Zeng** had no one to play. Apparently the other girls saw her coming and decided to give the Championship to her without a fight.

Congratulations to our Team Michigan Champions!

Dale Graham made the trip to Chicago to compete in the Mens 55 and 55+A Divisions. At the end of the weekend, Dale earned the Silver in the 55+A Division.

Jack Huczek was ranked Number 1 at the beginning of the tournament. A win would earn the year end Championship. Unfortunately, Jack could not get by Kane Waselenchuk in the Finals. For the second year in a row, a loss in the final match cost the Championship.

Chuck Van Hoose is another perennial power. At Pro Nationals, he ended up with a Silver Medal in the Mens 50+B Division. Chuck also made it to the Quarters of the 50+A Division.

Another seasoned veteran is **Andrew Price**. After dominating the Junior play in Michigan, Andrew took his show on the road to Chicago. At Pro Nationals, Andrew finished as the Runner Up in the Juniors 16-

under division against a tough field of competition.

Sam Zeng also competed in the 12- Under Championship. This young up and comer pulled off an impressive Silver. This is certainly signs of things to come.

Another of the Zeng clan competed in the Juniors 12- Under as well. **Cory Zeng** finished just behind Sam to claim the Bronze.

The Arias Clan also had an impressive showing. Big Brother **Lucas Arias** earned a Brinze in the Juniors 16- under Division.

Tia Lecland is a rising star in Michigan racquetball. This year's Most Improved Player, Tia earned Bronze in the Womens 40+ Red Division as well as making the Quartes in the Womens A Division.

Mike Anderson was a double-Semi-Finalist. He made it to the Semis in the Mens 45+ Division, and partnered with Cindy Tillbury in the Mixed Open Doubles.

Ed Arias brought up the rear for the Arias Clan. Ed managed a Semi-Final appearance in the Mens 40+ Division.

Jim Woolcock made a rare appearance out of state to participate in the Mens 50+ Division. Jim made it to the Semis and took home a medal for his efforts.

Brad Schopieray, Matt Barbuscak, Frank Antonelli, Kim Hyde, Tom Blakeslee and Lewis Forrest also participated.

One thing I know for sure is that everyone had a great time and everyone is making plans for the next year. You do not want to miss out. See you there.

2006 STATE SINGLES PROVIDES A BIG END TO THE TOURNAMENT SEASON

- Twayne M. Howard

What a way to close out the indoor season. Other than the Southwest Michigan Shootout in Kalamazoo, the Michigan State Singles Championship closed out the indoor season for the 2005-06 year, and what a finish it was. The Coliseum in Taylor, once again played host and Wayne Holman and his great staff offered a great location yet again.

And what about the players? There was a huge draw, the largest State Championship in years. It is great to see the continued growth in participation and I can only hope it continues. One hundred sixty-five players came out to vie for the title "State Champion". Who would claim this title, let's see.

Let's start off with the young ladies. In the girls 12-Under division, **Mercedes Arias** took the Championship over runner-up **Kayla Reidt**. **Ines Lecland** and **Hannah Sporer** were the semi-finalists.

Connor Cowan won the Juniors 8-Under division. **Kurtis White** was the runner-up while **Mary Zeng** and **Sydney Kutt** were the semi-finalists.

Connor Cowan earned his second championship by winning the Juniors 10-Under division. **Sean Hardacre** was the runner up with **Alex Rhonkole** and **Cory Zeng** rounding out the semi-finals.

Brad Schopieray continued his dominance of the Juniors 12-Under division taking this Championship over runner-up **Eric Sporer**, and the semi-finalists **Trevor Sporer** and **Dan Poindexter**.

Conner Brown won the Juniors 12-Under A Championship after edging out **Vincent Mills** and **Shelby Kutt**.

And speaking of dominance... No one has dominated the Junior

ranks for years the way **Andrew Price** has. Andrew won his first Championship of the weekend in the Juniors 18-Under Division unopposed. Andrew also won the Juniors 14-Under Championship over runner up **Eric Sporer** and semi-finalists **Kevin White** and **Lucas Arias**.

And, Andrew won the 16-Under Championship over runner-up **Mark Servais**, and semi-finalists **Brad Servais** and **Stuart Robbinolt**. If you're not impressed yet, just wait.

And now for the Ladies. Everyone looked at the Womens' Open Division and all of them had one question... "Would **Lenore Zelenock** do it again". Lenore plowed through the draw last year, beating all of the top ladies. So, could she do it again? Definitely "Yes". She played the best and beat them one by one. Hopefully, next season she'll come out and play more local tournaments to show just how good she is. **Anthnita Dickerson** put up a great fight but was injured on the last rally of the Championship match. **Paula Saad** and **Karen Green** were the semi-finalists.

Better known for her prowess in Mixed Doubles, **Ruth Beier** won the Women's A Championship over runner-up **Tia Lecland**. **Carol Marshall** and **Marianne McHugh** were the semi-finalists.

The Women's B Championship went to **Donna Backus** over **Kathleen Servias** in the runner up position. **Michelle Poindexter** and **Susana Arias** rounded out the semi-finals.

Michelle Poindexter defeated Susana Arias to claim the Women's C Championship.

Lenore Zelenock earned her second Gold Medal after defeating **Melody Gorno** in the Women's 40+ Championship. **Paula Saad** and **Michele Geile** were the semi-finalists.

Sharon Huczek played down "a few" years to win the Women's 45+A Championship. **Tia Lecland** was the Runner Up and **Marianne McHugh** and **Carol Marshall** were the semi-finalists.

The Women's 50+ Championship went to **Karen Green** after defeating **Laura Patterson** and **Sharon Huczek**.

Jim Floyd returned to the Men's Open Division after a bit of a break. What did he find upon his return? A new crop of young lions and old warriors eager to take his place. The Championship came down to 10-10 in the tie breaker. Jim hit a great nick lob and **Shannon Kohl** skipped it in costing the match. I'm sure it's not the last time these two will see each other, and we're all going to get to enjoy it. **Steve Goedker** and **Mike Anderson** were the semi-finalists.

The Men's A Championship went to **Steve Clark** as he defeated **Rich Torres**. **Mark Reed** and **Jim Scheuer** were the semi-finalists.

Remember Andrew Price and how I said he wasn't done? Andrew also won the Men's B Championship defeating **John Kutt** in the Finals. **Twayne Howard** and **Donovan Cavell** were the semi-finalists.

The Men's C Division went to **Paul Wright** who defeated **Barry Dennis** for the Championship. **Bryan Galloway** and **Michael Petrucci** made it to the semis.

Russell Clark won the Men's D Championship after defeating **Keith Bryan** in the Finals. **Daniel Bass** and **Gary Anjeski** were the semi-finalists.

John Kutt won the Mens 25+A Championship by defeating **Eric Weber** and **Pat Firtl**.

(cont on pg 11)

NOMINATIONS DUE FOR THE RAM HALL OF FAME

- Jim Easterling

The Michigan Racquetball Hall of Fame developed in 1984 by the Racquetball Association of Michigan honors those recipients who demonstrate outstanding achievement, leadership, or contribution to the sport of racquetball in the state of Michigan. The award is based upon **YEARS OF CONSISTENT EXCELLENCE** in one or more of the following areas:

ABILITY

Through demonstration of exceptional playing skill in state, regional, and/or national tournament competition.

LEADERSHIP

Through generous giving of time and talent for the advancement of racquetball in the state of Michigan by running tournaments, conducting leagues, lessons, serving on the state racquetball association board of directors or other racquetball activities.

CONTRIBUTION

Through the generous support, including money, facilities, or products for the advancement of racquetball in the state of Michigan.

If you know someone who qualifies (see the Hall of Fame Criteria

found on the RAM home page at www.michiganracquetball.net) that you would like to see in the Hall of Fame, please submit a letter with their full name, address, phone number (including area code) and a brief description of why you think that person deserves to be in the Michigan Racquetball Hall of Fame to:

Hall of Fame Inductee
321 Village Drive
Lansing, MI 48911-3760

Also, include your name, address and phone number (both day and evening) in case we have to contact you for additional information about your nominee. The DEADLINE for nominations for induction into the RAM Hall of Fame for the 2006-2007 year is **October 21, 2006**. Induction will take place in the spring of 2007.

Who will join Chris Cole and Jimmy Floyd, inducted in 2006, as the newest member or members of the Michigan Racquetball Hall of Fame? Nominate your choice today.

Members of the Michigan Racquetball Hall of Fame committee include: Jim Easterling, David Brower, Irene Ackerman-Chmura, William Gottlieb, Lynn Hahn, Jim Woolcock, Karen Green and Twayne Howard.

THANK YOU - 2006 JUNIOR NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP SPONSORS

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ADVERTISING RATES FOR THE RAQUETBALL REPORTER FOR 2005-06

The Racquetball Reporter is published quarterly throughout the year - August, November, February, and May. Items to be included in the Racquetball Reporter for the **2005-06** year must be submitted by the following dates:

August 3, 2006	January 5, 2007
October 4, 2006	April 20, 2007

Advertisement material is subject to approval by the RAM Board of Directors. The prices for advertisement material are:

\$400 - Full page ad to run in all four issues (7"w x 9.5"h)

\$250 - Half page ad to run in all four issues (7"w x 4.75"h)
\$150 - Quarter page ad to run in all four issues (3.5"w x 4.75"h)
\$100 - Club listing for all four issues (3"w x 2"h)

All advertisements must be submitted in camera ready format in the appropriate size. E-mailed graphics can be accepted in either a **.TIFF** or **.JPG** format. All advertisements will be in black and white for all issues, except the May issue which will be in full color. Payment must accompany submission of all advertisement material. Information may be mailed to The Racquetball Reporter, 321 Village Dr., Lansing, MI 48911 or sent electronically to djeasterling@earthlink.net.

STATE SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIPS (cont from pg 9)

Twayne Howard defeated **Dennis Dinauer** to win the Men's 25+B Championship. **Dan Mullin** and **Chris Garner** were the semi-finalists.

Bryan Galloway capped a great season by winning the Men's 25+C Championship. **John Leggett** finished second and **James Price** and **John Simonis** were the semi-finalists.

The Men's 30+ Championship went to **Alex Cobb** after defeating Paul Stanwick. **Ed Arias** and **Mark Werthman** were the semi-finalists.

The Men's 30+A Division was a reversal of the Men's A division championship as Rich Torres took this Championship over Steve Clark. **Aaron Melch** and **John Wilson** rounded out the semis.

Steve Rambus won the Men's 35+D Championship after defeating **Ken Elder** in the finals. **Rudy Varela** and **Bruce Hotchkiss** were the semi-finalists.

Ed Arias won the Men's 40+ Division defeating runner up **Ron Barton**. **Chris Kelly** and **Fred Samson** were the semi-finalists.

The Men's 40+A Championship went to **Mark Reed** after defeating **Mark White**. Jim Scheuer and **Randy Pagels** made it to the semis.

Don Stadnika made a triumphant return to tournament play by winning two Gold Medals. The first came after defeating **Ken MacDonald** in the finals of the Men's 40+B Championship. **Danny Sutton** and **David Chirio** were the semi-finalists.

Walt Podraza won the first of his two Gold Medals in the Men's 45+ Championship. The runner up was **Rick Davenport**. **Chris Kelly** and **Tom Blakeslee** were the semi-finalists.

Don Stadnika's second Championship came in the Men's 45+B Division. **Paul Wright** was the runner up, and Paul Shultz and **Mark Candy** were the semi-finalists.

Keith Bryan was the Men's 45+C Champion after defeating Jeff Simonis in the finals. **Gregory McClellan** and **Don Schopieray** made it to the semis.

Walt Podraza's second Championship was the Men's 50+ Division. Walt defeated **Pat Burke** in the finals. Tom Blakeslee and **Dave Smolinski** were the semi-finalists.

Dean Rhodes won the Men's 50+A Championship defeating **Mark Zigila** in the finals. **Jay Kargula** and **Lou Collette** were the semi-finalists.

The Men's 50+B Championship went to **Chuck Van Hoose**. **Don Edwards** was the runner up. **Pete Harvey** and **Steve Simon** were the semi-finalists in this division.

Barry Dennis won the Men's 50+C Championship over **Gary Anjeski**. Gregory McClellan and **Ken Smith** rounded out the semis.

Kim Hyde won the Men's 55+ Championship after defeating **George Goudie** and **Bill Hagedorn**.

Pete Harvey won the Men's 55+A Championship over George Goudie. Chuck Van Hoose and Don Edwards were the semi-finalists.

Russell Clark won his second Gold Medal in the Men's 55+C Championship. **Bob Spencer** was the runner up, and **Tom Ouellette** and **Rodger Barton** were the semi-finalists.

Bill Hagedorn defeated the age-less **Art Murphy** to win the Men's 60+ Championship. **Bob LaPlant** and **Josephus Shaw** rounded out the semis.

Tom Sharum defeated Art Murphy to earn the Men's 65+ Championship. **James Culver** and **Josephus Shaw** were the semi-finalists.

Dave Lund defeated **Stan Kurzman** to earn the Men's 70+ Championship.

Congratulations to all of the 2006 RAM State Singles Champions. But that's not all that was contested at the State Singles Championship this year.

More from the State Championships. . .

This year the RAM Board decided to try to include more players in the State Singles Championship, but how? We noticed that a number of tournaments have doubles divisions and many people pass the singles and play only doubles. So, why not give it a try. We think it was a pretty good success. Thanks to all who played and enjoyed the Sunday afternoon doubles.

The Women's A Doubles Championship went to **Ruth Beier** and **Tia Lecland** who defeated **Donna Backus** and **Elaine Richards**. **Melody Gorno** and **Dean Rhodes** defeated **Thelma Howard** and Ron Barton to win the Mixed Open Doubles Championship.

Ron Barton and Alex Cobb won the Mens Open Doubles Championship. **Jody Quednau** and Mark Zigila won the Men's A Doubles Championship. John Kutt and Dan Mullin were the runners up. **Justin Nazich** and **Rudy Varela** won the Men's B/C Doubles by defeating Ken Elder and Tom Ouellette.

Bryan Galloway and Paul Wright won the Mens 40+A/B Championship over Justin Nazich and Rudy Varela.

Congratulations to all of the Champions and everyone who helped make the tournament a success.



Pictures from the Pool party at the Junior National Championships



CAN YOU STAND THE HEAT. . . SUMMER DOUBLES AT ITS FINEST

- Twayne M. Howard

Let's see... what to do on a gorgeous Summer Saturday when the temperature is spiking about 97 degrees, and the pavement is melting into a soft goo-like substance? I can think of only one thing. Go to St Clair Shores and play some outdoor racquetball with 40 of your closest friends. So that's what we decided to do.

The Second Annual Can You Stand The Heat Summer Doubles tournament took place July 29 in St Clair Shores and everyone who braved the weather was treated to another great event by Tom Blakeslee, Twayne Howard, Jack White and Jim Panasiewicz. This event gets bigger and better each year.

The tournament started with a special Junior/Veteran Division pitted several Father & Son combinations against a few Juniors paired with other partners. We borrowed this idea from our friends on Belle Isle and it was a huge success. The finals came down to **Lucas and Ed Arias** defeating **Kevin and Jack White** to claim the Championship.

The day ended with the Mixed Doubles Division. This was a very tough division that came down to **Claire**

Kruse and Mel Zurack playing **Margrit Shemechko and Joe Romeo**. In the end, Claire and Mel proved too tough and pulled out the Championship.

The biggest division was the Mens A/B Division featuring 8 teams split in to two flights. **Dan Mullin** and **John Kutt** walked through one flight while **Steve Gruber** and **Twayne Howard** pulled several upsets to face them in the Finals. Steve and Twayne outlasted Dan and John to take the Championship. This was a repeat for Steve after winning in 2005 with Dan Mullin.

The Mens Open Division featured several great teams and lots of great competition. **Ron Barton** and **Greg Lewerenz** advanced in their flight to play **Tom Blakeslee** and **Jack White** who advanced on the other side of the draw. After walking off the court, Blakeslee was overheard saying, "Man, those guys are good". Yup, Greg and Ron beat out the tournament directors and took home the big trophy.

Even with the heat, it was a great day of fun and friends. I hope everyone can make it out to join us next year. See you there!

SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN RACQUETBALL SHOOTOUT IN KALAMAZOO

- John Vandeweerd and Tom Ford

Our 3rd Annual Southwest Michigan Racquetball Shootout here at the B.A.C. was a great success. We are continually growing the number of players coming to Kalamazoo from all over the state of Michigan. We enjoyed a good turnout of doubles players this year. But we could not pull off a good tournament without our sponsors who give generously to support our tournament here in Kalamazoo. I want to give special thanks to Orion Auto Glass, our Gold sponsor, IBA Health Plans, our Silver sponsor, the Marvin Okun Agency, our Bronze Sponsor, and ProKennex for the giveaway stuff, Angelo's for the Great Food and Andersons for the exceptional job on the trophies and shirts. I also want to give recognition to the key people that are behind the scene who make the tournament run well, Tom Ford, our master at scheduling, and Jerry Spruit and Scott Glass for food and drink preparation, and the coordination of players and registration. I look forward to next spring for another exciting tournament here in Kalamazoo.

-- John VandeWeerd-Tournament Director

Now to our players' finishes as told by Tom Ford.

The Men's Open division was played in a round robin format. First place was tightly contested as **Shannon Kohl** edged out **Mike Anderson** by one point. Shannon had 101 total points over the course of 3 matches and Mike 100...can't get closer than that! **Alex Cobb** and **Paul Stanwick** rounded out the field with each playing solid ball.

The finals of the Men's A division consisted of a battle between local player, **Vic Sherman**, and **Rick Vrosh**, from Grand Rapids. Rick's poise, smart shot selection and great forehand kept the match close; however, Vic prevailed in 2 games with roll-out pinches, some great defensive play and precision drive serves. Congratulations to Vic who won his second tournament in the A division in as many tries this spring.

The finals of the Men's B division saw a match-up of contrasting styles between **Chris Barrigar** and local player, **Mark Widman**. Chris reached the finals by edging out his good friend, the ageless **Art Murphy**. Mark also had a tough semi against **Mike Malcolm** of Grand Rapids. Spectators enjoyed an exciting, nerve-wrecking finals match that pitted Mark's aggressive offensive game style against Chris' boundless stamina, excellent court coverage, and front court re-kills. Down 10 to 8 in the tiebreaker, Mark was able to come up with the goods to win the championship.

Bryan Galloway of Sparta defeated **Chad Ignatowski** of Grand Rapids for the championship of the Men's C division. Newcomer **Eric Stein** of Kalamazoo playing in his first Michigan racquetball tournament defeated another local player, **Tom Heintzkill**, in the finals of the Men's D division. Congratulations, Eric on a great win and great first tournament!

The finals of the Men's 30+ A division treated spectators to a very entertaining match between **Darrel Bushhouse** of Kalamazoo and leftie, **Mike Chambon** of Grand Rapids. The match, lasting well over an hour, saw several lead changes as both players battled hard to take control. Mike's determination and getting ability pushed Darrel to the limit. In the end, though, Darrel had just a little too much offense and won it in 2 very tight games.

Other winners included Vic Sherman in the 30+ Open division, Chad Ignatowski in the 30+ C division and **Christine Todd** in the 50+ C division.

Saturday night belonged to the doubles players. The Women's Open Doubles championship was contested in a round robin with 3 teams. When the dust settled, **Maureen Price** and **Christine Todd** repeated their



Chris Barrigar (left)
Mark Widman (right)

(cont on pg 14)

SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN SHOOTOUT (cont from pg 13)

feat from the RAM State Doubles Championship, beating **Lisa Stemple** and **Mary Meeseman**, and **Margrit Schemechico** and **Lynn Kuczajda**.

Lisa Stemple and **Keith Vogel** played first time partners **Wendy Ford** and **Jim Pike** in the Mixed Doubles championship. Lisa's drive serves and aggressive offense paired with Keith's experience and shot making ability proved too much for Wendy and Jim. Lisa and Keith rolled to victory in 2 games.

Rick Vrosh and Mike Chambon teamed up to win the Men's Open/ A division over **Attica Mitchell** and **Bob Shurlow**. The finals of the Men's B division featured an exciting match up between **Art Murphy** and **Harvey Allen** versus locals **Steve Gruber** and the unconventional "3-waller," **Gary**

Lehman. Despite tough play by Gary and Steve, the night belonged to Art and Harvey as they cruised to the championship.

Congratulations and thank you to all of the players who participated in the tournament. We really enjoyed hosting it and we look forward to seeing you all again next year.



Art Murphy

PASSION AND COMMITMENT (cont from pg 6)

to take her in for the duration of the tournament!

Beginning to end, this tournament was driven by caring and passion...alright, hard work, long hours and devotion too. And in this respect many people not yet mentioned need to be thanked. First for her long fret filled hours on how to provide food and snacks for the tournament, Hospitality Chair Sandy White and her committee members Diana Easthope, Claire Krause, and Allan Coyle. Joe Budzynski, for formatting the game day brochure; Graphics East, Inc. for their very quick turn around time in printing the brochure. Jim Easterling for his advice and guidance. And we could not have provided the great hospitality, or for that matter, this event without the generous donations of dozens of sponsors over

the past year...the players and members of the Davidson Athletic Club, Franklin Athletic Club and the Courtland Racquetball Club and the RAM board for their financial support, contributions and advice. Special thanks to the Michigan Athletic Club, staff and members for allowing us to "Rule the Roost" for the week. Thank you to all those over the past two years who offered the limited time they had, traveling to board meetings, and offering advice when needed. Individuals who ran or contributed to 50/50s, the golf outing at Timber Ridge, and all the miscellaneous fundraisers. Jim Kutt, for designing "Racquetball Man" t-shirts and Anderson Printing for printing them at cost. And talking about time and devotion, how can you say enough for the extraordinary quilt work that Robin Woolcock put together for the silent auction. Robin, spent countless

hours sewing three large quilts that depicted logos and icons of Michigan State University, University of Michigan, and the Lansing area. The quilts were beautiful! And a final thank you to Mike Price and John Young, of the CVB, for their constant support and diligent assistance.

So many made this event an outstanding success, but without the juniors and their enthusiasm there would have been little reason for the tournament. In closing, thank you to the parents for supporting their children, and the multitudes of coaches and mentors that have instilled the drive and passion that exemplifies our sport of racquetball!

Hard work and long hours...yes, but let's not wait another twenty years to bring Junior Nationals back to Michigan!



RACQUETBALL ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN

2006 RAM STATE DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIPS

DECEMBER 1-3, 2006

MICHIGAN ATHLETIC CLUB

2900 Hannah Blvd., East Lansing, MI

Phone (517) 364-8888



ENTRY FEES & DEADLINE

First Event \$35 per person - \$70 per team
Second Event \$15 per person
Juniors \$15 per person - \$30 per team
USA Racquetball Membership \$35 per person

Entries must be received by November 27, 2006. Play is limited to two events per person. Tournament is USA Racquetball sanctioned. A \$5 late fee will be charged for all entries received after the deadline. This includes all phone entries. Phone entries must be confirmed by Twayne or Tom. **The Junior/Veteran division can be your third division. Play in the Junior/Veteran division will be on Sunday afternoon.**

RULES AND REFEREES

Single elimination format with matches consisting of two games to fifteen and a tie-breaker to eleven. USA Racquetball rules apply including **mandatory USA Racquetball-approved lensed eyeguards**. Penn blue balls will be used for all matches. Referees will not be used. All players will use the honor system.

STARTING TIMES

Play may begin on Friday, December 1, 2006. Call the club Thursday, November 30, after 12:00 pm for starting times, or check the website at <http://www.michiganracquetball.net>. **Effort will be made to eliminate Friday and Sunday play.**

AWARDS

Medals will be given for the first and second place winners in divisions with draws of at least eight teams. Each player will receive a complimentary souvenir.

ELIGIBILITY

All players must live or work full time in the state of Michigan, and be a member of RAM. Players must be able to provide proof.

TOURNAMENT DIRECTORS

Tom Blakeslee -- (810) 217-8668
Twayne Howard -- (616) 771-0312

SPECIAL TOURNAMENT EVENTS

General Player Meeting - Saturday, December 2 - 7:00 pm

"I Gotta Have That" Auction & Party - December 2 - 8:00 pm

ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY NOVEMBER 27, 2006

Name _____ Partner 1 _____
Address _____ Partner 2 _____
City _____ Club Affiliation _____
Phone (days) _____ (evenings) _____ Date of Birth _____

Make checks payable to RAM, and mail to RAM State Doubles Championships, 38114 Lakeshore, Harrison Twp., MI 48045

Entry Fee (first event) \$35 _____
2nd Event Fee \$15 _____
Junior Fee \$15 _____
USA Rac. Membership \$35 _____
Late/Phone Fee \$ 5 _____
Total _____

Waiver clause: I hereby for myself, my heirs, executors & administrators, waive & release any & all claims for damages I may have against RAM, the host club, tournament staff, & their agents, for all injuries which may be suffered by me due to participation in said tournament.

Signature: _____ Date: _____
(parent/guardian signature if under 18)

DIVISIONS

circle correct choices - limit 2 divisions + Junior/Veteran

	MENS		WOMENS		
Open	25 C	40 Open	50 Open	65 Open	
A	30 Open	40 A	50 A	Mixed Open	
B	30 A	40 B	50 B	Mixed A	
C	30 B	45 Open	55 Open	Mixed B	
D	35 Open	45 A	55 A	Mixed C	
25 Open	35 A	45 B	55 B	Mixed D	
25 A	35 B	45 C	60 Open		
25 B	35 C	Junior/Veteran (can be third division)			

Juniors: (specify age division) _____
(All Juniors play will be on Saturday)

Alternate division: _____
(Divisions may be combined if fewer than 8 teams)

Mail To: RAM STATE DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP, 38114 Lakeshore, Harrison Twp., MI 48045

JOIN THE RACQUETBALL ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN

Membership Includes:

**Membership card, USA Racquetball Official Rule Book, travel and equipment discounts*

**USA Racquetball medical, life, and liability insurance at sanctioned events*

**Four issues of the RAM newsletter, THE RACQUETBALL REPORTER*

**Six issues of the USA Racquetball national magazine, RACQUETBALL MAGAZINE*

**RAM sanctioned tournament entry forms mailed to your home*

**Eligibility to play in all sanctioned tournaments and receive national ranking points*

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

DATE _____ EMAIL ADDRESS _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

DATE OF BIRTH ____ / ____ / ____ HOME PHONE _____

_____ \$35.00 – Adult Competitor

_____ \$20.00 – Junior Competitor (18 and under)

_____ \$20.00 – Racquetball Magazine subscription only

MAIL TO: RAM, 38114 Lakeshore, Harrison Twp, MI 48045

Racquetball Reporter

321 Village Dr.
Lansing, MI 48911

