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NUMBER 1  
JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2008



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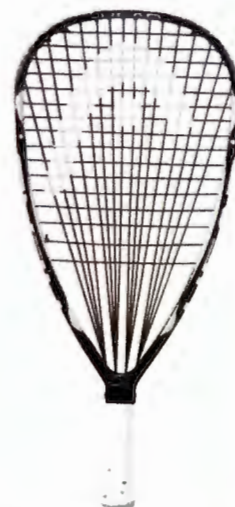
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## MISSION STATEMENT

USA Racquetball (USAR) is the National Governing Body for the sport of racquetball, recognized by the U.S. Olympic Committee and is committed to excellence and service to our members. We provide opportunities for members and enthusiasts to actively participate in the sport, through sanctioning of events, administration of programs and development of competitive teams.

## VISION STATEMENT

To provide racquetball opportunities in the sport of racquetball for all levels of participation through:

### Objectives:

- **MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT** - USAR values its members and will strive to provide the best possible member services at all levels.
- **MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT** - USAR believes that racquetball is a lifetime endeavor and the benefits of health, recreation, and competition should be available to everyone. USAR will strive to expand its membership in order to share these benefits with as many players and supporters as possible.
- **PROMOTION OF THE SPORT** - in order to sustain a strong player base USAR will promote the numerous benefits of participation through mass marketing efforts.
- **COMPETITIVE SUCCESS** - USAR strives to maintain America's position as the number one racquetball nation in the world. Success at the elite levels has a positive influence on every other facet of our sport.
- **SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS** - USAR values its relationship with sponsors and will continue to maximize benefits and exposure.

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TRAVELING WITH RACQUETBALL



US OPEN



JUNIOR WORLDS

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Racquetball Magazine is a publication of USA Racquetball. Readers are encouraged to submit items of possible interest to Heather Fender at the address listed below or via email ([hfender@usra.org](mailto:hfender@usra.org)).

All items submitted are subject to editing by Racquetball Magazine.

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USA Racquetball  
 1685 West Uintah  
 Colorado Springs, CO 80904-2906  
 (719) 635-5396  
[www.usaracquetball.com](http://www.usaracquetball.com)

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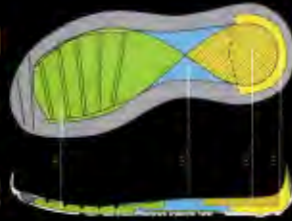
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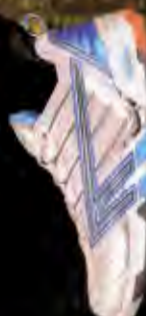
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By James Hiser, Ph.D.  
USAR Executive Director

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# Once in a LIFETIME

Make plans now to attend the 35th Anniversary Celebration of the Racquetball Hall of Fame and the 25th Anniversary of Houston as the site for National Singles.

The pinnacle of accomplishment for any player is to be recognized by his or her sport and inducted into its Hall of Fame. In recent issues of Racquetball magazine, you may have noticed considerable coverage of racquetball's Hall of Fame.

Thanks to the passionate efforts of Jim Easterling from Michigan, USA Racquetball has established the selection criteria and also elevated the presentation ceremony. However, many of the original inductees were selected prior to the most recent changes and received minimal recognition for their achievements.

At the USAR National Singles coming up in May, attendees and guests will celebrate the 35th Anniversary of The Racquetball Hall of Fame and also the 25th Anniversary of Houston as the site for National Singles. On Saturday evening of the tournament, our sport will present the



Garfinkel have all confirmed their attendance.

Plans are already underway to make this evening memorable for Hall of Fame members and attendees alike. The theme of the evening will resemble the format used at The Oscars and

THANKS TO THE PASSIONATE EFFORTS OF JIM EASTERLING FROM MICHIGAN, USA RACQUETBALL HAS ESTABLISHED THE SELECTION CRITERIA AND ALSO ELEVATED THE PRESENTATION CEREMONY.

most historical and prestigious banquet in racquetball history.

Currently, 27 Hall of Fame members have committed to attending the gala event. Legends such as Dr. Bud Muehleisen, Charlie Brumfield, Mike Yellen, Heather McKay, and Charlie

every effort will be made to provide Hall of Fame members with the recognition they deserve. Make your plans now to attend National Singles in Houston — you won't want to miss this once-in-a-lifetime event!



# Give to Help the SPORT You Love

Do you have a level of charitable interest and a desire to do good? Consider charitable giving to support USA Racquetball.

Have you ever considered charitable giving? To help the sport we love, speak with Ed Mazur, our financial planner, who is representing the interests of the USA Racquetball Foundation. You will find him knowledgeable and all information will be held in the strictest confidence.

So, who is a potential donor? Generally speaking, the individual has a level of charitable interest and a desire to do good. In fact that's the #1 reason people give to a charity — for philanthropic reasons, not for tax breaks.

By providing charitable giving ideas and solutions, we can show you how to begin or enhance your giving program without risk to

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- Life insurance policy
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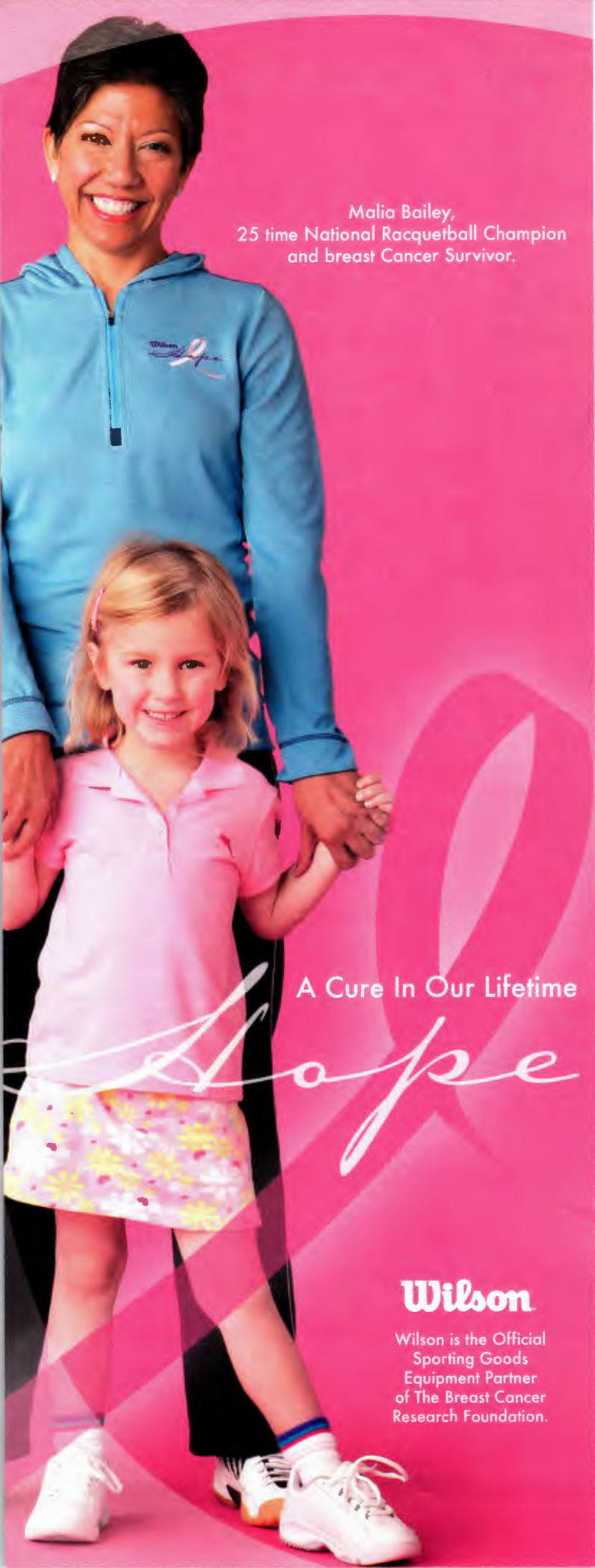
Please contact Ed Mazur at (866) 923-6444 to receive a no-obligation USA Racquetball Foundation informational packet.



**By Randy Stafford,**  
USAR Board President



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The following individuals have pledged the indicated amounts for the next four years and to meet with the President to advise and discuss association issues:

Bruce Adams	\$1,000
Doug Ganim	\$3,000
Dr. Fred Heros	\$1,000
Christopher "Kit" Lawson	\$1,000
Mike Lippitt	\$1,000
Dennis Rosenberg	\$3,000
Sal Perconti	\$1,000

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# Hall of FAME

In May 2008, we will celebrate the 35th Anniversary of the USA Racquetball Hall of Fame and our illustrious members at the National Singles Championships in Houston. In honor of this milestone, there will be a continuing series of "Hall of Fame" articles focusing on racquetball Halls of Fame at the State level. We have a number of State Organizations that have recognized key contributors, leaders and top players in their states and regions. These individuals have also been critical to the success and growth of our great sport and we look forward to sharing their contributions with our readers. Watch for this continuing "Hall of Fame" section in upcoming *Racquetball* magazines.

## 1997

**Chuck Leve** | Northbrook, Illinois  
(Contributor, Inducted 1997)



An integral part of racquetball since 1969, Leve was the Executive Secretary of the International Racquetball Association (IRA) in 1970. After following IRA President Robert Kendler, in 1973, to the newly formed National Racquetball Club (NRC), Leve privately felt that the amateur players had been left out. In 1976, he formed the United States Racquetball Association to serve those players outside the professional ranks. In 1979, Leve joined the National Court Club Association, now known as the International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association (IHRSA). Now the Director of Sales and Promotions for IHRSA, Leve continues to lend his support to racquetball.

**Heather McKay** | Brisbane, Australia  
(Professional Athlete, Inducted 1997)



Heather McKay (Brisbane, Australia) had lost only two matches in two decades of international squash dominance before turning to the sport of racquetball in 1980 at the age of 39. McKay didn't waste much time earning the title of best women's racquetball player in the world, winning the pro nationals in 1980 and '81. She again won the coveted title in '84. Before returning to Australia in '85, the Canadian national collected nine national titles and the '84 Steding Cup, given yearly by the women's pro tour for outstanding contributions to women's racquetball.

**Dave Peck** | Austin, Texas  
(Professional Athlete, Inducted 1997)

Dave was awarded the professional tour's Rookie of the Year trophy in 1978. In the years following, Peck took his place among the racquetball elite, winning the Ektelon National



Championships in 1981 and '82. The powerful Texan also captured the Catalina National title and Player of the Year honors in '81. With a brilliant pro career under his belt, Peck continues to play competitively in the amateur ranks. In 1995, he captured both the national singles and doubles crowns in Men's 35+.

**Mike Yellen** | West Bloomfield, Michigan  
(Professional Athlete, Inducted 1997)



Mike Yellen made his mark on the men's pro circuit in the same era as Hogan and Peck, claiming a spot as one of the most fundamentally sound and powerful players on the tour. His best year was 1983, when he claimed three national championships in one season to take the #1 spot. In the process he defeated all of the top names: Hogan, Peck, Harnett, Gonzalez, Hilecher and anyone else who crossed his path. Like McKay, Yellen took important lessons from his second passion, squash, and applied them to his racquetball career. Those lessons served him well.

**Lynn Adams** | Libertyville, Illinois  
(Professional Athlete, Inducted 1997)



Lynn Adams won 325 of her 369 professional matches, for a .887 winning percentage. An eight-time player of the year (1982-88, 90), Adams won six pro tour season titles (1982-83, 85-88) and seven overall championships (1982-83, 85-88, 90). Even more impressive is Adams' courageous fight against multiple sclerosis throughout her life and racquetball career.

**Marty Hogan** | Chesterfield, Missouri  
(Professional Athlete, Inducted 1997)

The sport's first million dollar man, Hogan owned the men's professional tour from 1977 to '82, with six national championship titles. In his



early — and later renewed — amateur career Hogan garnered several top honors from the '75 Boy's 18-and-under crown to the '94 Men's 25-and-over national doubles championship. Over the course of his career Hogan's name became synonymous with the sport, he was tagged as the "King of Racquetball" and is credited with transforming the sport into the power game that it is today.

## 1999

**Earl Acuff** | Asheville, North Carolina  
(Amateur Athlete, Inducted 1999)



Since his first career win in the Men's 60+ division in 1984, Earl Acuff has medaled 34 times at major national and world senior events and walked away with the gold at 20 of them. In the year preceding his induction, Earl was a double-gold winner in Men's 75+ and earned his seventh U.S. National Doubles title, matching the Singles victory he had claimed that spring. His 1998 Men's 80+ world title and three other world seniors crowns comprise quite a distinguished 16-year career for Earl Acuff.

Grand Gala  
2008 Hall of Fame  
35th Anniversary  
Houston, TX

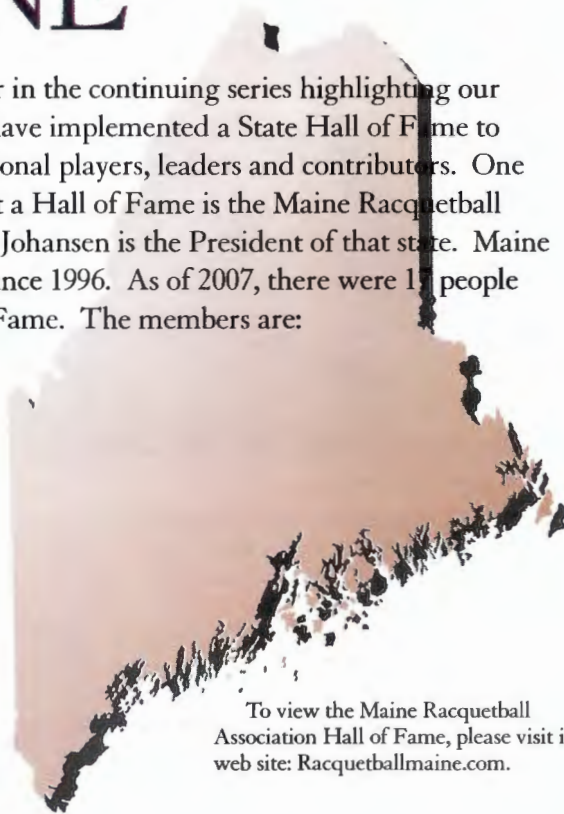


# THE FAME IN MAINE

By Jim Easterling

This is another chapter in the continuing series highlighting our State organizations that have implemented a State Hall of Fame to honor their local and regional players, leaders and contributors. One of the states to implement a Hall of Fame is the Maine Racquetball Association (MeRA). Jon Johansen is the President of that state. Maine has had a Hall of Fame since 1996. As of 2007, there were 17 people inducted into its Hall of Fame. The members are:

1996 — Robert Folsom  
1996 — Mike Friedman  
1996 — Keith Mahaney  
1998 — Terri Graham  
1998 — Don Thomas  
1999 — Randy Olson  
2000 — Tom Farley  
2000 — Leesa Smith  
2001 — John Bouchard  
2002 — Gene Fitzpatrick  
2002 — Dan Gagne  
2003 — Frank Trask  
2003 — Ken Bailey  
2004 — Paula Truman  
2005 — Damon Currier  
2007 — Steve Hayden  
2007 — Jim Simmons



To view the Maine Racquetball Association Hall of Fame, please visit its web site: [Racquetballmaine.com](http://Racquetballmaine.com).

# State Hall of Fame: OHIO

By Jim Easterling

The Ohio Racquetball Association (ORA) has had a Hall of Fame since 1987. The ORA web site reports that the Hall of Fame in Ohio has been reorganized under the leadership of Jerry Davis. Ohio State President Doug Ganim identifies 24 people who have been inducted into its Hall of Fame. The members are:

1987 — Reed Gunselman  
1987 — Clark Pittman  
1988 — Cookie Wachtel  
1989 — Otis Chapman  
1990 — Gerry Lapierre  
1990 — Ken Mitchell  
1990 — Bobby Sanders  
1991 — Jack Soble  
1991 — Ed Witham  
1992 — Jerry Davis  
1993 — Dave Kovanda  
1993 — Ron Woolard  
1994 — Don Alt  
1995 — Barbara Harrison  
1995 — Gerri Stoffregen  
1996 — Shelley Ogden  
1996 — Ray Huss  
1996 — Tom Perna  
1998 — Steve Lerner  
1998 — Tom Travers  
1999 — Kelvin Vantrease  
2003 — Dave Eagle  
2004 — Elaine Albrecht  
2006 — Ron Coates



To view the Ohio Hall of Fame, visit [ohioracquetball.com](http://ohioracquetball.com).

**WHY? ESTABLISHING A HALL OF FAME IS A GREAT WAY TO RECOGNIZE AND REMEMBER THOSE PLAYERS AND CONTRIBUTORS WHO HAVE SUPPORTED AND GROWN OUR SPORT ON A LOCAL AND STATE LEVEL. IF YOUR STATE IS INTERESTED IN PUTTING TOGETHER A "RAQUETBALL HALL OF FAME" AND WOULD LIKE INFORMATION TO GET STARTED, CONTACT JIM EASTERLING AT [djeasterling@earthlink.net](mailto:djeasterling@earthlink.net) OR CALL (517) 449-8942.**



## The 2007 Canadian Racquetball Classic

Burlington, Ontario, Canada

### SIDENOTES

The venue — Cedar Springs Health, Racquet and Sports Club — is a large facility and features racquetball, tennis, squash, fitness, three pools and a full-service lounge and pro shop. It is under renovation right now and the improvements will make this club one of the elite clubs in the Toronto area. The staff is great and always helpful which helps make the event grow every year.

Thank you, Usher Barnoff and Racquetball Canada, for helping with the event and supporting and understanding the importance of the professional game in promoting the sport. Also thanks for the lift to the airport!

Thank you to all the local event sponsors. The event does not happen without your financial support and the players appreciate it. Also, thanks to all the volunteers who had a hand in helping out with the event. The milk and cookies were the best.

Jason Reaume, you are a class act and it is a pleasure working with you. Your dedication to keeping the event on time and the courts moving makes you one of the best on our tour. Also, your ability to burn the candle at both ends is amazing! Look forward to seeing you next year and ... Go Michigan!

It was great catching up with Corey Osborne, one of Canada's best, and getting to know his eight-year-old son, Kaleb. Kaleb played more racquetball this weekend than any one of our touring pros play in a year. You could not get him off the court whether it was squash or racquetball. Wherever there was a place to hit the ball, he was doing it. Look for this youngster in eight to ten years on the IRT. Nice seeing you again, Corey!

Mike Green showed that he still has it and is still arguably one of the best top players in Canada's racquetball history. We miss you out on the tour, Mike.

It was great playing along side the WPRO and catching up with the WPRO players. Hats off to Christie Van Hees on taking the WPRO title. You are a class act and true asset to not only the women's game but also the sport overall.

Mike Ceresia was lurking about the event ... it's always great catching up with Mike. Good luck on the CPRT!

The unselfish act of the weekend was from Jack Huczek, as he did a 90-minute clinic for more than 40 fans after the finals. Great job, Jack!

Last but not least, thanks to Adrian and Joann Webb for organizing the event. To put on an event the size of this and also having the WPRO alongside the IRT is a huge undertaking and you did a tremendous job. You should be proud of what you accomplished and we look forward to working with you again next year, possibly getting the event to the next level, glass court and grand slam style!



### Jack Huczek in Toronto

The 2007 Canadian Racquetball Classic got underway at the Cedar Springs Health, Racquet and Sports Club. This was the third year the IRT moved north of the border to perform for the racquetball fans of the Toronto area. This event was the mastermind of event director Adrian Webb, and his vision of having the IRT at his home club has grown bigger than ever. Racquetball Canada and Usher Barnoff (President of Racquetball Canada) stepped up to help out in a big way in the promotion of the IRT and the amateur play at this event. The crowds were overflowing from the stadium courts as the fans filled up the seats for all the matches.

The qualifying rounds had a huge Canadian National Team presence as the top Canadian players from around the country competed in the event.

However, only one Canadian player would advance into the main draw and that was former IRT top eight player Mike Green. Mike plays at Cedar Springs and his hometown fans were there to support him. Mike defeated fellow Canadian National Team member Kris Odegard in five games to move on to the main draw. Other notables advancing on were John Ellis, Javier Moreno, Juan Herrera, Andres Herrera and Japan's Hiroshi Shimizu.

It looked like the fans were in for a long evening — the quarterfinals match-ups looked tough. However all the matches went off on time and finished quickly. Jason Thoerner reached his first quarterfinal this season but was no match for Jack Huczek, losing 0, 3, 3. Ben Croft, now a regular in the quarters, extended Alvaro Beltran to four games, losing 4, 2, (10), 4. Jason Mannino went down in Game One to Shane Vanderson, but too many unforced errors by Vanderson gave Mannino

the match, (8), 3, 7, 2. Mitch Williams, arguably the hardest hitter on the tour, was firing missile drive serves at Rocky Carson that left Rocky standing still a few times. The veteran Carson, however, handled the speed and took the match in three, 7, 10, 2. Williams did put on an impressive display of serving that was reminiscent of Cliff Swain in his prime.

The semi-finals featured Jason Mannino against Rocky Carson and Jack Huczek taking on Alvaro Beltran. It was Mannino in the first semi as Jason controlled center court and Rocky just could not find a groove. Jason was back to

his old self and using his patented angle passes with nearly perfect splats throughout the match. This match went to five games, but Carson just did not have enough to pull it out as Mannino advanced to the final 7, (4), 4, (6), 4. Alvaro Beltran seems to give Huczek fits every

time they play and this match was no exception. Huczek took Game One in convincing fashion, but Beltran made it close the next three before bowing out, 3, 7, (8), 7. Huczek played very well, showing some great poise in this match.

The final was set with Jack Huczek and Jason Mannino facing off in a rematch of the Kansas City final in which Mannino won. A packed crowd filled the seats on Sunday for this one, but early in the first game Mannino strained his right arm. After an extended time out between games one and two, Mannino tried to return and play but was unable to continue the match. Huczek took the Canadian Racquetball Classic title for the third straight year. After the match, Jack acknowledged Jason and his efforts to continue, then invited the crowd to stick around as he conducted a 90-minute clinic for the fans. No one left the club disappointed!





# The 2007 New Mexico Pro Am

Albuquerque, New Mexico; October 25-28, 2007

The top racquetball players in the world converged on the New Mexico Sports and Wellness Midtown location for the fifth full ranking event of the season for the IRT. The players were all geared up for the altitude in the "real mile high city," Albuquerque. Denver has the Rocky Mountains, but Albuquerque has the Sandia and Manzano Mountains, which offer the most beautiful sunsets in the world.

The event netted the largest draw of players on the NMRA schedule and the hard-hitting sound of the Pro Penn HD ball rang loud all weekend. Gary Mazaroff and Paula Sperling do a tremendous amount for racquetball across the country and here in their hometown. This facility is also the host site for the IRF World Senior Championships held each September, also run by Gary and Paula. The players are treated well here and each year this event continues to grow.

The qualifying draw included a few of the toughest that Mexico has to offer in tour staples — Javier Moreno and Polo Gutierrez — along with the former World 18 & Under champion Alejandro Herrera and his brother Roman. Also included were former Top 4 IRT professional John Ellis and current CPRT #1 Woody Clouse. Alejandro Landa pulled off the biggest upset in the qualifying round by taking out Javier Moreno in a five-game "batalla," winning Game 5, 13-11. The rest of the top seeds advanced with little fanfare.

The Round of 16 had one big upset as former top touring pro John Ellis, making a comeback this year, upset Jason Mannino in a five-game marathon. John has changed his game style and has been playing some great ball this year. The "wonder kid" from the Motorola World Racquetball Championships, Polo Gutierrez, could not repeat his storybook play in New Mexico as Jack Huczek disposed of him in three straight. Jason Thoerner made it two in a row against Chris Crowther, winning in four close games. Shane Vanderson stopped Alejandro Landa's run of great ball, taking out the youngster in four. Andy Hawthorne waged a battle against Ben Croft and took the match in four games. Woody Clouse gave Alvaro Beltran all he could handle, but Beltran advanced in five. Mitch Williams brought out the cannon and took out Alejandro Herrera.



Rocky Carson, Gary Mazaroff and Jack Huczek

The quarterfinals saw all but one of the top seeds advance as #2 Rocky Carson took #10 Andy Hawthorne in three and #1 Jack Huczek got by #9 Jason Thoerner in three. Shane Vanderson (#5) has had some battles with #4 Alvaro Beltran and this one was no different with Shane advancing in four games. Mitch Williams (#6) ended John Ellis's run, winning in four and giving Mitch his first semi-final appearance of his career.

The semi-finals began late afternoon on Saturday and began with Mitch Williams against Rocky Carson. Mitch came out blasting and took game one. He continued his top-notch play in the second, but a few unforced errors allowed Rocky to take the second and gain the momentum. Carson won this one in four, (8), 10, 7, 3, to advance to his second final of the season. On the other side, Jack Huczek was matched up against Shane Vanderson. Huczek came out rolling the first game, not missing a thing and Shane struggling to find a game. Jack let down a bit in the second and Vanderson's game came back to life before losing a close one to Jack. The next two games went to Vanderson, as a combination of unforced errors by Huczek and terrific backhands and clutch forehands by Vanderson kept him in the match. The fifth was a great game with both players hitting clutch shots when they needed them most. It was Huczek in the end, 0, 9, (6), (12), 10, moving to the final to meet Rocky.

The final at noon Sunday was #1 Jack Huczek against #2 Rocky Carson. Jack came out with a tough game plan in the first, keeping Rocky in the back court and off balance most of the game. The first game went to Huczek, 11-9. Carson regrouped after the first and made some adjustments that worked wonders for him. Rocky was aided by some uncharacteristic unforced errors by Jack in the next three games and took full advantage, taking his second title of the year, (9), 7, 2, 2, and closing the gap on the #1 ranking.

## SIDENOTES

Hats off and a big thank you to Gary Mazaroff and Paula Sperling for putting on another great event in Albuquerque. It is a tribute to you that the event was the largest in recent history. Also, thanks to all the many volunteers who helped out with rides for the pros and commissioner. There was a good turnout for all the matches and the fans were treated to some solid racquetball all weekend. The altitude did not seem to bother or affect play ...

New Mexico Sports and Wellness Midtown is a fantastic club and will be more impressive after the remodeling is complete.

Congrats to Rocky for taking his second final of the season and to Mitch Williams for reaching the first semi of his young career. Shane Vanderson stepped up his game this weekend and it showed.

Great to see John Ellis back in the mix after a few years off recovering from shoulder surgery. John is a class act, playing a big role in Ektelon and its growth.

Ken Goldstein and Chris Evans — nice seeing you guys and expect to see your label next year on your homebrew! Robert Lee, we missed your party this year, maybe next year?

See you next year for the 2008 New Mexico Pro Am!





# WPRO Pros Honored at US Open Gala

At the Choice Hotels US OPEN gala on Saturday night, the WPRO players honored three standout pros on the tour with special awards for their performances during the 2006-2007 season.

**Rhonda Rajsich** was named Player of the Year for the second year in a row. Rhonda finished last season #1 on the WPRO tour and closed out last season with a win at the WPRO Pro Nationals in New Orleans.

**Angela Grisar**, #3-ranked player on tour and co-founder of the revolutionary Racquetball Online ([www.racquetballonline.tv](http://www.racquetballonline.tv)) Internet broadcasting service, received the Janet Myers Sportswoman of the Year Award for the second consecutive year for her ambassadorship and fairness on the court.

**Paola Longoria** was honored as the WPRO's Most Improved Player for having a breakout season in her first full year on tour. She lost in the finals of the WPRO Pro Nationals to Rhonda in May and secured the #8 spot on the WPRO tour.



Ladies of the WPRO at the 2007 Choice Hotels US Open Gala

Photo by Mike Boatman

## Wachtel Wins Mid-Atlantic Tournament of Champions

Kerri Wachtel (Cincinnati, OH) defeated Candi Hostovich (Burke, VA) in three games at the Mid-Atlantic Tournament of Champions satellite stop. The tournament was hosted by Sport Fit Racquet Club in Laurel, Maryland, from October 5-7, 2007, with proceeds benefiting the American Breast Cancer Foundation (ABCF) and the Racquetball for Life campaign. This was Wachtel's first tour win since signing with Wilson Racquetball at the beginning of the season. Thanks to all the sponsors for making this event possible and especially Dan and Doreen Fowler and Bill Cooper for bringing the WPRO back to Maryland!



## GUDINAS-HOLMES CAPTURES LONG ISLAND OPEN TITLE

Cheryl Gudinas-Holmes (Naperville, IL) defeated #1 seed Rhonda Rajsich in a grueling five-game battle at the Long Island Open satellite event at the Sportime Club in Syosset, New York.



The tournament took place the first weekend of November 2007 and was presented by Queens Racquet Sports. Special thanks to longtime friend of the WPRO, Tom Keogh, and his wonderful staff for inviting the WPRO and the IRT to showcase their skills in front of the wonderful players and fans that make up New York Racquetball.



# Maple Leaf RACQUETBALL

## WPRO Stars Compete in Canadian Racquetball Classic In Ontario

The Canadian Racquetball Classic marked the second time in less than a year that the WPRO competed in Ontario for a major tour championship. We were excited to be back and we witnessed some of the best Canada has to offer in women's racquetball as they challenged the top international players on tour!

At the Cedar Springs Health, Racquet and Sports Club in Burlington, Canada's own Christie Van Hees (Calgary, AB), the #5 seed, claimed the women's title over #6 Kristen Bellows (Pleasant Grove, UT) in three games. Bellows played nearly flawless racquetball all weekend and didn't drop a single game heading into the finals. But Van Hees' overpowering passing shots and precise serves kept Bellows from getting into a rhythm in each game. Van Hees was on a mission and as in last season's event in Toronto, she stepped up her game to the highest level and would not be denied on her home turf before a crowd that included her biggest fans.

Going into Sunday's championship, Van Hees defeated #1-ranked WPRO pro Rhonda Rajsich (Fountain Hills, AZ) in four games in the semifinals after dispatching Angela Grisar (Santiago, Chile) in the quarterfinals and Adrienne Fisher (Centerville, OH) in the Round of 16.

On behalf of our Board of Directors and the ladies of the WPRO, we would like to express our gratitude to tournament director, Adrian Webb, his wife Joanne and his mother (who made lunch throughout the week) as well as Tim Davey, John Smith, Mike and Cindy Johnston, Lori and Trevor Smith, Jason Reaume, Terry Nelson, Evan Pritchard and the host committee for bringing the WPRO back to Ontario. Special thanks to Racquetball Ontario and Usher Barnoff of Racquetball Canada for their efforts to include the WPRO in this prestigious championship alongside the IRT. We would also like to thank all of the Canadian Racquetball Classic event sponsors, Cedar Springs Health, Racquet and Sports Club (Cindy Lolua), and the Comfort Inn of Burlington, a Choice Hotels property, for their generosity and hospitality.

The WPRO is able to tour cities around the world due in large part to the support of our national sponsors, including Ektelon Fireball (Official Ball), Python (Official Grip), Choice Hotels International (Official Hotel Partner), Racquetball Online (Official Webcaster), Transfection Designs (Official Jeweler) and many other tour partners listed on our website: [www.wpro-tour.com](http://www.wpro-tour.com).



**Christie Van Hees**  
(Calgary, AB)

## WPRO TOUR SCHEDULE 2008 SEASON

January 10-13	Panama City, Panama / Canal Challenge (T1)
January 24-27	Sacramento, CA / Greater Sacramento Open (T1)
February 1-3	Cincinnati, OH / Racquet & Hand for the Cure (Satellite)
February 7-10	Phoenix, AZ / Ektelon Fireball Rollout (T1)
February 28-March 2	Miami, FL / Great Balls of Fire (T1)
April 17-20	New Orleans, LA / WPRO World Championships (GS)

**T1** = Tier 1 Full Ranking Event

**GS** = Grand Slam Event (higher prize money and ranking points)

**Satellite** = Lower Level Event (check web site for satellite levels)

\*All Tier 1 WPRO events will use the Ektelon Fireball and will be broadcast live on RacquetballOnline.tv so stay tuned!

\*Check the WPRO web site - [www.wpro-tour.com](http://www.wpro-tour.com) - for changes and additions.

## WPRO RANKINGS As of December 1, 2007

Rank	Name	Hometown	Points
1	Rhonda Rajsich	Fountain Hills, AZ	1388.39
2	Cheryl Gudinas-Holmes	Naperville, IL	843.20
3	Angela Grisar	Santiago, Chile	806.29
4	Kerri Wachtel	Cincinnati, OH	791.20
5	Christie Van Hees	Calgary, AB, Canada	788.50
6	Kristen Bellows	Pleasant Grove, UT	626.50
7	Brenda Kyzer	Leesville, SC	457.00
8	Paola Longoria	San Luis Potosi, Mexico	446.00
9	Samantha Salas	Leon, Guanajuato, Mexico	318.50
10	Jo Shattuck	Denver, CO	304.40
11	Diane Moore	Griffith, IN	285.50
12	Doreen Fowler	Silver Spring, MD	226.66
13	Adrienne Fisher	Centerville, OH	212.50
14	Vivian Gomez	Miami, FL	200.75
15	Kimi Ferina	Rockaway Park, NY	172.00
16	Candi Hostovich	Burke, VA	158.94
17	Jen Saunders	Winnepeg, MB, Canada	115.50
18	Kara Mazur	Akon, CT	103.75
19	Michelle Earl	Anchorage, AK	88.32
20	Susy Acosta	Chihuahua, Mexico	77.40





## Classic Pro Racquetball Tour - Salem

The Classic Professional Racquetball Tour opened its ranking, singles season as the Capital City Challenge got into full swing on Friday night at the Courthouse Athletic Club in Salem, Oregon. Earlier in the day, the CPRT pros played doubles with a group of Oregon Juniors as part of the fundraising effort and support of the great Oregon Junior program. Additional fundraising through the weekend will benefit the National Fibromyalgia Research Association. As play opened, two local qualifiers stormed into the quarterfinals in straight games as Greg Campbell defeated Stacey Witenberger and Paul Reed took out Andrew Perry.

Third-seed Woody Clouse opened his season first with a solid three-gamer over California's Steve Wattz. The second quarterfinal turned into one of the closest matches in the brief history of the CPRT, as top age-group amateur Tom Travers of Florida took the first two games from fourth-seed Gerry Price, 9-7 and 9-8. Price battled back with 9-8 and 9-7 wins of his own setting up the decisive game five. As these two battled early in the tiebreaker, Price hit a passing shot down the right side wall that Travers stretched for and unfortunately pulled his hamstring, ending his upset bid. The top two seeds, Bret Harnett and Ruben Gonzalez,

both cruised with routine wins over the qualifiers, Campbell and Reed, respectively.

Bret Harnett opened play on Saturday and came from two games down in his semi-final over Gerry Price, 7-9, 4-9, 9-3, 9-4, 9-4. Price had played that five-game quarterfinal on Friday night and Harnett picked up the pace after getting behind to overpower Price.

Woody Clouse then continued the drama with a five-game win of his own over 2006-07 co-champion Ruben Gonzalez. The semi-final was a great, back-and-forth battle with both players playing extremely well and trading game wins with identical scores of 4-9, 9-4, 5-9, 9-5 through the first four games. Clouse opened strong and pulled away in the fifth game, 9-3.

Clouse then took over the number one ranking on the Classic Professional Racquetball Tour with his five-game victory over last season's other co-champion, Harnett, in front of a standing room-only crowd. Clouse came out on fire with quick wins in the first two games of the finals, 9-1, 9-3, before Harnett found some answers. Harnett took the next two games from a frustrated Clouse, 9-4, 9-6, before Clouse was able to regroup for game five. His game-five 9-2 win pushed Clouse into the top spot of the new rankings as the CPRT goes on to the US Open in Memphis next month.

Thanks to the Courthouse Athletic Club for hosting a great event that benefited the Oregon Junior Racquetball Program and the National Fibromyalgia Research Association.

Four hundred dollars were donated to the Oregon Juniors, including a fine associated with a CPRT code violation charged to Clouse in his semi-final. CPRT guidelines provide that any fines paid by players are donated to the event's designated charity. For more CPRT information, please watch [classicproracquetball.com](http://classicproracquetball.com).

The US OPEN put the CPRT on racquetball's biggest stage in front of thousands of fans, a worldwide audience on [RacquetballOnline.tv](http://RacquetballOnline.tv) and highlights to be aired during the US OPEN broadcasts on The Tennis Channel.



**L to R: Brett Harnett, Phil Crock, Kent Hollingsworth, Woody Clouse**

## Classic Pro Racquetball Tour at the US Open

**US OPEN PLAY INTO THE ROUND OF 16:** The top 16 were set for great competition in the US OPEN CPRT draw as 8 amateurs moved ahead on Thursday. Two of the matches went the full five games as Roland Grossl knocked out Steve Wattz after being down two games, 5-9, 6-9, 11-9, 11-9, 12-10, as did David Sable over Cary Slade, 8-10, 2-10, 9-4, 9-7, 9-3. The top eight seeds, including all the CPRT pros, were in action throughout the day on Friday.

**UPSETS HIGHLIGHT ROUND OF 16:** 4th-seeded Gerry Price was an upset victim in the round of 16 dropping a four-game match to former IRT pro David Sable, 9-7, 9-8, 7-9, 9-5. In another upset, Michael Anderson took out 6th-seeded Tom Travers in straight games, 9-7, 9-8, 9-7. Fifth seed Mike Ceresia was taken to the limit by Eugene Coyle and 2nd seed Bret Harnett dropped the first game to Richard Eisenman, but both advanced along with top seed Woody Clouse and 3rd seed Ruben Gonzalez. Play continued with the quarterfinals on Saturday morning and semi-finals in the afternoon.

**FINALS SET AT US OPEN:** After the quarterfinals and semis, the stage was set for Woody Clouse and Ruben Gonzalez on center stage at the US OPEN. Clouse reached the finals with wins over Brad McCuniff in straight games and then a four-game semi over Mike Ceresia. Gonzalez cruised past Michael Anderson in three then Keith Minor in four games, after Minor upset 2nd-seeded Bret Harnett in three surprisingly quick games. The showdown between Clouse and Gonzalez offered Gonzalez the opportunity to avenge a semi-final loss at the last event in Salem. The finals were on the stadium court and broadcast live on [RacquetballOnline.tv](http://RacquetballOnline.tv).

**GONZALEZ IS US OPEN CHAMPION:** Ruben Gonzalez thrilled a large crowd on the stadium court with a long five-game win over top-ranked Woody Clouse. The 9-2, 2-9, 9-4, 8-9, 9-5 win moved Gonzalez into the number two ranking after the second event of the CPRT season. Gonzalez came out strong only to have Clouse wake up and answer.

After a solid third game, Gonzalez had a big lead in the fourth only to have Clouse come out of the deep hole to force the deciding fifth game. That fourth game seemed to take too much out of Clouse and Gonzalez took an early lead in the fifth, riding that lead home. With 38 guys in the division at the US OPEN and two of the matches on the stadium court, the event was a huge success for the CPRT. Follow the rest of the CPRT season and get additional information at [classicproracquetball.com](http://classicproracquetball.com).



**L to R: Ruben Gonzalez, Mike Coulter and Woody Clouse**

Current CPRT Rankings:		
1	Woody Clouse	925
2	Ruben Gonzalez	793
3	Keith Minor	535
3	Mike Ceresia	535
5	Bret Harnett	528
6	Gerry Price	328
7	Dave Sable	275
8	Brad McCuniff	265
8	Michael Anderson	265
9	Tom Travers	260
10	Greg Campbell	250
10	Paul Reed	250
10	Steve Wattz	250
13	Eugene Coyle	135
14	Doug Ganim	130
14	Richard Eisenman	130
16	Andrew Perry	125
16	Brent Sturgiss	125
16	Roland Grassl	125
16	Stacey Witenberger	125
16	Timothy Kirch	125

## National Masters Racquetball Association to Support Classic Professional Racquetball Tour Junior Initiatives

**NMRA to Match Funds Raised at CPRT Events**

The National Masters Racquetball Association (NMRA) has committed to a matching funds program with the contributions raised at Classic Professional Racquetball Tour (CPRT) events earmarked for Junior Racquetball. NMRA President Tom Curran stated that the NMRA is committed for the entire remaining 2007-2008 CPRT Tour.

"Like the CPRT, the NMRA understands that the longevity of our sport lies in the continued development of Junior Racquetball programs across the nation. We have chosen to partner with the CPRT and match the funds that the CPRT raises at each of its events so that Junior programs in those and other markets will continue to flourish," said Curran. In addition, the NMRA sponsors various Junior programs throughout the year and has contributed more than \$6,000 to Junior Racquetball in 2007, including \$1,000 to the 2007 IRF 19th Junior World Racquetball Championships, December 14-20, 2007, in Cochabamba, Bolivia. The NMRA runs two major round-robin tournaments in different states every year. More information can be found at [www.nmra.info](http://www.nmra.info).

Steve Lerner, CPRT Commissioner added, "The professionals and promoters of the CPRT built our Tour on the premise that it was time for those of us who were fortunate to compete in professional racquetball to now give back to our sport. It's a great honor to share this mission with the NMRA and its support is greatly appreciated."

CPRT is a professional tour featuring racquetball's greatest stars who are 40 years of age and older. Classic Professional Racquetball Tour is "Stars of the past supporting the future of Racquetball."

### SEASON SCHEDULE

Feb. 22-24	Rawlins, WY
March 7-9	Rochester, NY
April 10-12	Concord, CA
May 2-4	Las Vegas, NV

Watch for any further updates and entry forms on [classicproracquetball.com](http://classicproracquetball.com).



## Pro Kennex Outdoor US Open Dominated by California's Craig Lane and Greg Solis

By **Hank Marcus**, WOR Executive Director

Craig "Clubber" Lane and Greg Solis each showed what champions are made of, winning the Outdoor US Open Pro Doubles despite brutal conditions. They were tested by some of the local veterans along the way, but in the end, Lane/Solis showed why they have dominated the outdoor scene for so many years.

Local standouts Dave Smith and Todd Pulman were able to serve at game point a few times, but that was the closest anyone came to taking even one game from Lane/Solis all weekend. The young Florida team of Dillon Silver and Chris McDonald also showed some spark against the two veteran Pros in their semifinal match, but came up just short each game.

J Bingo and Gary Smith added to their legend as "giant killers" by getting past seasoned California Pro veterans Son Nguyen and Rick Sandello to reach the semis. Next up for Florida's last remaining team were Zeus Ocana and Jesus Usterroz, who were anxious for another shot at the locals. Things looked good for Florida's last hope after game 1, but Bingo and Gary could not hold off the determined Californians for long. Zeus and Jesus battled back with some gutsy shots and incredible defense, winning the next two games fairly easily.

In the Pro Singles Finals, Clubber and Greg put on an incredible show that was greatly appreciated by the Florida audience. Between singles and doubles, they both played back-to-back matches in the Florida heat for more than five hours without a break. They each were fighting off cramps, yet battled in the Singles finals for each and every point. Clubber's incomparable power energized the crowd each time he blasted a forehand. Solis played with guts, determination and poise to go with his remarkable shot-making. The gallery was brought to its feet time and again to cheer yet another incredible backhand splat or a seemingly impossible defensive return. In the end, Clubber was able to defeat his good friend and partner using his thunderous serve and court sense to serve notice to the world that his singles game is to be reckoned with!

The pro players were not the only standouts, though. Due to all the rain delays, nearly the entire B division draw was played on Sunday. It was quite inspirational watching Ariel Acanda reach the semifinals in B Singles and win the B doubles with his partner, Yosvani Calero, who dominated the B Singles as well. Yosvani and Jorge Diaz had an epic singles battle near the end of the day Sunday. It's a shame hardly anyone saw it as these two really played their hearts out, with Yosvani winning 15-14, 15-14. These two have proven they are ready to

**Tourney Director Angel Calderon congratulates champions Greg Solis & Craig Lane**



move up to the A division from now on. Youngster Jason Tackett made the semis despite having limited outdoor experience, and represented Florida's junior team quite well.

The A Division was dominated by Danny Betancourt, who won the A singles and the A doubles with his partner, Maikel Valladares. Danny made all the tough shots, and seemingly never got tired as the day wore on. In the A doubles Finals, Maikel was able to handle the brutal serve of Jorge Arias, which proved to be the difference. Jorge's serve had been giving everyone else tons of trouble, helping Jorge and his partner Alex Corrales make the finals for the second event in a row.

In the Juniors finals, Michael Bernstein showed Alex Bartolome that experience counts, winning in two straight. Along with Jack McDonald and Jason Tackett, it looks like Florida Juniors could be well represented next year at the championships in Huntington Beach.

It was an all-Holiday Park Final in the 40/50 doubles, with Dave Smith and Mark Maupin taking out good friends J Bingo and Todd Pulman in an exciting match. On the singles side, local Lefty Rick Bolles was able to defeat Vince Santilli from Connecticut.

Open Doubles was won by the new dream team of Randy "El Presidente" Forrest, President of the Florida Racquetball Association, teamed with Allan Kazem, National Director of World Outdoor Racquetball. Despite first meeting at the event, they were hitting on all cylinders throughout the pool play, and were able to take out locals Larry Wasserman and Jose Lopez in the Finals.

Last, but not least, was the mixed doubles. Florida legends Greg and Martha McDonald were taken out in the finals by J Bingo and Kathy Geels.

### WOR TOP 10 RANKINGS

#### PRO SINGLES:

Jack Huczek 1075 MI  
Greg Solis 865 CA  
Rocky Carson 700 CA  
Rick Sandello 665 CA  
Jesus Ocana 550 CA  
Craig Lane 500 CA  
Greg Freeze 490 CA  
Dillon Silver 425 FL  
Andy Solis 375 CA  
Lou Orosco 375 CA

#### PRO DOUBLES:

Craig Lane 1275 CA  
Greg Solis 1275 CA  
Rob Hoff 1000 CA  
Rocky Carson 1000 CA  
Paul Dylewski 875 CA  
Jesus Ocana 850 CA  
Jesus Ustarroz 850 CA  
Son Nguyen 790 CA  
Jim Banuelous 700 CA  
John Ellis 690 CA  
Jose Rojas 690 CA





**Q:** Fran, I am often confused on when to hit an offensive shot vs. when to hit a defensive shot ... can you guide me in the right direction?



By Fran Davis

Hope to see you at one of my camps for live personal instruction on this topic and many others. The next best thing is to buy my video if you can't make it to a camp at this time.

Go to [www.FranDavisRacquetball.com](http://www.FranDavisRacquetball.com) for details on both.

**Answer:** That is a very good question, because knowing when to take an offensive shot vs. a defensive shot is a VERY important part of shot selection and can win or lose you a match.

Too often I see players do the complete opposite of what they should do:

1. They take an offensive shot when they should go defensive, such as when they are off balance in the front of the court and they try to kill the ball and wind up skipping it. They should go up to the ceiling or hit a Z ball to buy themselves time and get back to the middle.

2. They take a defensive shot when they should go offensive, such as when they are in front of their opponent with a set up and should kill or pinch the ball, but they elect to take a ceiling or a pass shot because they are scared of missing the kill or pinch shot.

### Let's define an Offensive Shot and a Defensive Shot first:

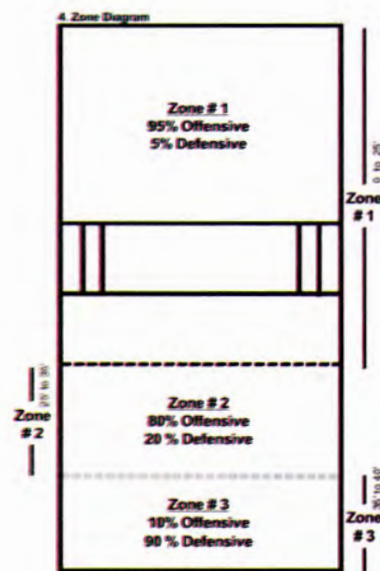
**Offensive Shot** — ends the rally and/or scores a point.

**Defensive Shot** — draws your opponent out of center court and/or buys you time.

I've made it easy for you to see when you should go for what shot ... see the "Zone Diagram." I've broken up the court into 3 Zones and it is clearly marked:

**Zone 1:** 0-25 feet 95% offense/5% defense  
**Zone 2:** 25-35 feet 80% offense/20% defense  
**Zone 3:** 35-40 feet 10% offense/90% defense

This holds pretty true when you are playing and have set ups, but when you are off balance or out of position you should be thinking defensive and use the ceiling or Z shot. Also, when you look at Zone 3 (the



back of the court), you are predominantly going defensive unless you get a shot off the back wall, then it's offensive.

I am confident by studying this diagram it will take the confusion out of what to hit when ... offense vs. defense. If you understand this principle off the court, you will have more success on the court when the ball is traveling at different speeds and coming off at different angles and spins. This concept will help you play smarter and take the right shot at the right time, leading to a more consistent game.



“... this shot cannot be hit on purpose, but when it does happen, few, if any, have ever been able to return it!”

Here are a couple of issues that you may never have thought of:

The first is something that the average racquetball player probably does without thinking at the start of every doubles game. Only one player from the team that serves first in each game gets to serve so that when he is out, the whole team is out! But the question here is, “Why is that?” Why don't both partners get to serve?

**OTTO SAYS:** It's a matter of being as fair as possible. Let's assume that there are two doubles teams — “Team A” and “Team B.” Also, let's think of a player stepping into serve as “one opportunity to score.”

If the game were to begin with both players from “Team A” getting to serve before “Team B” serves, then what starts as neither team having a scoring opportunity advantage, rapidly becomes “Team A” being ahead by first one and then two scoring advantages! Thus, when “Team B” serves, “Team A's” two scoring opportunity advantage is reduced first to one and then to zero, but as soon as “Team A” serves again, its opportunity advantage would again increase to two. As you can see, “Team B” would never have a scoring opportunity advantage in the game, while “Team A” would be up by either one or two scoring opportunities or, at worse, have the same number as the other team.

But what a big difference in scoring opportunities results if only one player from “Team A” is allowed to serve at the start of the game as called for by Rule 4.2(a). When one player from “Team A” serves, its team would be up by one opportunity. But that single advantage would be completely erased just as soon as the first player from “Team B” serves. Then “Team B” would be up one opportunity as soon as the second player from

its team serves. This leap-frogging of each team having either no advantage or being up no more than one opportunity over the other continues throughout that game.

Now, for another issue that's puzzled me for many years. Let's say that a right-hander is standing approximately 35 feet from the front wall and rather near the right side wall. If he hits the ball low and hard to first hit the right side wall near the front wall, the resulting shot likely will become either a pinch shot or a splat shot — the main difference being the amount of spin he places on the ball. The ball hits the right wall and then front wall and then takes off to the left at a sharp angle that depends mostly on the spin. BUT, have you ever hit or seen hit that very same kind of shot that, for some unknown reason, hits the right wall, the front wall, and then amazingly backs up to hit the right wall again? Why does that happen? It seems impossible. At this year's U.S. Open, Jason Mannino offered me a possible explanation that seems to be the most reasonable I have heard.

**OTTO (and Jason) SAYS:** I have asked this question of many top players and never got a truly satisfying explanation until Jason Mannino offered this one. He says that this strangeness happens whenever the ball is hit rather flat and for some reason (such as a slight wetness, etc.) slides when it hits the right side wall. The ball will still angle toward the front wall, but since it is NOT spinning like it usually does, the ball just compresses and returns right back to the place from whence it came, i.e., the right side wall! Jason and others have quickly acknowledged that this shot cannot be hit on purpose, but when it does happen, few, if any, have ever been able to return it!



**By Otto Dietrich**  
USA Racquetball  
National Rules  
Commissioner



**Always “Play by the Rules!” If you don't have a copy, you can find and review them on-line at:**

**<http://www.usaracquetball.com/Default.aspx?tabid=839>.**

**Do you have a rules/refereeing question?**

**Be sure to email it to me at [ODietrich@usra.org](mailto:ODietrich@usra.org) and you might find it featured in an upcoming issue of Racquetball.**





# awareness:

## RACQUETBALL & YOU



by **Woody Clouse**,  
Ektelon Director of  
Instruction

To a racquetball player, awareness is everything! Starting at the beginning, let's address awareness from two perspectives: before you walk onto the court and while you're on the court.

### Before you walk onto the court

#### 1. Are you aware of your mental state?

Are you in a confident frame of mind, ready to play and have fun? Have you cleared your mind of all irrelevant concerns and thoughts? Are you aware of your focus and whether or not you are staying in the now, not letting your mind drift into the future or fade into the past? Are you aware of what it takes for you to put yourself into the zone? Are you aware of how positive you are during the entire process? What goals do you want to accomplish (for example, have fun, keep my racquet up the whole match)? Do you have a game plan? Have you visualized yourself executing and succeeding with your game plan? Do you have a Plan B?

#### 2. Are you aware of your physical state and status?

Are you hydrated and well nourished? Are you rested? Have you given yourself enough time to warm up so you're 100% ready to go at 0-0? Are you carrying yourself like a champion with a tall posture, head held high? Are you aware of your breathing pattern prior to and during the match? (Breathing helps your mental state, aiding in your ability to stay in the now.) Are you aware of your energy level and your conditioning, ready to call time outs when you need them or to push the pace when your opponent is fatigued?

#### 3. Are you aware of your emotional state?

Do you feel even-keeled, with the emotional stability to not get too low during the tough times and too high during the good times? Are you ready to stay calm and focused during the big points? Prior to starting the match, have you taken the necessary steps to feel good about yourself, regardless of whether you win or lose? Have you released the daily concerns and pressures that can affect your stress level, knowing that you can address those issues later? Are you aware of your willingness to prevent bad calls from negatively affecting your game? Are you emotionally ready to keep an opponent with a bad attitude from diverting your focus?

#### 4. Are you aware of your spiritual state?

Do you have that fighting spirit? Are you centered and feeling empowered? Do you feel one with the game and at peace with yourself?

### While you're on the court

Now that you're on the court and are ready to start playing, there are a number of other areas to consider for 100% awareness of what it will take to be at your very best! This can be broken down into two major groups that can be defined as "you" and "your opponent."

Let's begin by focusing on your opponent. The following is a list of the attributes your opponent has of which you should be aware:

#### Are you aware of:

- whether your opponent is left- or right-handed? (Seems obvious, but we don't notice this more than we want to admit.)
- your opponent's strengths & weaknesses?
- a weakness that you can attack and create a game plan around?
- how to neutralize your opponent's strengths?
- movement limitations? (A player will always move better in certain ways than others.)
- your opponent's energy level and preferred playing pace? (How will you offset his/her rhythm to speed things up during the lows and slow things down during point runs?)

#### Now, let's focus on you! Are you aware of:

- where the ball is and where it's going, 100% of the time?
- where the ball is when you and your opponent make contact with it? (When a player hits the ball deep in stance, the ball will usually go to the side wall he/she is next to; when a player hits the ball in front of the lead foot, the shot is usually going cross court. When a player hits the ball level with the lead foot, the ball is usually going straight down the line. Note: The lead foot will always be the foot closest to the front wall.)
- your strengths and weaknesses?
- how to execute a game plan to match your strengths against your opponent's weaknesses?
- your racquet dropping by your hip when you are NOT hitting the ball? (The racquet should always be up in a ready position.)
- your opponent watching you while you're hitting the ball? (If he/she is staring at the front wall while you are hitting your shot from the deep end of the court, there will be a delayed reaction to every ceiling ball and passing shot. This especially holds true on your return of serve.)
- any and all adjustments you need to make between games or during time outs?
- how to learn from the match regardless of whether you won or lost?

This article is published without pictures because each player should visualize what best fits. Once you create that image of yourself – focused, relaxed and having fun – you're on the right track to bringing out your best!



# DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

## Island Racquetball Paradise

By Carol Chelsea George

Trying to figure out where to go on your next vacation? Tired of coming home sunburned and out of shape? Maybe what you need is a little R, R & R: Rest, Relaxation and Racquetball!

The Dominican Republic, a popular tourist destination in the Caribbean, is the perfect place to combine holidays and racquetball. Santo Domingo, its capital, boasts three clubs with a total of 10 courts, while Puerto Plata on the north shore has one court at a small guesthouse resort. Combined with dreamy beaches, a renovated colonial zone from the 16th century and other attractions, a trip to the Dominican Republic is a racquetballer's paradise.

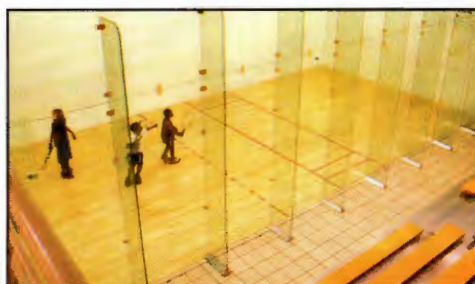
In the early 1980s, a handful of Dominicans discovered racquetball in the U.S. and built a few courts in their country's capital. These early pioneers included Rafael Fernandez, president of the Dominican Racquetball Federation; Danelo Alfaro, Vice President; Rosa Gomez, top female player for 15 years who now heads an impressive juniors program; and Claudine Garcia, ranked #5 in the world during the height of her professional career.

In 2002, Fernandez spearheaded a campaign with the Dominican government to construct an eight-court state-of-the-art racquetball facility at the country's Olympic complex. The Pabellon de Racquetball was inaugurated in July 2003 in time to include racquetball in the 2003 Pan American Games. American racquetball pro Ruben Gonzales participated in that tournament, gaining fame as its oldest participant.

"This racquetball club is one of the best in all of Latin America and the Caribbean," stated Fernandez.

Six courts have glass back walls, while the two stadium courts feature side and back wall glass. There are bleachers for spectators at all the courts, plus upstairs viewing. The complex includes men's and women's locker rooms, offices, and is set up for televising international events. In August 2006, Santo Domingo hosted the World Racquetball Championships, attended by an impressive 27 countries.

Santo Domingo's Olympic courts also stand out because they're open to the public. Dominicans pay a monthly fee of \$10 for unlimited use of the courts. International visitors are welcome for a \$5 per day donation. In much of Latin America, racquetball is an elitist sport, available only to members of exclusive clubs. This helps explain why the



One of 2 stadium courts in Santo Domingo

Dominicans have a strong national team, with many international juniors champions as well. Thanks go mainly to coaches Rosa Gomez and Danelis Deleon Ortiz, who, along with brother Alberto and cousin Simon, make up a large part of the national team.

"The next step," according to VP Alfaro, who discovered racquetball as a college student in Tampa in 1982, "is to build courts in the interior of the country where people still haven't heard of racquetball." For economic reasons, according to Alfaro, the government plans to construct three-wall outdoor courts. This will introduce more Dominicans to the sport and hopefully encourage the best players to come train in Santo Domingo.

Gomez's and Deleon's juniors program has produced several world-ranked players. After taking home several trophies at the World Juniors Racquetball Championships in Tempe, AZ in December 2006, they are on their way to Cochabamba, Bolivia, Dec. 14-20, 2007, to beat their record.



L'Oase Racquetball in Puerto Plata

### PUERTO PLATA

On my most recent trip to the island, I booked five nights at L'Oase Racquetball & Guesthouse, just outside D.R.'s oldest resort town of Puerto Plata. Due to nearby Cabarete's

success as a venue for world-class windsurfing, Puerto Plata has been enjoying a revival in tourism. The small private community of Costambar where L'Oase is located, is clean, safe, gorgeous, but not yet overcrowded or overpriced — truly an oasis to get away from it all.

In addition to racquetball, L'Oase offers wallyball, ping pong, billiards, basketball, gym equipment, and a small pool in an oasis setting. Tennis courts and a beach are walking distance away. For a great view of the Costambar area, climb to the rooftop patio above the racquetball court. If you come back from a vacation at L'Oase and you're not in better shape than you left, you must have spent too much time enjoying Presidente beers and the delicious Caribbean cuisine.

### Racquetball Facilities

**Pabellón de Racquetball:** Centro Olímpico; Juan Pablo Duarte / Av. Máximo Gómez; Santo Domingo, República Dominicana; Tel. (809) 543-2467/Fax. (809) 686-2591; Contact: Rafael Fernandez; email: Rafa\_fernandez53@yahoo.com.

**L'Oase Racquetball & Guesthouse:** Owner: Joseph Kruchten; Costambar, Playa Real #21; Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic; (612) 701-7011; (609) 970-7861; (809) 837-6845; email: jose@loase.com.

### Places to stay in Santo Domingo:

**El Beaterio Guest House:** Converted from a historic convent. Calle Duarte N° 8, Zona Colonial; Santo Domingo Tel/Fax: (809) 687-8657; email: elbeaterio@elbeaterio.fr; Web: www.elbeaterio.com.

**Hotel Atarazana:** Vicente Celestino Duarte #19, Zona Colonial, Santo Domingo; (809) 688-3693; email: info@hotel-atarazana.com; Web: www.hotel-atarazana.com.

**Hotel El Señorial:** Pte. Vicini Burgos No. 58; Entre Independencia y Malecón; Santo Domingo, R.D.; Tel. (809) 687-4367; Cel. (809) 224-4721; Fax. (809) 687-0600; email: senoria@verizon.net.do; Web: www.elsenorial.com.

For more hotels: TripAdvisor.com or Hotels.com

### Things to do in Santo Domingo:

**Zona Colonial:** A must-see and best area to stay, 5 minutes from the Olympic Racquetball courts.

**Calle El Conde:** Popular pedestrian zone for shopping and people watching.

**Los Tres Ojos:** Impressive underground caves, a cool place to hang out on a hot tropical day.

**La Catedral Primada:** Santo Domingo boasts the first of everything since Christopher Columbus landed here first. The first cathedral of the Americas is logically located at Plaza Colon (Spanish for Columbus).

**Jardin Botanica:** Huge, bring good walking shoes and a camera for nice portraits of yourselves in beautiful settings.

**El Acuario:** Not as well-maintained as aquariums in the U.S., but nice setting on the waterfront.

**Boca Chica:** Join the locals for a day at the beach, especially crowded on weekends.

### Things to do in Puerto Plata:

**Teleferico:** Ride an Italian-built cable car up to a mountain top for spectacular views of the city and beaches.

**Historic Zone:** Currently under renovation, but well worth a stroll around admiring the architecture.

**Malecon:** As in Santo Domingo, a nice place to stroll along the waterfront as long as you can ignore the garbage.

**Museo de Amber:** Learn all about amber and other stones. Watch demonstration of cigar-making.

**Cofresi Beach:** Voted best beach in Dominican Republic, and nearby Ocean World & Water Park houses the world's largest dolphin lagoon.



# THE PASSSHOT

By Sudsy Monchik

In this issue, I want to reinforce when to use "The Pass Shot" and how to hit the different "Pass Shots," the #1 offensive shot in the game today and the #1 choice of the top men and women pros. The Pass Shot is defined as a shot that hits 18" and lower on the front wall and bounces two times before the back wall ... the highest percentage offensive shot in the game.

## HERE'S WHEN TO USE IT:

The BEST tip I can give you and that will put points on the scoreboard for you is to use the Pass Shot when your opponent is in front of the dotted line such as Fran is in the picture. Too many players hit the shot they like, the kill shot (hits 6" on the front wall and bounces two times before the short line), rather than the shot that is most effective, the pass shot.

## HOW TO HIT THE DIFFERENT PASS SHOTS:

There are three kinds of passes ... down-the line (d-t-l), cross court (cc) and wide angle. I will focus on the three different contact points for these shots as that is the ONLY thing that changes when you are hitting these shots:

### TRICK

#### (Down-the-Line)

- Contact the ball off the arch of your front foot
- Contact the ball knee-high and lower
- The ball hits between me and the closest side wall (in this case, the left wall), not hitting the side wall and bounces two times before the back wall.

### TRICK

#### (Cross Court)

- Contact the ball off the big toe of your front foot
- Contact the ball knee-high and lower
- The ball hits between me and the furthest side wall (in this case, the right wall), not hitting the side wall and bounces two times before the back wall.

### TRICK

#### (Wide Angle)

- Contact the ball between the big toe and little toe of your front foot
- Contact the ball knee-high and lower
- The ball hits between me and the furthest side wall (in this case, the right wall), this time hitting the side wall on a fly slightly behind your opponent and bounces two times before the back wall.





## LET'S TAKE A CLOSER LOOK:

You can see how by changing **ONLY** the contact point in your hitting zone (everything else about your stroke and footwork remains the same), you can change your pass shot options ... d-t-l, cc and wide angle, leading to a great amount of deception. At the "Pro" level, deception is the key ... it kept my opponents off balance and guessing. When I captured my five #1 rankings on the IRT Pro Tour, I not only used this very concept, I swore by it. I recommend you first try it at your home club while sparring with a friend before you break it out in a tournament or a league and sock it to your opponents ... as I did to Cliff, Jason and John.

Remember the pass shot is the #1 offensive shot in the game, the highest percentage shot, and you should be using this shot when your opponent is on or in front of the dotted line. Remember, the further

up your opponent is in front of the dotted line his or her reaction time diminishes, therefore pass, pass, pass. My magical Pass Shot has gotten me out of more trouble than you could imagine ... it was instrumental in helping me climb to the #1 position on the pro tour ... so have some fun testing the angles and running your opponent around the court ... I certainly did.

Here's a philosophy I lived by when I was on tour ... "if you can win the rally with a pass or kill ... always pass." I'd rather be safe than sorry.

To learn how to hit these Pass Shots, you can pick up one of our instructional videos which include me, Fran and Jason, "Building Your Racquetball Dream House" or attend one of our camps.

(See [FranDavisRacquetball.com](http://FranDavisRacquetball.com) for details.)



Presented by

**HEAD**  
*Penn*





# R...R...Rolling it out in Memphis!

## Racquetball's Three 'Rs' Capture **US OPEN** Crowns

The 12th edition of the Choice Hotels US OPEN Racquetball Championships brought the game's best players to Memphis in November, all hoping to claim racquetball's top prize.

In the Men's Professional Division, defending champion Jason Mannino was looking to earn consecutive US OPEN titles, but it would be the top-two ranked players on the International Racquetball Tour (IRT) facing off in the finals. **Rocky Carson** won his first-ever US OPEN, outlasting Jack Huczek in front of a sellout crowd in four games (11-3, 7-11, 11-8, 11-6).

In the Women's Professional Division, the top player in the Women's Professional Racquetball Organization (WPRO), **Rhonda Rajsich**, defeated Cheryl Gudinas-Holmes (11-6, 11-5, 8-11, 11-9) to claim her second US OPEN Championship.

The Classic Pro Racquetball Tour (CPRT) made its US OPEN debut this year and didn't disappoint. The ageless **Ruben Gonzalez** took out the CPRT's No. 1 player, Woody Clouse, in a five-game marathon that lasted nearly two hours (9-2, 2-9, 9-4, 8-9, 9-5).

2007 Choice Hotels US OPEN Magazine Coverage  
Compiled by Jeff Oliver, US OPEN Media Manager  
Articles by Bryan Shaw, Adam Katz and Steve Lerner  
Photography by Mike Boatman and Geoff Thomsen



PRESENTED BY:



**Lucite**  
International





FROM LEFT: US Open winners Rhonda Rajsich, Ruben Gonzalez and Rocky Carson



**MOTOROLA**



**WILSONART**  
INTERNATIONAL





# IRT COVERAGE

By Bryan Shaw

Much buzz surrounded the top professionals coming into the tournament. Jason Mannino was the only player in the draw who had won a US OPEN. Could he keep the elite list of champions at four people (Sudsy Monchik, Cliff Swain, Jason Mannino, and Kane Waselenchuk)? The focus on Jack Huzcek wasn't if, but when, he would finally claim his first US Open title. Rocky Carson won his first Grand Slam title in Colorado earlier in the season, but could he play consistently enough through the entire draw to add another huge accomplishment to his career as he appears to be playing into his potential? Alvaro Beltran has the tools, but would he be able to play consistently through an entire tournament? Would Shane Vanderson's backhand hold true the entire tournament or abandon him when he needed it most? Could Mitch Williams, Ben Croft or Chris Crowther string together consistent upset rounds and make an impact?

## IRT QUALIFYING ROUNDS

Forty players signed up to attempt and battle into one of the 16 coveted spots in the International Racquetball Tour Men's Professional Round of 64. Matt Stamborski was the only player seeded in the top four to advance.

Bradley Kirch, Park Minsoo, and Darrel Miller each battled through two rounds in order to qualify. David Sabalesky, Chris Coy, Mauricio Zelada, Brent Sturgess, Triston Hickey, Jason Geis, Jason Bronson, Takaaki Hirose, Sergio Rivera, Tony Jammal, Roberto Canto, and Jose Ramos rounded out the remaining advancers.

## IRT OPENING ROUND OF 64

The top eight seeds were all business; nobody dropped a game and the group averaged 2.8 points against per game. Top gun Jack Huzcek rolled past Chris Coy, 11-3, 11-1, 11-2, while Rocky Carson fired from the number two spot and dismantled Roberto Cantos, 11-3, 11-8, 11-2. Number three-ranked Jason Mannino allowed the fewest points of anyone in the round, cruising past Jason Bronson, 11-4, 11-0, 11-1.

Mexico's best player and fourth-seed Alvaro Beltran eliminated Jason Geis in a quick three games, 11-3, 11-3, 11-6. Number five-seed Shane Vanderson took care of Triston Hickey, 11-1, 11-6, 11-3, and the hard-hitting number six-seed

Mitch Williams put the hurt on Takaaki Hirose in a quick three, winning, 11-1, 11-3, 11-3. Number seven-seed Ben Croft was also taking no prisoners as he beat Tony Jammal, 11-3, 11-2, 11-1. Rounding

out the top eight, Chris Crowther moved past Bradley Kirch, 11-6, 11-2, 11-0.

There were only a few minor upsets in the opening round with both players within five seeding places of each other: Alejandro Landa over Ryan Smith in a five-game battle, Ruben Estrada over Vincent Gagnon in a tight four games, and Anthony Carson over Timothy Kirch in three games. The only other upset was number 42 seed Eric Desrochers over number 23-seed Michimune Kono in four games. Although it was an accomplishment to fight through the qualifying rounds, none of the qualifiers got past the round of 64.



## IRT ROUND OF 32

Thursday's Round of 32 continued to bring good fortune to the top eight seeds as they advanced again without dropping a game. Competition was tougher this round as their average points against per game rose to 5.8. Jack Huzcek continued to steam through his competition defeating Alejandro Landa, 11-4, 11-5, 11-6. Rocky Carson didn't look quite as sharp early on against Tony Carson, but started to roll his backhand and won, 11-8, 11-7, 11-4. Jason Mannino continued to look focused and played great ball as he left Ruben Estrada at the gates, 11-4, 11-5, 11-1. Alvaro Beltran cruised past Lee Connell in the first two games, 11-2 and 11-1. Lee put up a valiant fight in the third before falling, 11-9. Tim Landeryou played a very tough match against Shane Vanderson, holding tight and capitalizing on Shane's mistakes. Vanderson's backhand would carry him through the match, winning, 11-7, 11-5, 12-10. Mitch Williams had trouble against tournament director Doug Ganim, but won, 11-10, 11-9, 11-8. Ben Croft played well in his match over Anthony

Herrera, winning, 11-6, 11-6, 11-6. Rounding out the top eight players, Chris Crowther sent Rafael Filippini packing as he won, 11-8, 11-6, 11-1.

Polo Gutierrez topped Charlie Pratt in three games for a chance to face Huzcek next round. Jason Thoerner dropped the first game against Travis Woodbury before winning the next three to face Crowther in the Round of 16. Twelfth-seed Hiroshi Shimizu from Japan allowed the fewest points against his opponent than anybody else in the round, played great ball and never let Andres Herrera get anything started, steamrolling past him, 11-2, 11-5, 11-0, and was set to face Vanderson next round. The always entertaining Javier Moreno had another excellent round. Javier's menacing forehand only allowed 11 points total for Brian Istace as he won in three games. Javier would line up against long-time friend Alvaro in the next round.

Number 19-seed Kris Odegard had the only five-game battle or upset of the round against number 14-seed Juan Herrera. Kris

won the first two games, but they were tight at eight points each. Juan turned around the next two, 12-10 and 11-4, before Kris' backhand caught fire and took care of the fifth game to advance and face Mannino next round. Number 22-seed John Goth was having a great tournament as his consistent play staged a large upset to take out 11th-seed Alejandro Herrera in three quick games, 11-3, 11-2, 11-5. John would face southpaw the cannon Mitch Williams in the next round. Andy Hawthorne dropped a game against Eric Desrochers, but won in four to face Ben Croft in the round of 16. The final match of the round staged John Ellis against legend Ruben Gonzalez. Ruben played great, but John won in three to face Rocky Carson in the next round.





## IRT ROUND OF 16

The winners of the Round of 32 took a quick breather and started the Round of 16 later in the day. Upsets were few in that 14 of the Top 16 seeds advanced.

Jack Huczek continued to show why he was seeded first, knocking out Polo Gutierrez in three games, 11-4, 11-4, 11-6. Through three rounds, Jack's average points against was an impressive 4.0. Jason Thoerner had Chris Crowther off-balance and off his game. An upset according to the seeding, Jason took care of Chris in three quick games to face Jack on Friday.

Shane Vanderson had a war against Hiroshi Shimizu. After winning the first two games, Shane's backhand turned more and more inconsistent and Hiroshi scrambled to keep any ball alive. The added pressure forced a lot of skips from Shane. Hiroshi evened the match by winning the third and fourth games, but then Shane turned on the heat and couldn't miss. An 11-0 win in the fifth game advanced him through to Friday's quarterfinals. Javier Moreno faced off against Alvaro Beltran. Alvaro typically controls the matches between these two and this time was no different. Alvaro had Javier running all over the place, even literally running out of his shoes at one point. Alvaro, looking to have a great tournament, would face Shane in the quarterfinals.

Jason Mannino continued his quest to repeat as champion and ran out to a 7-0 lead against Kris Odegard in game one. Kris got his backhand going and came back to tie at 7-7 before Jason cleaned house, winning in three, 11-8, 11-2, 11-1. Mannino was playing fantastic ball, keeping his opponents to an average of 2.9 points per game through three rounds. Mitch Williams ended John Goth's impressive showing at the US Open in a quick three games and would face Mannino on Friday.

Andy Hawthorne and Ben Croft go back and forth in their matches between each other, but Andy had gotten the last couple and staged an upset win over Croft in a very tight four games, 11-9, 8-11, 11-8, 12-10. Both players spent nearly as much time in the air as they did on their feet. Rocky Carson dropped his first game of the tournament against John Ellis, but managed to win in four to face Andy in the quarterfinals.



## IRT QUARTERFINALS



Interestingly enough, Jason Thoerner was the only quarterfinalist who wasn't also a quarterfinalist last year as Cliff Swain held that last spot. Jack, Rocky, Jason, Alvaro, Shane, Mitch, and Andy all made the 2006 quarterfinals at the US Open.

Jack Huczek continued his dominance of any who faced him on the court. Jason Thoerner couldn't get anything going as Jack

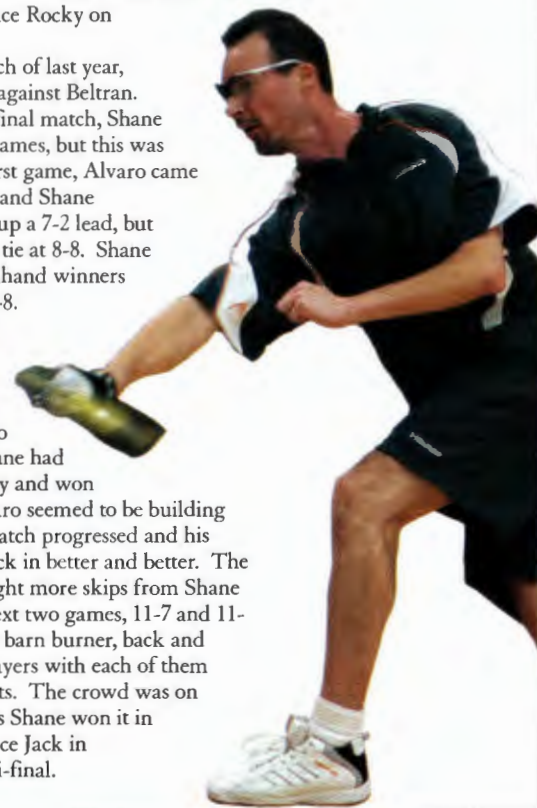
continued to blister perfect passing angles and pinches. Jack rolled through in a quick three games, 11-5, 11-3, 11-5. Jack had advanced yet another round without losing a game and kept his opponents' average points per game at 4.0.

In a rematch from last year's quarterfinal and almost an exact replica in scores, Rocky Carson sailed through the round as he beat Andy Hawthorne, 11-7, 11-6, 11-5. Andy put up an impressive effort, but had to play from behind the entire match and couldn't work Rocky off his game.

The match-up between Jason Mannino and Mitch Williams was highly anticipated by the fans. Everyone could feel that Mitch is eventually going to break through and wondered if it would happen on Friday. Jason remained focused and worked a winning game plan. Mitch appeared as if he was maybe a little too pumped for the match and skips haunted him for the first two games, with Jason winning 11-4 and 11-9. Jason ran up a quick lead in the third, but Mitch fought back to tie, take the lead, and hold on to win game three, 11-9, giving Jason his first lost game of the tournament. Play was tight early on in the

fourth before Jason extended his lead to 10-3. Mitch hung tough and chipped back to earn nine points. Jason finally connected on his fifth chance at match and won game four, 11-9, to face Rocky on Saturday.

In another rematch of last year, Vanderson faced off against Beltran. In last year's quarterfinal match, Shane beat Alvaro in four games, but this was a new year. In the first game, Alvaro came out of the gates slow and Shane capitalized, running up a 7-2 lead, but Alvaro came back to tie at 8-8. Shane laid down some backhand winners to take game one, 11-8. Game two was tight play throughout as both players hit fantastic shots and made amazing gets to keep rallies alive. Shane had more plays go his way and won game two, 11-9. Alvaro seemed to be building momentum as the match progressed and his shots continued to lock in better and better. The added pressure brought more skips from Shane as Alvaro won the next two games, 11-7 and 11-4. Game five was the barn burner, back and forth between the players with each of them blasting winning shots. The crowd was on the edge of its seats as Shane won it in overtime, 12-10, to face Jack in Saturday's other semi-final.













## IRT SEMIFINALS

Jack Huczek came ready to play on Saturday and continued to dominate the field. Shane scored first in game one, but Jack took a 4-1 lead before motoring ahead for an 11-2 win. Shane scored first in game two also, but Jack seemed to hit every pass with exact precision and mounted 4-1 and 8-4 leads in game two. Shane's shots locked in and the added pressure forced a couple of skips from Jack and gave Shane a 10-8 lead. Shane served twice for game, but Jack came back to win, 12-10. Shane scored first again in game three and extended a 4-2 lead, but Jack came back to tie it at 4-4. Then, Shane caught a major case of the "skippies." He skipped Jack's next five points. Suitably, Shane also skipped match point and Jack advanced to the final, winning game three 11-4.

The other semifinal was a rematch of last



year's final between Jason Mannino and Rocky Carson. The fans were treated to high-percentage, fundamental racquetball. Players held at 3-3 in game one, before Rocky took control and rolled on to win, 11-3. Game two also had the players locked at a 3-3 tie, before Rocky stormed forward. Jason committed a foot fault on a drive serve to which he responded, "I'm 4'2" ... how can I commit a foot fault?" Humor didn't score any points, and Rocky won game two, 11-3. The tide changed in game three, though, and Jason didn't miss, taking a 7-0 lead before Rocky got on the board. Game three continued to go Jason's way and he won, 11-1.

Game four found the players locked at 3-3 and 5-5, before Rocky's solid play rolled forward to a 10-6 lead. Jason climbed a little closer but it was Rocky's day as he won the match and game four, 11-8.



## IRT FINALS

Championship Sunday guaranteed that after the match a fifth name would be added to the US OPEN's Silver Cup. Both players, still early in their careers, seemed destined to eventually win the sport's biggest Grand Slam. This year would bring one player's dream to a reality. The crowd expected a battle as both players looked unbeatable all week. Jack hadn't lost a game the entire tournament and kept his opponents' average score to 4.3 points per game. Rocky also had an amazing run, only losing two games and keeping his opponents' average score to 4.5 points per game.

Rocky jumped out to an early lead in game one and controlled center court. His pinches and passes kept Jack out of the play and Rocky assembled a 5-1 lead. Rocky continued to re-kill Jack's shots and owned the first game, winning, 11-3. The game didn't take longer than 10 minutes and left the crowd stunned as Rocky shut down Jack.

Jack took a 2-0 lead in the second game, but

Rocky tied it and the players continued to trade points and march to a 7-7 tie. Jack stayed aggressive and put away setups to win game two, 11-7.

Rocky came out shooting in game three and took a 3-0 lead before Jack battled back to tie at 4-4. Rocky locked in his shots and started chipping towards the win and Jack started skipping. Rocky went up to a 10-5 lead before Jack started coming back. On Rocky's fourth chance at game, Jack skipped the backhand return of serve and Rocky won, 11-8.

Game four started out tight and the players locked horns in a 3-3 tie. Jack was playing frustrated again and fell victim to an unusual number of skips while Rocky started moving ahead. Rocky went up, 7-3, then 10-4. Jack notched another point as Rocky struggled to close the match. It took seven game points before a two-bounce call on Jack gave Rocky the match as he won game four, 11-5. Rocky became only the fifth player in the elite club known as US OPEN Champions.







# WPRO COVERAGE

by Adam Katz

## OPENING ROUNDS

With eight players from outside the United States reaching the Round of 32, it is becoming clear just how well these ladies from all over the world are playing this game. Led by WPRO #2 Christie Van Hees and #5 Angela Grisar, the international contingent proved from the outset that they have the ability to put their own stamp on racquetball's greatest Grand Slam event. Early play went to form as the top eight seeds all managed to reach the quarterfinals. That almost didn't happen as Suzy Acosta gave Kerri Wachtel all she could handle in their Round of 16 match on the Stadium Court. Winning a tough five-gamer, Kerri advanced, but her luck would run out as she became the only higher seed to lose in the quarterfinals when Angela Grisar won in four close games.



## RHONDA RAJSICH'S ROAD TO THE FINALS

In early round play, Rhonda played #32 Brandi Jacobson Prentice and #16 Candi Hostovich, and was clearly working on various aspects of her game to make sure she didn't fall victim in the quarterfinals for the second consecutive year. That match would be with up-and-coming player Paola Longoria, winner of the first stop on the WPRO schedule this season, the Outback

### Steakhouse Blast It!

Paola had taken that final match over Rhonda and that clearly had her fired up as they took to the court for this one. A standing room-only crowd on the Media Room Court was treated to a world class display of athleticism, as Rhonda dove and rekindled her way to the 11-8, 7-11, 11-9, 11-3 victory and a semifinal match against another international player in Angela Grisar. Angela had earned her way to an appearance on the Stadium Court by virtue of a four-game win over 2001 champion, Kerri Wachtel.

This one started fairly slow as both players adapted to their surroundings on the stadium court. Eventually, Rhonda put a run together to grab a 7-1 lead, but Angela started to calm her nerves and got back into the game at 4-7. Playing on the Stadium Court seemed to hinder Angela's usual precise shots as she had a few serves go out of bounds on the fly for side outs and

Rhonda continued to take advantage. Building her lead, Rhonda very slowly inched her way to game one, 11-7.

Game two was a back-and-forth affair as Angela was able to grab her first lead of the match. Playing very controlled and smooth, she built a 7-3 lead before she stalled. Rhonda increased the pressure with some incredible diving kills and was able to end the game with an 8-1 run.

Rhonda's momentum seemed to be building, but Angela refused to go down without a fight. She grabbed a quick 2-0 lead, but now Rhonda sensed her opportunity. She knew she didn't want to let Angela get comfortable and she moved the score to 2-2 with another great show of athleticism. Angela briefly grabbed a 3-2 lead, but once Rhonda got the lead back, she wouldn't give it up, winning 11-3 and going onward to the finals at the 12th Choice Hotels US OPEN Racquetball Championships.



## CHERYL GUDINAS-HOLMES' ROAD TO THE FINALS

Cheryl began play with a match against #30 Paola Nunez, before she began tough back-to-back matches against players she used to coach on the US Junior National Team. First up was #14 Adrienne Fisher who managed to play Cheryl close throughout, but Cheryl battled out the four-game win.

That victory set up a quarterfinal with #6 Kristen Bellows. Cheryl came into this one looking extremely strong, but at the same time, Kristen had yet to be tested in her early-round matches. That turned out not to be a problem, as Cheryl was able to close better in each game to make her way into the semifinals, serving up a rematch of the 2006 Choice Hotels US Open finals match against #2 Christie Van Hees.

Cheryl began this match with a short serve, and that gave Christie a little momentum out of the gate. Jumping ahead 2-0 and then 5-2, it looked like Christie would be more than happy to relive last year's final. However, Cheryl had other ideas and came back to tie the score each time.

Tied at five, Christie decided it was time to take one more lead, and once she had it she closed it out.

That only served to fire Cheryl

up. She's been playing very well in recent events and that certainly continued in this match. The

players took turns grabbing one-point

leads early in game

two until Cheryl

led, 4-3. At that

point, there was a

close call on the left

side wall. That

particular call went

Christie's way, but Cheryl

used that and regained the

momentum quickly. She built her lead to 7-

3 before Christie was able to get the service

back. Cheryl then kept the pressure up and

built her advantage to 10-5. Christie then

went on a run to bring it back to 9-10, but

that was as close as she would get. Cheryl



closed it out on her next service to even the game count at one.

Each player knew they needed game three to put additional pressure on her opponent, and both players came out

firing. Cheryl built a quick 2-0

lead, but Christie came right

back and strung together five

points for a 5-2 lead. Cheryl

then pushed it up to another

level and stormed back with

nine straight points to close

it out.

Cheryl now sensed her

moment, but Christie came

out for a quick 2-0 lead.

Cheryl erased that right away

with four straight points. At that

point, they started trading points with

some amazing shots. At 10-8, Cheryl served

another short serve, but quickly regrouped

with a side out. She would end it on her next

serve to earn another finals appearance at

the 12th Choice Hotels US OPEN

Racquetball Championships.



## WPRO FINALS

This one was billed as "Rhonda's athleticism versus Cheryl's focus" and definitely lived up to all the hype. Cheryl came out shooting extremely well and Rhonda seemed to come out a little slower, but her great athletic talent kept her right with Cheryl. Both players traded side outs early in the first game, trading serves at 1-1 and 2-2 for several serves. Rhonda then started to click and built her lead to 5-2, before Cheryl could regain the all-important serve. However, once back in the service box, Rhonda would go on the run that would get her to the brink of the first game. Cheryl fought back to six, but would go no further as Rhonda closed out the first game and gave a quick fist pump.

In the second game, Rhonda started to catch fire as she jumped to a 4-1 lead. Cheryl is a true champion and she wasn't about to give this one away, so it surprised nobody in the house when she closed the score to 4-5. Rhonda could sense the momentum changing and as she stepped into the service box, she took a quick, deep breath to get ready for the moment. It certainly worked as she went on a run to 9-4, playing her usual aggressive style. Cheryl was able to add one more point before the end, but Rhonda looked to be on a mission and she finished the second game, 11-5, for the two game lead.



The third game would prove to be a great test of both players' nerves. Rhonda was clearly fired up and was looking to go for the kill and the sweep. As such, she sprinted to a 3-0 lead. Cheryl came into the service box and hit one of the best drive serves to the right side that I've seen in a while and totally sent Rhonda the wrong way. That brought big momentum back to Cheryl, and she used it to tie the game at three. They would then go point for point right up to the pivotal moment of the match. Rhonda serving 7-6, good rally, Rhonda set up on the side wall glass, both players playing very close. Rhonda hit Cheryl on her backswing and continued to hit a very close pinch shot. The referee called the shot good instead of calling the penalty hinder. Cheryl appealed that good shot call and was

awarded the serve. Rhonda needed an injury timeout as her nose was seriously bloodied. When she returned to the court, Rhonda was not happy and Cheryl was serving. Cheryl used that to her advantage and strung together some very tough shots to grab the third game, 11-8.

The crowd was starting to sense that this one might go five, but Rhonda had other ideas. Cheryl did manage to take a 2-0 lead, but Rhonda wasn't going to let this opportunity slip away that easily. She came into the box and built her own 4-2 lead. Both ladies could somehow feel that this game probably meant the title, and Cheryl used that knowledge to come back for a 7-4 lead. Once again, Rhonda refused to give in. The crowd could clearly see that she was hurting, but she just kept plugging away. With her amazing athletic ability to make impossible shots seem routine, she built her lead to match point. Cheryl refused to give in, as always, and came back one last time. But serving for match for the third time, Rhonda finally ended things with a well-placed backhand down the left side out of Cheryl's reach. Cheryl was only able to look at the shot and nod, knowing that the match was over. 11-9 to the 12th Choice Hotels US OPEN Racquetball Champion and now two-time winner, Rhonda Rajsich.

## The Ageless Ruben Gonzalez Takes US OPEN CPRT Crown

By Steve Lerner

Ruben Gonzalez thrilled a large crowd on the stadium court with a long five-game win over top-ranked Woody Clouse. The 9-2, 2-9, 9-4, 8-9, 9-5 win moved Gonzalez into the number-two ranking on the Classic Professional Racquetball Tour (CPRT) after the second event of the season.

Gonzalez came out strong only to have Clouse wake up and answer back. After a solid third game, Gonzalez had a big lead in the fourth, but Clouse came out of the deep hole to force the deciding fifth game. That fourth game seemed to take too much out of Clouse and Gonzalez took an early lead in the fifth, riding that lead home. With 38 guys in the division at the US OPEN and two of the matches on the stadium court, the event was a huge success for the CPRT.





# The Amateurs Came To Play, Too...

The Choice Hotels US OPEN Racquetball Championships has truly become a holiday tradition. For the 12th consecutive year, players from around the country came to Memphis to not only watch racquetball's top athletes, but also to get on the court themselves.

More than 650 players took to the courts at The University of Memphis, WellWorx Sportsplex, Ridgeway Baptist Recreation Center and The Racquet Club in a variety of age and skill divisions. By the time the top four finishers in each division were awarded their US OPEN medals — which weighed almost a full pound each — more than 1,200 matches were played!

Congratulations to all who came and played and we'll see you next year!

## **MEN'S AGE 24- SINGLE ELIMINATION**

- 1st: Chris Coy - Elk City, OK USA  
2nd: Cesar Castillo -  
Valencia, Carabobo, VEN

## **MEN'S AGE 24- A - ROUND ROBIN**

- 1st: Miguel Wiggins -  
Albuquerque, NM USA  
2nd: Nathan Johnson - Flint, TX USA

## **MEN'S AGE 24- B - ROUND ROBIN**

- 1st: Chase Stanley -  
Baton Rouge, LA USA  
2nd: Jon Tumas - Polloucksville, NC USA

## **MEN'S AGE 24- C - SINGLE ELIMINATION**

- 1st: Sebastian Franco - Cali, Valle COL  
2nd: David Suggs - Nashville, TN USA

## **MEN'S AGE 25+ - SINGLE ELIMINATION**

- 1st: Jason Geis - Torrance, CA USA  
2nd: Derrick Victor -  
Jacksonville, AR USA

## **MEN'S AGE 25+ A - SINGLE ELIMINATION**

- 1st: Ignacio Jaimes - Corinth, TX USA  
2nd: Bryan Shaw - Bel-nor, MO USA

## **MEN'S AGE 25+ B - SINGLE ELIMINATION**

- 1st: Mauro Barbosa - Margate, FL USA  
2nd: Terry Lambright -  
Leesville, LA USA

## **MEN'S AGE 25+ C - SINGLE ELIMINATION**

- 1st: Josh Gibson -  
Chattanooga, TN USA  
2nd: Guillermo Gonzalez -  
Bogota, COL

## **MEN'S AGE 30+ - SINGLE ELIMINATION**

- 1st: Cary Slade - Naperville, IL USA  
2nd: Juan Manuel Gutierrez -  
Mission Viejo, CA USA

## **MEN'S AGE 35+ - SINGLE ELIMINATION**

- 1st: Brad McCunniff -  
Cedar Falls, IA USA  
2nd: Eugene Coyle - Palatine, IL USA

## **MEN'S AGE 35+ A - SINGLE ELIMINATION**

- 1st: Ray Cordero -  
Colorado Springs, CO USA  
2nd: Andrew Kulback -  
Maineville, OH USA

## **MEN'S AGE 35+ B - SINGLE ELIMINATION**

- 1st: Robert Cole -  
Oklahoma City, OK USA  
2nd: Michael Swift - Columbus, OH USA

## **MEN'S AGE 35+ C - SINGLE ELIMINATION**

- 1st: Daniel Russell - Rockvale, TN USA  
2nd: Kevin Macon - Brandon, MS USA

## **MEN'S AGE 40+ - SINGLE ELIMINATION**

- 1st: Ruben Gonzalez -  
Staten Island, NY USA  
2nd: Woody Clouse -  
Highlands Ranch, CO USA

## **MEN'S AGE 45+ - SINGLE ELIMINATION**

- 1st: Scott Cullins - Woodstock, GA USA  
2nd: Richard Eisemann - Frisco, TX USA

## **MEN'S AGE 45+ A - SINGLE ELIMINATION**

- 1st: Andrew Kulback -  
Maineville, OH USA  
2nd: Randall Thompson -  
Acworth, GA USA

## **MEN'S AGE 45+ B - SINGLE ELIMINATION**

- 1st: Mark Candy - Pinckney, MI USA  
2nd: Dave Dennick - Spring, TX USA

## **MEN'S AGE 45+ C - SINGLE ELIMINATION**

- 1st: Navin Deo - Chicago, IL USA  
2nd: Robert Griffith -  
Northport, AL USA

## **MEN'S AGE 50+ - SINGLE ELIMINATION**

- 1st: Patrick Gibson - Ft. Worth, TX USA  
2nd: Rex Ledbetter -  
Cookeville, TN USA

## **MEN'S AGE 55+ - SINGLE ELIMINATION**

- 1st: Joe Lee - Mi'l, HI USA

- 2nd: Howard Walker -  
Ft. Worth, TX USA

## **MEN'S AGE 55+ A - SINGLE ELIMINATION**

- 1st: Tyrone White - Wetumpka, AL USA  
2nd: Michael Reed - Pinson, AL USA

## **MEN'S AGE 55+ B - SINGLE ELIMINATION**

- 1st: Billy Askins - Timpson, TX USA  
2nd: Steven Shapiro -  
Gaithersburg, MD USA

## **MEN'S AGE 55+ C - SINGLE ELIMINATION**

- 1st: Navin Deo - Chicago, IL USA  
2nd: Larry Knetzger -  
Kennesaw, GA USA

## **MEN'S AGE 60+ - SINGLE ELIMINATION**

- 1st: Jim Hiser -  
Colorado Springs, CO USA  
2nd: Ed Remen - Apex, NC USA

## **MEN'S AGE 65+ - SINGLE ELIMINATION**

- 1st: Patrick Taylor -  
Barrington Hills, IL USA  
2nd: Parris Geiser - Bolivar, MO USA

## **MEN'S AGE 70+ - POOL PLAY**

- 1st: Lee Graff - Bend, OR USA  
2nd: Phil Wheeler - Wirtz, VA USA

## **MEN'S AGE 75+ - ROUND ROBIN**

- 1st: John O'Donnell Jr. -  
Champaign, IL USA  
2nd: Charles Kaiser -  
Pickerington, OH USA

## **MEN'S DOUBLES 19+ - ROUND ROBIN**

- 1st: Andy Gross / Kevin Francis -  
GA, USA/GA USA  
2nd: Brandon Shoemaker /  
Peter Ulliman

## **MEN'S DOUBLES 35+ - SINGLE ELIMINATION**

- 1st: Daniel Pflaster / Kevin Buehler -  
KS, USA/KS USA  
2nd: Scot Consoli / Scott Cullins -  
FL, USA/GA, USA



## MEN'S DOUBLES 50+ - SINGLE ELIMINATION

- 1st: Randy Pfahler / Salvatore Perconti - FL, USA/FL, USA  
2nd: Howard Walker / Patrick Gibson - TX, USA/TX, USA

## MEN'S DOUBLES A - SINGLE ELIMINATION

- 1st: Darjon Bittner / Ignacio Jaimes - TX, USA/TX, USA  
2nd: Daniel Pflaster / Jim Brane - KS, USA/MO, USA

## MEN'S DOUBLES B - SINGLE ELIMINATION

- 1st: Michael Hall / Gary Frasco  
2nd: Ignacio Scoppa / Peter Casey - TX, USA/TX, USA

## MEN'S DOUBLES C - SINGLE ELIMINATION

- 1st: Mike Davis / Joe Klingbeil  
2nd: Daniel Russell / Fredrick Giles - TN, USA/TN, USA

## MEN'S DOUBLES OPEN - SINGLE ELIMINATION

- 1st: Juan Herrera / Andres Herrera  
2nd: Hiroshi Shimizu / Michimune Kono - Tokyo, JPN/CA, USA

## MEN'S SINGLES A - SINGLE ELIMINATION

- 1st: Ignacio Jaimes - Corinth, TX USA  
2nd: Leonel Simo - Santo Domingo, Distrito Nacional DOM

## MEN'S SINGLES B - SINGLE ELIMINATION

- 1st: Chase Stanley - Baton Rouge, LA USA  
2nd: Eric Lampley - Southaven, MS USA

## MEN'S SINGLES C - SINGLE ELIMINATION

- 1st: Sebastian Franco - Cali, Valle COL  
2nd: Josh Gibson - Chattanooga, TN USA

## MEN'S SINGLES D - SINGLE ELIMINATION

- 1st: Kerry Clark - Rison, AR, USA  
2nd: Guillermo Gonzalez - Bogota, COL

## MEN'S SINGLES OPEN - SINGLE ELIMINATION

- 1st: Alejandro Landa - El Paso, TX MEX  
2nd: Ryan Smith - Burlington, ON CAN

## MEN'S SINGLES PRO - SINGLE ELIMINATION

- 1st: Rocky Carson III - Ladera Ranch, CA USA  
2nd: Jack Huczek - Rochester, MI USA

## MIXED DOUBLES 30+ - SINGLE ELIMINATION

- 1st: Andy Gross / Trish Beatty - GA, USA/WI, USA  
2nd: Melissa McElfresh / Ralph Cuesta - FL, USA/FL, USA

## MIXED DOUBLES 40+ - SINGLE ELIMINATION

- 1st: Beth Sacco / Kipp Atwell - LA, USA/LA, USA  
2nd: Jean Trimble / Scot Consoli - FL, USA/FL, USA

## MIXED DOUBLES A / B - SINGLE ELIMINATION

- 1st: Park Minsoo / Young-mi Lee - KOR/ KOR  
2nd: Megumi Kozakai / Takaaki Hirose - USA/Tokyo, JPN

## MIXED DOUBLES C / D - ROUND ROBIN

- 1st: Greg Eisenberg / Sarah O'Brien  
2nd: Abbey Lavelly / Mark Brower - OH, USA/OH, USA

## WOMEN'S AGE 24 - ROUND ROBIN

- 1st: Kara Mazur - Avon, CT USA  
2nd: Nawoo Kim - KOR

## WOMEN'S AGE 24- A - ROUND ROBIN

- 1st: Cristina Amaya - Cali, Valle COL  
2nd: Viviana Reveron - Valencia, Carabobo, VEN

## WOMEN'S AGE 35+ A - POOL PLAY

- 1st: Hiroko Asari - Tokyo, JPN  
2nd: Janice Kennedy - Morrow, GA USA

## WOMEN'S AGE 40+ - ROUND ROBIN

- 1st: Debra Tisinger-Moore - Simi Valley, CA USA  
2nd: Lorraine Galloway - Hempstead, NY USA

## WOMEN'S AGE 45+ - POOL PLAY

- 1st: Debra Tisinger-Moore - Simi Valley, CA USA  
2nd: Lorraine Galloway - Hempstead, NY USA

## WOMEN'S AGE W24B/25B/35B - ROUND ROBIN

- 1st: Beth Gainer - Elizabethtown, PA USA  
2nd: Monica Escobar - GUA

## WOMEN'S AGE W25C/35C/45C/55C - POOL PLAY

- 1st: Brenda Granados - Mexico Df, DF MEX  
2nd: Nancy Hodges - Huron, OH USA

## WOMEN'S AGE W30/35 - ROUND ROBIN

- 1st: Vallana Perrault - Brooklyn Park, MN USA  
2nd: T.J. Baumbaugh - Reston, VA USA

## WOMEN'S AGE W45A/55A - POOL PLAY

- 1st: Chizuko Furuta - Tokyo, JPN  
2nd: Patsy Hake - Elizabethtown, PA USA

## WOMEN'S AGE W45B/55B - ROUND ROBIN

- 1st: Cheryl Jones - Rochester, MN USA  
2nd: Laura Woodbury - Arlington, VA USA

## WOMEN'S AGE W50/55 - POOL PLAY

- 1st: Linda Moore - Lincoln, NE USA  
2nd: Gerri Stoffregen - Cincinnati, OH USA

## WOMEN'S AGE W60/65/75 - ROUND ROBIN

- 1st: Cece Palaski - Ranchos De Taos, NM USA  
2nd: Mildred Gwinn - Waxhaw, NC USA

## WOMEN'S DOUBLES 35+ - ROUND ROBIN

- 1st: Jean Trimble / Melody Butler - FL, USA/FL, USA  
2nd: Kelly Kirk / Page Kern - MN, USA/MN, USA

## WOMEN'S DOUBLES 50+ - ROUND ROBIN

- 1st: Beth Sacco / Linda Moore - LA, USA/NE, USA  
2nd: Jean Trimble / Renee Fish - FL, USA/FL, USA

## WOMEN'S DOUBLES A - POOL PLAY

- 1st: Angela Adams / Dolly Watson - MD, USA/GA, USA  
2nd: Janice Kennedy / Karen Mickel - GA, USA/GA, USA

## WOMEN'S DOUBLES OPEN - SINGLE ELIMINATION

- 1st: Kimberly Ferina / Michele Earl - NY, USA/AK, USA  
2nd: Chris Evon / Trish Beatty

## WOMEN'S DOUBLES WB/CDBL - ROUND ROBIN

- 1st: Carolina Escobar / Patricia Beltranena - GUA/ GUA  
2nd: Elizabeth Selaya / Tish Rodgers - MO, USA/TX, USA

## WOMEN'S SINGLES A - POOL PLAY

- 1st: Christina Amaya - Cali, Valle COL  
2nd: Chizuko Furuta - Tokyo, JPN

## WOMEN'S SINGLES B - POOL PLAY

- 1st: Sarah O'Brien - Woodstock, GA USA  
2nd: Cheryl Jones - Rochester, MN USA

## WOMEN'S SINGLES C - ROUND ROBIN

- 1st: Jackie Wray - Huron, OH USA  
2nd: Kimberly Wilson - Beaumont, TX USA

## WOMEN'S SINGLES D - POOL PLAY

- 1st: Marilyn Lemmon - Nesbit, MS USA  
2nd: Paula Coley - Bartlett, TN USA

## WOMEN'S SINGLES OPEN - SINGLE ELIMINATION

- 1st: Jen Saunders - Winnipeg, MB CAN  
2nd: Adrienne Fisher - Tuscaloosa, AL USA

## WOMEN'S SINGLES PRO - SINGLE ELIMINATION

- 1st: Rhonda Rajsich - Fountain Hills, AZ USA  
2nd: Cheryl Gudinas-Holmes - Naperville, IL USA





# RACQUETBALL WISCONSIN

With WRA President Tom Griffith

## Wisconsin Racquetball Association

### State Board Members:

President: Tom Griffith  
Vice President: Paul Krueger  
Treasurer: Mike Grota  
Newsletter: Bill Schultz  
Web site: Matt Fitzgerald  
Trish Beatty  
Jen Bezruczyk

### Membership Strength:

124 and growing

### State Population:

5,556,506

### Lifetime Members:

Elliott Papermaster  
Jim Luzar  
William Merkel

### What would you say is the key to having a successful state organization?

Having a group of board members who are passionate about racquetball and willing to volunteer their time and effort to make the game better. The other ingredient is having members who want to get involved in programs.

### What are the most successful programs in your state?

Our sanctioned events are some of the best I've seen. They are scheduled and run as well as any tournament I've played around the country. I am biased, but we have two of the best tournament directors in the country. They can put a tournament together and run it with their eyes closed, and they have a set of control desk volunteers who are second to none in the country.

### What is the number one complaint that you hear from a USA Racquetball state representative?

The value proposition for their membership dues. What's in it for them and what they get for their hard-earned money.

### During your tenure, what would you consider as your state's greatest accomplishment?

I have only been the president for a very short period, but prior to that, we as a board really settled our association in terms of complying with what the national organization needed. Now, the future holds some very exciting opportunities. Two goals I have identified are development of an outstanding junior program, and we're trying to get much more involved in the university program as well.

### If you could share some advice, what would it be?

As the president or a board member, don't expect a pat on the back. Anytime you are part of a governing body, there will be people who do not agree with you and your practices. How I have tried to work with that situation is to invite these people to the table and see if we can work together to solve a problem. My motto is, if you have a comment or complaint, bring with it a solution or an idea to make it better and we can see if it works. If you don't have a solution, then you are just complaining.

### What makes racquetball in your state special?

I think it is one of the best-kept secrets in the country. We have some of the best players who don't choose to play national or regional events. I have told many of our players that they could compete at a very high level if they were to go to these events. A few did and they have done very well.

### Dossier about you:

I have served on the Wisconsin Racquetball Association board of directors since 2002. Prior to that, I served as an Illinois Racquetball Association board member and later as its vice president under one of the best state association presidents, Laurel Davis.

I have played racquetball since college, too many years ago to mention! I was an NCAA Division III tennis player who used racquetball as an off-season conditioner and just fell in love with competing in racquetball. After two seasons of college tennis, I started playing racquetball exclusively.



# 2007 IRF World Junior Racquetball CHAMPIONSHIPS

by Carole Chelsea George

Cochabamba, Bolivia, December 14-20, 2007

## THE EVENT

Nearly 200 kids representing 16 countries endured yellow fever vaccinations, stomach difficulties, and the 9,000-foot altitude to compete in the 19th annual World Junior Racquetball Championships in Bolivia.

The outcome was a sixth consecutive victory for the Mexican team. Led by newly-crowned 18 & under world champions Rubén Estrada and Paola Longoria, the Mexicans went home with six gold, two silver and two bronze medals in the World Cup (14-18 year-olds) division. In second place, the U.S. team captured two gold, three silver and four bronze medals, followed by the host country with two gold, three silver and one bronze. Bolivia also deserves a Most Improved award, stepping up from its sixth place finish in Tempe in 2006.

The home court advantage was clear from the beginning, as Bolivian president Evo Morales inaugurated the opening ceremonies. Not only is Morales a fronton fanatic (basically outdoor racquetball on an oversized three-wall court), he is the first indigenous president of Bolivia since the Spanish conquest. Many commented that it was surprising to see a world leader mingling with the public, albeit with bodyguards present.



Christ statue above Cochabamba

The Bolivians, already adapted to high altitudes and local diets, enjoyed enthusiastic support from local fans numbering in the hundreds by the final day of play. The admission price of 10 bolivianos (about \$1.35) may seem like a bargain to Americans, but is relatively high in Bolivia, one of Latin America's poorest countries. In contrast, Country Club Cochabamba provided a luxurious venue for the seven-day event,

boasting eight glass wall courts, including the stadium court, swimming pool, golf course, internet café, tennis and gym facilities, all available for participants' use.

The local organizing committee did an excellent job of providing hospitality, free international phone calls for the kids, and an hourly shuttle back and forth to sponsored hotels. This is the third time in the last four years that the World Junior Championships has been hosted in Latin America. Before that, for 13 consecutive years, the event was held in the United States.

Of the 16 teams represented in the tournament, 13 were Spanish-speaking: Bolivia, Mexico, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Guatemala, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Cuba, Venezuela, Colombia, Argentina and Chile. Joining





them were racquetball veterans U.S.A. and Canada with one representative country from the U.K., Ireland.

In addition to the World Cup events for 18s, 16s, and 14s, there were two divisions in the Esprit Cup for 12 & Under and 10 & Under. Bolivian fans cheered their Esprit youngsters onto victory this year (up from a 3rd place finish in Tempe, AZ last year), winning five gold, two silver and four bronze medals. They were followed by Mexico in second with nine medals overall, Costa Rica in third with a silver and a bronze, and Canada in fourth place with one bronze medal.

## THE MATCHES

Standing-room crowds, yelling "Vamos, vamos," cheered the players throughout the weeklong tournament. Meanwhile, Pablo Fajre from Santiago, Chile, husband of pro player Angela Grisar, kept the cameras rolling, broadcasting live around the world. Finals matches can be viewed via the internet on racquetballonline.tv. Other than a few gaps due to the weak internet connection — much to the frustration of the tournament desk as well — Fajre provided up-to-the-minute coverage to fans back home. "Ninety-five percent of my viewers are from the U.S.," explained Fajre. In the future, he hopes to have a second camera capture the audience and other courts to fill the gaps between matches.

controversy came up a bit later when the Mexican team complained that the U.S. fans were waving their hands to distract Estrada. Under threat of a technical, the behavior disappeared.

The gap widened at 13-7 (Mexico), when a broken ball temporarily stopped play. From there, Estrada took the first game, 15-7. The second game pretty much paralleled the first, as Rojas' earlier efforts played havoc with his stamina. For Estrada, this marked his 11th world title (6 in doubles with Ortega).

"I reached my goal," claimed Rubén Estrada as he was interviewed by Bolivian television. "I feel really happy because this is my first 18 & Under title and I still have two more years to play in the Juniors. It was a difficult match and you could see how important the serve was. Now I have to continue training and see if I can maintain the title."

"I was tired," confessed Rojas in Spanish for Bolivian television. "I feel good even though I didn't win, because Estrada played very well and there was nothing I could do. I was really tired, because yesterday I played four matches and today I won the 16 & Unders. That's what did it to me." Along with brother Marco, winner of the 14 & Under division, the Rojas brothers brought home the only gold medals for the U.S. team.



From left: World Championship trophy and medals; Large crowd watches finals; Girls 18 Award winners.

In Finals action, José Rojas of the U.S. had a heavy line-up, playing both the 18s and 16s. High off a double victory in the U.S. Junior Championships — the only player since Jack Huczek and Adrienne Fisher to accomplish this feat — Rojas was hoping to repeat his success at the world championships.

In the 16s, neither Rojas nor his opponent, Alejandro Cardona of Mexico, had lost a game before their face-off in the finals. Cardona came out blasting, jumping ahead to 9-1 with aces left and right, before Rojas could close the gap at all. The closest he got was 6-11, before Cardona took the first game, 15-7, on an ace serve. Determined not to let that happen again, Rojas came back strong in the second game, taking the lead to 7-1 and plowing ahead to 15-3. He kept the momentum into the tiebreaker, destroying Cardona 11-1.

In the 18s, Mexico's Rubén Estrada may have had a grudge against Rojas after Jose took out Estrada's doubles partner, the legendary David Ortega, in the quarterfinals. No other player in the history of the World Junior Championships had ever beaten Ortega, winner of 21 gold medals, beginning with the 8-and-under title in 1996.

In the first game, Estrada got a head start, 4-0, with a few good aces. Rojas tied the score at five and again at six. A small

In the Girls 18 & Under, there was no stopping Paola Longoria of San Luis Potosi, Mexico, fresh off her first pro victory at the WPRO season opener in Fayetteville, N.C., against #1-ranked Rhonda Rajsich. In comparison, Bolivia's Jenny Daza proved small competition. Bolivian fans were mostly quiet with their Bolivian flags motionless in their laps as they watched their hometown girl remain scoreless until 6-1 in the first game.

Daza's second point didn't come until 12-2. A slight flurry of excitement ensued as she pulled up to 14-4, then bowed out. In the second game, Longoria let up slightly, as the two girls tied at three and again at six. From there, Longoria racked up five straight points. Daza managed to score only two more before the match ended, 15-8.

"Yes, I am very happy," beamed Longoria as she was interviewed for Bolivian television. "My country and all the players left our hearts on the court. Now I need to keep training for the professional tour. Our next stops are in Panama and Sacramento, California, in January."

Daza and Bolivia took their revenge in doubles, when Daza and partner Yazmine Sabja defeated Longoria and partner Luisa Alderete in the finals.



## THE TEAMS

Once upon a time, the U.S. and Canada dominated international junior racquetball. Those days seem like ancient history today. Mexico, with six world championships in a row, is clearly Numero Uno, but teams such as Bolivia, Ecuador, and Costa Rica have made great strides.

"It's an even playing field," according to U.S. head coach Kelley Beane, whose team took second in the older divisions, but failed to place at all in the younger Esprit Cup. "We definitely don't dominate anymore. It's not that we've gotten worse. The other teams have gotten much better."

Mexico, with racquetball courts in border towns such as Ciudad Juarez (just south of El Paso) and Tijuana (adjacent to San Diego), has always had strong male players. Over the years, as racquetball spread out to cities in the interior such as Guadalajara, San Luis Potosi, Monterrey and Chihuahua, the numbers rose to 500 courts and 6,000 players. Unfortunately, Mexico City, with nearly 30 million inhabitants, is still dominated by squash and has very few racquetball courts.

According to head coach Javier Moreno, about 10 years ago, with government backing, the Mexican Racquetball Federation made a conscious decision to concentrate on training women and juniors. This strategy has clearly paid off, as Mexico claimed its sixth consecutive World Junior title. In their march to victory, the Mexican players smashed the golden hopes of U.S. champs Michelle Key, Ishmael Aldana and José Rojas. Of course, it helps that the Mexican government pays all the travel expenses to the World Juniors, so its team can concentrate on training, while other countries are busy fundraising.

The U.S. team brought 55 players, coaches and parents. Kelley Beane started playing racquetball in 1984 and has been coaching the juniors for 10 years. "I think it helps that I'm still competitive. I can say to them, 'Kids, it happened to me once too.'"

Another big challenge to the U.S. team was food, even though they brought a lot of it with them. Most of the players got sick in Bolivia, even though they arrived two days before the tournament to try to adapt to changes in altitude, the bounce of the ball, and the diet.



**Mexican team celebrates victory**

The host team, Bolivia, definitely enjoyed their home court advantage. Over the past decade or more, racquetball has grown to be a national sport in Bolivia, with more than 900 courts and more under construction. Their 34-member team was impressively supported by local fans, chanting, "Bo-Li-Via, Bo-Li-Via" over and over and waving their country's red, yellow and green flags. In the end, the Bolivians walked away with seven gold medals, third-place World Cup finish and 1st place in the Esprit Cup.

"We lost some incredible matches," commented Juan Carlos Tapia, one of seven Bolivian coaches. "We could have won more if our players had risen to their potential in this disciplined sport. Still, with seven medals, we beat our record from last year."

The Bolivian coaches are working with the kids on values and attitude, as well as kill shots and serves. "Who you are on the court is who you are inside," says Tapia. This was most clear in the youngest doubles players who never failed to click racquets and encourage each other between rallies. The Bolivians have clearly been working on teamwork as five of their seven gold medals were for doubles.



**From left: Cuban player reading local paper, Bolivian Boys 12 Doubles Team, Gilbert (Dad) and son Daniel Chaverra (Costa Rica)**



Ecuador is another team that displayed immense improvement over last year. Under the guidance of coach José Luis Cueva, its juniors team of nine players took home nine medals — one gold, three silver, and five bronze. Cueva, at the ripe old age of 26, has retired from competing in international tournaments in order to concentrate on coaching both the juniors and the open players. Despite his youth, Cueva is no newcomer to racquetball, having started his career in 1990 at the age of nine.

"My father, Jorge Luis Cueva, is the president of the South American Racquetball Federation," said the younger Cueva (which helps explain José's early introduction to the sport). Cueva Senior was on hand for all of Ecuador's matches and appears to still be in great shape himself. How long did it take for young José Luis to beat his dad? "Two years," he says.

Cueva, who works full-time in marketing, has been coaching in his hometown of Cuenca for six years. Most of the 25-30 racquetball courts in Ecuador are located in Cuenca, at an altitude very similar to Cochabamba, so the Ecuadorian players had no difficulty with the bounce of the ball or shortness of breath.

Approximately 500-1,000 Ecuadorians play racquetball, according to Cueva, and more courts are being built. It used to be considered an elitist sport, but many of the newer courts are open to the public for an average of \$3/hour, so even the middle class can afford to play.

Costa Rica recently doubled the number of courts in its country - from four to eight. Total number of players in the country is about 200, double the number when Steve Keeley and I taught a weeklong clinic in San José in 1983. But like the Little Engine That Could, Costa Rica surprised even itself by finishing third in the Esprit Cup and earning a silver medal and two bronze medals overall.

Costa Rica's twin coaches, Jorge and Fernando Rodriguez García, have been playing racquetball since 1989. They brought 27 players to Tempe last year, but only 16 this time due to the yellow fever vaccination requirement and fear of political unrest in Bolivia.

"We weren't used to the attitude," said Jorge. The Costa Rican team arrived in La Paz first, the world's highest capital city at 12,000 feet above sea level. For people who aren't used to the altitude, symptoms can be throbbing headaches, shortness of breath, nausea, and feeling weak and dizzy. It also causes the racquetball to bounce higher and faster.

The sole European representative was Ireland, a country filled with ancient handball courts. A full team of boys and girls in the 14s, 16s and 18s spent \$4,000 USD each for airfare and two weeks away from home. Coaches Liam Hughes and Elma Gibney decided against bringing the 10s and 12s, because they felt they were too young to travel so far and for so long. The team raised what it could, but the difference had to be paid by the individual players. The Irish government provides no support for the team.

"Racquetball is still a minority sport in Europe, compared to squash and tennis," explained Hughes, who began playing in 1993. In the European Racquetball Federation, which also includes England, Holland, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Turkey and Spain, the Irish are ranked number one. It will host the next World Racquetball Championships August 1-10, 2008, in Kingscourt, Ireland, which should be a big boost for its program.

All but four of the Irish kids had been to Mexico and Arizona for world championships, but this was their first trip to South America. When asked how many of them speak Spanish, Hughes laughed and said, "Zero."

*Author Carole Chelsea George's claim to fame is she taught racquetball throughout Latin America with former pro Steve Keeley in 1983.*



## SPANISH RACQUETBALL VOCABULARY

<b>Ráquetbol</b> — racquetball
<b>Cancha</b> — court
<b>Pelota</b> — ball
<b>Raqueta</b> — racquet
<b>Eso es!</b> — That's it!
<b>Vamos!</b> — Let's go!
<b>Puntos</b> — points
<b>Saque, servicio</b> — service
<b>Cambio</b> — change of serve, side-out
<b>Piso</b> — skip ball (literally "floor")
<b>Tiro muerte</b> — kill shot

## WORLD AND ESPRIT CUPS - 2007

<b>WC BOYS</b>	2nd: CAN, 93	4th: USA
1st: USA, 134	3rd: USA, 81	5th: CAN
2nd: MEX, 125	4th: BOL, 78	6th: VEN
3rd: BOL, 95	5th: ECU	7th: GUA
4th: ECU, 70	6th: IRL	8th: ECU
5th: CAN	7th: COL	9th: CHI
6th: CRI		
7th: IRL	<b>WC COMBINED</b>	<b>EC GIRLS</b>
8th: COL	1st: MEX, 258	1st: MEX
9th: CHI	2nd: USA, 215	2nd: BOL
10th: ARG	3rd: BOL, 173	3rd: CRI
11th: VEN	4th: CAN, 156	4th: CAN
12th: DOM	5th: ECU	5th: USA
13th: GUA	6th: IRL	
14th: HON	7th: COL	<b>EC COMBINED</b>
15th: CUB		1st: MEX
16th: PUR	<b>EC BOYS</b>	2nd: BOL
	1st: MEX	3rd: CRI
	2nd: BOL	4th: USA
	3rd: CRI	5th: CAN







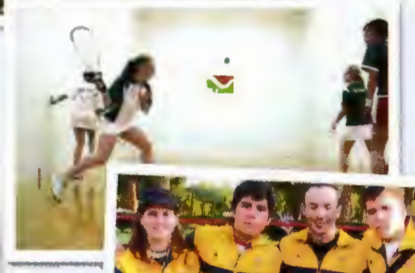
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BOLIVIA



GUATEMALA



# Wisconsin's Racquet for the Cure Raises More Than \$15,000!

Great racquetball, great fun, great food, and great fellowship all played a part in the huge success of the Second Annual Racquet for the Cure fund raising event. Because of the generosity of so many sponsors, donors, players, participants and volunteers, the event raised \$15,247 for Susan G. Komen for The Cure!

The Wisconsin Athletic Club of West Allis hosted the event again this year. The event kicked off with a fun "Meet and Greet" doubles on Friday, October 5, for both women and men. Starting off the donations for the Cure, everyone participated in the 50/50 raffle that night. On Saturday, 67 women representing all skill levels participated. Players from throughout Wisconsin and Illinois came to play singles and doubles in a round-robin format in their respective divisions. During the week leading up to the tournament, more than 100 donated items and services were on display and up for bid in the silent auction. The tournament also featured a full-scale raffle with the chance to win at least one of the more than 50 items on display. As evening approached, the final bids were placed on the auction items and the raffle items were presented to the winners. Once prizes were distributed, a local DJ donated her time to play music Saturday night and the fun continued! New features to this year's event included a health fair which featured information on breast cancer; court sponsors who had their logo displayed on the front wall of a court; and local TV news coverage that aired on the evening news.



**Women's doubles (left to right): Tracy Burke, Lori Hill, Deb Evers and Anna Byers**

A heartfelt thank you goes to everyone for their contributions toward this very worthy cause. The success of the Racquet for the Cure lies at the heart of all of these people and their willingness to make a difference. There are so many ways to make an impact and we commend those who have helped raise a two-year total of more than \$25,000. We will not stop until there is a cure. Make a commitment to join us for the Third Annual Racquet for the Cure Tournament scheduled for October 3-4, 2008. For further information, contact Linda Covault at [ljcovault@wi.rr.com](mailto:ljcovault@wi.rr.com). Hope to see you there!

The following are the 2007 Racquet for the Cure sponsors. As thanks for their support, please reward them with your patronage.

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CURE.



**Check presentation from the Racquet for the Cure tournament committee to Susan G. Komen for The Cure, from left: Deb Evers, Janet Zylstra (Komen Affiliate Board President), Linda Covault, Kathi Hartl, Lori Hill, Holly Szablewski, Sally Sheperdson (Komen Milwaukee Affiliate Executive Director), Kathy Roskopf, and Penny Kroening. (Not pictured: Anna Byers)**



# JACK HUCZEK

## on Stringing and Staying Ahead of the Pack

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



**From the most dominating junior player in racquetball history, Jack Huczek has propelled himself to the number one spot on the IRT. Known for his hard work ethic and extreme fitness level, Jack will be the man to beat for #1 this year.**

We've talked about Jack Huczek's stringing habits before in this column (he uses Ashaway SuperKill® II), but now that he's become a recognized columnist in his own right (see the previous issues "Training with Jack" column), but we thought we'd see what updated advice he might have for others on the subject. We recently caught up with him between classes on the campus of Oakland University, where he is busily pursuing his MBA. Not surprisingly, he had several good points to offer.

"The first thing I would say to someone who is trying to figure out what string they should use is that they have to determine what they want out of the string," he said. "Do they want a performance string? Do they want a string that is going to be durable, a string that works a certain way? Figure out exactly what the need is first."

For example, if you are a chronic string breaker, "You would want a string that is going to wear evenly across the sweet zone of the racket and is going to last for a long time."

And what's a long time? "Well," Jack continued, "it depends mainly on how often they're going to be using the racquet. If we're talking about the average recreational player who isn't looking for a high-performance string but wants something economical, and they don't want to restring their racquets every two weeks, I would say a set of strings should last a minimum of a quarter of a year. So, four sets a year."

But what about other performance aspects? Are there specific ways to test one string against another? "For me," said Jack, "string performance is largely a matter of how it feels. Different strings may feel stiffer or more forgiving. The string might have a little more bite, might induce a little more spin on the ball. Everyone swings differently, everyone hits the ball differently, so it really comes down to player preference — you just have to hit with racquets that have different types of string in them."

"For example," Jack added, "some strings are more abrasive to the touch and will induce more spin on the ball. If you are a player who perhaps puts a lot of spin on the ball naturally, just by the way you swing, you probably don't want a string that is going to add more spin. Racquetball is not like squash or tennis, where you're trying to put spin on the ball. In racquetball, strokes are meant to be flat, so if you have trouble swinging level and hitting the ball flat, you may want to select a smoother string that doesn't produce more spin."

"On the other hand, even though most strokes are flat, there are times — serving or hitting soft shots, for example — when you may need a little bite on the ball to control it better. If you are looking for that, then you may want a set of strings with more texture."

The bottom line, said Jack, is to evaluate your style of play to determine what you need from a string, then experiment until you find the one that feels right.



# Racquetball Mourns the Passing of GREG SHEFFIELD

After a five-month battle with cancer, Greg Sheffield of Garden Grove, California, passed away in the early morning hours of November 24. A long-time indoor and outdoor racquetball player and ambassador, Greg most recently served as National Racquetball Director for LA Fitness. The racquetball community joins Greg's beloved wife of 18 years, Linda, and daughters, Haley (14) and Holly (8), in mourning his loss. For those who didn't know Greg, the loving comments of close friends best represent this admired and well-respected man's life and contributions.

**Kris Kaskawal:** Greg was a great husband, dad, friend and racquetball player — the list goes on and on. If every player could take just a little of the sportsmanship Greg had on the court, there would be a lot less arguing and more good racquetball. Greg was an honest, caring man. He was a wonderful husband to Linda and loved his family time. He was the very proud daddy of Haley and Holly, made special date nights with them and was always tickled with their cute remarks. Anytime he shared anything about them, his smile couldn't have been bigger. I wish God hadn't wanted him so soon. I know he's not suffering anymore and in a better place — it's all of us who suffer the loss of such a wonderful man. Greg's amazing smile will be missed, but never forgotten.

**Scott Winters:** Greg was a private person and chose to keep his condition as quiet as possible, battling this illness on his own terms. Only those closest to him knew what was going on. Greg was a tough competitor and it was no surprise to me that he chose to fight this without any interruption to his job as National Racquetball Director of LA Fitness. Greg's toughness, determination and level of fitness gave me hope that he would beat the cancer. He fought it right up until the very end and continued to work right up until several weeks before he passed away.

The key traits I will remember most about Greg was how humble, sincere, honest and fair he was. One of my most memorable recollections was at a time when we were both working to promote racquetball in California. I had scheduled a meeting with a group of people to discuss the number of tournaments on the calendar (maybe too many) and what should be done. So, there we were, discussing what we all wanted to do while eating donuts and drinking coffee, and all of a sudden, I saw Greg come strolling in about 45 minutes late. At first, I was a little annoyed by his tardiness and he received a bit of razzing from the group as he took his seat. I noticed that Greg had biking shorts on and he was sweating. I asked him sarcastically, "Hey, Greg, what did you do, ride your bike here?" Greg's response was, "Yeah, sorry I'm late, I blew out a tire on the way or I would have been here on time." The distance he had traveled on his bike to the meeting was about 90 miles and to all of us, this was an incredible feat. Needless to say, we all pushed aside our donuts and coffee and felt very humbled by the experience! Greg was sort of a fitness freak during a time when most of us thought just playing the game was enough to stay in shape. You can never replace someone like Greg Sheffield. He touched many people

and I'm sure he felt very fortunate for that opportunity. I will never forget him.

**Brian Hawkes:** Greg was a genuinely nice guy, consistently humble and mild-mannered. You could tell he was giving you his undivided attention. Greg was considered an ambassador for racquetball because of how much he put into the sport. But more than what he did for racquetball, he was a man who loved his family; it was evident by how he spoke to and about them.

**Greg Solis:** I met Greg in a tournament when I was 18 years old (he beat me). I started running tourneys soon after that. Greg called me, offering to help, and every time he ran a tournament, he asked for my advice as well. As a younger person, I appreciated the respect he gave me. He was just a great guy. I considered him a good friend and I'm going to miss him a lot.

**Sherri Knecht:** As Greg's doubles partner, I liked playing with him because he let me play my game. He didn't hog the ball, didn't get mad if I missed a shot and complimented me when I made a great shot...a real sweetie!

**Craig "Clubber" Lane:** I became a member of LA Fitness specifically to be able to play in Greg's tournaments. He did such a great job and made you feel very welcome. Greg understood that you have to do what's right. He recently made a tough decision to fix a mistake on a draw sheet, even though it wasn't appreciated by one of the players who ended up having to play someone else than who he had planned on playing. He was a likeable guy and asked every level of player, "How's your game going?" Everybody at LA Fitness knew who Greg S. was. No other club had a person like that, ever.

**Deby Pierce:** Greg knew our games and he also knew our lives. He was more than fair, a hard worker, and a quiet leader. He talked of his family often — he was very proud of them. I hope that Greg is happy and that he can feel how much he is missed. I found a saying that may be a little bit soothing for us all: "Death leaves a heartache no one can heal, love leaves a memory no one can steal." (from a headstone in Ireland)

**George Barrera:** I knew Greg for 25 years. One of main things I remember is, five or six years ago we were playing in the Men's Open dropdown division. I was dehydrated and sick to my stomach, but I was ahead, 5-1.

Greg came over and said, "George, you can have the win, I see you're not well." I continued to play, though, and he came back, 10-5. Then I got side out and served out, 11-10. In my heart, I know he let me win that game. He didn't care about the win, it was all about the sport. If racquetball had a name, it would be Greg's name. He would have done anything for racquetball.



**How to Help**  
A memorial fund has been established to assist Greg's wife and daughters. If you wish to contribute to this fund, you can do so by contacting your local Bank of America or by mailing a check to:

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A memorial service for  
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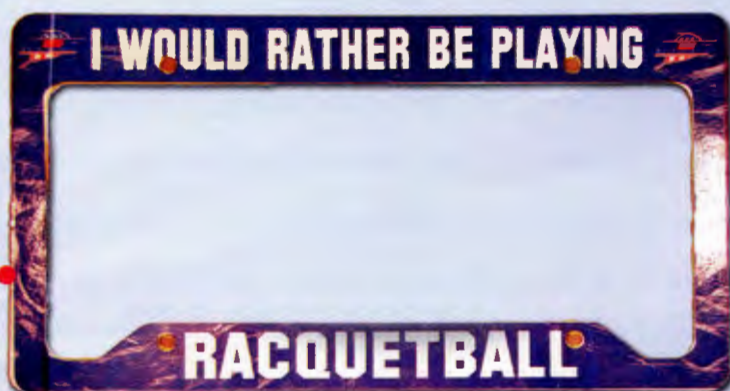
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# 2008 RACQUETBALL

EVENT TITLE	EVENT START	EVENT END	FACILITY NAME	CITY, STATE
FL State Singles	2/1/08	2/3/08	Sarasota Bath & Racquet Club	Sarasota, FL
WA Tacoma Seniors Masters Classic	2/1/08	2/3/08	Bally's of Tacoma	Tacoma, WA
NY Westchester Championships	2/1/08	2/3/08	Club Fit Jefferson Valley	Jefferson Valley, NY
NC Classic	2/1/08	2/3/08	The Sports Center	Fayetteville, NC
TX Maverick Metroplex Racquetball	2/1/08	2/3/08	Maverick Athletic Club	Arlington, TX
MI Motor City Rollout	2/2/08	2/3/08	Courtland Racquetball	Utica, MI
ND Pat Fadden Classic	2/8/08	2/10/08	West River Community Center	Dickinson, ND
VA RAC Winter Classic	2/8/08	2/10/08	Roanoke Athletic Club	Roanoke, VA
IL ISRA State Singles	2/8/08	2/10/08	The Chalet	Willow Springs, IL
KY State Singles	2/8/08	2/10/08	YMCA of Greater Louisville	Louisville, KY
MO Pinchshot.com Midwest	2/8/08	2/10/08	Vetta Sports Concord	St. Louis, MO
MI Aloha Open	2/9/08	2/9/08	Genesys Athletic Club	Grand Blanc, MI
IN State Singles	2/9/08	2/10/08	Greenbriar Athletic Club	Indianapolis, IN
41st USAR National Doubles	2/13/08	2/17/08	Arizona State University	Tempe, AZ
MN February Lifetime St. Louis	2/15/08	2/17/08	Northwest Athletic Club - St. Louis Park	St. Louis Park, MN
FL State Juniors	2/15/08	2/17/08	Richey Racquet	Port Richey, FL
ME Valentine's Classic	2/15/08	2/16/08	The Racket and Fitness Center	Portland, ME
VA American Family 15th Ann. Winter Classic	2/15/08	2/17/08	American Family Fitness Southside	Richmond, VA
Adirondack Open	2/15/08	2/17/08	YMCA - Glens Falls	Glens Falls, NY
PA Icicle Open	2/16/08	2/16/08	Allentown Racquetball Club	Allentown, PA
Seattle Open	2/21/08	2/24/08	Washington Athletic Club	Seattle, WA
MI Capital Challenge	2/22/08	2/24/08	Michigan Athletic Club - Lansing	East Lansing, MI
TX Tornado Alley Classic	2/22/08	2/24/08	YMCA - Wichita Falls	Wichita Falls, TX
TN State Singles and Doubles	2/22/08	2/24/08	YMCA - Downtown Nashville	Nashville, TN
NY Valentine's Open	2/22/08	2/24/08	BOE R/B Club	Woodside, NY
DE Snowball Open	2/23/08	2/24/08	Kirkwood Fitness & R/B Club	Wilmington, DE
TX Aggieland Shootout	2/23/08	2/24/08	Texas A&M University College Station	College Station, TX
Central NY Championships	2/23/08	2/23/08	Gold's Gym - Dewitt	Syracuse, NY
21st USAR National HS Championships	2/28/08	3/2/08	Multnomah Athletic Club	Portland, OR
FL Great Balls of Fire PRO AM	2/28/08	3/2/08	University of Miami	Coral Gables, FL
MN Lifetime Fitness Spring Open	2/29/08	3/2/08	Northwest Athletic Club - 98th Street	Bloomington, MN
MWRA Singles Championships	2/29/08	3/2/08	Severna Park Racquetball and Fitness Club	Millersville, MD
IN Amatulli Open	2/29/08	3/1/08	OMNI 41 Sports Complex	Schererville, IN
NMRA National Championships	3/5/08	3/8/08	OREM Fitness Center	Orem, UT
FL Spring Break IRT PRO Stop Tier I	3/5/08	3/9/08	Sarasota Bath & Racquet Club	Sarasota, FL
ME State Doubles	3/7/08	3/8/08	Champions Fitness Club	Waterville, ME
NY 3rd Annual CPRT Tournament	3/7/08	3/9/08	Penfield R/B Club	Rochester, NY
IL Shamrock Shootout	3/13/08	3/16/08	Glass Court Swim & Fitness	Lombard, IL
CO State Singles	3/13/08	3/16/08	Highlands Ranch Recreation Center	Highlands Ranch, CO
MI State Singles	3/14/08	3/16/08	Davison Racquet & Fitness Club	Davison, MI
WA Northwest Open	3/14/08	3/16/08	Bellingham Athletic Club	Bellingham, WA
NY State Singles Championships	3/14/08	3/16/08	The Court Club	Colonie, NY
TX State Singles Racquetball Championships	3/14/08	3/16/08	Maverick Athletic Club	Arlington, TX
IN Shelbyville Open	3/14/08	3/15/08	Shelbyville Athletic Club	Shelbyville, IN
PARC 21st PAN AM Racquetball Champ.	3/15/08	3/22/08	Costa Rica Athletic Club	Unknown
ME State Singles	3/22/08	3/23/08	The Racket and Fitness Center	Portland, ME
36th USAR National Intercollegiate Champ.	3/26/08	3/29/08	The Athletic Club of Overland Park	Overland Park, KS
5th Annual Southwest MI Shootout	3/28/08	3/30/08	Bronson Athletic Club	Kalamazoo, MI



# CALENDAR

EVENT TITLE	EVENT START	EVENT END	FACILITY NAME	CITY, STATE
NY Spring Classic	3/28/08	3/30/08	Premier Athletic Club	Montrose, NY
TX Maple Hollow	3/28/08	3/30/08	Maple Hollow Farms	Franklin, TN
MO State Singles	3/28/08	3/30/08	Vetta Sports Concord	St. Louis, MO
5th Ann. DE Orthopaedic Center State Singles	3/29/08	3/30/08	Kirkwood Fitness & R/B Club	Wilmington, DE
MN State Singles	4/4/08	4/6/08	Central Courts	Columbia Heights, MN
MD Lake Forest Open	4/4/08	4/6/08	Lake Forest Sport & Health Club	Catonsville, MD
WA State Singles	4/4/08	4/6/08	Pro Sports Club	Bellevue, WA
AZ State Singles	4/4/08	4/6/08	LA Fitness Chandler II	Chandler, AZ
CA Concord Classic	4/10/08	4/13/08	Big C Athletic Club	Concord, CA
Kentucky Racquetball Seniors Tournament	4/11/08	4/13/08	YMC - Louisville	Louisville, KY
USAR Regional Championships	4/16/08	4/20/08	USA Racquetball *Fast*Furious*Fitness	Nation-wide
3rd IRT Motorola Pro Nationals	4/23/08	4/27/08	Schaumburg Tennis Plus	Schaumburg, IL
MD End of the Year Social	5/17/08	5/17/08	Severna Park Racquetball and Fitness Club	Millersville, MD
41st USAR National Singles Championships	5/21/08	5/24/08	YMC - Downtown Houston	Houston, TX
FL Junior Regionals	5/30/08	6/1/08	Sarasota Bath & Racquet Club	Sarasota, FL
Pepsi Cup Team Championships/Colorado	6/5/08	6/7/08	Highlands Ranch Recreation Center	Highlands Ranch, CO
TX Kane Waselenchuck Invitational	6/13/08	6/15/08	Maverick Athletic Club	Arlington, TX
Grand Canyon State Games	6/20/08	6/22/08	The Racquet Club at City Square	Phoenix, AZ
35th USAR Junior Olympic Championships	6/25/08	6/29/08	USA Racquetball *Fast*Furious*Fitness	Concord, CA
High Performance Training Camp	7/1/08	7/2/08	USA Racquetball *Fast*Furious*Fitness	Colorado Springs, CO
TX Triple Crown July Racquetball Shootout	7/12/08	7/13/08	Maverick Athletic Club	Arlington, TX
Key Sports Flagstaff Classic	7/18/08	7/20/08	Flagstaff Athletic Club West	Flagstaff, AZ
TX Triple Crown August Racquetball Shootout	8/9/08	8/10/08	Maverick Athletic Club	Arlington, TX
TX Triple Crown Racquetball Championships	9/13/08	9/14/08	Maverick Athletic Club	Arlington, TX
2nd IRT World Championships	9/17/08	9/21/08	USA Racquetball *Fast*Furious*Fitness	Colorado Springs, CO
TX State Doubles Racquetball Championships	10/10/08	10/12/08	Maverick Athletic Club	Arlington, TX
13th US Open Racquetball Championships	10/22/08	10/26/08	The Racquet Club of Memphis	Memphis, TN
TX State Seniors Racquetball Championships	11/8/08	11/8/08	Maverick Athletic Club	Arlington, TX
TX Maverick Holiday Racquetball Shootout	12/13/08	12/13/08	Maverick Athletic Club	Arlington, TX

## REGIONALS

2008 OR Regional Qualifier	4/17/08	4/20/08	Cascade Athletic Club	Gresham, OR
2008 KS Regional Qualifier	4/17/08	4/20/08	The Athletic Club of Overland Park	Overland Park, KS
2008 NH Regional Qualifier	4/17/08	4/20/08	Nashua AC	Nashua, NH
2008 WPRO World Championships/ Regional Qualifier	4/17/08	4/20/08	Elmwood Fitness Center, Downtown	New Orleans, LA
2008 FL Regional Qualifier	4/17/08	4/20/08	Richey Racquet	Port Richey, FL
2008 MD Regional Qualifier	4/17/08	4/20/08	Severna Park Racquetball & Fitness Club	Millersville, MD
2008 GA Regional Qualifier	4/17/08	4/20/08	Southern Athletic Club	Lilburn, GA
2008 NY Regional Qualifier	4/17/08	4/20/08	Sportset - Syosset Club	Syosset, NY
2008 OH Regional Qualifier	4/17/08	4/20/08	Solon Athletic Club	Solon, OH
2008 CA Regional Qualifier	4/17/08	4/20/08	Spectrum Club	Canoga Park, CA
2008 MO Regional Qualifier	4/17/08	4/20/08	Vetta Sports Concord	St. Louis, MO
2008 TX Regional Qualifier	4/23/08	4/27/08	YMCA - Downtown Houston	Houston, TX
2008 IRT Motorola Pro Nationals/ Regional Qualifier	4/23/08	4/27/08	Schaumburg Tennis Plus	Schaumburg, IL



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### Camp Schedule

#### Weekend Racquetball Camps 2008/2009

January 25-27	Lincoln, NE
February 1-3	Las Vegas, NV
February 8-10	Seattle, WA
February 29-March 2	Rochester, MN
March 28-30	Davison, MI
April 11-13	Seattle, WA
(Women's Only with Christie Van Hees)	
May 16-18	Overland Park, KS
May 30-June 1	San Diego, CA
June 6-8	Sun Prairie, WI
July 18-20 (Doubles Only)	Laurel, MD
July 25-27	Long Island, NY
August 1-3	San Francisco, CA
Fall 2008 - Atlanta, GA, New Orleans, LA	
Portland, OR (Doubles Only), Texas	
January 2009 - Sarasota, FL	

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December 4-11, 2008 Aruba  
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# Wachtel Joins WILSON

Kerri Wachtel Joins Pro/Advisory Staff and Promotes 'Tour for Hope' National Program

Top-ranked WPRO Tour player Kerri Wachtel has signed with Wilson Racquet Sports and joined their Racquetball Pro/Advisory Staff.

Kerri is one of the most respected players on the tour. She finished the 2006-2007 season ranked #2 and has the potential to win any event she enters. She is known for her steady nerves, accurate shot-making ability, and always being in top physical condition. Her goal is to be the #1 player in the world!

Kerri won the US Open Championships in 2001, and three WPRO titles. She has won numerous State, Regional, and National titles, is an Intercollegiate Champion and was a member of the US National team.

"Kerri has a passion for teaching, promoting women's racquetball and raising money and awareness for breast cancer through racquetball events. She will be taking an active role in growing the Wilson Tour for Hope program throughout the country," said

Chris Evon, Marketing Manager of Indoor Racquet Sports for Wilson.

Wilson Sporting Goods has donated more than \$1,000,000 to the Breast Cancer Research Foundation. Wilson has led the way in supporting the growth of women's racquetball and in raising money for breast cancer through the Tour for Hope program and through sales of the new Hope racquetball line.

Kerri comes from a racquetball family. Her mother, Gerry Stoffregen, has won numerous National Championships and is a top age-group player. Husband Chris Wachtel is a top open player. There is no doubt their two-year-old twin daughters will grow up with a passion for the courts!

To receive an informational packet on hosting a Tour for Hope event, contact Kerri at [kerristoff@aol.com](mailto:kerristoff@aol.com). For more information, visit [www.wilson.com](http://www.wilson.com).

**Wilson.**



## Rhonda Rajsich Continues to PLAY WITH FIRE

Racquetball Superstar and World's #1 Signs Two-Year Extension with Ektelon

What a couple of weeks it was for the world's top woman racquetball player, Phoenix native Rhonda Rajsich! Fresh off of her championship run at this year's US Open in Memphis, Rajsich gave the nod to a two-year extension with her sponsor Ektelon, continuing on as one of the company's top featured athletes.

"I am proud to wear the Ektelon flame and cannot imagine myself anywhere else. Ektelon is like family and it is a great feeling to be able to extend our relationship. The company continues to amaze me, not only with the quality of product it brings to players, but also with the way it treats us. It truly is a close-knit, dedicated team - one that I love playing for and being a part of."

Having joined Ektelon in 2006, Rhonda is well known for her hard-nosed style of play and



**EKTELON**

fearless court coverage. With her Ektelon O3 White racquet in hand, Rhonda is an accomplished player at both the indoor and outdoor games; and her presence dominates at every venue. Without losing her patented extreme style of play, Rhonda has evolved into an extremely versatile and powerful player with great touch and control.

"Rhonda is an awesome competitor, teammate and brand ambassador, and we are proud to have her on our team," said Scott Winters, General Manager at Ektelon. "An entertaining and talented athlete, she is a class act both on and off the court. She truly embodies the Ektelon brand and we look forward to partnering with her for many years to come."

For more information about Rhonda, log on to [www.ektelon.com](http://www.ektelon.com) or [www.rhondarocks.com](http://www.rhondarocks.com).

## Who Plays Racquetball in a Pineapple Under the Sea?

Wilson's New Sponge Bob Square Pants Junior Set Helps Turn Kids on to Racquetball

Wilson has partnered with Nickelodeon to introduce a sure-fire way to get kids interested in racquetball.

The new Sponge Bob Square Pants Racquet Kit includes a junior-sized racquet, a Sponge Bob water bottle, racquetballs, and an easy carrying case. This kit is ideal for children 2 to 8 years old.

"The Sponge Bob Square Pants Racquet Kit is a great tool for teaching the valuable eye-hand coordination skills children need to excel in racquet sports," said Chris Evon, Marketing Manager of Indoor Racquet Sports for Wilson. "Kids can't wait to get home to play racquetball with Sponge Bob!"

For more information, log on to [www.wilson.com](http://www.wilson.com).





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Lorraine Galloway  
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