

Racquetball Reporter

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MICHIGAN CROWNS NEW CHAMPIONS AT THE STATE DOUBLES TOURNEY

Total Sports was the host for nearly 120 Michigan players over the first weekend of December at the Racquetball Association of Michigan's (RAM) State Doubles Championship. As always Michigan players flock to this tournament for the great club, the great competition and the chance to be a State Champion.

In 2004, the Men's Open Division crowned a new pair of champions as **Jeff Mullins** and **George Yarbenet** got past Mike Anderson and Paul Stanwick in a tough tie-breaker. This was the first state championship for both players. Lewis Forrest/Brad McIlhargie and Ron Barton/John Torres were the semi-finalists.

The Woman's Open Championship went to **Claire Kruse** and **Sandy White** over Diana Easthope and Melody Gorno. This was also a first time championship for this team. Jan Insko /Christine Todd and Stacey Barbas/Paula Saad completed the semi-finals.

Another first time pairing of **Ron Barton** and **Paula Saad** defeated Rich Torres/Melody Gorno and Mike Anderson/Lindsay Anderson to win the Mixed Open Championship. Thus completing the Open division sweep by new team pairings.

The Mixed A Division went to **Paul Franck** and **Christine Todd** who defeated Lisa Stemple and Mike Mollema in the Final. The semi-finalists were Greg Sporer/Karen Morehead and Lindsey Anderson/Keith Vogel.

Kerry Marks and **Jim Miller** defeated Jim Kutt and Ben Marciniak to take the Men's A Championship. James Scheuer/Matt Malolepszy and Tony Tewes / Mike Materna were the semi-finalists.

The Women's B Division went to **Mary Meesman** and **Lisa Stemple** who defeated

Mary Horne/Marjorie Pendell, and Janice Hermann/Margrit Shemechko to claim the championship. This gave Lisa Stemple her second runner up finish at the tournament. Way to go!

John Kutt and **Chris Pendell** made short work of Twayne Howard and Bob Shurlow in the finals of the Mens B Division to claim the championship. This gave son, John a state championship while dad Jim settled for being a runner up. Terrell Hill/Larry Cleyman and Tony Gardner/Sherman Gipson were the semi-finalists.

The Mixed B Championship went to **Dan Sutton** and **Mary Meesman** who defeated Paul Schultz and Marjorie Pendell. This victory made Mary Meesman a two division State Champion. CONGRATULATIONS, Mary!!! Keith Vogel/Janice Hermann and Ron Hnilica/ Mary Horne rounded out the semi-finals.

Jennifer Gidner and **Kathleen Servais** defeated Vivian Sanders/Thelma Howard and Anita Lark/ Betty Tinsley to win the Women's C Division.

The Men's C Championship went to **Dan Mullins** and **Steve Gruber** who defeated the "faux" lefties Jeff Mullins and Glen Williams in the finals. The semi-finalists were Paul Schultz/Ron Hnilica and Tom Burnip/Rick Foster.

The Mixed C/D Division saw **Judy Porter** and **Sherman Gipson** earn their first State Championship after defeating Wally Dombrowski and Kathleen Servais in the finals. Brian Ellison/Vivian Sanders and Carol Biliti/Allen Jones were the semi-finalists.

The brother tandem of **Andrew** and **James Price** defeated a pair of up and coming juniors (cont on pg. 7)



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THOUGHTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Twayne M. Howard
President

"It's half time, bring out the band." Yes, we've reached the mid point of another great racquetball season. As I write, it is college football bowl season, and Michigan has hosted 8 sanctioned racquetball tournaments with an incredible 11 more scheduled before the season culminates with the State Singles Championship April 8-10 at the Coliseum in Taylor. There is plenty of great racquetball action coming and you won't want to miss out.

This Newsletter features coverage of State Doubles which was held at Total Sports in Mt. Clemens. Saturday evening at Doubles, there was an open membership meeting and juniors benefit auction. At the meeting members were updated on the current members of the board and some of the current board projects, as well as the new ranking system, and the progress of the Michigan Juniors Program.

After the meeting we held the annual auction to benefit our Juniors Program. Jack Huczek acted as our auctioneer (thanks Jack, I hate microphones). We had pro racquetball DVDs donated by ProRacquetball.net, a racquet and bag donated by Jim Woolcock, a warm-up shirts and a lesson donated by Jack Huczek, blankets hand made by Robin Woolcock, warm-ups donated by Jack White, a warm-up donated by Tom Blakeslee, custom logo shirts donated by Mike Anderson, bags and gloves donated by Lewis Forrest, pizzas donated by Village Inn Pizza, stringing provided by Michael Banks of Professional Racquet Services, a Ladies Spa Collection and many, many more items.

The auction raised over \$2,500 to support our Juniors programs. I was asked to highlight the biggest spenders. They included Chuck Van Hoose who spent \$200, the Sporer boys who spent \$215, John Torres who spent \$235, Mike Anderson who spent \$250, Paul Stanwick who spent \$315, and Chris Kelly and myself who each spent \$325. I would like to thank everyone for their generous support. Sufice it to say it was a great weekend on and off the courts, and we raised a lot of money to support our Juniors program.

And now for a brief peek into the coming months. January is packed full with tournaments in Muskegon at the OMNI Fitness Club, at the Genesys Athletic Club in Grand Blanc, and at the Courtland Athletic Club in Utica.

January 14-16 features an AmPRO Certification Clinic at the Lansing MAC and Fran Davis makes another visit to the Grand Rapids MAC on January 28-30 for her week-end long instructional clinic. The AmPRO Certification is an excellent program for instructors. Fran's clinic covers every aspect of racquetball from beginning to end.

February is another busy month with tournaments in Davison at the Davison Athletic Club, in Mt. Clemens at Total Sports, and in Lansing at the Michigan Athletic Club. March wraps up with tournaments in Warren at Players Athletic Club, a Ladies Only tournament at Genesys Athletic Club in Grand Blanc and at the Grand Rapids MAC. All of this leads us up to the State Singles Championships at the Coliseum in Taylor.

Whew. Sounds like a lot of great racquetball. As always the best way to keep up on the schedule is to check out our website, www.michiganracquetball.net. Feel free to add it to you "Favorites" and check it every few days.

I always like to highlight the RAM Board. At the last regular meeting of the Board held Monday, January 3, Don Schopieray and Paula Saad were elected to the Board. We welcome them and thank them for their interest in helping make racquetball in the state of Michigan even better.

Everyone is welcome to attend our Board meetings and see what they are all about. Keep checking the web page for these dates as well.

As always, please feel free to contact me or any of the other Board members with any questions, comments, concerns, complaint, or ever kudos. We are here to work for you.

I wish you all a continued great season! See you on the courts!

*The Racquetball Reporter is printed courtesy of
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MICHIGAN CROWNS THREE NATIONAL CHAMPS AT THE US OPEN IN MEMPHIS

- Twayne Howard

Each year as Thanksgiving draws near, the attention of the racquetball world turns to Memphis, Tennessee and the US Open Racquetball Championship. This year twenty-four members of Team Michigan made the trip to prove themselves against some of the best racquetball players in the world.

Tia Lecland made her first trip to Memphis, and it is one that she won't soon forget. After nearly a week of tough competition, Tia was Michigan's most accomplished competitor as she brought home a Gold Medal in the Women's D Division, and a Silver Medal in the Women's 35+45+C Division. I would call this a very successful trip.

One of Tia's coaches also did quite well herself. **Karen Green** earned the Gold Medal in the Women's 45+/55+A Division as well making the Semi-Finals in the Women's 45+ Division. Karen is making a habit of taking home Gold in the biggest tournaments.

Jeff Johnson earned Gold in the Men's 25+B Division. This follows up Jeff's National Championship from a few season back. Apparently, Michigan is growing a new crop of "big

game" players. Congratulations to our newest US Open Champions!!!

Another double-medalist was **John Trendell** who earned a Silver Medal in the Men's 25+B Division after falling to Jeff Johnson. John also made the semi-finals in the Men's B Doubles Division with his partner **Andre Roy**.

Lindsay Anderson, another newcomer, took home the Silver Medal in the Women's D Division finishing just behind Tia Lecland. Lindsay has been working very hard over the last year, and clearly it is paying off.

Veteran **David Lund** also took home a Silver Medal in the Men's 65+ Division. This will go well with the Gold he earned in this division a few years ago. This is always a tough division and to medal in it twice is more than impressive.

John Kundrot also made his first trip to Memphis, and also came home a double-medalist. John earned a Bronze in both the Men's A Division and the Men's 35+A Division. Another great weekend.

Michigan's final double-medalist was Andre Roy. Andre not only made it to the semis in the Men's B Doubles with John

Trendell, but he also earned a Bronze Medal in the Men's 35+B Division.

Twayne Howard took home a Bronze in the Men's 25+B Division after losing to John Trendell in the semis. This rounded out a 1-2-3 finish for Michigan in this division.

Sharon Huczek earned another national tournament medal by winning Bronze in the Women's 55+ Division. **Stanley Kurzman** earned a Bronze in the Men's 70+ Division. **Paula Saad** also earned Bronze in the Women's 25+/35+A Division. **Mike Anderson** made it to the semis of the Men's 45+ Division. **Jack Huczek** suffered an upset loss to Cliff Swain in the semis of the Men's Pro Division.

Also participating in Memphis were Tom Blakeslee, Brandon Cortese, Jim Easterling, Lewis Forrest, Dale Graham, George Goudie, Greg Hodges, Allan Kohl, Shannon Kohl and Chuck Van Hoose.

Every year I tell the readers what a great event this is. The best competition, the best fun, and the best racquetball in the world. Hopefully, next year you'll make the trip.



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JUNIOR'S CORNER . .

- Karen Green

Team Michigan Junior Racquetball has been growing. Several of the Team Michigan Juniors have been earning a higher skill level by testing with their racquetball director.

To review, at the State Singles and the State Doubles tournaments Team Michigan Junior Racquetball players who have earned either a red, blue or gold T-Shirt will receive them if they have completed their testing prior to these tournaments. Please have the person who administered the testing notify Karen Green at 248-663-0175 if a skill level has been passed so we can order the appropriate shirt color for the junior player.

Again, all juniors wishing to test should do so with their club racquetball director. If a junior does not have a club racquetball director, another AmPro certified racquetball player should administer the test. If there is no racquetball director or AmPro certified player, the junior may make arrangements to test with another racquetball director at a different club, at a tournament or at the State Singles or State Doubles Tournament. It is preferable to test when a tournament is not in session due to the limited availability of court space. First time junior players participating in either the State Singles or the State Doubles will receive a white, introductory level, Team Michigan Junior Racquetball player T-Shirt.

There is no charge for testing for a particular level for the first time during a playing season. If a player tests for a particular level and does not pass, a \$10.00 fee will be assessed for each additional test administered during a playing season. The \$10.00 fee should be forwarded to the State Racquetball Association. This policy is to encourage players to test when they are sure they are ready to pass a particular level.

All players who pass the Gold Level skill testing must also pass the referee certification test. As always, if there are any questions, please call Karen Green at 248-663-0175.

4th ANNUAL TURKEY SHOOT OUT

- Karen Green

The Fourth Annual Turkey Shootout Tournament was held on November 6-7 at the Franklin Athletic Club in Southfield. This tournament has a tradition of having a Thanksgiving feast on Saturday afternoon. This year's feast was a great meal catered by Boston Market. Players enjoyed the buffet and it is probably safe to say that no one left hungry.

One individual that many players know from the "old days" was back to compete in the Men's Open, **Ryan Covell**. Many of you probably remember that Ryan was and still is an outstanding player. He also finished second in the Men's AA division, losing only to **John Kundrot**. It was nice to see John back

at the tournament as well as his "partner in crime", **Mark Werthman**. Mark finished second in the Men's A division and first in the Men's 35+ division.

Jimmy Floyd and **Jeff Mullins** went head to head in the Men's Open final. Jimmy prevailed, but Jeff was a formidable opponent. The Floyd family will be expecting their first child soon and we wish them congratulations and the best of luck.

The Women's B/C division had six players. **Bridget Kundrot** accompanied John to the tournament and played very well. She finished second to **Tia Lecland**.

The Women's Open division featured a player returning to tournament play after a ten-year hiatus. **Marianne McHugh** returned playing in a round robin format and was able to meet and play many different opponents. However, perennial favorite, **Paula Saad** won the division.

In the Men's C Doubles division were two father and son teams, **Danny Kurzmman** and son **Ari** and **Matt Barbuscak** and son **Matt Jr**. The winning team in this division was comprised of two junior players from Team Michigan. **Matt Bernstein** and **Ethan Gottlieb** have been playing doubles together in a league and are developing quite well as a team.

The Men's Open Doubles final was a battle between the team of **Greg**

(cont. pg. 7)



Junior 8 - Stone Antisdale (r) - 1st
Alex Rhonkole (l) - 2nd



Junior 12 - Jarrod Antisdale (l) - 1st
Ari Kurzmman (r) - 2nd



Open - Paula Saad (l) - 1st
Melody Gorno (r) - 2nd

SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN SHOOTOUT AT THE BRONSON ATHLETIC CLUB

-John Vandeweerd & Tom Ford

The Bronson Athletic Club in Kalamazoo hosted its second annual Southwest Michigan Shootout on the weekend of October 9th and 10th. We thank all the players who came to participate, they treated us to some great play. We also thank the Bronson Athletic Club for their hospitality and our sponsors (ProKennex, Visions Auto Glass, Marvin Okun Insurance Agency, IBA Health Plans, Swan Restaurant & Motel, and the Tennis Connection) for helping to make the tournament such a success.

The men's open division was contested for a first place prize of \$200.00. **Brent Zimmerman** earned a semi-final berth beating a tough opponent in **Greg Lewerenez**. **Scott Graves** made it to the semi's beating the hard-hitting **Alex Cobb**. Joey Logan, from Chicago, also earned a berth in the semi's beating **Steve Goedker** who retired in that match due to injury. We wish Steve a fast recovery and hope to see him on the courts again soon. **Brandon Cortese** earned the final spot in the semi's beating **John Torres**.

The first semi-final match paired the current state champion, Brandon Cortese against Brent Zimmerman. Brent took the first game with some amazing shot making and consistent play. Brandon made some terrific shots of his own in the second game to come back from match point down (11 to 14) to force a tie-breaker. In the tie-breaker, Brandon's experience, consistency and constant pressure proved to be the difference. With his victory, Brandon earned a spot in the finals and awaited the winner of the second match between Scott Graves and Joey Logan. Unfortunately, Joey was not feeling 100 percent and forfeited the match giving Scott the opportunity to play Brandon for the first place prize.

In the finals, Scott was the fresher of the two players, and took command early, winning the first game. However, Brandon, very tired from his semi-final match, found a way to win the second game to force a tie-breaker for the championship. In the tie-breaker, Brandon raised his game and frustrated Scott with precision shot-making and getting ability.

Brandon out-last-ed Scott to win the championship. Brandon was awarded the first place prize of \$200.00 and Scott received a second place check of \$50.00.

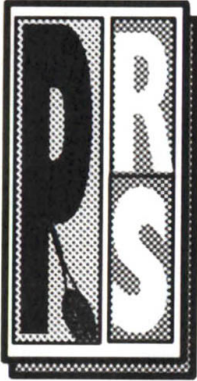
The finals of the Men's A division saw a match-up between **Steve Clark** from East Lansing and local player, **Mark Widman**. Mark battled hard, but in the end, Steve's passing shots and getting ability were too tough and he rolled to the championship in 2 games.

The Men's B division featured 2 lefties, **Mike Chambom** and **Gary Lehman**, a local player new to the tournament scene. Gary's overhead serve and unconventional "3-wall" style kept Mike off balance and frustrated. Gary won the title in 2 games.

The Men's C division was contested between 2 tournament regulars, **Dan Mullin** and **Maureen Price**. Dan showed great touch in front court and precise pinch shots throughout the tournament. Although Maureen battled hard, Dan made too many of those rollout pinches and won the title. (cont. pg. 7)



Rhonda and Marissa welcome players to the Bronson Athletic Club



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ADVERTISING RATES FOR THE RACQUETBALL REPORTER FOR 2004-05

The Racquetball Reporter is published quarterly throughout the year - August, November, February, and May. Items to be included in the Racquetball Reporter for the 2004-05 year must be submitted by the following dates:

August 3, 2004 January 5, 2005
October 4, 2004 April 4, 2005

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

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

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

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

STATE DOUBLES

(from page 1)

iors in Matt Bernstein and Ethan Gottlieb to win the Men's D Championship. Tom McArthur/Allen Jones and Mike Kitchen/Kevin Keys rounded out the semi-finals.

Eric Sporer and **Brad Schopieray** defeated Trevor Sporer and Kevin White to claim the Juniors 12 & under Championship.

The Juniors 14 & under Championship went to **Brad Schopieray** and **Andrew Price** who defeated Matt Bernstein and Ethan Gottlieb in the Finals. Winning in the 14 and Under division made both Brad Schopieray and Andrew double division champions. Way to go Brad and Andrew!!!! Bradford Servais/Mark Servais and Trevor Sporer/Kevin White were the semi-finalists.

The Men's 30 Division went to **Greg Lewerenz** and **Rob Fobar** who defeated Ron Griggs and Dave Chirio in

the finals. The semi-finalists were Jim Kutt/Ben Marciniak and Carl Burton/Arsalan Shaukat.

Ed Arias and **Glen Williams** won the Men's 35+ Championship after defeating John Torres and Rich Torres. Carl Burton/Arsalan Shaukat and James Scheuer/Matt Malolpszy rounded out the semi-finals.

Greg Fenner and **Mike Middleton** won the Men's 30+/40+/50+B Division by defeating Greg Sporer and George Terryn. Dan Sutton/Larry Cleyman and Twayne Howard/Bob ShurLOW were the semi-finalists.

The Men's 35+45+C Championship went to **Mike Kitchen** and **Kevin Keys** who defeated Dan Mullin and Steve Gruber in the Finals. Rick Foster/Tom Burnip and Ken Smith/Wally Dombrowski completed the semi-finals.

The Champions of the Men's 40 Division were **Bob Gravelyn** and **Steve Jazwiec** who defeated Ric Scott and Al Mell in the

finals. Dan Verbeck/Jim Woolcock and Chris Kelly/Jim Panasiewicz were the semi-finalists.

Jim Woolcock and **Dan Verbeck** claimed another Men's 45+ Championship by defeating Tom Blakeslee and Jack White in the finals. The semi-finalists were Ed Arias/Greg Zivov and Chris Kelly/Jim Panasiewicz.

Al Mell and **Ric Scott** defeated Dan Edwards and Jim Bruton to take home the Men's 55+ Championship. Tony Tewes/Mike Materna and Joe Romeo/Jim Strode were semi-finalists.

Along with the great play, other highlights of the weekend included the second annual all membership meeting and the Juniors Auction held on Saturday evening. Always a highlight of the RAM season, State Doubles proved no less this year. Another exciting weekend of racquetball and fun. If you missed it, mark it on your calendar for next year. I can guarantee you'll have a good time. See you there.

TURKEY SHOOTOUT

(from pg. 4)

Lewerenz and **Rob Fobar** and the team of **Ron Barton** and **John Torres**. Greg and Rob won the final in a tiebreaker. This was their second Open championship as a doubles team. Congratulations Greg and Ron. Final results:

Men's Open	1st - Jim Floyd 2nd - Jeff Mullins
Men's AA	1st - John Kundrot 2nd - Ryan Covell
Men's A	1st - Andre Roy 2nd - Mark Werthman
Men's B	1st - Pat Burke 2nd - Chuck Oliver
Men's C	1st - Ken MacDonald 2nd - Bob Spencer
Men's D	1st - Bob Spencer 2nd - Steve Bagdon
Men's 35+	1st - Mark Werthman 2nd - John Kundrot
Men's 50/60+	1st - Dave Lund 2nd - Pat Burke
Women Open	1st - Paula Saad 2nd - Melody Gorno
Women B/C	1st - Lia Lecland 2nd - Bridget Kundrot



Open - Jim Floyd (r) - 1st
Jeff Mullins (l) - 2nd

Doubles:	
Mens Open	1st - Lewerenz/Fobar 2nd - Barton/Torres
Men's AA	1st - Jones/Riveria 2nd - VanHoose/ Johnson
Men's C	1st - Gottlieb/Bernstein 2nd - Barbuscak/ Barbuscak
Mixed	1st - Gorno/Torrex 2nd - Howard/Barton
Juniors 8	1st - Stone Antisdale 2nd - Alex Rhonkole
Juniors 12	1st - Jarrid Antisdale 2nd - Ari Kurzmman
Juniors 14	1st - Jarrid Antisdale



SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN SHOOTOUT (from page 5)

The women competed in a round-robin format and Maureen Price decimated the field, which included **Wendy Ford**, **Marilyn Kiegley**, and **Viola Thompson**. Maureen lost a total of only 5 points in 6 games.

Frankie Antonelli edged out **Jarrid Antisdale** and **Brad Schopieray** for the title in the juniors division. **Ryan Walker**, playing in his first tournament, also competed in the juniors division.

Other winners included **Frankie Antonelli** in the Men's D division, and **Jerry Spruit** in the Men's 30 A/B division.

PAGING ALL PLAYERS

- Allan Coyle

The Capital Challenge tournament February 18-20 at the Michigan Athletic Club in East Lansing is excited to announce the use of pagers to call players to the courts to start their matches!

Used for the first time during Spartan Splat last October, the pagers kept tournament play running smoothly and on time. No more waiting hours past scheduled start times. As players registered, they were handed individual pagers and told to listen for their call. Players carried their pagers in their pockets or clipped to their bags as they roamed the MAC waiting for the next available court. Players even playfully whined when, in earshot of the desk, they were called to court by voice rather than being paged!

The tabletop transmitting unit is capable of up to a two mile range and had ample power to reach players anywhere in the MAC, including the restaurant or locker rooms. Though we can only dream of needing this amount, the tabletop unit can handle over 200 pagers at one time.

CHILDREN'S BENEFIT TOURNAMENT AT THE MAC

- Helen Lang



The 1st annual Children's Benefit Racquetball Tournament was held November 14, 2004 at the MAC in East Lansing. It was a huge success! With

Come join us at the MAC in February and experience racquetball with a new 21st century twist!

the generosity of our players, families, friends and sponsors, we raised \$1,000 for the Sparrow Ped's ER, Coaches for Kids. We want to thank everyone. Tournament directors Helen Lang and Jeff Connell already have the next Children's Benefit tournament scheduled for November 12, 2005. Mark your calendars now, and we hope to see you there.

Racquetball Reporter

321 Village Dr.
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