

MSRA NEWS

Minnesota State Racquetball Association

September 1986

A Racquetball Patron

It's easy to say "I support Junior racquetball," but Bill Kuban does more than just talk about it.

Bill Kuban has been playing racquetball for 12 to 15 years making the transition from paddleball. Maybe you've never heard of him, but that's not surprising, he's a quiet man who plays in leagues at his home club and competes in a few tournaments each year. He plays in the 50+ age division, not necessarily the winner. He simply enjoys the sport. He might be described as an average player, but average? Hardly.

Bill sponsors the Junior team that played from Northeast Health and Fitness. You may have noticed the kids at the State Singles tournament or Regionals, in their blue and gold shirts and shorts. He provides the "team uniform" and paid the entry fees as well as MSRA/AARA dues for each player.

Money alone however, will not produce a junior program. Bill approached the club management and with the help of his daughter, Gretchen Kuban, the program was started. It took many calls and much promotion, but once the program began, the club cooperated with court time and instruction.

"Active kids stay out of trouble," Bill believes, "and racquetball is a positive outlet for their energy." But racquetball does more than just keep the kids off the streets. Bill notices that the game has helped them develop personalities as well as physical ability.

"The kids are charming and so appreciative. They call me up to say, 'Thanks.' They are really nice kids."

Another asset Bill sees is the way these young people interact with adults. Many of the kids compete with adults in pick-up

matches and in leagues, and they are learning a valuable lesson in dealing with people of all ages. "They are very courteous." Bill remarks, admirably.

Bill is President of Kurt Mfg. Co. which seems to be pretty serious about supporting people and the community. His company sponsors in-house teams such as bowling and softball, but is also a supporter of the community little league and hockey programs. "As team sponsorships go, the junior racquetball team is pretty inexpensive."

Through Bill's interest in racquetball and the kids at his club, the junior players know they can count on his support for the junior program. Bill doesn't see himself as unusual, but racquetball could use more people like Bill Kuban.



Kurt Mfg Co. Junior Team

Front row: Todd Peterson, Brian LaValley, Scott Burtness, Back row: Justin Knutson, Brian Mason, Kristy LaValley, Dan Newquist
Missing: Dana Sibell, Dan Sibell, Dan Bittman



FALL is Renewal Time



Fall is the traditional time for renewal. Vacations have ended and while nature winds down for the sleep of winter, families are gearing up for active schedules. It's time to get "serious" again. School begins and numerous organizations start anew. Racquetball especially finds fall an exciting time as summer's leisure patterns turn to boredom and players are eager to get on the court for an energetic workout.

Fall is also the time to renew your MSRA/AARA membership. This is required for all State, Regional and National Championship tournaments as well as all sanctioned tournaments in or outside of Minnesota. All memberships will renew each fall and expire August 31 of the following year. However, if you have already joined or renewed your MSRA membership this year, 1986, your membership is valid until August 31, 1987. If not, NOW is the time!

An individual membership in the MSRA/AARA is \$10, a family of two pays \$18 with \$2 extra for each additional person. Since this is the price of a membership throughout the year, (ALL memberships will expire 8/31/87) it makes sense to join or renew now and begin receiving your newsletters and MSRA information.

Minnesota State Racquetball Association

New membership Date _____
 Renewal
 Change/correction

\$10 Individual membership
 \$18 Family membership*
 (\$2 each over two)

Name _____

Add'l mbr(s)* _____

Address _____

City _____ MN Zip _____

Phone _____

Club _____

Amount Enclosed \$ _____

Board Talk

This year we will conduct the State Doubles Championship in the fall, October 10 -12, and the State Singles Championship next spring, April 10 - 12. Our newsletters will continue to be published every other month with up-to-date information about tournaments, rules and players. Our membership drive will be primarily focused on the fall allowing us to target our energy and resources in other areas such as junior programs, clinics, refereeing, publicity, etc. We regret being unable to offer the Junior camp this summer as we had intended. We decided instead to wait and provide a quality camp that would help build a good junior program, next summer.

We had many successes this past year and a few disappointments. As a board we have grown and matured. Perhaps one of the most significant ways we see this improved image is in the attitudes of the membership, their willingness to help. Players who may have simply complained in the past are instead offering positive suggestions. Since we are all volunteers, a "pat on the back" from various people has been greatly appreciated.

At the end of one of the best Minnesota summers most of us can remember, we retire the golf clubs and dig out the racquetball gear. However the MSRA board has not been dormant through the summer. We learned from last year's experience that continuity, even during the slow summer months, is essential to a quick start in the fall - supporting our sport and our players.

we look forward to another great season of racquetball.

HELP WANTED!

Volunteers to work 1 or 2 hours at the MSRA check-in desk or tournament table for the State Doubles Championship Tournament. Call Don Griffiths 612-454-2552.

"Thanks"

A Special "THANKS" to Graham Gurr and Eagandale Racquet Club for donating computer time to the MSRA.

How are the Kids Doing?

When looking at the Junior Program in Minnesota, it is easier to focus on individual players. Some of the best known "Junior" players probably are known first as outstanding players and as "Juniors" second.

At the top of the list is Todd Stead, yes, the number two player in the State based on his performance at the State Singles Championship. Todd has been playing racquetball for about 8 years. His teacher and coach was his father. Todd is an excellent all 'round athlete which seems to be a common factor in almost all the top players. When Todd was younger, there wasn't a "Junior" program promoted where he played and he found very little competition. He and Bruce Erickson were learning the sport at about the same time. Together they learned and tested each other. Both players now challenge players in the Open class.

Lynn Kadlec, 16, and Dana Sibell, 15, defeated the number 1 seeded team of Barb Iennessen and Kathy Huben in the State Doubles Championship last spring. The young team lost in the finals in a tie-breaker to Kim Mays and Carol Kriegler. Referring to Lynn, Kim remarked, "She hits the ball harder than any woman I've played."

Lynn has been playing racquetball for 5 years. She learned the game initially from her father. In 7th grade, Tim Savin from Southview began coaching her. Similarly, Dana who has only been playing for 2-3 years, was introduced to the game by her dad, a handball player, but was also helped by an outside coach, in Dana's case, John Kellner. Both girls spend many hours on the court practicing as well as playing in the Men's A league of their home clubs.

These are just a sample of the fine junior players throughout the state. Many have similar experiences and backgrounds. Some come from a family of sports enthusiasts (even racquetball players), some are alone in their love of sport. Most of the outstanding players possess a good athletic aptitude, and are willing to work hard at developing their skills. Power, quickness and agility are apparent to anyone watching these young people on the court. These players of tomorrow hone their skills and refine their strategies. With youth on their side, are we older players afraid of the challenge these young people offer, or can they bring all of us to a new level of performance.

Running the Junior Program

Ron Strom is the racquetball coordinator of the largest number of courts in Minnesota through the Northwest clubs which include Burnsville, 98th St., Normandale, Hwy 100 and Northwest in the Metro area. Their Junior program has been in existence for 5-6 years though the activity level was quite low until two years ago.

Two factors affected the junior explosion at these clubs. The first was a change in the billing and benefit structure of the clubs. Racquetball became the beneficiary of the change because the monthly fee included unlimited court use for racquetball. At about the same time, an enthusiastic racquetball pro was hired, Soli Hughes. He enjoyed working with kids and promoted the sport to young players.

Across the river at Eagandale, Sandy Gross runs a successful Junior program. The smaller club which is family oriented promotes racquetball among the children of members. Few juniors participate without a parental member. Eagandale has both the monthly unlimited-play membership and the pay-as-you-play type. The junior players are about 50/50 between the 2 memberships.

Eagandale's Junior program is most active during the summer and over the holidays. The conflict of school activities and competition for the 5 racquetball courts make these times most advantageous. Northwest on the other hand promotes racquetball throughout the year because of the large number of members and many courts available.

Both managers feel juniors are important to keeping the sport alive although neither club sees junior programs as a financial asset for the short term. Ron cautions, "We don't want racquetball to make the same mistake handball has made, a bunch of die-hard players but a lack of growth among young players."

Most managers recognize that many of the best players are also involved with other sports. Racquetball shouldn't try to compete with other sports, instead kids should be encouraged to include racquetball in their sports interests. Eagandale promotes racquetball as a lifetime sport like tennis and swimming.



TOURNAMENT

RESULTS



JUNIOR REGIONALS

Over 70 kids competed in this year's Junior Regional Championship held at the Suburban Racquetball and Swim Club in St. Cloud. Players from Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska and Minnesota provided spectators with plenty of action - on and off the court. Great kids, great sponsors, and an excellent facility helped make the weekend a huge success. A special thank you goes to Bruce Velich from DP. Bruce was on hand all weekend giving away merchandise, offering discounts to players and timing their "blasts" with his speed gun. His genuine interest in junior racquetball is going to help keep this sport alive and strong.

Boys

- 18 & under: 1st Todd Stead - Mpls
2nd Dan Fowler - Bismark
- 16 & under: 1st Dan Fowler - Bismark
2nd Brett Stinson - Duluth
3rd Scott Daugaard - Duluth
- 14 & under: 1st Chris Weinert - Embarass
2nd Ryan Davis - Des Moines
3rd Brent Hansen - Hudson
- 12 & under: 1st Brett Beugen - Golden Valley
2nd Nate Martin - Rapid City
3rd Troy Schramek - Lincoln
- 10 & under: 1st Brad Hansen - Hudson
2nd Andy Gross - Apple Valley
3rd Matt Kappes - Crooks
- 8 & under: 1st Blair Hansen - Hudson
(No Bounce) 2nd Blake Hansen - Hudson
3rd Sadie Gross - Apple Valley
- Class B
- 18 & under: 1st John Hansen - Plymouth
2nd Kevin Bohnsack - Prior Lake

Girls

- 16 & under: 1st Lynn Kadlec - Cottage Grove
2nd Dana Sibell - Columbia Hts
Cons. Aimee Melville - St. Cloud
- 12 & under: 1st Kristy LaValley - Spring Lk Pk
2nd Andrea Beugen - Golden Valley
- Class C
- 18 & under: 1st Angie Hansen - Hudson
2nd Kirsten Thompson
- A Doubles: 1st Beugen & Stinson
2nd Daugaard & Freeman
Cons Werschay & Doughey
- B Doubles: 1st Sibell & Kadlec
2nd Melville & Ostman
Cons Beugen & Martin

AQUATENNIAL

The tournament season during the summer months is slow. The only major tournament in Minnesota during June or July is the annual Aquatennial Tournament held at Kings Court. This is a Pro-Am tournament and usually draws players from outside Minnesota. This year was no exception. Players from Wisconsin, South Dakota, Iowa and Illinois challenged the Minnesota competitors. It is often a time when junior players excel because their time on the court over the previous weeks pays off. The "under-18" group competed in almost every regular division this year.

At the tournament, known for its endless hospitality, one player admitted that she had hesitated to play in the tournament (her second ever) because she wasn't sure she would get her money's worth. By Saturday evening she decided that regardless of her playing, the tournament was well worth it - food, entertainment value and fun. "I'll be back again next year." she confessed.

Men's

- Pro-Am 1st Dan Ferris, 2nd Todd Stead
3rd Sean Moskwa, 4th B. Erickson
- A 1st Dave Wershay, 2nd Scott Daugaard
- B 1st Kirby Rogers, 2nd Ross Tate
- C 1st Justin Knutson, 2nd Todd Gadtke
- 35+ 1st Al Pederson, 2nd Brad House
- 35+B 1st Dan Cybyske, 2nd Dave Anderson
- Masters 1st Charles Schafer, 2nd Les Dittrich
- Doubles
- Pro-Am 1st Gus Farell/Hart Johnson
2nd Dan Ferris/Pat Page
- A 1st Eric Lindquist/Kent VanDehaar
2nd Tim Ostman/Dave Werschay
- B 1st Dave Lein/David Rowe
2nd David Barnes/Charles Schafer
- C 1st Mike Dunn/Frank Musbach
2nd Robin Larson/Jerry McCann

Women's

- Pro-Am 1st Kim Mays, 2nd Lynn Kadlec
3rd Katrina Zabinski, 4th D. Sibell
- A 1st Kate Nelson, 2nd Aimee Melville
- B 1st Laura Merrill, 2nd Jean Step
- C 1st Kathy Rick, 2nd Karen Jass
- Doubles
- Pro-Am 1st Patty Erger/Sheryl Warfield
2nd Lynn Kadlec/Dana Sibell
- A 1st Lynn Cardwell/Mary McCarthy
2nd Mary Harrity/Kate Nelson
- B 1st Karen Jass/Laurie Pletscher
2nd Katie Crawford/Barb Hopson
- Juniors 1st Jason House, 2nd Blair McNaughton
- Mixed
- Doubles 1st Kim Mays/Hart Johnson
2nd Lori Harper/Bill Harper

State DOUBLES

Referee Clinic

If this seems like de ja vu, don't be alarmed. The State Doubles Championship titles won in the spring are in the record books for last season. This year however, the State Doubles Championship will be in the fall, October 10 - 12. This is the ONLY official Minnesota State Doubles Championship for this season. The tournament will be conducted by the MSRA and held at the Hwy 100 Club in Brooklyn Center. An entry form is included in this newsletter. Additional forms can be obtained from your local club or may be requested from the MSRA. All pertinent information is contained on the entry. Any further questions should be directed to Sheryl Warfield (507-282-1013) of the tournament committee.

The MSRA will conduct a referee clinic at the State Doubles Tournament, covering rules and the referee's responsibilities. It will also include the special situations that arise in doubles matches. A certified AARA referee will teach the clinic which is strongly recommended for ALL players. This should improve the level of refereeing for all matches.

For players new to the tournament scene, "making the call" can be a pretty intimidating experience. Most clubs don't have occasions or situations for players to learn and develop these skills. At a tournament however, it is difficult to avoid this responsibility. This clinic should alleviate some of the fears that come with the job.



Tournament Schedule

Sept 26-28	Southview Tournament West St. Paul 612-450-1660	Nov 14-16	Super 6 Tourney Carlton Club St. Paul 612-738-3559	Feb 20-22	Heart Fund Open Kandi Kourts Willmar 612-235-1212
Oct 10-12	MSRA State Doubles Hwy 100 & France Brooklyn Center	Nov 28-30	7th Turkey Tourney Eagandale Club Eagan 612-454-8790	Feb 20-22	Super 6 Tourney Supreme Court Rochester 507-281-1551
Oct 17-19	Pro-Am Tournament Supreme Court Rochester 507-281-1551	Dec 12-14	Super 6 Tourney Kings Court Roseville 612-633-0744	Feb 27-3/1	Valley Club Shakopee 612-445-2333
Oct 23-26	AARA National Doubles Jacksonville, Fla	Jan 16-18	Super 6 Tourney Greenway Athletic Club Minneapolis 612-343-3131	Feb 27-3/1	Cub Foods Tourney River Valley Club Stillwater 612-439-7611
Oct 24-26	Flagship Eden Prairie 612-829-2610	Jan 23-25	Super Bowl Weekend Calhoun Beach Club Minneapolis 612-927-9951X16	Mar 13-15	Super 6 Tourney Hwy 100 & France Brooklyn Center
Oct 24-26	Super 6 Tourney Forest Lake	Jan 23-25	Country Courts Fairmont 507-235-6691	Mar 20-22	Country Courts Fairmont 507-235-6691
Nov 7-9	Fall Shootout Kandi Kourts Willmar 612-235-1212	Feb 6-8	Winter Carnival Carlton Club St. Paul 612-738-3559	Apr 10-12	MSRA State Singles Burnsville
Nov 7-9	Country Courts Fairmont 507-235-6691				

Going to Camp

Going to camp used to mean swimming, crafts and campfires. Today's camps can be educational and can specialize in anything from computers to sports, (some aren't just for kids anymore).

Racquetball offers instructional camps. The Strandemo camps and the Lynn Adam camps, are open to any player, but the AARA sponsors a camp for promising young players who qualify at regional tournaments. This year's camp was at Northern Michigan University in Marquette.

There was intense training at this camp, with a strong emphasis on conditioning. Up at 5:30 for running, these young athletes spent most of their time learning "how to train". They learned about nutrition, stretching, aerobic and anaerobic exercises, weights, plus prevention and care of injuries. They learned drills to practice and "charting" (a system of analyzing an opponent's weaknesses.) The accent was on teaching the players how to help themselves.

No camp should be all work and there was plenty of socializing. You can't get a large group of kids together in one place without having fun. But you'll have to ask the "campers" more about that: Dana Sibell, Lynn Kadlec, Dave Wershay, Shawna Ostman and Aimee Melville.

Strandemo Interview

Strandemo's Interview with D. Lichty

Steve Strandemo, the hometown racquetball player made "good", now lives in Coronado, California, just outside San Diego. On a trip to California, Dee Lichty had the opportunity to talk with Steve.

Q: Where and when did you start playing racquetball?

A: "I started playing in St. Cloud while in graduate school in about 1971. I was 23."

Q: Who influenced you the most in those early years?

A: "I suppose players locally and in area tourneys. One person was Bill Schmidtke, who was then current National Champion."

Q: Where and when did you play your first tournament?

A: "Probably the St. Cloud Elks Club in 1971. I played two matches in the B's, got beat, and was a spectator."

Q: What were your early accomplishments in competition?

A: "Don't remember all that well, but probably 2nd in the Open singles at the Kahler State Tournament in Rochester. I think Ron Strom and I won the Doubles once or twice but I can't say for sure."

Q: What motivated you to try professional racquetball?

A: "I was at a point of conflict. All through college I had played baseball thinking of a career in Pro ball. But scouts told me I was lacking in some fundamental skills and probably wouldn't get a pro contract. I was frustrated. All my goals were turned to fantasy. So with racquetball, I saw myself going down the same road. I was a good Open player, but being mostly self-taught, I was frustrated thinking I was making some fundamental mistakes. When I watched a 16 man tourney, pro invitational in the "Cities", I saw I couldn't match their skills, I told myself, I'm not going to make the same mistake twice."

Q: When did you leave Minnesota for California?

A: "I came to San Diego in 1974 because that's where the best players were from. I played Charlie Brumfield and Steve Keeley and they taught me the game."

Q: What were your accomplishments and what was it like on the Pro Tour?"

A: "Well, that first year, 1974, I won the Canadian Nationals (beating Hilecher and Schmidtke.) The 'Pro Tour' started and I was ranked 4th. I held my position. I'm not totally sure but I think I won 5 pro tournaments. In the Nationals, I finished 2nd twice prior to 1980. I lost to Brumfield one year and not sure about the other..." "It was a neat experience playing with guys who I had aspired to play like. Then I was part of it, a great feeling of accomplishment."

Q: Why did you stop playing competitive racquetball?

A: "I just felt the tour wasn't going anywhere. It wasn't growing and even though I really liked the competition, I realistically needed new goals - financially and personally. I miss it, but I try not to think about it. I really like going to tournaments and watching."

Q: What are you doing now in racquetball?

A: "Well, there's the new book, Strategic Racquetball. We have the Head, Penn, Adidas sponsored racquetball Training Camps. Plus there are some new projects in the future."

A big "thanks" to Minnesota's own Steve Strandemo.

MORE HINDERS

This issue will begin to focus on the deadball hinders. These hinders include the ball hinder, swing hinder, path hinder, court hinder and the visual hinder or screen. The result of these situations is a replay of the point with no penalty and the server receives two serves. (Rule 11)

A ball hinder is pretty obvious, it occurs when the ball strikes or touches the opponent on its way to the front wall. Remember, a ball which has no chance of reaching the front wall is not considered a hinder and is not replayed. This is a judgment call and the operative words are "no chance". If however, the ball contacts a player on its way from the front wall, that player loses the rally, this is not a hinder situation.

Prevention could save many a ballmark on the body. A player should hold-up on a shot if the player believes he/she might hit the opponent with the ball. When a referee is present, this call when made by a player, is subject to referee approval.

The ability of the players will dictate the appropriate action in deciding whether to take a shot. An Open player might want to take advantage of the opponent's position on the court and will confidently hit the ball near the opponent. A "B" player would chose to take the hinder because he/she wasn't sure of making a safe shot, or by trying to safely hit "around" the opponent the result is a bad shot.

A player is entitled to an unrestricted swing at the ball, including backswing and follow-through. A swing hinder is similar to a ball hinder inasmuch as contact on the backswing is pretty indisputable (not to mention dangerous) However contact on the follow-through is not necessarily a hinder if the player's shot was not affected by the contact. (The player struck may not call the hinder.)

A hold-up on a shot for safety's sake, is the same whether the concern is striking an opponent with the ball or the racquet. If a player feels somewhat cramped but chooses to shoot the ball to take advantage of the opponent who is trapped or out of position, there is no hinder here, whether the point is won or not. The player has relinquished the right to a hinder call by taking the shot.

A good rule of thumb for requesting a "hinder" in a questionable situation, is to imagine the opposite results. Would your "call" be the same whether the shot made it to the wall or skipped? If not, perhaps you should reexamine your motives.

Questions or comments appreciated. Write Editor, PO Box 16515, Mpls, MN 55416-0515

Rules Quiz

- Q. Is a ball that is "carried" a legal shot?
- A. A "carry" or "sling" occurs when the ball remains on the racquet instead of being struck by the strings. It is NOT a legal hit and should be called immediately. Often the ref is unable to distinguish this, and a player should not hesitate to call it on himself.
- Q. Where does a partner stand during the serve?
- A. The AARA rules are not only specific about where a partner must stand during the serve, but also how. The server's partner must stand straight with his/her back to the sidewall and with both feet flat on the floor within the service box (on either side of the court) from the moment the service motion begins until the ball passes the short line. Violation (of any part of this rule) is a foot fault. (3.b)
- Q. What happens when a player serves out-of-order?
- A. When either partner serves out-of-order, the points scored by that server will be subtracted and an out serve will be called. If the second server serves first, after subtracting any points scored, the first server receives the "out" service and the second server continues. If the first server serves twice, after subtracting any points scored, the second server receives the "out" service and a sideout results. Note: Players may change service order at the beginning of any game (notify referee of change) but not during a game.
- Q. Does it matter which partner has the service at the beginning of the game since only one service is allowed?
- A. Yes, the player designated as the first server must serve first even at the beginning of the game when there is only one service. 7

AARA Supports Junior Programs

The AARA has published a booklet for developing and conducting successful junior racquetball programs. This booklet is available through the MSRA. It includes ideas on how to start a junior program for clubs who can't seem to get it off the ground. It also contains suggestions to diversify and vary a current successful program. It discusses ways that parents can support their child and club. It addresses the problem of what to do when your club doesn't promote junior racquetball. From specific drills to fund raising ideas, this booklet has some sound suggestions based on successful junior programs in California and Michigan. If a club manager or even an interested parent would like to read this valuable asset to any junior program, contact the MSRA to "check-out" their copy.

Watch for our next survey:



"What's important in a tournament?"
Questionnaires will be at Doubles tourney.

Newsletter Coordinator:

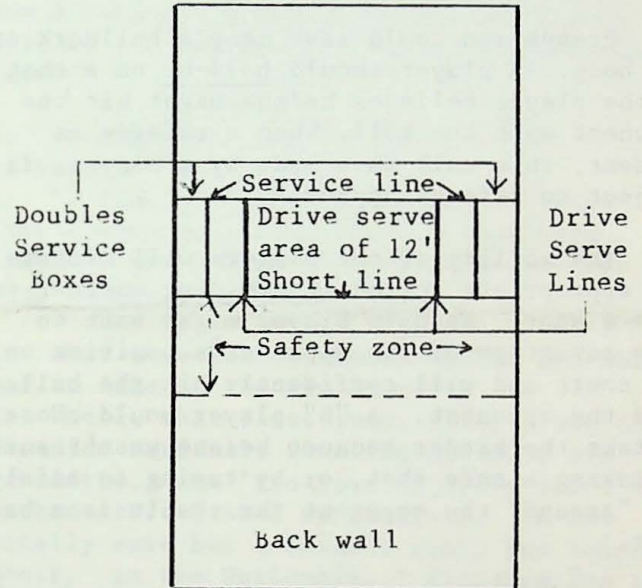
Marta Groess

Court Changes

If you are noticing new lines on your courts this year, it is because the AARA rules are now defining the safety zone with a broken line extending the full width of the court. This should make it easier both for the referee to call encroachments, but even more important for the player to judge the distance thereby promoting safety.

A proposed court/line change is being tested on some courts that will eliminate certain screen serves. A line parallel to the service box will be drawn 4' from either wall creating a 12' service area. Drive serves must be made from within this area. While this change is not official yet, racquetball players should be aware of pending changes.

Front wall (20')



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