

The NHRA Experiences Growth Over the Summer!

*H*i Everyone,

Your New Hampshire Racquetball Association Board of Directors has had a very enjoyable and productive summer putting together the upcoming season. We started by adding four new board members to help lighten the load this year. First, Ron Bouchard, who will bring to this board lots of experience in the printing and tournament areas. Ron Bye, from the seacoast area who can help us tremendously with the day to day activities of the board and establishing more racquetball on the seacoast. Owen McGarrahan, who will help us with our fundraising and financial capacities, and Suzanne Ewert, who designs our website and will take a more active role in tournament prep and press coverage. As always thanks to Stacey Bruzzese for putting together this beast of a newsletter.



I am proud to say that 2003 is shaping up already to be the most successful year in the history of the NHRA. Hosting the Junior Nationals here was a great accomplishment for such a tiny state, and we are looking to have more events of that nature. We have never been more committed to continuing to build the NHRA with the most experienced people in the sport on our board. We are a group that has a great desire to back up our vision of 300+ members and great events all season long.

Thanks to all of our members for your continued support, and we welcome your thoughts and suggestions on the upcoming year.

Kelley

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NHRA Features New Hampshire Players

In an effort to recognize players who work hard for the love of the game we have added a new feature to the quarterly newsletter. Beginning with this fall issue, the NHRA Newsletter will include "The NHRA Spotlight Player". In this section you will find the profile of a local racquetballer. Someone who plays hard, and strives to improve in their respective division. This feature will include some basic information about the athlete, as well as a highlight from the game, told in the player's own words. It is our hope that this will be a way to get to know fellow racquetball players throughout New Hampshire. If you would like to provide a suggestion for the next Profile, please e-mail the board at nhboard@nhracquetball.com.

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Chris
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John
Varrill

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Suzanne
Ewert

Ron
Bouchard

Ron
Bye

Newsletter
Editor
Stacey
Bruzzese

Tournament Entry *CHANGES* for Upcoming Season

We will be changing the way we accept entries during the upcoming tournament season. In the past we have allowed entry by telephone. We will be phasing this form of entry out over the next 6 months. There really is no need for it, especially with the advances of email, and fax entries and not to forget the good old fashioned mail in entry! Telephone entries take more manpower than we have available, and usually involve a call back, again more work than is needed. Many states already do this and since we have the same dates and deadlines year after year, we feel that it won't be a major adjustment. We will notify you by email of any upcoming deadlines, as well as posting the dates on our posters and in our newsletters.

A second change is that the board will be responsible for ALL entries whether it be by mail, fax, or email. ***So take note of new addresses on the applications!*** If you haven't read between the lines by now, I will not be involved in the tournament process any longer. This will help to involve more people, and make the events better in the long run. Please bare with us during these changes as we look forward to an exciting tournament season!

Kelley

Announcement!

Demo night at the Executive Health & Sports Center. Monday September 8th, 6am - 8pm. Come and check out the latest from all your favorite companies. Reps from E-force, Ektelon and Wilson will be there to show off the new lines, and answer questions. You can also score great deals on last year's lines too!

The Junior Nationals Championships

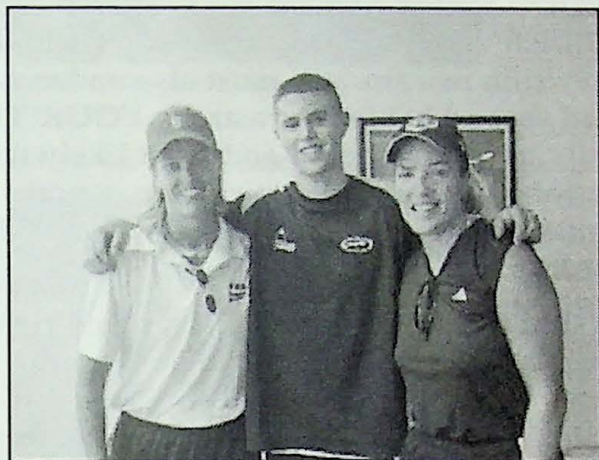
Fran Davis Racquetball Comes To New England

By Suzanne Ewert

This summer New Hampshire hosted the 2003 Head Junior Nationals Championships in June. To recognize the importance of that occasion, Governor Benson signed into law a special day just for junior racquetball players. The original proclamation is available to

view on our website. The event was a great success! Many volunteers from the NHRA Board and local

clubs were on hand to help coordinate the food and cheer on the young athletes. Feedback from the Juniors, and their parents was phenomenal. We certainly hope to have the juniors back to do it again sometime soon.



Mike Keddle with coaches Kelley Beane and the #1 player in the world, Cheryl Gudinas.

I've been reading the press about Fran and her racquetball camps since I first started playing tournaments, and have always wanted to sign up. It sounds great – 3 days with a top racquetball instructor, along with the help of a top pro player, working to fix the flaws in my game. So I finally signed up for the Boston camp (actually held in Brockton) early in July. I had just recovered from having surgery on my playing hand and figured that it would be a good idea to take the camp before I drilled all of my bad habits back into my game. So I headed down to Brockton on Friday night, with the camp scheduled from 6:30-10:30. Cliff Swain was the pro slated to help out Fran – I was really looking forward to getting tips from a fellow lefty, but unfortunately Cliff wasn't going to be there. Fran enlisted the help of top NH junior, Mike Keddle to take Cliff's place.

Mike rode with me to Brockton, and we got there about an hour late after crawling through heavy Mass commuter traffic. Fran already had everyone in the court, and was teaching forehand mechanics. It figures that I'm late for the part I need the most! Not to worry, Fran was able to re-adjust my stance and stroke mechanics just fine. Fran took time to answer any and all questions on the forehand, and then it was on to the backhand. We all struck a backhand pose while Fran and Mike walked around the court, making little (or big) adjustments. She covered ceiling ball technique as well, which was enlightening. I have found it to be much easier to hit a consistently good ceiling ball after learning it from Fran. After practicing our new stroke mechanics, Fran sectioned everyone into groups and had us play each other. She kept an eye on all of the groups, frequently coming inside the court to watch and question our strategy. It was easy to see that most of us were not using court positioning or shot selection correctly. While Fran watched us play, Mike was busy recording us all, one by one, for the video analysis on Saturday. He recorded forehand and backhand strokes, hitting the ball from 4 angles. Then he recorded each student playing 5 minutes against another student. We wrapped up right at 10:30, and drove home to get some sleep for the early 9am start on Saturday. NH tourney players Lee Monks and Ken Scherer were also part of the group, and everyone got a ride together. It was great having friends from our tournament community sharing the experience!

Saturday started with lectures on shot selection, court positioning and drills. Guess where the center of the court really is? Not where most people think! I'd tell you, but Fran would probably come after me for revealing her secrets! After an hour and a half of the lecture, we again broke into groups to work on drilling. I went in a group with Lee and Ken, and we took turns trying to train our bodies to hit the ball the right way. Everyone had an Achilles' heel they were trying to fix – for most people it was the backhand, but I needed help with my forehand and that tennis swing I can't seem to shake! Mike tried patiently for about 15 minutes, but I wasn't getting it right. Fran came in and maybe 5 minutes later, I was actually hitting the ball the right way! It will take many hours of drilling to get my body to do it naturally, but at least now I have the tools to fix my technique with some hard work. *continued on page 7...*

Is Sportsmanship Dead?

By Ron Bye

It seems we could, and perhaps should, all learn a very valuable lesson from some very classy sportsmen. Athletes competing at the very highest levels of their sport, who have not forgotten what good sportsmanship is all about. In the Tour de France recently, one of the most premier cycling events in the world - Jan Ullrich of Germany intentionally held back the competition when his arch rival, Lance Armstrong of the United States Postal Service Team, crashed and fell. He provided enough time for Armstrong to recover from the accident and catch back up with the group. Now this may seem like quite a first-rate gesture, when in-fact it was an ENORMOUS action. Armstrong is attempting to win his fifth consecutive Tour, tying an all time record, and Ullrich was his closest competitor with only 67 seconds separating them at the time! In addition to the very slim margin, you must also understand Ullrich has finished first only once, in 1997, and has finished second behind Armstrong FOUR TIMES!! So you see, this was an incredible gesture. He could easily have pressed on and most likely taken the overall lead away from Armstrong. It seems that Armstrong had provided a similar opportunity for Ullrich in the past. Armstrong held up the competition until Ullrich could get up from a crash a couple years ago and apparently Ullrich has a very good memory despite all that was at stake!!

Can we also learn to be supreme sportsmen when we are simply battling it out for bragging rights or at best a few hundred dollars?? I have been playing tournaments for only a couple years seriously and have had the opportunity to see both the best of us and the worst of us. I have mostly been fortunate to have played and seen some very good people and I have had the unfortunate experience of seeing and hearing of some horrendous acts of unsportsmanlike conduct...continued on page 5

The Local Favs

National Rankings of NH Players as of 06/01/03

From July-August 2003 online edition of *Racquetball* magazine

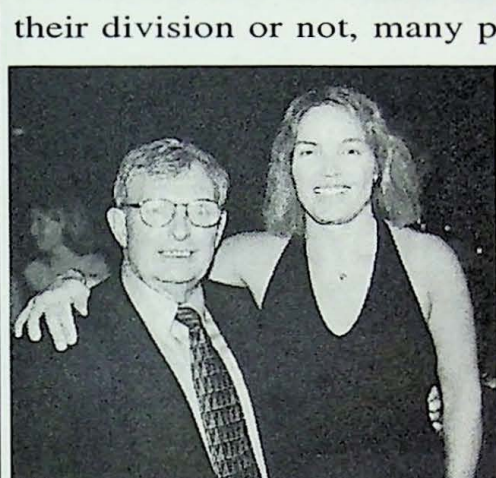
Chris Zalegowski: Men's Open, #16; 25+, #15(T)	Pat Sims: Women's A, #4
Scott Reiff: Men's Open, #26(T)	Deb Irvine: Women's A, #20(T); B, #12(T), 45+ A/B, #8(T)
Gary Walsh: Men's B, #23(T)	Patty Thomas-Danos: Women's B, #28(T); 45+ A/B, #16(T)
Scott Stoodley: Men's C, #3(T)	Jean Lerch: Women's C, #3; 40+ C/D, #3
Ken Scherer: Men's C, #13	Teresa LaBrie: Women's C, #4
Carl Hassum: Men's D, #17	Sharon Shapiro: Women's C, #8, 40+ C/D, #1
Greg West: Men's Novice, #1	Suzanne Ewert: Women's C, #10
Bruce Gervais: Men's Novice, #24(T)	Cathy Doucet: Women's D, #6; 35+ C/D, #8(T)
Mike Keddie: Men's 24-, #18(T); 24- A/B, #16(T); Boy's 16-, #5(T)	Kim Roy, Women's D, #8(T)
Chuck Gates: Men's 40+, #22(T)	Martha Robinson: Women's D, #21; 35+ C/D, #12(T)
Sid Bird: Men's 50+, #23	Ceci Carpenter: Women's D, #22(T)
Mitch Milewski: Men's 60+, #9(T)	Tracie Madore: Women's Novice, #6(T)
Bob Drouin: Men's 65+, #8(T)	Lisa Koolman: Women's 30+, #17(T)
Ken Hardman: Men's 70+, #20(T); 60+ C/D, #8(T); 65+ A/B, #3(T)	Ann Doucette: Women's 30+, #24(T)
Norbert LeCompte: Men's 70+, #24(T); 65+ A/B, #3(T)	Kelley Beane: Women's 30+, #30, 35+, #25(T), 40+, #20(T)
Lee Monks: Men's 25+ C/D, #6(T)	Diane Weissbach: Women's 35+, #21(T)
Joe Richards: Men's 45+ C/D, #21(T)	Lauren Lyndon: Girl's 8-, #3
Ron Bouchard: Men's 55+ C/D, #16; 60+ C/D, #8(T); 65+ A/B, #1(T); 65+ C/D, #1(T)	Rebecca Nader: Girl's 8-, #5(T)
Kian Fuertes: Boy's 8-, #10(T)	Shannon Larkin: Girl's 8-, #10(T)
Beau Breton: Boy's 12-, #8; 14-, #18	Kristin Lawrence: Girl's 12-, #27(T)
Gavin Bennett: Boy's 14-, #10	

Nationals Singles Championships



From left to right: Kelley Beane, Ron Bouchard, Jean Lerch, Lee Monks and John Ancompora.

Over Memorial Day weekend the 2003 Ektelon 36th USRA National Singles Championships took place in Houston, Texas. More than 600 players competed in this U.S. National team qualifier. The top two Men's and Women's open finishers qualify for the World and Pan American Games U.S. Teams. In addition, players from around the country, in a variety of age and skill levels compete for the top spot in their respective divisions.



Ron Bouchard and Cheryl Gudinas

Whether they are the top seed in their division or not, many players participate in this event because of a lifelong love of the sport, and a desire to push themselves to improve. We would like to extend Congratulations to the New Hampshire players who competed over the summer in this exciting event. Among the 600+ players were Sharon Shapiro, Jean Lerch, Lee Monks, Mike Keddie, Ron Bouchard and John Ancompora.

Joining this years Open winners, Rocky Carson of Laguna Niguel, California and Cheryl Gudinas of Lisle, Illinois, were some of our very own. Sharon Shapiro of Manchester, New Hampshire took home the Gold in the Women's 40+, Jean Lerch of Exeter New Hampshire finished with the Silver in the Women's C division and Lee Monks finished with the Bronze in the Men's 25+ C/D division. All players were honored at the sports banquet, which wrapped up the tournament.



Jean Lerch and Kim Roy

Advertising Opportunity!

If you are looking for an alternative to advertising in large publications with high price tags—consider advertising with us!

Newsletter Ad Rates:

\$100. Full page

\$50 for half page

\$25 for quarter page

\$15 for Business card size

The newsletter goes out to the full NHRA membership plus all the clubs, former members and many RB friends - so advertise here!

Yearly rates are also available.

Sportsmanship Continued

Continued from page 4...We should all take a lesson from these two incredibly classy sportsmen and always bring our best attitude if not our best game!! We will always have some wins and some losses, but the people we encounter along the way will surely remember the action more than the play!! Be courteous, honest in calling your own shots, and remember the referee is someone just like you. Someone who may or may not have seen what happened - but are always trying to call it the best they can. At the start and end of each game give your opponent a "good luck" and a "great match"! Win, lose or draw, play to win, but remember you will be judged by your actions more than the resulting score!

The NHRA Spotlight Player



Name: Sharon Shapiro

Age: 44

Playing Since: 1999

Level: B & C

Sharon is originally from Newburg, New York. She now lives in Manchester, New Hampshire and works for Dartmouth Hitchcock Manchester as an HR Generalist. Her father taught her to play racquetball at age 15. She always played with her dad, and even competed in a couple of tournaments in Manchester at the Willows about 12-13 years ago as a novice. She gave up playing for close to 10 years and got back into playing at the Y-MCA in Merrimack with her father about four years ago, and got the bug to come back.

Sharon on Winning the Nationals:

I started seriously playing about two years ago after a long break. I joined the Executive in Manchester because of the strong racquetball program. I played in the women's B league and realized how much I loved the sport and loved the competition. The Executive has an exceptional program, and we have great competition in our league - the women I played with have made me bring my game up. Last summer I took a camp with Kelley Beane and Cheryl Gudinas and that helped me be a better competitor this year. I started hearing talk of the Nationals around Regional time, I didn't know much about it, other than I had to play in the Regionals to qualify. A few players that I know well were talking about going down just to experience the event, and do the best they could. Fortunately I had the opportunity to go, I was able to get the time off from work and everything fell into place. I discussed it with Kelley Beane and her words to me were, if you go - make sure you go with no expectations - it's an unbelievable event, go for the experience and the chance to see some of the best racquetball you will ever see. With Kelley's help I practiced hard, and planned for the trip. I wanted to be able to be ready to play, but again not put any pressure on myself to win. I literally went to Houston not expecting to win a match! I was so overwhelmed by the size of the event! Everything was well planned and organized. I got there early so I could have a day to get acclimated to the city and the event, and root for some of the hometown men competing. The competition started on Wednesday. I would be competing in the Women's C's and Women's 40 C/D events. It ended up the Women's C was a full draw, and the 40 C/D was a combined 40-60 round robin. It was great because I was guaranteed 4 days of playing. I won my first Women's C match and then came up against the #1 Women's seed in round #2 and lost. But I had won my first match so I had already exceeded my expectations! In the over 40 C/D category I played some great women from different parts of country. I even got to play against Jean Lerch! What a great match we had and what a great pleasure it was and always is to play Jean. I had a great time in Houston, the people were wonderful, and most of all I will always be grateful to Kelley who said just go have some fun - fun it was, the gold medal was the icing on the cake. I never expected it, not to say I didn't work hard, but never did I think I could achieve what I did. I have just met so many wonderful people over the past couple of years of competing, the support I had in Houston was remarkable. The New England group gave me such support, support I never imagined and am ever so thankful for. I would highly recommend the experience to anyone who loves the sport. To live and breath the sport for a few days and leave everything else behind is not an opportunity you get often.



Fran Davis Continued

Continued from page 3... A couple of small backhand pointers, and I was ready for the next part of the camp – video analysis! I was dreading this part, as I know all too well how ungainly my forehand technique is. I never realized until I saw myself on tape that one of the biggest things I need to address is bending my knees and hitting the ball lower to the ground – something that small will make a big difference. I heard all of the things I expected to hear on my forehand, and got a nice surprise with my backhand. My fully extended follow-through is actually a good thing! Bend the knees, change the grip a little, and my backhand is in good shape.

We finished up Saturday at 5:00 to go have some fun in Boston. Not too much fun though, camp started Sunday right at 9:00 am. Sunday morning came quickly and soon we found ourselves in the hands of Mike, who was ready and waiting for us with some conditioning drills. We did all sorts of drills that had everyone running around the court, knees bent and racquet ready to go. It's amazing how only 2-3 minutes of shuffle drills can get the blood pumping! Once Mike was through with us, we gathered around Fran,

Reminder!

Season Opener....

The Executive Open
Manchester New Hampshire
September 28, 29 & 30th

Look for the application inserted in this edition of the NHRA Newsletter and register for this event now!

Calling ALL Sponsors!!!

We are in need of sponsors for State events throughout the upcoming season.

For more information on the many ways you can help out, please call Kelley Beane or contact her through the web site:

www.nhracquetball.com.

going over the big guidebook every student gets at the start of the camp. She covered off-court training, nutrition and mental toughness among other things. Then it was time to hit the courts again, as we try to use all of the info flooding our brains in games to 7 points against Mike. Again, everyone got to have their mini-game with Mike filmed for posterity. It is interesting to see how people have changed their thought processes after only 2 days. It was most visible in shot selection and positioning, since actual stroke mechanics take time and lots of drilling to show progress. After everyone played Mike, we got one last shot to pick Fran's brain before the camp ended at 1:00.

On the drive back to NH, I thought about the weekend and wondered if it was worth the time and money. I'd have to say yes – my game didn't jump to an Open level after a magical weekend of racquetball with Fran, but I now have the tools to take myself to the next level. And that's really the key – you will only go as far as you are willing to work for, but the info I got throughout the weekend is invaluable for the journey.

Racquetball – fun & fitness for life!



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YOUR SEPTEMBER 2003 NHRA NEWSLETTER
INCLUDES CURRENT RANKINGS



Upcoming Events

September						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19 Connecticut	20 State Doubles
21 Stratford AC	22	23	24	25	26 Executive	27 Open
28 EHSC	29	30				

October						
			1	2	3 Ektelon/ USRA	4 National Dou- bles
5 Minnesota	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17 Justin Open	18 Nashua
19 Athletic Club	20	21	22	23	24 Halloween	25 Open
26 Rhode Island	27	28	29	30	31 Fall Fling	

November						
						1 Fall Fling
2 Connecticut	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14 Sims Open	15 Sims Athletic
16 Club	17	18	19	20	21 US Open &	22 Capital Open
23 TN & Concord, NH	24	25	26	27	28 Winter's	29 Comin'
30 Cedardale						

December						
	1	2	3	4	5 Connecti- cut Open &	6 B/C Challenge
7 CT & Great Bay	8	9	10	11	12 Gib Smith	13 Memorial
14 Vermont	15	16	17	18	19 IRF Junior	20 Worlds
21 Florida	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			