

The Racquetball Reporter

Summer 1992

Quarterly Publication of the Racquetball Association of Michigan

Cole Wins Houston Nationals

The Ektelon AARA National Singles Championships celebrated its silver anniversary by crowning one of Michigan's best, the 1992 Men's Singles Champion.

Chris Cole, having just cele-

brated his 25th birthday, slid past junior phenomenon John Ellis of California to capture the Men's Open National Championship title, 8-15, 15-10, 11-9, on a very memorable Memorial Day.

For the exhausted Cole, the tie-breaker in the finals marked his fourth consecutive tie-breaker of the tournament.

"Nothing comes easy at this level of competition and I certainly seemed hell-bent on proving that theory," he said. "What's even more amazing to me is the fact that I was behind in every tie-breaker and had to constantly battle back from the brink of losing. Although I won, I just as easily could have been bounced out in the round of 16."

The roads to the championship match for each finalist were in sharp contrast. Ellis, seeded 14th, breezed through the bottom bracket, not losing a game to an impressive list of competitors on his way to the Memorial Day showdown. He scored impressive and quick wins against #3 seed Tim Hansen in the round of 16, Joey Paraiso in the quarters and #2 seed Doug Ganim in the semi-finals.

Cole, meanwhile, found a rougher road to the Gold and littered also with tough players. His first two matches went quickly in two games, before the tie-breaker syndrome set in.

In the round of 16, Cole, seeded #4 was pitted against #13 seed Dan Fowler, who won the second toughest division at Houston in Men's 19+, while also

playing Open. Fowler's ability was evident, as he won the first game 15-14 and sent the favored Cole slightly reeling. Cole regained his composure, however, to take game two and finish with the 11-7 tie-breaker win for the match.

This win not only propelled Cole into the quarters, but also earned him a one-year extension of his spot on the U.S. National Team. However, this win did not guarantee him a place on the team that will go to the World Championships in Montreal later this summer. Thus, making the semi-final round became his immediate goal.

Standing in his way was #5 seed Michael Bronfeld who used his quickness and a slow start by his opponent to take a 5-0 lead in their tie-breaker. Despite the enormous pressure, Cole dug deep and gutted out an unbelievable 11-10 triumph.

The imposing figure of Tim Sweeney, last year's National Champion, loomed on the horizon. Sweeney, serving around 180 mph the first four rounds, was dispatching opponents faster than an M-60 assault machine gun spat bullets.

"I played Tim at Intercollegiates in April," Cole explained. "Although he beat me in two games, I had some confidence going into our Houston match."

However, Sweeney came out quickly, bolting to a lead with laser beam drive serves, not allowing Cole to make many

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A new season begins; RAM hopeful for '92-93

by Chris Cole

With the 1992 Houston Nationals completed, our 1991-92 racquetball season has come to close.

It has been a good and bad year for Michigan racquetball. Ken Bonnett, Jim Earley, Maureen Mead and Jim Easterling's series of tournaments, all provided tournament player with plenty of opportunities to compete. This next season all four sets of tournaments will again offer players all over the state a chance to play in a tournament in their local area.

The bad news is that membership in RAM and the AARA has dropped drastically and Michigan has fallen to 13th place in total members. This concerns me, and the RAM board is currently addressing this issue to see how we might possibly raise it. The economy is certainly a factor, especially for our state, so different measures may need to be taken in order to spur interest and garner new members.

The 1992-93 season will see some new things from the RAM Board. The return of the Player of the Year Awards highlights these Long a tradition since the early 1980s, these awards have been absent for a few years. Tom Blakeslee and the rest of the board feel it is time to enliven this tradition.

This new season will also see the formation of a Hall of Fame Commission, chaired by Hall of Fame member, Bob Wilhelm. This commission will nominate and select old-timers who have drifted from the game, and who wouldn't be known to today's voters. Keeping a link to Michigan's racquetball heritage is extremely important and I hope the Hall of Fame election committee fills this void.

I would like to thank the other RAM Board members for their time and effort this past season and I look forward to a prosperous 1992-93 year. Vice-president Tom Blakeslee, Treasurer Lou Ellen Fecher, Secretary Jim Earley, member Mark Werthman and newsletter editor Sandy Conlen all did excellent volunteer work, and their efforts do not go unnoticed.

Zimmerman heads to Elite Training Center

by W.T. Blakeslee

Brent Zimmerman has been selected as Region 9 Team USA Junior for 1992.

This honor allows Brent to tryout for the Junior Team USA, which is comprised of 14 boys and girls. Tryouts take place at the Elite Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado, where 44 junior players fight for the 14 spots.

Brent is an outstanding student as he attends Northview High School in Grand Rapids, with a 3.8 grade point average. As an honors student he also has perfect attendance and participates in many extracurricular activities.

His racquetball performance is obviously in a league of his own. Nationally, in his age group, he has consistently finished in the quarterfinals, and placed second in 1990. This year with the help of his doubles partner, Eric Storey of Utah, he finished second in the national tournament, which only adds to the glory of holding the current state and regional titles in his age division.

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of
Michigan

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RAM Tournament Sanctioning
Jim Earley (313) 761-4440

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Sandy Conlen, Editor
3152 S Henderson
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W.T. Blakeslee
Ken Bonnett
Christopher Cole
Jim Easterling
Jim Earley
Lou Ellen Fecher

State Singles draws 350

The Coliseum II Racquetball Club hosted the 1992 Racquetball Association of Michigan's State Singles Championships April 24-26.

With nearly 350 people in the draw, it was the largest tournament of the year in Michigan as players from around the state competed for the prestigious title of State Champion.

The Women's and Men's Open divisions crowned a couple of players used to State Championship glory. Val Springer successfully defended her '91 title by defeating newcomer Laura Patterson. Springer is already established as Michigan's #1 female and has made strides elsewhere, as evident by her finals appearance at the Regionals in Ohio in April.

The Men's Open final pitted best of friends Jim Floyd and Chris Cole against each other yet again. Cole, coming out the victor, counts this win as his seventh Men's Open State Singles title.

The tournament was run extremely well by Tom Blakeslee, who was assisted by Lou Ellen and Anne Fecher. The RAM board would like to thank the following for their contributions: Hilton Screeners, Mike Anderson, Wayne Holman and PENN.

As always RAM appreciates all those who participate in the event and extends hearty congratulations for the winners.

*Congratulations
RAM State Singles
Championship
Winners!*

1992 Michigan State Champions

WOMEN'S OPEN

WOMEN'S A

WOMEN'S B

WOMEN'S C

WOMEN'S D

WOMEN'S 25

WOMEN'S 30A

WOMEN'S 30B

WOMEN'S 35A

WOMEN'S 35B

WOMEN'S 40

WOMEN'S 45

MEN'S OPEN

MEN'S A

MEN'S B

MEN'S C

MEN'S D

MEN'S Novice

MEN'S 25

MEN'S 30A

MEN'S 30B

MEN'S 35A

MEN'S 35B

MEN'S 40A

MEN'S 40B

MEN'S 45A

MEN'S 45B

MEN'S 50A

MEN'S 50B

MEN'S 55

MEN'S 60

MEN'S 65

BOY'S 8

Val Springer

Marta Rubcich

Karen Green

Marianne McHugh

Kathy Foley

Val Springer

Diane McCauley

Karen Green

Laura Patterson

Leonora Zelenock

Peg Shaw

Betty Ann Gilliland

Chris Cole

Bob Gravelyn

Larry Sarver

Scott Sargent

Steve Marsh

Kevin Harkness

Scott Pufahl

Greg Hodges

Ray Matthews

Scott Worthy

Scott Bruce

Marty Mangino

Terry Lawler

Tom Brownlee

Ron Slavik

Jess Madden

Oscar Olivo

Ron Pudduck

Lynn Hahn

Duane Russell

Jack Huczek

Cole collects another gold

U.S. takes all in Honduras

The city of Tegucigalpa, Honduras hosted the Tournament of the Americas April 11-18, and Michigan's Chris Cole helped the U.S. National Team to a gold medal.

Delegations from 17 countries traveled to Honduras in hopes of ambushing a U.S. team composed of many new players thought previously to be "the weakest unit" the U.S. has ever sent into a national event.

Despite being the underdogs, the U.S. Team won men's, women's and team competitions by the widest margin of victory in international competition history. Their domination was so great that they captured seven of a possible eight gold medals.

In women's competition, the U.S. ladies produced a clean sweep winning the gold, silver and bronze. Lynne Coburn captured the gold in winning her first international event against teammate Jackie Paraiso Gibson. Robin Levine rounded out the U.S. women's sweep by defeating Canada's #1 player Carol McPhetteridge for third.

The men's bracket is where true surprise came from. Due to the recent decision by the Men's Professional players to exclude themselves from AARA events, the U.S. men's team were chosen from their finishes at the 1991 Houston Nationals. Supposedly weaker players, Tim Hansen, Cole and John Ellis were expected to be chump change to the Canadian men.

Cole started the tournament off well by defeating Canada's #2 player Mike Ceresia in the quarters by a slim 11-7 tie-breaker. Ellis, on the other side of the draw, manhandled his two Canadian opponents in the quarters and semi's. The junior phenom pummeled #3 Hayden Jones and #1 Sherman Greenfield in two

games each, insuring an all USA final with Cole having beaten teammate Hansen in the other semi-final match.

The finals was an exciting match for the standing room only crowd of Latin Americans who marveled at Ellis' power and Cole's quickness and mental toughness. The scores of 15-13, 13-15 and 11-9 correctly indicate the closeness of each game and the excitement the match generated.

With his first international gold medal, Cole joined best friend Jim Floyd as a Michigan U.S. Team member to win such a prize.

In 1991, following his National Doubles Championship win with partner Tim Hansen, Floyd won the gold in doubles with Hansen

at the Pacific Rim Championship in Hawaii and also at the Tournament of the Americas in Santiago, Chile.

In other action, the U.S. women's doubles team did not lose a game all week capturing the gold medal. Levine, (in a dual role of both singles and doubles) and Kim Russell blazed a path to victory defeating Canada in a quick final.

The men's doubles produced the only U.S. failure to win the gold when Ellis and Eric Mueller lost a tight match to Canada's Roger Harripersad and Mike Ceresia.

In team competition, the U.S. finished with over 120 points, a whopping 60 points ahead of the second place Canadian team. Mexico rounded out third

Huczek wins second junior title

by Chris Cole

Jack Huczek and Brent Zimmerman represented the state of Michigan admirably at the 1992 National Junior Olympics in Salt Lake City, Utah, June 27-July 1, 1992.

Huczek last year's 8 and under National Champion and #1 seed, repeated as this year's 8 and under winner as well, besting a field of more than twenty kids. Zimmerman, also seeded first in his division of 14 and under, was upset in the semi-finals, but managed to bring home the bronze. However, his thirst for a gold medal was quenched when he and partner Eric Storey of Utah captured first place in 14 and under doubles competition.

This was the chief qualifying event for the newly formed Junior Team USA, which is the brainchild of former Michigan dweller

Jim Hiser. This development was an off-shoot of the adult U.S. National Team, where forty-five juniors, from around the country, were picked from hundreds to receive a week long trip to the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado. From the forty-five finalists, seven boys and seven girls will be chosen for the 1992-93 Junior Team USA squad and receive uniforms, sweatshirts and opportunity to travel abroad in international competition, much like the adult U.S. National Team.

There are a few different avenues a junior player, ages fourteen and older, can be selected to tryout for the national team. The winners of the High School Nationals and Junior Olympics receive automatic spots on the list of forty-five, while each of the

Continued on page 15

Michigan claims champion

Continued from page one

shots.

"It took me nearly half of the first game to adjust to his pace having just played a slower-hitting player in Bronfeld. Once I got used to it however, I used my quick first step to start meeting the serve aggressively," he said.

Battling back, Cole caught the surprised defending champion and closed out game one 15-14 with a backhand cross-court kill shot.

Game two saw an increase in intensity from Sweeney and a decrease in surprise, as he snatched game two 15-11.

The tie-breaker was a series of momentum swings. As expected, Sweeney cranked up his drive serve for all it was worth and began the pivotal game up 3-0. Without warning, Cole began playing like he was possessed, and accelerated out to a 10-4 lead with a combination of good first serves and pin-point passing shots.

Attempting to stave off elimination, Sweeney showed his true championship mettle, inching his way closer point by point. The momentum was certainly with Sweeney when the ball broke at 5-10 and a faster one was put in play. Sensing this was the break he needed, Sweeney began hitting the ball so hard, it appeared to spectators that he was attempting to put a hole in the front wall. After two quick points to get to 7-10, this proved to be the champion's undoing.

"I knew he was just trying to mush every ball, so I kept setting him up at the backwall where he had to shoot from 40 feet. He skipped a forehand for side-out and then a backhand for match. It was just too difficult to control for him to maintain control swinging as hard as he was," Cole said after the win.

The stage was then set for the

final match: Cole against Ellis for the National Championship.

The pressure was certainly on Cole, knowing that no one had been able to win a game off the young Californian during the entire tournament, as well as the realization that he was facing a national television audience for the highest honor in American amateur racquetball.

Game one, for the most part, was the John Ellis highlight reel. Dispensing the notion that he would feel the pressure, Ellis took a 9-1 lead and never looked back, crushing the Michiganian 15-8.

The adage, "It ain't over 'till it's over," proved to be appropriate in this match as Cole battled both his nerves and his opponent to send the contest to a decisive third game.

"When he got up on me 4-0, I sort of lost my mental toughness. I began envisioning telling people back home that second place wasn't too shabby and coming up with excuses (of why I didn't win)," he explained. "But, somewhere I got it back together and made a comeback to win that game 15-10."

After a week of tie-breakers for Cole, it seemed only fitting that the game to decide it all would be yet another one. If either player felt butterflies at the start, their play certainly didn't reflect it: they were deadlocked for nearly 25 minutes up to 4-4.

Although Ellis was first to surpass this 4-4 standstill, taking the game to 6-4, it was Cole who headed for the win by using his drive serve to take the lead to 10-6. However, the Michigan superstar couldn't seem to put the game away, as he skipped his first chance at match point, allowing Ellis to bring the contest to a tense 9-10 "anybody's game."

The deciding factor came in

Ellis's attempt to tie the game, when he unbelievably skipped his serve; thus, it was side-out. Sensing this might be his final chance before Ellis overtook him, Cole hit a back-pedaling, forehand kill off the backwall: 11-9 game, match, National Championship and Gold Medal to Chris Cole.

"Right now, my feelings are indescribable, almost unreal. Houston is something we all dream for," Cole reflected with gold medal in hand. "But, it has always been just enough from my grasp for me to feel it was unattainable. Euphoria is probably the best word to describe how I feel."

Next up for the newly crowned National Champion will be the 1992 International Racquetball Federation World Championships held this August in Montreal, Canada.

This year's Houston Nationals also drew many other players from our state. They include: Joel Bonnett and Jim Floyd (round of 16, Men's Open); Jim Hamilton (round of 16, Men's 25+); Johnny Northern (fourth place, both Men's 30 and 45+); Scott Worthy (quarterfinals, Men's 30+); Stu Hastings (quarterfinals, Men's 35+); Hank Gates (round of 16, both Men's 50 and 55+); Diane McCauley (quarterfinals, Women's A); Kelly Kirk (round of 16, Women's 25+); Terry Straka (consolation, Women's 30+); Janet Insko (semi-finals, Women's 40+); Carol Marshall (round of 16, Women's 40+) Denise Foley (Women's 45+) and Luke Gunn, Melody Matties, Marty Mangino, Marta Rubcich, Ken Bonnett, Jim and Dianne Easterling, Jack White, Stacy Barbas, Paula Saad, Val Springer, Kaye Harrington, Pat Goodwin, Gordon Gallagher, Chuck McCauley and Bill Marshall.

Racquetball One ready for '92

The Racquetball One Tournament Series has expanded, as eleven events are scheduled for the up coming tournament season.

New sites this year include a fall adventure during the "color season" in beautiful Petoskey, Michigan, as well as the addition of the Grand Blanc Court Club in Grand Blanc and Birmingham to the schedule.

Again this year, there will be two Senior's/Master's events for all those thirty and over players. Prize money, plaques, shirts and more great raffles will highlight this year's series.

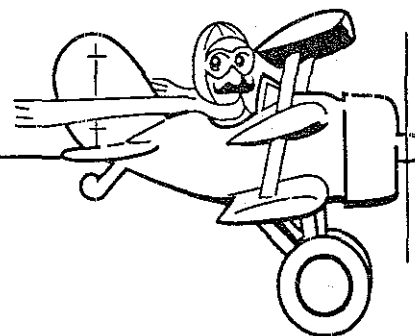
Ken Bonnett, tournament director, is working closely with all the clubs involved to try and get more players involved in racquetball. Look for exhibitions and other exciting events at Racquetball One tourneys.

Ken will be spending the entire summer organizing his series and is open to any suggestions from players. Feel free to give him a call at (616) 956-0550. Entry forms will be distributed in August and Ken hopes to see everyone September 18-20 at the Livonia Racquetime Fitness Center. Rest up those arms and get ready for another great season of racquetball!

RACQUETBALL ONE TOURNAMENT SERIES 1992-93 Season

Sept. 18-20	Racquetime Fitness Center	Livonia, MI
Oct. 2-4	National Health & Racquet	Petoskey, MI
Oct. 23-25	Michigan Athletic Club	Grand Rapids, MI
Oct. 30-1	Michigan Athletic Club RACQUETBALL ONE PROMO Racquetball Camp by the Dynamic Duo <i>Fran Davis/Stu Hastings</i>	Grand Rapids, MI
Nov. 6-8	Grand Blanc Court Club	Grand Blanc, MI
Nov. 20-22	Riverview Racquet Club	Grand Rapids, MI
Dec. 11-13	Omni Fitness Center	Muskegon, MI
Jan. 15-17	Michigan Athletic Club	Grand Rapids, MI
Jan. 29-31	Michigan Athletic Club SENIOR'S CLASSIC	East Lansing, MI
Feb. 19-21	Maple Courts	Birmingham, MI
Mar. 5-7	Trenton Athletic Club SENIOR FINALE	Trenton, MI
Mar. 26-28	Michigan Athletic Club GRAND FINALE	East Lansing, MI

**Racquetball One
Tournament Series Hotline
(616) 956-0550**



Junior spotlight

Tourney provides competition for all

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following is a brief feature on the junior players who highlighted the Junior Region 9 Championship Tournament in April. Their superb play and outstanding sportsmanship is to be commended, as they continue the Michigan tradition of competitive, championship racquetball. Thanks to Lou Ellen Fecher who compiled this information. RAM also congratulates Jack Huczek, two-time National 8 and under champion, as he successfully defended his title at the Junior Olympics this past July

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JUNIORS 18 & UNDER

Scott Hale won first place in the Juniors 18 & under division. Scott graduated this year from Port Huron High Northern High School and has been playing racquetball for 12 years. He also enjoys water skiing and golf.

Chad Visgar took second place honors and has been on the court for 6 years. He lives in Gateway and is '92 graduate from Washington Eisenhower High. Chad also enjoys tennis in his spare time.

Congratulations!

**Brent Zimmerman
1992
Region 9 Team
USA Junior**

*Best of Luck
from the RAM Board*

JUNIORS 16 & UNDER

Scott Zimmerman, a junior at Northview High in Grand Rapids won first place in the Juniors 16 & under division. In addition to racquetball, Scott is also quarterback on his high school football team and plays forward on the basketball team.

Andrew Frost of Sarnia, Canada took second place. He has only played racquetball for three years and also plays football for his high school as halfback.

Sarnia's **Brian Chadwick** took third place.

.....

JUNIORS 14 & UNDER

Brent Zimmerman is the Junior 14 & Under Champion. Brent has played racquetball for eight years and is currently a ninth grader at Northview High School in Grand Rapids. He also plays for the football and basketball teams for his school.

Justin McCabe from Waterlow South Dakota took second place honors. He has played for three years and attends Western Reserve Academy in Hudson, Ohio. He is also point guard on the basketball team.

Sterling Heights native **Jason Goy** took third place. He is an eighth grader at Flynn Junior High and plays thirdbase for his baseball team. He has been playing racquetball for two years.

.....

Junior Regional & State Warm-up Winners

JUNIORS 18
Scott Hale

JUNIORS 16
Scott Zimmerman

JUNIORS 14
Brent Zimmerman

MEN'S OPEN
Nick Rallis

MEN'S A/B
Dan Veith

MEN'S C
Rick Beck

MEN'S D
Mike McPharland

MEN'S 35B
Ron Bonds

MEN'S 40
Marty Mangino

MEN'S 40B
Mike Young

MEN'S 45
Mike Young

MEN'S 50
Robert Dynes

WOMEN'S OPEN
Cindy Seiders

WOMEN'S A
Kay Harrington

WOMEN'S B
Diane Pearson

AARA Michigan

MEN'S OPEN

Chris Cole	1330
Jim Floyd	520
Nick Rallis	470
Joel Bonnett	275
Stu Hastings	210

MEN'S A

Dan Veith	250
G. Gallagher	150
Mike Garbarino	150
Bob Gravelyn	150
Charles White	125

MEN'S B

Jim Davidson	165
Larry Sarver	150
Manny Amato	100
Scott Reneaud	95
Bill Marshall	75

MEN'S C

Rick Beck	325
Scott Sargent	265
John Wall	160
C VanHoose	150
Manny Amato	105

MEN'S D

M. McFarland	250
Steve Marsh	210
W. Panagos	210
Ken Franz	200
Bob Reou	125
John Hall	120

MEN'S 25+

J. Northern	300
Scott Pufahl	150
Greg Hodges	130
Jai Shekawat	130
Jim Hamilton	80
Dan Verbeck	75

MEN'S 30+

J. Northern	510
Scott Worthy	300
Greg Hodges	250
Mike Anderson	190
Jack White	110

MEN'S 35+

Scott Worthy	440
J. Northern	380
Stu Hastings	375
Jim Woolcock	340
Marty Mangino	155

MEN'S 35+B

Ron Bonds	375
Scott Bruce	150
B Momchilove	150
Van Conway	100
Brian Hedden	100
Lionel Guerra	75

MEN'S 35+C

Doug Kochneff	105
C. VanHoose	70
Richard Cramb	50
M. Stephen	50

MEN'S 35+C (cont.)

Matt Raymond	40
Mian Rashiad	30

MEN'S 40+

Marty Mangino	865
Tom Blakeslee	370
Bob Gravelyn	280
Doug Toth	255
Jim Santino	200

MEN'S 40+B

Mike Young	250
Terry Lawler	150
Jerry Eldred	100
Allan Mell	100
Gary Phipps	95
Steve Burghdorf	75

MEN'S 45+

Ken Bonnett	655
Tom Brownlee	300
Mike Young	270
J. Northern	200
Rick Parkhurst	200
Gary Phipps	170

MEN'S 50+

Robert Dynes	250
Hank Gates	180
Vince Callahan	170
Jim Connor	150
Jess Madden	150
Paul Becker	130

MEN'S 55+

Hank Gates	320
Dave Lund	200
Ron Pudduck	150
David Lund	100

MEN'S 60+

J.D. Driver	400
Lynn Hahn	350
Leonard Poole	125
R. McClelland	100
Charles Kaiser	75

MEN'S 65+

Duane Russell	300
Dick Caretti	250
Gerry Leone	125
R. Finkleman	100
Arthur Burke	70

WOMEN'S OPEN

Val Springer	475
Cindy Sieders	250
Laura Patterson	175
Leslie Kishigan	150
Kay Harrington	100
Lin Showerman	100

WOMEN'S A

Pam Parkhurst	325
Kay Harrington	250
Marta Rubich	200
Stacey Barbas	170
Paula Saad	150

Player Rankings

WOMEN'S B

Diane Pearson	515
Karen Green	280
Charlene Shaw	165
Kathy Beck	150
Diane Trombley	150
Barbara Swaab	130

WOMEN'S D

Kathy Foley	150
Judy Porter	150
C. Edmunds	100
Karen Hart	80
Terri Harris	75

WOMEN'S 30+

D. McCauley	215
Leslie Kishigan	155
Val Springer	130
Kay Harrington	100
Pam Parkhurst	70

WOMEN'S 40+

Janet Insko	300
Betty Gilliland	225
Peg Shaw	150
Barbara Swaab	100
Linda Eldred	75

WOMEN'S C

Darla Furze	250
Karen Green	215
Denise Knoll	180
M. McHugh	150
Terri Harris	130

WOMEN'S 25+

D. Leapheart	150
Val Springer	150
Marta Rubich	125
Melody Matties	100
Paula Saad	100

WOMEN'S 35+

Beth Gutowski	250
Karen Green	150
Laura Patterson	150
Denise Gravelyn	105
Cindy Sieders	100
Diana Trombley	70

Player ranking
figures
provided by the
AARA national
office.

Points as of
May 1992.

Letters...

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following is a letter received by Chris Cole, regarding the successful 1992 State Singles Championships. The RAM Board appreciates words of consideration and encouragement, as it is always looking out for the best interest of the Michigan racquetball player. Thanks Chuck and best of luck in all of your racquetball endeavors!

Dear Chris,

Just a brief note to thank you and Tom Blakeslee for the opportunity to play in the State Singles (my first venture) The competition/people were great!

I really enjoyed the experience and will be back. Lou Ellen did yeoman work and I'm not quite sure with the number of people/referees, etc. how it all gets done.

Very truly yours,
C.T. Kaiser

P.S. Chris: not sure how you keep your concentration in playing while trying to also see that the tournament is running smoothly. I also appreciated your interest in how I was doing.

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B-C-D round robin format successful; sets stage for future tournaments

by Jim Easterling

The 1992 B-C-D Round Robin Championships racquetball tournament, held in Waterford, was the first of its kind in Michigan and possibly the first to be held anywhere.

The tournament, held exclusively for B-C-D players took place on April 4-5 at the Crescent Lake Racquet Club was similar in format to Seniors/Masters type tournaments, in that there were no referees and entertained round robin format.

The event proved to be fun and exciting, as every player played on Saturday and Sunday both, in a minimum of five matches.

I would like to thank PENN Athletic Products for their support of racquetball in Michigan,

as well as with the tournament. A thank you also goes to Sports Plus, Advanced Floor Covering, Dreisbach Buick and Buddy's Pizza, for their donation of door prizes. Lastly, I would like to thank Vince Callahan, the club pro, who did numerous things before and during the tournament to help things run smoothly.

We look forward to seeing everyone next season at the 1993 B-C-D Round Robin Championships.

Listed are the top two winners in each division, as well as a couple highlights shots, from the tournament. Thanks again to all who participated in this special event.

Men's B

1st
Todd Bedenis
2nd
Hank Ferry

Men's C

1st
John Wall
2nd
Robert McClelland

Men's D

1st
Matt Raymond
2nd
William Panagos

Women's B

1st
Lorraine Gohr
2nd
Barb Swaab

Women's C/D

1st
Joanne Caleo
2nd
Kathi Foley



.....



At left are some highlight shots taken at the 1992 B-C-D tournament.

Men's B winner Todd Bedenis, top left, shows off his plaque, along with second place winner Hank Ferry

Joanne Caleo happily displays her first place trophy from the Women's C/D division.

Photos provided by Jim Easterling.

RAM Board Minutes

June 11, 1992

Attendance: Chris Cole, Tom Blakeslee, Jim Earley, Lou Ellen Fecher. Guests: Ken Bonnett, Maureen Mead.

Treasurer's report: Lou Ellen reported that we are in good standings with our rebates from the national office.

Secretary: Jim Earley: we outlined the schedule for the new 1992-93 season. Ken Bonnett would like to run and host the State Singles. Ken will get back to the board with a proposal at a later date. The schedule will be ready for print in the summer newsletter. Jim will get some prices on having the card printed for the 1992-93 schedule. The cards will be ready at the August Racquetime tournament.

Vice-president: Tom Blakeslee: Brent Zimmerman, is Michigan's choice for the USA team selection. Hamilton of Ohio or Brent will be selected to go to the Elite camp in July.

President: Chris Cole: Our memberships are down from past years. We need to come up with some ideas to get more Michigan players, playing again. The reason the membership is down is because of the economy. Chris will be working on new ideas and how to build memberships back up. We need help in the area of rankings. If anyone is interested, please contact the Board.

May 12, 1992

Attendance: Chris Cole, Tom Blakeslee, Lou Ellen Fecher and Jim Easterling

Treasurer's Report: March, April, State Championships, Junior Regionals, AARA fees. Approved

Vice-president: Elections are next month. Deadline for newsletter is May 26th. Tom will get with Doug Ganim and then with Chris on the the Junior Team. States went well—needed more help from Werthman/Earley. Chris read a note from Chuck Kaiser on how he enjoyed the States. Also discussed problems that came up at the States concerning the photographer and the match between Mike Davis and Cleo Biles. Jim Easterling suggested writing a letter to Mike Davis. We will wait to hear from Cleo Biles before we act. Tom talked to Jim Earley to set up the dates for new year's Doubles and States.

President: Newsletter will be mailed from Flint instead of Flushing this next time. The last newsletter should be available at the States. Sandy wants to expand the mini to be included in six newsletters. We need to change deadlines to speed up productions from start to finish. If we can't get our articles to her on time, then she should try to find fillers.

Guest: Jim gave us his sanctioning forms for November 13-15 and March 5-7. He suggested we send Chuck Kaiser's letter to be printed in the newsletter.

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Attend a RAM board
meeting and get involved
in Michigan's future.
For information contact

Chris Cole
(313) 239-4130

or

Tom Blakeslee
(313) 468-2787

Have a say in what
goes on...RAM needs you!

Letters...

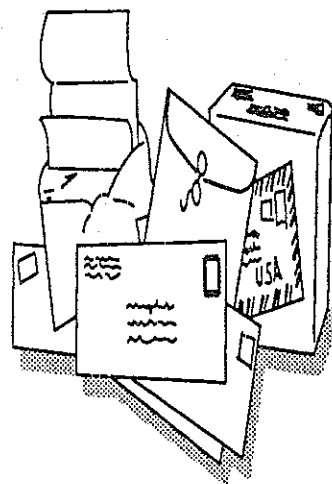
RAM welcomes letters and ideas from Michigan racquetball players. Write us and tell us what you think.

Chris Cole
President
2502 Kentucky
Flint, MI 48506

Tom Blakeslee
Vice-President
38154 Seaway Dr.
Mt. Clemens, MI 48045

Jim Earley
Sanctioning Director
c/o One on One
2875 Boardwalk
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

The Racquetball Reporter
c/o 3002 Miller Rd.
Apt. #1
Flint, MI 48503



Intercollegiates held in Ohio

Floyd wins silver; Cole takes bronze

Jim Floyd of Ferris State University, no stranger to Intercollegiate finals, lost a close match to 1991 National Champion, Tim Sweeney in the 1992 AARA World Intercollegiate Championships, held this year in Canton, Ohio.

This year's second place finish earned Floyd the dubious distinction of winning three straight silver medal at the college nationals. After winning the gold over Memphis State's Dave Simonette in 1989 as a freshman, he lost consecutive matches his sophomore and junior seasons to Todd O'Neil and Tim Sweeney respectively.

Despite Floyd's personal disappointment in three silvers, his

excellent intercollegiate record will stand up against anyone's for many years to come: he is the only player besides Andy Roberts to reach four straight college finals.

The championship match saw Sweeney blister Floyd 15-7 in game one as he racked up ace after ace, but Floyd returned the favor as he produced some photons of his own in game two leaving the stunned Sweeney shaking his head at the 15-4 bludgeoning.

In the tie-breaker match, Floyd had his chances to win the championship as he came out with a 3-0 lead, but couldn't sustain his momentum. He outplayed the

champion in the rallies, but Sweeney's 175 mph+ drive serve was the difference in the 11-4 loss that sent Floyd home with the silver.

Michigan colleges were well represented with the University of Michigan-Flint's Chris Cole winning the bronze and transplanted Michigania, Joel Bonnett of Memphis State snatching fourth place. Bonnett, along with partner Lance Nelson also won the silver medal in men's doubles competition.

Though it was Floyd's final intercollegiate nationals, the legacy he leaves behind will be something other Michigan players can take pride in always.

Tom offers racquetball tips (again)

by W. T. Blakeslee

When I used to write these letters as President, I would frequently ask in my column if any one had read my article. I have to admit, not many of you responded. I often wonder if I'm writing these articles for myself or the members of RAM. If you did read my last article, I offered some advice on how to improve your game and believe that this month (through osmosis) that you must want more tips!

What separates the top "A" level player from an Open player? You may be surprised at my answer. I think the difference is shot selection or the mental aspect of the game rather than racquet technique or physical skill. Sure the open player seems to have more power, quickness and accuracy, but is that the real difference? The key, in my opinion, is the mental ability to select the right shot! Playing racquetball is like investing money: do you put your money in the bank with the low-

est interest rate or the one with the highest? Obviously, one chooses the bank with the highest interest rate. Apply this principal to racquetball and play the high percentage shot. That is really the difference between the Open player and the "A" player: the Open player selects the better shot more often.

So, my advice is find out what the right shot is. If you don't know, you can do several things: watch top players and see if their shot selection agrees with yours (call their shot), take lessons from a pro or discuss shot selection with anyone who can work with you. My point is, that the mental difference may be all it takes. As we get older our physical ability begins to be less of a factor and if we all have similar physical skills, guess what has to be the difference? The ability to win may only be your thought process of what shot to take.

My final point: as you know by now, Chris Cole is our National

Champion! I think Chris would agree he is not the best athlete, the strongest, quickest, biggest or most powerful, but he makes the right shots—he plays the percentages. Think about your shot selection.

NOTICE

All RAM tournament
sanctioning can be
directed to:
Jim Earley
at
(313) 761-4440

1992-93 RAM TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

August 28-30	Rollout Series Livonia Racquetime Livonia, Michigan
September 18-20	Racquetball One Livonia Racquetime Livonia, Michigan
October 2-4	Racquetball One National Health & Racquet Petoskey, Michigan
October 23-25	Racquetball One Michigan Athletic Club Grand Rapids, Michigan
October 30- November 1	Racquetball One Michigan Athletic Club Grand Rapids, Michigan
November 6-8	Racquetball One Grand Blanc Court Club Grand Blanc, Michigan
November 13-15	Jim Easterling's Seniors/Masters Only Grand Blanc Court Club Grand Blanc, Michigan
November 20-22	Rollout Series Livonia Racquetime Livonia, Michigan
December 4-6	STATE DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIPS One on One Athletic Club Ann Arbor, Michigan
December 11-13	Racquetball One Omni Fitness Center Muskegon, Michigan

Remaining schedule to follow.

Questions can be directed to Jim Earley at (313) 761-4440

A legacy begins; Springer speaks out

by Chris Cole

Valeria Springer burst on the Michigan racquetball scene nearly two years ago when she beat Joetta Hastings at the Backwall Racquet Club, during a Super Seven tournament. Defeating one of Michigan's lady legends gained her instant respect and fame, but since she was so new to the sport, she was indeed a mystery to many players, including myself. I recently caught up with the two-time Michigan Women's Open State Champion to have a question and answer session so that players who do not know her might get some insight as to what fuels such a fantastic player and person.

COLE: How long have you been playing?

VAL: I've been playing recreationally for eight years and tournaments for two and a half.

COLE: Where did you get your start?

VAL: I started going to Vic Tanny with my dad practicing with him. At first, all I could do was hit the ball back and forth. I stuck with it and continued to improve until I started playing tournaments.

COLE: Where do you play now?

VAL: I play now at the Northwest Activity Center in Detroit, formerly the Jewish Community Center.

COLE: What racquetball titles have you won?

VAL: I won Women's Open states the last two years and the Women's 25+ states this year.

COLE: How did it feel when you won states?

VAL: The first time was such a shock, I really didn't expect to win. When I did, it took at least two weeks for it to set in that I was the best female player in the state. The first time was fun because since it was my first time there was very little pressure. The second time, however,

was tough. Everyone guns for you since you are on top and that makes it more difficult.

COLE: How did you feel when you beat Joetta, who had completely dominated the state for years, for the first time?

VAL: Oh, it felt great! It was at her club, the Backwall, with all her friends watching. I had heard of her, of course, and I was just happy to be on the same court as her. I really did not think I was going to win. When I beat her at the states two years ago, it meant so much more because she has been the best in our state for years and I had to beat the best to be the best: the win had so much more magnitude by beating her.

COLE: Do you have any racquetball idols?

VAL: Not really, the game is still new to me and I'm meeting new players all the time. I really haven't had a chance to have an idol.

COLE: Do you have a coach?

VAL: Not exactly. Many people give me advice, Jim Tyler helps me some.

COLE: What are your immediate goals in the sport?

VAL: This year I will continue to play tournaments in the state, but I want to do some traveling around and in Ohio and Illinois. I want to win regionals in Ohio and I think I will go to Nationals in Houston in May. I would also like to win states again in April.

COLE: What are your long term goals in the sport?

VAL: I want to win a National Championship someday, follow in your footsteps!

COLE: Thank you! You definitely have the ability. Are you a sponsored player?

VAL: Yes. I have been sponsored by Ektelon for a year.

COLE: What do you like most about racquetball in Michigan?

VAL: I like the closeness between players from around the state, the bonding at tournaments. At regionals and nationals, people from around Michigan root for fellow players from their state making more exciting.

COLE: What are some areas do you feel need improvement?

VAL: I don't think the women's game is promoted enough, other states like Ohio do more for women. All players should let women know that racquetball is a game for them as well as the guys, and that someone cares that they play.

COLE: What advice do you have for up and coming players?

VAL: If you want to get better, get on the court and learn how to practice. That took me awhile, learning how and what to practice. Practicing also includes mentally developing a game plan. I visualize as well as stay sharp.

COLE: What is your greatest achievement outside of racquetball?

VAL: Well, let me see, probably getting my MBA from U of M-Ann Arbor.

COLE: What other hobbies do you enjoy? I run alot and would consider myself a good runner. I also enjoy lifting weights, doing aerobics. I'm very active and sports oriented. To relax, I enjoy reading all kinds of books.

COLE: Where do you work?

VAL: CoAmerica Bank, I am a financial loan analyst.

COLE: What would you like to leave as your legacy when you leave Michigan racquetball?

VAL: That I gave my all for women's racquetball and that I gave something back. Many women come and ask me for advice or ask me to watch them play and I feel it is a responsibility.

Continued on page 15

Huczek wins 8 and under championship

Continued from page four

16 regional junior directors works with each state's junior committee to pick an automatic selection and alternate choices. Those spots that remain are given to the alternate choices if they display high marks in the necessary categories. Each player is rated in three areas: racquetball play, academics and citizenship.

In most cases the list of alternates far surpasses the number of spots left after automatic bids, so the selection usually comes down to grade point averages.

Michigan's Zimmerman was given an automatic spot by Region 9 and Ohio's David Hamilton was given a bid as an at large selection from the list of alternates. Both will be among the 45 juniors at the August try-out camp.

Former Men's Professional National Champion Jerry Hilecher was named as the Junior Team USA Head Coach, while 1991-92 assistant coach Hart Johnson is joined in that capacity by U.S. Adult National Team member Dottie Kelly.

Congratulations to Michigan's Huczek and Zimmerman for the championships they brought home from this year's Junior Olympics.

Val speaks...

Continued from page 14

ity I have to keep I enjoy all the attention, but I know that with that I must be willing to accept everything that comes with it.

COLE: Do you have anything else to say to Michigan players?

VAL: Yes, come out and support Michigan racquetball.

COLE: Amen to that.

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