

# RACQUETBALL



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- U.S. Open preview
- singles recap

JULY/AUGUST 2008 • VOLUME 19 • ISSUE 4





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

## VISION STATEMENT

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

### Objectives:

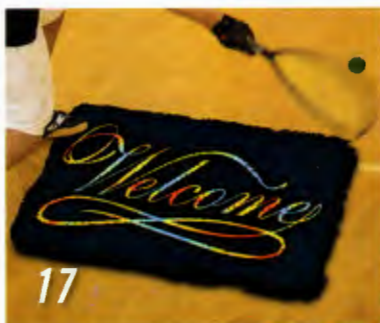
- **MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT** - USAR values its members and will strive to provide the best possible member services at all levels.
- **MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT** - USAR believes that racquetball is a lifetime endeavor and the benefits of health, recreation, and competition should be available to everyone.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



22 U.S. OPEN REVIEW



34 NATIONAL SINGLES



17 GET WITH THE PROGRAM

## FEATURES

<i>From the Top</i>	4
<i>Racquetball 4 Ever</i>	5
<i>Players Helping Players</i>	6
<i>On Becoming an Advocate</i>	48
<i>Industry News</i>	52

## ON TOUR

<i>IRT</i>	8
<i>WPRO</i>	10
<i>Classic</i>	12
<i>WOR</i>	13
<i>National Master</i>	14

## INSTRUCTIONAL

<i>Fran's House</i>	16
<i>Sudsy's Magic Show</i>	18
<i>Woods</i>	20
<i>Woody's Racquetball &amp; Visualization</i>	26

## SPECIALS

<i>U.S. Open Preview</i>	23
<i>Hall of Fame</i>	45
<i>Carrabba's Calendar</i>	48
<i>Racquetball Women</i>	51
<i>Young Racquetball</i>	54
<i>Reflections by the "Gar"</i>	56



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By James Hiser, Ph.D.  
USAR Executive Director

# A GREAT END TO THE SEASON

## The Grand Gala Perfect Finish

**T**he Grand Gala banquet at the National Singles Championships in Houston was a great way to end the season. It was an opportunity for the racquetball community to join together to recognize the Hall of Fame members who have given so much to our sport. It was also a time to reflect back on our history, acknowledge the present and dream of the future.

The banquet was certainly the most prestigious event in the history of our sport. The Hyatt Ballroom was completely transformed into an elegance befitting the racquetball royalty present. Attendance was virtually a Who's Who of the racquetball world. The top players from both the WPRO and IRT, all the manufacturers, leaders of the sport's major organizations... Never before has the racquetball community presented itself in such an impressive manner. Tuxedos, gowns, and military attire set the tone for the evening. For the newer and younger players, this was an opportunity to share in the history of the sport and meet many of the legends who made it all possible. For the older, more tenured players, it was a time to reflect, remember and acknowledge how much has been accomplished over the years. We in racquetball are very fortunate – we're still young enough to allow us the opportunity to actually speak with many of the founders of the sport.

The knowledge and experience they possess is invaluable, and their guidance can help us avoid many of the pitfalls that plague other sports. A careful

examination of the history can lead one to conclude that some problems seem to be cyclical and will reappear. An understanding of the history allows a better perspective of how to face both old and new challenges.

For one of the few times in our history, all facets of racquetball seem to be working in concert toward common goals. There are no "rebel" organizations competing to take over segments of the sport and the organizations currently directing the sport are working in harmony. The "pros" and "amateurs" often compete in the same events with dual promotion and sponsorships provided by both associations.

The next phase of development must be concerned with fostering integral relationships with club owners and major fitness chains. For everyone to prosper, we all need to work together to achieve mutual benefit for both groups. We need to develop programs and relationships that will promote racquetball at all levels in order to demonstrate to the club owners and chains that racquetball organizations can help drive memberships and channel increased profits to their clubs.

The challenges are many, but history shows that such challenges have been conquered in the past. Grassroots success will be critical, and "the time is now" to move forward aggressively and confidently. We know what we have to do.



# A New INTRODUCTION



By Cheryl Kirk,  
USAR Board President

**P**ermit me to introduce myself. I'm a 31-year veteran of the racquetball court. Twenty-seven of those years I worked for McDonald's Corporation. Seventeen of them I've been with my racquetball partner-turned-husband, Kit Lawson. Eight of them I've been on the Illinois Board (ISRA). Six of them I've been editor of the ISRA Newsletter. In 2006, I was elected to the USA Racquetball Board of Directors.

After all that time, one might expect me to have become a better player than I am. But what I may lack in blazing speed and ferocious kill shots, I make up for in my dedication to serving racquetball. This wonderful sport has been the constant essence of my adult life.

Who would have thought that so many years after a YMCA instructor by the name of Dwayne Mulvaney gave me my first lesson in 1977, I'd have the honor and privilege to become USA Racquetball's Board President in 2008? Not I...not in a million years. What an incredible privilege!

Having neither seen nor heard anything about Dwayne in all this time, I'll use this opportunity to thank him for changing my life....wherever he may be.

In addition to my history of involvement in our sport, my qualifications revolve around my professional duties at McDonald's where I specialized in operations, training and unique projects such as coordinating global team efforts for several of the recent Olympic Games. My husband says that my best (and most annoying) management characteristic is my attention to detail.

My first goal as president is to create a tradition, by following the lead of Past President Randy Stafford. His leadership, intelligence, persistence, style and grace has helped the board to realize significant accomplishments. He inherited a most challenging financial dilemma when he became board president; he met that challenge. Importantly, Randy's leadership took USA Racquetball to higher levels with such initiatives as the ranking system, the membership structure, tournament management software, Racquetball Magazine, and partnership with IRT events.

Randy has been a galvanizing force in our world of racquetball. I know you join me in offering our most heartfelt gratitude to Randy for his selfless, monumental service.

With the help of the Board of Directors, Executive Director Jim Hiser and his wonderful staff, and the racquetball-playing community, I promise to do the best job I know how to do in continuing Randy's legacy. The learning curve will be steep, I know.

In the beginning, I plan to focus on several basic themes:

**1. Administration.** The board itself is a diverse group of outstanding individuals and I intend to make very good use of their talents and expertise. Most players know little of the amazing amount of time, thought and heart your Board members contribute to the wellbeing of racquetball. Their names and faces should be familiar to you:



Dave  
Negrete



Ed  
Remen



Frank  
Taddonio



Geoff  
Peters



Jason  
Thoerner



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Mike  
Guidry



Ray  
Cordero



Sal  
Perconti



Tom  
Curran

**2. Financial solvency.** There are many ideas about how to make sure that USA Racquetball has enough money to pay its bills...and to assure that national tournaments; the USA Adult and Junior Teams; grassroots development programs for juniors, women, and cross-training enthusiasts; Racquetball magazine; and the USAR E-Newsletter will continue as excellent reminders of our dedication to our sport. We will actively pursue the best of these ideas.

**3. Growing the sport:** We will investigate and pursue ways to encourage new players as well as the return of those who "use-ta" play. As more people take up racquetball, the free enterprise system will step in and build more courts. All things are possible as the popularity of racquetball rises again. There are literally millions of people in America who might/could/would take up racquetball if we find the right ways to encourage them.

Of course, this list is not exhaustive. There is much to do. My first official act, as the new Board president, is to deputize YOU as special assistant to the Board. Please help us to serve the needs of our beloved game by being proactive with your state association. Give them some of your time; help them to raise funds; introduce someone to the game at your club. If you are so inclined, contact your USAR Board members to share ideas and solutions.

This is going to be great!





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

Bruce Adams	\$1,000
Doug Ganim	\$3,000
Dr. Fred Heros	\$1,000
Christopher "Kit" Lawson	\$1,000
Mike Lippitt	\$1,000
Dennis Rosenberg	\$3,000
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## THE 2008 DENNIS ROSENBERG PRO AM

**T**he IRT was back in Allentown, PA for the second time at the Allentown Racquetball Club for the Dennis Rosenberg Pro Am. Title sponsor Dennis Rosenberg graciously honored the top players in the world by supporting the prize money for the event. There are a lot of benefactors of the sport and the IRT, and Dennis is at the top of the list. His contributions to the sport as a whole should be applauded. It is people like Dennis who make the sport what it is and keep the IRT in the limelight.

Pennsylvania State President John Barrett took on the tournament director duties again and all the players had a great weekend of racquetball.

The IRT draw was nearly double what it was last year and served as a great tune-up for the Motorola IRT Pro Nationals presented by Verizon Wireless. Rocky Carson swept

through the draw without losing a game for the second time this season. His victory over Jack Huczek in the finals pretty much cemented his first year-end #1 ranking on the IRT. Rocky took out his nemesis Alvaro Beltran in the semifinals and Jack defeated a tough Jason Mannino on the other side of the draw. With the Pro Nationals next up on the schedule, the players gave it their all this weekend and it showed.

The Allentown Racquetball Club is one of the true "old school" privately-owned clubs left around the country. Racquetball is the primary focus here as it is with its sister club in Bethlehem, PA, twenty minutes away. Racquetball is still alive and well in the great state of Pennsylvania!

Once again, a big thanks to Dennis Rosenberg for bringing the IRT back to Allentown, and we look forward to returning next season.



## THE 2008 MILLER LITE OPEN

**T**wenty-two players entered the Pro Draw at the Miller Lite Open, hosted by The Athletic of York, in York, PA. The event was a complete sellout, and there was definitely a buzz in the club. The top four seeds were Shane Vanderson, Mitch Williams, Andy Hawthorne, and Jason Sylvester. The Round of 32's opened with a classic match between Mitch Posner (Captain Charisma) and Marty (Hollywood) Hammond. Hammond prevailed in a five-game marathon. The Friday night 16's had a lot of good matches. Dave Austin beat Cory Fritz in a five-gamer that was interrupted in the 5th game by a "beer hinder." With Miller Lite as the sponsor, anything can happen. A beer was dropped from above onto the court by an unnamed source, and play had to be stopped. Both players took it with good humor, and the match was completed with no further interruptions. Another unique match had Dan Fowler playing in his first IRT event in quite awhile, and he looked good, beating Rich Sledzick from Massachusetts. An up-and-coming young player from Maryland, Mauricio Zelada, defeated current Pennsylvania State champ John Barrett in four games.

The Final 8 were all solid players. Shane beat Dave Austin in three, Travis Aldinger beat Jason in four, Andy ended Dan's run in three games, and Mitch beat Mauricio in three. The semifinals were a rematch of last year's final between Shane and Travis. Travis played much better this year and did indeed make Shane sweat. The home crowd wasn't enough though, and Shane won in three. The other match had Andy retrieving Mitch's bombs. Andy played great in splitting the first two games, but Mitch was too tough and won in four.

The finals had missiles flying all over the place. The crowd was in awe as the guys were trading blows. Mitch won the first game and the second went into overtime, but Mitch again prevailed. Shane's title defense came up a bit short with Mitch winning the match in three.

These guys really represent the IRT in a great way and were accessible to all of the amateurs, posing for pictures and talking to a lot of different people. We will continue to grow this event and make it better each year. Special thanks to Jay Walker and Travis Aldinger for making this event spectacular!



# THE 2008 MEXICO OPEN

**T**he IRT returned to the Racquetball Rio Club in Tijuana for a full ranking event. This event was a late addition to the IRT calendar but a very welcome one. Alvaro Beltran was instrumental in helping to retain the event, and with the help of Felix Medrano and Sinuhe Huidobro, the tournament was a huge success. There was a large draw of players from the Baja Mexico region as well as southern California. The host club has a great sidewall/backwall stadium-style court and seating was full capacity all weekend. A newly-added bar and snack bar was a surprise, a welcome addition to the club from our vantage point. If you have never been to an event in Mexico, you are missing some great hospitality and an enthusiasm for the sport that is unmatched anywhere in the world. Every match felt like a World Cup soccer match.

A full IRT draw was present at this event, and the race for #1 was heating up between Jack Huczek and Rocky Carson. Alvaro Beltran treated the hometown crowd to some great racquetball before losing a

tough five-game battle to Jack Huczek in the semifinals. Rocky Carson waged a battle with Jason Mannino before finishing the match off in three games. The final was all Carson as he rolled on to the victory. Carson did not lose a game in this event, and it put him in command of reaching the coveted year-end #1 ranking.

The city of Tijuana has some great attractions and the IRT wishes to thank Tijuana's Mayor Jorge Ramos for bringing the event to reality. Also, thanks again to the event team and directors Sinuhe Huidobro and Felix Medrano. This is one of the top events of the season and we look forward to returning next year.



## 2007-08 IRT SCHEDULE AND RESULTS

DATES AND CITIES SUBJECT TO CHANGE

### PRIZE MONEY DETERMINES TIER LEVEL

GS GRAND SLAM 30K MINIMUM • T1 TIER ONE MINIMUM \$17.5

T2 TIER TWO \$10-\$17.5K • T3 TIER THREE \$5-\$10K • T4 TIER FOUR 0-\$5K

Tier Level	Date	Tournament Location	Winner
GS	SEPT 13-16	MOTOROLA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP COLORADO SPRINGS, CO	Rocky Carson
T1	SEPT 20-23	KANSAS CITY, MO	Jason Mannino
T1	OCT 4-7	BOWLING GREEN, KY	Jack Huczek
T1	OCT 11-14	TORONTO, CANADA	Jack Huczek
T3	OCT 19-21	MADISON, WI	Jack Huczek
T4	OCT 19-21	WILMINGTON, NC	Mitch Williams
T4	OCT 19-21	GRAND RAPIDS, MI	Shane Vanderson
T1	OCT. 25-28	ALBUQUERQUE, NM	Rocky Carson
T4	NOV 2-4	LONG ISLAND OPEN, NY	Jason Thoenner
T5	NOV 2-4	JAPAN OPEN, TOKYO	Andy Hawthorne
T2	NOV 2-4	CHIHUAHUA, MEXICO	Alvaro Beltran
T4	NOV 9-11	PORTLAND, OR	Mitch Williams
GS	NOV 14-18	US OPEN MEMPHIS, TN	Rocky Carson
T5	NOV 30-DEC 2	KENT, WA	Wade Reuther
T4	DEC 6-9	TEMPE, AZ	Jack Huczek
T1	JAN 10-13	CANOGA PARK, CA	Rocky Carson

Tier Level	Date	Tournament Location	Winner
T1	JAN 17-20	LONG ISLAND, NY	Jack Huczek
T2	JAN 25-27	MILWAUKEE, WI	Mitch Williams
T4	JAN 25-27	FAIRFIELD, NJ	Jason Thoenner
T5	FEB 1-3	CINCINNATI, OH	Andy Hawthorne
T2	FEB 7-10	SIOUX FALLS, SD	Jack Huczek
T1	FEB 21-24	SEATTLE, WA	Jack Huczek
T1	FEB 28- MAR 2	SAN DIEGO, CA	Jack Huczek
T1	MAR 6- 9	SARASOTA, FL	Rocky Carson
T4	MAR14-15	BELLINGHAM, WA	Jimmy Lowe
T4	MAR 28-30	YORK, PA	Mitch Williams
T4	APR 3-6	TIJUANA, MEXICO	Rocky Carson
T1	APR 10-13	ALLENTOWN, PA	Rocky Carson
GS	APR 23-27	MOTOROLA IRT PRO-NATIONALS CHICAGO, IL	Jack Huczek
T2	MAY 9-11	GARDEN CITY, KS	Ben Croft
T4	JUN.6-8	LAUREL, MD	Shane Vanderson
T2	JUN 20-22	GREENVILLE, SC	Kane Waselenchuk
T4	JULY 11-13	PORT RICHEY, FL	Shane Vanderson



# WPRO SEASON ENDS WITH A BANG IN THE BIG EASY

Rajsich Captures  
World Championship Crown  
and Secures #1 Ranking

**N**umber one WPRO Pro Rhonda Rajsich (Los Angeles, CA) defended her title in New Orleans at the 2008 Chemtech WPRO World Championship presented by Ektelon, April 17-20 at the Elmwood Fitness Center. Rajsich defeated #2 Cheryl Gudinas Holmes (Naperville, IL) in a five-game war in front of an awesome crowd in the New Orleans. She closed out the 2007-08 season by winning the last four major WPRO events and secured the year-end #1 ranking for the third straight season.

The WPRO World Championships is a "Racquetball for Life" event benefiting the American Breast Cancer Foundation (ABCF). The Grand Slam marked the end of a grueling 14-stop season, which was full of upsets, rivalries, revivals and unprecedented exposure for the tour. The WPRO will announce its 2008-09 schedule soon, so check the tour's Web site at [www.wpro-tour.com](http://www.wpro-tour.com) to see when the top pro's will be in a city near you!

The WPRO's presence in New Orleans for the second year in a row would not have been possible without the generous support of our title sponsor, Chemtech Chemical Services, LLC. Chemtech is a south Louisiana-based water treatment and engineering company led by Scott D. Trahan (president and co-founder). Mr. Trahan is from the New Orleans area and is an avid supporter of any effort to empower south Louisiana. We are honored to have Chemtech as a partner and friend of the tour.

Ektelon, the presenting sponsor of this event, has supported the WPRO in numerous ways this year and also serves as the tour's Official Ball sponsor. The Ektelon Fireball has helped to make WPRO matches even more exciting than ever before.

Our heartfelt appreciation goes out to tournament directors Al Schof and Beth Sacco, as well as Anthony Zeringue, Pattie Schof (AmMax Publications) and Kipp Atwell of the Louisiana Racquetball Association, for their tireless work in making this marquee championship event a reality. Everyone on the tournament committee did a fantastic job managing the event!

Special thanks also to the one and only Guy Keller of Crystal Clear Imaging for always making us feel like a big sport on grand stage with beautiful banners and signage of the ladies of the WPRO. WPRO communications consultant Adam Katz also did a great job of providing exciting daily reports of WPRO matches after every round.

It takes a massive team effort to pull off an event like this and we recognize all of the event sponsors on our Web site: [www.wpro-tour.com](http://www.wpro-tour.com). We also want to recognize Elmwood Fitness Center, a top-notch racquetball facility based in Harahan, for opening its doors to us once again. Al Reagle, who is a fixture at Elmwood and runs the league programs there, has allowed us to borrow his domain for this championship and we are very grateful to him for that. Special thanks also to the best mixed dancing partner, Clarence Simmons, for making every trip to the Big Easy like a party!

Through RacquetballOnline.tv, fans have witnessed the top pros from around the world compete in full ranking WPRO stops and gut it out for every ranking point. Our international player base continues to grow and a strong contingent from the U.S., Chile, Mexico, and Canada will be back to battle it out for the tour's biggest championships next season!



THE WOMEN OF WPRO

MIKE BOATMEN



# WPRO Rankings

RANK	NAME	HOMETOWN	TOTAL POINTS	RANK	NAME	HOMETOWN	TOTAL POINTS
1	Rajsich, Rhonda	Fountain Hills, AZ	1607.30	37T	Key, Danielle	Gilbert, AZ	20.00
2	Gudinas Holmes, Cheryl	Naperville, IL	1301.20	37T	Zieman, Dori	Hollywood, FL	20.00
3	Wachtel, Kerri	Cincinnati, OH	756.90	41	Mazur, Kara	Avon, CT	19.75
4	Grisar, Angela	Santiago, Chile	710.50	42	Lambert, Frederique	Montreal, QC, Canada	18.75
5	Bellows, Kristen	Pleasant Grove, UT	609.00	42T	Flaherty, Monique	Moreno Valley, CA	18.75
6	Longoria, Paola	San Luis Potosi, Mexico	503.50	42T	Perrault, Vallana	Brooklyn Park, MN	18.75
7	Fisher, Adrienne	Centerville, OH	390.94	42T	Sacco, Beth	Metairie, LA	18.75
8	Kyzer, Brenda	Leesville, SC	373.00	42T	Rumler, Allison	Mississippi	18.75
9	Van Hees, Christie	Calgary, AB, Canada	276.50	42T	Aldrete, Luisa	Mexico	18.75
10	Fowler, Doreen	Silver Spring, MD	254.16	42T	Truman, Paula	Louisiana	18.75
11	Shattuck, Jo	Denver, CO	245.25	49	Morton, Karen	Harrisburg, PA	17.16
12	Moore, Diane	Griffith, IN	230.00	50	Jordan, Yolanda	Millersville, MD	14.80
13	Ferina, Kimi	Long Island, NY	183.70	50T	Halahan, Jean	New York	14.80
14	Gomez, Vivian	Miami, FL	181.50	52	Burth, Angela	Washington DC	12.40
15	Franks, Keely	Eules, TX	170.00	53	Brodeur, Genevieve	Canada	12.00
16	Hostovich, Candi	Falls Church, VA	140.44	53T	Guillemette, Veronique	Canada	12.00
17	Baumbaugh, T.J.	Reston, VA	134.33	55	Haynes, Denise	Canada	10.00
18	Salas, Samantha	Leon, Mexico	119.00	55T	McElfresh, Melissa	Miami, FL	10.00
19	Saunders, Jennifer	Winnipeg, MB, Canada	106.25	55T	Ramirez, Claudia	Casselberry, FL	10.00
20T	Nunez, Paola	Falls Church, VA	84.75	58	Hettesheimer, Sarah	Cincinnati, OH	9.94
20T	Csuk, Krystal	Chicago, IL	84.75	59	Jackson, Sharon	Shelbyville, IN	7.20
22	Morris, Phyllis	Charlotte, NC	83.05	59T	Stoffregen, Gerri	Cincinnati, OH	7.20
23	Acosta, Susy	Chihuahua, Mexico	81.25	61	Lotts, Sheryl	Bedford, OH	6.68
24	Sotomayor, Veronica	Ecuador	60.75	61T	Berry, Lily	Columbus, OH	6.68
25	O'Brien, Aubrey	Auburn, CA	58.75	63	Beane, Kelley	Manchester, NH	4.80
26	Davis, Da'monique	San Antonio, TX	56.25	63T	Rashid, Alia	New York	4.80
27	Wheeler, Janell	Virginia	52.40	63T	Washington, Genevieve	Ohio	4.80
28	Jacobson-Prentice, Brandi	Saskatoon, SK, Canada	48.50	66	Tisinger, Janel	Simi Valley, CA	2.88
29	Rascon, Sofia	California	38.75	66T	Torres-Carrillo, Karen	Chihuahua, Mexico	2.88
30	Amaya, Cristina	Cali, Columbia	31.13	68	Holslander, Khanh	Harrisburg, PA	2.40
31	Brandt, Laura	Ft. Lauderdale, FL	30.75	68T	Ward, Ashley	Vermont	2.40
32	Earl, Michelle	Anchorage, AL	28.75	68T	Plaza, Jasmine	New York	2.40
32T	Nichols-Dickinson, Catherine	Canada	28.75	68T	Maldonado, Anita	New York	2.40
32T	Eichenberger, Tonya	Tampa, FL	28.75	68T	Chisholm, Courtney	New York	2.40
35	Ruiz, Aimee	New York	21.47	73	Hawthorne, Tracy	Tallmadge, OH	1.88
36	GrandMaitre, Josee	Longueuil, QC, Canada	20.75	73T	Kozakai, Megumi	Japan	1.88
37	Pimentelli, Devon	California	20.00	73T	Lee, Young-mi	Seoul, Korea	1.88
37T	Key, Michelle	Gilbert, AZ	20.00	73T	Enriquez, Stephanie	Chihuahua, Mexico	1.88



TEAM ELMWOOD RACQUETBALL WITH FINALISTS



FINALS MATCH





## CLASSIC PRO RACQUETBALL TOUR – CONCORD

The Classic Professional Racquetball Tour (CPRT) headed to Concord, California, April 10-13, for the Concord Classic hosted by the Big C Athletic Club. This was the final regular season event before the May CPRT Pro Nationals in Las Vegas.

Leading the lineup were the top two ranked CPRT players, Cliff Swain of Boston, MA and Woody Clouse of Highlands Ranch, CO. Seeded third was New York City's Ruben Gonzalez and rounding out the top four was Bret Harnett of Las Vegas. Local favorite Gerry Price, then tour regulars Tom Travers and Steve Wattz, followed in the seeding. Rounding out the top eight was top US age group amateur Jimmy Lowe who made the trip across the Pacific from Hawaii for his first CPRT appearance. The draw was filled out by some of Northern California's top 40-and-over players taking their best shot at the CPRT professionals.

A full slate of amateur singles and doubles divisions (with a total of nearly 200 players) punctuated this great weekend that benefited the U.S. National Racquetball Team and the National Fibromyalgia Research Association.

For the third straight CPRT event, Cliff Swain and Woody Clouse met in the finals. In the semis, Clouse had stopped Ruben Gonzalez 9-3, 9-6, 7-9, 9-1 and Swain had made quick work of Bret Harnett 9-7, 9-3, 9-2. The finals would illustrate whether Clouse could break through and be the first CPRT pro to defeat Swain.

Swain came out playing near perfect racquetball but Clouse played him close in a match that easily could have gone much longer than the three games it did. Swain dominated the first game 9-1 with rocket serves and flat shots before Clouse raised his level of play with leads in both the second and third games. Swain's intensity and top level of play closed out Clouse 9-8, 9-6 for his third CPRT victory in as many tries.

Big thanks to the hosts, tournament staff and sponsors of the Concord Classic including major sponsor Mike Lippitt, tournament directors John Ellis & Steve Cook, and the entire staff of the Big C Athletic Club.

## CLASSIC PRO RACQUETBALL TOUR – PRO NATIONALS

Bet the Underdogs in Las Vegas! After an uneventful round of 16, the quarterfinal matches of the DPH CPRT Pro Nationals were an evening to remember. With four long matches, the round was highlighted by the stunning five-game upset of Cliff Swain by CPRT newcomer Jimmy Lowe.

Earlier in the evening, fifth seed Mike Ceresia had come out strong against Bret Harnett but let the first game slip away 9-8. Ceresia turned things back around and dispatched the hometown hero Harnett with 9-5, 9-3, and 9-5 games for the evening's second upset. The bottom half of the draw saw Woody Clouse stopping Gerry Price 9-6, 9-4, 7-9, 9-7 in a long back-and-forth struggle. Gonzalez prevailed over long-time rival Mike Ray in another long five-game match, coming from behind 9-3, 7-9, 2-9, 9-4, 9-1.

The semifinals were Lowe over Ceresia in four games and Gonzalez over Clouse in a three-game victory. In the

final, Jimmy Lowe took early leads in both of the first two games but was able to only hold the lead in the first as they split games 7-9 and 9-6. Gonzalez cruised to a third game win 9-3 and Lowe took the fourth 9-4. The tiebreaker was a spectacular, back-and-forth battle. Lowe ultimately took an 8-7 lead and had several shots with match point before Gonzalez tied the match and reached 9-8 for a match point of his own. After trading sideouts, Gonzalez closed it out 10-8 for the first overtime finals win of the CPRT season and his second win of the year. The match was broadcast live on racquetballonline.tv and will be edited and uploaded later this month to the site.

Thanks to major sponsors Desert Plumbing & Heating and Beck's for making the 2008 DPH CPRT Pro Nationals a great event.

## CPRT ANNOUNCES 2007-08 AWARDS

Following the Pro Nationals, the CPRT announced the following awards for the past season:

**Player of the Year:** Ruben Gonzalez

**Rookie of the Year:** Cliff Swain

**Sportsmanship Award:** Bret Harnett

## CPRT ANNOUNCES 2008-09 SCHEDULE

The 2008-09 season is shaping up to be the strongest in the brief history of the CPRT. With a second event in Concord, two new events in Colorado, and a new event in Hawaii, the CPRT is certainly growing. For the latest information or to download entry forms, go to [classicproracquetball.com](http://classicproracquetball.com)

## Scheduled 2008-2009 events (as of June 4, 2008):

July 11-13, 2008	WOR Championships – Doubles
September 4-7, 2008	Concord, CA – Doubles
September 11-14, 2008	Denver, CO
October 22-26, 2008	US Open – Memphis, TN
November 14-16, 2008	Grand Junction, CO
January 22-25, 2009	Concord, CA
February (TBD)	Columbus, OH or Allentown, PA
March 6-8, 2009	Rochester, NY
April 17-19, 2009	Kauai, Hawaii
April 30 - May 3, 2009	Las Vegas, NV – Pro Nationals

## FINAL 2007-08 CPRT RANKINGS

RANK	PLAYER	POINTS			
	13	Tom Travers	258		
1	Cliff Swain	915	14	Ravi Sohoni	255
2	Ruben Gonzalez	858	15	Steve Wattz	254
3	Woody Clouse	827	16	Dave Spoleta	250
4	Jimmy Lowe	665	16	Greg Campbell	250
5	Mike Ceresia	613	16	Matthew Christensen	250
6	Keith Minor	570	16	Paul Reed	250
7	Bret Harnett	523	16	Darrell Baricuartro	250
8	Mike Ray	515	16	Ted Pittinaro	250
9	Gerry Price	391	16	Tom Mastrodonato	250
10	Brad McCuniff	315	16	William Turner	250
11	Dave Sable	275	24	Bill George	188
11	Mike Anderson	275	24	Steve Cook	188



# GEORGE DAURIO DOUBLES CHALLENGE AT HOLIDAY PARK

by Vic Leibofsky



LEFT TO RIGHT: MITCH SLATER, DAVID LEVY, J. BINGO, TODD POHLMAN, DAVE SMITH, GEORGE DAURIO, KEN GRANDY, MARK MAUPIN, ROB MIJARES.

**F**or the locals, this event has been a long time coming. Back in the 70's, you would find George Daurio banging with the top dogs on "A" court. Over the years, George's role has evolved into something much more. When the park needed new lights, or a paint job, or any other upkeep, it was George making sure the city got it done. George has been a leader at Holiday Park, setting the bar for what the term "giving back" means in South Florida outdoor racquetball. For the locals, this tribute to George Daurio has been a long time coming. For all that he does, and has been doing over 30 years, it was time to step up and say in unison "Thank you, George Daurio!" Besides all the tribute, there was an incredible racquetball event! The locals came out in force to pay homage, with an unheard-of 70 players showing up for what was supposed to be a one-day shootout on four courts. Event Director Angel Calderon did an incredible job managing the desk in the face of record-setting participation. Special thanks to Steve DiSalvo of DiSalvo's Pizza and Italian Restaurant for the delicious lunch!

## TOURNAMENT RESULTS

### Open

1st - Ken Grandy & Dave Smith  
2nd - Rob Mijares & Mark Maupin

### A Division

1st - Abiel Enamorado  
& Maikel Valladares  
2nd - Ralph Rodriguez  
& Warren Einiger

### B Division

1st - Jabari Vaughns & T.J. Vaughns  
2nd - Rob Cohen & Harvey Bernstein

## CARSON WINS AGAIN WHILE BOOTH AND PETERS EAT A DOUBLE DOUBLE(S)!

At the National Warm-Ups tournament held in Huntington Beach, California, June 7-8, Rocky Carson kept his singles title secure but fell short in his quest for a doubles title as well.

The team of Kevin Booth and Mike Peters made it through the winners' bracket, dropping only one game along the way to the tough team of Josh Tucker and Son Nguyen. They took the tiebreaker 11-4 and rode that victory all the way to an 11-4, 11-2 win over Pete Gauchi and Gary Martin in the Winner's bracket final. That earned them the bonus of a long rest while the other teams battled it out in the Loser's bracket.

In the finals match-up, it was Peters and Booth against Rocky Carson and Rob Hoff. After taking the first game, Booth and Peters got off to a quick start in the second, only to see Carson kick his game into third gear and mount a comeback. The effort fell short as Booth and Peters were able to eek out an 11-8 win and the championship.

In the hotly-contested Masters division (40+), Booth and Peters were able to grab their second title, beating the team of Gary Martin and Rick Sandello in the final 21-14. Tournament Director Allan Kazem presented the dynamic duo with a check for \$600 for their Pro Division Win, and they received a trophy and gift certificate from Kris Kaskawal for their Masters win.

Chris Crowther put up a valiant fight against Carson in the mid-day final but Carson's outdoor skills were too much for Crowther's game and Rocky was once again champion, winning 15-10, 15-9. He congratulated Crowther on his game and unexpected trip to the finals and walked off with a \$500 winner's check presented once again by tournament director Allan Kazem.



It is 2008 and we are set to kick off another incredible season of Belle Isle Racquetball – WOR style. Get ready for the HEAT-- 28 years and counting! Last year, we had an unprecedented tournament season with the largest-ever participation and attendance. Jack Huczek capped off the season by taking the title of 2007 Belle Isle Men's Pro Singles Champion. Andy Hawthorne and Shannon Kohl won the Men's Pro Doubles title.

We expect this year's tournament series on Belle Isle to be even Bigger and Better than last year: more people, more prize money, and more FUN! Come join us for the party... Detroit... WOR... Belle Isle Style!

Check the official Belle Isle website for updates, news, and information about tournaments and recreational play on the island [www.belleisleracquetball.com](http://www.belleisleracquetball.com). And, check out North West Ohio Outdoor Racquetball site for updates, news, and info at [nwohiorball.com](http://nwohiorball.com).

## Michigan and Ohio WOR

### Tournament Schedule

Aug 15-17, 2008  
Belle Isle Pro Championship

Sept TBD, 2008  
Toledo 3rd Annual Fun Doubles





# NMRA UPDATE

by Bruce Adams,  
NMRA Secretary



MILDRED GWINN



HALL OF FAME MEMBERS WITH MEMBERS OF THE AIR FORCE



BEN MARSHALL AND KEITH CALKINS

**T**he gala event at the 41st USAR National Singles in Houston was outstanding! Congratulations to all NMRA members who participated and a very special congratulations to the Hall of Fame Members of the past 35 years. Additionally, we send a proud shout-out to Mildred Gwinn who received the Peggy Steding Athlete of the Year Award.

Be sure to check out the NMRA newsletter, The Racquet Racket, on the website. There exists a lot more information and photos in its 16 pages than space allows here...

Speaking of nmra.info, it has been moved to R2Sports.com as its internet service provider and as a result offers updated features and a smoother feel. The menu structure is the same, with some enhancements. Check it out and

send us your comments.

The NMRA is dedicated to the mature racquetball player who is 45 years and older. All tournament matches (singles, doubles, and mixed doubles) at our two annual events are in a self-officiated, round robin format -- No More One Round and Out. Your first event does not require membership to the association, but we hope you will

join. We look forward to having you participate in an upcoming event. Speaking of which...

Come on out to the IRF World Seniors in Albuquerque the week before Labor Day. And, the NMRA will return to Canoga Park (Los Angeles) in March 2009 for our National Championships. We hear the facility is great, with one venue to handle all matches!





MITCH WILLIAMS  
RACQUETBALL CHAMPION



165g  
[K] BOOM



175g  
[K] SONIX



160g  
[K] LITE



170g  
[K] ROK

We know you have a desire for the game.  
We know you demand a balance of power and [K]ontrol.  
And we know.....one of these racquets is right for you.

**(K)FACTOR**  
TAKE [K]ONTROL

**Wilson**



# BUILDING YOUR PERFECT GAME



By Fran Davis

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

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

## Q:

*The Infamous Question -- Pass or Kill?*

## A:

My philosophy has been and always will be to play the percentages. If you can win the point with a pass, why kill?

Before we go any further, let's define the pass and kill:

### Pass

Hits 18" or lower on the front wall and bounces two times before the back wall

### Pass-Kill

Hits 12" or lower on the front wall and bounces two times before the dotted line

### Kill

Hits 6" or lower on the front wall and bounces twice before the short line.

I think everyone would agree it is easier to hit an 18" target than it is to hit a 6" target, since you have more room for error. If you go for a pass and miss your shot it can become a pass-kill or kill, but if you miss your kill shot it can become a skip...the last thing you want.

**The players I have coached:** Jason Mannino (#1 ranked IRT Pro in 2003), Sudsy Monchik (retired five-time #1 ranked IRT Pro) and numerous other pros, top juniors and US Team members, live and die by the pass to win the point and/or the match. As a matter of fact, in May I watched Cheryl Gudinas Holmes capture her 7th National Championship in Houston using this very concept – very impressive.

### Let me give you an important statistic that will also help you see why you would want pass vs. kill if given the opportunity:

The national average of hitting a kill shot from the dotted line (which is 25 feet from the front wall) is 30% (see the diagram below). I think you would all agree that the odds of effectively killing the ball diminishes the further back you go in the 40-foot court.

I cannot stress enough how importance of the pass shot. In fact, two of the most well-known male professionals in the game advocate that if they had a choice to win the rally with a pass or kill they would always elect the pass. It's a sure thing... it's money in the bank...it's high percentage racquetball! They learned the hard way coming up the ranks and told me this. "The more you attempt to kill the ball, the more you skip. The more you skip, the more matches you lose." Pretty easy philosophy to follow...

Remember, every time you skip the ball you become your opponent's partner...you are clearly helping him out.

### Here's a good general rule of thumb to follow:

- Pass or Pass-Kill when your opponent is in front of you or boxed in against either side wall.
- Kill when your opponent is behind you and you are on or in front of the dotted line.

I read this in the '80's from one of the pros and it's always stuck in my mind: "Pass for the dough, Kill for show!"

Good luck in your passing game...the odds are in your favor!

Hope to see you at one of my camps for live personal instruction on this topic and many others. Or, if you can't make a camp at this time, purchase my instructional videos. Go [www.FranDavisRacquetball.com](http://www.FranDavisRacquetball.com) for details on both.



# INVITING YOUR **PAST MEMBERS** BACK



by Connie Martin

**I**t is time to get your Old Racquetball Players back to the Game and to the Club. There are a lot of reasons that your Racquetball Members leave the club. They move, they are tight on finances, they are beginning to raise a family or have bought a new house and had to cut back, they go to a new club, they just need a break from the sport or they don't like you!!! Hopefully it is not the last one! Except for 'they move' or 'they don't like you', there is still opportunities to get them back as players and hopefully as members.

Here are a few suggestions on what you can do to entice these past players/members to come back.

## 1. Have a Racquetball Reunion Party...

Invite your current Members and anyone that they know who plays racquetball that lives within a 15 mile radius of your club to an evening of racquetball, socializing, appetizers and door prizes. (You can give everyone one drink ticket, have them pay for the rest.) Invite past Racquetball Members with a special mail delivered invitation to come enjoy an evening of play and socializing. Of course you will offer a special if they join that evening. You may wish to have a Racquetball Demo or Clinic that evening also.

## 2. 30 Day Complimentary Membership

Send out a Complimentary 30 Day Membership. A letter or post card from the owners simply stating 'We Miss You and Want You Back' or a group picture of some of the Racquetball Players with the same title can easily be printed on card stock in color (so inexpensive to do these days). Or how about an empty Racquetball Court with the title 'We are empty without You!' After their Complimentary 30 Day Membership, offer a Membership Special. During their 30 Day Membership, offer a free clinic or two, some round robin plays, ANYTHING, to let them know that you really do want them back and that your Club has very successful programs that you would like them to be a part of.

## 3. We Miss You -- Come Back!

No Initiation Fee, just start paying your dues. This is another special you can offer your past Members. Send out a letter, a postcard or even take the time to call.

*Connie Martin, Director of Programs at Cascade Athletic Clubs in Gresham, OR and National Racquetball Hall of Fame inductee. e-mail: [Connie@CascadeAthleticClubs.com](mailto:Connie@CascadeAthleticClubs.com)*



GEOFF THOMSEN



# POWER DRIVE Z SERVE

by Sudsy Monchik

**I**n last month's article, I introduced my Magical "Power Drive Serve." The key word in the title says it all: "Power." Power is translated to reaction time...the harder someone hits the ball, the less time their opponent has to react to the ball. The problem is, power alone will not work forever because once someone is dialed into the speed of the ball and where it is going, they can eventually adjust pretty quickly. Similar to a power hitter in baseball, if the pitcher only threw fast balls at the batter, the batter would soon adjust. So the pitcher has to learn variety – a change-up, slider, knuckle ball, etc. – to keep the batter guessing. By creating variety, the pitcher made his fastball more effective.

The same is true for my "Power Drive Serve" -- if that were the only serve I had, even though I hit it 180+ mph, Jason and Cliff would have adjusted. So, I had to create variety in my service game. By creating this variety of serves I have made my "Power Drive Serve" more effective. So today I am going to teach you my "Power Drive Z Serve," a new serve, but an offshoot of the Power Drive Serve.

Let's dissect how I hit my magical "Power Drive Z Serve."

## Trick 1: The Ready Position

- Feet on the back line (short line) lined up one behind the other.
- Left foot in front of right foot (for righties) and right foot in front of left foot (for lefties) to create a two step approach into the ball for more power.
- Start low – knees bent and slightly bent at the waist.
- Weight evenly distributed (50/50).
- Racquet down.
- Concentrate - eyes on ball.

## Trick 2: The Step

- Back foot moves first by taking a short step.
- Racquet starts to come up.
- Hold the ball at full extension from your body to get ready to drop the ball off front leg after second step.
- Stay low -- knees and waist slightly bent.
- Weight slightly on front foot (60/40), but pretty even.
- Eyes on ball.

## Trick 3: The Swing

- Front leg takes second step, straight ahead or at a slight angle.
- Ball dropped off the heel of the front leg at full extension.
- Racquet begins its downward motion (leading with elbow and wrist cocked back – just like the forehand – no different).
- Hips begin to open (just like the forehand – no different).
- Stay low -- knees and waist slightly bent.
- Weight slightly on front foot, but beginning to pull back (55/45).
- Eyes on ball.

## Trick 4: Contact Point

- Legs are in line with each other, weight back to even (50/50).
- Ball is hit off the heel of my front foot, slightly closer to my body to get a good angle on the racquet, rather than at full extension off the big toe of my front foot.
- Racquet comes through flat and level with tremendous wrist snap.
- Hips continue to completely open.
- Stay low – knees and waist still slightly bent.
- Contact point is knee high and lower.
- Shoot the ball flat, no spin.
- Eyes on ball.

## Trick 5: Follow Through

- Legs are in line with each other, front toe pointed to right corner and back toe rotated around – completely balanced.
- Racquet completely around, pointing to back wall.
- Hips completely open and rotated through.
- End low – knees still bent, but upper body more erect.
- Eyes on the front wall, tracking the ball, then head rotates around to follow the ball.

The Power Drive Z Serve is hit exactly like the Power Drive Serve except for the contact point; the ready position, the step, the swing and the follow-through are all the same. What that does is create deception...a key ingredient in a great service game. This deception is created by one major element: the ball toss. The two-step motion should be exactly the same no matter whether you are drive serving to the right or left, z serving or jam serving -- the ball toss is what will change ever so slightly, a matter of inches. It will appear in the same spot, off the front foot, but the server will drop it off the big toe for the drive to the right, off the little toe for the drive to the left, off the heel for a z serve, etc. The element of surprise and keeping your opponent off balance is the key to accomplishing a weak return or an unreturnable serve. If they have no idea where the ball is going or which serve is coming, you've got them where you want them. Keep your opponent guessing.

With the one/two punch of Power and Deception, you are on your way, but now add in Variety (height, speed, angle, and type of serve) and you're there...right where I was. I terrorized the IRT Tour my entire career with this exact same service philosophy. If it worked for me at my level, it's going to work for you at yours.

The magic of the serve speaks for itself -- it sets the tone of the match, so give it all you've got. I did, and look where it took me -- right to the top. You, too, can be on the top of your service game by trying this very philosophy.

Hope to see you at one of the Fran Davis camps for live personal instruction, or the next best thing: buy our video if you can't make a camp at this time.

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







# THE POWER OF PERFECTION

## RACQUETBALL & VISUALIZATION



by Woody Clouse  
www.ektelon.com

**M**ultiple studies have proven that when you are visualizing a specific movement, you are actually using some of the same parts of the brain when you are physically performing that same movement. In a survey conducted at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs for "The Sport Psych Handbook" by Shane Murphy (copyright 2005, Human Kinetics), 90% of the athletes and 94% of the coaches who were interviewed used imagery in their sport; 97% of the athletes and 100% of the coaches agreed that imagery does enhance performance.

So in an effort to become that perfect racquetball machine you're striving to be, allow that perfect game that already exists within you to become reality by using the power of visualization. The key to increasing the effectiveness of visualization is to bring all five senses into the imagery process. In theory the more detailed our visualizations are, the more productive they will become.

The following will give you an idea of how to take yourself through a visualization script to enhance your ability to bring out your best and get one step closer to your true potential. Keep in mind that this is only a guideline and you should put your own thoughts into the process. The reason and purpose of the repetitiveness in parts of this is to ensure continual positive thinking, feeling, and believing. The brain needs five positive thoughts to drown a negative one, so repetition is necessary in order to fight off any negativity that a person might be dealing with during competition.

*Note: The following is only a short example. Build an entire dialogue with yourself that will take you through every aspect of the game.*

Visualization for Racquetball: Imagine yourself as you arrive at the racquetball facility ... see the friends you were expecting to see ... feel the atmosphere of the tournament ... see people playing ... hear the familiar sounds of the balls echoing off the walls ... feel the anticipation of the match ... experience the feeling in your stomach and in your body. You're a little nervous, but you know that's a part of being ready ... you're ready ... very ready ... remembering that these are common emotions and feelings before you play a match ... these feelings motivate you and prepare you for being at your best.

You finish your light warm up and receive your court designation ... you begin to hit on the court ... hitting with efficient, powerful strokes ... hitting smoothly ... accurately ... feeling relaxed and confident ... remembering some of your affirmations and cue words as you warm up. I encourage myself after a good or bad shot ... I am a positive person ... I turn negative experiences into positive ones ... I am a confident player ... I believe in myself and my abilities ... I hit each shot in the moment ... I am consumed with the present and each new situation that arises ... I am only focused on the now ... I am in control of my emotions and my temper ... I am free of anger and play for the love of the game ... I am confident, relaxed, and play with fluency.

Experience yourself and the energy as you now ready yourself for the start of your match ... you feel good and strong ... you focus your energy and power and stand poised, ready for the match to begin. The match starts ... you are prepared to

hit each ball ... your awareness is sharp ... you know where the ball is going at all times ... you're moving well ... you are light and quick ... you are focused, executing with precision. As the ball comes to you on each shot, you concentrate on the ball and you begin to establish a rhythm of bounce, set and hit: hitting with power, strength, and accuracy. As you hit each shot, you see it go exactly where you want it to go ... you feel the perfection in your body as you hit the ball ... you feel the ball hitting the sweet spot with each stroke. Notice yourself enjoying the match immensely ... you are glad to be on the court on this day ... playing ... playing well ... you feel relaxed ... loose ... you are breathing out as you hit each shot ... your forehand is powerful, strong ... your backhand is fluent and accurate ... you feel light on your feet and you are ready for each shot when it comes to you ... you easily place the shot wherever you want it to go ... with accuracy and ease.

See yourself consistently forcing your opponent into both corners as you move into center court and take control of the rally. Imagine the entire game each point and every movement that is important to your success and the achievement of your goals. You trust your body and your abilities...and yes, you're having fun! Continuously experience yourself as a good and competent player, a player who wins, who gives everything and plays the best he knows how. You have achieved your goals, you have played well and you feel proud and complete. Allow yourself to enjoy it all as you remind yourself that you have everything within you to be, do, and have what you want!

*To host a clinic at your home facility, contact Woody via email at [woody@winningracquetball.com](mailto:woody@winningracquetball.com).*



# NOTES ON SHOULDER REPLACEMENT

by Jim Rockstad

I started playing racquetball in 1974. In 1991, I had head-on car accident (prior to air bags) which caused whiplash and a few bulging discs in my neck.

I began losing range of motion in my right shoulder and arm just after the accident. I couldn't throw a baseball without experiencing great pain.

I still played racquetball (my passion) but it was harder to do since the range of motion was going away. Lots of ice, Advil and exercising so I could continue with racquetball, but my game was deteriorating over the years. My shoulder was constantly sore and the range of motion was a real struggle.

In 2004, I saw a University of Washington video on shoulder replacement and made contact to see if that was for me. I made an appointment with Dr. Matsen at the UW.

Dr. Matsen said the timing was up to me, when I couldn't take the pain any longer. I knew I would be coming back in the near future. He also said he could grind away some of the existing bone which would allow me better range of motion in addition to the new replacement. (He was certainly correct about this additional range of motion).

In early July of 2005, I was painting a room and my shoulder would "clunk" with each stroke of the brush; I knew it was bone-on-bone.

I had the surgery later in July of 2005 at 62 years old. I requested a replacement that would keep me in the game and not wear out. I wanted to get more range of motion so that I could do the backhand swing again.

In early October, Dr. Matsen allowed me to hit the ball lightly for a short time twice a week with ice after the exercise.

In January 2006, I returned to playing racquetball and using light weights to strengthen the area.

Currently I play three times a week, at least two hours each time. I played 16 games over three days at the March 2007 NMRA event in Portland with just some soreness. I entered the October 2007 Huntsman World Senior Games in St. George, Utah, and won four out of eight games there.

Most players who hear about my replacement can't believe it. I hit the ball harder now than I ever did and the range of motion is wonderful. I work out with weights every week to keep the strength in my upper body to help with my game.

Without the replacement shoulder, I can't imagine where I would be today since the game is so good for my body and health at age 65. I see no reason why I can't play for many, many more years, which is really exciting to me. I certainly hope to play for 10-20 years if the rest of my body holds up.

Without a doubt, this replacement



is the best thing I have ever done for my health -- it allows me to continue to work out in the later years. As a retired guy, I can focus on playing the game and entering tournaments throughout the year.

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# U.S. OPEN

RACQUETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

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2008

*Special Racquetball Magazine 2008 US OPEN Preview*

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# A PREVIEW

## 2008 US OPEN RACQUETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

**U.S. OPEN**  
RACQUETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS  
**2008**

By Doug Ganim



**W**ell, it's hard to believe it has been thirteen years but the 2008 US OPEN Racquetball Championships has arrived! This year's event promises to be the best ever with a record turnout expected from both players and spectators. The purpose of this special Preview Section is to give you an idea of what to expect at this year's tourney.

### Amateur Draws

The amateur matches will be played primarily at WellWorx Sportsplex (formerly Six50), Ridgeway Baptist Rec. Center, and The University of Memphis. No consolation divisions will be offered due to the huge draw and limited availability of court time. The competition is excellent in all of the divisions offered since competitors from all over the world enter this tournament. The top four finishers in each division will receive oversized US OPEN medals that weigh about one pound each!

### Pro Match Tickets

There is no better place in the world to watch pro racquetball than at the US OPEN Racquetball Championships. First of all, every top player in the world on the IRT, WPRO, and CPRT will be in Memphis. For the true racquetball enthusiast, this means incredible matches to watch right from the round of 64. Second, all pro match courts are professionally wired for

sound so spectators can hear every grunt, groan, and under-the-breath comment throughout every match of the tournament. Third, all the featured matches take place on the NEW breathtaking made-for-TV portable stadium court. The stadium seats about 1,100 fans and ticket sales are always brisk. Your best value is to purchase the Ticket Package which includes all sessions.

### Parties, Parties, and More Parties!

One of the things the US OPEN is best known for is the evening social functions. For those planning to attend you can expect more of the same this year starting with the "free admission" Pro-Am Doubles for St. Jude on Tuesday evening, the fun "Players' Gathering" at the Fox & Hound on Thursday evening, the Players' Dance Party in the Pub on Friday evening and the largest bash of the year: the Saturday evening Grand Gala -THE PARTY WITH THE PRO's. Other activities include a special Wednesday evening International Reception for all our "out of the country" guests and a weeklong Industry Trade Show in the Players' Hospitality Village, featuring all the top racquetball manufacturers displaying the latest and greatest gear available in the sport. Look for returning special events this year including the IRT Champions Clinic and the IRT/WPRO Play the Pro for St. Jude Challenge.

### No way to attend the event this year?

If you absolutely can't make it to this year's tournament, then the last resort is to follow the action from home. To help make this easier, we will transform our website, [www.usopenracquetball.com](http://www.usopenracquetball.com), into a computer "window" to look in on the action at the tournament. Plans include offering live amateur division results posting, up-to-the-minute pro match results, digital photography from throughout the event, streaming video of select pro matches, and web-radio voice interviews with top pro's as well as play-by-play voice streaming of the quarters, semis, and finals. Special thanks to our computer guru and webmaster Steve Kowalski for spearheading this ambitious project for the US OPEN.

### THE PRO'S!

As always, the focal points of the US OPEN are the pro players and the incredible entertainment they provide as each player quests for the coveted US OPEN title. Anyone on tour will tell you that at the U.S. OPEN, intensity is at its highest, so every match yields both players at 120% effort. The following pages in this Racquetball Special Preview Section provide some detailed insights about which players to keep your eye on at this year's US OPEN.





# CAN YOU SAY EXCITEMENT?

A 2008 US OPEN IRT PREVIEW

By Doug Ganim



**Rocky Carson (3:1 odds)** – Rocky Carson is coming off his best season ever, including finishing the year as the #1 ranked player in the world. The big twist for Rocky is the return of Kane. During the last two years Kane played on tour, he gave Rocky quite a few beatings. However, the Rocky Carson that Kane played then is not the Rocky Carson we see today. Rocky has improved every aspect of his game including his quickness and fitness level. I do think Kane will be the slight favorite to win; however, I would not be surprised to see Rocky win the tournament for back-to-back titles.

**Jack Huczek (4:1 odds)** – Despite never winning the US OPEN, Huczek still is a good bet to win his first in 2008. A lot will depend on the draw. Since Kane is coming into the tourney with a low ranking, it is unclear whether he will run up against Rocky or Jack first. If Jack is the unlucky one to draw the Kane match-up, it will require him to win this match and a match against Carson to take the title. However, if Carson draws the Kane match-up, then Jack will only have to beat one of these top players to win. Not knowing the draw, it is difficult to calculate true odds for Jack. However, he is due to play well in Memphis, and don't be surprised to see him in the finals, battling for the title.

**Jason Mannino (7:1 odds)** – Winning the US OPEN is about guts, stamina, and the willpower to dig down deep. Being the most skilled player on the court does not even come close to guaranteeing a win. Nobody on the IRT has more guts than Jason Mannino. However, with the return of Kane and the fact that he routinely lost to Rocky and Jack all of last season, the chances of his winning a third US OPEN are not great. However, I have learned to never count Jason out and therefore have given him reasonable odds to win.

**Alvaro Beltran (12:1 odds)** – Beltran continues to be a big underperformer at the US OPEN and on tour in general. For a guy with his enormous talent to have never won a pro

**W**hat excitement, you say? How about these story lines for starters...

He's BAAAAACK! Kane Waselenchuk will attempt to win his fourth consecutive US OPEN title and join Sudsy Monchik as the only player to achieve it. Can he do it?

Can Rocky Carson win back-to-back US OPEN titles? This year he will come into the event ranked #1. How will he handle the pressure of being expected to win?

Can Jack Huczek finally get over the hump and win his first US OPEN?

Can Jason Mannino do the unthinkable and win his third US OPEN title with yet another upset victory?

Cliff Swain has announced he is coming out of retirement to play the IRT full time this season. That means another US OPEN with Swain in the mix!

Will Mitch Williams prove his 2007 National Singles win was not a fluke and back it up with a US OPEN title?

Will Beltran, Vanderson or Williams make the life-changing leap into US OPEN immortality by winning the 2008 title?

Always the highlight of the US OPEN, the IRT draw will undoubtedly deliver another memorable year for racquetball fans around the world. Never before has the excitement level been this high going into the US OPEN. For those of you who may like to lay a little side wager on the action, allow me to give some insights that may help...

**Kane Waselenchuk (2:1 odds)** – I am at a huge disadvantage as an odds maker when it comes to Kane since, at the time of this writing, the IRT season has not yet begun. If I could see Kane play just one tournament prior to the US OPEN, it would be a huge help to see what kind of form he is in. Very fit and very strong! Even if he comes out a bit rusty at the start of the season, I believe that when the US OPEN rolls around, he will be the man to beat. Add to the mix that he will be the "hungriest" player in the draw, I would not be surprised to see him steamroll to his fourth consecutive US OPEN title and I am considering him the odds-on favorite.



stop (despite six finals appearances) is shocking. Everyone on tour knows how dangerous this player can be since he has all the tools. The question is, will he break through on the biggest stage and really show the fans what he has under the hood? As I said in my review of Mannino, winning the US OPEN is more about guts than skill. I would love to see Beltran finally show some real fire on the court and put forth the effort necessary to claim victory.

**Shane Vanderson (13:1 odds)** – Vanderson has had success at the US OPEN, making the semifinals two times. Of all the players who have never won a pro stop, Shane has about the best chance of pulling off the impossible by making the US OPEN his first victory. The reason is, he tends to get “hot” from time to time. When he’s rolling the ball from the back of the court, nobody on tour can beat him – he becomes impossible to score against. All you can do is “weather the storm” and wait for him to cool off, which he usually does. To win the US OPEN, he would have to stay hot for multiple matches. Never say never!

**Mitch Williams (16:1 odds)** – Mitch has never made the finals of a pro stop so the chances of his winning the US OPEN are a bit remote. However, with the weapons he has on the court, you never know when he is going to break loose with a life-changing performance. He did this a couple years ago at the Nationals in Houston, knocking off two players in the Top 5 to win the tourney. Mitch remains one of my favorite players to watch on tour with his big-time power and fearless shot selection.

**Cliff Swain (18:1 odds)** – “The greatest player to ever play the game of racquetball,” at age 41 Cliff probably does not have another US OPEN title in him (especially with Kane’s return). However, the thing about Swain is he always played his best racquetball of the season at the US OPEN. I fully expect to see him playing at a high level and would not be surprised to see him pull off an upset of a Top 5 ranked player. To win the tourna-

ment, he would have to string together multiple upsets which is quite a tall order. Still probably worth a small bet with the odds offering a strong return on your money.

**Jason Thoerner (20:1 odds)** – Never really a threat at the US OPEN, Jason Thoerner has quietly sustained a Top 10 ranking for a few years now. This impressive result was not the reason I chose to give him somewhat reasonable odds to win the US OPEN. The reason I put Jason at the top of my dark horse list is because of his fearless attitude and spotlight-loving personality. Don’t be surprised to see Thoerner in the quarters giving a top seed more than he can handle.

**Ben Croft (40:1 odds)** – Last season Croft beat Jason Mannino on tour twice (and two more times the year before) and gave other top ranked players fits with his speed and determination. He is probably not ready to win it all at the US OPEN but every season he shows more improvement on tour. Look for this young speedster to take someone in the top ranks to the wire.

## HONORABLE MENTIONS:

**Andy Hawthorne** – Last season was a bit disappointing for Hawthorne, but he remains a determined competitor. Perhaps the hardest-working player on tour, look for Andy to go down swinging (and diving) at this year’s US OPEN.

**Chris Crowther** – Also known as “the crippler,” Chris is another dark horse who has incredible talent on the court. Nearly impossible to pass, he proves that players of all heights can play at the elite level with his 6’ 5” stature. Always fired up on the court, look for Crowther to give someone fits in the round of 16.

**Tony Carson** – Never heard of him? Well he won the 2008 Intercollegiate Championships and is the best new young player on the IRT. He has a BIG game, BIG heart, and an entertaining personality. Not much chance of winning the tournament, but a great chance to upset a top ranked player in the 16’s.

In closing, the men of the IRT are ready to let it all loose at the 2008 US OPEN. Get your seat early for the greatest show in sports and ENJOY!

## PRO-AM DOUBLES FOR ST. JUDE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Want to treat yourself to an incredible racquetball experience while at the same time supporting a world-renowned charity devoted to caring for children with catastrophic illnesses? Well, here may be your chance! On Tuesday evening, October 21st at the 2008 US OPEN, thirty-two lucky amateurs will team up with the top stars on the IRT and WPRO for a special Pro-Am Doubles tournament.

A \$325 donation gets you into the draw. The evening features free food and drink as well as an autographed racquet and a complimentary portrait with your pro partner.

Although this event has sold out each of the last twelve years, at the time of this writing there are still a handful of spots left. If you are interested in participating, call (800) 234-5396, ext.129, to register.

## ATTENDING THE US OPEN AS A VIP!

A very limited number of four-person courtside luxury GOLD BOXES still remain for the 2008 US OPEN (at the time of this writing). The cost is \$2,800 and includes four GOLD All-Access Credentials to the event. In addition to enjoying the pro matches from your private and comfortable courtside GOLD BOX, All-Access Credential holders have unlimited access to the exclusive Pro/GOLD

Lounge throughout the event, featuring free food (breakfast, lunch, and dinner) and drink (beer, soda, water, wine, and champagne) during all hours. Event sponsors, top ranked men and women pro players, and GOLD BOX holders are the only VIP’s permitted in the lounge.

If you are interested, please call (614) 890-6073 to check for current availability.



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# HEAR YE! HEAR YE! THE KING RETURNS TO MEMPHIS

By Leo R Vasquez

**S**ome may argue that the original King of Memphis is Elvis Presley, the same Elvis who not only played racquetball but built a court on his 14-acre estate known as Graceland Mansion. There is no doubt Elvis would be singing the blues if he faced three-time World Champion and three-time US OPEN Champion Kane Waselenchuk who is returning after a two-year absence from the Men's International Racquetball Tour. With his unique mix of athletic ability and superior skills, Kane Waselenchuk has become one of the sport's most recognized athletes.

The new King as of late was quickly making a name for himself by becoming the first player ever to win back-to-back US OPEN Men's Pro Championships (2003 & 2004). Along the way to his second US OPEN championship, Kane did not lose a single game and then finished that off with a drubbing of six-time world champion and two-time US OPEN Champion Cliff Swain in the finals, (1, 3, 0). In fact, Kane has an unbelievable record at the US OPEN, only losing matches to Alvaro Beltran ('00) and to Cliff ('01, '02) since he began playing the US OPEN in 2000. His match record in Memphis is an impressive 28-3 and his dominant performances are hard to argue against in his quest for a fourth US OPEN title.

For those that haven't been fortunate enough to see Kane play in Memphis against all of the top pro-

fessionals (Carson, Huczek, Mannino, Swain, Beltran and the other superstars), this could be your "once in a lifetime" chance to see Kane make history. But, this may not happen once in a hundred years, especially if the rumors are true about the aging Cliff Swain coming out of retirement and Sudsy Monchik making an attempt at a comeback.

Kane took some time from his vigorous training regimen to answer a few questions about his return to Memphis and what it takes for him to bring his best to the US OPEN. Read on and find out about the King, his return and how he is preparing to take his throne back.

**LV:** Obviously the most important question most people want to know is, what have you been doing for the last two years and are you ready to play in Memphis?

**KW:** I've been training a lot and of course hitting the ball. I also developed an interest in business and began working on building and designing my own clothing company, Krowning Moment. Am I ready for Memphis? Yes, I am ready and I will be prepared. It's only the biggest, or should I say the most *prestigious*, tournament in the sport of racquetball.

**LV:** Did you miss the game and what will you enjoy most now that you are back?

**KW:** Of course I missed the game; it's been my life since I was two years old. There are three things I first remember as a child — my mom, my dad, and racquetball. I'm really going to enjoy the competition and just the overall moment when I step onto the court in Memphis. The US OPEN is a special place to live those memories.

**LV:** Since you will be coming back from a two-year absence as a three-time US OPEN champion, is there added pressure entering this year's event?

**KW:** To be honest, I don't feel any pressure. I love it, I love the moment. If anything, I think people will underestimate me.

**LV:** With your absence and inactivity the last two years, is it fair to consider you a favorite going into this event?

**KW:** That's not for me to determine, and honestly it's not important to me. I don't think there is any edge for anyone, maybe experience, that's about it. Everyone has an opportunity to win; my job is to limit that opportunity for the others and maximize my own chances.

**LV:** What did you miss the most about the US OPEN? Was it winning, the fans, destroying your opponents on the portable court, the lights, the television cameras?

**KW:** I missed *everything* about the US OPEN, especially the interaction with the fans on and off the court, and yes, the cameras and the lights. I always love that. Also, the new portable court looks great and I can't wait to play on it.



**LV:** You have obviously developed a way of winning Majors or Grand Slam championships. Can you explain the challenges and uncertainty you will face at this year's US OPEN? Is there something you will do differently considering the long layoff?

**KW:** The old portable court was a slower court and the ball stayed up. With that being said, the players who hit the ball harder had really no advantage. It really made everybody even. One of the most-asked questions I get is how I think the layoff will affect me. I really don't think it will have any effect, maybe travel and the speed of the ball, but those are not big things to worry about.

**LV:** Should you win the 2008 US OPEN, you'll become just the second player ever to achieve four US OPEN championships, tying the mark first set by Sudsy Monchik ('96, '98, '00, '02). How many more US OPEN Championships can you win, and what will keep driving you to bring your best?

**KW:** First of all, I want to give Suds his props. He deserves everything he did in Memphis. With four US OPEN championships, that silences any talk about being prepared. If I'm to capture my fourth US OPEN, it would be a tremendous honor to be in that class with Suds. Hopefully, I can win every year until I retire. That would be great, but for now, one point at a time, right, Coach?

**LV:** You made an appearance at the 2007 US OPEN and watched the semifinals. Since you've been gone, has the level of competition gotten better, and what do you think of the level of play?

**KW:** I was interviewed in Memphis and I mentioned that in my opinion it's a slower game from what I saw. It looked like fewer drive serves, longer rallies. I don't necessarily know if that is a good or a bad thing, but I will say it's a lot different watching than playing. To give you a really educated answer, I'm going to have to get out there and see for myself.

## TIPS FOR ATTENDING THE 2008 U.S. OPEN

**Tip #1: ENTER EARLY!** The event is expected to completely sell out this year. At 760 players we cap the draw and start turning people away. Don't get shut out. Enter today on-line at [www.usopenracquetball.com](http://www.usopenracquetball.com)

**Tip #2: ORDER TICKETS NOW!** You must have a ticket to view any of the pro matches, and although the Stadium Court seats over 1,000 the event is always a sell-out from the quarters on. No-shows can free up some session tickets "at the door" but it's risky to wait. By far, the best deal is to purchase the ticket package (\$99) for unlimited viewing for all pro matches for the entire week -- this guarantees you a seat -- but ticket packages are sold only in advance!

**Tip #3: ENTER TWO OR THREE EVENTS.** Court time restrictions (and the large draw) do not allow us to offer consolation divisions, so we strongly recommend that you enter two divisions so that you are guaranteed at least two matches. Although players are limited to just two divisions there are a couple of exceptions. First, if you would like to play "up" into the Men's or Women's Pro draw (perhaps just for the experience?) you can still play in two amateur divisions, for a total of three events. Second, if at least one of your divisions are doubles, you can play in any third event you choose. For these two exceptions only, a third event is permitted.

**Tip #4: STAY AT THE HOST HOTELS.** Check the entry form for the official list of host hotels. By staying at the main host hotels you'll have the convenience of the complimentary shuttle, running every half hour from the hotels to The Racquet Club and back and receive special room rates. These hotels will fill up VERY fast so call to book your room immediately. For a complete list of hotels in the area offering special U.S. OPEN room blocks and rates visit [www.usopenracquetball.com](http://www.usopenracquetball.com) and click on "Hotels".

**Tip #5: BRING NICE CLOTHES AND YOUR DANCING SHOES!** One of the really fun parts of attending the U.S. OPEN is experiencing the many evening social activities offered, especially the Grand Gala -- The Party with the Pro's. Racquetball or casual attire is not allowed at this bash so "dress to impress" will be the rule!

**Tip #6: LAST FLIGHT OUT ON SUNDAY.** Make sure you book the very latest flight you can get home on Sunday. The Men's Pro final is the last match of the tournament and you won't want to miss it. A packed house, booming music, laser light show introductions and the television camera's make this an experience like no other in the sport. The match usually ends around 2:30 pm so any evening flight will do. Can't get a late flight out? Consider going home Monday morning. It will be worth it!

Keep these tips in mind when making plans to attend the 2008 U.S. OPEN and you will have the inside track. Lastly, if you really want to experience everything the event has to offer and you have a few bucks laying around earmarked for "gifts for myself" here are a couple ideas to treat yourself to the ultimate VIP weekend.

**PRO-AM DOUBLES FOR ST. JUDE:** On the Tuesday night before the U.S. OPEN begins, a special fundraiser is held for the event's designated charity, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Have you ever dreamed of playing doubles with one of the best pro players in the world as YOUR partner? Well, here's your chance. For a \$325 donation to St. Jude you'll be one of 32 lucky amateurs to be paired up with top ranked men and women pros to compete in a single elimination draw. The evening will be fully catered and each amateur player will receive an autographed racquet from their pro partner. This popular event has sold out each of the last 12 years, so call (800) 234-5396 ext. 129 to request a Pro-Am Doubles Entry. The first 32 paid entrants will get the spots.

**GOLD LUXURY BOX SEATING.** If you really want to go first class, consider purchasing a four-person, courtside GOLD Luxury Box. Most are already reserved for event sponsors, but a very limited number are available for individual purchase. The cost is \$2,800 for the week and includes 4 GOLD All-Access credentials, a four-person stadium courtside Luxury Box with your name it (table service included), and unlimited access throughout the week to the fully catered PRO/GOLD lounge (only top 16 ranked pro's, event sponsors, and VIP's allowed). If you are interested, please call (614) 890-6073 to check Luxury Box availability for the 2008 U.S. OPEN.



# US OPEN WPRO PREVIEW

DEFENDING US OPEN CHAMPION  
HEADLINES WOMEN'S FIELD

By Leo R Vasquez



**T**he Women's Professional Racquetball Organization (WPRO) will once again bring their best athletes to Memphis for the 2008 US OPEN Racquetball Championships. Defending champion Rhonda Rajsich will be joined by three other former US Open women's singles champions – Cheryl Gudinas-Holmes, Christie Van Hees, and Kerri Wachtel -- in the women's singles field along with a strong showing of other hopefuls.

Although all of them will certainly be heavily favored to reach their projected semifinal spots, one of them has gone one step further than the others, and that would be Van Hees, who has won three US OPEN singles championships.

What we know is the torch no longer belongs to just one player. What's still to be determined is how long it will remain in the hands of defending US OPEN champion and world No. 1 Rhonda Rajsich. It's too early to say for sure, but you couldn't have drawn one up any better.

Rajsich's spectacular win in 2007 raises the issue as to whether she is the best female player to bring her best to Memphis, or whether she still needs to overtake Van Hees's record of three US OPEN titles. The WPRO only has two Grand Slam events and those provide major championship clarity, now that battle lines have been drawn and the contenders established, it is time.

Time, that is, to look ahead to the US OPEN, look ahead to the sport's original Grand Slam championship – look ahead to the newly designed “made-for-tv” four wall Lucite portable court – and ask the question: Who do you like to win the U.S. Open?

So who wins the US OPEN? Here is the skinny on the tour's top ladies looking to etch their names on the championship trophy and win a coveted championship.

**Rhonda Rajsich (2:1 odds)** – Rajsich is the defending US OPEN champion as well as the 2003 champion. She had another sensational performance during the WPRO '07-'08 season, finishing with the #1 year-end ranking for the third straight year after winning the last four major pro events of the season, including the WPRO Pro Nationals. There's no doubt now that Rajsich is for real. In the last twelve months, and particularly over the course of the last two years, she's dispelled all doubts about her ability to stand up to the competition at the biggest moments.

Rhonda was injured in an unprovoked assault outside of her home in June and suffered several fractures to the right side of her face. How will Rhonda's injury affect her performance? Nobody knows for sure. How will Rhonda's injury affect her performance? Nobody knows for sure.

**Cheryl Gudinas-Holmes (3:1 odds)** – Cheryl has two US OPEN championships to her credit (2002, 2004). She missed a golden opportunity and lost to Rhonda in the finals last year, but she doesn't seem to be slowing down despite being one of the tour veterans. Cheryl finished the WPRO season ranked #2 and recently won the USAR National Singles Women's US Team qualifying division.

Cheryl continues to bring intensity unmatched by her opponents. She is within striking range of becoming one of game's greatest female players and a win in Memphis could help seal the deal. Can Cheryl still dig deep and pull out another championship in Memphis?





**Christie Van Hees (4:1 odds)** – Christie has made headlines each year she has played in the US OPEN. She became the first unranked player to go from being a qualifier to a finalist in the 2003 US OPEN and she became the first female to win three US OPEN Championships (2000, 2005, and 2006) and always seems to have a strong showing in Memphis. The 31-year-old Canadian possesses relentless composure and focus on the portable court in championship matches. However, her lack of full-time participation on the WPRO tour may stand in her way against full-time competitors Rajsich and Gudinas Holmes. Does she have enough in her arsenal to hoist another championship trophy?

**Angela Grisar (5:1 odds)** – This Chilean superstar earned a semifinal appearance last year in the 2007 US OPEN and continues to sparkle on the big stage. She has relied on her backhand and supreme conditioning but will need to play the big points with confidence. If she prepares meticulously for this tournament, few things will surprise her with the possible exception of lack of experience. Angela is a threat to anyone on her side of the draw, but can she handle the pressure that builds up leading to the finals?

**Kerri Wachtel (6:1 odds)** – When she won her first US OPEN seven years ago (2001), Wachtel was a shining star in women's professional racquetball, driving her game to new heights that may have seemed unimaginable. She finished the WPRO '07-'08 season ranked #3 with her string of semifinal appearances and she looks healthy coming into Memphis. With her previous US OPEN championship under her belt, she knows what it takes to win but needs to string it all together for a second title. Does she have the heart and can she resurrect the same magic?

**Paola Longoria (8:1 odds)** – Also in the spotlight will be Paola, an energetic 19-year-old Mexican superstar who has proven herself on the WPRO by winning her first tour event last season. Paola is no stranger to the US OPEN and her loss to Rhonda last year may help steady her nerves and her game in Memphis. She needs to try and use all that energy as best she can to heighten her focus. Could she become the youngest player to win the US OPEN?

**Brenda Kyzer (10:1 odds)** – Last year, Brenda had a tough draw as she took on the best players from Ecuador, Mexico and Canada. Her semifinal appearance in 2006 is her best finish to date and she has the experience to reach the title match. Brenda has been a fan favorite the last few years, but can she take that ultimate step into the winner's circle?

**Kristen Bellows (13:1 odds)** – The player formerly known as Kristen Walsh has recently taken a new name and looks like a new player. Although she has not made it past the quarterfinal round here at the US OPEN, she was a finalist at the 2008 USAR National Singles and proved she can make it to the finals of a big tournament. Is the moment too much for Kristen or is she ready to rise to the next level?

**B**ack for the second consecutive year the Classic Pro Racquetball Tour (CPRT) will be in full force at the US OPEN in 2008. Rather than just having 4 players square off for the title we have again decided to engulf the entire Men's 40+ division into the fun. Therefore, the Men's 40+ (open to anyone 40 and over) will be a ranking event on the CPRT this year. Significant prize money is being offered for the top 4 places and many former legends of the sport have already committed to compete. Players currently ranked in the top 8 on the CPRT will start in the round of 16 while all other entries will work through a qualifying draw to reach the elite round of 16. Once we reach the finals, it will be played on Sunday morning on the stunning portable Stadium Court.

I predict that the 2008 US OPEN will feature the strongest Men's 40+ draw in the history of the sport of racquetball. It represents a bookmaker's nightmare, as there are literally 15 guys who can win the tournament. Here is the line on just some of the living legends you can expect to see compete at the US OPEN:

**Bret Harnett (4-1)** Former #1 ranked pro player in the world, Bret Harnett still possesses devastating power and a modern game-style. He has kept himself in tiptop shape and is used to dominating his competition. This left-hander will dazzle everyone with his thunderous splat shots and raw power. Look for Harnett to be a force to win the title.

**Woody Clouse (3-1)** Never made it to the top on the pro tour but is perhaps the most dangerous 40+ player in the world today (except for Cliff Swain). He is in incredible shape and has the most modern game-style of any CPRT player. Smart money would always have at least one bet on Woody to win.

**Ruben Gonzalez (3-1)** Former #1 ranked player in the world, the living legend is now 55 years old and is still a physical "freak of nature". Although he is giving up quite a few years to many of his opponents in this draw Ruben still has as good a chance as any to win the title. Nobody has ever re-killed the ball better than Ruben in rallies and his never say die attitude often wears opponents out. He won the event in 2007 and will be the defending US OPEN Champion. He has a great chance of repeat, unless Cliff Swain decides to jump in.

**Mike Ceresia (5-1)** A true competitor, this Canadian bag of energy is always entertaining to watch. He is never happy on the court unless he is winning by 12 (which is rare) so fans can enjoy a true "gamer" in action. Don't be fooled by his sour face on the court. Nobody loves to compete more than Mike Ceresia! Regardless of whom he is playing, Ceresia will find a way to be competitive and win points and maybe even matches.

**Jimmy Lowe (5-1)** The fittest player on the CPRT, Jimmy's unorthodox game style and endless energy give these guys fits. Last season he even knocked off Cliff Swain in a CPRT tourney! Don't be surprised to see this guy battling for the title on Sunday.

**Other hopeful attendees:** At the time of this writing, other CPRT regulars considering entering include former top ranked pro's Mike Ray, Dan Obremski, and Jerry Price. If any or all of these guys show up, the pool of possible winners expands greatly.

**The perennials:** Perhaps the most active and sharp players of all are the amateurs that compete in the Men's 40+ division at all the national tourneys each year. Guys like John Amatuli, Keith Minor, Tom Travers, Brad McCunniff, Tim Hansen, and others are all capable of beating anyone in the draw and winning the title. As I said earlier in this article, the 2008 US OPEN will feature the strongest draw of Men's 40+ players ever assembled in the sport of racquetball. For true racquetball fans, this division will offer yet another spectacle to enjoy at the US OPEN!



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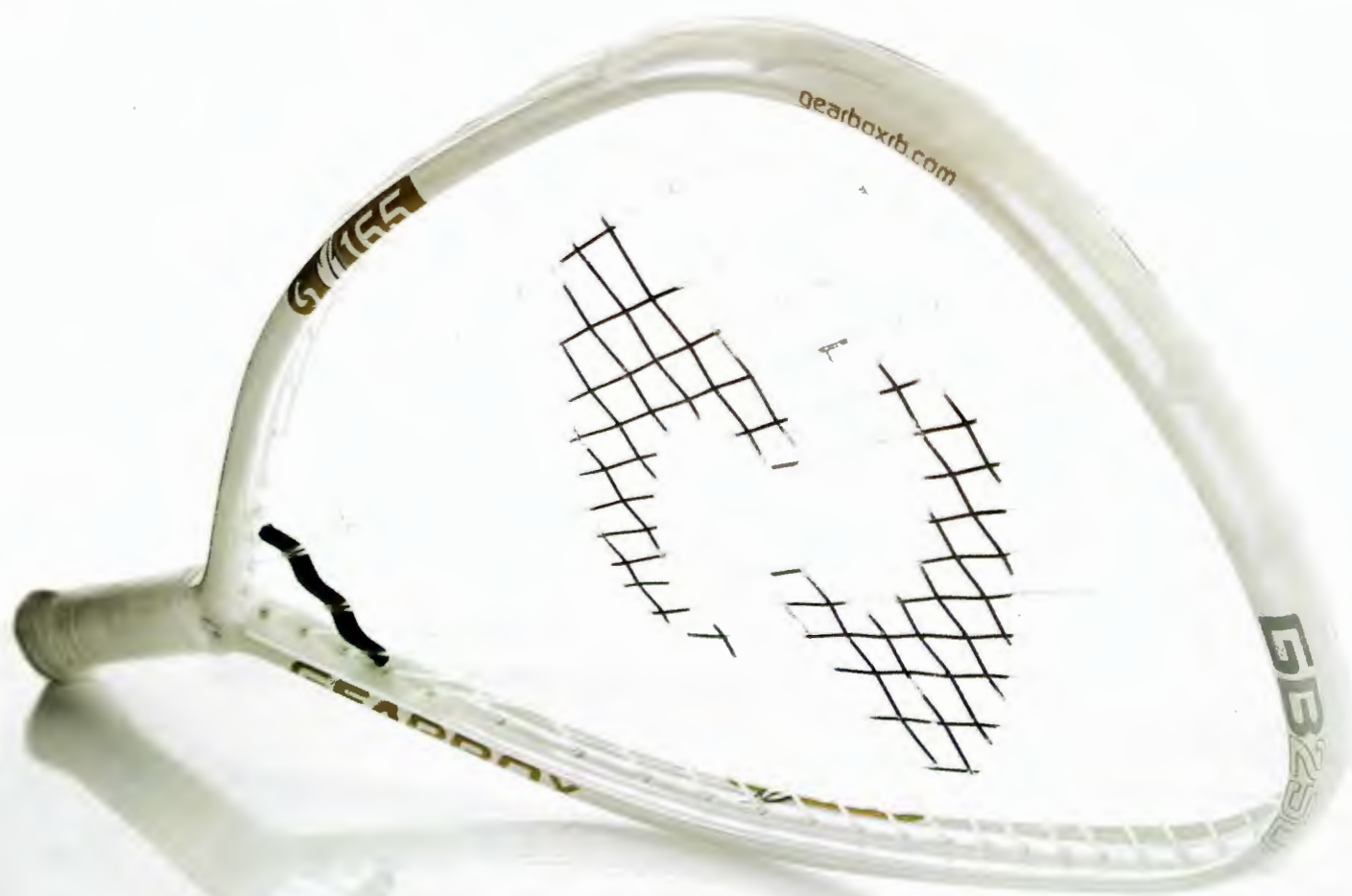
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This year's camp is scheduled for September 4-10, 2008. Visit [www.racquetballacademy.com](http://www.racquetballacademy.com) to view a three-minute video and a flyer on the High Performance Camp. Then, hop on over to [www.usaracquetball.com](http://www.usaracquetball.com) and download the application for this life-altering and rewarding experience!



CAMP STAFF

Camp starts at 7pm on Thur. Sept. 4 in Colorado Springs and ends Tuesday Sept 9. Checkout by 9am on the 10th OR you can plan to play or/and watch the IRT Motorola World Championships in Denver, CO 11-14. (45 MILES AWAY) This Grand Slam event features the 4 glass wall court! (Go to [R2Sports.com](http://R2Sports.com) to register for the tournament only)

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Applications are available online at [www.usra.org](http://www.usra.org), (see programs & camps). Questions? Ask Heather Fender at [HFender@usra.org](mailto:HFender@usra.org) or Camp Director Jim Winterton [Coachwint1@aol.com](mailto:Coachwint1@aol.com). As soon as you sign up—you will begin receiving our famous "what to expect" emails, and enrollment information. Send apps with \$200 deposit to: High Performance Camp USA Racquetball 1685 West Uintah, Colorado Springs, Colorado, 80904 . Call Heather Fender at 719-635-5396 to secure your place.



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# OH....WHAT A NIGHT!

## GRAND GALA HALL OF FAME 35TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



The highlight of the 2008 USA Racquetball 41st National Singles Racquetball Championships was the recognition and awards ceremony as 24 living legends gathered to celebrate the 35th Anniversary of the USA Racquetball Hall of Fame inside the Grand Ballroom at the Hyatt Hotel in Houston, TX. The event also awarded over 70 gold medals to national champions for Men's and Women's divisions along with hosting the National Military Racquetball Championships over the Memorial Day weekend.

**FRONT ROW:** JIM AUSTIN, CINDY BAXTER, ED REMEN, CHARLIE GARFINKLE, WILLIAM SCHMIDTKE, DR. BUD MUEHLEISEN  
**MIDDLE ROW:** RUBEN GONZALEZ, JIM WINTERTON, LYNN ADAMS CLAY, DAVE PECK, KEITH CALKINS, JOHNNY HENNEN, GARY MAZAROFF, JO KENYON  
**BACK ROW:** CONNIE MARTIN, SUSAN PFAHLER, MARY LYONS, JERRY HILECHER, DAN OBREMSKI, FRAN DAVIS, SHANNON WRIGHT, CLIFF SWAIN, CARYN MCKINNEY, ANDY ROBERTS

**T**he country's best racquetball players came out in force at the YMCA-Downtown Houston, May 21-26, 2008, to compete in the 2008 USA Racquetball 41st National Singles Racquetball Championships presented by Penn Racquet Sports. The "Finals" is the one-and-only national championship for singles competition in open, skill, and age group divisions and this year included the newly-added National Military Championships. This event brought together four branches of the U.S. Armed Forces to compete for their own national titles while others competed for the coveted gold medals in over 70 divisions.

This year's event was even more special with all the buzz about the Saturday night banquet: a chance to see and meet some of the sport's greatest contributors and players. Attendees were asked to dress formally and as a result the dust was brushed off of many tuxedos and cocktail dresses in preparation for the Grand Gala event.

Another surprise was the first-ever racquetball museum as USA

Racquetball displayed 40+ years of history with photos, old magazine issues, U.S. Team uniforms, racquets, accessories and other memorabilia. The museum was positioned at the entrance to the tournament at the YMCA so that everyone could easily see the items on display and reminisce about old times. Staff member Chuck Meredith did an exceptional job in bringing the museum to life after working closely with Jim Hiser in designing the layout and the timelines.

The Players Village provided the location for industry sponsors such as Ektelon, E-Force, Gearbox, and Head/Penn to display their new equipment. Other sponsors included Lawler Sports, Aflac, Reuben Landsberg & Sons Jewelry, Hyatt Hotels, Carrabba's and the U.S. Navy.

The Silent Auction fundraiser, organized and run by Mary Meredith, drew a lot of attention with the unique donated items on hand for attendees to bid on. All monies raised will assist in sending the U.S. National Racquetball Team to the 14th IRF Racquetball World

Championships in Kingscourt, Ireland, August 1-10, 2008.

Wednesday kicked off with 161 matches on the first day of competition at the YMCA-Downtown Houston, the Metropolitan Racquet Club, and the newly-added Houston Center Club. Tom Fuhrmann (Carpinteria, CA) was the spoiler as he defeated Ruben Gonzalez (Staten Island, NY) 15-13, 7-15, 11-9 in the Men's U.S. Team Qualifying division. "This was my first time to play him. I had to play good, this guy is a legend, he is Ruben Gonzalez," said Tom.

Nerves seemed to get the best of 12-year-old Jorge Contreras, Jr. (Haltom City, TX) who was playing in his very first National Singles in Men's D. "I was nervous and there were a lot of people watching me," said Jorge who was defeated by Ian Whiteside (Virginia Beach, VA) 15-2, 15-6.

The Military division also saw plenty of action as LCDR Steven Harper (Supply Officer, U.S. Navy) put together an amazing performance and defeated GYSGT



## BY THE NUMBERS

523	PLAYERS ENTERED
323	PLAYERS IN TWO DIVISIONS
161	WEDNESDAY MATCHES
91	AGE OF OLDEST PLAYER
8	AGE OF YOUNGEST PLAYER

**AFLAC RETRO  
BINGO NIGHT**

Reynaldo Ruiz (U.S. Marine Corps) 15-6, 15-0. "I was relaxed and I love these courts," said Harper.

Thursday was the second day of competition and the women took to the courts. In the Women's U.S. Team Qualifying division Jo Shattuck (Denver, CO) had her hands full against Malia Bailey (Norfolk, VA) and couldn't find a way to get past the crafty veteran. Malia won 15-11, 15-10 and later faced six-time National Singles Champion Cheryl Gudinas Holmes. Some of the most exciting matches on Thursday belonged to the women as Kerri Wachtel (Cincinnati, OH) took on Michelle Key (Gilbert, AZ); Kerri took the match, 15-6, 7-15, 11-6. "Michelle played really well. She definitely did not play like a rookie," said Wachtel.

The young guns were not finished, as sixteen year-old Aubrey O'Brien (Auburn, CA) turned in a stellar performance and took the first game from Rhonda Rajsich (Fountain Hills, AZ) 15-14. Rhonda was up against the wall but finished the match, winning the second game and tiebreaker, 15-5, 11-7.

In the Men's U.S. Team Qualifying division, 2007 Finalist Shane Vanderson (Naples, FL) was tested by a scrappy Shannon Kohl (Hudsonville, MI) but ended up winning 15-5, 6-15, 11-4. "I was as competitive as I can be," said Kohl. "I lost to Jason Thoerner last year so this is good experience for me."

John Ellis (Stockton, CA), the 1993 Champion, looked impressive and fresh against lefty Tom

Fuhrmann (Carpinteria, CA) and made quick work of the match, 15-5, 15-3. John has come back from a shoulder injury and possesses a newfound love for competition.

The nightly social activities are what most players look forward to at the end of an arduous day and first up was the Aflac Retro Bingo and 1970's Costume Contest. Players were asked to yell "Aflac" instead of "Bingo" if they had a winning card. Cool Aflac prizes were given to all the winners and everyone had a great time. Jeff Elder couldn't win a hand all evening until the last game of the night when he was the recipient of a friendly promise from Leo Vasquez. "I looked at Leo's card and said, 'Hey man, you got a winner.' I had to stand up and start yelling Aflac, Aflac," said Jeff. "Leo had said if he won anything, he would give me half."

The Thursday evening Ladies' Night Out event at the Hyatt was standing room only, when over 50 female players enjoyed their own special cocktail reception, along with a chance to win prizes, enter a fundraising raffle, test their trivia skills and pick up freebies. A special ambience was provided by the posters of Hall of Fame Women placed around the room. The evening was hosted by the USA Racquetball Women's Committee, who also took the opportunity to update the attendees on special initiatives to increase women's participation nationwide, including Racquet for

the Cure, Wilson's Hope Tour, and Ektelon's Rally for a Reason.

Players and fans were treated to a spectacular day of racquetball on Friday as the Men's and Women's U.S. Team qualifying matches showcased all of the top seeds. In the Men's division, three of the matches were decided by nail-biting tie-breakers. Jack Huczek (Rochester, MI) was on the brink of elimination as he fought off a remarkable comeback by Jason Thoerner (Pekin, IL), 15-13, 12-15, 11-6. Hard-hitting Chris Crowther (Riverside, CA) nearly broke the will of Rocky Carson (Ladera Ranch, CA) but fell in a thrilling tie-breaker, 10-15, 15-11, 11-8. The last Men's U.S. Team match on Friday featured defending champion Mitch Williams (Pueblo, CO) as he went up against high-flying Andy Hawthorne (Seven Hills, OH). Andy came out hot, winning the first game 15-3 but then it was all Mitch, grabbing the second game 15-10 and the tiebreaker 11-7.

The women were also battling for top spots as Adrienne Fisher (Tuscaloosa, AL) knocked out Kerri Wachtel in front of a packed crowd, 8-15, 15-8, 11-9. Kristen Bellows (Pleasant Grove, UT) looked impressive as she defeated sentimental favorite Brenda Kyzer (Leesville, SC) in two straight games, 15-5, 15-8. The women continued to push each other as Cheryl Gudinas Holmes (Naperville, IL) had to fight off a determined Malia Bailey. Cheryl nearly allowed Malia a chance but won in two games, 15-11, 15-13. Defending champion Rhonda Rajsich looked like a fish



**LADIES NIGHT**





KARAOKE NIGHT



TISH ROGERS - WINNER OF TEXAS HOLD 'EM



RACQUETBALL MUSEUM

out of water as Krystal Csuk (DeKalb, IL) gave Rhonda all she could handle. Krystal played her best racquetball but ultimately it wasn't enough as Rajsich closed the door and advanced to the semifinals with a 15-11, 15-13 win.

The night was all set for the Head/Penn Idol Karaoke and Texas Hold 'Em Party as over a hundred players gathered for a chance to sing for prizes and try their hand in a real poker tournament. After many entrants in the singing contest, it was Amber Dirks who walked away the big winner. The Texas Hold' Em Poker tournament came down to the final table where Texan Tish Rodgers was the overall chip leader. After a hand of all-in, the River card was too much and Rodgers walked away as the Grand Prize winner.

Super Saturday at the 41st USA Racquetball National Singles Racquetball Championships was filled with excitement as players began to advance further into the draws. In the Men's 24- under division, Cesar Castro (Bryan, TX) was all smiles after he defeated Jacob Hutkins (Lincoln, NE) 8-15, 15-1, 11-10 in front of a standing room only crowd.

The first Men's U.S. Team

semifinal match-up had Rocky Carson up against Shane Vanderson. The first game did not bode well for Shane as Rocky quickly jumped to a 9-4 lead and was scoring at will. After three more unanswered points, Rocky won the first game 15-5. The second game was no different as Rocky kept moving the ball around in the back of the court, making very few unforced errors along the way. Rocky advanced to the finals with a 15-9 win.

The second semifinal match between defending champion Mitch Williams and Jack Huczek began with Mitch firing right out of the gate and building an early 11-5 lead. Jack kept chipping away and claimed game one, 15-14. Game two was tight as both players kept scoring back and forth. At 14-14, Mitch hit a forehand splat to win the game and force the tiebreaker. Jack became aggressive and jumped out to 9-3 lead before Mitch's unforced errors became costly as Jack won the tiebreaker 11-3 to advance to the finals.

The women also held court as Cheryl Gudinas Holmes faced Adrienne Fisher in the first Women's U.S. Team semifinal. Cheryl showed everyone she is still a dominant

player and took the first game easily 15-4. The second game was "too much Cheryl" and "not enough Adrienne" as Cheryl built a commanding 12-2 lead before closing out the match 15-3.

The upset of the tournament came at the hands of Kristen Bellows who looked impressive against defending champion Rhonda Rajsich. The first game saw Rhonda build a 13-8 lead before Kristen caught fire and stole the first game 15-14. Rhonda was struck with a racquet to the head and her game suffered as a result. Kristen's court coverage allowed her to make some incredible shots and she found herself up 13-4, then finished the match 15-6 to earn her first finals appearance.

The Grand Gala Hall of Fame 35th Anniversary Celebration Banquet and Awards Ceremony was an amazing experience that began with a fully-costumed bagpiper's emotional melody. The elegantly-decorated Grand Ballroom was sold out and most of the men were dressed in tuxedos or suits while the ladies wore evening gowns or dresses. The twenty-four Hall of Fame members were escorted in one-by-one as the color guard of the U.S. Armed Forces stood at attention on both sides of

**"I was truly honored...after tonight the USAR Hall of Fame just went up to a whole new level. I now feel we are equal to the big boys." – Jerry Hilecher, 2005**

**"It's an honor to be a part of such an elite group of Hall of Famers."  
– Caryn McKinney, 2001**

**"Never in my wildest dreams did I ever think there would be an evening like this during my lifetime."  
– Jim Winterton, 2000**





CHERYL GUDINAS-HOLMES - U.S. TEAM DIVISION WINNER

ROCKY CARSON - U.S. TEAM DIVISION WINNER

the red carpet runway. A great many legends across the generations of the sport were together for the first time in racquetball history.

Shawn Royster hosted the evening's program as awards were given out to athletes of the year, contributors and career achievers. The night ended with a special video presentation and some lasting words from the sport's greatest legends. "Sure, all these people up here on this stage with me are great players, they won a lot of tournaments," said Dr. Bud Muehleisen. "But these people are here because they gave something back to the sport. They loved the game and it was what they did for racquetball that got them here today."

The banquet came to an end, but not before a seemingly never-ending line of players and fans formed to take photos with Hall of Fame members. Amid the constant flash bulbs from cameras, it was all smiles as the greatest contributors and athletes in the sport of racquetball enjoyed this once-in-a-lifetime chance to share memories and laughs together.

The Women's U.S. Team Qualifying finals on Sunday was an emotional moment for both ladies as Cheryl Gudinas Holmes was looking to

capture her seventh singles championship. She faced Kristen Bellows in front of a packed-to-capacity crowd. This was Kristen's first finals appearance and it showed as Cheryl built a 10-2 lead. Cheryl continued to put pressure on Kristen and closed out the first game with a 15-2 drubbing. The second game continued all-Cheryl from the start as her forehand became her biggest weapon and she was rewarded with a 7-1 lead. Cheryl won the match 15-5 and her emotions were apparent as she delivered her post-game speech before friends and family. Legends Caryn McKinney, Lynn Adams Clay and Shannon Wright were in attendance as well.

The Men's U.S. Team Qualifying final match-up between Rocky Carson and Jack Huczek began as both players were seeking their fourth championship. There are but a few players who can match Carson's determination and will to win. The score remained close with Jack hitting a variety of serves before he took a slight lead at 9-7. Jack's decision to continually move Rocky around the court with wide angle passes gave him several opportunities to win the first game, 15-12. Jack jumped out to a quick

8-3 lead in the second game and Rocky was now looking at a tough challenge to get back into the match. He began his attack on Jack as he re-killed any ball left up and won game two 15-9. The tiebreaker was all Rocky as he ran off six unanswered points before Jack knew what hit him. It was Rocky's day as he went on to win 11-4 and capture his fourth championship title.

Monday wound it all down as the finals were played in many divisions before everyone headed back home. Tell 17-year-old Danielle Key (Gilbert, AZ) she is too young to play with the adults and she'll prove you wrong. Danielle won the Women's Elite singles as well as the Women's 24-/25+ division. "I used this tournament to train and prepare for the USAR Junior Olympic Championships in June," said Danielle. "This was a great experience and gives me the opportunity to evaluate my game." Danielle comes from a racquetball family and trains with them to prepare.

Brad McCunniff (Cedar Falls, IA) had his hands full as he faced Men's 40+ defending champion Jimmy Lowe (Wahiawa, HI) in the finals. Brad lost to Jimmy in the semifinals of the 2007 US National Singles, 11-3 in the tiebreaker. This year was a chance for Brad to redeem that loss as he defeated Jimmy 11-8 in an exhausting tiebreaker and took the gold medal home to Iowa.

O. Rion O'Campo (Newport News, VA) was a double winner, claiming the Junior 18-under division and also the gold medal in the Men's C division.

Mother and daughter were also busy winning National Championships as Malia Bailey (Norfolk, VA) won the Women's 45+ division and her fourteen-year-old daughter Kelani Bailey (Norfolk, VA) won the Women's B.

In the end, 73 national champions were crowned and the Memorial Day weekend came to a close.

View complete tournament results on-line at [www.usaracquetball.com](http://www.usaracquetball.com).

"This was undoubtedly the greatest moment in the history of our sport."  
— Keith Calkins, 1996

"I was indeed humbled and honored to share the stage with so many fine athletes."  
— Jo Kenyon, 1994

"That was the biggest, most exciting and most professional racquetball event that I have ever attended."  
— Charlie Brumfield, 1988



## 41ST USAR NATIONAL SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIPS RESULTS

### Junior Singles 10 and Under - Round Robin:

1st: Chase Wright - Houston, TX  
2nd: Warren Bailey - Norfolk, VA  
3rd: Brady Yelverton - Mesquite, TX

### Junior Singles 14 and Under - Round Robin:

1st: Adam Manilla - Centennial, CO  
2nd: Kelani Bailey - Norfolk, VA  
3rd: Erik Smith - Houston, TX

### Junior Singles 18 and Under - Round Robin:

1st: O. Rion Ocampo - Newport News, VA  
2nd: Chase Angelocci - Lake Worth, FL  
3rd: Jaime Contreras Jr. - Haltom, TX

### Men's Age Singles 24 - Single Elimination:

1st: Marcelo Laprea - Houston, TX  
2nd: Cesar Castro - Bryan, TX  
3rd: Phil Mathews - Columbia, IL

### Men's Age Singles 24 - A - Round Robin:

1st: Joseph Lee - Baton Rouge, LA  
2nd: Darren Castro - Las Cruces, NM  
3rd: Brandon Taylor - Baytown, TX

### Men's Age Singles 24 - B - Round Robin:

1st: Adam Manilla - Centennial, CO  
2nd: Ross Dusenbury - College Station, TX  
3rd: Nick King - Pearl, MS

### Men's Age Singles 24 - C - Single Elimination:

1st: Michael Loudin - Houston, TX  
2nd: Chase Angelocci - Lake Worth, FL  
3rd: Michael Redmon - Paterson, NJ

### Men's Age Singles 25+ - Single Elimination:

1st: Andy Hawthorne - Seven Hills, OH  
2nd: Mike Harmon - Sarasota, FL  
3rd: Lee George - Aiea, HI

### Men's Age Singles 25+ - A - Round Robin:

1st: Joshua Jones - Sarasota, FL  
2nd: Kipp Atwell - Denham Springs, LA  
3rd: John Cole - Topeka, KS

### Men's Age Singles 30+ - Single Elimination:

1st: Mike Orr - San Diego, CA  
2nd: Jeff Bloom - Norfolk, TX  
3rd: Ryan Rodgers - Wythe, TX

### Men's Age Singles 30+ - A - Single Elimination:

1st: Jeremy White - Bend, OR  
2nd: Eric Vought - Powell, OH  
3rd: Bryan Shaw - Bel-Nor, MO

### Men's Age Singles 35+ - Single Elimination:

1st: Keith Minor - Channahon, IL  
2nd: Brad McCunniff - Cedar Falls, IA  
3rd: Thomas Fuhrmann - Carpinteria, CA

### Men's Age Singles 35+ - A - Single Elimination:

1st: Alex Ma - Lake Dallas, TX  
2nd: Elliott Mistich Jr. - Belle Chasse, LA  
3rd: Mark Ruiz - Kingwood, TX

### Men's Age Singles 35+ - B - Single Elimination:

1st: Bill Adams - Sugarland, TX  
2nd: Allen Crawford - Arlington, TX  
3rd: Michael Mack - Dayton, OH

### Men's Age Singles 35+ - C - Single Elimination:

1st: Don Jordan - Houston, TX  
2nd: Mark Velko - Kingwood, TX  
3rd: Scott Holmes - Pearland, TX

### Men's Age Singles 40+ - Single Elimination:

1st: Brad McCunniff - Cedar Falls, IA  
2nd: Jimmy Lowe - Wahiawa, HI  
3rd: Keith Minor - Channahon, IL

### Men's Age Singles 40+ - A - Single Elimination:

1st: Eduardo Salehroa - Copperas Cove, TX  
2nd: Andrew Kulback - Maineville, OH  
3rd: Jerry Hecht - Houston, TX

### Men's Age Singles 40+ - B - Single Elimination:

1st: Tim Kirk - Highland Park, IL  
2nd: Curtis Haines - Houston, TX  
3rd: Larry Grayson Jr. - Carriere, MS

### Men's Age Singles 40+ - C - Single Elimination:

1st: Jimmy Viquezo - Chula Vista, CA  
2nd: Rick Dietz - McKinney, TX  
3rd: Clarence Brathwaite - Irvington, NJ

### Men's Age Singles 45+ - A - Single Elimination:

1st: Andrew Kulback - Maineville, OH  
2nd: Jeffrey Waters - San Antonio, TX  
3rd: David Stewart - Houston, TX

### Men's Age Singles 45+ - B - Single Elimination:

1st: Melvin Todd - Frisco, TX  
2nd: Peter Kendrick - Arlington, TX  
3rd: John Shurbet - Lubbock, TX

### Men's Age Singles 45+ - C - Single Elimination:

1st: Robert Griffith - Northport, AL  
2nd: Tony Lorusso - Chelmsford, MA  
3rd: Ziad Saliby - Pearland, TX

### Men's Age Singles 45+ Open/Elite - Single Elimination:

1st: Jimmy Lowe - Wahiawa, HI  
2nd: Tim Hansen - Wellington, FL  
3rd: Richard Eisemann - Frisco, TX

### Men's Age Singles 50+ - Single Elimination:

1st: Ivan Sanchez - San Antonio, TX  
2nd: Leonard Mervin - Orlando, FL  
3rd: Glenn Bell - Nederland, TX

### Men's Age Singles 50+ - A - Single Elimination:

1st: Rick Betts - Malibu, CA  
2nd: Bobby Robertson - Houston, TX  
3rd: Robert Frazier - Toney, AL

### Men's Age Singles 50+ - B - Single Elimination:

1st: George Brewer - Bellevue, WA  
2nd: David Aguirre - Rancho Cucamonga, CA  
3rd: Francisco Martinez - Houston, TX

### Men's Age Singles 50+ - C - Single Elimination:

1st: Joe Gandy - Houston, TX  
2nd: Robert Griffith - Northport, AL  
3rd: Ron Curtis - St. Louis, MO

### Men's Age Singles 55+ - Single Elimination:

1st: Jim Bailey - Norfolk, VA  
2nd: Dennis Rosenberg - Mechanicsburg, PA  
3rd: Joe Lee - *M/V, HI*

### Men's Age Singles 55+ - A - Single Elimination:

1st: Gregg Mandell - Winnetka, IL  
2nd: Robert Steele - Hampton, VA  
3rd: Bobby Robertson - Houston, TX

### Men's Age Singles 55+ - B - Single Elimination:

1st: Christopher Young - Austin, TX  
2nd: Bob Walton - Whitehouse, TX, TX  
3rd: David Aguirre - Rancho Cucamonga, CA

### Men's Age Singles 55+ - C - Round Robin:

1st: Steven Markey - York, PA  
2nd: George Jackson - Richmond, TX  
3rd: Wayne Harris - Marietta, GA

### Men's Age Singles 60+ - Single Elimination:

1st: Ed Remen - Apex, NC  
2nd: Mickey Bellah - Laguna Hills, CA  
3rd: Russell Mannino - Poway, CA

### Men's Age Singles 60+ - C - Single Elimination:

1st: James Key - Northport, AL  
2nd: Richard Gower - Waynesville, MO  
3rd: Jack Morgenroth - Cincinnati, OH

### Men's Age Singles 65+ - Single Elimination:

1st: Patrick Taylor - Barrington Hills, IL  
2nd: Gordon Kelly - Gainesville, FL  
3rd: Brad Parra - Cibola, TX

### Men's Age Singles 65+ - C - Single Elimination:

1st: Richard Gower - Waynesville, MO  
2nd: Ray Gribshaw - Cypress, TX  
3rd: Ronald McElwee - Huntsville, AL

### Men's Age Singles 70+ - Single Elimination:

1st: John Kehrigh - Webster, NY  
2nd: Jerry Holly - Canyon Country, CA  
3rd: Leon Stanley - Hampton Cove, AL

### Men's Age Singles M25B/30B - Single Elimination:

1st: William Smith - Lewisville, TX  
2nd: Daniel Mullin - Lansing, MI  
3rd: Billy Wilcox - Houston, TX

### Men's Age Singles 38C - Single Elimination:

1st: Adam Burns - Ponchatoula, LA  
2nd: Chris Pipkin - Missouri City, TX  
3rd: Ali Gilan - Missouri City, TX

### Men's Age Singles M25C - Single Elimination:

1st: Ali Gilan - Missouri City, TX  
2nd: Chris Pipkin - Missouri City, TX

### Men's Age Singles M60A - Single Elimination:

1st: Bob Smith - Bend, OR  
2nd: John Bryant - The Woodlands, TX  
3rd: Leo Klimaitis - Barrington Hills, IL

### Men's Age Singles 65A - Single Elimination:

1st: Carl Moody - Williamsburg, VA

### Men's Age Singles M60B/65B - Round Robin:

1st: Tony Vargas - Prosper, TX  
2nd: Leon Stanley - Hampton Cove, AL  
3rd: Otis Campbell - Lewisville, TX

### Men's Age Singles M75 - Single Elimination:

1st: Donald Alt - Dublin, OH  
2nd: John O'Donnell Jr. - Champaign, IL  
3rd: Charles Kaiser - Pickerington, OH

### Men's Age Singles M85 - Single Elimination:

1st: J.W. Studak - Austin, TX

### Men's Age Singles M90 - Single Elimination:

1st: Ben Marshall - San Antonio, TX

### Men's Military Singles 30+ - Single Elimination:

1st: Reid Percivalle - Vail, CA  
2nd: Russell Bruns - Ladson, SC  
3rd: Chhem Young-pen - San Diego, CA

### Men's Military Singles 40+ - Single Elimination:

1st: Tyrone Gilmore - Unknown, CA  
2nd: Ian Chin - Navarre, FL  
3rd: Biff Martel - Aop, UN

### Men's Military Singles B / C - Single Elimination:

1st: Dillon Lacoste - St. Marys, GA  
2nd: Tim Kirk - Highland Park, IL  
3rd: Joe Yamrick - Bluffton, SC

### Men's Military Singles Open / A - Single Elimination:

1st: Travis W Passey - Mountain Home AFB, ID  
2nd: Russell Bruns - Ladson, SC  
3rd: C.J. Shaffer - Tyndall AFB, FL

### Men's Singles A - Single Elimination:

1st: John Cole - Topeka, KS  
2nd: Jonathan Clay - Middletown, NJ  
3rd: Alex Ma - Lake Dallas, TX

### Men's Singles B - Single Elimination:

1st: Peter Kendrick - Arlington, TX  
2nd: Melvin Todd - Frisco, TX  
3rd: Roger Hertzberg - Humble, TX

### Men's Singles C - Single Elimination:

1st: O. Rion Ocampo - Newport News, VA  
2nd: Alonso Mago - Houston, TX  
3rd: Paul Kochanowsky - Tallahassee, FL

### Men's Singles D - Single Elimination:

1st: Steven Markey - York, PA  
2nd: Michael Redmon - Paterson, NJ  
3rd: Brandt Smith - Houston, TX

### Men's Singles Elite - Single Elimination:

1st: Ignacio Jalmes - Corinth, TX  
2nd: C.J. Shaffer - Tyndall AFB, FL  
3rd: Ralph Cuesta - Hialeah, FL

### Men's Singles Open - Single Elimination:

1st: Petric Masorro - Houston, TX  
2nd: Charles Pratt - Portland, OR  
3rd: Jeff Wilson - Ashburn, VA

### Men's Singles US Team Qualifying - Single Elimination:

1st: Rocky Carson III - Ladera Ranch, CA  
2nd: Jack Huczek - Rochester, MI  
3rd: Shane Vanderson - Naples, FL

### Women's Age Singles 24C - Pool Play:

1st: Samantha Keca - Champaign, IL

### Women's Age Singles 25C - Pool Play:

1st: Beatriz Gonzalez - Hutto, TX

### Women's Age Singles 30C - Pool Play:

1st: Clara O'Brien - Lubbock, TX  
2nd: Lucie Michaud - Port Arthur, TX

### Women's Age Singles 35C - Pool Play:

1st: Alicia Paoletta - Indio, CA  
2nd: Allison Gabbert - Houston, TX  
3rd: Nancy Davis - Houston, TX

### Women's Age Singles 35+ - A - Pool Play:

1st: Melody Gomo - Trenton, MI  
2nd: Martha Contreras - San Antonio, TX  
3rd: Thao Le - Herndon, VA

### Women's Age Singles 45+ - Pool Play:

1st: Malia Bailey - Norfolk, VA  
2nd: Debra Tisinger-Moore - Simi Valley, CA  
3rd: Cindy Tilbury - Denver, CO

### Women's Age Singles 50+ - Pool Play:

1st: Chris Evon - Wheeling, IL  
2nd: Susan Pfahler - Neptune Beach, FL  
3rd: Mary Lyons - Neptune Beach, FL

### Women's Age Singles 55+ - Round Robin:

1st: Marsha Berry - Louisville, KY  
2nd: Karen Key - Gilbert, AZ  
3rd: Diana Matthews - Lincoln, NE

### Women's Age Singles 60+ - Round Robin:

1st: Merjean Kelley - Palo Alto, CA  
2nd: Mildred Gwinn - Waxhaw, NC  
3rd: Clarita Parra - Cibola, TX

### Women's Age Singles W24 - Round Robin:

1st: Danielle Key - Gilbert, AZ

### Women's Age Singles W25 - Round Robin:

1st: Keely Franks - Euless, TX

### Women's Age Singles W30 - Round Robin:

1st: Kimberly Ferina - Rockaway Park, NY  
2nd: Monique Flaherty - Moreno Valley, CA  
3rd: Rachel Gellman - El Mirage, AZ

### Women's Age Singles W24A - Pool Play:

1st: Kristina Jennings - Dallas, TX  
2nd: Carolyn Becker - Cranford, NJ

### Women's Age Singles W30A - Pool Play:

1st: Melissa McElfresh - Pembroke Pines, FL  
2nd: Jennifer Cole - Topeka, KS

### Women's Age Singles W24B - Pool Play:

1st: Vanna Keller - Bryan, TX  
2nd: Whitney Altenhoff - San marco, TX  
3rd: Alison Dooley - New York, NY

### Women's Age Singles W25B - Pool Play:

1st: Adrienne Antoni - Phoenix, AZ

### Women's Age Singles W30B - Pool Play:

1st: Tamika Holman - Severn, MD

### Women's Age Singles W35B - Pool Play:

1st: Sarah Houghtailing - Honolulu, HI  
2nd: Richelle Kulju - Seattle, WA  
3rd: Tish Rodgers, Wythe, TX

### Women's Age Singles W35 - Round Robin:

1st: Tina Hagen - Colorado Springs, CO  
2nd: Monique Flaherty - Moreno Valley, CA

### Women's Age Singles W40 - Round Robin:

1st: Kelley Beane - Manchester, NH  
2nd: Lorraine Galloway - Hempstead, NY  
3rd: Janice Vosika - Anchorage, AK



**Women's Age Singles W40A - Round Robin:**

1st: Thao Le - Herndon, VA  
2nd: Maggie Smargon - Chula Vista, CA

**Women's Age Singles W45A - Round Robin:**

1st: Melody Gorno - Trenton, MI  
2nd: Rosario Betancourt-Kelley - Houston, TX  
3rd: Laura Natividad - Milliani, HI

**Women's Age Singles W40B - Pool Play:**

1st: Jo Anna Reyes - Corpus Christi, TX

**Women's Age Singles W45B - Pool Play:**

1st: Barbara Jinks - Burkburnett, TX  
2nd: Debbie Roberson - Austin, TX  
3rd: Rhonda Ragsdale - Richland Hills, TX

**Women's Age Singles W50B - Pool Play:**

1st: Phyllis Clair - Round Rock, TX  
2nd: Diana Allen - Richwood, TX

**Women's Age Singles W55B - Pool Play:**

1st: Lorna Rose - Detroit, MI

**Women's Age Singles W50A - Round Robin:**

1st: Karen Simon - Cocoa Beach, FL  
2nd: Alyse Cori - Novato, CA  
3rd: Cheryl Kirk - Naperville, IL

**Women's Age Singles W55A - Round Robin:**

1st: Kathleen Ruzicki - Lombard, IL  
2nd: Marquita Molina - Wasco, CA

**Women's Age Singles W60A - Round Robin:**

1st: CeCe Palaski - Rancho De Taos, NM

**Women's Age Singles W65 - Round Robin:**

1st: Clarita Parra - Cibola, TX  
2nd: Marquita Molina - Wasco, CA  
3rd: Mildred Gwinn - Waxhaw, CA

**Women's Age Singles W75 - Round Robin:**

1st: Lola Markus - Park Ridge, IL

**Women's Singles A - Pool Play:**

1st: Melissa McElfresh - Pembroke Pines, FL  
2nd: Jennifer Cole - Topeka, KS  
3rd: Martha Contreras - San Antonio, TX

**Women's Singles B - Pool Play:**

1st: Kelani Bailey - Norfolk, VA  
2nd: Nicole Cordova - Greeley, CO  
3rd: Debbie Roberson - Austin, TX

**Women's Singles C - Pool Play:**

1st: Clara O'Brien - Lubbock, TX  
2nd: Lucie Michaud - Port Arthur, TX  
3rd: Vanna Keller - Bryan, TX

**Women's Singles D - Round Robin:**

1st: Nancy Davis - Saint Louis, MO  
2nd: Leslie Schulze - College Station, TX  
3rd: Beatriz Gonzalez - Hutto, TX

**Women's Singles Elite - Pool Play:**

1st: Danielle Key - Gilbert, AZ  
2nd: Tina Hagen - Colorado Springs, CO  
3rd: Diane Bunker - Lisle, IL

**Women's Singles Open - Round Robin:**

1st: Janel Tisinger - Simi Valley, CA  
2nd: Michelle Key - Gilbert, AZ  
3rd: Aubrey O'Brien - Auburn, CA

**Women's Singles US Team Qualifying - Single Elimination:**

1st: Cheryl Gudinas Holmes - Naperville, IL  
2nd: Kristen Bollovs - Pleasant Grove, Utah  
3rd: Adrienne Fisher - Unknown, AL







# MILITARY COMPETES

## IN THE USA RACQUETBALL NATIONAL SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIPS

BY STEVEN HARPER

**T**his year, for the first time since 1992, the Navy sent the All-NAVY Racquetball Team to Houston, Texas to compete against the Air Force and the Marine Corps in the 41st USA Racquetball Association National Singles Championships ("The Finals"), May 22-26, 2008. Racquetball has been around since the 1960's. Six Sailors, six Marines, 17 Airmen and one Soldier competed in two or more matches per day for six days over the Memorial Day Weekend.

"It's a passion and the adrenaline that keeps me coming back," said Machinist's Mate 1st Class (SW/AW) Russ Bruns, All-Navy team co-captain from Trident Refit Facility, Kings Bay, Ga. "I mean, racquetballs have been clocked at speeds of over 150 mph within the confines of a 40ft by 20ft court. Where else can you experience that?"

Military members from all four services have been working with their respective branches and with USA Racquetball for the last few years to get backing to compete in this tournament. The ultimate goal is to grow the sport within the services as well as grow the relationship between the military and USA Racquetball.

"We [military] are always looking for good players who are at their A level to compete," said Capt. Rik

Lepine, Air Force team captain, from Hurlburt Field AFB, Fla.

Racquetball is an all-season cross-training sport that is open to male and female athletes of all ranks. Between military commitments and deployments, it is often hard to keep players for a team and find the time to play.

"It's all about the game," said LCDR Steven Harper, All-Navy team captain, from Maritime Security Squadron Five, Imperial Beach, Calif. "The game is a true challenge because once you understand the fundamentals, you will want to get better. It is truly addictive!" said Harper. "It's the best way to stay fit and offers a different mental challenge every time you step on the court, and that's the new physical theme of the Navy...staying physically ready for any situation," he continued.

Overall the Air Force won with 47 points, second place went to the Navy with 42 points and the Marines came in third with 11 points. "The competition was tough," said Lepine. "This is the first time the military has played at this level, and it was great."

LCDR Harper stated, "This is only the beginning. Naval Base San Diego MWR is in the initial planning stages for hosting a sanctioned tournament, "The ALL MILITARY INVITATIONAL OPEN Racquetball Tournament," for



active duty members in all services during the fall season (tentatively November 14-16, 2008). So start getting ready for more spectacular military racquetball taking place soon!"

To view results for all divisions, both civilian and military, at USAR National Singles, visit [www.usaracquetball.com](http://www.usaracquetball.com).



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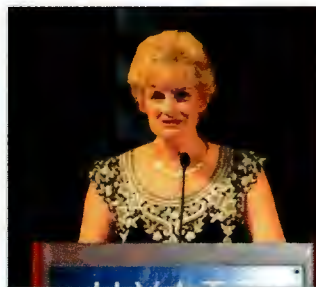




# 2008 AWARD WINNERS



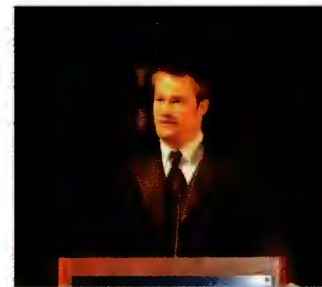
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MILDRED GWINN – AGE GROUP  
FEMALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR



RHONDA BAISICH –  
FEMALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR



MITCH WILLIAMS –  
MALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR



TWAYNE HOWARD –  
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# RACQUETBALL HALL OF FAME NOMINATIONS DUE



**N**ominations for the USA Racquetball Hall of Fame are due October 1, 2008. The Racquetball Hall of Fame is maintained to recognize and honor those athletes and contributors who have demonstrated outstanding achievement in competition or in the development, leadership, and advancement of the sport. The award is based upon years of consistent excellence in one or more of the following areas:

**COMPETITOR:** In either an amateur or professional field, the person must have influenced other competitors with his or her performance through any or all of the following: high performance standards, sportsmanship and fair play, competitive techniques, persistent and inspirational leadership.

**CONTRIBUTOR:** The person must have made a significant and noteworthy contribution that has left a lasting, positive effect on the advancement of the sport. The person's efforts should have been devoted to the sport and organization of racquetball.

#### **NOMINATION CRITERIA:**

Competitor and Contributor

Age Limit: Candidates must be 40 years of age or older.

**Requirements:** The candidate must have influenced the sport of racquetball through any or all of the following: outstanding performance, play, competitive techniques, or lasting and beneficial contributions to the advancement of the sport.

#### **Criteria:**

**Contributor:** Nominees must have been involved in racquetball at a state, regional, or national level for a minimum of ten years.

**Competitive Professional:** Top-level professionals may be nominated, once they have been retired from professional tour play for three years. (see Guidelines for a Professional Hall of Fame Nomination on the [usaracquetball.com](http://usaracquetball.com) website)

**Competitive Amateur:** Nominees must have exhibited outstanding performance at the national level in either singles or doubles over an extended period of time. Quality of competition and depth of field should be key criteria in the consideration of national champions, and nominees must adhere to the highest standards of fair play and sportsmanship.

**Stipulation:** In the case of special circumstances (death, career-ending injury, or illness) a person may still be eligible for a nomination, even though specific criteria (ten years in the sport, top ranking, or retired for three years) may not have been met.

**Nominations:** Any current USAR member may nominate a candidate. The USAR may designate a specific form that must be used in making nominations and it will set the time frame for submitting nominations. The call for nominations will be publicized in *Racquetball* magazine with sufficient lead time to allow response. A person may not nominate himself or herself.

**Eligibility:** Staff members or members of the respective IRT/WPRO/USAR Boards of Directors shall not be eligible for nomination until 3 years after their term has expired or 3 years following their last employment by one of the above associations. Also, committee chairpersons cannot receive an award of any kind given out by the committee chaired by that person.

**Stipulation:** Consistent with nomination criteria, USAR Board members who serve specifically in an athlete capacity (athlete representatives to the Board) may be considered for Hall of Fame review, or other awards, during their terms of service (the three-year waiting period may be waived in this instance).

**Documentation:** The person presenting a nomination must obtain and submit a resume and complete a cover letter. The one-page cover letter should accurately summarize the resume.

**Limits:** A candidate nominated but rejected for three consecutive years may not be nominated again for a minimum of three years.

To nominate a candidate who meets these criteria, please review the guidelines above, then submit the proper text and support materials to complete your nomination. The nomination in its entirety may be sent electronically or it may be mailed to:

"Racquetball Hall of Fame"  
Attn.: Heather Fender  
1685 West Uintah  
Colorado Springs, CO 80904





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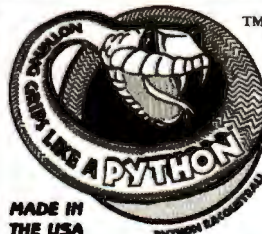
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October 17-19 Atlanta, GA

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March 27-29 TBA

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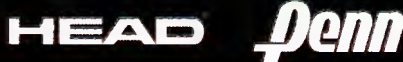
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EVENT TITLE	EVENT START	EVENT END	CONTACT	
2008 FL BOB SIERRA YMCA SUMMER SHOT FEST	8/17/2008	8/17/2008	RANDY	BUFFINGTON
2008 TX YMCA CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES AUGUST	8/16/2008	8/17/2008	CURTIS	HAINES
2008 NASHVILLE RACQUETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS	8/22/2008	8/24/2008	TERRY	DAVIS
2008 IRF WORLD SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS	8/26/2008	8/30/2008	GARY	MAZAROFF
2008 WA SUMMER SHOOTOUT	8/30/2008	8/30/2008	NEAL	HEGGEN
2008 MOTOROLA IRT WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP PRESENTED BY VERIZON WIRELESS	9/17/2008	9/21/2008	DAVE	NEGRETE
2008 NC OUTBACK STEACKHOUSE BLAST IT! (WPRO)	9/12/2008	9/14/2008	LYNN	STEPHENS
2008 WICHITA, KS HEALTH STRATEGIES FALL SHOOTOUT	9/12/2008	9/14/2008	SCOTT	WOLFORD
2008 TX TRIPLE CROWN RACQUETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS	9/13/2008	9/14/2008	LEO	VASQUEZ
2ND IRT WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS	9/17/2008	9/21/2008	JIM	HISER
2008 TX YMCA CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES SEPTEMBER	9/20/2008	9/21/2008	CURTIS	HAINES
2008 NC FALL CLASSIC	9/26/2008	9/28/2008	SHANE	HUMMELL
2008 WA AUBURN VW OPEN PRO/AM	10/10/2008	10/12/2008	NEAL	HEGGEN
2008 TX STATE DOUBLES RACQUETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS	10/10/2008	10/12/2008	LEO	VASQUEZ
2008 KS STATE DOUBLES	10/17/2008	10/19/2008	MIKE	WEDEL
2008 NC EAST COAST RBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS	10/17/2008	10/19/2008	CHARLES	HAUSER
2008 TX YMCA CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES OCTOBER	10/18/2008	10/19/2008	CURTIS	HAINES
13TH US OPEN RACQUETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS	10/22/2008	10/26/2008	DOUG	GANIM
2008 WA SHAWN HYATT EXCAVATING SHOOTOUT	11/6/2008	11/9/2008	RAFAEL	LOPEZ
2008 TX STATE SENIORS RACQUETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS	11/8/2008	11/8/2008	LEO	VASQUEZ
2008 TURKEY SHOOT OPEN	11/13/2008	11/16/2008	DOUG	HALVERSON
2008 CA ALL MILITARY INVITATIONAL OPEN	11/14/2008	11/16/2008	STEVEN	HARPER
2008 WA PUGET SOUND CHALLENGE	11/21/2008	11/23/2008	CHEYENNE	HAYES
2008 NC COURTS FOR THE CURE	12/5/2008	12/7/2008	JAN	STELMA
2008 TX HOLIDAY CLASSIC	12/13/2008	12/14/2008	CURTIS	HAINES
2008 TX MAVERICK HOLIDAY RACQUETBALL SHOOTOUT	12/13/2008	12/13/2008	LEO	VASQUEZ
2009 TX TEST TRAINING EVENT	1/1/2009	1/3/2009	RYAN	RODGERS
2009 KY YMCA SPIRIT TOURNEY	1/16/2009	1/18/2009	BARRY	STEWART
2008 NATIONAL MASTERS CHAMPIONSHIP	3/11/2009	3/14/2009	STEVE	COHEN



# CALENDAR

CONTACT PHONE	FACILITY NAME	FACILITY CITY	STATE	EVENT PHONE
813-806-0250	YMCA - BOB SIERRA TAMPA	TAMPA	FL	813-230-7525
281-827-7420	YMCA - DOWNTOWN HOUSTON	HOUSTON	TX	281-827-7420
615-895-3679	YMCA - DOWNTOWN NASHVILLE	NASHVILLE	TN	615-895-3679
505-321-1110	MIDTOWN SPORTS & WELLNESS	ALBUQUERQUE	NM	505-321-1110
360-820-3224	BALLY'S TOTAL FITNESS - KIRKLAND	KIRKLAND	WA	360-820-3224
630-430-1478	DENVER ATHLETIC CLUB	DENVER	CO	
910-638-8008	THE SPORTS CENTER	FAYETTEVILLE	NC	
316-721-3428	HEALTH STRATEGIES	WICHITA	KS	
817-275-3348	MAVERICK ATHLETIC CLUB	ARLINGTON	TX	817-275-3340
719-635-5396	USA RACQUETBALL *FAST*FURIOUS*FITNESS	COLORADO SPRINGS	CO	
281-827-7420	YMCA - DOWNTOWN HOUSTON	HOUSTON	TX	281-827-7420
704-716-6100	YMCA - DOWD	CHARLOTTE	NC	
360-820-3224	BALLY'S TOTAL FITNESS - KENT	KENT	WA	
817-275-3348	MAVERICK ATHLETIC CLUB	ARLINGTON	TX	817-275-3340
913-383-9060	THE ATHLETIC CLUB OF OVERLAND PARK	OVERLAND PARK	KS	
	WILMINGTON ATHLETIC CLUB	WILMINGTON	NC	
281-827-7420	YMCA - DOWNTOWN HOUSTON	HOUSTON	TX	281-827-7420
614-890-6073	THE RACQUET CLUB OF MEMPHIS	MEMPHIS	TN	
509-966-4050	YAKIMA ATHLETIC CLUB	YAKIMA	WA	509-966-4050
817-275-3348	MAVERICK ATHLETIC CLUB	ARLINGTON	TX	817-275-3340
630-629-3390	GLASS COURT SWIM & FITNESS	LOMBARD	IL	630-629-3390
757-377-0713	SAN DIEGO NAVAL BASE	SAN DIEGO		
360-558-9493	BALLY'S TOTAL FITNESS - OLYMPIA	OLYMPIA	WA	
252-633-2221	COURTS PLUS OF JACKSONVILLE	JACKSONVILLE	NC	
281-827-7420	YMCA - DOWNTOWN HOUSTON	HOUSTON	TX	281-827-7420
817-275-3348	MAVERICK ATHLETIC CLUB	ARLINGTON	TX	817-275-3340
214-556-1835	SPECTRUM HEALTH CLUB	SAN ANTONIO	TX	
	YMCA - OF GREATER LOUISVILLE	LOUISVILLE	KY	270-945-9695
714-288-8910	SPECTRUM CLUB	CANOGA PARK	CA	818-884-5034





# ON BECOMING ADVOCATES FOR RACQUETBALL

by Twayne M. Howard

I had a number of eye-opening moments this summer that brings me to share a new, hopefully interesting, observation.

I was playing with some of my usual sparring partners. It is a group of guys who don't play tournaments but are good club players. They are the "Average Joes" who are the backbone of our sport. They come out three days a week, get some exercise and have a good time. I wish they would play tournaments, but they come out and use the courts, and there are more of "them" than "us" who do play tournaments.

We were taking a break between games and one guy dug into his bag for a glove. I noticed that it was an "Ebonite" brand bag. Now, I may be a bit racquetball-centric, but I know enough to recognize one of the premier brand names in bowling. (To me, it's not a sport if you can drink and smoke while you are playing, but don't get me started.) My friend, who shall remain nameless, had a bowling ball bag for his racquetball gear. Of course, the assembled players gave him quite a bit of grief for it, all in the name of good fun. He said it was a present, or whatever, and we all had a good laugh. But it got me to thinking. "Bowling... really? Huh."

Another day, another set of games with the same players. I looked around the court and I noticed that one guy was wearing a t-shirt from a 3-on-3 basketball tournament series. I know this guy doesn't play basketball but does play the occasional racquetball tournament. I asked about the shirt, and he said his son plays and gave it to him. I asked him why he didn't wear any of his tournament shirts. His response was something along the lines of, "I don't know....I've got them, drawers

full of them, but I never pull them out." I realized how many basketball tournament shirts I see out in public. Never any racquetball shirts. "Basketball...really? Huh."

For that matter, sometimes it seems that I can't go out to dinner without seeing a dozen guys wearing golf shirts with a big country club logo, or "US Open" or "Ryder Cup" logos. Sometimes it seems like every guy who has swung a 3-iron has one and is wearing it every chance he gets. "Golf... really? Huh."

The final incident was just last week. I was playing an old friend at his club, and he introduced me to another gentleman so we could play some cut-throat. As we were getting started, I noticed my new friend (I always figure that anyone who plays racquetball is a friend of mine) was wearing a FootJoy golf glove instead of racquetball glove. A GOLF GLOVE!! Fortunately, he was a good guy and we had some good games, otherwise I was going to revise my thinking on this whole "every racquetball player is a friend of mine" thing.

Instead, I took heed of the obvious theme that was developing during my summer and decided to write it down in a gentle thesis, which you are now reading.

Ladies and gentlemen, I submit to you that we do not support our sport. I am sorry to say it. But, I fear it is true. We do not do enough to support racquetball.

When you get back into the office on Monday, do you tell your co-workers that you played a tournament? Or that you got in a few games over the weekend? It never ceases to amaze me how people react when they find out that I play racquetball. I have a new co-worker that I mentioned racquetball

to. You should have seen his eyes light up. He used to play in college and would love to get back into it. I'm going to get him back on the court and get him involved. This has happened time and time again. It's amazing the response that you can get by just mentioning "Racquetball."

Racquetball might not have the high status that the Ryder Cup does, but we have a US Open Championship and National Championships. It is easy to get a nice, embroidered polo from them. It's an easy way to show off your love of racquetball.

Most people reading this article have played a tournament, and most tournaments give out a shirt. I'm betting that you all have shirts in a drawer that never see the light of day. I am not asking that you wear your Motor City or Riverview long-sleeved t-shirt out to a formal dinner. But you know what, they are darned good-looking shirts. Drag one out, put it on and go out in public. State Singles and the Aloha Open give out some really cool Dri-Fit shirts. They are perfect for racquetball or any other form of exercise. Lansing, Davison, Kalamazoo and Players all give out great shirts. The West Michigan Open even provides a polo shirt with an embroidered logo.

But, it's not just about shirts. I know you all love racquetball as much as I do. The RAM Board of Directors spends a lot of time and energy around trying to bring more people to the game - Juniors, Women and Men alike. But every little bit helps.

It is crucial that we support racquetball. FootJoy and Ebonite, and even Nike and Adidas don't care about racquetball. E-Force, Ektelon, Gearbox, Head, ProKennex, and Wilson do. I urge you to support them as much as possible. Buy their gloves, bags and shoes. Help them continue to help us.

The opportunities to promote racquetball are endless. It doesn't take much. Talk about racquetball, wear a shirt and wear the right gloves. It is time that each of us becomes an Advocate for Racquetball.



# RACQUETBALL WOMEN



WOMEN'S CLINIC: RHONDA RAJSICH, FRAN DAVIS, BRENDA KYZER



AT THE HOUSTON CENTER CLUB: L TO R, PHYLLIS CLAIR, BARBARA JINKS, RHONDA RAGSDALE, DEBBIE ROBERSON, VENITA MITCHELL AND JOANNA REYES

**T**he USAR Women's Committee enjoyed its now-traditional (3rd Annual) Ladies' Night Out on Thursday, May 22nd in Houston. This activity originated as a way to not only bring added value to those who faithfully attend National Singles every year but also to provide an opportunity for first-time attendees to meet other women at the event. This year was particularly special because of the presence of several women from the Hall of Fame. We loved how the women pioneers of the game mingled with women who were attending National Singles for the very first time!

Thanks to 14-year-old Kelani Bailey, everyone in attendance had the opportunity to contribute to the fundraising raffle that included four racquets donated by Ektelon, Gearbox and Wilson; a USA Team shirt; and a Patricia Locke commemorative breast cancer awareness pin. Due to the generous participation and Kelani's impressive fundraising skills, nearly \$500 was raised for Susan G. Komen for the Cure. Congratulations to raffle winners Debbie Chaney, Phyllis Clair, Nancy Davis, Dianne Easterling, Sam Keca and Merijean Kelley!

In addition to the Ladies' Night Out, other features that provided value to women players were the pool play format and the Women's Clinic (which welcomed men as well!), impressively presented by Fran Davis, Brenda Kyzer and Rhonda Rajsich. Everyone appreciated the donation of time and expertise from these professional players and respected instructors.

The Women's Committee's mission is increase women's participation at national events as well as advocate for grassroots development of the sport for women. We will continue to look for more ideas and we wholeheartedly welcome the contributions of anyone interested in helping us grow women's racquetball. Whether your forte is computer programming and graphics, running racquetball programs, creating training and instructional programs, or simply possessing excellent social skills, we welcome your input!

The Women's Committee has created a location on the USA Racquetball website entitled "Women's Watch" for all interested parties to learn more about the many aspects of women's racquetball: [http://usaracquetball.com/Programs/](http://usaracquetball.com/Programs/WomensCommittee.aspx)

[WomensCommittee.aspx](http://usaracquetball.com/Programs/WomensCommittee.aspx). Much gratitude goes to Linda Mojer for her significant contribution in creating this page for the committee and for the women of racquetball.

Please use the website as a resource for learning more about women's racquetball and as a vehicle to reach out to us. Whether you are looking for a place to learn, a league in which to compete to have fun and further your skills, or connections with other women players in your area, we want to help. When we make a difference to one person, we are one step closer to realizing our mission!





# EKTELON LAUNCHES O SERIES PERFORMANCE FOOTWEAR

NEW LINE DELIVERS "HOLE" NEW LOOK AND ULTIMATE STABILITY FOR PLAYERS



**R**acquetball players are very particular when it comes to equipment for their feet since the right footwear can lead to improved footwork that can, in turn, make all the difference between winning and losing.

Now, after months of exhaustive design and on-court play-testing, Ektelon is launching O Series and in the process is taking footwear to a "hole" new level - as evidenced by the new O-Port ventilation system designed into the upper portion of the shoe to deliver exceptional breathability. O Series also builds on the success

of the original M Series line by delivering improved Precision Tube technology that rounds the tubes for maximum energy return and greater shock absorption.

Coming in a mid profile, the OC-1 performance shoe is designed to provide players with ultimate support and features a gum rubber outsole in an aggressive herringbone tread pattern to allow greater traction, quicker acceleration and improved lateral stability.

"Ektelon is focused on understanding exactly what racquetball players need to win and we pride ourselves on providing them with the best products from head to toe," said

Scott Winters, Vice President of Indoor Sports at Ektelon. "For a competitive racquetball player, support and acceleration are key when it comes to footwear, and this new line provides both in exceptional fashion. We are excited to introduce O Series as we strive to bring the best quality products to players and continue to grow our footwear category."

The OC-1 will be available in two color combinations starting July 15, 2008 wherever Ektelon products are sold: Black/Red/Silver and White/Black/Silver.

For more information and to view images of Ektelon's O Series footwear, log onto [www.ektelon.com](http://www.ektelon.com)

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  - a. Through your membership login on [www.usaracquetball.com](http://www.usaracquetball.com) or
  - b. Contact national office (719-635-5396) to update your information
2. *E-Mail Newsletter* – In order to receive the free e-mail newsletter you must make sure you include a valid email address in your profile. If you know other players who may be interested in receiving the e-mail newsletter you may forward their e-mail address to the office.
3. *Rankings* – Ranking information may be obtained by going to the USA Racquetball website. Each player is now able to review their racquetball playing history, verify the matches they played and the events in which they competed.

### As a Non-Member:

1. *Racquetball University* – Go to the USA Racquetball website and review information from the nations top instructors and players. Club and instructors can

download instructional and programming information as well as find the most up to date information on training and the physical benefits of racquetball.

2. *History of Racquetball*– Review a complete collection of historical data outlining the history of racquetball. Periodical updates will highlight important events that have contributed to the growth of racquetball.
3. *USA Foundation* – USA Racquetball Foundation will officially be approved within the next

few weeks. The Foundation will have a separate Board of Directors from the USAR board of Directors and will function to oversee contributions and financial investments of the association.

### For Tournament Directors:

The USA Racquetball R2 tournament management system has been designed especially for USA Racquetball. The system allows event directors to register players on line, check memberships, verify player rankings and playing history, and automatically submit results for rankings verification.

## SPECIAL THANKS TO SPLATSHOTZ

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**S**platshotz Sports LLC ([www.splatshotz.com](http://www.splatshotz.com)) is a privately-held distributor of racquetball racquets and accessories, supplying players and pro shops all over North America. Founded in 2001 and based in Chaska, Minnesota, Splatshotz is committed to providing players with quality equipment and services while promoting the sport of racquetball at both the local and national levels.



# #1 Indoor and out

## EKTELON

PLAY WITH FIRE



Rhonda Rocks  
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**Rocky Carson and Rhonda Rajsich dominated the 2007/2008 season winning nearly every title possible and finishing as the #1 players in the world. Rajsich finished her 3rd straight season as #1 on the WPRO tour.**



Rocky Carson: 2007 US Open Champion, 2007 WOR Nationals Singles/Doubles Champion, 2008 US National Doubles Champion, 2008 US National Singles Champion  
Rhonda Rajsich: 2007 USRA Player of the Year, 2007 US Open Champion, 2007 WOR Nationals Singles/Doubles Champion, 2008 WPRO Nationals Champion

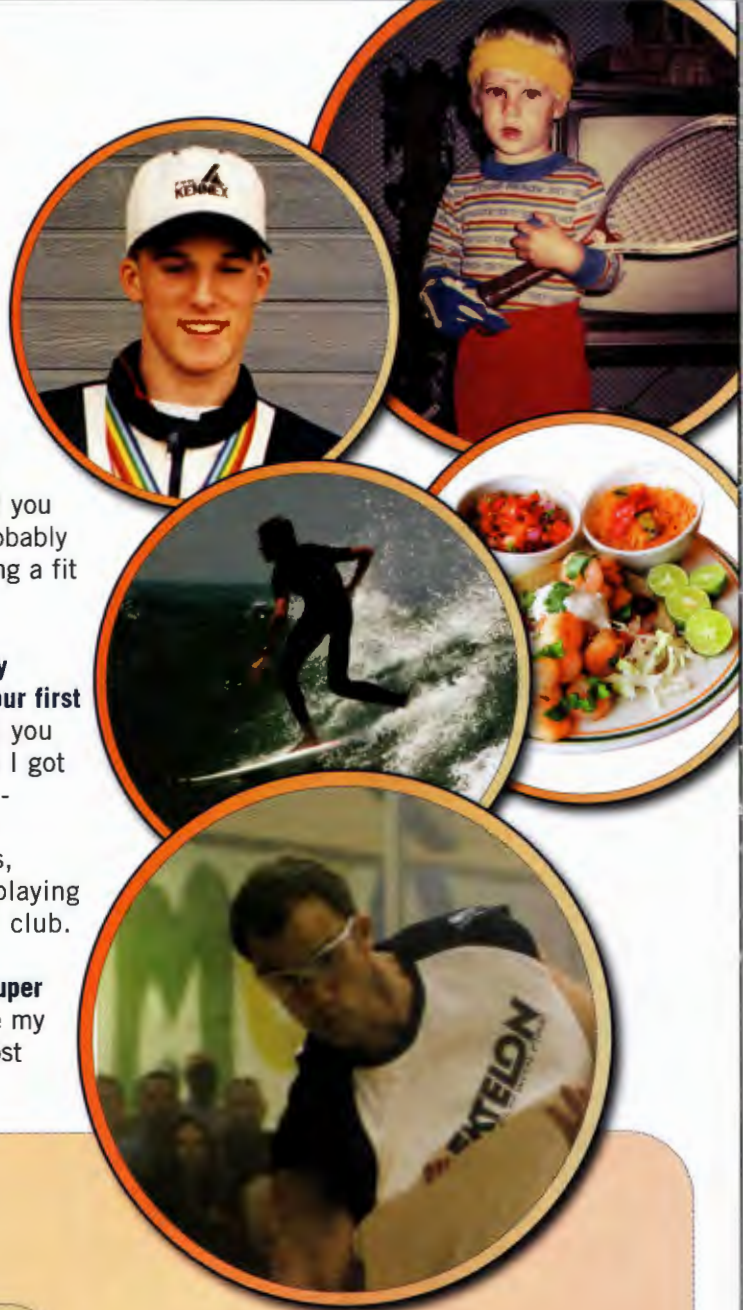
Rankings based on IRT, WPRO and WOR 2007/2008 season end rankings.

ektelon.com



## Interview with Rocky Carson

- How old were you when you started playing?** I have played racquetball since I could hold a racquet at age one or two. The court was my childcare while I was at the club and I could play for hours!
- Who introduced you to racquetball?** My dad did – he was an open player as I grew up and very understanding my passion for the game. But I can say we did not always agree! In those moments, he would let me cool off and then try to help, if I hadn't totally clocked out.
- What was the first racquet you used?** My dad's – I couldn't tell you what it was, but I probably broke it while throwing a fit on the court.
- How long did you play before you entered your first tournament?** How did you do? I was eight, and I got second. It was multi-bounce and I didn't understand the rules, because I was only playing against adults at my club.
- Who is your favorite super hero?** Batman, 'cause my wife says he's the most mysterious.



## YOUNGRACQUET word search

I	A	N	P	R	L	K	H	S
A	P	T	I	S	U	L	O	E
L	I	S	N	K	R	L	A	L
S	T	T	C	L	A	O	E	B
D	N	A	H	K	C	A	B	U
P	I	K	S	N	Q	U	E	O
R	O	L	L	O	U	T	B	D
A	P	S	I	D	E	O	U	T
L	L	I	S	I	T	A	O	I
U	U	L	P	T	E	U	A	N

### find these words:

Racquet

Skip

Rollout

Backhand

Ball

Side Out

Pinch

Rule

Doubles

Point



6. **Do you have any pets?** Two dogs, one's a min-pin and the other is a whippet. My min-pin loves to pull my on my skateboard but that would be a death wish for my whippet.
7. **Pizza or tacos?** Tacos, I love Mexican food.
8. **What is your favorite sport drink?** Spark by Advocare. It's an energy drink that has no sugar. You can get it at [fueledbyadvocare.com](http://fueledbyadvocare.com).
9. **Do you have any brothers or sisters?** My sis, Dawn, just moved back from Hungary. She missed me (I think).
10. **Where all have you lived?** I grew up in Orange County up until we moved to Santa Maria at six. After high school, I moved back to Orange and I love living here – surfing, outdoor racquetball, and great friends.
11. **What is your favorite vacation spot?** At home! My dream day would be to wake up and lift weights, then surf for 3-4 hrs, then some outdoor racquetball for a couple of hours, and my family would be with me the whole time.
12. **What advice would you give to a young person learning racquetball?** Love it and have fun. The more you enjoy something, the more you will want to learn.
13. **What is your dream sports car?** Why stop with one? I would like to someday get the new Audi R8.

14. **How important is it to you to get a good night's sleep when playing tournaments?** As a pro, recovery is one of the most important things to play at 100%; sleep is key.
15. **How often do you practice?** In season, I play so many tourneys that I may not hit between them, but I usually hit four times a week. I may drill for 20 minutes by myself or play outdoors at the beach, usually.
16. **When did you play your first outdoor tournament?** It was seven years ago. I did practice for it and I lost to my current doubles partner, Rob Hoff. Last year I won the Doubles with him and also won the Singles title, too.
17. **Do you like indoor or outdoor better?** I love them both a ton. But I love going to the beach to play outdoors for practice, then telling everyone that I'm at work!
18. **Who are your current sponsors?** Ektelon, Motorola, Verizon Wireless, Racquetball Warehouse, OneShot, Advocare – they are all very supportive sponsors.
19. **How important is it to stretch before and after matches?** Stretching is great for recovering and staying loose. Without stretching, you won't allow yourself to become the best you can be.
20. **What is your favorite ice cream flavor?** I'm not picky, but I really like peanut butter and chocolate.



Topock (AZ) School's second grade teacher Rick Anderson stands behind his class with personally signed posters of the #1 and #5 racquetball players in the world. "I was at the HEAD Holiday Splat Classic Racquetball Tournament at Arizona State University a couple of weeks ago. I asked Jack Huczek and Shane Vanderson to write a personal note and sign a poster for my students.

Without hesitation, they both got busy on twenty posters, one for each of my students. They helped me give a very special gift to my students. I'm not sure that Jack and Shane know the impact that they have had with my students. They have just made 20 new fans," says Rick proudly.

#### last issue's crossword answers:





# REFLECTIONS

## ON A MEMORABLE NIGHT

AMONG OTHER SUBJECTS...

By Charlie Cartinkle,  
"HOF Class of '89"



I arrived at the Houston YMCA about 2 PM. on May 24th and was quickly escorted to the VIP room to mingle with other Hall of Famers who were going to be honored that night. As I was eating my third filet I overheard two players talking at the table next to me. Evidently, they weren't aware that I could hear them. Their conversation went something like this:

"Charlie was one of the greatest players that ever lived. He had a big ego. However, he backed it up almost every time. I was also impressed with how Charlie moved and thought on the court for a man his size. He deserves all of the championships that he won. Charlie was truly a charismatic and phenomenal champion."

Of course, I was impressed with their remarks. I went over to talk to them and told them that I was very appreciative and humbled by what they had said about me. You can imagine my chagrin when one of the players said, "Sorry, Charlie, but we weren't talking about you. We were talking about Charlie Brumfield!"

When Jim Hiser and Jim Easterling asked me to write about the dinner and presentation for the Hall of Famers, they begged me to focus on the event and not myself, which I admit I have sometimes been guilty of in the past. So...

I promised them that I wouldn't mention my wins over Brumfield, Schmidtke, Muehleisen and Bledsoe. I assured both Jims that I wouldn't bore the readers by discussing my 24 national titles in different age groups in various national championships. I surely wouldn't write about my being in eight different sports' Hall of Fames (probably a record for any racquetball player) for racquetball, tennis, squash and basketball.

I also told both Jims that I wouldn't waste space by writing about my two books, over 600 published racquetball and tennis-related stories, my years as the Racquet Sports writer for the Buffalo News nor my two as ESPN color analyst for the Ektelon Nationals. I'm sure that they appreciated that.

Seriously, the Hall of Fame ceremony was one of the most memorable nights of my life. Seeing so many Hall of Famers and other players I've competed against and written about was a wonderful experience. I especially enjoyed sitting next to my old friend Jim Winterton. (However, I wasn't sure why he was wearing earmuffs during our conversations.)

Jim Hiser, Jim Easterling, and their committee have to be thanked profusely for the incredible evening they put together. I also have to congratulate Easterling for his Guinness Book of Records Award for calling each Hall of Fame member a minimum of 67 times a day.

The Hall of Fame ceremony was a magnificent affair. When I first entered the Grand Ballroom at the Hyatt

Regency and walked down the red carpet, I was overcome by the overwhelming applause. Then, I quickly realized that the applause wasn't for me, but for Dr. Bud Muehleisen and Charlie Brumfield, who were walking right behind me.

Jim Hiser and Master of Ceremonies Shawn Royster, a really talented and funny guy, did an amazing job. As each player was introduced, his/her picture was shown on the screen. Hiser then recited each player's accomplishments and contributions to the game of racquetball. Every Hall of Famer that I talked to said that it was an evening they will never forget. They also reiterated how appreciative they were to the USA Racquetball staff and the Hall of Fame Committee for the time and effort they put in to make the evening a resounding success.

I admit to being a little upset when they showed my picture. Underneath the picture was the following: "Please do not show this picture to children under the age of 10. It could result in nightmares, nervous disorders, and visits for years to psychiatrists to get over the trauma."

Having been away from the tournament racquetball scene for almost eight years due to assorted injuries (no, it wasn't because of laryngitis) and personal reasons, I was greatly impressed by the displays, competition, and camaraderie of the players at the tournament. For those doomsayers who feel that racquetball is greatly on the decline, I say, "Not so!" Although there may not be as many players as there were twenty years ago, the game is alive and well. When you have such outstanding people involved in the sport like Randy Stafford, the outgoing president of USAR, you know that racquetball can't help but succeed. Under Stafford's leadership, USAR was able to rid itself of a huge debt – an unprecedented achievement. And, the numerous financial contributions that are listed each month in the magazine shows that there are a great many people interested in seeing the game continue to grow.

Speaking to many people (what else is new?), I was thrilled to hear about the many positive things that are happening in racquetball throughout the United States and the world. A question I am always asked is, "Wow, do the players of today compare to the players of years ago?"

It is virtually impossible to compare the two eras, due to the equipment and training changes reflected in today's game. However, I have no doubt that players like Hogan, Brumfield, Yellen and Peck would have done just as well today.

In closing (and aren't you happy!) I would like to once again thank Jim Hiser, Jim Easterling, and the USAR staff for a magnificent ceremony that will always stay etched in the memories of all the Hall of Famers who were present. They did a GA-RATE job!

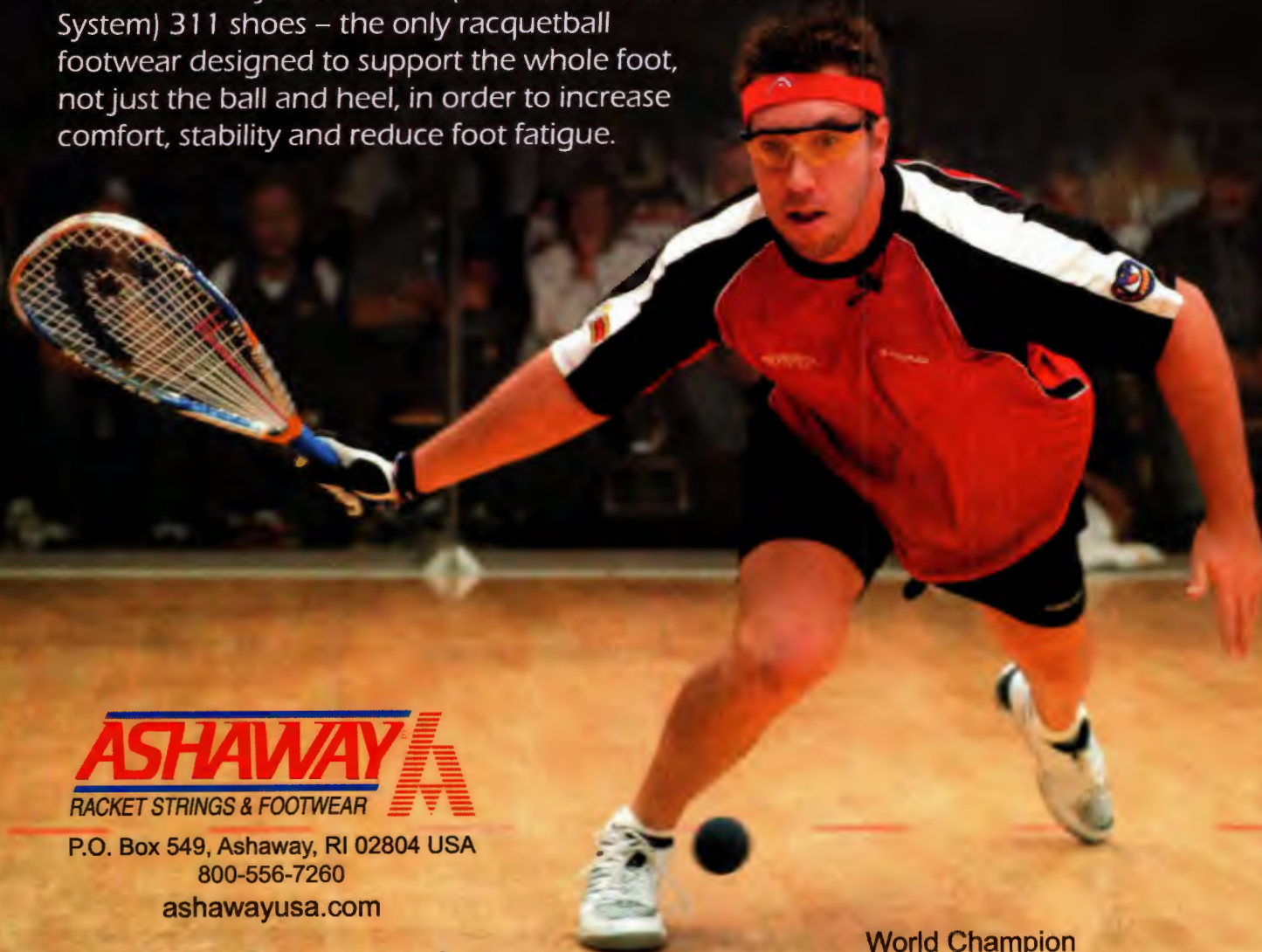


**ADVANTAGE ASHAWAY**

# Introducing AMPS™ 311 Technology

## *Supporting Jack Huczek Every Step of the Way*

World Champion and IRT Professional, Jack Huczek, demands a lot from his equipment. That's why Jack chose Ashaway's new AMPS (Anatomic Multi-Performance System) 311 shoes – the only racquetball footwear designed to support the whole foot, not just the ball and heel, in order to increase comfort, stability and reduce foot fatigue.



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& IRT Professional,  
Jack Huczek, wears  
AMPS™ 311 footwear



# SPEED IS EVERYTHING

INTRODUCING



## UP TO 24% FASTER

Ektelon raised the bar on O<sup>3</sup> racquets by introducing new Speedport Technology. The rectangular port design creates a stronger and larger string hole, improving frame aerodynamics while allowing the string even more freedom to move.

***The result - Ektelon's fastest and most powerful racquet ever!***

### GET PLUGGED IN

Ektelon's Power Plug technology offers 7 different swing weight configurations. Depending on the location and amount of Plugs added to the frame's O-ports, players now have complete control of the overall weight and balance of the racquet. Adding anywhere from 1.5 up to a fully loaded 16 grams to the frame results in a wide variety of swing weight, stability and power combinations. ***It's like having 7 racquets in one!***

### STRING IT UP

Ektelon's DPR (Double Power Ring) string pattern maximizes main string length for greater power. When combined with new Premier Power string, the string bed is on Fire! This new multifilament string is now offered in 3 colors that racquetball players crave.

***Finally, a high performance string designed to withstand the demands of extreme racquetball play while providing ultimate power and softer feel.***

RECOMMENDED BY  
WORLD #1 PLAYERS  
ROCKY CARSON\* &  
RHONDA RAJSICH\*

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BASE WEIGHT: 170 grams  
(No Power Plugs Added)

MAXIMUM WEIGHT: 186 grams  
(All Power Plugs Added)

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STRING: Premier Power 16

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#1 Rankings based on 2007/2008 IRT and WPRO results