

RACQUETBALL

A full-page photograph of two racquetball players, Paola and Kane, celebrating their victory. Paola, on the left, is a woman with dark hair, wearing a white tank top with 'CASA DE BOLSA' and a red logo, black shorts with a red flame logo, and white protective eyewear. She has her right arm raised, pointing upwards, and is wearing a black wristband and a watch. Kane, on the right, is a man with short brown hair, wearing a black polo shirt with white stripes on the sleeves, black shorts, and white protective eyewear. He has his right arm raised in a 'V' for victory gesture and is holding a racquet in his left hand. The background is a blurred indoor racquetball court.

UNSTOPPABLE!

Paola and Kane Triumph at US OPEN

ALSO:

Pride and Power at Pan Ams
Team USA Scoops Up Multiple Medals



FALL 2011 • VOLUME 21 • ISSUE 4

DON'T MISS DOUBLES

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2012 NATIONAL
DOUBLES
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TEMPE, AZ



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MISSION STATEMENT

USA Racquetball is the National Governing Body for the sport of racquetball, recognized by the USA Olympic Committee, and is committed to excellence and service to our members. We provide the infrastructure and organization for racquetball. We also provide competitive opportunities for members and enthusiasts through our coordination of racquetball organizations, development and administration of rules and programs, sanctioning of events and development of teams for international competition.

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.



PAN AMS



US OPEN

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Racquetball Magazine welcomes submissions from our members and readers. If you have an idea for an article you may discuss your topic with the editor either by email or telephone. Contact: Editor, Racquetball magazine, lrutzen@usra.org. All items submitted are subject to editing.

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Photo courtesy Cheryl Kirk



Cheryl Kirk, President
 USAR Board of Directors

Putting the Question TO YOU



James Hiser, Ph.D.
 USAR Executive Director

At the USA Racquetball Board of Directors meeting held 10/4/2011 in Minneapolis at the US Open, the directors declared this an ideal time to take a close look at USA Racquetball in terms of the value we provide to our sport, our members and our partners (the states, organizations, and manufacturers).

Input from our constituents is incredibly valuable -- as USA Racquetball members you are the subject matter experts on being served by the National Governing Body.

What should USAR's structure look like in the future? What is our Brand? What are our values? How will we define success?

These are key questions that must be answered, and we don't want to conduct this quest in a vacuum.

We ask you - our customers - to communicate your thoughts using a Stop/Start/Continue mindset to evaluate what we need to do both in the near term and the longer term to change with the times and adjust to the challenges of our sport. What can we do to best carry out our mission to serve our sport and our members, not only via providing national events and navigating the multitude of issues we face on the national level, but also in leading and supporting the states, clubs and recreational players?

Referring to the front of this magazine for USAR's Mission Statement and a brief description of our five strategic objectives, please participate by providing feedback on these questions:

1. What is USA Racquetball currently doing that is not working (that is, USAR should STOP doing these things)?
2. What things would be beneficial for USA Racquetball to START doing?
3. What is USA Racquetball currently doing well that we should CONTINUE doing?

Please respond by writing to cheryl.kirk.usar@gmail.com, or USA Racquetball, 1685 W. Uintah, Suite 103, Colorado Springs, CO, 80906, before December 31, 2011.

We look forward to hearing from you!

In other news, October was quite the month for racquetball! Enthusiastic shout-outs to:

- Doug Ganim, his staff and volunteers, and USAR staff members who provided a first-class experience at the US Open in Minneapolis!
- Our U.S. Team! See the coverage in this issue for a close-up look at the Pan American Games experience!

Photos by Luke St. Onge • Aimee Ruiz • James Hiser

Guadalajara 2011: MAGNIFICENT!

Fulfilling lifelong dreams, the US Team traveled to Guadalajara, Mexico in October to compete in the Pan American Games, the largest sporting event in the world that includes racquetball. Making the trip were Alex Ackermann, Rocky Carson, Chris Crowther, Cheryl Gudinas, Rhonda Rajsich, Aimee Ruiz, and Shane Vanderson, along with US Team Coach Mike Guidry and USA Racquetball Executive Director/Team Leader Jim Hiser. Our team earned seven medals: one gold, two silver, and two bronze in the individual divisions, plus a silver medal each in the Men's and Women's Team Competition. On these next pages, see and hear about this experience from our team members themselves.



2011 Pan American Games

QUICK FACTS

- **When and Where This Year:**
October 14-30, 2011 – Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico
- **How Often:**
Every four years in the year before the Summer Olympic Games
- **How many:**
Sports: 36
Athletes: 6,003
Participating countries: 42
- **Participating Sports:**
Some sports are automatically included, others are chosen on a Games-by-Games basis
- **Torch Relay:**
On August 26, 2011, the Pan American Games torch was lit during a ceremony held at the Ancient Teotihuacan pyramids on the outskirts of Mexico City. The first torch was carried by Pan American Games gold medalist Paola Longoria.
- **Next Pan American Games:**
Toronto 2015 – Racquetball has been chosen as a participating sport

Reflections From The TEAM

The most poignant moment for me was when the U.S. Team entered the stadium for the Opening Ceremonies, and 60,000 people cheered loudly. I felt extremely humbled by the warm greeting the Mexican fans gave us.

– Alex Ackermann

From the Opening Ceremonies to the highs and lows of competing, it was an experience of a lifetime. Being surrounded by all these great athletes and watching them compete for their respective countries was a fabulous experience.

– Chris Crowther

I enjoy and appreciate the US Team so much for what they bring to me as an athlete and friend. This trip truly made me remember what I have worked so hard for all these years, how proud I am to be an American, and how I blessed I am to have the best friends, coaches, and support system in the world.

– Cheryl Gudinas

The most special aspect that really set this event apart from any other was the unity amongst the athletes from all sports representing Team USA. I am sincerely grateful for the opportunity to have represented my country and my sport in such a grand event, to be amongst the others of the caliber that truly defines champions.

– Rhonda Rajsich

I would like to thank the USOC and USA Racquetball for their support. For the first time in my racquetball career, I was treated as a world-class athlete. Playing in the Pan American Games was an experience of a lifetime!

– Aimee Ruiz

I will always remember having the privilege of playing for the USA, walking into a stadium of 60,000 plus people cheering for you and your country, staying in the Athletes' Village, and being recognized as an elite athlete by other great athletes, coaches, and organizations.

– Shane Vanderson

MEXICO SHOWCASES A STELLAR PAN AM GAMES

by Jim Hiser
US Team Leader/Executive Director,
USA Racquetball

The 2011 Pan American Games were unquestionably the most elaborate, well-organized and successful event in the history of the Pan Am Games.

Host country Mexico can be extremely proud of their sensational presentation of these Games, which came very close to emulating the Olympics experience; they have now set the standard for all future Pan Am Games. This standard included an extravagant, Olympic-worthy Opening Ceremonies; world-class venues and stadiums; an efficient transportation system; numerous well-trained volunteers; a comfortable, modern Athletes' Village; and superb security. This atmosphere of prestige and honor was a phenomenal inspiration and a guaranteed memory-maker for every athlete privileged to be a part of these Games.

The question now is: How will North America respond to such a triumphant event? Will the success carry over to Toronto in 2015? Will the event receive the recognition and prestige so deserving of such an international spectacle?

Will the cultures of the United States and Canada be as receptive and supportive of the athletes as Mexico was, and will their achievements be properly recognized? The gauntlet has been thrown down!

The good news is that the Toronto Organizing Committee has accepted this challenge and their goal is to surpass the success of the Games in Mexico. It's a formidable task, but achievable. It would be absolutely awesome to see the stadium in Toronto packed with 60,000 fans! In addition, it's time for the United States and Canadian media to step up and recognize the Pan Am Games as equal to any Olympics event or professional sports achievements. As participants in the second largest sporting event in the world, these athletes deserve first-class media exposure and recognition.

Hats off to Mexico for showcasing the excellence of these elite athletes in the finest possible way. They have raised the bar, and we look forward with enormous anticipation to 2015. Onward to Toronto!



photo by Geoff Thomson

Photo by Geoff Thompson



Catching up with Pan American Games Gold Medalist **ROCKY CARSON**

Q. CONGRATULATIONS! WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PAN AMERICAN GAMES VS. OTHER BIG EVENTS IN OUR SPORT?

A. Thank you! This is the biggest tournament in racquetball. You have the Nationals and the US Open within the sport in our US community, but it doesn't get bigger for racquetball (and many other sports) than the Pan Am Games. As much as the USA prepares to go and compete in these Games, the media coverage is ten times more in the other countries. This is a huge international event.

Q. HOW DID IT FEEL TO REPRESENT THE US AT THE PAN AMERICAN GAMES IN GUADALAJARA?

A. Opening Ceremonies took place on Friday night. The next day, the first gold medal was awarded in Modern Day Pentathlon. One of our USA women won the gold, and they posted her picture up on the wall in the US Athletes' Lounge. To see her picture was special to me: not only was it the gold medal, it was for our country. When I saw that, all I thought was, I want my picture up there, too. As the Games went on, and the medal counts were going up, more and more faces appeared on that wall. I kept envisioning my face on that wall. I wanted to be a part of US success!

Q. YOU WON THE GOLD MEDAL IN MEN'S SINGLES IN THE INDIVIDUAL COMPETITION!

A. The passion all the countries share for these Games was exciting to be a part of. As for an athlete, to compete at the Games, the goal is to win the gold medal! When I got home, my wife and I saw the total Pan Am US medal counts on TV, and I told her, "That's one of those medals sitting on that table over there!"

Q. HOW WERE THE ATHLETES TREATED THERE AT THE GAMES?

A. It was great, there was a lot of media coverage from other countries, and walking into a cheering stadium

of 60,000 at the Opening Ceremonies was an unforgettable experience.

The training staff available to the athletes was incredible. It was interesting to see what each athlete put into the recovery process. It overworked our trainers, playing so many days in a row.

The US Team had an Athletes' Lounge where a lot of athletes hung out. You could watch some of the sports being televised,

Q. HOW DID YOU STAY CONNECTED WITH EVERYONE BACK HOME?

A. There were computers with reliable Internet connections in the Athletes' Lounge. I communicated on Facebook on my Rocky Carson page. I shared that we get to see racquetball all the time at the highest levels, and sometimes we're spoiled. I wanted people to know how great it was outside of racquetball: USA Boxing, USA Field Hockey, USA Volleyball, all the top athletes, we were just hanging out like any other day. Then when it was time to compete, we put our game faces on and went out there and played our hearts out.

Q. REFLECTING BACK ON YOUR EXPERIENCE, WHAT WERE YOU THINKING AND FEELING WHILE YOU WERE THERE?

A. It's the thing that we as athletes get to experience when you're hanging out with the different countries and the top athletes in the world. Around each corner you can run into the best athlete in their respective sport or on the #1 team. You get to hang out and talk with them. Being surrounded with some of the best athletes in the world motivates you to be even better than you are right now. While I was in Guadalajara, I tried to take advantage of meeting as many coaches and athletes as I could – enjoying and living in the moment.

Q. ...AND NOW THAT YOU'RE HOME?

A. Being there for two weeks is a long time, but when I did have to leave, it was tough. I wanted to be able to stay and cheer on the US Team and

be a part of the rest of the Pan Am Games. It was bittersweet – I was ready to be home, but didn't want to miss anything going on there. I was like a kid in a candy store!

When I got home and was watching ESPN2, a basketball game was on, and I saw people competing I had been with 24 hours earlier!

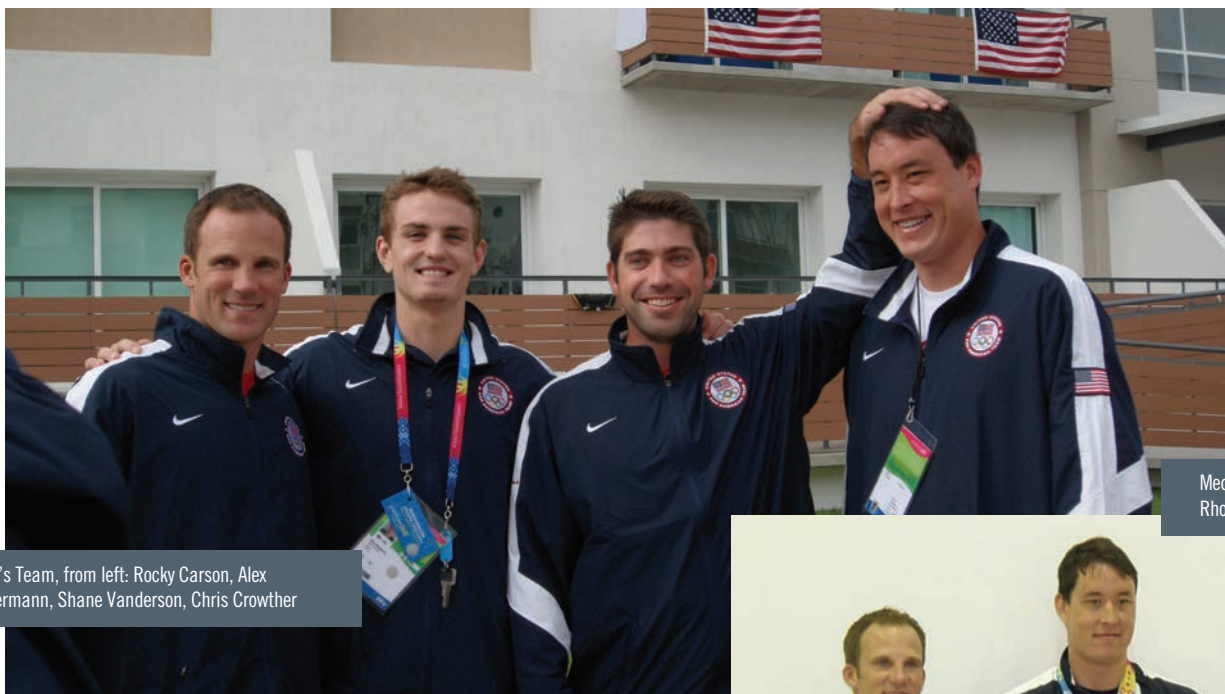
Q. WHAT RESONATES WITH YOU AS THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN RACQUETBALL IN THE U.S. AND IN OTHER COUNTRIES?

A. Racquetball's biggest platform is in the US, supported by sponsors and fans. The IRT and WPRO Tours are mainly played in the US, something every country would love to have.

It's widely known that national racquetball teams and players from other countries generally receive a good deal of monetary and program support from their governments and Olympic Committees. While we currently don't receive those same levels of support in the US, I try not to look at it in a negative way. I feel proud of those countries – seeing how Central/South American and Canadian teams are endorsed and supported by their governments is exciting. I am proud of what they've done for their players. It would be neat to see that for the US players, but at the same time, you have to be happy for them. For example, it was great to see Mexico's enthusiasm for racquetball and how they recognized their athletes at these Games, monetarily, in the media, everything. The First Lady of Mexico was there for Paola's matches, cheering on the Mexican team. This shows that they are passionate about racquetball.

Q. WHAT WILL YOU REMEMBER MOST ABOUT THE EVENT?

A. Watching the best athletes in their realm doing the things they love doing...meeting those athletes, getting to know them as individuals and competitors. It doesn't get better than that. And I really enjoyed my US Racquetball teammates – we had a great time there together.



Men's Team, from left: Rocky Carson, Alex Ackermann, Shane Vanderson, Chris Crowther

Medalists Cheryl, Aimee, Rhonda, Rocky, Chris, Shane



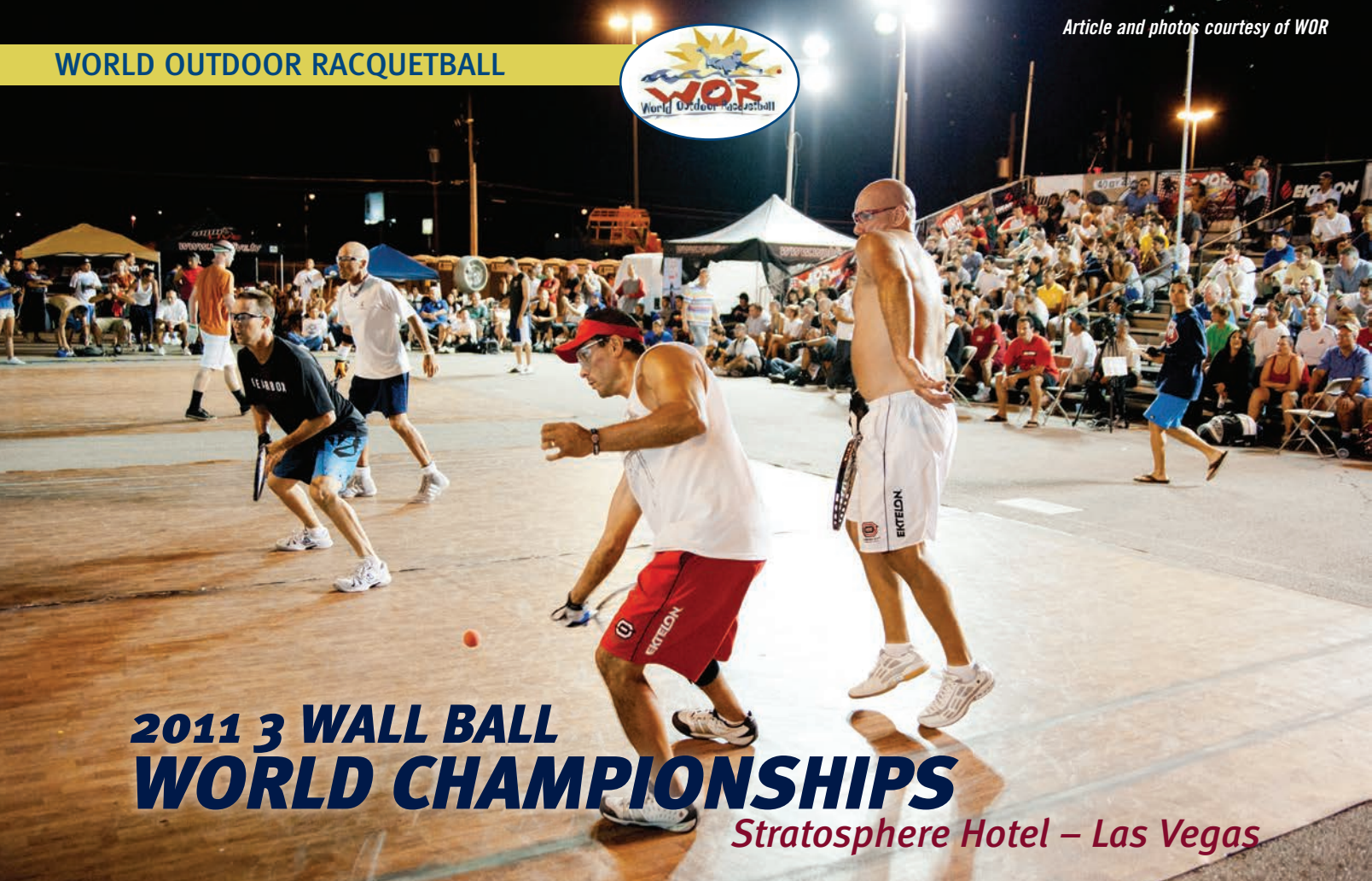
Team Leader Jim Hiser and Head Coach Mike Guidry



Women's Team, from left: Cheryl Gudinas, Aimee Ruiz, Rhonda Rajsich



Athletes Village



2011 3 WALL BALL WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Stratosphere Hotel – Las Vegas

Yeah... It's Vegas, Baby! Last year's Championship was an historic, "never-been-done-before" event where two sports shared an incredible venue provided by the Stratosphere Hotel. Featuring nine portable short-wall outdoor racquetball courts set up on the Vegas Strip, that awesome tournament boasted over 500 participants in both racquetball and handball as well as thousands of spectators.

Incredibly, this year trumped last year's extravaganza. An additional stadium/show court was added for a 20% increase in participation, and the sport of paddleball was added to the mix. The event was better in every possible way.

The best indoor and outdoor racquetball players in the world came to compete for the money and the trophies but mostly to enjoy the party that is outdoor racquetball in Las Vegas. Bikini-clad waitresses delivered drinks to the spectators throughout the day and night while everyone enjoyed the incredible action on the courts. A DJ was on hand "pumpin' the jams" to keep the party atmo-

sphere electric.

Best of all, the matches featured some of the most hard-core competition imaginable. Players were making concrete diving incredible gets, amazing athletic and acrobatic shots, and good ol' fashioned pinches, passes, and rollouts. The skin shredding was all part of the action that left players and spectators in awe.

There were many highlights both on and off the court...Cliff Swain and Craig "Clubber" Lane defending their CPRT Doubles title...Rocky Carson continuing his incredible run of Professional Singles outdoor dominance...Janel Tisinger wowing and winning Women's Pro Singles, Doubles, and Mixed...Legends of Racquetball Ruben Gonzalez, Sudsy Monchik, Brett Harnett, and Cliff Swain competing for CPRT and Pro Doubles titles, blowing us all away... A two-hour rain delay in the desert featuring a New York-inspired dance session to the DJ's Latin jams -- nonstop excitement!

But the single biggest story of the week was the incredible run of

Robert "The Ice Man" Sostre. Sostre competed in an unheard-of seven total events at the 3 Wall Ball World Championships. His itinerary also included three racquetball, three handball, and a paddleball event. If that alone were not enough to impress, Sostre won the CPRT with Mike Peters, made the semis of the Mixed Pro Doubles with Keely Franks Kennedy, and lost in the final of the Pro Doubles with Jose Rojas to the incredible team of Rocky Carson and Alvaro Beltran. Spectators and players commented repeatedly throughout the week that Robert Sostre is an animal - in the most complimentary sense of the word!

If you made it to Vegas for the Championships in 2010 or 2011, you know the kind of first-class experience and incredible party this tournament was. If you weren't fortunate enough to attend, be sure to include it on your 2012 calendar. Don't miss the party next year...in Vegas, Baby!!!

Huge thanks to all of our sponsors and the fantastic tournament staff who made it all possible. Check out the full results at www.r2sports.com.



WOMEN'S SENIOR/MASTERS RACQUETBALL



WSMRA INVITES YOU TO FLORIDA COME TO SARASOTA IN JANUARY

by Kendra Tutsch

The WSMRA returns to Florida in 2012 for our 23rd Annual Women's Senior/Masters National Racquetball Championships! This is our first tournament on the Gulf side of Florida, and we look forward to warm weather and great competition. You will have fun, meet new friends and play a lot of racquetball. You are never out of the draw at this singles round-robin tournament. The tournament is for all women 35 and over, and we have Open/A and B/C (intermediate) divisions for all age groups.

The annual "Fun Doubles" will be the afternoon of January 12. This is a good chance to see old friends, make new ones and to check out the courts. The tournament committee is hard at work to make this a great experience for all, so make your plans now and invite a friend or two to join you! The beautiful, newly-remodeled Bentley's Resort Hotel is the perfect "home base" for comfort and unwinding after a busy day.

Plan to come early or stay after the tournament to enjoy the gorgeous Sarasota area, including Siesta Key Beach, designated as the #1 beach in the U.S. Other great attractions include

museums, historic neighborhoods, world-class shopping and state parks for hiking, boating, and wildlife adventures.

Important Note: Entry forms will not be mailed out. Please enter at www.r2sports.com or download the entry form at www.wsmra.com. Entry deadline is January 6 online; mailed entries must be postmarked by January 4.

The WSMRA is an organization dedicated to promoting racquetball as a lifetime sport. Our members are women 35 and over who want to compete at a high level and have fun at the same time. We sponsor a yearly national tournament of self-refereed, round robin play within age groups. All matches count in the USAR ranking system. In this tournament you will not only find yourself competing against some of the best women players in the country, but you will have a great time! We stress fun, friends and good sportsmanship. The WSMRA continues its long-time partnership with our National Sponsor, Wilson Racquetball.

For more information on the WSMRA, check out www.wsmra.com or contact Kendra Tutsch at kdtutsch@wisc.edu.



Wow, Wow and Wow!

3 WALLBALL WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

By Steven Harper • Photos courtesy of MRF

What a weekend! It was nothing short of amazing. This five-day event started out with a fundraiser in support of the MRF's Rehabilitative Racquetball Clinic (RRC) with a four-team Charity Doubles featuring outdoor pros and generous amateurs. At the same time, Steven Harper of the MRF was interviewed by the local FOX News affiliate on how the RRC helps severely wounded warriors through involvement in racquetball.

The tournament itself was fantastic! There was a lot of play time, especially at night under the lights. There's just something about that feeling that gives your ego a boost. In addition, a combined Uniform Division (Military, Police, and Firefighters) was offered for the first time at a national-level event.

The highlight of the weekend, in coordination with the MRF, was the Honor Guard from Nellis Air Force Base. They put on a show that would make anyone proud to be an American. With SSGT Marcia Roberts – US Army, as the special guest of honor, the Honor Guard presented the National Colors during a sunset ceremony. There wasn't a dry eye in the house as those who looked on were treated to a special tribute to those who gave their lives serving this country or who have been severely wounded protecting our freedom. A musical selection of TAPS and a speech by Steven Harper rounded out an incredibly moving evening.

In support of Wounded Warriors, a very special thanks to Mike Coulter, Hank Marcus and Steve Lerner and to everyone who participated. If you have never been to Vegas before, this is a great excuse to get away, bring your family, and see the famous town. Plan to make next year's event!



MRF CHARITY DOUBLES PARTICIPANTS

(l to r): Mikel Faulkner, Steven Harper, Aimee Ruiz, Robby Johnson, Craig Lane, Tom Moore, Cliff Swain and Geoff Holmes



MRF Players Honor 9/11 Military Heroes

By Peter S. Berger • Photo courtesy of MRF

Fort Myer Fitness Center was the host site for the 3rd annual MRF Fort Myer Racquetball Open, September 9-11, in Washington, DC. Coinciding with the tenth anniversary of 9/11, the remembrances were in full swing at the Pentagon nearby, honoring those servicemen and women who lost their lives that fateful day.

Over 30 players gathered to play some outstanding matches, including participants from Texas, Georgia and North Carolina who came to join the locals of Maryland and Virginia in support of this competition. We thank our sponsors Racquetworld, E-Force, and Ektelon along with the Fort Myer staff, Todd Hopkins and Brandon Lamberson. Huge thanks to on-site Tournament Director Glenn Martineau, who was ably assisted by Carmen Alatorre-Martin and Ann Martineau. MRF deeply appreciates Fort Myer for allowing us to be able to put on another terrific tournament.





AT SUMMER'S END...

By Peter S. Berger • Photos courtesy of WFRA

Though summer has ended, racquetball continues in a positive light with the World Firefighter Racquetball Association. The WFRA was one of the lead sponsors along with the NPRA in support of the Denver Police and Fire Games, and we thank all who participated and helped to run the event. We hear that the tournament will continue next year and will be a mainstay as firefighters and police officers will come together to compete. We are looking forward to the competition!

Often despite our best intentions, one thing remains the same, and that is the chance that Mother Nature can turn a promising event into a cancellation. Our excitement and hopes for a great time in New York were dashed this year when the 2011 World Police and Fire Games were marred by a storm named Irene. Hurricane Irene battered the Eastern United States with the fury of a Category Three hurricane, and with the information that was being relayed to NPRA's Bill Bearden and WFRA's Peter S. Berger, we felt that we did not want to put people in harm's way. Bill and Peter met with the committee and they all agreed to cancel the tournament.

Weather notwithstanding, the 2011 World Police and Fire Games brought in over 12,000 athletes from 27 countries. In racquetball we had representatives from Spain, Mexico, Canada, Ireland, England, Australia, and the United States - 47 competitors who planned on playing at Lehman College. The WFRA, NPRA, and Ektelon sponsored the



Raising of the Heroes Flag

event. Even though it did not come to fruition, safety always has to be the determining factor. The WFRA would like to thank Bill Bearden and Mike Welch from the NPRA, Tom Montalbano from the Fire Department of New York, and others who collaborated in the planning of a great tournament for the tenth anniversary of the attacks on the World Trade Center.

After the Games, Peter S. Berger from the WFRA was asked to spearhead the 2013 World Police and Fire Games Racquetball tournament in Northern Ireland. The WFRA has already reached out to and received help from the Irish Racquetball Federation and the European Racquetball Federation. Both organizations have started the legwork to get the word out to firefighters and police officers in the European nations. The WFRA and NPRA also have reached out to the 2015 World Police and Fire Games in Arlington, VA. Stay tuned!

In other news, two new members of the WFRA received their first-ever contracts, both from E-Force: Adam Chevalier of Southern Manatee Fire Rescue and Florida firefighter Jason Godinez. Both WFRA members have competed in National and State tournaments. We are excited that these two up-and-comers have received contracts they so rightly deserve.

On a local front, the WFRA recently made a very important donation.



The 343 Firefighters

On Sunday, September 11, a flag was given to Hallandale Beach Fire Rescue, the fire department of WFRA President Peter S. Berger. Mr. Berger also donated a flag which bears the names of every first responder who gave the ultimate sacrifice to save others. It was a very emotional day and it became even more so when the Fire Chief declared, "From this day forward, the donated flag will be flown only on 9/11."

The WFRA will be the event sponsor for the upcoming 2011 National Firefighter Games in Orlando as well as other tournaments throughout the rest of the year. In addition, some indoor and outdoor tournaments in California will take place with the help of state WFRA representative Danny Hernandez. We will also sponsor an indoor tournament as well and will run an outdoor doubles tournament with WOR in Florida to kick off the New Year.

The WFRA has made it to cars! That's right, in honor of firefighters in Florida and across the United States, the first ever WFRA License plate was issued in the State of Florida. Proceeds from the sale of the plates will go to the National Fallen Firefighters Fund and Memorial in Colorado Springs, CO. It is important that we celebrate the lives of our fallen firefighters, and this is a great way to do so.



Challenge Coin for 2011 WPFPG



AN INTERVIEW WITH

SHANE WOOD

- Chairman, US Intercollegiate Racquetball Council
- Executive Director, Eastern Collegiate Racquetball Conference (ECRC)
- President, Massachusetts Racquetball Association (MRA)
- Asst. Coach, United States Junior National Racquetball Team

Q.

What is your racquetball background?

A. I started playing at a very young age and won several National and World titles as I grew up in the sport. In 1997 I had to forfeit my semi-final match at Collegiate Nationals and ended up in the hospital with a serious head injury stemming from months earlier. That was the last time I played racquetball competitively. Having started a program at Nichols College three years earlier, I wanted to continue on with it and make sure it survived, which kept me involved in the sport.

Q.

Is there life for you outside of racquetball?

A. Yes, a tremendous amount. Starting with the most important part, my wife and I have two great boys, Korey (5) and Kaden (3). As with most kids, they are involved in a variety of things, but both of them absolutely love racquetball. My family and I are involved in a lot of different volunteer roles, and as my boys get older, there seem to be an endless amount of opportunities to give back to the community and kids programs. I have a very demanding job with a great company. Like the majority of people in the world these days, I'm juggling a lot of things but loving all of it.

Q.

What is your perspective of the state of collegiate racquetball in the U.S.?

A. I truly believe that 20 years from now, we are going to look back at this phase of our sport and relate a huge amount of the success of racquetball to the collegiate level. Where private clubs are taking courts out, colleges and universities are putting them in. Where organized programs are dropping at the local level, they are growing every single day at our schools. Collegiate racquetball continues to grow every year, and we are about 2-3 years away from really seeing the results that this can bring our sport. The kids love the game, they play it right with passion and integrity, and for anyone who has participated in or witnessed a collegiate event, it's very encouraging for the future of racquetball.

Q.

Please describe your work with collegiate racquetball in the U.S.

A. I am one of dozens of people who love to see collegiate racquetball grow. Between the Collegiate Council, Conference Commissioners, and others who just love our sport, we are getting more schools to include racquetball in their curriculum, putting more club teams together at schools that have courts around the country, using reliable coaching techniques available through the USAR Instructors Program and Jim Winterton, getting them involved in year-long conference play, and keeping them playing after school. We want to continue to grow the conferences around the country, and the ultimate goal is to make racquetball an NCAA sport by 2014. Lofty goals, but as the best sport in the world, the expectations should be high.

Q.

What are your planned goals/activities for collegiate racquetball in the coming season?

A. We currently have six recognized conferences around the country: ECRC (Northeast), MACRC (Mid-Atlantic), MERC (Ohio Valley), MWCRC (Mid-West), SCRC (South) and WCRC (West Coast). Some are in their first year, and the others that have been around awhile continue to grow and remain strong with full schedules. With just these conferences, there are over 1,000 kids now playing organized collegiate racquetball. On the average, 700 of those players would have never gotten involved in organized racquetball without the conference structure, so it's exciting to see this continue to strengthen. Ultimately I would like to have 14 conferences structured and active by the 2013-2014 season, so this year will be very important in establishing the programs in other areas of the country to set schedules for the 2012-2013 season.

Q.

Please describe your work with the US Junior Team.

A. Absolutely love it. As a player growing up on the team for several years when the Junior Team was developed, and being a captain of the team for a couple years, it's such a blessing to be able to be part of it again as a coach. I guess you don't realize it when you are a teenage athlete, but now that's it been "a few" years since those days, being able to see these incredible kids' journeys and the sacrifices they make in their lives to reach such an incred-

ible goal, then to have the privilege of being able to contribute anything you can to help them get to those goals, is something most people will never get to experience in their lives, and I'm so grateful for it. I could probably go on for days on this, but what Coach Kelley Beane and the other coaches (Cheryl Gudinas, Jen Meyer, Mitt Layton, Andy Pitock, RO Carson, Joyce Parsons and others who have helped out over the years) have given to this program and what Kelley has turned it into is just so remarkable. If there was ever the meaning of a second family, it is definitely the coaches and all the kids who have come through this team over the past ten years.

Q. We've all heard the phrase, "Oh, yeah, I used to play racquetball in college." What can USAR, state associations, manufacturers, organizations, clubs and individuals do to assist in encouraging college students to keep playing racquetball once they leave college?

A. I really think we're there. The problem in the past was that "playing in college" meant you'd go down a couple nights a week and hit the ball around. Now it means trying to make the team, or going to practice with a dedicated coach, or preparing for the next conference event. I can assure you that most of these athletes will continue to play when college is over now that they have gotten to live the real racquetball experience and not just hit around on a court once a week. The support all those organizations can give is to continue to help grow the conference structure.

Q. What have been your most exciting moment(s) in racquetball?

A. Wow, that's a loaded question. I'm still a young pup, but after 33 years in the sport, there are quite a few. I guess if I were to nail it down to two, I would start with the Nichols College Division I National Title in 1995. I had turned down offers to go to schools with established programs and as a freshman started a program at a very small 500-person private school near my house. There were no racquetball courts at this school, and the only way we could play was to convince kids that they get to play this sport they have never tried, four nights a week at a club 30 minutes away, and on Friday nights we have to go clean or pick up trash at the club so they will let us play for free. It was a tough sell, but a core group of people who are now my best friends in the world decided they would give it a shot. They had never played competitively and didn't even know what "Nationals" meant, but they were dedicated to get ready for it. We had no budget, so 14 of us got in a 15-passenger van and drove to Tennessee where all us stayed in one hotel room for the week so we could afford it. My #2 player was in the finals in the last match of the tournament against the perennial powerhouse University of Memphis, and if he won the match, we won the National Title; if he lost, Memphis would win. He was down 10-7 in the breaker and came back to win for this little unknown school. I'll remember that last point forever.

My other "Top 2" memory was in 2008 when the Junior Team won the IRF World Championship for the first time in several years. I'll never forget being at Closing Ceremonies in Arizona, arm around Coach Kelley, watching those kids, many of whom had experienced a few years of disappointment in not meeting our goal, as they stormed the podium as a team on our home turf. They were holding up that World Cup, so incredibly proud to be wearing the letters USA. Quite a trip.

Q. What does racquetball personally mean to you?

A. That's an easy one. Family. And for anyone who is involved in racquetball, no additional explanation is needed.

Q. Is there anyone you would like to recognize for their support to you or for their support of collegiate racquetball?

A. How big is this magazine? Our sport is driven by the volunteers who love it and who are willing to do what they can to help it grow. That list can go forever, which is one of the things that makes racquetball so special. There have been hundreds of people who have made college racquetball what it is, and I thank every single one of them from the bottom of my heart. From the Collegiate Council, to the Conference Commissioners, Jim Hiser and everyone with USAR who have always supported me, the state organizations, the coaches, the team leaders, the parents of these kids who support them to be able to participate, the club managers who allow us to take over their courts for a weekend, the members who swing by to help ref - the list truly could go on forever.

Personally, however, I want to thank four people who have contributed more heart and soul than could ever be imagined. Without Pat Bernardo and Racquetworld's dedication to college racquetball, this truly would not all exist. He kept all personal objectives as a business owner out of the mix and went out of his way to support these programs, both financially and tactically. To Rob "Smokey" VanSchalkwyk, a few years ago when things got to be too much to take on and I decided to stop the college programs we had started and drop out of collegiate racquetball, Smokey, a former player and recent graduate, took it upon himself to dedicate the 40-50 hours/week that were needed to reach the goals we were striving for. Like Pat, without Smokey I can assure you that much of where college racquetball is today wouldn't exist. To Coach Kelley Beane for giving me a chance to be part of the Junior Team and all of the things that she brings to that program. There could never be a better role model for these kids and a more appropriate person to represent the USA. And most importantly, to my wife, Katie, and to my family who have never stopped supporting me in all of the things that I do and the time away from home to accomplish them. She knows how much these programs and other things outside of racquetball mean to me, and I know it's not easy when I hit the road for weeks at a time. I thank her and everyone who has supported racquetball, directly and indirectly, throughout the years.

WORLD JUNIOR OUTDOOR WOR CHAMPIONSHIPS

by Jaden and Dane Elkins
All photos courtesy Brett Elkins

The inaugural World Junior WOR Outdoor Championships presented by Ektelon on September 3, 2011, was a huge success! Twenty-one junior players aged 6-18 shined at this exciting tournament held at Marina Park in Huntington Beach, California.

The event featured numerous national/world indoor and outdoor champions, but in the end it was the Leon and Fernandez families who stole the show, winning a total of ten 1st place trophies!

Victoria Leon led the way with three 1st place trophies in the Girls 14-Singles, plus a victory in two doubles divisions with teammate Sebastian Fernandez. Sister Sarah Leon soared to 1st place in the Girl's 18- Singles and Boys 18- Doubles.

Next, it was the "fabulous Fernandez brothers" capturing five 1st

place trophies. Sebastian Fernandez, the phenomenal 2011 World 10 & Under Indoor Junior Champion, dominated, earning 1st place in the 12-Singles and 12- Doubles with partner Victoria Leon (in Boys Doubles!). Older brother Luiz Fernandez triumphed as well, winning the 14- and 18- Singles to accompany his 18-Doubles win with Sarah Leon. The talented Carson Nguyen and Michael Uhrich battled all comers to finish 2nd place in Boys 12- Doubles.

Other top medalists included Dane Elkins, a four-time World Outdoor Junior Champion, who captured first place in the Boys 16- Doubles with partner Andrew Bainbridge. Past world champ Attosa Rejaei won 1st place in the Girls 12-, playing spectacularly all afternoon.

In multi-bounce action, 6-year old Cody Elkins won two 1st place tro-

phies in the Multi-bounce 6- and the 10- Doubles with double gold winner Nicolas Machaen. Nicholas won the Multi-bounce 8-, edging partner Cody Elkins by one point in a "battle of the serves," as is often the case in outdoor Multi-bounce. Speedy Noah Nguyen finished second with a great effort.

During the day, all players and parents enjoyed delicious Southern California BBQ fired up by Chef Gary Martin, and after the event everyone cooled down with a water balloon toss.

Special thanks to Tournament Director extraordinaire Steve Cohen and tournament co-founders Brett Elkins, George Barrera, David Leon, Brian Dixon and Bonnie Rejaie for a fantastic event! Come on out for next year's Championships being planned for next summer in Huntington Beach!

PHOTO GALLERY – 2011 JUNIOR EVENTS



Letters From ELITE CAMP



Front Row, left to right: Anthony Herrera, Arman Tousi, Shahram Tousi, Lamar Hughes, Will Metherd, Dustin Cole, AC Orozco, Brad Schopieray, Jim Winterton **Back Row, left to right:** Kim Roy, Janine Davic, Tyler Kendrick, Tony Jalan, Chase Robison, Ethan Wadsworth, Jeffery Hald, Connor Laffey, Zach Pellowski, Arlyn Tratt, Rhonda Rajsich, Jo Shattuck, Eddie Meredith

Hello USA Racquetball,

My name is Jeffrey Hald, and I was a scholarship participant in Elite Camp 2011. It was enlightening, fun, and truly life-changing. I not only improved my game and form, but I got to meet and talk to and play with the pros and a Coach Jim Winterton, and I brought all of that home to teach my younger players who look up to me at my home courts. The camp was very informative, intense, and an overall great experience. Not quite a "vacation," but no matter how hard physically and mentally it was, four days in that camp beats working one day any time.

I'd like to thank all the people who made this camp possible: Coach Winterton, Rhonda Rajsich, Anthony Herrera, Jo Shattuck, the staff at the Olympic Training Center, the YMCA, Mr. Mannino, Mr. Carlson and Mr. Scott, and last but not least the IRT Network. Thanks everyone for my trip out to this amazing camp. You truly made my summer that much brighter and my racquetball game better, tenfold.

Sincerely,
Jeffrey Hald

INTERESTED?

Do you want a fantastic week of awesome, intense racquetball training with the best instructors anywhere? Elite Camp is your instruction destination! For a phenomenal time of world-class coaching and great fun at the US Olympic Training Center at the foot of the Rocky Mountains, contact us at jhiser@usoc.org.

Dear USA Racquetball,

I'm an Open player from Fort Worth, Texas, who was looking to take my game to the next level, so I chose the Elite Camp. It was such a fun and rewarding experience, but it was also very physically and mentally tough. I would like to first thank my benefactor, Chris Knight, who helped pay my way here. Without him I would have never been able to have the amazing experience of visiting the US Olympic Training Center and learning all of the things I did.

The great instructors at the camp taught me many ways to improve my game that I had no idea how to do before. Both my forehand and backhand have already improved by getting lower by bending at my knees rather than my waist and using my hips to drive through the ball rather than swinging mainly with my upper body. My drive serve has already gained speed and accuracy. The coaches taught me how to place my feet closer

together for better balance and exploding with my hips and snapping the racquet for more power. There were also many footwork drills that we worked on. I learned how to keep my feet from crossing one another by shuffling, which has resulted in me to getting to the ball quicker and with better balance. Now I set up and make higher quality shots more efficiently.

These things are only a small part of what I've learned - things that most people don't even know about. I have seen numerous times how much this camp has helped people improve their game in the past, and I know I will be winning a lot more matches in the future because of it. I absolutely plan on coming back in the future. A big thanks to coach Jim Winterton, Rhonda Rajsich, Anthony Herrera, Jim Hiser and Eddie Meredith, and of course the people who helped me make this a trip of a lifetime!

Sincerely,
Chase Robison



IRT EVENTS 2011-2012

Dates	Event	Venue	Address	City	State
Dec. 1- 4 2011	Market America Pro/Am	TBD		Greensboro	NC
Dec. 8- 11 2011	21st Annual Turkey Shoot	Garden City Family YMCA	1224 Center Street	Garden City	KA
Dec. 9- 11 2011	2011 North Dakota Minot Open	Minot Family YMCA	3515 16th Street	Minot	ND
Dec. 9- 11 2011	South Texas Racquetball Holiday Shootout	Corpus Christi Athletic Club	2101 Airline Road	Corpus Christi	TX
Dec. 9- 11 2011	Head Penn IRT Pro/Am	Arizona State University	Student Recreation Complex	Tempe	AZ
Jan. 5- 8 2012	Coast to Coast California Open	Spectrum Club, Canoga Park	22235 Sherman Way	Canoga Park	CA
Jan. 12 - 15 2012	Cactus Salon NYC Pro/Am	Sporttime of Syosset and World Gym	10 Gordon Drive/ 225 Howels Rd	Long Island	NY
Jan. 13 - 15 2012	2012 Longhorn Open	University of Texas, Austin Campus	Gregory Gym	Austin	TX
Jan. 13 - 15 2012	2012 Racquetball Blizzard	Vetta Sports - Concord	12320 Old Tesson Road	St. Louis	MO
Jan. 13 - 15 2012	Orange & Blue Shootout	University of Florida	Southwest Recreation Center	Gainseville	FL
Jan. 19 - 22 2012	RCN Indiana IRT Pro/Am	Indiana State University	HHS Building	Terre Haute	IN
Jan. 27 - 29 2012	2012 West Michigan Open	Michigan Athletic Club	2500 Burton SE	Grand Rapids	MI
Jan. 27 - 29 2012	2012 Wichita Open	Central Branch YMCA	402 North Market	Wichita	KS
Jan. 27 - 29 2012	34th Annual Lewis Drug Pro/Am	Sioux Falls Family YMCA	230 South Minnesota Ave.	Sioux Falls	SD
Jan. 27 - 29 2012	West Michigan Open	Michigan Athletic Club	2500 Burton Southeast	Grand Rapids	MI
Jan. 27 - 29 2012	IRT Shootout	Modesto Court Room	2012 McHenry Ave	Modesto	CA
Feb. 2- 4 2012	Salt Lake City Pro/Am	Sports Mall	5445 South 900 East	Salt Lake City	UT
Feb. 3- 5 2012	2012 Pinchshot.com Championships	Vetta Sports - Concord	12320 Old Tesson Road	St. Louis	MO
Feb. 22 - 26 2012	San Diego Open	Sorrento Valley Racquetball and Fitness	10999 Sorrento Valley Road	Sorrento Valley	CA
Feb. 24 - 26 2012	Head Penn IRT Pro/Am	Sports Club at City Square	4000 N. Central Ave. Suite 110	Phoenix	AZ
Feb. 24 - 26 2012	2012 Winter Classic	Athletic Club of Overland Park	10440 Marty Street	Overland Park	KS
Feb. 24 - 26 2012	2012 Comfort Inn	Baywinds Athletic Club	5507 Milan Road	Sandusky	OH
Mar. 1- 4 2012	2012 Carl Myers Memorial	Garden City Family YMCA	1224 Center Street	Garden City	KA
Mar. 7- 11 2012	Florida Spring Break Pro/Am	Harbor Island Athletic Club	900 S. Harbor Island Drive	Tampa	FL
Mar. 7- 11 2012	Florida Spring Break Pro/Am	Bob Sierra YMCA	4029 Northdale Blvd	Tampa	FL
Mar. 7- 11 2012	Florida Spring Break Pro/Am	Central City YMCA	100 E. Palm Ave	Tampa	FL
Mar. 7- 11 2012	Florida Spring Break Pro/Am	Interbay YMCA	4411 South Himes Ave	Tampa	FL
Mar. 7- 11 2012	Florida Spring Break Pro/Am	University of South Florida	4202 E. Fowler Ave	Tampa	FL
Mar. 16 - 18 2012	Shamrock Shootout	Glass Court Swim and Fitness	830 East Roosevelt Road	Lombard	IL
Mar. 22 - 25 2012	Party With The Pros	Missouri Athletic Club West	1777 Des Peres Road	St. Louis	MO
Mar. 29 - 1 2012	2012 Topeka Open	Central Branch YMCA	402 North Market	Wichita	KS
Mar. 29 - 1 2012	American Glass and Door Pro/Am	Roanoke Athletic Club	4508 Starkey Road	Roanoke	VA
April 20 - 22 2012	2012 Miller Lite Open	Athletic Club of York	1785 Loucks Road	York	PA
April 20 - 22 2012	2012 Kansas State Open	Athletic Club of Overland Park	10440 Marty Street	Overland Park	KS
April 26 - 29 2012	Aliso Viejo Pro/Am	Renissance SportsClub Aliso Viejo	50 Enterprise Drive	Aliso Viejo	CA
May 4 - 6 2012	2012 Cinco De Mayo Shootout	Pueblo Athletic Club	58 Glenroyal Drive	Pueblo	CO
May 10 - 13 2012	Boston Pro/Am	Boston Athletic Club	653 Summer Street	Boston	MA
May 11 - 13 2012	Head Penn IRT Pro/Am	La Camarilla Racquet & Fitness Club	5320 E. Shea Blvd.	Scottsdale	AZ
May 17 - 20 2012	South Carolina Pro/Am	TBD		Greenville	SC
May 23 - 27 2012	Ektelon Nationals Presented by Penn	Meridian Sports Club	1535 Deerpark Drive	Fullerton	CA
June 8- 10 2012	2012 Maryland Open Championships	Sport Fit, Laurel	204 Fort Meade Road	Laurel	MD

IRT RANKINGS

Rank	Player	Points	Advantage	Season Rank	Season Points
1	WASELENCHUK, KANE	4621	758	1	390
2	CARSON, ROCKY	3864	954	2	345
3	HUCZEK, JACK	2910	29	47	0
4	CROFT, BEN	2881	683	3	278
5	HAWTHORNE, ANDY	2198	25	3	233
6	ROJAS, JOSE	2174	183	6	203
7	CROWTHER, CHRIS	1990	51	9	133
8	VANDERSON, SHANE	1939	282	9	143
9	PRATT, CHARLIE	1658	360	9	143
10	BELTRAN, ALVARO	1297	13	5	200
11	HERRERA, ANTHONY	1285	39	6	173
12	CARSON, TONY	1246	152	13	98
13	MORENO, JAVIER	1094	188	6	173
14	HERRERA, JUAN	906	368	9	113
15	HERRERA, ALEJANDRO	538	23	26	43





WPRO EVENT SCHEDULE 2011-2012

DATE	TOURNAMENT	LOCATION	LEVEL
Nov 17-20	Puget Sound Challenge	Olympia, WA	T1
Dec 8-11	Christmas Classic	Arlington, VA	T1
Jan 5-8	Coast to Coast California Open IRT/WPRO	Canoga Park, CA	T1
Jan 26-29	Wilson Tour for Hope	Cincinnati, OH	SAT T3
Mar 8-11	Mile High Pro/Am	Denver, CO	T1
Mar 22-25	Terrapin Shootout	Laurel, MD	SAT T3
Apr 19-22	San Antonio Pro Stop	San Antonio, TX	T1
May 3-6	2011 SCS Title and Escrow Pro-Am	Herndon, VA	T1+*
May 17-20	LA WPRO Ektelon World Championships	New Orleans, LA	GS

WPRO RANKINGS



Rank	Name	Residence	Points
1	Rhonda Rajsich	Phoenix, AZ	1374.40
2	Paola Longoria	Tijuana, Mexico	1291.00
3	Samantha Salas	Monterrey, Mexico	768.30
4	Kerri Wachtel	Cincinnati, OH	530.45
5	Cheryl Gudinas	Naperville, IL	384.80
6	Adrienne Fisher	Centerville, OH	383.70
7	Jennifer Saunders	Winnipeg, MB, Canada	350.00
8	Susy Acosta-Mendoza	Chihuahua, Mexico	332.50
9	Angela Grisar	Santiago, Chile	327.00
10	Cristina Amaya	Cali, Colombia	324.85
11	Krystal Csuk	Chicago, IL	314.50
12	Da'monique Davis	San Antonio, TX	222.75
13	T.J. Baumbaugh	Reston, VA	206.50
14	Christie Huczek	Trophy Club, TX	150.25

The Making of a CHAMPION



by Fran Davis (The Coach) • Diana McNab (Sports Psychologist) • Dan Obremski (Fitness Expert)

Let's continue "Making You a Champion" using the core principles of "Building Your Racquetball Dream House" as you build your championship racquetball game one assessment at a time. This will allow you to continue to complete the "Racquetball Success Triangle" explained in the Winter 2010 issue of *Racquetball* magazine.

In the last issue, we said that summer is the perfect time to take off from a long season and heal both physically and mentally. That's the Postseason Recovery Cycle, which lasts approximately three weeks. Once you go through the recovery cycle, you then begin the Preseason schedule, a 6-8 week program.

Refer to the charts below to set up an in-season and tournament week training program using the components of flexibility (FLEX), speed play (SP), aerobic conditioning (AC), strength training (ST), drilling (DR) and mental (MENT). Give yourself adequate time to prepare, and pay close attention to how you integrate all the components each week. The schedule below gives you all aspects of the Racquetball Sports Triangle: Racquetball Skills, Conditioning Skills and Mental Skills.

MON.	TUE.	WED.	THUR.	FRI.	SAT.	SUN.
DR1, 2, 3	SP	Off	DR1, 3, 5	DR1, 2, 4	DR1, 3, 5	Off
ST	AC	FLEX	ST	AC	AC	FLEX
Play	MENT	MENT	FLEX	MENT	SP	MENT
FLEX	FLEX		Play	Play	FLEX	
			FLEX			

DR (Drills), SP (Speed Play), ST (Strength), AC (Aerobic Conditioning), FLEX (Flexibility), MENT (Mental), Play (Play Games)

Remember, since the racquetball season is long, you need to rest before each tournament -- physically, mentally, and emotionally. Start to visualize and rehearse perfect technique and on-court strategies. After each tournament, rest, hydrate, stretch, and relax for a few days until your body feels energized and ready to go to the club again. This is called "stress with recovery cycles," giving you the best possible chance of playing all season without serious fatigue or injuries.

MON.	TUE.	WED.	THUR.	FRI.	SAT.	SUN.
AC	SP	AC	Off	TOURN	TOURN	TOURN
Play	DR1,3,5,etc	DR6,7,8	MENT	FLEX	FLEX	FLEX
MENT	MENT	MENT	FLEX		MENT	
FLEX	FLEX	FLEX			FLEX	

DR (Drills), SP (Speed Play), ST (Strength), AC (Aerobic Conditioning), FLEX (Flexibility), MENT (Mental), Play (Play Games), TOURN (Tournament)

How many days you take off before a tournament is personal preference; determine what works for your individual needs.

Below are more tools to help "Make You a Champion."

1. RACQUETBALL SKILLS

In-Season Schedule

Drill four times per week, primarily by yourself, to tweak skills, but drill with a partner if you're working on specific movement drills. Play three times per week.

Tournament Week Schedule

Drill two times that week by yourself to tweak skills, but, again, drill with a partner if you're working on specific movement drills. Play once that week.

2. MENTAL SKILLS

In-Season Schedule

Practice MENT three times per week: visualization, affirmations, playing in the "now" and having a positive attitude.

Tournament Week Schedule

Practice MENT five times per week: visualization, positive affirmations, playing in the "now" and having a positive attitude.

MENT is an area where you can never over-train, so do it as often as possible. The pros sometimes practice MENT 2-3 times per day, especially in the weeks leading up to major events. This keeps their minds sharp, focused and mentally tough.

3. FITNESS SKILLS

In-Season Schedule

Condition five times per week with AC, SP and ST. FLEX seven times per week.

Tournament Week Schedule

Condition three times per week, but light and easy. FLEX seven times per week.

FLEX keeps your body loose, relaxed and as flexible as possible to stretch for racquetballs.

4. NUTRITION SKILLS

Since you're back into your in-season training and playing tournaments and leagues, you want to make sure you are in your routine of eating right and drinking lots of water. Your body and mind need this in order to perform at their best.

Visit FranDavisRacquetball.com for detailed instructions on executing the information introduced in this article.

by Otto Dietrich
USA Racquetball National Rules Commissioner

WET FLOOR PROBLEMS

If a wet spot causes a player to slip, "... that's just 'tough luck' for the person who slips on it."

photo by Geoff Thomsen



Here are answers that I gave for several questions that came across my desk. Let's take a look...

Darold Key, Phoenix, AZ asked: "I do not see or know of a rule for a wet spot during the rally, either hit by the ball or a person slipping because of a wet spot. Can you enlighten me on your thoughts, please?"

OTTO SAYS: If the ball hits a wet spot and its having done so affects the rally, then it is a court hinder as addressed in Rule 3.14(a)1. As far as a wet spot on the floor causing a player to slip, well, that's NOT in the rulebook because that's just "tough luck" for the person who slips on it -- regardless of who made the floor slippery, or how!

Murray Horne submitted this question: "We play the two-serve game. Say, for example, the first serve is long and the server then hits the second serve. Then, if either of the players calls a replay hinder, does the server then go back to his first serve and receive two new serves, or do they replay only the second serve?"

OTTO SAYS: On the second serve, once the receiver has struck the served ball, then any replay of that rally reverts to the server's FIRST serve. Thus, they do not replay only the second serve. This is covered under Rule 3.13(h).

Steve Adams says: "I have been hearing that the rule for 'carrying' has been eliminated. Is it still in effect, or has it been taken out? I had also heard that, in doubles, if the first serve hits your partner while they are in the box, you get the first serve over again. Is that true, or is it a fault and the server goes to the second serve?"

OTTO SAYS: Some erroneous information is out there. The carry rule has been eliminated only by the men's pros (IRT); it still exists in all other rulebooks -- USAR, WPRO, and IRF. Regarding doubles serving, if you hit your non-serving partner while he is still standing in the box, then it is a fault serve. You only get two faults and you are OUT. But, if you happen to be playing in a game governed by USAR's one-serve rules (Open divisions), then hitting your non-serving partner does give you one more chance to put the ball into play.

Brian Griffiths inquired: "Are there going to be changes to the Open level regarding two serves like lower level and pro?"

OTTO SAYS: There is nothing in the works at present. The Open divisions at USAR National events are used to select our U.S. National team members who represent us at international events where the one-serve rules are still used. So, USAR wants to ensure we identify and select the very best one-serve players for our teams. Until the IRF would change its rule, USA Racquetball probably won't, either.

Maureen Padilha asked: "If it looks like the serve might be (or will be) long, can a person still play it even if it is called long?"

OTTO SAYS: A served ball is NOT "long" until it actually reaches and touches the back wall. So, therefore, the receiver can play the served ball until it actually touches the back wall. Important note: the referee should never call the serve "long" before then, either.

Bradley Voumard inquired: "Just curious about a debate that came up in a doubles match the other day. Question is, does the position of the receiving team have to be maintained for each game? In other words, if Player A on the receiving team is in the back left corner for the first serve of the game and Player B is in the right corner, do they have to always receive in those positions?"

OTTO SAYS: No, actually the receivers can switch sides of the court at any time they want to -- between serves or even during the serve!

DO YOU HAVE A RULES/REFEREEING QUESTION?

Email it to me at Odietrich@usra.org and you might find it featured in an upcoming issue of *Racquetball*.

A full-page photograph of a racquetball match. In the foreground, a player (Ben Croft) is diving horizontally towards the left, his body low to the wooden court floor. He is wearing a bright blue short-sleeved shirt with a white Nike swoosh, white shorts, white sneakers, and a black headband. His eyes are wide open, and his mouth is agape in a shout. He is holding a racquetball racket with his right hand, which is extended forward. In the background, another player (Chris Crowther) is standing, watching the play. He is wearing a grey t-shirt, black shorts, a white headband, and glasses. The background is slightly blurred, showing the indoor court environment with metal support structures and spectators.

US Open: **MORE MAGICAL MILESTONES** In Minneapolis

Ben Croft dives for a shot
vs. Chris Crowther

Racquetball's Premier Tournament Continues to Write History

BY JEFF OLIVER

PHOTOS COURTESY RESTRUNG MAGAZINE

How do they grow up so fast? It seems like just yesterday that racquetball greats Michelle Gould and Sudsy Monchik were lifting the Champions Cup at the inaugural US OPEN Racquetball Championships in Memphis. Now reincarnated in Minneapolis, the 16-year-old tournament is doing what most teenagers its age do... Drive! The 2011 edition drove the sport of racquetball to new levels in October. From the record-breaking streaks, to the international breadth, then on to the high-level play among the amateur divisions, the US OPEN failed to disappoint yet again.

Hosted by Minnesota-based Life Time Fitness at three of their clubs in the Minneapolis area, the event was centrally located downtown. The all-Lucite stadium court was surrounded by gold sponsor boxes and stadium seating inside the Life Time Fitness-Target Center club, located within the 20,500 seat Target Center arena - yes, the same arena that is home to the NBA's Minnesota Timberwolves and the WNBA's Minnesota Lynx! Just below the arena's floor is housed the professional basketball team's training facility. During the week, the Lynx were in the middle of competing for the WNBA Championship, which they would eventually win. Many of the Lynx players checked in on some of the racquetball action throughout the week. The best women's basketball players in the world were impressed with the athleticism and skill of the world's best racquetball players.

MEN'S PROFESSIONAL DIVISION KING KANE'S REIGN CONTINUES

The theme of the International Racquetball Tour (IRT) division at the 2011 US OPEN was simple: "New Challengers, Same Result." This year was the first in a decade in which the names Huczek and Williams didn't appear in the draw after both Top 8 players announced their respective retirements last season. Attempting to fill the void were a pair of young guns in Jose Rojas (age 21) and Charlie Pratt (age 25). Also benefiting from the retirements were Ben Croft and Andy Hawthorne, now both positioned in the Top 5 in the IRT Rankings.

For the first time in US OPEN history, all of the Top 8 seeds reached the quarterfinals. Rojas defeated Hawthorne to reach his first-ever US OPEN semifinal. For his efforts he earned a date with racquetball's version of Superman embodied in Kane Waselenchuk. On the other side of the draw, Chris Crowther upset fourth-seeded Croft in three straight games to set up a showdown with Rocky Carson who held off Shane Vanderson in the quarterfinals.

Both semifinal matches were won in straight games, setting up the familiar final that IRT fans have become accustomed to watching: No. 1 Kane Waselenchuk versus No. 2 Rocky Carson. Rocky came out in the first game of

the Finals and took advantage of some uncharacteristic mistakes by Kane, winning 11-7. The packed house was buzzing; everyone was wondering if they were going to witness the end of Kane's unfathomable winning streak. For Rocky, winning the first game against Kane put him in the "Good News/Bad News" position. Yes, the California Surfer held a 1-0 lead against the World's top player in the Final of the World's top tournament. However it also gave determination to Kane, one of the sport's most indomitable players. The conundrum turned to the negative for Rocky as Kane easily captured games two and three with scores of 11-2 and 11-4. In the fourth game, both players battled and finally stalemated at 7-7 for a series of side outs until the defending champion broke through. After putting away match point, Kane reached both hands into the air to celebrate his seventh US OPEN title and the extension of his winning streak to a phenomenal 122 matches.

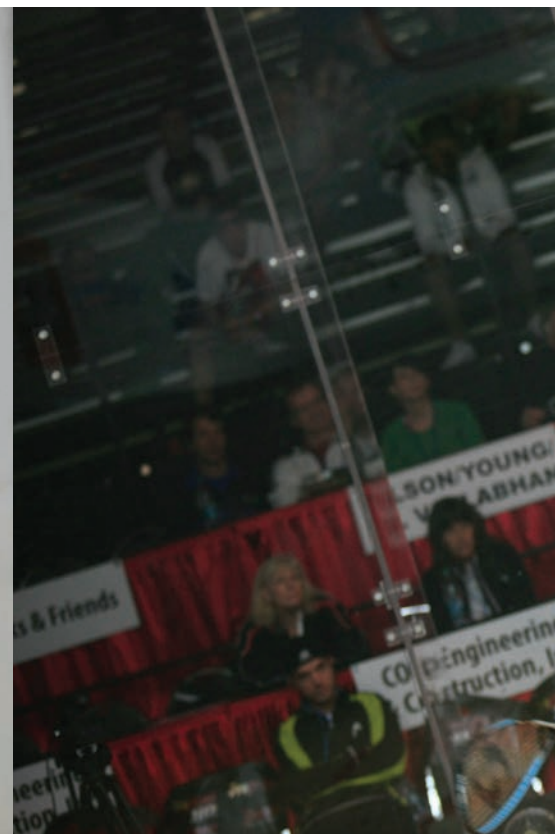
During his post-match speech to the fans, Kane's daughter came onto the court in a miniature matching shirt that her father was also wearing. Kane picked up his daughter, and as they stood in center court in the black t-shirts adorned with giant "7s", the world's best racquetball player fought back a few tears. For just a moment, Kane finally looked human.

WOMEN'S PROFESSIONAL DIVISION CHAMPIONS BATTLING CHAMPIONS

The Women's Professional Racquetball Organization (WPRO) draw also followed a theme similar to the professional men. In the draw were four former US OPEN Champions: defending champion Rhonda Rajsich, Cheryl Gudinas, Paola Longoria and Kerri Wachtel. The up-and-comer in the women's ranks is most definitely Samantha Salas who has stormed up the WPRO rankings to No. 3 and was looking to make it back to the US OPEN semifinals again in 2011. Returning to the WPRO after the birth of her first child was Kristen Bellows. The sleeper pick was Da'monique Davis, who was named last season's Rookie of the Year.

Davis played up to her award in knocking out two-time US OPEN Champion Gudinas in the quarterfinals. Also in the quarters, Bellows defeated sixth-seeded Adrienne Fisher. The upsets would pause, though, in the semifinals, as the top four seeds all faced off. On the top half, Rajsich battled Wachtel in a match-up of past US OPEN champions. On the bottom half, the winners of the 2010 World Doubles title faced off in an all-Mexican match: Longoria versus Salas. Like the men, the finalists cruised through the semifinals in straight games.

The 2011 US OPEN Women's Final was a powerful battle between the two ladies who have won the title over the past three years: Paola Longoria, who became the youngest



player to win a US OPEN in 2008 at the age of 18 and Rhonda Rajsich, the two-time defending US OPEN champion and a holder of four US OPEN titles overall.

Rhonda came into the final as the heavy favorite, not only for what she displayed on the court through the week but also as the all-time leader in US OPEN titles on the women's side. But Paola had also looked impressive all week; entering the Finals, she had yet to drop a single game, and she was hungry to reclaim her title.

Paola kept Rhonda in a defensive position from the start. Keeping the ball in play and putting it away have long been the keys to Longoria's game. In the Final she drive served throughout the match and kept Rhonda moving around. Paola jumped out to a 10-5 lead and thanks to some errors by Rhonda held on to win 11-7.

Rajsich appeared to shake off some nerves during the break between games and took the early lead in game two. Two aces by Longoria, however, put Rajsich back in a defensive game. She couldn't catch back up and dropped the game 5-11.

Now just a game away from winning her second US OPEN title, Longoria was looking to end it quickly with a fast game three win, but Rhonda is the fiercest player on the WPRO and wasn't going to go away quietly. She jumped out to an early 5-2 lead, but Longoria battled back to tie it at 9-9. With a US OPEN championship just two points away, Paola won the next two points and held up her hand to signify #1 in victory.

CPRT / MEN'S 40+ DIVISION – CLOUSE'S HOUSE

One of the annual highlights of the US OPEN is the show put on by the men of the Classic Professional Racquetball Tour (CPRT). Two-time defending US OPEN champion Woody Clouse did his part to reach yet another CPRT final, where he met former Canadian National Champion Corey Osborne. The Canadian defeated former champion Jimmy Lowe in the semifinals to earn a spot in the early Sunday morning CPRT Final on the Stadium Court. Woody easily controlled the final as it appeared that Corey finally ran out of gas during his run through the draw. Clouse won his third straight US OPEN title in the CPRT draw by scores of 9-3, 9-5 & 9-1.

THE AMATEURS CAME TO PLAY TOO!

The 2011 US OPEN featured more than 700 players from 16 different countries. Countries represented included: Aruba, Bolivia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Japan, Mexico, Panama, Puerto Rico, South Korea, United States, and Venezuela.

Winners of the Open Divisions were:

Men's Open – Daniel De La Rosa (Mexico)
Women's Open - Frederique Lambert (Canada)
Men's Open Doubles – Alejandro Landa (Texas) & Polo Gutierrez (Mexico)
Women's Open Doubles – Cristina Cordova (Ecuador) & Maria Paz Munoz (Ecuador)
Mixed Open Doubles – Corey Osborne (Canada) & Frederique Lambert (Canada)



MUCH MORE THAN JUST RACQUETBALL

The US OPEN features just as much action off the courts as on! Minneapolis offered late summer-like weather, thanks to the early October date, with sunny skies and temperatures in the 80s for most of the week. Within blocks of the Target Center sit dozens of the Twin Cities' top restaurants and nightlife spots. At the entrance to the Target Center venue is Huberts, the official host restaurant and bar of the US OPEN. Huberts was home to the USA Racquetball Women's Committee's Ladies' Night Out on Wednesday night and the Racquetball Warehouse Player's Dance Party on Friday. The Party With The Pros at the Aqua Nightclub was fantastic. All the top professional players in the world left their court shoes back in the hotel and came to Aqua dressed to the nines and ready to party!

Since the US OPEN started in 1996, the event has raised money for St. Jude Children's Hospital. This year the tournament is honored to announce that it has now raised more than \$300,000 over the past 16 years. Participants donate money through the Pro-Am Doubles Tournament and the Silent Auction as well as by donating back their \$5 referee fees.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR NEXT YEAR

The 2012 US OPEN will be held October 3-7 back in Minneapolis. Free up your calendars now so you can attend this once in a lifetime racquetball event. You won't be sorry!



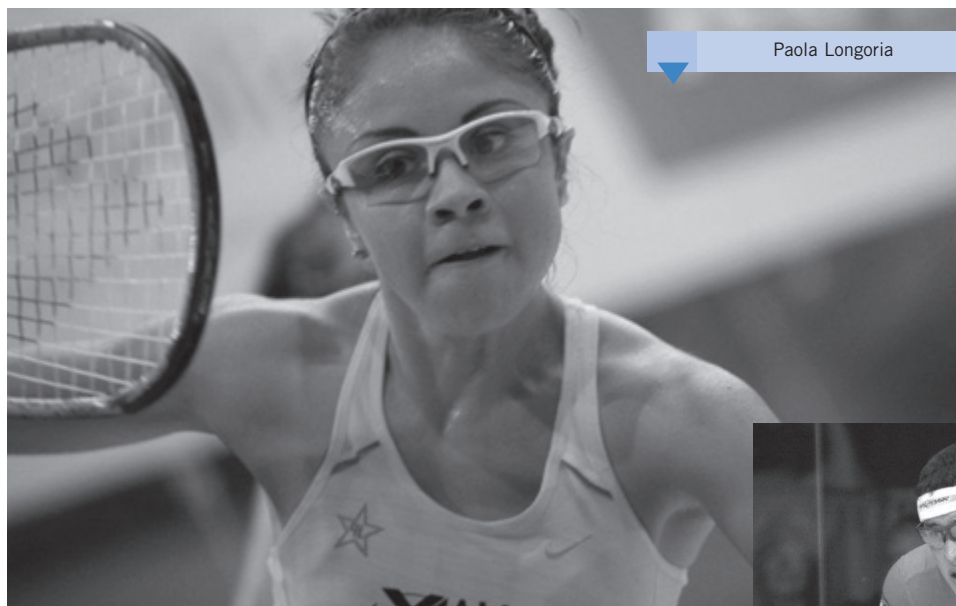
THESE TWO PAGES, FROM TOP LEFT:

- Paola wins Victor's Cup!
- Polo Gutierrez from Mexico in 32s
- Taylor Knoth vs. Andy Hawthorne in 16s
- Future Hall of Famer Sidsy Monchik coaching Andy Hawthorne



CPRA Final – Woody Clouse
and Cory Osborne

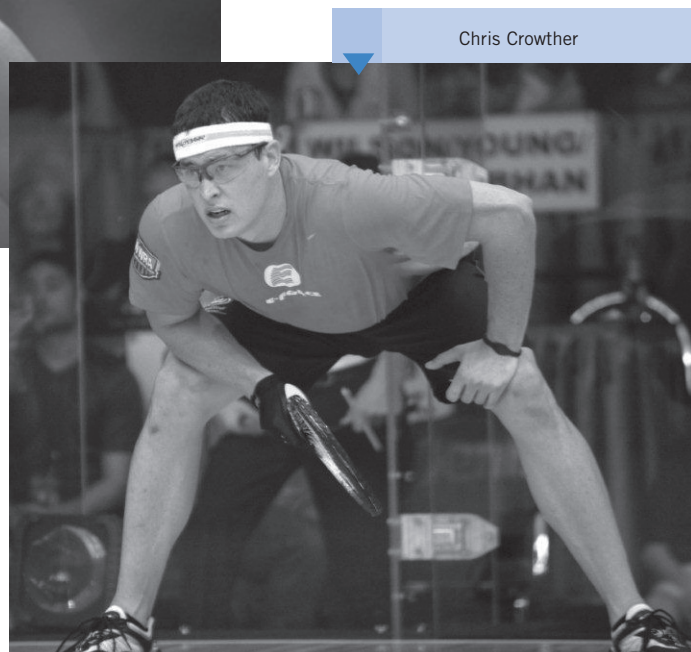
Former professional baseball
MVP Jeff Conine



Paola Longoria



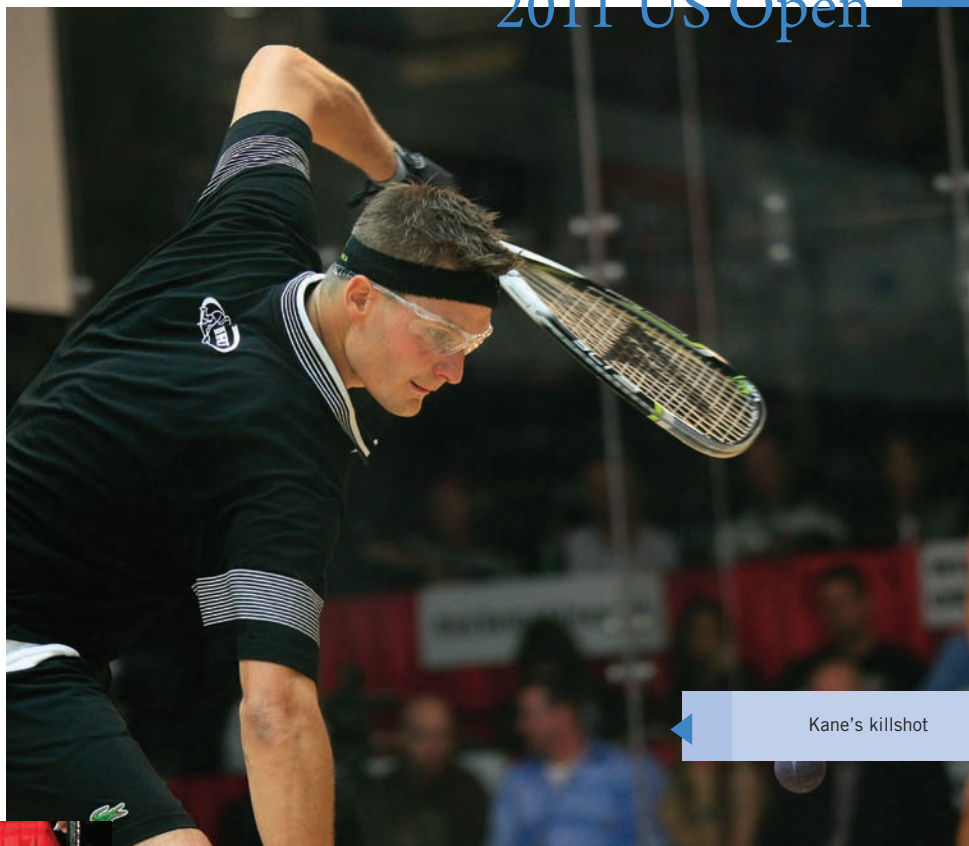
Jessica Parilla



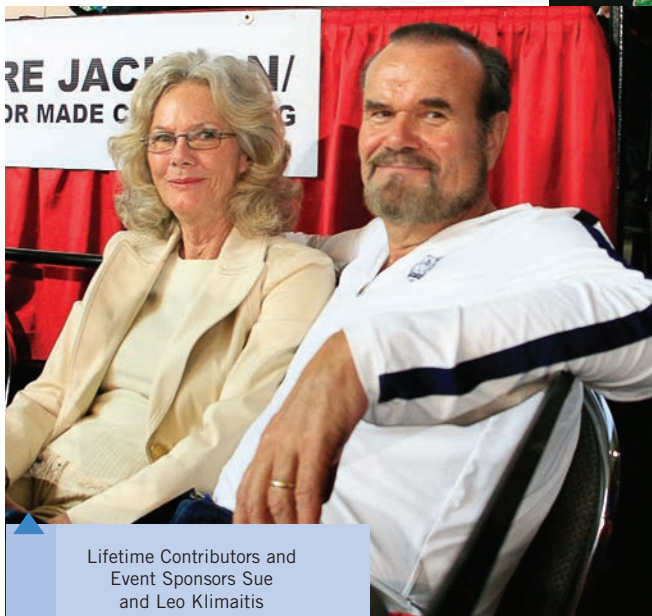
Chris Crowther



Sharon Jackson
prepares for Rhonda



Kane's killshot



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Exuberant fans

Rocky Carson performs acrobatic dive



Rhonda Rajsich with a future junior champion



A Mexico coach stresses the mental game



Kane's family and fans celebrate his seventh US Open title

HOW THE “MACHINE” IS RUN

BY LEO R. VASQUEZ

Ever wonder what goes on behind the scenes at the US OPEN Racquetball Championships? The life of a tournament volunteer can be hectic and exhausting, but just to be part of the tournament is a reward in itself. It sounds like a fun time, but there is a lot of work to be done behind the scenes.

THE STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

US OPEN Director Doug Ganim has used his skills and leadership to harness a tremendous group of nearly 40 staff/vendors and 75 volunteers who play a significant role in the operation of the US OPEN each year. It takes a staff made up of security, registration, portable court setup and teardown, shuttle drivers, IT services, sound/lights, floor manager, tournament desk managers, media, staff referees, photographer/videographer services, desk staff for three clubs, court monitors, maintenance, trade show services, VIP services, bleachers setup, sponsor coordination, electrical, entertainment and hospitality services.

The US OPEN was run in Memphis from 1996-2009 (fourteen years) with a great team of staff and volunteers to execute the tournament. When the event moved to Minneapolis in 2010, many of the national staff moved, but hardly any of the volunteers did. Doug started over with a local organizing committee (headed up by Aaron Granberg) that has done an incredible job of putting together a great team of volunteers. In

addition, they have helped with sponsorship sales and tournament execution in many different areas.

The tournament desk staff members arrive each day at their respective clubs at 7:00 a.m., working a shift of approximately eight hours. The second shift takes over and finishes the day usually around midnight. These amazing people are assigning courts, finding referees (sometimes volunteering to referee themselves), keeping the clubs clean, refilling water and POWERADE jugs, updating results online on R2Sports and updating results on the posted draw sheets.

Customer service skills are at a high level for this tournament and all of these volunteers have an incredible amount of patience. Additionally, they work extremely well together to be able to run such a large tournament with players from all over the world including many who speak very little English.

THE SETUP

Preparation is a year 'round job but the actual setup for the US OPEN begins eleven days before the tournament commences and ends three days after. This includes assembling the portable racquetball court, which is always difficult to do. The court has to be shipped from Chicago on a 53-foot flatbed truck. It weighs more than 40,000 pounds and takes a full week to build. In addition, the US OPEN in Minneapolis presents some unique challenges. Since

the Life Time Fitness club is in the basement of the Target Center, all the materials have to be carted down two separate freight elevators and through more than 100 yards of hallways and maintenance tunnels. Of course, this same process has to be repeated during teardown but in a shorter amount of time since we only have a few days to get the club back to normal! Eddie Meredith and his team do a fantastic job in setting up and tearing down the portable court.

Vendor booths with tables and drapery must also be set up along with VIP Gold Boxes for sponsors and supporters. In addition, the stadium-style seating bleachers were expanded for back wall viewing, giving more players the best view. Total man hours to execute: over 4,000!

A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

We are always looking for quality volunteers to join the US OPEN staff, and we are especially interested in anyone who would be available the week prior to the tournament and for the three days after. If you are interested, you can contact Doug Ganim at ganim@mac.com. We try to finalize our staff at least three months prior to the tourney each year. Very simply, the US OPEN Racquetball Championships would not be possible without the incredible staff and volunteers who have dedicated countless hours to the tournament. This was truly an amazing effort by everyone. THANK YOU to everyone involved!



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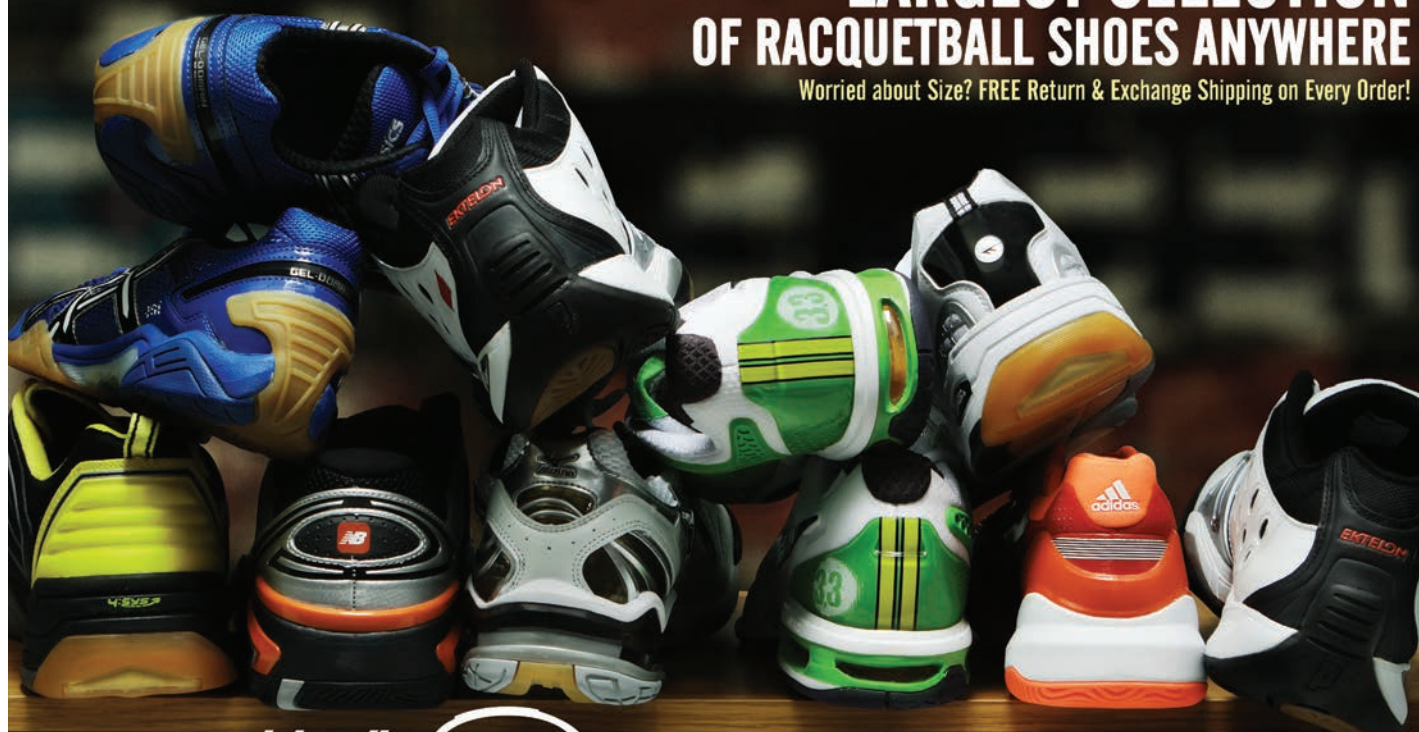
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Jason Mannino
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Rocky Carson
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Paola Longoria
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Sudsy Monchik
2X #1 Pro Player

Fran's Credentials

- 25+ Years Camp Experience
- Woman of the Year 2009
- 2004 Hall of Fame
- U. S. National Team Coach 1989-1996, 2002
- Pan American/World Championship Coach
- USOC National Coach of the Year 1997
- Coaches Rocky Carson, Paola Longoria, Taylor Knoth, Sharon Jackson
- Coached Legends Jason Mannino and Sudsy Monchik
- USAR-IP Master Professional

Jason's Credentials

- #1 IRT Professional Player 2003
- 2X U.S. Open Champion
- IRT Most Improved Player 1998
- IRT Rookie of the Year 1996
- International Racquetball Tour President

Camp Schedule:

Weekend Camps 2011

September 9 -11 - Tampa, FL
October 14-16 - Atlanta, GA
October 21-23 - TBA
November 11-13 - Chicago, IL

Weekend Camps 2012

January 27-29 Las Vegas, NV
February 3-5 Seattle, WA
March 2-4 Findlay, OH
March 30-April 1 Mobile, AL
April 20-21 Salt Lake City, UT
May 4-6 TBD

Week Long Fantasy Camps 2011

December 1-8, 2011 - Aruba (Caribbean Island...Intermediate to Advanced Camp)

Possible future cities: AZ, NM, MD/VA, New England and more

The above dates are subject to the IRT schedule.



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HEAD



www.FranDavisRacquetball.com



PHOTOS AND ARTICLE
BY DR. BUD MUEHLEISEN

HOW RACQUETBALL *Got Its Name*

It was in early 1969 that the Jewish Community Center in St. Louis had the foresight and chutzpah to send a letter to virtually every facility in the United States that might have a 4-walled indoor court - and where they might be playing with a small strung racket - inviting their players to a National Tournament.

The “game” was invented by a tennis pro named Joe Sobek who resided in Greenwich Village. The story goes that one winter when the snow outside prevented Joe from teaching tennis, he thought of the idea of cutting down a tennis racket and moving indoors to a 4-walled handball court in order to be able to get a workout while at the same time practice his tennis strokes.

Joe used the inside of a tennis ball that was called a Pensie Pinkie (made by Pennsylvania Tire & Rubber). The ball’s rubberized surface gave itself traction on the polished wooden floors used by the handball players. Soon a “game” was started that patterned itself after handball. A Paddle Rackets Association was formed in the New England area, and the game slowly spread to various hotbeds throughout the United States.

Now, the game had a founder, equipment and association, but not a name.

St. Louis heralded its event as the “The First National Tournament for Paddle Rackets.” Entries were mailed out and at tournament time, and lo and behold, upwards of 250 participants showed up from all corners of the U.S. Divisions were created for both men and women in singles and doubles as well as senior age groups for both genders.

Early on in the tournament, time was set aside for a big “organizational meeting” of the players at the tournament. The room was packed with participants. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Robert (Bob) Kendler from Lake Forest, Illinois, who was the President of the National Handball Association at that time. A Board of Directors of seven was elected representing the different areas of the country and each more or less headed a committee to further develop the “new” sport. Bob Kendler was installed as Honorary

President of the Association with the National Office to be set up at his Lake Forest headquarters. (Kendler subsequently used his handball staff there to get things underway, including the handling of the dues and communications with its new members.)

That process was soon completed at the inaugural meeting, then it was announced that we needed to give a name to our new sport and organization. A hum swept the room. The problem arose because the many paddleball players voiced the opinion that the racket was NOT a paddle. That opinion was unanimous.

A chalkboard at the front was filled with 6-8 potential names, and then each was put up for nomination. After scrutinizing the names for a few minutes and bantering the possibilities about, the room buzzed in confusion. The reason was that each and every name seemed to conflict with other sports such as tennis, paddleball, paddle tennis, paddle rackets, etc.

During a lull in the action, a tall man in the back of the room stood up and introduced himself as Robert (Bob) McNerney from Coronado, California, who had traveled there with the contingent from San Diego. He proceeded to offer the thought, “Since the sport uses a racket and a ball... why not call it... (Racket)ball?” Well, it was like a light from above went off in the room. The name was quickly put in motion, seconded, and won by acclamation!

Then started a 25-minute debate as to the spelling of the sport’s name. This was because of the connotation of “Racket” lending association with the Underworld of Rackets, and reputed Mafia members might therefore object. Finally, Bob McNerney stood up again and suggested the French spelling of ‘Racquet’... and once again, it was quickly adopted by acclamation.

As the meeting adjourned and the players filtered back to their matches, a pride began to permeate throughout the building that OUR SPORT, which was so much fun to play, was called...Racquetball!

WHAT ARE THEY *Doing Now?*

Bob McNerney (left), 74, has lived in Maui, Hawaii, for many years. He recalls his early roots in Racquetball with many great moments playing in San Diego with Dr. Bud, Charley Brumfield and Carl Loveday. He is pleased to have played a part in helping Racquetball get its start. His fondest memories are the many special friends made and places visited over the years while participating in Racquetball. He is still a USPTA/PRT Tennis Professional.

“Dr. Bud” Muehleisen (right) celebrated his 80th birthday on October 15th. He is enjoying retirement after 51 years of Dentistry. Blessed with good health, Dr. Bud still enjoys teaching and giving clinics in Racquetball. Feel free to contact him at email (drbudm@att.net) or on Facebook.



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An Interview With JOE WILLIAMS

By Cheryl Kirk • Photos by Kit Lawson

Joe Williams is a familiar face of USA Racquetball at national and state events. His customer service attitude reminds me of the slogan on a button I've kept from my McDonald's days: "Yes! Now, what's the question?" Joe's picture should be on that button. At the US Open, my husband Kit Lawson and I were able to sit Joe down for a few minutes (not an easy task, he's in perpetual motion) and find out more about his life and philosophies.

Tell us about your life before racquetball.

I was born in Queens, NY. My dad was in the military and we traveled around a lot. I attended eleven or twelve different schools. I'm the oldest of four.

My childhood was difficult. As the oldest in the family, I took care of and watched out for my brothers and sister. When my dad retired, we moved to Lena, Illinois. I met an elderly lady who took me to church, and taught me how to do crafts, and we would make homemade maple syrup. I learned from her that there's a reason for everything and you have to do the best with what you have.

I guess I've always wanted to look out for people who aren't as fortunate. For instance, in grade school I got into some minor trouble one time when I had to teach a kid a lesson for beating up a friend of mine who had a disability. I feel like everyone should be kind to others.

As far as interests go, I love the sea, and I love to travel. I was a wrestler in high school. I was the Illinois State High School Wrestling Champion in the 98-lb. weight class in 1981. At 17, I left home and joined the Navy and trained in San Diego as a machinist's mate. I liked mess duty. Sailors who didn't like it would give me \$20 to wash pots and pans in their place, and I took advantage of it! I was proud to receive the Sailor of the Year Award at the San Diego 32nd St. Naval Station in 1989. I went on to serve in Desert Storm from November 1990 to February 1991 where we patrolled the Persian Gulf. I traveled and saw the world, with ten active years, then was on reserve duty for ten additional years.

Where did you acquire your customer service attitude?

I think at church, mostly. I wouldn't ask someone to do something I wouldn't do.

How did you come to be so heavily involved in tournaments and at USA Racquetball?

In 2006, I went to a Junior Achievement event for Big Brothers and Sisters and won a 30-day membership to the Lincoln Racquetball Club in Nebraska. I joined a league and signed up for the Open, thinking Open meant anybody! It was there I met Linda Moore, and she gave me my first racquet. The Nebraska Racquetball Association let me help at tournaments. I medaled in the C's at States, and then heard about the State Games of America in Colorado Springs. I met Mary Meredith there and asked her if I could help. I recorded match results and wrote down the scores on the draw sheets. Eddie Meredith invited me to an IRT event at the Lynmar club, and introduced me to Dave Negrete, who invited me to Schaumburg, IL to monitor the VIP booth at the Motorola Pro Nationals. When Jason Manino and the CEO of Motorola arrived, I wouldn't let them in because they didn't have badges. (Laughing) Dave gave me a book of pictures of sponsors and pro players so I'd know who to let in!

I continued volunteering at national events, then Jim Hiser asked me to move out to Colorado Springs to contribute at the USA Racquetball national office. I left Nebraska for Colorado in 2010.

What do you like best about your role?

Everything! Making new players feel welcome and special, paying a bit more attention to them, offering them hospitality. I learn at each tournament how to make it better next time. Sometimes people help me out, and I really appreciate it.

I try to always be around, and I consider everything my job. I like to take care of the little details, even if it's technically not my job. When you go to a restaurant and

An Interview With **JOE WILLIAMS** (continued)



someone says, "Sorry, you're not my table," that drives me nuts.

What are the most important things to you in the sport?

I like working with a team to make a tournament really special for the players. I don't expect recognition, but I was really touched when I received the Nebraska Association's Domangue Sportsmanship Award in 2007, and the Kansas City folks gave me an appreciation plaque at their KC Winter Classic in 2009!

What's your motto?

Live today like it's your last day. Something could happen between here and the hotel! Also, I try to live by the Golden Rule and treat other people as I want to be treated.

What does the future hold for you?

I'm engaged to Suzan Spuhler! We haven't set a date yet, but more than likely it will be sometime next summer.

Words of Appreciation **FOR JOE**

"Joe Williams is one of the main reasons events run as smoothly as they do. During the 2010 US Open, Joe appeared to be everywhere. I saw him at 8:00 am when I was waiting for a shuttle and again at midnight when he drove the shuttle that picked us up from our late night match. I saw him cleaning windows and picking up trash at 7:30 am. Whether he was standing in the rain to insure our shuttle left on time, or checking our identification while we stood in line to eat, he always had a smile on his face. In my eyes, Joe Williams is the USAR Man of the Year."

Roby Partovich
US Open, November 2010

"As tournament players, we are so focused on where we need to be and what time we play that we rarely take the time to peek behind the scenes of what it really takes to pull off these large-scale events. Joe is dedicated to the players' experience, and he puts in long hours to make sure all the details

are taken care of. There are many chiefs, but Joe is the man who puts all the details into motion. He's quick with a solution and even quicker with a smile."

Peggie Tellez
Ektelon Nationals, May 2011

"Knowing that we needed to set up Board Meetings and Social Gatherings for the new United States Racquetball Foundation (USRF) at the 2011 US Open, the task was rather daunting until being introduced to Joe Williams. While everyone on the USAR staff was courteous and helpful, Joe always went the extra distance to meet our needs, perfectly exemplifying our Foundation slogan, 'Give to Your Passion.' When you need to know who, what, where or when, ask Joe! Kathleen Klukas (USRF General Manager) and I want to extend our profound thanks and appreciation to Joe for making our experience the best possible!"

Shannon Wright
US Open, October 2011

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

EVENT TITLE	EVENT DATES	FACILITY NAME
2011 TURKEY SHOOT	11/25-26/2011	TRITON SPORTS CENTER
NMRA 2011 DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP	12/1-3/2011	MAVERICK ATHLETIC CLUB
2011 FLORIDA REGIONAL DOUBLES	12/2-4/2011	SARASOTA BATH & RACQUET CLUB
2011 RAM STATE DOUBLES	12/2-4/2011	TOTAL SPORTS
MIKE SCARFF DOUBLES	12/2-4/2011	BALLY'S
2011 ND HAPPY JOE'S OPEN	12/2-4/2011	CENTER COURT FITNESS CLUB
IDAHO 2011 CHRISTMAS CLASSIC	12/2-4/2011	IDAHO AHTLETIC CLUB - BOISE
2011 PA TRI-STATE OPEN	12/2-4/2011	PHILADELPHIA SPORTS CLUB AT HIGHPOINT
WOMEN'S ONE DAY SHOOTOUT	12/3/2011	FOREST VIEW RACQUET CLUB
2011-2012 INSRA STATE DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIPS	12/3-4/2011	OMNI 41 HEALTH & FITNESS CONNECTION
2011 NM SNOWBALL TOURNAMENT	12/8-11/2011	HIGHPOINT SPORTS & WELLNESS
THE KANE TRAIN SERIES OF TX PRESENTED BY PROKENNEX - SOUTH TX RACQUETBALL HOLIDAY PRO/AM	12/9-11/2011	CORPUS CHRISTI ATHLETIC CLUB
ST. CLOUD WINTER TOURNAMENT	12/9-11/2011	SUBURBAN HEALTH CLUB
IRT FLORIDA SATELLITE SERIES - PORT ST. LUCIE	12/9-11/2011	TBA
HEAD PENN PRO/AM SERIES 6TH ANNUAL HOLIDAY SPLAT	12/9-11/2011	ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY
2011 ND MINOT OPEN - IRT TIER 4 SATELLITE EVENT	12/9-11/2011	MINOT YMCA
HOLIDAY DOUBLES SHOOTOUT	12/10/2011	FOREST VIEW RACQUET CLUB
TOYS FOR TOTS CHARITY RB TOURNAMENT	12/10/2011	CLUB SPORT SAN RAMON
FLORIDA SENIOR GAMES STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS	12/10-11/2011	LAKELAND YMCA
PHOENIX MOTOR COMPANY'S MERCEDES BENZ HOLIDAY RACQUET TOURNAMENT	12/15-18/2011	VILLAGE RACQUET & HEALTH CLUB
2011 MO VETTA SPORTS HOLIDAY CHARITY CLASSIC	12/17/2011	VETTA SPORTS - CONCORD
BAC DOUBLES	1/7/2012	BRONSON ATHLETIC CLUB
2012 MO RACQUETBALL BLIZZARD	1/13-14/2012	VETTA SPORTS - CONCORD
2012 WSMRA 23RD ANNUAL NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS	1/13-15/2012	SARASOTA BATH & RACQUET CLUB
MN HALL OF FAME	1/13-15/2012	LIFE TIME FITNESS - MOORE LAKE
2012 8TH ANNUAL CARDILE BROS. STATE DOUBLES	1/14-15/2012	YMCA OF DELAWARE
OSU INVITE	1/19-22/2012	TIMBERHILL ATHLETIC CLUB
2011-2012 EASTERN COLLEGIATE RACQUETBALL CONFERENCE MEET #4	1/27-29/2012	COURT CLUB
2012 FRAN DAVIS HENDERSON, NV CAMP	1/27-29/2012	CLUBSPORT GREEN VALLEY
IRT FLORIDA SATELLITE SERIES - PORT ST. LUCIE	1/27-29/2012	CIVIC CENTER
34TH ANNUAL LEWIS RACQUETBALL PRO/AM	1/27-29/2012	SIOUX FALLS FAMILY YMCA
WEST MICHIGAN OPEN PRO/AM RACQUETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS	1/28-29/2012	MICHIGAN ATHLETIC CLUB
13TH ANNUAL RACQUET FOR THE CURE	2/3-4/2012	LITTLETON YMCA
2012 FRAN DAVIS SEATTLE CAMP	2/3-5/2012	WASHINGTON ATHLETIC CLUB
2012 MO PINCHSHOT.COM CHAMPIONSHIPS	2/3-5/2012	VETTA SPORTS - CONCORD
2012 USAR 45TH NATIONAL DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIPS	2/8-12/2012	ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY
LIFE TIME FITNESS - ONE DAY TOURNAMENT	2/11/2012	LIFE TIME FITNESS
OREGON STATE DOUBLES	2/16-19/2012	EAST SIDE ATHLETIC CLUB
FLORIDA STATE SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIPS	2/17-19/2012	SARASOTA BATH & RACQUET CLUB
COLORADO MADNESS	2/17-19/2012	APEX RACQUETBALL AND FITNESS CENTER
SHOOT-OUT ON THE BRAZOS	2/18/2012	QBI
2012 USAR 26TH NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL CHAMPIONSHIPS	2/22-26/2012	MULTNOMAH ATHLETIC CLUB
ST. CLOUD SPRING TOURNAMENT	2/24-26/2012	SUBURBAN HEALTH CLUB
CAPITAL CHALLENGE	2/24-26/2012	MICHIGAN ATHLETIC CLUB
2012 DE SNOWBALL OPEN	2/25-26/2012	KIRKWOOD FITNESS CLUB



Calendar of Events 2011-2012

FACILITY CITY	FACILITY STATE	CONTACT NAME	CONTACT EMAIL
SAN ANTONIO	TX	LANCE GILLIAM	LANCE@GILLIAMCPAPC.COM
ARLINGTON	TX	STEVE COHEN	HWALKER@NMRA.INFO
SARASOTA	FL	CHAD BAILEY	AUCHAD99@HOTMAIL.COM
MT. CLEMENS	MI	WELDON BLAKESLEE	TBLAKESLEE@TEAMEKTELON.COM
KENT	WA	NEAL HEGGEN	NHEGGEN@YAHOO.COM
GRAND FORKS	ND	MICHAEL ORR	MORR@CENTERCOURTFITNESSCLUB.COM
BOISE	ID	STEVE PURCELL	STEVELPP@YAHOO.COM
CHALFONT	PA	TOM GAFFNEY	TOM@ARCHWAYPRESS.NET
ARLINGTON HEIGHTS	IL	DAVE NEGRETE	NEGRETZ@COMCAST.NET
SCHERERVILLE	IN	RYAN GRIFFIN	RYAN@INSRA.ORG
ALBUQUERQUE	NM	GARY MAZAROFF	GMAMPRO@AOL.COM
CORPUS CHRISTI	TX	JOANNA REYES	STXRACQUETBALL@YAHOO.COM
ST. CLOUD	MN	DAVID TORNELL	TORNELD@CHARTER.NET
TBA	FL	KIM ROY	KIMBERLY_ROY@HOTMAIL.COM
TEMPE	AZ	MICHAEL FRANKS	BSIMONS101@COX.NET
MINOT	ND	STEVE KNOWLES	KNOWLES007@YAHOO.COM
ARLINGTON HEIGHTS	IL	DAVE NEGRETE	NEGRETZ@COMCAST.NET
SAN RAMON	CA	JACK HUGHES	RACQUETBALLPLUS@COMCAST.NET
LAKELAND	FL	JEAN TRIMBLE	JTRIMBLE1255@GMAIL.COM
PHOENIX	AZ	DARIN RANGLES	DARIN.RANGLES@COX.NET
ST. LOUIS	MO	DAN WHITLEY	DWHITLEY@VETTASPORTS.COM
KALAMAZOO	MI	DAVE STAGRAY	DSTAGRAY@YAHOO.COM
ST. LOUIS	MO	DAN WHITLEY	DWHITLEY@VETTASPORTS.COM
SARASOTA	FL	CHAD BAILEY	AUCHAD99@HOTMAIL.COM
FRIDLEY	MN	DAVID TORNELL	TORNELD@CHARTER.NET
WILMINGTON	DE	JEFF ZEGNA	DELAWARE.RACQUETBALL@GMAIL.COM
CORVALLIS	OR	ROB DURBIN	ROB_DURBIN@COMCAST.NET
ALBANY	NY	ROB VAN SCHALKWYK	VANSCHALKWYKR@HOTMAIL.COM
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MILWAUKIE	OR	ANGIE HENDERSON	ANGIE@EASTSIDEATHLETICCLUB.COM
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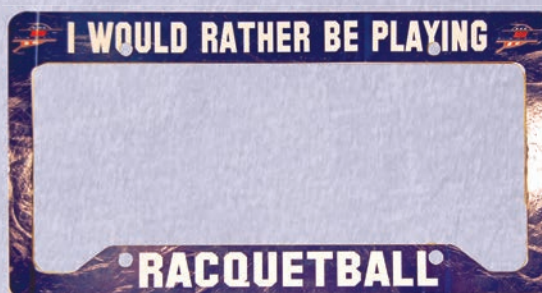
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*The Women's 45-60B Division in Fullerton
Janet Scheffer, Melanie Jones, Julia Mouser, Margie Der, and Andrea Allmon*

Setting the RECORD STRAIGHT

In the Summer issue of *Racquetball*, several Ektelon Nationals results were incorrectly reflected.

In the Women's 45+A division, the players logged the following results:

1st: Suzanna Fast (CA)
2nd: Diane Mueller (CA)

3rd: Peggie Tellez (CA)
4th: Aiaga Roffey (CO)
5th: Jeanine Black (TX)

In the Women's 45+B-60+B round robin, results were reported as 60+B only.

Medals in that divisions were earned as follows:

45+B
1st: Melanie Jones (NJ)
2nd: Janet Scheffer (HI)
3rd: Andrea Allmon (CA)
50+B
1st: Julia Mouser (CA)
60+B
1st: Margie Der (CA)

We apologize for any confusion or concern this may have caused, and we thank everyone for coming to play in Fullerton!

Also at July's WOR 38th Racquetball Warehouse World Championships presented by Ektelon in Huntington Beach, CA, some Junior divisions and winners were not included. *Racquetball* apologizes for the error and congratulates the winners in each division!

Junior Singles 14- Dane Elkins

Junior Singles 12- Jonathan Maupin

**Junior Doubles 14-/12-
Jonathan Maupin/Robby Mijares**



Building Champions, Changing Lives

Dear Friend,

Competition, fitness, fun, and friendship are the cornerstones of the racquetball experience. Racquetball already makes a difference in the lives of millions in the U.S., but we know with additional resources we could do so much more to create awareness of and increased participation in our sport.

USA Racquetball is recognized by the USOC as the National Governing Body for the sport of racquetball. However, although we are a Pan American sport, we do not receive outside funding from the USOC or other government entities.

A not-for-profit 501(c)(3) association, we depend upon three major sources of funding – membership, events, and fundraising. To support the ongoing success of our mission, we announce the creation of the USA Racquetball Champions Club. Three levels of participation are available – Lifetime Member*, Benefactor and Patron.

Help support the sport of racquetball in America. Please consider joining USA Racquetball's most distinguished and loyal giving community – the USAR Champions Club.



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- ☐ Enclosed is \$2,500 to become a Champion Club Patron
- ☐ Enclosed is \$1,250 to become a Champion Club Lifetime Member
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String Quiz Challenge OF THE DECADE

By Steve Crandall
Vice President, Sales & Marketing
Ashaway Racket Strings

It has been eleven years—September 2000—since our last String Quiz ran in *Racquetball Magazine*!

While many of the basics haven't changed, there have been a number of important developments in racquetball string since then, so it's a great time to publish an updated quiz. A few questions have been included from the original quiz, but overall, this quiz is a bit more difficult. After an additional decade of reading this column, you all ought to be experts by now!

Take this "Challenge of the Decade" quiz and impress everyone with your racquetball string knowledge! Either fill out the quiz form on our website (www.ashawayusa.com);

print the form or fill out this magazine page and fax to 401-377-9091; or scan the page and email it as an attachment to info@ashawayusa.com.

Completed quiz forms must be submitted by December 31, 2011. All those receiving a passing grade of over 70 will receive a free set of one of Ashaway's new strings. Scoring 100% correct will earn special mention in the next Ashaway column. (An extra credit question is included for a little boost.) Please try to complete the quiz on your own. Referring to past columns is okay, but please don't discuss with your friends or stringer. Good Luck and stay tuned for answers in the Spring issue!

GENERAL STRING QUESTIONS

1. If you want the ball to explode off your racquet with greater power, you should string your racquet at a higher tension.

☐ True ☐ False

2. Many new fibers have been used in racquet strings over the last ten years. Which of the following fibers has NOT been used in a commercial racquet string?

☐ Aramid ☐ Kevlar® ☐ Zyex®
☐ Vectran® ☐ Spectra®

3. In general, all racquet strings are pre-stretched before stringing.

☐ True ☐ False

4. What is the standard diameter range for an 18-gauge string?

☐ 1.00-1.05 mm ☐ 1.10-1.15 mm
☐ 1.20-1.25

5. Which property is not monitored by Ashaway's Quality Control Lab and does NOT affect string durability?

☐ Tensile strength ☐ Knot strength
☐ Loop strength ☐ Shear strength

RACQUETBALL STRING QUESTIONS

6. Your choice of racquetball string makes very little difference in how your racquet plays.

☐ True ☐ False

7. The fastest growing segment of the racquetball string market is the Zyex-based string segment.

☐ True ☐ False

8. Zyex is represented by which of the following chemical acronyms?

☐ UHMWPE ☐ PEEK ☐ PTFE

9. Which of the following countries is NOT home to a racquetball string manufacturer?

☐ USA ☐ China ☐ Taiwan
☐ France ☐ Canada

10. Which of the statements in this list is NOT relevant to racquetball string?

☐ Multifilament construction gives better feel
☐ Textured surface construction gives better spin
☐ Solid monofilament strings are very stiff

RACQUETBALL STRINGING QUESTIONS

11. Hybrid stringing (two different types or different gauges of string) is growing in popularity in racquetball.

☐ True ☐ False

12. The normal breakage point for a racquetball string is a main string in the upper 1/3 of the frame.

☐ True ☐ False

13. The trend in racquetball stringing is to string at tensions in the 25 lb. range.

☐ True ☐ False

14. The most popular tension range for stringing racquetball racquets is:

☐ 20 - 30 lbs. ☐ 30 - 40 lbs. ☐ 40 - 50 lbs.

15. All racquetball racquets have the exact same stringing pattern.

☐ True ☐ False

STRING POTPOURRI

16. A new Zyex-based racquetball string was introduced last summer. It is 1.30 mm in diameter. What gauge is that?

☐ 16 gauge ☐ 17 gauge ☐ 18 gauge
☐ 19 gauge

17. The biggest (largest unit volume) string market in the world is associated with which sport?

☐ Squash ☐ Racquetball
☐ Tennis ☐ Badminton

18. The general rule of thumb is that you string your racquet as many times each year as you play your favorite racquet sport each week. (Unless your string breaks on a mishit, of course!)

☐ True ☐ False

19. A thin gauge and textured surface is desirable in a racquetball string since it grips the ball better for control and spin.

☐ True ☐ False

20. Jack Huczek has won ten World Championships playing with Ashaway string in his racquet.

☐ True ☐ False

EXTRA CREDIT (you may need it and please don't get this one wrong!)

Ashaway is the only brand of racquet strings manufactured in the United States.

☐ True ☐ False

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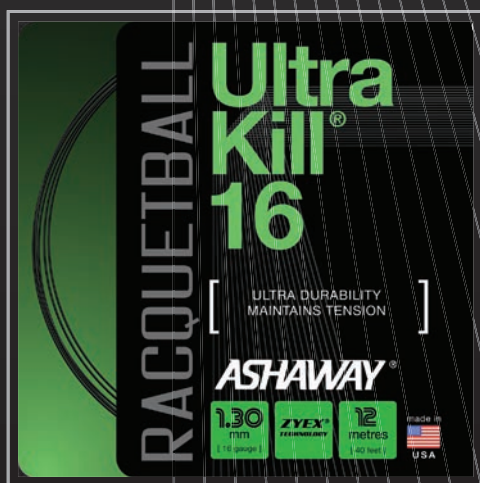
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RUBEN'S LAST STAND.

ROAD TO TOP 10

Ruben Gonzalez, "the legend of racquetball," is on his way to accomplishing something no one in this sport has ever done. Early this year, Ruben decided to commit to playing full time on the IRT tour for one more season. This farewell tour, **Ruben's Last Stand** is even more special since he dedicated himself to finishing the current season ranked in the **Top 10** by the time he turns **60 years old**. Follow Ruben's rise up the ranking chart and stay up to date on his accomplishments at www.ektelon.com. Also, make sure to pick up some of Ruben's signature products from an Ektelon dealer near you.



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