



Down the Line

"Dedicated to promoting the game of Racquetball"

Vol. 23
No. 4

PRESIDENT'S NOTE

On behalf of the *LRA*, I would like to wish everyone the happiest of holidays and the best of luck in the upcoming racquetball new year.

Technically, the new year for racquetball does not begin for Louisiana until after the state championships in March. We still have three more qualifying tournaments before State (see calendar, back page), so make plans and get those entries in early.

This racquetball season has been one of the best I have been associated with and I would like to review some of the highlights.

The State Singles Championships was the biggest in 14 years with over 175 entries including seniors and juniors.

Louisiana showed the rest of the nation we are serious contenders by the fantastic attendance at Nationals. Twenty-seven warriors went looking for a national championship; when it was all over three came home with the gold medal. We had four in the finals and seven players in the semi-finals; I believe we'll take home even more next year.

Louisiana racquetball received some great media exposure with the *Louisiana Games* held at *Elmwood Fitness*. Thanks to the *New Orleans Sports Foundation*, it looks like this tournament will grow every year and help keep racquetball in the spotlight.

Our junior team showed their dedication to the game by making a great show at the Junior Nationals in Portland. Eight committed juniors emptied their parents checking account and made the trek to the very

intimidating racquetball tournament. I would like to commend our young athletes on their hard work and dedication, as well as raising most of the money for the trip. Thanks to our members and the *Rollout Roundup* tournament, they raised almost \$2,000 which was about half of the cost of the trip. As I am writing this article, five members of our team are at the World Championships in Los Angeles, and several still have a great chance at a title. Check out the next newsletter for specific highlights and results.

Don't forget, we still have four more tournaments before the end of the season: the Lance Nelson Memorial in Alexandria, Manhattan's Mardi Gras Madness, and of course World Gym in January. This will be World Gym's last tournament at this location, Mark Burrows is building a new club complete with racquetball; I hope everyone can support this tournament as well as Mark in his endeavors.

This year's state championships will be our 25th Anniversary State Singles Championships and will promise to be best ever. The tournament will include all skill levels, as well as senior and junior divisions. In celebration of the 25th state championships, we are offering a "Legends" division, which will showcase some of the best players in the history of racquetball. This will be a invitation only division, HOWEVER, we do need help finding all of these people. If you or someone you know was a highly competitive player or had a profound impact on the game back in the 70's and 80's or even from the 90's, please call us or get in contact with one of our board members. We definitely do not want to miss anyone.

If you thought last year's State was good, "you ain't seen nothing yet." The Saturday night banquet will be better than ever and as special feature, there will be a Hall of Fame Induction. Please mark your calendars now for this momentous tournament. The next issue of *Down the Line* will include all specifics for the tournament.

QUALIFICATION RULES FOR STATE SINGLE CHAMPIONSHIPS

1. The tournament is open to **Louisiana residents only**.
2. You must have played in at least one LRA sanctioned tournament since March 25, 1998. State Doubles does not count.
3. There is no pre-tournament qualification necessary for junior, senior, or legend divisions.
4. All players must be LRA/USRA members. Renewals are available at the tournament.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING STATE SINGLES PLEASE CALL THE LRA OFFICE AT (504) 468-2813.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS- 1ST QUARTER 1999

KILLSHOT CLASSIC-WORLD GYM, JANUARY 8,9,10, 1999

LANCE NELSON MEMORIAL-COURTYARD ATHLETIC CLUB, FEBRUARY 5,6,7, 1999

MARDI GRAS MADNESS-MANHATTAN ATHLETIC CLUB, FEBRUARY 26,27,28 1999

THESE TOURNAMENTS ARE QUALIFIERS FOR STATE SINGLES

25TH ANNIVERSARY STATE SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIPS- LSU REC CENTER- MARCH 19,20,21, 1999

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