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## NATIONAL DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIPS

FEBRUARY 8-12, 2017 - ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY - TEMPE, AZ

## NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL CHAMPIONSHIPS

MARCH 1-5, 2017 - VETTA SPORTS - ST. LOUIS, MO

## NATIONAL INTERCOLLEGIATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

MARCH 29-APRIL 1, 2017 - LOS CAB SPORTS CLUB - ORANGE COUNTY, CA

## NATIONAL SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIPS

MAY 24-28, 2017 - ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY - TEMPE, AZ

## NATIONAL JUNIOR OLYMPIC CHAMPIONSHIPS

JUNE 21-25, 2017 - IN-SHAPE SPORTS CLUB - STOCKTON, CA

# UnitedHealthcare US OPEN RACQUETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

OCTOBER 4-8, 2017 - LIFE TIME FITNESS - MINNEAPOLIS, MN

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2016 U.S. Junior National Team Training Camp. August 15-20, 2016. United States Olympic Training Center. Colorado Springs, CO. Photo By Jim Hiser. Copyright USA Racquetball.

#### ON THE COVER

The Fall 2016 cover showcases past US Open winners throughout the years as we head into the 21st US Open.

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#### Submissions

Racquetball Magazine welcomes submissions from our members and readers. If you have an idea for an article, propose it by email to: [magazine@usra.org](mailto:magazine@usra.org). All submissions are subject to editing.

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#### Quarterly Production Schedule

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Fall	JUL 1	AUG 1	SEP 30
Winter	OCT 1	NOV 1	DEC 30

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#### Correction from our Summer 2016 Issue:

Pictured: Timmy Hansen, Tim Hansen, and Amy White enjoy the view courtside! Hansen won both his divisions in 2015 (M55+ Singles and Men's Open Doubles), while Timmy and Amy earned the silver medal in Mixed C Doubles.



## USA RACQUETBALL MISSION STATEMENT

*USA Racquetball, recognized by the United States Olympic Committee as the National Governing Body for the sport, is committed to our members and the growth of racquetball from recreational play to international competition.*

## USA RACQUETBALL CORE VALUES

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### NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS & TEAM QUALIFYING

All future national championship details remain tentative until entries are published.

#### 2017 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP DATES

National Doubles: February 8-12, 2017

High Schools: March 1-5, 2017

National Intercollegiates: March 29-April 1, 2017

National Singles: May 24-28, 2017

Junior Olympics: June 21-25, 2017

#### U.S. NATIONAL TEAM QUALIFYING

In an effort to help ensure that the top American racquetball players have an equal and fair opportunity to qualify for the U.S. National Team, USA Racquetball adopted changes to the qualification process beginning with the 2016-17 U.S. National Team.

While the process for qualifying for the Team as a doubles team is generally the same, the singles selection procedure will be determined by performance at three selection events, including:

- UnitedHealthcare US OPEN Pro Division
- U.S. Team Singles Qualifying Division at USA Racquetball National Doubles Championships
- U.S. Team Qualifying Division at USA Racquetball National Singles Championships

To learn more and for complete details, including the process to qualify for Elite Athlete Health Insurance, please visit <http://www.teamusa.org/usa-racquetball/programs/team-usa>.

#### U.S. NATIONAL TEAM QUALIFYING RULE CHANGE EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1, 2016:

**ALL U.S. TEAM QUALIFYING DIVISIONS WILL BE USING THE NEW TWO SERVE RULE THAT WAS RECENTLY ADOPTED BY THE IRF.**



FROM THE  
Executive Director

By Steve Czarnecki  
Executive Director  
USA Racquetball

## National Headquarters

# Thank You, USA Racquetball

**I**t has been an honor and a privilege to help lead USA Racquetball over the past 3+ years. As I step away from the association, I know I will miss working to promote this great sport and its many players. What I will miss most are the people of the sport and the relationships I've formed.

I sincerely hope that I am leaving this organization in a better place than when I joined the team back in early 2013. For instance, I am especially proud of the TEAM USA Challenge campaign that is in its third year of helping galvanize the USA Racquetball family around our National Teams and providing valuable additional support to the team members who devote so much to the sport. I hope this kind of generous support for the Adult and Junior National Teams will continue.

I want to thank the staff, Board members, and volunteers I have partnered with at USA Racquetball. The sport is fortunate to have so many dedicated individuals invested in its success.

I also want to thank each and every member of USA Racquetball. Your participation with the sport's Governing Body means so much more than you may know. As the only charitable non-profit organization working in racquetball on a nation-wide basis, USA Racquetball's sole purpose is to promote and support the sport we love. Membership support is what makes everything USA Racquetball does possible, from conducting national championships, to managing the rankings system, overseeing the rules, assisting event directors, working with court owners, administering the Hall of Fame, and awarding scholarships.

There is a lot of opportunity in Racquetball, and I am certain that USA Racquetball will find the right person to lead the organization toward a bright future.

Personally, I intend to stay involved with racquetball and may even have more time to play going forward. I hope to see you at a local or national tournament at some point down the line. Until then, thank you, best wishes for amazing success, and please never forget that "Together, We Are Racquetball."

• • •

### Editor's Note:

President Thoerner stated, "While USA Racquetball will miss Steve Czarnecki's leadership as Executive Director, we are happy for him as he pursues this next challenge in his career. We wish Steve, Rosanna, and their sons the very best, and our sincere gratitude goes to Steve for his service to USA Racquetball."

# WE ASKED THEY ANSWERED

**A**s the US National Team returned home from the AIRF World Championships in Cali, Colombia, we asked the team a few questions to reflect on their experience and what it means to play for Team USA.



### ROCKY CARSON

*What is your greatest achievement within the sport of racquetball?*

Obviously five World titles rates right up there. Also winning the Pan American games twice and the U.S. Open are big as well. But still one of my most memorable victories was when I won my first outdoor singles title versus Brian Hawkes.



### RHONDA RAJSICH

*What are you most proud of, in or out of the sport?*

I am most proud of who I am and how I am because of the incredible parents that I have. I cannot say enough about what amazing human beings they are and the love and support that they have shown me and the high standards that they set by example. I am so blessed and so grateful for everything I have and all that I may become because of them.



### CHRIS CROWTHER

*This was your first international trip in awhile. From your perspective, has anything changed since the last time you competed?*

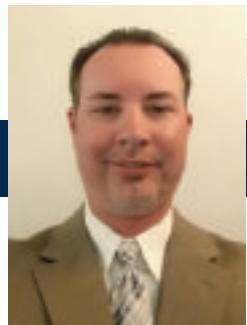
It's been so long it's hard to remember that far back, but aside from being much older, the competition has improved quite a bit. I was impressed with the level of play by many of these young up-and-coming players. It would be nice to see these players compete more in the U.S., as they have lots of potential.



### MICHELLE KEY

*You have been on several international trips now. What's your favorite part of the events?*

My favorite part of traveling international would have to be just the experience overall. Getting to visit new places with all my friends and having Daniel there with me makes it even better.



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Jason Thoerner

# THE FUTURE HOW YOU CAN HELP

As I sit here to write my first article as President, I look back on the past four years to see how far we have come in several areas. Four years ago when I was elected as Vice President, along with Larry Haemmerle as President, we encountered an association that was teetering on the edge financially and stagnant on the programming side due to lack of funding. Under the leadership of President Haemmerle, along with other USA Racquetball Board members, we decided to make some drastic changes to not only the staff but to the way we managed our finances as well.

I am happy to report that just four years later we are in one of the most stable times financially that we have seen since USOC funding disappeared. We have hired an outside accounting firm that has given us a fresh look at how we are operating financially and also an additional layer of impartial oversight. We want our members to be assured that your membership dollars and donations are going to the programs that grow the sport!

With the finances stabilizing, it is now time for us to GROW! We have made two recent staffing additions to help move us toward our goals of reaching out to the recreational players throughout the country as well as to our competitive core.

Nick Irvine will be launching Ambassador/Facility Partnership programs to help establish a connection to every place racquetball is played in the United States. We will be training these Ambassadors how to give a Racquetball 101 class, set up Challenge Ladders, and run USA Racquetball sanctioned leagues, shootouts, and tournaments. Renée Gundolff will be working with our state associations to streamline our renewal and new member processes so that our state association board members can spend more time promoting the game of racquetball and less time handling paperwork. She will also be rolling out a new membership drive starting at the U.S. Open!

Now comes my personal appeal to each of you reading this column to help USA Racquetball GROW! The staff and Board of Directors of USA Racquetball can't achieve the level of success that we have planned without help from our members who are just as passionate about racquetball as we are.

### Here is what you can do to help:

- Visit [USARacquetball.com](http://USARacquetball.com) daily!
- Sign up to become a USA Racquetball Ambassador for your home club.
- Sign up your local club players for the FREE USA Racquetball eMembership or a full membership.
- Introduce or reintroduce at least one person to the game of racquetball this year.
- Renew your membership before it expires!

With your help we can GROW our sport, SAVE our courts, and BUILD our junior, high school, and collegiate programs bigger than ever before. I need each and every one of you reading this (and everyone you know!) to join our cause because:

*Together, We Are Racquetball.*

## WE ASKED TEAM USA THEY ANSWERED

### DOUBLES



#### AIMEE RUIZ

*You have now won three World Championship doubles titles with three different partners. What makes you so successful?*

Being a lefty is a definite plus.

There are not many lefty/righty teams out there, and having a forearm match up against a backhand on the left side can be an advantage. Also, without having great partners over the years, I wouldn't be where I am today. Doubles is a team sport and you have to have 100% faith in the person you are playing with.



#### JANEL TISINGER

*How do you two communicate while playing?*

Aimee and I are already pretty in tune with each other. We both know how to cover each other and be where we need to be. When we are struggling with communication, we vocalize everything out loud. We yell out who's going take the shot. And we make sure to talk in between rallies and during timeouts if need be.



#### JAKE BREDENBECK

*What are the keys to making a successful doubles partnership?*

In my opinion it's communication and understanding. By understanding, I mean in all aspects such as your partner's strengths and weaknesses, who plays what role, where to be on the court, cohesiveness off the court, everything really. It just comes down to working well together as a team.



#### JOSE DIAZ

*Living so far apart, how often are you two able to get together and play?*

The only times we really get to practice is at tournaments. It's not as often as we would like, but we cope with the long distance relationship only playing a couple times a year.



# ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE

WITH YOUR SUPPORT, WE CAN RAISE MORE THAN **\$25,000 FOR THE TEAMS!**

**S**upport the U.S. Adult and Junior National Teams with a tax-deductible contribution today. Your support is vital to the players and coaches as they prepare to represent the United States in international competition. Funds are primarily used for travel expenses, entry fees, and training.

Donations of \$100 or more ... made in 2016 to the TEAM USA CHALLENGE ... *will be doubled* by the group of generous Team Benefactors at right, who have each pledged up to \$2,500 to support the cause. With your support, the USA Racquetball family can raise more than \$25,000 for your U.S. National Teams!

## TEAM USA CHALLENGE BENEFACTORS

*Usher Barnoff • Rick Betts • Steve & Rosanna Czarnecki  
Cheryl Kirk & Kit Lawson • Chris Poucher*

*For the first time under the TEAM USA CHALLENGE, donations will be used to support direct travel costs of U.S. Junior National Team members attending the Junior World Championships!*

## DONOR LEVELS & GIFTS



**\$100** or more will receive an official USA Racquetball Bag Tag and a **Team USA T-shirt**.



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**\$500** or more will receive a Bag Tag and a **Team USA Jacket**.



**\$1,000** or more will receive an exclusive **Team USA Warm Up**.

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# 2016 U.S. National Junior Olympic Championships

Presented By: Penn & Wilson

By Renée Gundolff

**M**ore than 200 of the country's best junior racquetball players convened at the Life Time Fitness-Fridley outside the Twin Cities in June for the USA Racquetball National Junior Olympic Championships. Contested this year for the 43rd time, the Championship serves as the qualification competition for the United States Junior National Team. This November, the U.S. Junior National Team will travel to Mexico for the International Racquetball Federation's Junior World Championships.

Headlining the U.S. Team will be the winners of the Boys and Girls 18 & Under Singles Divisions. Jordan Cooperrider (Palm Harbor, Fla.) came to Minneapolis with a National Championship already in her pocket as she captured the 2016 National High School Girls Singles Title in February in Portland, Ore. At the Junior Olympic Championships, Jordan cruised through the Girls 18 & Under Singles draw dropping only a single game all week long. Coupled with her win in the Girls 18 & Under Doubles Division, Cooperrider now has won 15 Junior Olympic Titles. Partnered with Erika Manilla, she is looking to defend her 2015 World Championships Gold Medal in the Girl's 16 & Under Doubles competition. Jordan is a senior at Palm Harbor University High School.

The 2016 Boys 18 & Under Singles National Champion is Wayne Antone (Eugene, Ore.). Wayne entered the Championship as the No. 4 seed and upset the No. 1 and No. 3 ranked players en-route to his first Junior Olympic singles title. Antone had previously won two Junior Olympic Doubles Championships (2015 – Boys 16 & Under Doubles / 2011 – Boys 12 & Under Doubles). Last year's title earned Antone a spot on the 2015 U.S. Junior National Team where he represented his country at the Junior World Championships in the Dominican Republic. At that international competition, Wayne and his playing partner earned a Silver Medal. Antone is a 2016 graduate of Churchill High School and during his high school career captured two Oregon High School State Championships in the Boys Singles division.



28 STATES  
195+ PLAYERS  
51 DIVISIONS

**MATCHES PLAYED**  
623



**Brook Brew**  
Adriana Ramírez  
San Juan, Puerto Rico  
LARGEST DISTANCE TRAVELED  
2,404 Miles

**Jared Contreras**

10 Years, 2 Months, 3 Days  
10 Years, 1 Month, 3 Days

**Leah Trejo**

**Emma Jones**

10 Years, 2 Months, 14 Days  
10 Years, 4 Months, 24 Days



**Jordan Cooperrider**

**Wayne Antone**



Photos By: Ron Denler

**Penn** **Wilson**



BOYS SINGLES		GIRLS SINGLES	
<b>Champion</b>	<b>Runner-Up</b>	<b>Champion</b>	<b>Runner-Up</b>
18 and Under Wayne Antone	Kevin Vazquez	Jordan Cooperrider	Erika Manilla
16 and Under Jordan Barth	Akul Ramayami	Ingrid Robledo	Briana Jacquet
14 and Under Antonio Rojas	Akul Ramayami	Nikita Chauhan	Heather Mahoney
12 and Under Krish Thakur	Vedant Chauhan	Heather Mahoney	Julia Stein
10 and Under Nikhil Prasad	Benjamin Horner	Kareena Mathew	Ava Kaiser
18 and Under Friendship -	-	Sofia Smith	Unchallenged
14 and Under Friendship Bryce Hansen	Miles Rivera	Marina Kernan	Jadyn Ngo
12 and Under Friendship Ian Weller	Akhhill Durai Nath	Alondra Canchola	Arya Cyril
10 and Under Friendship Joe Merz	DJ Mendoza	Yurae McCallister	Unchallenged
8 and Under Friendship Eshan Ali	Joe Merz	Mollie Hansen	Elizabeth Denler
12 and Under DB Akhhill Durai Nath	Owen Miller	Alondra Canchola	Esha Cyril
10 and Under DB Aditya Pulakuniyil	Gael Trejo	Lillian Ford-Crimi	Kellie Hansen
8 and Under MB Ashan Ali	Gael Trejo	Elizabeth Denler	Mollie Hansen
6 and Under MB Caled Marshall	Cooper Briggs	-	-



Jordan Cooperrider -  
Champion Girls 18 & Under  
Singles & Doubles  
Photo By: Steve Czarnecki

BOYS DOUBLES		GIRLS DOUBLES	
<b>Champions</b>	<b>Runners-Up</b>	<b>Champions</b>	<b>Runners-Up</b>
18 and Under Jake Birnel/Mauro Rojas	Jordan Barth/Justus Benson	Jordan Cooperrider/Erika Manilla	Daniela Torres/Karina Quintanilla
16 and Under Dane Elkins/Ricardo Diaz	Julian Singh/Mitchell Turner	Ingrid Robledo/Briana Jacquet	Adriana Ramirez/Frances Vasquez
14 and Under Akul Ramayani/Antonio Rojas	Jay Ferrer/Nick Birnel	Elena Dent/Nikita Chauhan	Hannah Carver/Megan Carver
12 and Under Vedant Chauhan/Josh Shea	Andrew Gleason/Timmy Hansen	Julia Stein/Heather Mahoney	Elena Mathew/Kareena Mathew
10 and Under Nikhil Prasad/Gatlin Sutherland	Benjamin Horner/Krish Maini	Ashlyn Carver/Ava Kaiser	Sonya Shetty/Yurae McCallister
14 and Under Friendship Pierce Jacoby/Ian Weller	Carter Johnson/Suchith Palyam	-	-
10 and Under Friendship Braden Dall/Joe Merz	Unchallenged	-	-



#### MIXED DOUBLES

<b>Champions</b>	<b>Runners-Up</b>
18 and Under Brady Yelverton/Hollie Scott	Daniela Torres/Gavin Usher
16 and Under Briana Jacquet/Ben Baron	Unchallenged
14 and Under Nick Birnel/Megan Carver	Rei McCormick/Lucas Shoemaker
12 and Under Ava Kaiser/Owen Forsythe	Elena Mathew/Matther Currier
10 and Under Joseph Marshall/Kareena Mathew	Owen Hickman/Raina Hartman

For complete results visit <http://www.r2sports.com/tourney/viewResults.asp?TID=14389>

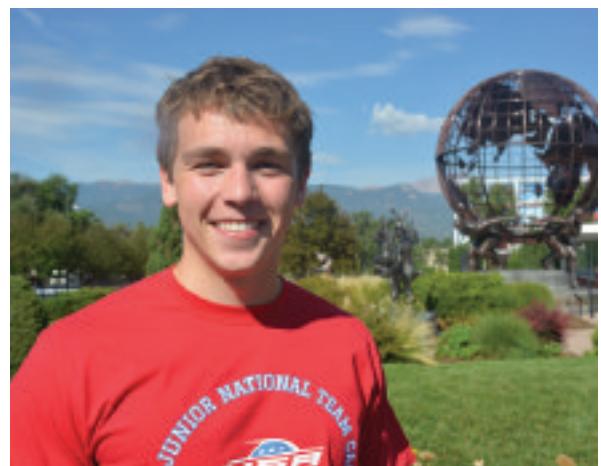
## 2016 USA RACQUETBALL JUNIOR ALL-AMERICANS

Wayne Antone	Elena Mathew
Jordan Barth	Kareena Mathew
Justus Benson	Yurae McCallister
Jake Birnel	Nikhil Prasad
Nick Birnel	Karina Quintanilla
Ashlyn Carver	Akul Ramayani
Hanna Carver	Adriana Ramirez
Megan Carver	Annie Roberts
Nikita Chauhan	Ingrid Robledo
Vedant Chauhan	Joey Rohlwing
Jordan Cooperrider	Antonio Rojas
Elena Dent	Mauro Rojas
Ricardo Diaz	Hollie Scott
Dane Elkins	Josh Shea
Jay Ferrer	Sonya Shetty
Andrew Gleason	Julian Singh
Maddie Hansen	Julia Stein
Timmy Hansen	Gatlin Sutherland
Raina Hartman	Krish Thakur
Benjamin Horner	Sahil Thakur
Briana Jacquet	Daniela Torres
Ava Kaiser	Mitchell Turner
Heather Mahoney	Frances Vasquez
Krish Maini	Kevin Vazquez
Erika Manilla	Graciana Wargo



Photos By: Ron Denler

# 2016 USA National Junior Training Camp



TOP: Coaches Nick Montalbano, Kelani Bailey, Cheryl Gudinas, Jody Nance, and Adam Manilla  
LEFT: Girls Team Captain: Erika Manilla  
MIDDLE: Boys Team Captain: Wayne Antone  
BOTTOM: Team Camp Tournament MVP Jake Birnel  
Photos By USA Racquetball/Jim Hiser

Members of and alternates for the 2016 Junior National Team were invited to the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs in August to prepare for the 2016 Junior World Championships. Held during the 2016 Rio Olympic Games, the athletes experienced the rare opportunity of being at the Olympic Training Center during the Games, training next to Paralympians preparing for their journey to Rio.

The sixteen athletes who attended were put through an intense camp, consisting of 6 hours of practice per day at the Pikes Peak YMCA in downtown Colorado Springs. They also participated in daily runs: a 3-mile morning run around Prospect Lake at Memorial Park, a run up the infamous Incline in Manitou Springs, and a grueling simulation run. Conditioning was an emphasis of this camp, as Colorado Springs sits only 200 feet lower in elevation than San Luis Potosí, Mexico, host of the 2016 Junior World Championships. The Coaching Staff (Cheryl Gudinas, Jody Nance, Nick Montalbano, Adam Manilla, Kelani Bailey, and Jim Hiser) simulated the high elevation conditions as closely as possible. In the evenings, players attended lectures facilitated by the coaching staff.

Team Captains Wayne Antone and Erika Manilla, winner of the Girls' Team Camp Tournament, were elected by their fellow team members, while Jake Birnel, winner of the Boy's Team Camp Tournament, was named the Camp MVP. Both Erika and Wayne look forward to leading this strong team in Mexico.

## 2016 WORLD TEAM ROSTER

Wayne Antone	Ricardo Diaz	Antonio Rojas
Jake Birnel	Dane Elkins	Mauro Rojas
Nikita Chauhan	Briana Jacquet	Sahil Thakur
Jordan Cooperrider	Erika Manilla	Mitchell Turner
Elena Dent	Ingrid Robledo	Kevin Vazquez

## 2016 ESPRIT TEAM ROSTER

Vedant Chauhan	Nikhil Prasad
Benjamin Horner	Josh Shea
Ava Kaiser	Julia Stein
Heather Mahoney	Gatlin Sutherland
Kareena Mathew	Krish Thakur

\*\*The World and Esprit Team Rosters represent those athletes that will be representing Team USA at the upcoming IRF Junior World Championships in San Luis Potosí, Mexico.



# EXTREME PASSION

MARIA JOSE VARGAS

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HEAD PRO Players may play with different racquets from the model shown.

Pro players in many sports are wined, dined, and raking in large amounts of money. But just ask any pro racquetball player and you may hear a different story. Unless you are #1-3 in the world, many times you are left scrambling for table scraps.

Not in the case of #6-ranked men's professional International Racquetball Tour player (IRT) Jansen Allen, who has taken a different approach on the pro circuit. Allen earned both his bachelor's and master's degrees before going on tour full time.

He's had success, winning college titles, state titles, and a gold and silver medal at the 2015 Pan American Games in Toronto, on his 25th birthday no less. Some would say he's achieved success, but gold and silver medals don't pay the bills for the guy from Rice, Texas, a small town just outside Corsicana about 50 miles south of Dallas. He recently made the move to Dallas, right in the heart of downtown.

"Playing in Texas all of my life has really been great for me," Allen said. "There are so many players here, especially in the North Texas area. Living in Dallas has really been good for me. Anytime I want to play there is always someone at the gym. Coming from a small town, it is nice to see so many people playing all the time. I have met a lot of new people since moving to Dallas a year ago, and the move has definitely been worth it for me."

Texas is chock full of tournaments, players, and gyms, giving Allen a chance to play in his home state and in front of family and friends in Dallas, San Antonio, Houston, Austin, and Wichita Falls, to name a few.

"Most all of the tournaments I play in are out of state, so it is always nice to be able to drive to a few here and there," he said. "Playing in Texas also gives my family a chance to come support me. My dad and I have a great relationship. He has always been very supportive and has always wanted to see me succeed."

"I have an amazing support team: my mom, stepdad, brother, fiancée, sponsors, Texas racquetball, and so many friends here in Texas that I am so thankful for."



# JANSEN ALLEN

MAKING MARK WITH A DIFFERENT APPROACH

By Dale Gosser

However, one place stands out among all of his Texas stops – Arlington's historic Maverick Athletic Club. Arlington may be home to the Dallas Cowboys and Texas Rangers, but it's also home to numerous tournaments every year, including the Texas State Singles Championships.

"I started playing at the Maverick when I was really young, and I still enjoy playing over there," Allen said. "[Owner] Bob Sullins and [Program Director] Leo Vasquez have always been big supporters of racquetball and without them Texas racquetball definitely would not be the same as it is today."

Vasquez watched Allen grow from a high level junior player to the pro he is today.

"When I first think of Jansen, I also think of his mom and dad, Jim and Debra, who were the ones who supported him and took him to all of these tournaments throughout Texas and across the country as well," Vasquez said. "Watching him rise to the top of the pro rankings was fun to watch, especially since he grew up with our Texas racquetball family."

"Jansen hasn't forgotten where he came from either, as he also travels to the USAR Junior Olympics and coaches the kids at the event all week. How many other kids can say their coach is one of the top players in the world?"

Allen's family has always been supportive. You can find his father, coach, confidante, etc., Jim Allen, at many tournaments. Although his father does not stand out from the crowd with his quiet and unassuming demeanor, he is always there during his son's matches to help with strategy during critical points.

Before he left for the Pan American Games, Allen's hometown newspaper, the Corsicana Daily Sun, published an article in which his family spoke about his progression from a top junior player to where he is today. It's not surprising Allen turned out to be a great player, considering his parents met playing racquetball.

"Back in the '80s in the U.S., that was racquetball's heyday. Racquetball was huge and there were tournaments all over," Jim



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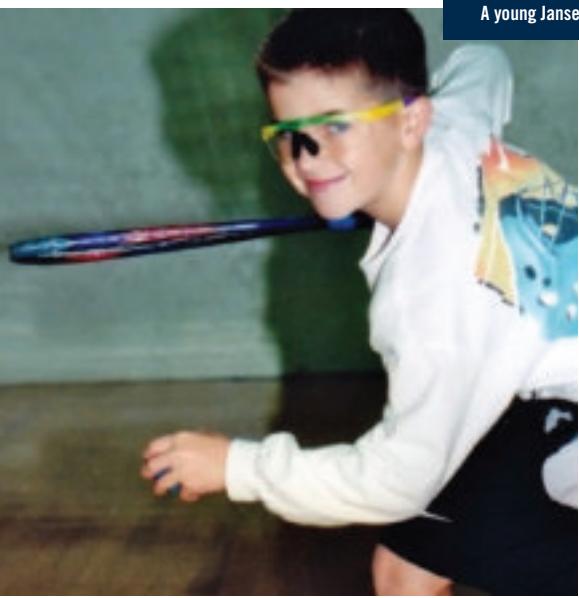
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Allen, with his close friend and agent Patrick Sanchez, second from right, along with Sanchez's co-workers Steve Ferguson, left and Ray Ballaro who came out to support Allen at a clinic.  
Photo By: Patrick Sanchez

Allen told the Daily Sun. "Before aerobics came along and everyone started running, and before the spinning classes, racquetball was a huge issue."

Debra Schneider, Allen's mother, ran racquetball tournaments, and that's how she and Jim met. They were both active in the sport when the Corsicana YMCA ran tournaments. Both played racquetball and wanted to share their passion with their children. Both sons — Jordan, now 29, and Jansen — learned the game when they were young.

By the time Allen was 10 years old, he was playing in tournaments in the C and D divisions against opponents three and four times his age.

"They couldn't get over how good he was," Schneider told the newspaper.

"Yeah," said Jim. "Some guys didn't like it. It was funny watching him playing guys who were 30, 40 and him beating them."

"Some of the guys got mad when [Jansen] would beat them 15-1, 15-1," Jordan Allen said in the article. "They would say, 'That kid!' I played in tournaments, too, but he was just that good, he beat everybody."

### WHO IS PATRICK SANCHEZ?

In 2015, another person entered Allen's racquetball world — Patrick Sanchez. Sanchez is behind the scenes and not often well known by other racquetball players. The question, "Who is Patrick Sanchez?" is often heard around the courts. Allen can best answer that question.

"I met Patrick at Texas State Singles in 2015. Dr. Mike Gray (Allen's chiropractor and one of his sponsors) introduced me to Patrick about possibly taking some lessons from me, and ever since then we just became great friends and he has really been a big part of my success this past year. He and [his wife] Deborah have been so supportive, and I can't thank them enough for that."

Despite knowing each other for fewer than two years, the bond between Sanchez and Allen is evident. At an event at Sanchez's home after Allen returned home from Toronto with the gold and silver medals, Allen became emotional when discussing Sanchez.

"I really feel blessed to have such a great friend like him who helps me out so much," Allen said. "He always takes time out of his schedule to help me out anytime. It's always nice to have someone in your corner at a tournament. It always helps me focus more on playing after traveling all day and running around to get settled in."

Sanchez isn't just Allen's racquetball confidante.

"Jansen and I are not just racquetball buddies," Sanchez said. "We talk or text each other almost every day about racquetball, daily activities, and personal things. We have developed a trust in one another to the point we discuss the strategies on how he plays against top players. I also have a close relationship with his family and his fiancée, Paige."

### A UNIQUE WAY

Despite having a few naysayers a year ago, Allen has come out smelling like a rose on the business end of racquetball. Some might say he's put his business degrees to good work. But sitting in an office all day isn't as appealing to Allen as being a pro racquetball player, traveling the U.S., and internationally winning gold medals. Go figure. He's living every club player's dream right now.

"A lot of people laughed at me when I first posted a year ago on Facebook about having an agent [Sanchez] help me find sponsors," Allen said. "When I met Pat he asked me why I didn't have more sponsors, and at the time I thought what I had was pretty good. I found out pretty quickly that Pat knew what he was doing, and before I knew it, he had already found two sponsorships for me."

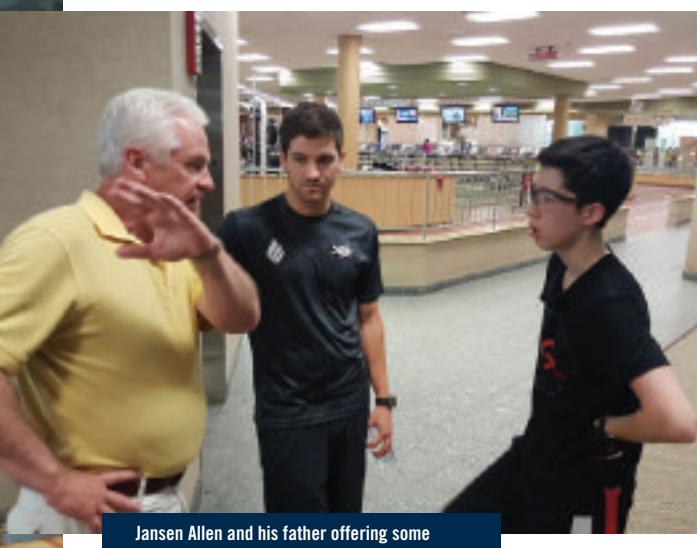
"Patrick's brother professionally raced motorcycles a few years ago, and Pat helped with sponsors. Corona was one of their major sponsors, so he had a background with negotiation and sponsorship-type deals. I do think it helps having someone who can assist in initiating and negotiating sponsorship deals for you. It can be tough as an athlete to handle deals on your own, in my opinion." Sanchez had a plan when he decided to help Allen with sponsors.

"Jansen has a huge support team that helps in a lot of different ways," Sanchez said. "The role I play is getting sponsors for Jansen to take some of the financial burden off him so he can concentrate on playing and not on how will he get there. At the beginning of the 2015-2016 season, I set out to get five sponsors. We got the five sponsors and have a unique relationship with each one."





Jansen Allen and partner Jose Rojas on the podium winning a gold medal at the 2015 Pan American Games. Photo By: Cheryl Kirk



Jansen Allen and his father offering some coaching strategy to fellow Texan Lukas Le at the Junior Nationals this past summer.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

Allen remains young at 26 and has already accomplished so much in his career. He's going to have to set some lofty goals to beat winning medals at the Pan American Games.

"The Pan Am Games was easily the most exciting highlight of my career in racquetball," he said. "That will be a hard one to beat, for sure. Winning a gold medal on my birthday is about as good as it gets. With the Pan Ams only coming around every four years, you never know if you will get the chance again in your career. You have to perform your best when it counts and get a little lucky as well. My family was also there to enjoy the experience with me, and I will definitely remember the Pan Ams the rest of my life."

"Right now I want to keep playing to see how far I can go. I'm lucky enough to have the support of so many sponsors and I want to play as long as I can. I have a master's degree in business, so when my racquetball career is over I feel confident that I can fall back on that."

## PLAYING THE TOUR

Reaching the top 10 on the IRT is a goal many professionals seek to achieve. But make no mistake, Allen isn't satisfied with the No. 6 ranking he maintained all season.

"Of course I am happy to be in the top 8 on the IRT, but I really feel like I have the ability to be even better. I feel like I have made it to No. 6 really just on athletic talent and my experience playing racquetball over the years. It takes hard work both mentally and physically, and I think if I can continue to improve in both of those areas of my game, then I can move up even higher in the rankings."

Many players come straight out of high school and attempt to play the tour; however, Allen took the college route so goals were slightly different than most.

"When I first started playing the tour, I was just coming out of college so I really didn't have much of a ranking on the IRT. My goal was to be in the top 12. It took me a full year of playing the tour to really boost my ranking into the top 12. From there, I just chipped away and before I knew it I was in the top 10 and then the top eight."

## GIVING BACK

In his spare time, Allen keeps busy by conducting lessons and continuing to promote the sport he loves.

"I try to give back to the sport as much as I can, especially during the off-season," Allen said. "I play at some of the local clubs here in Dallas with a lot of the local recreational players, and they just



Photo By Jansen Allen

love it. I play people who would never get the chance to be on the court with a pro, and that really means a lot to them."

This is also my second year helping Junior Team Texas at Junior Nationals, and I really have a lot of fun with that. The kids really look up to me, and I am happy to help in any way I can."

**Dale Gosser** is the Ektelon Regional Advisor for North Texas and racquetball coordinator for Life Time Fitness in Mansfield, Texas. He is the managing editor for the Cleburne Times-Review and Johnson County News newspapers as well as Community Life Magazine.



MRF Doubles Pro Am at the Pro Kennex Tournament of Champions



The Military Racquetball Federation has been busy and remains committed to promoting racquetball to active service members, veterans, and our disabled service members.

**PORTLAND, OR:** IRT Professionals and MRF Supporters enjoyed the MRF Doubles Pro Am at the Pro Kennex Tournament of Champions (TOC) recently in Portland, Oregon. All proceeds from the event went to the Racquetball Rehabilitation Clinic Program. TOC also hosted a wheelchair racquetball exhibition prior to the pro finals Saturday night. Thanks to Wendall Pelham for making this possible.



**SALT LAKE CITY, UT:** MRF recently partnered with the 36th National Wheelchair Games in Salt Lake City to introduce hundreds of wheelchair athletes to racquetball which included a hitting alley and wall. Special thanks to local Utah racquetball volunteers Andrew Gale, Linda and Garrett Tyler, Kevin Day, David Diaz, and Erika Rand as they assisted MRF's Steven Harper, Jack Hughes, and Terry Rogers in getting ready for the event and helping with the demonstration, playing rounds of racquetball with the wheelchair veterans from around the country. These veterans loved the sport of racquetball and were so thankful to be introduced to the sport!

**FORT MEYER, VA:** The MRF hosted a tournament at Fort Myer, Virginia, September 9-11, 2016, which included a special Wreath Laying Ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery.

*All photos by Steven Harper.*

# GEAR BOX

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2016-17

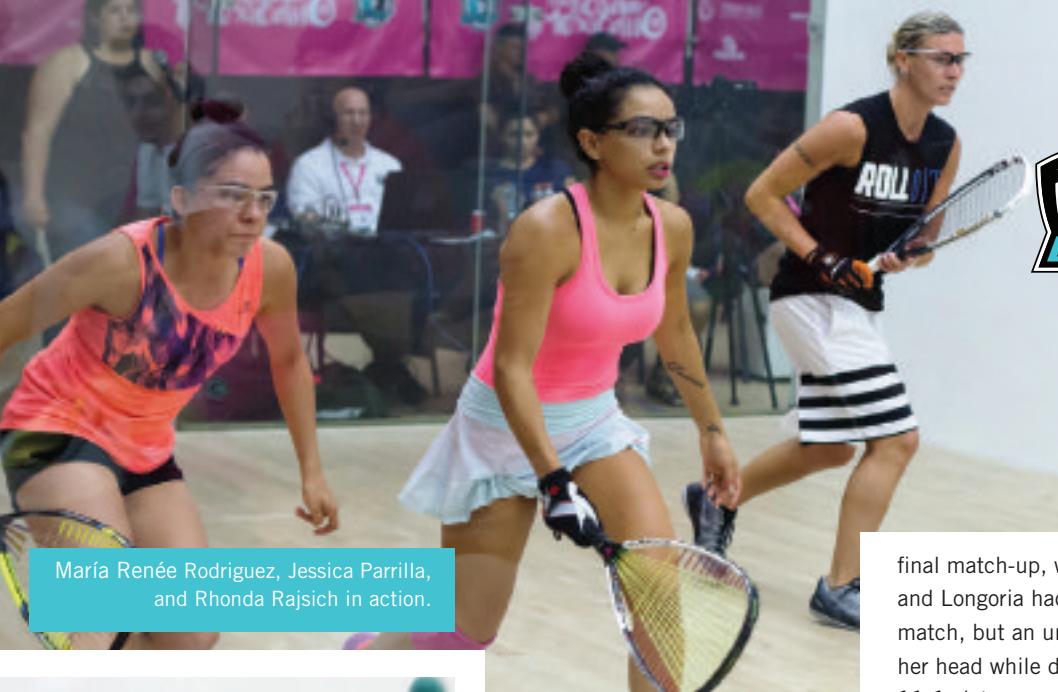
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S E R I E S

P O W E R

C O N T R O L

D U R A B I L I T Y



Maria Renée Rodriguez, Jessica Parrilla, and Rhonda Rajsich in action.



Paola Longoria finished the LPRT Season Ranked #1 for a 5th Consecutive Season.

It was no surprise that Mike Cantu, the Alamo City Racquetball Association, and the rest of the volunteer tournament staff ran another fantastic San Antonio LPRT Tier 1 event. Over 250 amateur players and 33 pros entered, beginning at 7:00 a.m. and ending in the late hours of the night (actually the next morning, 2:30 a.m.!). An honorable mention for this event to Veronica Sotomayor who won her round of 32, round of 16, and quarterfinal matches, all in 5 games. She took out the #24, #5, and #4 ranked players, Monserrat Mejia (Mexico), Samantha Salas Solis (Mexico), and Frédérique Lambert (Canada), along the way. Sotomayor fell short in the semifinals in a highly contested match against Paola Longoria (Mexico).

The “Dare to Dream” Tier 1 event in Stockton, California, supported by the Reaching Your Dream Foundation, was an exceptional tournament hosted by John Ellis and Family. Stockton, which has been known over the years for a few LPRT upsets, did not disappoint. In the round of 16, #12 María Reñee Rodriguez (Guatemala) defeated #5 Sofia Rascon (Mexico), and #10 Carla Muñoz (Chile) defeated #7 Michelle Key (USA). In the quarterfinals, #6 Jessica Parrilla (Mexico) made her first semifinal by defeating #3 Maria Jose Vargas (Argentina). For their fourth Stockton



# 2015 - 2016 End of Season Review

By T. J. Baumbaugh

All Photos By:

Eladio Enrique Jimenez Hernandez

final match-up, where Rhonda Rajsich led the series 2-1, Rajsich and Longoria had another epic five-game battle. It was an exciting match, but an unfortunate incident in the fifth game (Rajsich hit her head while diving for a ball), allowed Longoria to coast to an 11-1 victory.

A Grand Slam in the coastal city of Vera Cruz was the perfect setting to end the season. Tournament Directors of the Tour Rosa Mexicano event treated the players with special gifts, great accommodations, and enthusiastic crowds who cheered them on all weekend. The Grand Slam ended with an edge-of-your-seat five-game final between #4 Frédérique Lambert and #1 Longoria. Longoria prevailed.

## LONGORIA CONTINUES HER STREAK

For the fifth consecutive season, and the seventh overall, Paola Longoria finished at the top of the ranks. She won every Tier 1 and Grand Slam event, with Vera Cruz marking her 71st pro tournament win. She also finished the season as the top-ranked pro doubles player. Her remarkable record does not end with the LPRT; she has made an incredible impression in international competition.

Coach Fran Davis had this to say about coaching Paola: “Paola is an extraordinary athlete and person. She is one of the most accomplished people I know. No matter what she sets her mind to, she accomplishes, from holding the #1 LPRT ranking seven times, winning the US Open six times, being a World Champion five times, a Pan American Champion four times, as well as finishing her Bachelor of Science Degree in Engineering in Mechanical and Administration and a Masters Degree in Political Science. All of this does not come without commitment, dedication, work ethic, and just sheer will to be the best in whatever she tackles.”

Paola’s Team Surrounding Her: Fran Davis (Technical and Strategic Coach), Efrain Lara (Personal Trainer), Magaly Zeron (Sports Psychologist), Amando (Masseuse), Victor (Doctor), and Betty (Nutritionist). We all work together to keep Paola focused on the task at hand.

“We have a great relationship and it starts and ends there. We believe in each other, we respect one another, we trust in one another, and we are truthful with each other. And this goes for her whole team, because Paola wouldn’t have it any other way.... Together Everyone Accomplishes More.”



PAOLA LONGORIA  
#1 RANKED PLAYER  
IN THE WORLD

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# FRÉDÉRIQUE LAMBERT



## Goal Oriented & Accomplished

By T. J. Baumbaugh

All Photos By: Eladio Enrique Jimenez Hernandez

**A:** I have heard this a couple times over the years, so I will start to believe it! Actually, I do agree, I don't play by the book. I like to take a risk, and I am willing to live or die with some shots. I take shots that I feel comfortable making even though they might not be the best choice. I think my style has evolved a lot since I started playing. When I was younger, I was trying to roll out anything and everything, but over the years I have learned to be a little more patient (I probably hit about five ceilings a match now!). I also developed some soft hand shots ("touchies") at the front of the court. I just loved watching Corey Osborne play when he would make those shots, so I asked him if he could teach me how to hit them since I thought it could be a great addition to my game.

**Q:** Do you set any racquetball goals? What about school/career?

**A:** Be the best doctor and racquetball player ever! No seriously, it's hard to set goals, because I don't know how many more years I will be able to play competitively. For now I am just enjoying every minute of it while it lasts. I would like to win a stop before I retire and finish the LPRT Season ranked in the Top 3.



Frédérique Lambert interviewed after her semifinal victory in Vera Cruz, Mexico.

**A**nother talented player with a successful 2015-2016 finish took some time to answer a few on and off-court questions. **Frédérique Lambert** (CAN) ended the season ranked #4 while also attending medical school full time. She is one of the most interesting players to watch, and she is a rising success on the LPRT.

**Q:** How has going to medical school impacted your racquetball career?

**A:** Medical school has had a big impact on my racquetball career. I have classes almost every day from 8:00 a.m. (anybody who knows me knows how I hate getting up before 11:00 a.m.) until 4:00 p.m. When I get home, I am tired but I still have to get reading and studying done, so it has changed my training schedule a lot. I don't practice on the court as much, but I try to get the most out of each of my practices. I also started going to the gym twice a week, since the gym is a lot closer to my house than the racquetball courts, which I think was so helpful this past season. I feel better on the court and my shoulder doesn't hurt anymore, so medical school does have one advantage over my racquetball career.

**Q:** What type of medical doctor would you like to be?

**A:** I would like to be an anesthesiologist or an ER/trauma doctor. I like the adrenaline and the fact that you don't do the same thing every day.

**Q:** You have what I would call a very different style of game with some unique shot choices. Would you agree? How has your style evolved since you started playing?

**Editor's Note:** At press time, Frédérique accomplished one of these goals by winning the first event of the 2016-2017 Season in Atlanta, Georgia. Congrats, Frédérique!

Vera Cruz, Mexico Women's Pro Doubles  
Champions & Finalists: Samantha Salas,  
Paola Longoria, María Renée Rodriguez, and  
Frédérique Lambert

**Q:** Do you work with any players or coaches at home in Montréal?

**A:** I have been working with Michel Gagnon since I started playing (when I was 8 years old). Josée Grand'Maître and my dad also helped me a lot when I was younger. I am also very lucky to have really good male players in Montréal like Vincent Gagnon, Francis Guillemette, Samuel Murray, Pedro Castro, and many others who are nice enough to play with a girl! I wouldn't be where I am without them.

**Q:** Do you have a favorite moment or experience in racquetball?

**A:** I think we are so fortunate in racquetball to be able to travel and meet a lot kind-hearted people who are so passionate about racquetball, so it would be hard to choose only one favorite moment, but I think beating Paola in New Jersey (March 2015) is hard to top. Since New Jersey is driving distance from Montréal, my coach, my best friend Michèle Morissette, and Nicolas Bousquet (who has been like a little brother to me) came down with me to this tournament, and it was so amazing to see the happiness on their faces after I won. It was a great moment when my coach hugged me and started crying with me. It was the result of many years of hard work.

**Q:** Did you play any other sports?

**A:** I played tennis from ages 8 to 13. Probably where the overheads are coming from! Funny fact, I actually played with Eugenie Bouchard who is now on the WTA and doing pretty good! I decided when I was 13 that I wanted to pursue a professional sport career, so I focused on racquetball.



## Event Schedule



DATES	TOURNAMENT NAME	LOCATION	TIER
October 5-9, 2016	UnitedHealthcare US OPEN	Minneapolis, MN	Grand Slam
October 28-30, 2016	Boston Open	Boston, MA	Tier 1
November 4-6, 2016	The Paola Longoria Invitational	Monterrey, Mexico	Grand Slam
November 18-20, 2016	KipSplat Open	Bremerton, WA	Tier 1
December 9-11, 2016	Christmas Classic	TBD	Tier 1
January 27-29, 2017	Mercedes-Benz of Cincinnati Pro Am	Cincinnati, OH	Tier 1
February 17-19, 2017	Winter Classic	Overland Park, KS	Tier 1
March 3-5, 2017	New Jersey Open	Warren, NJ	Tier 1
March 31-April 2, 2017	WOR - AZ WOR VII	Glendale, AZ	Outdoor Satellite
April 21-23, 2017	Battle at the Alamo	San Antonio, TX	Tier 1
June 2-4, 2017	TBD	Merida, Yucutan	Grand Slam



# INTERNATIONAL UPDATE

## XVIII IRF RACQUETBALL WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP



by Cheryl Kirk | US TEAM LEADER

Rocky Carson | Gold Medal  
Men's Singles  
Photo by: Cheryl Kirk

The IRF World Championship is held every other year and determines World Champions in both singles and doubles. Players from 20 countries (four continents) competed in Cali, Colombia. Countries represented were Argentina, Bolivia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, England, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Puerto Rico, United States, and Venezuela.

Club Cañasgordas Comfenalco Cali was the competition venue. Boasting eight courts total, six were concrete with glass back walls, another (the streaming court) had a glass right side and back wall, and another stadium court had glass on both sides as well as the back wall. The club was open air, so the occasional (very large) butterfly, et al., joined the players on the courts.

The competition began with a qualifying round robin/pool play format, Saturday-Monday, followed by a main draw (seeding based on each player's performance over the first three days) with Olympic format dropdown divisions. All participants, regardless of where they finished, received points that were put toward their overall country total.

The U.S Team consisted of four-time defending champion Rocky Carson (California), Chris Crowther (California), Rhonda Rajsich (Arizona), and Michelle Key (Arizona), all playing singles, plus doubles teams Jake Bredenbeck (Minnesota)/Jose Diaz (California) and Aimee Ruiz (New Jersey)/Janel Tisinger (California). Our Head Coach and Assistant Coach also hail from California -- Dave Ellis and Debbie Tisinger-Moore -- and Brent Huff (Athletic Trainer) and Cheryl Kirk (Team Leader) both call Illinois home.

### BEHIND THE SCENES...

All delegation members left early Wednesday morning and 91.67% arrived at the Cali Airport on schedule where shuttles transported them the 60 minutes to the hotel. Rocky Carson had an inordinately difficult time getting there, however. Starting with insane traffic at LAX, and a three-minute late check-in, they wouldn't let him get on the plane. Horrible! Didn't they know whom they were dealing with? He's ROCKY CARSON! Rocky persisted and finally arrived on Friday morning, weary but in excellent spirits as usual.

Then there was the luggage situation. Dave Ellis and Jose Diaz arrived just fine, but their luggage didn't. The bags were finally located, but they didn't arrive until Saturday morning. Jose depended upon clothing and equipment loans for practice, and Dave was able to secure enough practice balls from the other countries since the 45 he brought remained in transit throughout the practice time period.



Team USA Saying Their Goodbyes at the Airport.  
Photo courtesy of: Cheryl Kirk



Team USA on the podium.  
Photo by: Cheryl Kirk

Ah, such is travel abroad. But we had fun practicing and shopping. Dave related:

"It was quite an experience shopping for the team. Team Leader Cheryl charged more than half a million pesos to her credit card at a grocery store in the mall adjacent to the hotel. Happily, the exchange rate was around 3000 Colombian pesos to 1 U.S. dollar, so that figured out to be around \$200. After purchasing three grocery carts mostly of water, three store employees wheeled the carts around the hotel to the front entrance. What a scene!"

### MEETINGS AND CEREMONIES

On Friday, after the Coaches meeting where rules and logistics were discussed and the draws were distributed, the Opening Ceremonies took place at Unicentro Mall across from the hotel. Country delegations made the walk together and queued up in the mall awaiting the announcement for each country to proceed into the atrium where hundreds were witnessing the proceedings. Populating the head table were Tim Doyle (E-Force), Cheryl Kirk (IRF), Juan Manuel Gutiérrez (Colombian Racquetball Federation), Sr. Mauricio Rivas (local dignitary), Luke St. Onge (IRF), and Fernando Ivan Cabal (Cali Local Organizing Committee). After short speeches of welcome and congratulations were delivered, the athletes' and referees' oaths were taken, Colombian children danced the salsa for the entertainment of the crowd, and this event was declared officially open!

### THE FINALS

After days of round robin and Olympic format competition, suddenly it was Finals Saturday! In the Women's Singles final, Paola Longoria of Mexico and Ana Gabriela Martinez of Guatemala battled for the Gold. Longoria took the match with scores of 15-12, 15-5. We can't wait to see what the future holds for Gaby, the Women's Singles silver medalist. At 16 years old, her adventure is just beginning.

The remaining three finals matches were face-offs between the U.S. and Mexico. Coach Dave Ellis provided blog commentary that aptly describes the energy and hype of those final hours at IRF Worlds:

"Rocky Carson faced frequent pro tour rival Daniel De La Rosa. The two competed frequently throughout the year, but now, in Cali, Colombia, it was a different setting. Both players have excellent anticipation and 'retrieve-ability', resulting in numerous extraordinarily long rallies in a court that many players described as a sauna. The match went tiebreaker, and the game saw Rocky continuing with his variety of Z serves with only a rare jam serve. His returns were excellent throughout, and the four-time defending champion now has earned his fifth! As Team USA Coach, I want to say that I have tremendous admiration for Rocky's achievement. He will have been IRF World Champion from 2008-2018, and to emphasize this feat, I'll mention that 37-year old Carson was able to defeat 23-year-old De La Rosa. Don't count Rocky out for win #6 in 2018.

"Jake and Jose faced defending champions Alvaro Beltran and Javier Moreno of Mexico. Beltran gave our Jose Diaz a lot of tough nick serves off the right side, eliciting weak returns that put us at a disadvantage during the rallies. Jose, with the score at 3-9, went to the box and scored 9 straight points with absolutely excellent right side wallpaper. Now up 12-9, the guys couldn't hold the lead. Throughout the rest of the first game, and throughout the second, Javier/Alvaro had the advantage and won in two games.



Rhonda and one of her many fans.  
Photo by Cheryl Kirk

## RESULTS

### US TEAM RESULTS

**Men's Singles** – Rocky Carson - Gold

**Men's Doubles** – Jake Bredenbeck and Jose Diaz – Silver

**Women's Doubles** – Aimee Ruiz and Janel Tisinger - Gold

**US Men's Team** – Gold

**US Women's Team** – Silver

**US Overall Team** – Silver

### INTERNATIONAL RESULTS

Gold; Silver; Bronze; Bronze (in PARC and IRF events, both semifinals places receive bronze medals)

**Men's Singles:** Rocky Carson (USA); Daniel De La Rosa (Mexico); Conrado Moscoso (Bolivia); Samuel Murray (Canada)

**Women's Singles:** Paola Longoria (Mexico); Ana Gabriela Martinez (Guatemala); Maria Jose Vargas (Argentina); Samantha Salas (Mexico)

**Women's Doubles:** Aimee Ruiz/Janel Tisinger (USA); Paola Longoria/ Samantha Salas (Mexico); Adriana Riveros/Jenny Daza (Bolivia); Frédérique Lambert/Jennifer Saunders (Canada)

**Men's Doubles:** Javier Moreno/Alvaro Beltran (Mexico); Jake Bredenbeck/ Jose Diaz (USA); Carlos Keller/Kadim Carrasco (Bolivia); Alejandro Herrera/ Sebastian Franco (Colombia)

**Women's Team:** Mexico; USA; Guatemala; Canada

**Men's Team:** USA; Mexico; Bolivia; Canada

**Overall Team (Combined):** Mexico; USA; Bolivia; Canada



Coach Dave Ellis, Rocky Carson, & Assistant Coach Debbie Tisinger

Photo By Cheryl Krik

# ROCKY CARSON

## A DECADE OF DOMINANCE

**W**ith his latest accomplishment of winning five straight Singles titles in the biennial IRF World Championships, along with his back-to-back Pan American Games Singles Gold Medals, Carson has cemented his legacy as the most decorated man in the history of international competition

"To cap off the event, Aimee and Janel faced off against rivals Paola Longoria and Samantha Salas of Mexico. This rivalry had become more intense with the Mexican players having defeated our ladies in 2014 in Burlington, Canada. The match was back and forth throughout, with the emotion so intense in the room that you could almost cut it with a knife. With the match going tiebreaker, our ladies immediately went down 3-0. Fighting back, with high lob nick serves by Aimee to Paola that pinned her in the back of the court, and with low lob wallpaper by Janel, our gals fought back to a 10-4 lead. The last point is many times the toughest to come by, and this was no exception. Paola's coach, Fran Davis, refusing to lose, had Samantha serve Z's from the left side to Aimee. She did score a couple of points but then Aimee adapted. Our ladies went through at least four tries with no success. Finally, Aimee hit a perfect down the line pass on the left side that did not come off the back wall, and the victory was ours. Most of the on-lookers called this an upset. Not in my mind, as I had the benefit of knowing of their intense pre-match preparation, along with their awesome talent.

"Our players give 100% on the court, and they do so away from their families for eleven days. Nearly all are pro players who compete in many tournaments during the season, and it is admirable and so appreciated that they sacrifice themselves to play for their country. Next up for the U.S. Adult Team will be the Pan American Championships in April of 2017. The site will be the Indoor Club in Costa Rica. Go Team USA!"

When asked how it felt watching Aimee and Janel win the Gold, Assistance Coach Debbie Tisinger-Moore replied, "Amazing! A dream come true! Not only because I was the U.S. Assistant Coach, but I got to coach Janel and Aimee to a World Championship. As a mom, I couldn't be prouder! That moment rates pretty high on my "best moments list!"



Men's Doubles vs. Korea  
Photo by: IRF/Tim Baghurst



Women's Doubles Final  
Photo by: IRF/Tim Baghurst

Women's Doubles | Awards Ceremony  
Photo by: Cheryl Krik

# THANK YOU



Chris Crowther vs. Tim Baghurst  
Photo by: IRF/Tim Baghurst

## IRF WORLD CONGRESS

Every two years at the IRF World Championship, delegates from the countries in attendance meet to approve minutes, hear reports, receive updates, elect Board members, discuss rule changes, etc.

One rule change in particular was the vote to go to two serves vs. one serve for all players in all IRF divisions. This is consistent with the IRT, WRT, LPRT, NMRA, and WSMRA, not to mention USA Racquetball. This and a few other rule changes will go into effect September 1, 2016.

Elected to four-year seats on the Board of Directors were Osvaldo Maggi (Argentina), Marcelo Gomez (Costa Rica), Cheryl Kirk (USA), and Juan Manuel Gutiérrez (Colombia). In a short IRF Board meeting after the World Congress adjourned, Osvaldo Maggi was re-elected as President, Marcelo Gomez is Executive Vice President, Cheryl Kirk continues as Secretary, and the Carlos Ruiz was subsequently appointed to the Treasurer position.

## AMERICANS IN COLOMBIA

There were more Americans in Cali than just the twelve in the U.S. Team Delegation. Fran Davis (coaching for Mexico), Tom Travers (coaching for Guatemala), and Sudsy Monchik (coaching for Ecuador) were all there, and it was great to see them participating in the growth of international racquetball.

IRF and Tournament Staff members Luke St. Onge, Gary Mazaroff, Marco Hidalgo, and Timothy Baghurst (with wife Terra-Leigh) were on hand, and there were also a few players who reside in the United States but play for their home countries. Alok Mehta, Aaron Booker, and Sriram Ravindran, to name three, came under that category.

*Team USA wishes to thank several people and organizations that work behind the scenes to support Team USA and the IRF:*

Jonathan and Carolyn Clay of Rollout Racquetball for being Official Apparel Sponsor for USA Racquetball and the U.S. Team.

Personal Touch Travel (Greg and Julia Hayenga) who made our flight reservations and helped out with the Saga of the Lost Luggage.

IRF Sponsors E-Force and Penn for their dedication to the growth of international racquetball.

Tim Baghurst and his lovely assistant/wife Terra-Leigh who videotaped matches and conducted interviews for posting on YouTube. Visit the International Racquetball Federation's Facebook page for more information, and while you're there please "Like" the page. Tim does a wonderful job with the IRF website and social media, and he is the federation's WADA (World Anti-Doping Agency) contact as well.

The Local Organizing Committee (Juan Manuel Gutiérrez and Company) for putting on a fantastic event. The work behind the scenes to pull off a tournament of this magnitude is massive, and they accomplished it in fine style.

The tournament staff (Osvaldo Maggi, Francisco Kurzbard, Gary Mazaroff, Mauro Grandio, Pablo Berriel, et al.)

Pablo Fajre and Laura McCormick for bringing the quarterfinals, semifinals, and finals to racquetball fans around the globe. Gary Mazaroff, Tim Baghurst, and Laura McCormick, great job on the commentary!

The referees who traveled from several countries to provide the happy gift that no player had to ref the next match!

The volunteers helping out the Local Organizing Committee with a variety of tasks at the club are fantastic young people who are eager to talk with and get to know us.

The staff of the NH Royal Cali Hotel who continually served us in the spirit of "Yes! Now, what's the question?"

Leo Vasquez who stopped whatever else he might have been doing as soon as a blog and photos were ready for posting!

For more coverage and photos from this event, go to <http://www.teamusa.org/USA-Racquetball/Features/2016/July/15/2016-IRF-Racquetball-World-Championships>. Full draws and results can be found on [www.internationalracquetball.com](http://www.internationalracquetball.com)

Last but not least, thank you to all the individuals who made contributions large and small...every bit counts! The Team USA Challenge on [www.usaracquetball.com](http://www.usaracquetball.com) provides the opportunity for racquetball players to support the U.S. Adult and Junior Teams with their participation at international competitions. With the Junior Team's upcoming trip to Mexico in November, your donations will be deeply appreciated.

# TOURNAMENT STRINGING FOR JUNIOR PLAYERS

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

**W**hen the topic of tournament stringing for junior players came up, we immediately thought of Jacqueline Paraiso. Jacqueline has worked with junior players throughout her stellar Hall of Fame career, and few people can match her passion for coaching and mentoring youngsters. She was eager to give us her thoughts.

"Juniors aren't as proficient as adults at hitting the ball," she said. "They're not as accurate and they have a harder time getting the ball to the front wall because they haven't learned how to use their core yet." Their string selection needs to reflect that growth and learning process.

Jacqueline currently heads up the Racquetball Kid's Academy for World Gym and just recently created the Racquetball Teen Academy. "I have some teenagers who hit the ball hard who can use a Zyex®-based string like Ashaway's PowerKill®," she said. "But I also have some players as young as four years old who need an even softer string for their arms -- one that also lets them feel the ball coming off the string. For them I recommend a nylon string like one of the SuperKill® models, strung at lower tension so they get more power, but can also feel the ball. Higher tension gives the racquet a more 'boardy' feel, so it's harder for younger kids to know how the ball feels when it comes off the racquet."

Jacqueline also suggests a 16-gauge string for younger juniors because it offers more durability. "They're not accurate with their shots," she said. "They're reaching a lot and not hitting on the sweet spot. So a 17 or 18 gauge string likely will not last as long. They haven't learned to shuffle up to the ball and set correctly, so a lot of the times they're stopping their steps and reaching for it. So in the process of learning to play, I find one of the nylon SuperKills is the best string for them."

"But," she added, "I have some 16 and 17-year olds that I string with the PowerKill and UltraKill®, and they love it. They notice the difference right away. It gives them a little edge. They're older, they're better players. They've been playing longer and hit more accurately in the sweet spot. They have better control and move to the ball better, so I recommend the PK and UK for them."

As for tournament prep, Jacqueline is equally concise: "String the racquet with enough time to practice with it to make sure you're happy with the tension, and the control and power. But definitely have at least three racquets on hand and even bring an extra packet of string in case the tournament stringer doesn't have it."

I know as a professional how important the right string is," she concluded. "If your shot is off by even an inch, another pro can pick that up and really make you pay. And if I'm not comfortable with my racquet, my mental game goes down the tubes. So I want to make sure that I have the right string so I feel good and can play in the now. If your racquet is not the way you like it, your focus is on the racquet, not the game. You get frustrated with your shots and it snowballs pretty quickly. It's not just a little thing."

It's hard to add anything to what Jacqueline said, but if I can summarize, I'd say there are three important considerations for tournament bound junior players in selecting a string:

First, pick a string to complement your style of play, including durability. Racquetball puts a lot of strain on string at the edge of the frame. With such a fast pace and today's open power-oriented stringing patterns, there is a lot of ball-to-string contact close to the frame, especially from 10 o'clock to 2 o'clock. You want a string that is thick enough so it doesn't snap at the frame on mishits, but is as thin as you can possibly use.

Second is design and construction for performance, including power, tension holding, and texture. The harder you hit, the more important it is to use a string with Zyex filaments that hold tension better. You can get good power from nylon, but it loses tension and 'umph' rather quickly for heavy hitters. Adjusting string tension can add power, or help with control. Lower tension increases power, while higher tension improves control. Texture on the string will improve grip and help put a little spin on the ball for your ceiling game, passing shots and pinches.

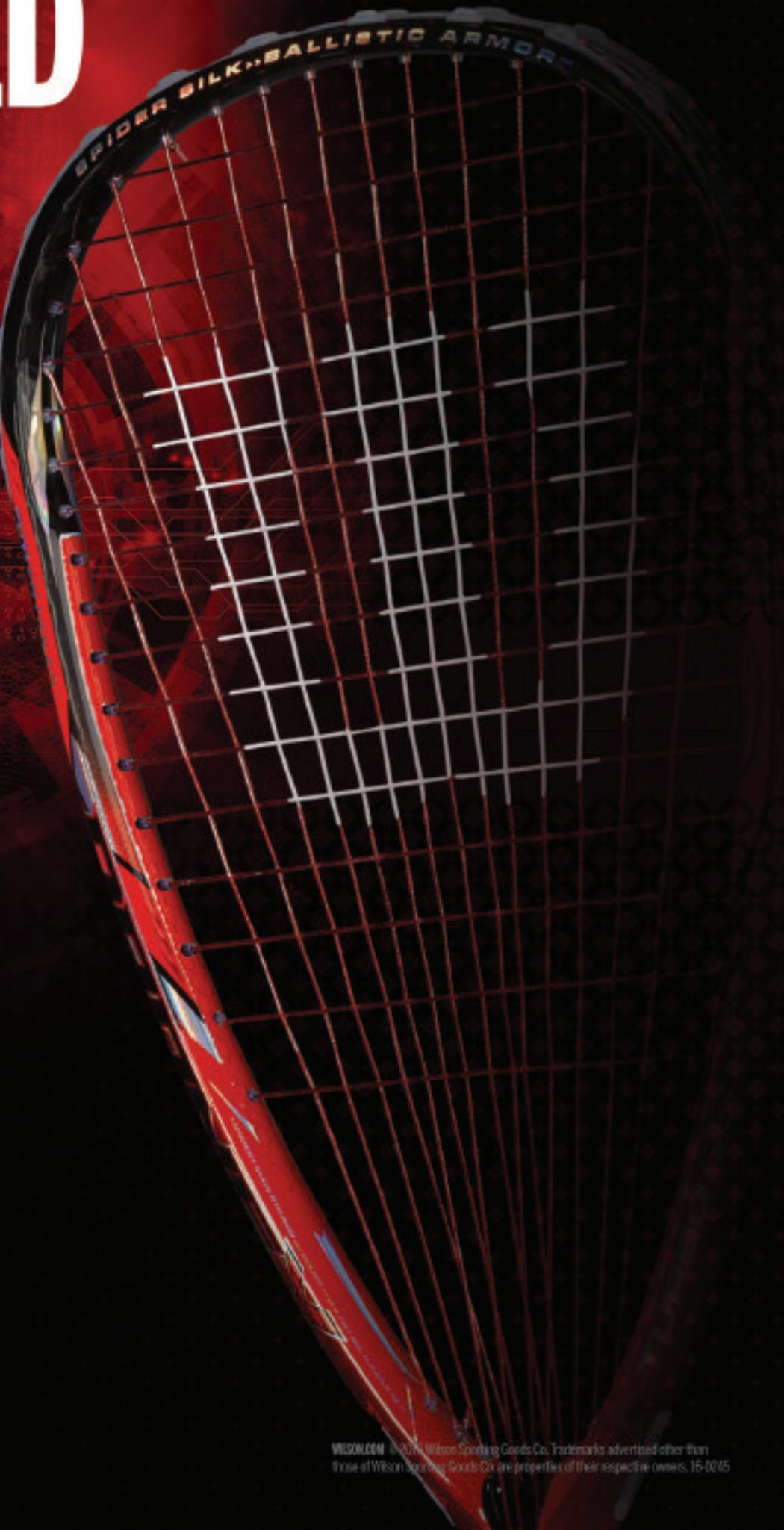
Picking the right gauge and tension is the final consideration. You might be reluctant to use a 16 gauge string, but if you string it a little bit tighter than you might a 17 gauge, you'll probably find that the performance is similar. Conversely, a control player or shot maker who uses a thinner gauge, may want to string at a lower tension to get a little extra power.

For tournaments, it's really important to have consistency in the way you relate to your string setup. This might mean using the same stringer or getting your own stringing machine, but make sure you get that consistency. And Jacqueline is right: be prepared going to tournaments because you won't necessarily know who the stringer is going to be, what kind of machine they use, or how long you'll have to wait for a stringing job. So bring three or four racquets and some extra string. Consistency in string setup is guaranteed to help build your confidence and will likely improve your performance.

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# CONTINUING THE Making of a Champion



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

Okay 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 always complete the "Racquetball Success Triangle" we have previously discussed in *Racquetball Magazine*.

In the Spring 2016 issue, I discussed the basic "Ceiling Ball," a defensive shot. This shot moves the server out of center court and puts them in the most difficult position to score -- the back of the court.

In this issue I am going to discuss the "Higher-Level Ceiling Ball," another defensive shot. When you get into the intermediate and advanced levels of play, you need to have shots to hit when you are off balance, out of position, or returning a tough well-hit low hard serve, as this will buy you time. Your goal is to move your opponent out of the middle and put him in the most difficult position from which to score (the last 3-5 feet of the court), while you regain center court position.

With this information, let's address the four skill areas needed to help make you a more consistent player, a must in developing your championship game.

## Racquetball Skills

### Higher-Level Ceiling Ball Shot

Instead of hitting the basic ceiling shot from chest high to full extension above your head, you will be hitting from low to high, generally waist high and lower. Use the higher-level ceiling shot only when you are off balance or out of position or returning a tough serve. The shot uses the same techniques as the basic ceiling shot except for the following:

Grip: the same

Stance: the same except for the following:

Your knees are bent as much as necessary to push off and lunge at the ball.

Step and Swing: the same except for the following:

1. Your step is big and can be straight ahead or at an angle as you are lunging for the ball.
2. You are bent at the waist as you are reaching forward.
3. The racquet and elbow move quickly to get under the ball.
4. The racquet head is at an angle facing the ceiling/front wall corner because you are now under the ball to get it up to the ceiling.

Contact Point: the same except for the following:

1. In your hitting zone: Ideally, off of lead foot, but the contact point can be anywhere since you are off balance and reaching, lunging desperately just to save the point and keep the ball alive. Ball is contacted approximately ankle to waist high.
2. On the ceiling: The same as the basic ceiling ball shot 5-8 feet back from the front wall, but ball contact can be anywhere.

Follow-Through: The same as a regular follow through -- try to make sure your racquet comes around, at least beyond your hitting arm's shoulder, as best as possible. The one thing you do not want to do is poke the ball, where the racquet does not go beyond your hitting arm shoulder and stays inches from where you made contact with the ball.

## Mental Skills

### Higher-Level Ceiling Ball Drills

#### Toss, Turn, Shuffle, and Hit

1. Stand square to the front wall in the down and ready position in the middle of the court, with feet more than shoulder-width apart, knees bent, waist slightly bent, shoulders level, and weight on the front part of the foot, ready to push off.

2. Toss the ball up from different distances at 35, 30, 25, and 20 feet. Let's use 35 feet as an example.

3. Stand at 35 feet and toss the ball low, approximately ankle high or lower, and far away from you. In the beginning, toss it forward; as you get better, toss the ball even with you, and finally toss the ball slightly behind you.

4. Cross over (by pivoting on the heel of the foot on the side you are turning or crossing over to) and lunge and reach, getting under the ball, and hit to the ceiling.

5. Practice only one shot at a time, 15 or 20 times, and keep track.

6. Practice different shots, tossing the ball forward, even with, and then behind you, 15 or 20 times, and keep track.

7. Repeat the sequence for 30, 25, and 20 feet.

## Set Up and Hit

1. Set the ball up from different distances 35, 30, 25, and 20 feet. Let's use 35 feet as an example.

2. Stand at 35 feet and hit the ball low off the front wall and far away from you. In the beginning, hit it forward; as you get better, hit the ball even with you, and finally hit the ball behind you.

3. You want to judge the ball so that when it comes off the front wall, you know where it is going so you can get there and lunge and reach to get under the ball.

4. Practice only one shot at a time, 15 or 20 times, and keep track.

5. Practice different shots, hitting the ball forward, even with, and then behind you, 15 or 20 times, and keep track.

6. Repeat the sequence for 30, 25, and 20 feet.

### Fitness Skills

#### Strength and Power

Having strength and power in any sport is an added benefit. By adding the following strength and power exercises to your weekly conditioning program. You will see a significant jump when you incorporate the "high-level ceiling ball" into your game. With your explosive movements, you will get to more shots that are a little out of your reach, and you will be able to pop the ball up to the ceiling. This will buy time so you can recover and push back quickly into good center court position. You will have control of center court, which will improve your winning percentage in rallies as well.

\*Check with your physician BEFORE you start any of these exercises.

1. At first start with one set, with 1-5 repetitions in the set, based on your fitness level.
2. Work your way up to two sets, then 3-4,

with 5-7 repetitions in each set.

3. As your fitness level improves and you get stronger and more powerful, you will be able to do more sets with higher repetitions. You will know when you are on your way, as you will be retrieving more balls when you are off balance, out of position, or returning serves into the corners.

Forward lunges with no weight.

Forward lunges with weight, *very light*.

Crossover lunges with no weight.

Crossover lunges with weight, *very light*.

Side lunges with no weight.

Side lunges with weight, *very light*.

### Nutrition Skills

#### Recovery Cycles

Your body thrives on stress with recovery cycles. Work hard and then eat a healthy, balanced diet; always hydrate with lots of water; and add a sports drink if you need extra electrolytes to prevent muscle cramping.

#### Recovery from your match.

Physically, your muscles have been broken

down, and you are filled with the waste product lactic acid. Therefore, you need to stretch, hydrate, eat well, and put your legs up to drain all the waste toxins through your kidneys. An extra bonus would be to get a massage or take an ice bath, either or both of which would help with the recovery.

**Fran Davis** coaches Paola Longoria (#1 LPRT 6X, 5X World Champion, 4X Pan American Champion, 6X US Open Champion), Rocky Carson (#2 IRT, 4X World Champion, 1X Pan American Champion, US Open Champion), and junior sensations Taylor Knoth (#1 Jr. National and World Champion), Jordan Cooperrider (#1 Jr. National Champion & USA Jr. Nationals Team), Wayne Antone (#1 Jr. National Champion & USA Jr. National Team) and Mitchell Turner (#1 Jr. National Champion & USA Jr. National Team), Hall of Fame 2004, Woman of the Year 2009, former US Team National Coach, Master Professional (USAR-IP).

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Taylor Knoth  
Jr. World Champion

Jason Mannino  
#1 Pro Player 2003

Rocky Carson  
#1 Pro Player 2008

Sharon Jackson  
Jr. Nat'l Champion

Paola Longoria  
2X #1 Pro Player

Sudsy Monchik  
5X #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

### Camp Schedule:

#### Weekend Camps 2016/2017

Oct 21-23	Portland, OR
Nov 4-6	Chicago, IL
Jan 20-22	Atlanta, GA
Jan 27-29	Seattle, WA
Mar 10-12	Sarasota, FL
Mar 31-Apr 2	Las Vegas, NV
Apr 28-30	Warren, NJ
June TBA	San Francisco, CA
TBA	Houston/Dallas, TX
TBA	Denver, CO
TBA	St. Louis, MO
TBA	New England

### 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

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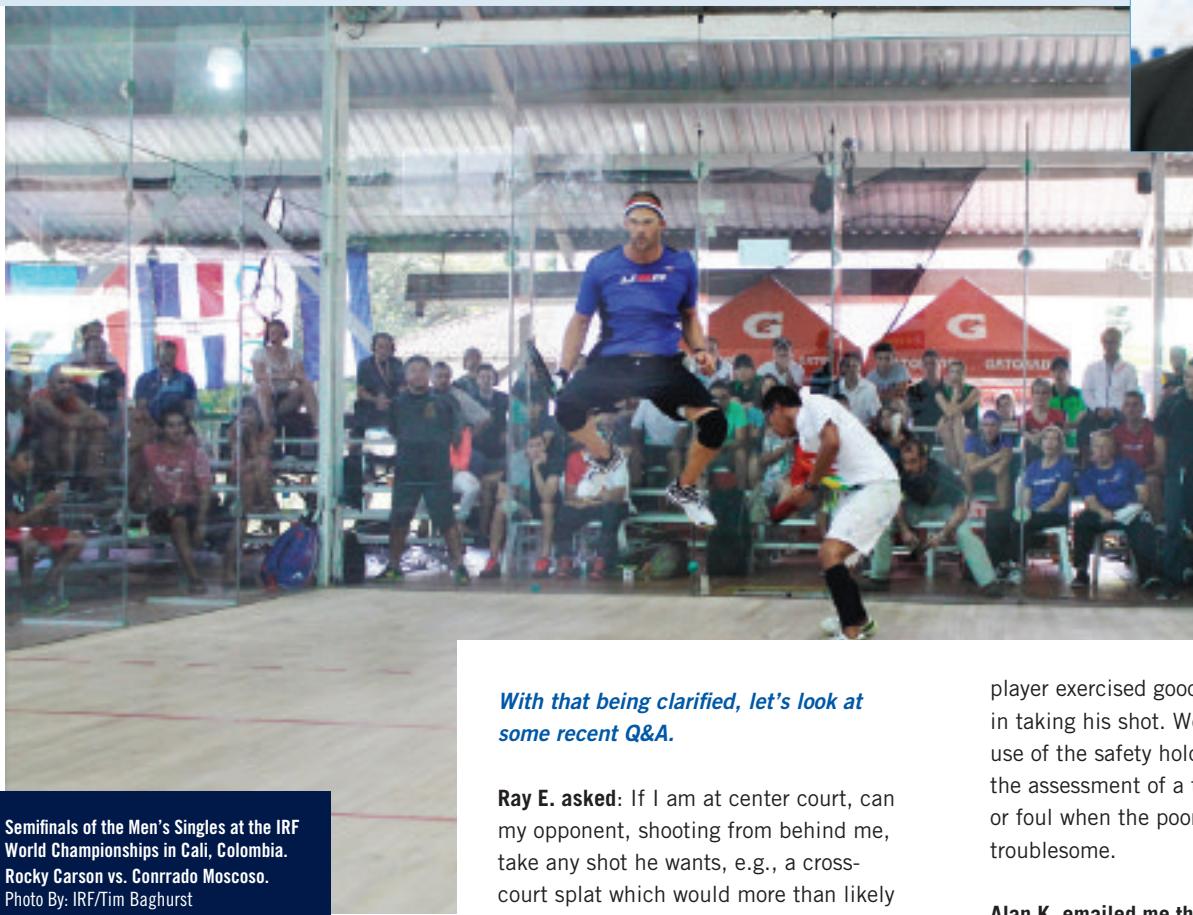


HEAD

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## ..MAKE SURE THE "DINK" IS NOT THE CARRY..



Semifinals of the Men's Singles at the IRF World Championships in Cali, Colombia.  
Rocky Carson vs. Conrado Moscoso.  
Photo By: IRF/Tim Baghurst

I want to start by first clarifying that the USA Racquetball rule concerning penalty hinder for "failure to move" currently says what I cite below and that the specific wording has remained the same and in effect continuously since 1986 when it was last changed to read like this:

### Rule 3.15 Penalty Hinders

(a) *Failure to Move. A player does not move sufficiently to allow an opponent a shot straight to the front wall as well as a cross-court shot which is a shot directly to the front wall at an angle that would cause the ball to rebound directly to the rear corner farthest from the player hitting the ball. In addition, when a player moves in such a direction that it prevents an opponent from taking either of these shots.*

**With that being clarified, let's look at some recent Q&A.**

**Ray E. asked:** If I am at center court, can my opponent, shooting from behind me, take any shot he wants, e.g., a cross-court splat which would more than likely hit me? I was told other than a ceiling lob, I have to give my opponent the down-the-line passing or kill shot and cross-court passing shot but that a kill shot cross-court that would knowingly hit your opponent is not a legal shot?

**I responded:** Technically, the player, whether he is behind you or anywhere else on the court, can take about any shot he wants. The only real limitation on his choices is "good sportsmanship." Remember that if he hits you and you are NOT in either of those two specified paths you mentioned, then that is only a replay hinder which, by the way, is the very same outcome as if he had, instead, held up on that shot because he feared he might hit you with it. However, selecting the option of hitting you might also involve some degree of pain and is therefore the much poorer choice. So it is a judgment call as to whether the

player exercised good judgment or not in taking his shot. We encourage liberal use of the safety hold-up rule as well as the assessment of a technical warning or foul when the poor choice becomes troublesome.

**Alan K. emailed me this:** I am very good at little dink shots when the ball is flying off the back wall and I am racing toward the front wall to hit it. I've been doing this for years and not until last week did someone state it was illegal. So if I wind up as if to smash it, then just dink it but do not swing, is this permissible? What if I did swing, miss intentionally, and then dink it?

**I emailed him back saying:** A fake swing (other than during the serve itself) is okay, but just make sure that the "dink" is not a "intentional carry" [called for in Rule 3.13(c)10] since that would cause you to lose the rally.

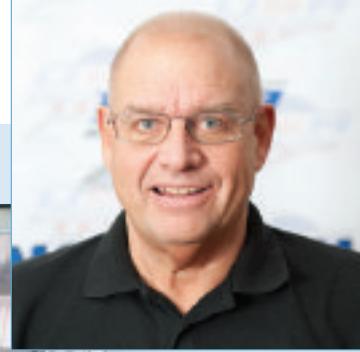
**Frank Q. wrote:** I play racquetball in Sligo on the West Coast of Ireland. I always enjoy reading your rules section in the magazine. In a recent issue Marion D. asked if a ball that hits the floor and

## DO YOU HAVE A RULES/REFEREEING QUESTION?

Be sure to email it to me at [ODietrich@usra.org](mailto:ODietrich@usra.org) and you might find it featured in an upcoming issue of *Racquetball Magazine*. I will personally answer every question I get, no matter how simple or complex it may be!

## Always Play by the Rules

...and, if you don't have a copy of them, I encourage you to go online where you can find, review, and/or download them – especially to your Smartphone – at: [teamusa.org/USA-Racquetball/How-To-Play/Rules](http://teamusa.org/USA-Racquetball/How-To-Play/Rules).



then bounces out-of-court (the back wall) is a point or a replay hinder. You replied that it's a replay (court hinder). If I hit a ceiling ball that bounces on the floor and then out-of-court (the back) – is that a replay?

**I advised Frank:** The answer actually depends on which set of rules you are following. You cited the one in the USA Racquetball rulebook, so I assume that those are the rules you are following. Just in case, however, the current IRF rules are posted at [www.internationalracquetball.com](http://www.internationalracquetball.com). A major difference concerns the back wall. The IRF calls for a line at 12 feet high and designates that any area above that line is "out of play/court." Conversely, USAR rules say that the entire back wall is in-play. So, under USAR rules, the ceiling shot that you asked about is exactly the kind of shot that our rule addresses: if the ball goes out of court after bouncing on the floor, then that is a replay of that rally. I'm not sure that any ball could ever both bounce on the floor and then leave the court except via a hard ceiling shot. Of course, hitting the ball directly out-of-the-court is a loss of rally for the player who hit it like that. Under the IRF Rules, you will find that the same rule is in effect: it's a replay.

**Barry W. wondered:** The court we play on has a red line on the back wall at approximately 20 feet high (we've never measured it). Clearly if a ball that hits below the line is in and above the line is out. But what if the ball hits the line? Is it in or out? I don't see anything in the rules covering that unless I'm somehow not finding that rule. This has happened several times with us just replaying the point since none of us know the specific rule.

**I replied:** Wow -- I am rather stunned! Where is this court located? What city/state? Also what version of the rules are you referring to when you say "clearly if a ball that hits below the line it is in"? I'd like to see that, too. I ask this because a "perfect" racquetball court would be no more than 20 feet wide, 20 feet high,

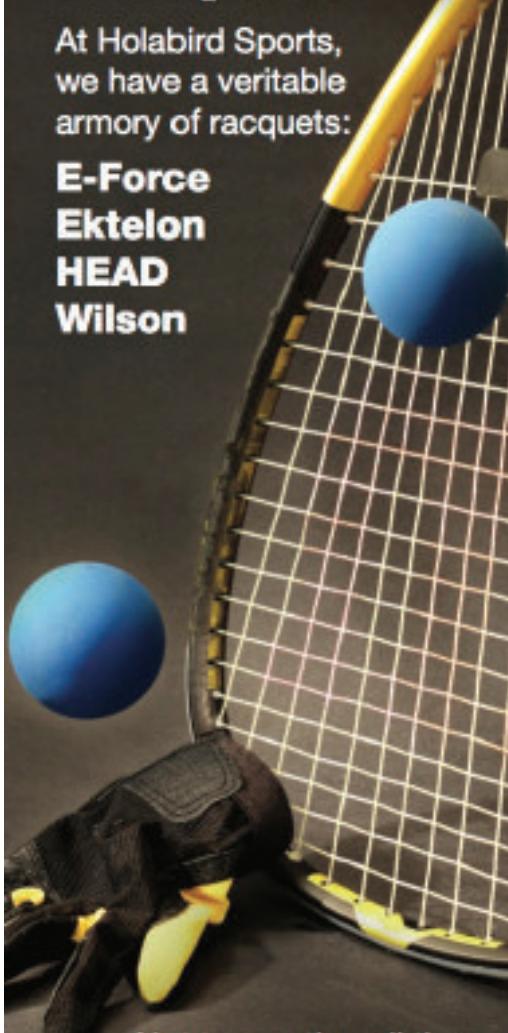
and 40 feet long with no lines of any kind except on the floor. For various reasons, some clubs construct courts that may have a somewhat lower back wall, but the rules specify that for the court to be official, the wall can be no lower than 12 feet. Some clubs also have a lower side wall (or two) to facilitate proper air handling. Those courts are acceptable since those side walls are partial and located to the rear of the court where the ball rarely, if ever, hits. Some other racquetball associations say that the back wall is "limited" to 12 feet. These include Racquetball Canada and the International Racquetball Federation. It's possible that such a line might have been placed at that lower level if they hosted one of those association's events in the past. Otherwise, there simply should be no line anywhere on a 20-foot high back wall. In addition, a ball that hits anywhere on the back wall is "in play" under USAR rules. I think that you should be able to find a way to take some fairly accurate estimates of that court's dimensions including that back wall line. I'd be interested in your findings. The latest USAR rulebook is posted online at <http://www.teamusa.org/usa-racquetball/how-to-play/rules>. You will find the basic court specifications covered in Rule 2.1. There is an illustration of the court there as well.

**Barry W. came back with:** After doing some research/measurements, I have found that the court (which is on the University of Vermont campus in Burlington, Vermont) at one time doubled as a squash court with a removable lower front wall tin. All of the walls are 20 feet high except the wooden back wall, which is only 12' 6" high (that red line is at 12 feet). Above the wooden back wall, however, is a 7' 6" cinder block wall with an open viewing space in the middle. My friends and I are going to start ignoring that line and playing anything that hits the wooden portion of the back wall as in play. Of course, we are just playing recreationally for fun, not in tournaments, so there are no real repercussions. But it was interesting to learn the real rules.

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## PROFESSIONAL TOUR CHAMPIONS

### IRT MEN

2015	Kane Waselenchuk (Texas)
2014	Kane Waselenchuk (Texas)
2013	Kane Waselenchuk (Texas)
2012	Kane Waselenchuk (Texas)
2011	Kane Waselenchuk (Texas)
2010	Kane Waselenchuk (Texas)
2009	Kane Waselenchuk (Texas)
2008	Kane Waselenchuk (Texas)
2007	Rocky Carson (Calif.)
2006	Jason Mannino (Calif.)
2005	Kane Waselenchuk (Can.)
2004	Kane Waselenchuk (Can.)
2003	Kane Waselenchuk (Can.)
2002	Sudsy Monchik (N.Y.)
2001	Cliff Swain (Mass.)
2000	Sudsy Monchik (N.Y.)
1999	Jason Mannino (Calif.)
1998	Sudsy Monchik (N.Y.)
1997	Cliff Swain (Mass.)
1996	Sudsy Monchik (N.Y.)

### IRT Men's Pro Doubles

2015	Ben Croft (III.) / Kane Waselenchuk (Texas)
2014	Ben Croft (III.) / Kane Waselenchuk (Texas)

### LPRT Women's Pro Doubles

2015	Paola Longoria (Mexico) / Samantha Salas (Mexico)
2014	Paola Longoria (Mexico) / Veronica Sotomayor (Ecuador)

## USA RACQUETBALL CHAMPIONS

### Men's Open

2015	Adam Manilla (Co.)
2014	Coby Iwaasa (Canada)
2013	Andres Parrilla (Mexico)
2012	Carlos Keller Vargas (Bolivia)
2011	Daniel De La Rosa (Mexico)
2010	Vincent Gagnon (Canada)
2009	Vincent Gagnon (Canada)
2008	Gilberto Mejia (Calif.)
2007	Alejandro Landa (Texas)
2006	Gil De Los Rios (Mo.)
2005	Gilberto Mejia (Calif.)
2004	Agustin Tristan (Mex.)
2003	Polo Gutierrez (Mex.)
2002	Josh Tucker (Mo.)
2001	Jack Huczak (Mich.)
2000	Jack Huczak (Mich.)
1999	Jack Huczak (Mich.)
1998	Ruben Gonzalez (N.Y.)
1997	Aaron Embry (Calif.)
1996	Joel Bonnett (Mich.)

### Women's Open

2015	Garbriela Martinez (Guatemala)
2014	Susana Acosta (Mexico)
2013	Maiko Sato (Japan)
2012	Veronica Sotomayor (Calif.)
2011	Frederique Lambert (Canada)
2010	Nancy Enriquez (Mexico)
2009	Krystal Csuk (III.)
2008	Veronica Sotomayor (Calif.)
2007	Jen Saunders (Canada)
2006	Diane Moore (Ind.)
2005	Adrienne Fisher (Ala.)
2004	Angela Grisar (Chile)
2003	Angela Grisar (Chile)
2002	Brenda Kyzer (S.C.)
2001	Lori Jane Powell (Canada)
2000	Lori Jane Powell (Canada)
1999	Josee Grand'Maitre (Canada)
1998	Lydia Hammock (Calif.)
1997	Lori Jane Powell (Canada)
1996	Christie Van Hees (Canada)

### Age Divisions

#### Men's 24-

2015	Edwin Galicia (Guatemala)
2014	Cristian Chavez (Ecuador)
2013	Andrés Gómez (Colombia)
2012	Sebastian Franco (Colombia)
2011	Joel Barshaw (Oregon)
2010	Roland Keller (Bolivia)
2009	Alex Ackermann (Texas)
2008	Jansen Allen (Texas)
2007	Chris Coy (Okla.)
2006	Armando Lando (Texas)
2005	Charles Pratt (Ore.)
2004	Alejandro Herrera (Fla.)
2003	Travis Woodbury (Va.)
2002	Ben Croft (III.)
2001	Mitch Williams (N.C.)
2000	Andy Hawthorne (III.)
1999	Jack Huczak (Mich.)
1998	Jeff Bloom (Texas)
1997	Jeff Bloom (Texas)
1996	Rocky Carson (Calif.)

#### Women's 24-

2015	Maria Renee Rodriguez (Guatemala)
2014	Maria Renee Rodriguez (Guatemala)
2013	Cristina Amaya (Colombia)
2012	Cristina Amaya (Colombia)
2011	Mariana Paredes (Venezuela)
2010	Cristina Amaya (Colombia)
2009	Cristina Amaya (Colombia)
2008	Cristina Amaya (Colombia)
2007	Kara Mazur (Conn.)
2006	Sharon Jackson (Ind.)
2005	Da'Monique Davis (Ala.)
2004	Da'Monique Davis (Ala.)
2003	Janel Tisinger (Calif.)
2002	Adrienne Fisher (Ohio)
2001	Rhonda Rajsich (Ariz.)
2000	Adrienne Fisher (Ohio)
1999	Aimee Roehler (Pa.)
1998	Aimee Roehler (Pa.)
1997	Shannon Feaster (D.C.)
1996	Amanda McDonald (Can.)

## Men's 25+

2015	Nick Hand (Fla.)
2014	Andrew Gale (Utah)
2013	Dennis Myers (N.C.)
2012	Andres Ramirez (Fla.)
2011	Andres Ramirez (Fla.)
2010	Bryan Crosser (Iowa)
2009	Francisco Gomez (Colombia)
2008	Ignacio Jaimes (Texas)
2007	Ignacio Jaimes (Texas)
2006	Jason Bledsoe (N.C.)
2005	Matthew Davenport (Mo.)
2004	Cesar Carillo (Tenn.)
2003	Dale Valentine (Calif.)
2002	Dale Valentine (Calif.)
2001	Kyle Veenstra (Wis.)
2000	Dale Valentine (Calif.)
1999	Sameer Hadid (Calif.)
1998	Mike Locker (Minn.)
1997	Kevin Graham (N.D.)
1996	Mike Locker (Minn.)

## Men's 30+

2015	Mike Harmon (Fla.)
2014	John Goth (Minn.)
2013	John Goth (Minn.)
2012	John Goth (Minn.)
2011	John Goth (Minn.)
2010	Kevin List (Fla.)
2009	Andres Ramirez (Fla.)
2008	Dale Valentine (Calif.)
2007	Cary Slade (III.)
2006	Andy Gross (Ga.)
2005	Aaron Metcalf (Fla.)
2004	Brian Fredenberg (Texas)
2003	Eric Williams (N.C.)
2002	Brian Fredenberg (Texas)
2001	Dale Valentine (Calif.)
2000	Kevin Graham (Wis.)
1999	Jim Minkel (Texas)
1998	Lance Gilliam (Texas)
1997	Dan Llacer (Del.)
1996	John Amatulli (Ind.)

## Men's 35+

2015	Kevin List (Fla.)
2014	Aaron Granberg (Minn.)
2013	Aaron Metcalf (Fla.)
2012	Aaron Granberg (Minn.)
2011	Wesley Miller (Fla.)
2010	Brad McCunniff (Iowa)
2009	Brad McCunniff (Iowa)
2008	Brad McCunniff (Iowa)
2007	Brad McCunniff (Iowa)
2006	Jimmy Lowe (Hawaii)
2005	Jimmy Lowe (Hawaii)
2004	Chris Wright (Mo.)
2003	Jimmy Lowe (Alaska)
2002	Jim Minkel (Texas)
2001	Jim Minkel (Texas)
2000	Brad McCunniff (Iowa)
1999	Tim Hansen (Fla.)
1998	Dave Watson (Okla.)
1997	Mitch Smith (Pa.)
1996	Marty Hogan (Mo.)

## Men's 40+ CPRT (est.2006)

2015	Brad McCunniff (Iowa)
2014	Jimmy Lowe (Hawaii)
2013	Jimmy Lowe (Hawaii)
2012	Woody Clouse (Colo.)
2011	Woody Clouse (Colo.)
2010	Woody Clouse (Colo.)
2009	Woody Clouse (Colo.)
2008	Jimmy Lowe (Hawaii)
2007	Ruben Gonzalez (N.Y.)
2006	Jimmy Lowe (Hawaii)
2005	Jimmy Lowe (Hawaii)
2004	Scott Cullins (Ga.)
2003	Jimmy Lowe (Alaska)

## Women's 25+

2015	Donna Ryder (Ireland)
2014	No division
2013	Youngock Lee (Korea)
2012	Emily Coonse (Idaho)
2011	No division
2010	Sarah Warhaftig (Colo.)
2009	No division
2008	Carolyn Peddle (Can.)
2007	Shannon Feaster (Md.)
2006	Shannon Feaster (Md.)
2005	Shannon Feaster (Md.)
2004	Claudia Ramirez (Fla.)
2003	T.J. Baumbaugh (Va.)
2002	Debra Bryant (N.C.)
2001	No division
2000	Mukai Youku (Japan)
1999	Michelle Wiragh (Md.)
1998	Michelle Wiragh (Md.)

## Women's 30+

2015	Michelle Sikorski (Co.)
2014	No division
2013	Shannon Feaster (Md.)
2012	No division
2011	No division
2010	Tracey Hawthorne (Ohio)
2009	T.J. Baumbaugh (Va.)
2008	T.J. Baumbaugh (Va.)
2007	Vallana Perrault (Minn.)
2006	Vallana Lundstrom (Pa.)
2005	Vallana Lundstrom (Minn.)
2004	Claudia Ramirez (Fla.)
2003	Etsuko Noda (Japan)
2002	Heather Dunn (Mass.)
2001	Lorraine Galloway (N.Y.)
2000	Lorraine Galloway (N.Y.)
1999	Lori Lepow (Fla.)
1998	Shigemi Yasuda (Japan)
1997	Debbie Tisinger (Calif.)
1996	Kersten Hallander (Fla.)

## Women's 35+

2015	No division
2014	T.J. Baumbaugh (Va.)
2013	Vallana Perrault (Minn.)
2012	Bernadette Zimmerman (Texas)
2011	T.J. Baumbaugh (Va.)
2010	No division
2009	Tammarrian Rogers (Wash.)
2008	No division
2007	No division
2006	Lorraine Galloway (N.Y.)
2005	Kelley Beane (N.H.)
2004	Lorraine Galloway (N.Y.)
2003	Lorraine Galloway (N.Y.)
2002	Debra Tisinger (Calif.)
2001	Debra Tisinger (Calif.)
2000	Debra Tisinger (Calif.)
1999	Debra Tisinger (Calif.)
1998	Debra Tisinger (Calif.)
1997	Debra Tisinger (Calif.)
1996	Kim Machiran (Mo.)

## Women's 40+

2015	T.J. Baumbaugh (Va.)
2014	Tammarrian Rogers (Wash.)
2013	Tammarrian Rogers (Wash.)
2012	No division
2011	Cindy Conine (Fla.)
2010	Marie Gomar (Guatemala)
2009	No division
2008	Kelly Beane (N.H.)
2007	Debra Tisinger-Moore (Calif.)
2006	Debra Tisinger (Calif.)
2005	Debra Tisinger (Calif.)
2004	Anita Maldonado (N.Y.)
2003	Debra Tisinger (Calif.)

**Men's 45+**

- 2015 Keith Minor (I.I.)
- 2014 Brad McCunniff (Iowa)
- 2013 Brad McCunniff (Iowa)
- 2012 Jimmy Lowe (Hawaii)
- 2011 Brad McCunniff (Iowa)
- 2010 Jimmy Lowe (Hawaii)
- 2009 Jimmy Lowe (Hawaii)
- 2008 Jimmy Lowe (Hawaii)
- 2007 Scott Cullins (Ga.)
- 2006 Scott Cullins (Ga.)
- 2005 Richard Mordachini (Miss.)
- 2004 Miguel Santiago-Cruz (Texas)
- 2003 Miguel Santiago-Cruz (Texas)
- 2002 Mitt Layton (Fla.)
- 2001 Mitt Layton (Fla.)
- 2000 Mitt Layton (Fla.)
- 1999 Mitt Layton (Fla.)
- 1998 Mitt Layton (Fla.)
- 1997 Mitt Layton (Fla.)
- 1996 Mitt Layton (Fla.)

**Women's 45+**

- 2002 Marie Gomar (Guatemala)
- 2001 Marie Gomar (Guatemala)
- 2000 Marie Gomar (Guatemala)
- 1999 Marie Gomar (Guatemala)
- 1998 Laura Fenton (Calif.)
- 1997 Anita Maldonado (N.Y.)
- 1996 Laura Brandt (Fla.)
- 2002 Debra Tisinger-Moore (Calif.)
- 2001 Debra Tisinger-Moore (Calif.)
- 2000 Debra Tisinger (Calif.)
- 1999 Debra Tisinger (Calif.)
- 1998 Debra Tisinger (Calif.)
- 1997 Linda Moore (Neb.)
- 1996 Meena Evans (N.C.)
- 2002 Joanne Pomodoro (Mass.)
- 2001 Meena Evans (N.C.)
- 2000 Joanne Pomodoro (Mass.)
- 1999 Shelley Ogden (Ohio)
- 1998 Janet Myers (N.C.)

2002 Glenn Allen (Va.)

- 2001 Warren Reuther (La.)
- 2000 Ron Hutcherson (Ind.)
- 1999 Bob Webster (Ala.)
- 1998 Lee Graff (Ore.)
- 1997 Jerry Stoltmann (Wis.)
- 1996 Jay Krevsky (Pa.)

**Men's 65+**

- 2015 Frank Taddonio (Ariz.)
- 2012 Gregory Hasty (III.)
- 2011 Jeff Leon (Panama)
- 2010 Donald Gunderson (Wis.)
- 2009 Robert Laffantico (Calif.)
- 2008 Mitch Milewski (N.H.)
- 2007 Patrick Taylor (III.)
- 2006 Patrick Taylor (III.)
- 2005 Leland Rents (Minn.)
- 2004 Ron Hutcherson (Ind.)
- 2003 Rex Lawler (Ind.)
- 2002 Lee Graff (Ore.)
- 2001 David Lund (Mich.)
- 2000 Jerry Holly (Calif.)
- 1999 Jerry Holly (Calif.)
- 1998 Jo Lambert (Texas)
- 1997 John O'Donnell (III.)
- 1996 J.D. Driver (Mich.)

Sharon Hastings-Welty (Ore.)

- Gail Schaefer (Md.)
- No division
- Jo Kenyon (Fla.)
- Jo Kenyon (Fla.)
- Jo Kenyon (Fla.)
- Jo Kenyon (Fla.)

**Women's 65+**

- Laurie Kitchen (N.Y.)
- Terry Ann Rogers (Nev.)
- Merijke Kelley (Calif.)
- No division
- CeCe Palaski (N.M.)
- Mildred Gwinn (N.C.)
- Mildred Gwinn (N.C.)
- Mildred Gwinn (N.C.)
- No division
- Gloria Piscoran (Ore.)
- No division
- No division
- No division
- Jo Kenyon (Fla.)
- Jo Kenyon (Fla.)
- Jo Kenyon (Fla.)
- Lola Markus (III.)
- Lola Markus (III.)

**Men's 50+**

- 2015 Doug Ganim (Ohio)
- 2014 Jimmy Lowe (Hawaii)
- 2013 Jimmy Lowe (Hawaii)
- 2012 Richard Eisemann (Texas)
- 2011 Ivan Sanchez (Texas)
- 2010 Daniel Pischke (Wash.)
- 2009 Edward Fink (Texas)
- 2008 Glenn Bell (Texas)
- 2007 Patrick Gibson (Texas)
- 2006 Thomas Travers (Fla.)
- 2005 Greg Campbell (Ore.)
- 2004 Howard Walker (Texas)
- 2003 Mitt Layton (Fla.)
- 2002 Mitt Layton (Fla.)
- 2001 Mitt Layton (Fla.)
- 2000 Mitt Layton (Fla.)
- 1999 Mitt Layton (Fla.)
- 1998 Rick Fusari (Fla.)
- 1997 Rick Fusari (Fla.)
- 1996 Ed Remen (Va.)

**Women's 50+**

- 2015 Laura Brandt (Fla.)
- 2014 Laura Fenton Kovanda (Ohio)
- 2013 Janice Kennedy (Ga.)
- 2012 Debra Tisinger-Moore (Calif.)
- 2011 Debra Tisinger-Moore (Calif.)
- 2010 Linda Moore (Neb.)
- 2009 Kelly Kirk (Minn.)
- 2008 Linda Moore (Neb.)
- 2007 Linda Moore (Neb.)
- 2006 Linda Moore (Neb.)
- 2005 Marsha Berry (Ky.)
- 2004 Janet Myers (N.C.)
- 2003 Marsha Berry (Ky.)
- 2002 Joanne Pomodoro (Mass.)
- 2001 Nancy Kronenfeld (III.)
- 2000 Sharon Huczak (Mich.)
- 1999 Shelley Ogden (Ohio)
- 1998 Sharon Huczak (Mich.)
- 1997 Margaret Hoff (III.)
- 1996 Gerri Stoffregen (Ohio)

**Men's 70+**

- 2015 Dave Zabinski (Minn.)
- 2012 Gordon Kelly (Fla.)
- 2011 David Zabinski (Minn.)
- 2010 David Zabinski (Minn.)
- 2009 Howard Nellor (Fla.)
- 2008 Dave Lund (Mich.)
- 2007 Lee Graff (Ore.)
- 2006 Dave Lund (Mich.)
- 2005 Paul Banales (Ariz.)
- 2004 Jerry Holly (Calif.)
- 2003 Don Alt (Ohio)
- 2002 Joe Lambert (Texas)
- 2001 Joe Lambert (Texas)
- 2000 John O'Donnell (III.)
- 1999 John O'Donnell (III.)
- 1998 Joe Lambert (Texas)
- 1997 Joe Lambert (Texas)
- 1996 Earl Acuff (N.C.)

**Women's 70+**

- No division
- Marquita Molina (Calif.)
- Marquita Molina (Calif.)
- No division
- Shirley Barron (Ky.)
- Shirley Barron (Ky.)
- No division
- Mary Low Acuff (N.C.)
- Mary Low Acuff (N.C.)
- No division

**Men's 55+**

- 2015 Tim Hansen (Fla.)
- 2014 Wes Snead (N.C.)
- 2013 Ivan Sanchez (Texas)
- 2012 Mike Grisiz (Texas)
- 2011 Mark Gilmore (Texas)
- 2010 Jim Lizar (Wis.)
- 2009 Joe Lee (Hawaii)
- 2008 Joe Lee (Hawaii)
- 2007 Joe Lee (Hawaii)
- 2006 Joe Lee (Hawaii)
- 2005 R.E. Montague (Pa.)
- 2004 Ed Remen (N.C.)
- 2003 Greg Hasty (III.)
- 2002 Dwayne McKnight (Md.)
- 2001 Ed Remen (N.C.)
- 2000 Ed Remen (N.C.)
- 1999 Ray Huss (Ohio)
- 1998 Warren Reuther (La.)
- 1997 Glenn Allen (Va.)
- 1996 Les Barbanell (N.J.)

**Women's 55+**

- 2015 Janet Tyler (Fla.)
- 2014 Debra Tisinger Moore (Calif.)
- 2013 Debra Tisinger Moore (Calif.)
- 2012 Linda Moore (Neb.)
- 2011 Jill Mitchell (Calif.)
- 2010 Elaine Dexter (Calif.)
- 2009 Gerri Stoffregen (Ohio)
- 2008 Gerri Stoffregen (Ohio)
- 2007 Terry Rogers (Calif.)
- 2006 Janet Myers (N.C.)
- 2005 Susan Kieffer (Minn.)
- 2004 Gerri Stoffregen (Ohio)
- 2003 Sharon Huczak (Mich.)
- 2002 Sharon Hastings-Welty (Ore.)
- 2001 Nidia Funes (Calif.)
- 2000 Mildred Gwinn (N.C.)
- 1999 No division
- 1998 No division
- 1997 Jo Kenyon (Fla.)
- 1996 Nancy Kay Butts (Wis.)

**Men's 75+**

- 2015 No division
- 2012 Jerry Holly (Calif.)
- 2011 Jerry Holly (Calif.)
- 2010 Jerry Holly (Calif.)
- 2009 Jerry Holly (Calif.)
- 2008 John O'Donnell (III.)
- 2007 John O'Donnell (III.)
- 2006 Fred Wiegand (Texas)
- 2005 John O'Donnell Jr. (III.)
- 2004 Robert Miller (S.C.)
- 2003 Joe Lambert (Texas)
- 2002 Joe Lambert (Texas)
- 2001 Earl Acuff (N.C.)
- 2000 Dick Kincade (Colo.)
- 1999 Earl Acuff (N.C.)
- 1998 Nick Sans (Calif.)
- 1997 Earl Acuff (N.C.)
- 1996 Earl Acuff (N.C.)

**Women's 75+**

- No division
- Mary Low Acuff (N.C.)

**Men's 60+**

- 2015 Mark Baron (Va.)
- 2014 Frank Taddonio (Ariz.)
- 2013 Joe Lee (Hawaii)
- 2012 Frank Taddonio (Ariz.)
- 2011 Joe Lee (Hawaii)
- 2010 Joe Lee (Hawaii)
- 2009 Frank Taddonio (Ariz.)
- 2008 Greg Hasty (III.)
- 2007 Jim Hiser (Colo.)
- 2006 Ed Remen (N.C.)
- 2005 Ed Remen (N.C.)
- 2004 Jeff Leon (Fla.)
- 2003 Dan Jones (Ga.)

**Women's 60+**

- 2015 Karen Simon (Fla.)
- 2014 Marsha Berry (Ky.)
- 2013 Wanda Collins (Wash.)
- 2012 Wanda Collins (Wash.)
- 2011 Kathleen Ruzycski (III.)
- 2010 Joan Vande Kieft (III.)
- 2009 Shirley Parsons (Colo.)
- 2008 Merijke Kelley (Calif.)
- 2007 CeCe Palaski (N.M.)
- 2006 CeCe Palaski (N.M.)
- 2005 Nidia Funes (Calif.)
- 2004 Gail Shaefer (Md.)
- 2003 Mildred Gwinn (N.C.)

**Men's 80+**

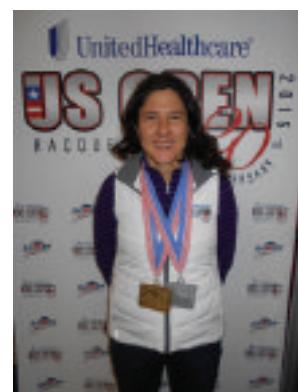
- 2015 No division
- 2012 John O'Donnell Jr. (III.)
- 2011 John O'Donnell Jr. (III.)
- 2010 John O'Donnell Jr. (III.)
- 04-09 No division
- 2003 No division
- 2002 Earl Acuff (N.C.)
- 2001 Earl Acuff (N.C.)
- 2000 Earl Acuff (N.C.)
- 1999 Earl Acuff (N.C.)
- 1998 Earl Acuff (N.C.)

**Women's 80+**

- No division
- Mary Low Acuff (N.C.)
- No division
- No division



# ALL-TIME RECORD BOOK OF PRO & AGE GROUP SINGLES CHAMPIONS



Please note: Due to page limitations we could not list all divisions in this issue.



# 28th Annual Women's Senior/Masters National Championships

By: Laurel Davis and Cheryl Kirk



Team Illinois Invites you to  
Chicagoland in 2017!

**C**ome play in "Sweet Home Chicago"! The 28th Annual Women's Senior/Masters National Championships will be held January 13-15, 2017, at Glass Court Swim & Fitness in Lombard, Illinois, and hosted by the WSMRA Board of Directors and Tournament Directors Cheryl Kirk and Laurel Davis.

Fly into either O'Hare International Airport (ORD) or Chicago Midway International Airport (MDW), and rent a car or take a taxi. The host hotel is Chicago Marriott Suites Downers Grove. It is available at a great price (\$89 per night) and is located in a nice wooded area less than four miles from the Club. Free shuttle service between the hotel and club can be scheduled onsite by individual reservation.

If you have never played in a WSMRA event, you're in for a treat. Our round-robin format ensures that you will be playing every day of our three-day tournament. We offer Open/A competition for top-level players in five-year age increments beginning with 35+ as well as B/C divisions if you aren't quite as accomplished (yet). You can also expect to meet new friends and connect with old ones. The Saturday night

banquet will be a time for fun awards and slideshows. The food will be plentiful and the dancing lively. The rest of the time when you are not playing your matches, you will definitely want to explore the surrounding area.

So what happens in Lombard/Downers Grove/Chicago in January?? You might be surprised...

Within less than five miles you have two shopping malls, a theatre, and any kind of cuisine you can think of. Stay for a few days after the tournament to see Saturday Night Fever at Drury Lane. Or, cure your sore muscles with a massage at Mario Tricoci's Salon and Day Spa in the Oak Brook Center.

If outlet shopping is your thing, we have two LARGE outlet malls. Both are about 15 miles from the hotel and can provide hours of entertainment. Leave for your flight a few hours early to take in the Fashion Outlets of Chicago, located next to O'Hare Airport. You won't have far to carry your packages!

On the sporting front, you will be 20 miles from the United Center, home to the Chicago Bulls and the Chicago Blackhawks. The Blackhawks

are home on Tuesday, January 10, and Sunday, January 15. We can't tell you about the Bulls because their schedule won't be published until September.

Are you spending your summer hyped up in Cubs mania? Guess what! The Cubs Convention will be held the same time as our tournament - just 16 miles from the racquetball club.

Lombard and Downers Grove are about 25 miles from downtown Chicago. There you can shop on the Magnificent Mile, visit world class museums (The Art Institute, Field Museum, The Museum of Science and Industry, The Adler Planetarium and The Shedd Aquarium) or maybe catch a Chicago Bears playoff game! You can eat in fabulous restaurants, ride the world's largest Ferris wheel, attend the Chicago Boat, RV and Sail Show. You can get to the city via a train from downtown Downers Grove (also worth a visit), you can grab a flat fare taxi at a reasonable rate, or you can always call Uber.

It might be cold outside, but there will be plenty to do!

A warm welcome and thank you to our new sponsor Head Penn Racquet Sports! (We will be playing with the Penn green ball.)

Enter now on R2Sports -- <http://www.r2sports.com/tourney.asp?TID=17584> -- and start practicing. We'll see you in Chicago in January!

Our motto: **Balmy weather definitely NOT guaranteed; a great time absolutely ENSURED!**

## Newest NMRA Hall of Fame Inductee: Len Sonnenberg



NATIONAL MASTERS RACQUETBALL

By: Cindy Tilbury, NMRA President

In the beautiful city of Portland, Oregon, on July 8, 2016, the NMRA proudly inducted another Hall of Famer. It was Len Sonnenberg's time in the spotlight. Len lives in San Diego, California, and runs a successful CPA firm.

Although Len has been a tireless NMRA and racquetball contributor for many years, he has been especially invaluable over the past three years. During that time, Len's skills as a CPA, particularly his experience with nonprofits, were put to the test by our organization. Len spent countless hours on NMRA accounting, professional, and legal matters, never once asking for reimbursement or even a free entry. In addition, Len is our Hall of Fame Executive Director, making sure each year that the voting committee actions are properly executed in order to elect inductees or wait until there is a worthy candidate. His sportsmanship and quiet dedication to the NMRA have not gone unnoticed by the Board of Directors and the voting committee members.

Len Sonnenberg with his NMRA Hall of Fame Award



Len is a 2016 NMRA Hall of Fame Outstanding Contributor Inductee. Other NMRA Hall of Fame inductees for 2016 are Carmen Alatorre-Martin of Arlington, Virginia; Ralph Stillman of Minneapolis, Minnesota; Dan Jones of Atlanta, Georgia; and (posthumously) Phil Dziuk of Champaign, Illinois. Induction ceremonies will be held at future NMRA banquets. Congratulations to all of the new inductees!

Join us for our social style of all-round-robin racquetball. No more "one and done." Our next event is Atlanta 40+ Doubles-Only, December 8-10, 2016. Sign up early, as we are anticipating having to limit players. First-time NMRA players do not have to join the NMRA, but they must be current USA Racquetball members.

Contact Cindy Tilbury at 303.888.4461, or go straight to the [www.nmra.info](http://www.nmra.info) website, tournament information page, for details.

## On the Road with the NPRA

By: Bill Bearden | NPRA President

School's out, and Mike Welch and I hit the ground running to represent the National Police Racquetball Association! Our first stop was USA Racquetball National Singles Event in Denver, Colorado. We ran into fellow member Josh Paul at the tournament, and after exchanging greetings and catching up, it was time to hit the courts. Unfortunately, the courts weren't too kind to Mike and me as we weren't able to medal in either of our singles events but salvaged the trip by bringing home a bronze in Centurion B Doubles. I would like to congratulate Josh Paul on a great run in the singles department by taking Gold in Men's 30+A and making it to the semifinals in the Men's A division.

Not only does the NPRA assist in and play in tournaments, our main focus is to help fellow officers who have been injured during the course of their duties. On April 15th, Harris County Precinct 7 Deputy Constable Alden Clopton was ambushed after assisting another officer in a traffic stop in downtown Houston. Deputy Clopton was shot six times, four of which struck him in his back. Following many surgeries, he has finally made his way back home but is not expected to return to work anytime soon. The NPRA was pleased to present a check to Deputy Clopton to help him and his family during these hard times. Even though it's the NPRA handing out these checks to our family of injured officers, it's the players who continue to support the NPRA that helps us make this happen. For all racquetball players, shoot straight, down the line, and keep rolling them out! To our fellow law enforcement and other first responders, we appreciate your services -- be careful out there.



NPRA President Bill Bearden presenting Deputy A. Clopton a check. Deputy Clopton spent 3 months in the hospital after his incident and is now going thru his rehabilitation. He hopes to return to work in 2017.



# CALENDAR of EVENTS

For the latest in USA Racquetball Sanctioned Events visit [USARacquetball.com](http://USARacquetball.com)

Date	City	State	Location	Event	Email
Oct. 5-8	St. George	UT	St. George Rec Center	Huntsman World Senior Games	rbjohn175@gmail.com
Oct. 5-9	Minneapolis	MN	Life Time Fitness - Target Center	UnitedHealthcare US OPEN Racquetball Championship	ganim@mac.com
Oct. 13-16	Salem	OR	Courthouse Athletic Club North	Jerry Bower Memorial	ajhenderslmt@comcast.net
Oct. 14-16	Cumberland	RI	Forecourt	First Ball Before Fall	dwb6464@aol.com
Oct. 15-16	Gillette	WY	Campbell County Rec Center	Izzi Racquetball IRT Open	derek@izziracquetball.com
Oct. 15-17	Tucson	AZ	Pima Community College	AZ WOR I Battle Assault on Pima	azor@azoutdoorracquetball.com
Oct. 15-17	Woodland	CA	Cross Court Athletic Club	Cross Court Open	hughesrjh34@gmail.com
Oct. 21-22	Lilburn	GA	Recreation Atl	HOPE for a Cure Breast Cancer Racquetball Shootout	womensball@gmail.com
Oct. 21-23	Arlington	TX	Maverick Athletic Club	Texas State Doubles Racquetball Championships	leo@themav.com
Oct. 21-23	Portland	OR	Multnomah Athletic Club	Fran Davis Racquetball Camp	camps@frandavisracquetball.com
Oct. 21-23	St. Cloud	MN	The Club - Total Fitness and Racquetball	Spooktacular	torneld@charter.net
Oct. 21-23	Spokane	WA	Spokane Club - Downtown	Inland Empire Championship Racquetball	afewmilliondollars@gmail.com
Oct. 21-23	Tulsa	OK	Ninowski Recreation Center	Rhema Racquetball Shootout	kindschi@cox.net
Oct. 21-23	Eldridge	IA	Eldridge Rec & Fitness	Marigold Resources Quad City IRT Open	joshpaul1982@gmail.com
Oct. 21-23	Reseda	CA	360 Health Club	Tournament of Terror	rjlam@hotmail.com
Oct. 21-23	Tucson	AZ	Tucson Racquet & Fitness Club	Tucson Open	maximus@utmax.com
Oct. 22	Huber Heights	OH	The Heights Racquet & Fitness - Dayton	Midwest Shootout Challenge Series	fabriziomora75@gmail.com
Oct. 27-30	Pleasanton	CA	Club Sport	Pleasanton Open	rbqueen@gmail.com
Oct. 27-30	Lombard	IL	Glass Court Swim & Fitness	Fall Brawl/IRT Pro Stop	cherylkirk@aol.com
Oct. 28-30	Boston	MA	Boston Athletic Club	Boston Open - LPRT Stop	solomonracquetandsports@gmail.com
Oct. 29	San Antonio	TX	Gold's Gym HCV	5th Annual Ghostly Doubles	venitamitchell@hotmail.com
Nov. 3-6	Lilburn	GA	Recreation ATL	Atlanta IRT Pro-Am	auchad99@hotmail.com
Nov. 3-7	Portland	OR	Sunset Athletic Club	Sunset Turkey Shoot IRT Pro Am	sacproshop@gmail.com
Nov. 4-6	Lombard	IL	Glass Court Swim & Fitness	Fran Davis Racquetball Camp	camps@frandavisracquetball.com
Nov. 5-6	Laurel	MD	SportFit Total Fitness Racquet Club	Maryland State Doubles Championship	msfeb14th@icloud.com
Nov. 5-6	Glendale	AZ	Bonsall Park	AZ WOR II Battle of Chicken Park	azor@azoutdoorracquetball.com
Nov. 11-12	St. Louis	MO	Vetta Racquet Sports - Concord	MO 15th Annual Pinchshot.com St. Louis Open -	dwhitley@vettasports.com
Nov. 12	Arlington	TX	Maverick Athletic Club	November Turkey Racquetball Shootout	leo@themav.com
Nov. 17-19	St. Louis	MO	Vetta Racquet Sports-CONCORD	MO St. Louis Pro Racquetball Winter Rollout Tournament	dwhitley@vettasports.com
Nov. 17-20	Bremerton	WA	Kitsap Tennis & Athletic Center	Kitsap Splat! LPRT	rocco@kitsapsplat.com
Nov. 18-20	Port St Lucie	FL	Port St Lucie Civic Center	PSL Turkey Shootout	auchad99@hotmail.com

# CALENDAR of EVENTS



Nov. 18-20	Houston	TX	Sweetwater CC	Houston Open Racquetball Invitational	michaelmagana2112@gmail.com
Nov. 18-20	Lombard	IL	Glass Court Swim & Fitness	IRT Turkey Shoot	mdhalversond@aol.com
Nov. 18-21	Tempe	AZ	ASU Student Recreational Center	Arizona State Doubles Championships	darin.randles@cox.net
Nov. 19	Riverside	CA	Arlington High School	Dale & Todd's WTF Outdoor Doubles Shootout	dale-valentine@hotmail.com
Dec. 2-4	San Antonio	TX	Thousand Oaks Family YMCA	WRT Alamo City Open	mike@alamoracquetball.org
Dec. 3	Portland	OR	MAC	Pelham Benefit Event - NSR	dabuy06@comcast.net
Dec. 3	St. Louis	MO	Vetta Racquet Sports - Concord	Missouri HS Racquetball League Top Seed Tournament	dwhitley@vettasports.com
Dec. 3-4	Scottsdale	AZ	Horizon High School	AZ WOR III Battle Siege at Horizon	azor@azoutdoorracquetball.com
Dec. 3-4	Port Richey	FL	Richey Racquet Club	Florida International Senior Games	jtrimble1255@gmail.com
Dec. 8-10	Lilburn	GA	Recreation ATL	NMRA Doubles-Only Championships Atlanta	cindy.tilbury@att.net
Dec. 9-11	St. Cloud	MN	The Club - Total Fitness and Racquetball	Holiday Classic	torneld@charter.net
Dec. 9-11	Gatlinburg	TN	Gatlinburg Community Center	29th Annual Mountain Madness Racquetball Tournament	danderson4692@hotmail.com
Dec. 10	Arlington	TX	Maverick Athletic Club	Maverick Holiday Racquetball Shootout	leo@themav.com
Dec. 17	St. Louis	MO	Vetta Racquet Sports - Concord	MO Vetta Racquet Sports Holiday Charity Classic	dwhitley@vettasports.com

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### PENN NAMED "OFFICIAL BALL" OF LADIES PROFESSIONAL RACQUETBALL TOUR (LPRT)

**H**EAD Penn Racquet Sports announced today that PENN, the #1 selling racquetball in the world, has been named the "Official Ball" of the LPRT. A multi-year deal was signed which included an extension of HEAD as an official Tour Partner.

"We could not be happier to add the LPRT to our marketing portfolio of key Official Ball designations," stated Ben Simons, Senior Business Manager for Indoor Court Sports. "The ladies pro tour has exploded in popularity in the US and throughout Central and South America. These elite athletes have taken the women's pro game to new heights with a level of player never before seen in women's racquetball," Simons went on to explain.

The LPRT will kick off their season using the Pro Penn Green racquetball, also the Official Ball of USA Racquetball and the International Racquetball Federation. However, top LPRT professionals are working with PENN engineers to soon launch a new state-of-the-art racquetball that will bring unmatched visibility and playability for players of all levels.

"It is an exciting time for the LPRT with a record number of events scheduled for the 2016- 2017 season," stated Andy Kulback, LPRT Commissioner. "As we move the tour forward, it was time for our players to play with the #1 ball in the game—Penn!" LPRT President T.J. Baumbaugh said, "The LPRT is excited to expand its relationship with HEAD Penn. HEAD Penn has been a strong supporter of the LPRT and women's racquetball, and we are looking forward to this new chapter in the relationship."

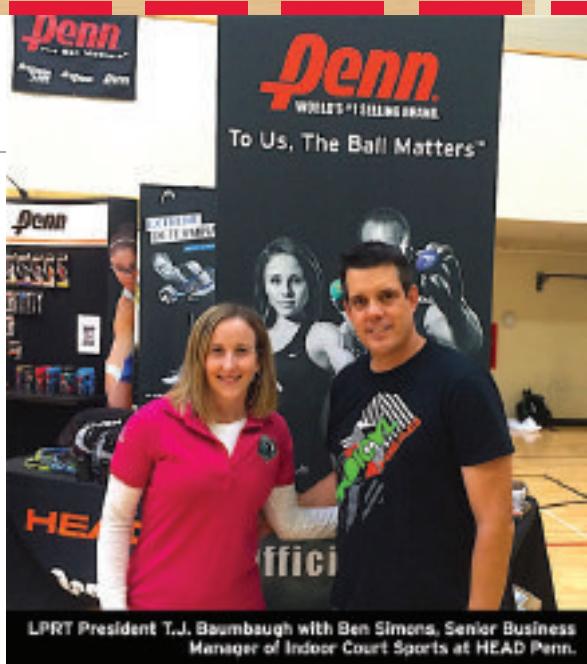
### ASHAWAY RENEWS SPONSORSHIP DEAL WITH RACQUETBALL HALL OF FAMER JACQUELINE PARAISO

**A**shaway Racket Strings recently announced it has renewed its long-standing sponsorship agreement with racquetball great and Hall of Fame player Jacqueline Paraiso.

"Jacqueline is not only a great player and a great ambassador for Ashaway strings, but she is a terrific coach and mentor to younger players, working with junior players as young as 4 and up to 18," said Ashaway's Steve Crandall. "She currently heads up the World Gym Racquetball Kid's Academy, recently created the Racquetball Teen Academy, and has a twenty-five year long history of junior racquetball instruction. We love working with her."

In her professional career, Paraiso has won seven World Championship titles -- more than any other racquetball player -- and has made more appearances on Team USA than any other racquetball player, winning over 20 gold medals in all. She has also won 14 National women's doubles titles and five mixed doubles titles. She was inducted into the USA Racquetball Hall of Fame in 2009. Paraiso lives in California with her husband and has two children.

"Working with kids is my passion," said Jacqueline, "I've done it throughout my professional career and hope to keep doing it as long as I am able. I also love working with Ashaway. I not only use their 17 gauge PowerKill® string but find their selection of racquetball strings excellent for young players just starting out, for juniors playing at the top of the charts, and for adult players at every level."



LPRT President T.J. Baumbaugh with Ben Simons, Senior Business Manager of Indoor Court Sports at HEAD Penn.

HEAD Penn's Paola Longoria, the #1 ranked player in the world, released the following statement in support of the partnership: "I am so excited to have PENN as the new Official Ball of the LPRT. We can now play with the same brand on Tour, at the US OPEN, and in all major international IRF events. I have always played my best when using a PENN ball!"





## @iwga.theworldgames

August 1, 2016 | "Congratulations to our Athlete of the Month for July 2016, Rocky Carson from International Racquetball Federation!"



The week following the Team's return to the U.S. from the IRF Worlds, an announcement came from the International World Games Association that Rocky Carson, five-time (consecutive!) World Champion, was named the IWGA Athlete of the Month for July 2016! Go to <http://www.theworldgames.org/the-sports/athlete-of-the-month> to view the announcement.



## @IRTfan

September 10, 2016 |  
"Congratulations to #15-ranked  
IRT player and head referee  
Matthew Ivar Majxner and his wife,  
Tara, on the birth of their son Noah  
James Majxner!"

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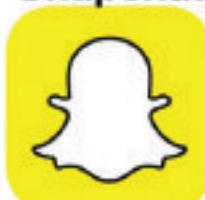
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Use the hashtag **#racquetball**  
in all your posts so we can  
follow you as well.

### Livestream Channel



For all the action visit  
[www.USARacquetball.com](http://www.USARacquetball.com)

### Texans Supporting Veterans and Wounded Soldiers

By: Leo R. Vasquez

**W**hen you think of what could be done with over 200 racquetball racquets, what would your first response be? "Donate them to the Military Racquetball Federation to support our Veterans," said Bob Sullins, Maverick Athletic Club owner in Arlington, Texas. "This donation could help grow our sport by putting racquets into the hands of new players as well as veterans who can enjoy the sport and have some fun like we do."

It began when Darjon Bittner mentioned he had over 200 blank racquetball frames from a previous business and wanted to donate them to someone. Bob and I drove out to Darjon's house one weekend and picked up all the new frames and accessories and took them back to the Maverick to pack and ship off to Steven Harper of the MRF. Steven and the MRF will use these racquets for the Racquetball Rehabilitation Clinics for our wounded soldiers.

Steven responded, "To the entire Texas Team (Leo, Bob, and Darjon), your contribution will definitely go a long way in helping our Disabled Veterans and Wounded Warriors through our adaptive



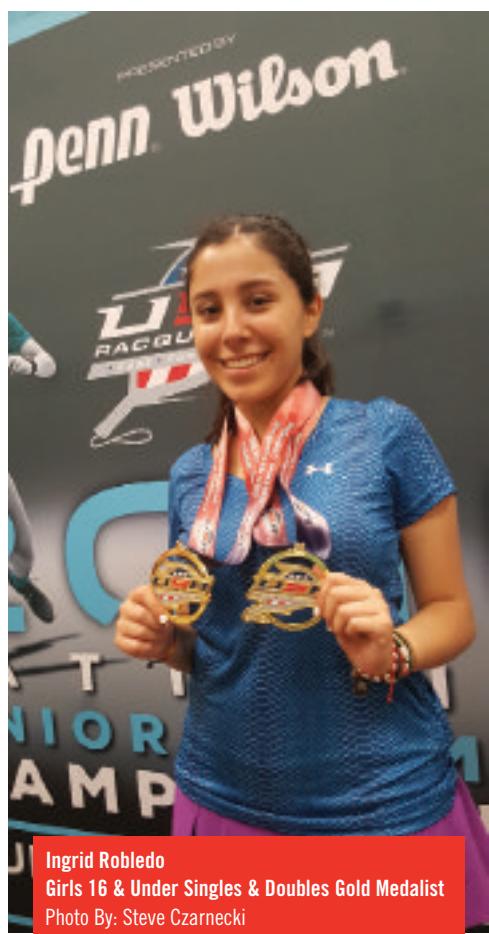
Photo By: Steven Harper

Racquetball Rehabilitation Clinics (RRC). This will make a difference in the lives of those who made the sacrifice for us! We will never forget. Thank you!"

Bob and I echo the same sentiments as Steven: our sincere gratitude goes to Darjon for such a generous donation. It felt great to be a small part of this and to do something for those who protect us and serve our country.

### California Juniors Win 59 Medals, including 13 Gold, at the recent National Junior Olympics

By: Margeret Pederson, Vice President CNRA



Ingrid Robledo  
Girls 16 & Under Singles & Doubles Gold Medalist  
Photo By: Steve Czarnecki

**T**he 43rd 2016 National Junior Olympic Championships presented by PENN and Wilson was held June 22-26, 2016 in Fridley, Minnesota. California was represented by 40 of our best male and female junior athletes. The event serves as the qualifier for the United States Junior National Team. In the fall, the U.S. Junior National Team will travel to Mexico for the International Racquetball Federation's Junior World Championships. The CNRA supported our junior athletes financially by donating \$4,000 to help defray travel and event expenses. The CNRA would like to thank all of the coaches and parents for their selfless love and dedication to these exceptional junior athletes. Congratulations to all of the players and a special shout out to all our medal winners and USA Junior Team members!

#### OTHER MEDAL WINNERS:

Jesse Rojas – 16 Singles (white) - Gold  
Sahil Thakur – 14 Singles (gold) - Bronze  
Vedant Chauhan – 14 Singles (blue) - Gold & 12 Doubles - Gold  
Ivan Hernandez – 14 Singles (blue) - Silver  
Julius Ellis – 14 Singles (red) - Silver  
Krish Thakur – 12 Singles (gold) - Gold  
Vedant Chauhan – 12 Singles (gold) - Silver  
Nikhil Prasad – 12 Singles (gold) – Bronze, 10 Singles (gold) - Gold, 10 Doubles Gold  
Ethan Tu – 12 Singles (white) - Silver, 12 Mixed - Bronze  
Angel Eden Galvan – 10 Singles (blue) Gold  
Bobby Singh – 10 Singles (white) - Gold  
Haiden Rivera – 10 Singles (white) - Silver  
Eshan Ali – 8 MB – Gold and 8 Friendship Gold  
David Rojas – 6 MB – Bronze  
Miles Rivera – 14 Friendship – Silver  
Cody Thomas – 14 Friendship – Bronze  
Akhhill Durai Nath – 12 Friendship – Silver & 2 bounce – Gold  
Julian Singh – 16 Doubles – Silver  
Cody Elkins – 12 Doubles – Bronze  
Advait Kartik – 10 Doubles – Bronze  
Sonya Shetty – 10 Singles – Bronze, 10 Doubles – Silver, 12 Mixed - Bronze  
Jordan Ellis – 8 MB – Bronze  
Alondra Canchola – 12 Friendship and 2 bounce – Gold  
Arya Cyril – 12 Friendship – Silver, and 2 bounce - Bronze  
Esha Cyril – 12 Friendship – Bronze an 2 bounce - Silver

#### Junior Team Members and Gold Medal Winners:

Nikita Chauhan – 14 Singles, 14 Doubles, 16 Singles - Bronze  
Ricardo Diaz – 16 Doubles  
Dane Elkins – 16 Doubles, 16 Singles Bronze  
Heather Mahoney – 14 Singles Silver, 12 Singles and Doubles Gold  
Ingrid Robledo – 16 Singles, 16 Doubles  
Antonia Rojas – 14 Singles, 14 Doubles  
Mauro Rojas – 18 Doubles, National HS Champion

Once again congratulations to ALL our California junior players!

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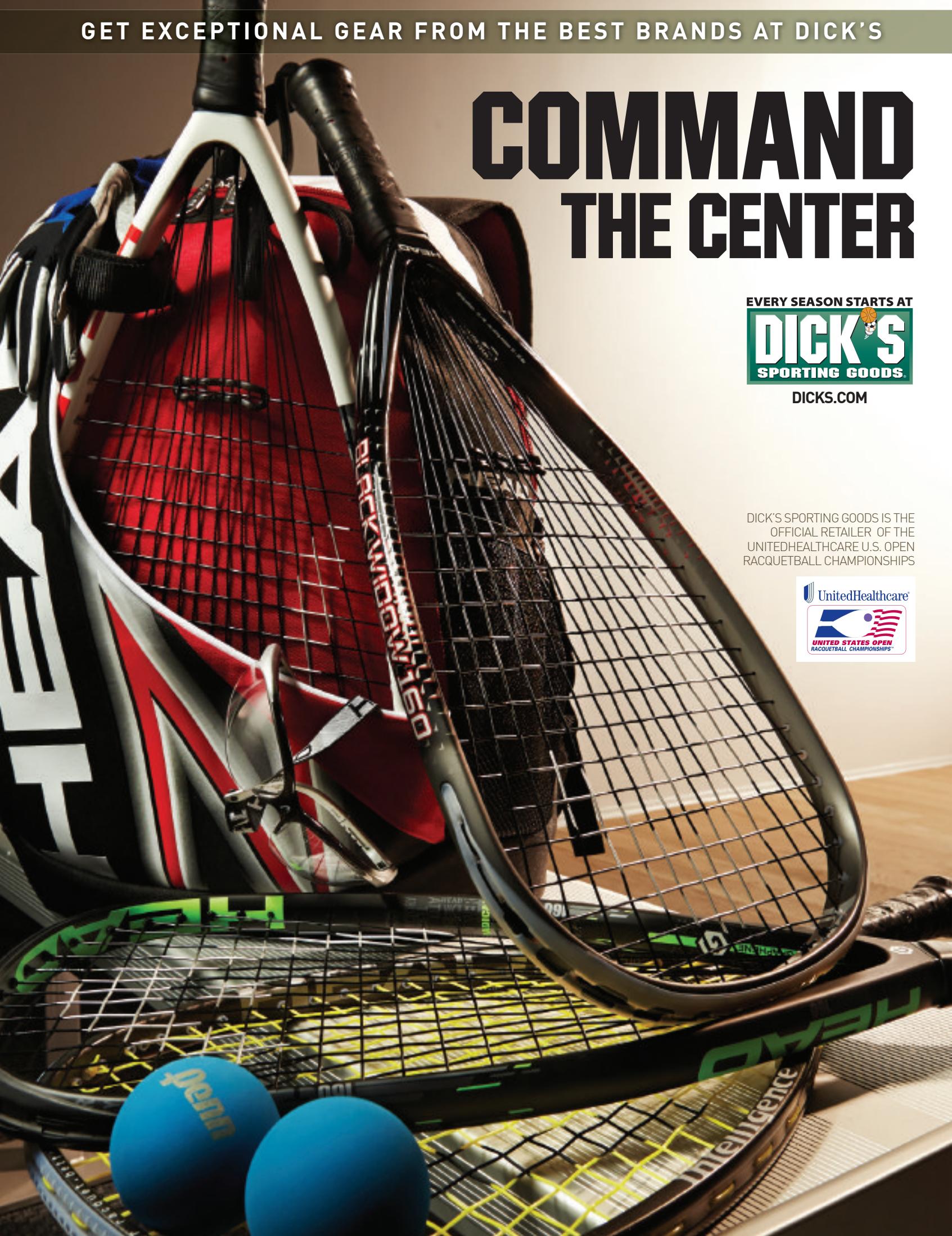




Photo by:  
Russ Chavez  
R&V photography

## WOR...DEEP IN THE HEART OF TEXAS

By Ramon Florez - Director, Alien Racquetball

**L**ook out, Outdoor World! MZ Companies LLC and George (Iceman) Gervin, formerly of the San Antonio Spurs, have partnered to construct a 10-court outdoor facility in San Antonio. The facility will consist of 8 three-wall courts and 2 one-wall courts. Plans are to have the facility in full swing by the fall season.

The facility's central location is ideal to accommodate players from both the east and west coasts. It will host tournaments, exhibitions, shootouts, and weekly leagues for racquetball, handball, and paddleball. All adult and junior skill levels will be offered.

A kickoff tournament, The Iceman Outdoor Racquetball Exhibition, was held on April 14th at APCON/MZ Companies, which houses a one-wall court in their warehouse.

The Exhibition hosted players from 14 cities across Texas, and even some Floridians joined us. Veteran outdoor players showed off their one-wall racquetball skills and others were curious to see if they could adapt their indoor skills to the one-wall challenge. From

the first timers to the masters of the court, all had fun watching and playing.

There was plenty of food, Texas BBQ, drinks, raffles and fun! Racquetball manufacturers ProKennex, Gearbox, and E-Force were on hand in the player village displaying the new season gear.

Many thanks to event sponsors APCON/MZ Companies LLC, Alien Racquetball, HEB, ProStop Racquet Sports, Gulf Coast Graphics, and Court Sport Diva.

Special thanks to Abel and Teresa Perez for hosting the event at their location. Much gratitude also goes to George Iceman Gervin, Anita Johnson Pena, JoAnna Reyes, Hank Marcus, Ryan Maher, and Joe Young for all their efforts and support in kicking off outdoor racquetball in Texas.

Keep y'all posted, and I hope to see y'all on the courts!

## WOR EXPANDS TO MAINE

Story & Image By: Jim Bove

**O**n Saturday June 18th, players from the New England area participated in Maine's first sanctioned World Outdoor Racquetball (WOR) event. It was held at the Saco Middle School, with two fantastic three-wall courts and three one-wall courts in the rear. Boston WOR players only recently discovered the complex. The courts were created through the efforts of Jim Prendergast, a dedicated handball player, who now, at 74 years young, continues to tear up the courts. Jim raised funds and was able to get the land donated by the school and paved by the town. His handball pals mounted a bronze plaque at the courts honoring him.



On the day of the event, the weather was perfect. Fourteen players from around New England showed up to play in the men's open doubles and singles. Everyone played all day with the top teams making the playoffs. In the finals, it was Maine's Brandon Dugas and Boston's Fernando Bento edging out Jon Alvarado and Jim Bove. Eight players rounded out the open singles, with Jon Alvarado taking first place over Bove.



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**Paola Longoria**

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**Rocky Carson**