

Racquetball Reporter

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Racquetball Association of Michigan

2008 STATE DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP CROWNS NEW CHAMPIONS

- Twayne M. Howard

The State Doubles Championship returned to Total Sports and, as always, the players came. Nearly 120 competitors came out and braved the weather to vie for the title "State Champion".

The Junior/Veteran has been a very popular division in the past few years. It gives everyone a chance to check out the up and comers, and see how far the racquetball apple fell from the tree. This year, **Lucas** and **Ed Arias** won the division in round robin fashion. Brad Schopieray and Dave Chirio were the runners-up.

Another division we indoor players "borrowed" from our three-wall friends is the Centurian Division. The total age of the partners must add up to 100. Two folks over fifty, one over 70 and another over 30. . . whatever. When the dust settled (and I mean dust), **Alphonso Pugh** and **Greg Lewerenz** proved they can play with a back wall as well as without, and took the Gold after defeating Jeff Johnson and Chuck Van Hoose. This division is always a fun one to watch.

Greg Lewerenz partnered with **Paula Saad** to win his second Gold Medal of the day and the Mixed Open Championship. They got past Anthnita Dickerson and Ron Barton in the finals.

The Womens Open Championship featured some great play and a couple huge first round upsets. Last year's Champions Paula Saad and Tia Lecland could not repeat as they dropped their first match to Chris Todd and Maureen Price. Sandy White and Claire Kruse, a nationally-competitive team lost to Laura Patterson and Melody Gorno in their opener. The Finals was another great

match. **Laura** and **Melody** took the match and the Gold.

The Mixed A Championship went to **Margrit Schmechko** and **Rick Oswald**. Mary Meeseman and Keith Vogel were the runners-up.

Darryl Hunter and **Russell Baker** made their way through the Mens C Division to claim the championship. Michael Labadie and Michael Petrucci were the runners-up.

Mens B was one of the biggest and most competitive divisions. After several rounds of grueling play, **Greg Sporer** and **George Terryn** defeated Girish Vallabhan and Marcos Rivera for the championship.

Mens A went to **Mike Chambon** and **Rick Vrosh**. Mike and Rick won this huge division by defeating Dan Mullin and John Kutt in the finals.

Mens Open went to **Greg Lewerenz** and **Ron Barton** who defeated Bill Wolcott and Steve Clark in the championship. For those of you keeping track at home, that was Greg's third Gold of the weekend. Not a bad days' work.

Mike Chambon and **Rick Vrosh** doubled up their Gold by defeating Aaron Melch and Pat Burke to win the Mens 25+A Division.

The Mens 35+ Championship went to **Ron Barton** and **John Torres** after they defeated Bill Wolcott and Steve Clark. This was Ron's second Gold of the weekend as well.

Ben Stanley and **Randy Minto** made the trip from Davison and claimed the Mens 45+ Championship for their

(cont. on pg 8)



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THOUGHTS FROM THE PRESIDENT . .

- Twayne M. Howard
President

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Michigan Racquetball Community, we are approaching the finish line of another amazing year. The State Singles is coming up, and what a great capper to the season it is going to be.

We are thrilled to be returning to the **Davison Athletic Club** for the State Singles Championship. The DAC is one of the great tournament houses in Michigan. It dates back to the glory days, and has been innovative enough to help lead us back into the new glory days ahead. Randy Minto and his staff offer excellent hospitality, and the club is still one of the best in the state.

You can expect another full house as the best of the best come to vie for the title "State Champion".

Due to popular demand, we are bringing back the first class Adidas Dri-Fit shirts we've featured over the past couple seasons. Some of the shirts have a retail value of \$50. Your new, lower entry fee is only \$45. I think you can do the math. When you sign up, you may want to come to the tournament early to pick out your favorite design.

Ladies that sign up before March 5, will receive a special Ladies shirt. Make sure you sign up early to beat the rush.

Check out the enclosed entry form. You can also sign up for State Singles online at www.r2sports.com.

I'd like to point out another highlight of this season - the **Junior Fantastic Four** events run by Don Schopieray. Don has come up with a tremendous program that is garnering national attention. Four events are designated for the program, and any Junior that signs up gets to play in their skill level, and they will get lots of play. Each event has gotten bigger each year, and

almost half of the matches go to tie-breakers. That just shows how great the competition is.

You should notice some changes in the Newsletter coming your way very soon. We are now living in a digital age and you can expect RAM to go right along with this innovation. If you have any thoughts on the format, just give me a shout - 616-540-7925 or

Twayne.Howard@michiganracquetball.net

If you have any comments on anything else having to do with racquetball in Michigan, just let me know.

"The only constant is change". A wise person once said that. What does that change mean? How do you react to it? What do you want to do about it? "What the heck is he talking about? The Racquetball Association of Michigan will go through strategic planning process this summer to lay the course for the next 5 years. Who are we? Who do we work for? What are our goals? These questions are faced by every organization. RAM is no different.

If you are interested in being a part of setting the strategic priorities for RAM for the future, contact me. We want as many people involved as possible. Without your input, the process will not be what we need it to be. Let your voice be heard so we can move the organization forward together.



*The Racquetball Reporter is printed courtesy of
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2007 US OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS

- Dan Mullin

By the numbers: 670 people entered the 2007 US Open Championships in Memphis in November. Eight countries were represented ranging from Chile to Ireland and six of the nine providences from Canada. Forty five states were represented ranging from Hawaii and Alaska to Maine, with the average entries from each state of thirteen people. Michigan sent nineteen people to represent the state and returned with ONE US Open champion: **MARK CANDY**! Congratulations for taking the gold in 45+B!

For some of those traveling to Memphis, it was their first time to the big show. **Keith Bryan** made it to the semi-finals in 25+C and 45+C, **Bryan Galloway** also made it to the semi-finals in 45+C almost setting up an all Michigan finals but settled for third and Keith fourth.

For those that have made the journey before, **Jack Huczek** walked through much of the Pro Division before meeting stiff competition in the finals. Rocky Carson and Jack know each other well and Rocky bested Jack this

time in a tough match. **Dan Mullin** came away with third in 35+B after losing 9-11 in the semi-final tiebreaker. **Dave Lund** came one win away from making it to the finals in the 70+ pool play and **Stanley Kurzman** took fourth in 75+.

The format for games at the US Open is different from the Nationals in that the games are spread over five different clubs miles apart from each other. This makes it very difficult to cheer someone on unless you happen to be at the right club at the right time. This year was more supportive than the past. Many of the freshman players happened to be at the same club near times that they had to play. You could definitely tell when a Michigan player was on the court because there always a large contingent of people hooting and hollering. For the player, it was encouraging and compelling.

I watched one game where **Rich Westerbrink** had a healthy deficit (5-13) in the second game after losing the first game (8-15). Six to eight people were there cheering him on. Not only did he come back to win the second game (15-14),

but he destroyed his opponent in the tiebreaker (11-0). For everyone that stuck around to watch another person from Michigan play – it was greatly appreciated!

Some of the best parts of traveling to one of the national events are meeting new people, watching great non-stop racquetball, and in some cases, getting to referee games. I witnessed, on many occasions, Michigan racquetball players call replay hinders, penalty hinders, tics, etc. on themselves overriding a ref's decision against themselves. Some lessons learned are: Don't be Swift to argue with the referee if a call does not go your way. Don't be Swift and be obnoxious on the court. Don't be Swift and get angry at your opponent for accepting a refs call, good or bad. You do represent your state and fellow racquetball players. I mention this because I was overwhelmed with pride when on more than a half dozen times it was mentioned how it was a pleasure to play a person from Michigan because of *the great sportsmanship that was demonstrated on the court*. Be proud and see you next year in October at the US Open.

2007-08 RAM TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

Feb 1-3	Motor City Rollout, Courtland Athletic Club, Utica
Feb 9	Aloha Open, Genesys Athletic Club, Grand Blanc
Feb 22-24	Capital Challenge, Michigan Athletic Club, Lansing
Mar 1	Inaugural March Maximus, Westland Coliseum, Westland
Mar 14-16	STATE SINGLES, Davison Athletic Club
Mar 28-30	South West Michigan Racquetball Shootout, Bronson A C, Kalamazoo

JUNIOR'S CORNER . . .

TEAM MICHIGAN SCORES A TOP TEN FINISH AT THE 2007 JUNIOR NATIONALS

- Don Schopieray

Junior Team Michigan rolled into Tempe, Arizona last June hoping to capitalize on the success they had the previous year at the MAC in East Lansing and if the matches were as hot as the temperature it was going to be a great time for all.

300 players from 33 states arrived at the University of Arizona campus to decide national championships and World team appointments. When the dust settled, the kids from Michigan had finished an impressive 9th place overall. One of the highlights was the All American recognitions received by **Sam and Mary Zeng**.

Ten players in all represented Michigan this year and great fun was had by all, even though the daily

average for temperature was a whopping 115 degrees. I would like to thank our team coaches Jim Woolcock, Fei Zeng, Matt Barbuscak, and Ed Arias for all their help during the week. Without these guys keeping all the kids playing at their best, a top ten finish would have been impossible.

Next years tournament (2008) will be held in Concord, California. Team Michigan is looking forward to keeping the current trend of high quality play going. If you are interested in going to the 2008 Junior National Tournament, it will be during the last week in June. Contact Don Schopieray for more information at don113x@comcast.net. Also if you are interested in helping to coach or sponsor the team, contact Don.



L-R top row: Jim Woolcock, Brad Schopieray, Mercedes Arias, Mary Zeng, Cory Zeng, Ed Arias, Don Schopieray
L-R bottom row: Matt Barbuscak Sr., David Zeng, Matt Barbuscak Jr., Bryan Schopieray, Sam Zeng, Fei Zeng
Not Shown, Andrew Price

JUNIOR'S CORNER . . .



3rd ANNUAL JUNIOR TEAM MICHIGAN GOLF OUTING

Calling all golfers and those who support junior racquetball in Michigan. The Junior Team Michigan benefit golf outing is set for June 14th this year and should be bigger and better than ever.

This year's Junior Nationals will be in Concord California. So come out and support the team and have some fun while helping send Michigan's delegation to California. Last year's outing was a huge success. We had plenty of sunshine, a great course, and some great food. Timber Ridge Golf Club in Bath Michigan has agreed to host our event again this year and for those of you who have not been there before it is a very nice place to play.

This year's event will feature some new twists to the traditional game. For more information and to enter, contact Don Schopieray at don113x@comcast.net.

Come out and help give Team Michigan a big send off to California

JUNIOR FANTASTIC FOUR HAS ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL SEASON

- Don Schopieray

For the second season in a row the Fantastic four Junior series experienced a significant increase in participation.

This year we had an average of 26 juniors at each of the four events. In addition to the great turnout of players, we also added Head and Ektelon as the series sponsors.

The skill based format of competition has produced some great matches and helped us introduce junior racquetball to many beginner tournament players in a less intimidating fashion. Parent response to this format has been exceptional and everyone seems to be working well together to bring the fun into each of the events.

I would like to thank tournament directors Dan Mullin, Twayne Howard, and Randy Minto for all their help with this series. Next year we have even bigger and better things planned so stay tuned.



Junior Team Michigan Coach, Jim Woolcock, helping Bryan Schopieray through another tough match at the 2007 Junior Nationals in June

SWIMMING THE STRAITS OF MACKINAC

- Kristy Kehl

For many of you, racquetball has been your life for years and years. You live it, eat it, and breathe it. You started at a young age, maybe even born with a racquet tied around your wrist. You went to tournaments with your parents and itched for that moment after a match where you had your five minutes of glory chasing the ball around the court. I, on the other hand, am a 33 year-old who has just started to realize what an awesome sport it is. I have no formal training and no parents that play. I didn't start when I was young and am really just starting to make it a bigger part of my life. So, if racquetball isn't really "my life", then what is? Well, allow me to share just one thing that has been a huge part of my life in 2007.



This summer, crazy Great Lakes swimmer Jim Dreyer decided to gather a team of 50 swimmers together to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Mackinac Bridge by swimming across the Straits, the 4 miles of water connecting St. Ignace to Mackinaw City. Since I am a person who loves a challenge, I thought it sounded like an awesome opportunity, but since I'd never swam more than a half mile, I thought it might not be the best challenge for me to take on. My competitive spirit got the best of me and after a bit of prayer and contemplation, I quickly joined the team.

I immediately started my training regime. I started by swimming a half mile and increased that distance until I was swimming 2 and a half miles twice a week and 5 miles once a week. WOW! We were promised that if we followed this training plan, we should be ready to face the treacherous cross-currents of the Straits on Labor Day. Because of my 24 hour work schedule and a busy summer, I was forced to do much of my training in a local pool. When I started my pool training, I remember days when I struggled to swim a mile (70 lengths in the pool), but I also remember days when 5 miles (350 lengths) seemed like a breeze.

After a long summer of training, Labor Day finally arrived. We awoke at 4:30 am to prepare for our 6:30 am send-off. I remember asking myself what I was doing and don't really remember having an answer for myself! My mom and dad both spent some time with me in prayer before I hit the road. Of course my mother also reminded me not to kill myself out there! After arriving in St. Ignace, we got slicked up and squeezed into our wetsuits. One of my biggest concerns was the temperature of the water. I didn't know how my body would handle it, so I hoped and

prayed for the best. Thankfully, I never felt even a slight bit cold in the 56 degree water.

We were split into groups and each group had a support boat. The support boat pulled a buoy 50 yards behind it and it was to keep every swimmer within 50 yards of the boat at all times, in case a rescue was necessary. I opted to be in the "Slow Group" so I could pace myself and finish, not intending to go for any speed records. When we got in the water, I was surprised at how comfortable I felt. We swam on the east side of the bridge and I was able to have a phenomenal view of the bridge for the entire swim. I was also amazed at how clear the water was and I was thrilled that I never saw any man-eating sturgeon (another one of my fears)!

As our swim began, the water was very calm and still, but soon changed to quite sizeable waves. No breaking waves or whitecaps, just big swells. The waves that were once big swells, eventually turned into a strong northwesterly current. The current was so strong that at one point our boat was swept from one side of the bridge to the other. During this time, I became separated from my support boat and fought against the strong current alone. I spent 30 minutes swimming in place without any forward progress. The current continued to strengthen as we made our way across the waters. It was pretty amazing to realize the strength of the water and the ability it had to change in an instant.

The swimmers in my group continued to struggle with the current. With the shoreline well in view, and after swimming for 4 hours, I once again became stuck in a strong current. As the support boat started to move away and my frustration with the current increased, the strength of the water started to worry me. Although I didn't feel tired, I felt like I just didn't have the strength left to pull my way through the current. I called the boat back and decided to end my journey. I didn't realize how close I was to the finish until I got in the boat, but it was too late to continue on, so I decided to focus on the great accomplishment that I had made. Taking on this 4 mile challenge was a huge deal for me. I learned a ton and was thrilled to be part of the team.

Although this adventure has made me realize the great love I have for swimming, right now I've decided to focus on something that I have even more fun with. RACQUETBALL! I look forward to seeing you on the courts real soon. If you feel like going for a cool-down swim when we're done playing, I'd love to join you, as long as it's less than 5 miles!

WATER YOU WAITING FOR???

- Susana Arias, RD

Water (aka H₂O) is the most important molecule on our planet and the major component in both the human body (you are composed of about 60% water; that's 42 liters or 92 pounds in a person weighing 70 kilograms or 154 pounds) and in many of the foods we eat. It is distributed throughout the body; protecting cells and tissues; lubricating joints; acting as a solvent for all chemical reactions; and most importantly in this context for transporting nutrients and wastes (cardiovascular function) and (thermo) regulation of body temperature through perspiration.

By now you might be thinking what does this have to do with me and racquetball. Water is the most important nutrient in your sports diet. You may not be playing your best or find yourself feeling somewhat fatigued and the reason for that might just be that you forgot your water bottle. You should think of your water bottle as another piece of equipment like your gloves, goggles and racquets.

All forms of exercise result in heat production, resulting in increased water evaporation in the form of perspiration to regulate body temperature. Racquetball at all levels is known as an intermittent high intensity (IHI) form of exercise, that is a kind of stop-and-go sport requiring bursts of energy with rest periods in between. Though rallies may only last 4-20 seconds on average, they are very intense, requiring much anaerobic energy; a more inefficient form of energy production which results in greater heat generation. This results in a greater heart rate (HR) to help provide nutrients (e.g. oxygen, glucose) to and remove waste from muscles but more importantly to help cool the body through perspiration.

While playing racquetball, you're losing a lot of water through your sweat. Even though you may not necessarily be feeling tired because you are resting between each rally and the court is air conditioned, your body is undergoing thermoregulatory changes and sweating is the body's mechanism to maintain a constant internal temperature.

"If you didn't sweat, you could cook yourself to death" says Nancy Clark from Sports Nutrition Guidebook. Sweat loss of 1 liter per hour is common in temperate environments such as an air conditioned racquetball court, though you may lose up to 2 liters per hour when playing outdoor racquetball. So you can see that playing without rehydrating can definitely decrease performance, which may translate into poor footwork, being lazy to get to the ball or back to center court, racquet prep, stroke mechanics, etc. . . you name it and even more importantly, mental function (e.g. shot selection, anticipation, strategy thought process, etc.) will degrade before muscle function does.

Inevitably, no matter how much water you drink, in a sport like racquetball and especially in a tournament format where you may be playing several divisions and perhaps a 1 hour plus match every other hour if not back to back, you will always be in some form of a dehydrated state. . . think of it as continuously driving a car down a steep hill, hopefully the tournament will be over before your brakes fail.

How much water should I drink? The exact amount depends on how large you are and how much your stomach can handle (amounts mentioned here are for a 70 kg person).

Drinking water BEFORE exercising (prehydration) is an often used

strategy to try to stay well-ahead of performance-impairing dehydration. Usually, it is best to drink 500ml (16oz) of fluid before going to bed on the night before playing (especially in a tournament) and the same first thing in the morning to ensure full hydration. Science studies also say drinking another 500+ml about an hour before your match and an additional 250 plus ml 20 minutes before to "top off" stores, though this may be extreme and may be more geared toward endurance exercise where you don't have many opportunities to rehydrate during competition. In a racquetball setting, you might find yourself going to the bathroom a little early, but you can try it out. One thing is for sure, you definitely do not want to go into a match or especially a tournament in a dehydrated state.

So you're at the tournament and well-hydrated for your first match. Continue to hydrate during (at timeouts) and between the games. As far as what to drink, water is always the best fluid replacer for most athletes who exercise for less than 60 to 90 minutes, as water is inexpensive and readily available. So, you won your match but you went to tiebreaker and the match lasted over 2 hours. Time is short and you should rehydrate immediately. Even if your next match is an hour away, drinking 2 liters of water 45 minutes ahead of time will only replace about 60% of the fluid lost in the previous match and if you just drink water at this point, much of it will be lost in urine. However, this is where sodium comes into play as having it (as well as other electrolytes and carbohydrates) in your rehydration beverage will maintain thirst and reduce losses in urine due to their osmotic properties, not to mention

(cont. on pg 8)

WATER (cont. from pg 7)

glycogen-sparing (but that's the subject of another article). Thus it's fine to drink water before your match but perhaps better to drink an energy drink (e.g. Gatorade) during and post-competition.

So in summary, the key points to remember are:

- 1) Do not start a match or competition in a hypo-hydrated (less than normal volume of body water) as you will likely experience poor cardiovascular function, temperature regulation, and ultimately your racquetball play will suffer.
- 2) Hyperhydrating yourself prior to a match, or particularly a tournament, will

help you stay ahead of the dehydration state.

- 3) Rule of thumb, drink 16oz before going to bed on the night before playing, 16oz when you wake up, 16oz+ an hour before your match and another 8-16oz 20 minutes before the match to ensure a normal hydrated state.
- 4) What you drink is important. Water is good but drinks containing carbohydrate (to supply energy) and small amounts of sodium chloride (to maintain thirst and reduce fluid loss in urine) are likely to have better effects.

DOUBLES (cont. from pg 1)

troubles. George Yarbenet and Jim Miller were the runners-up.

The Mens 40+B Gold went to **Dave Chirio** and **Twayne Howard** who got past George Terryn and Gregg Sporer in a long tie-breaker to win the championship.

The Mens 45+B went to **Greg Frazier** and **Norman Borden** after they defeated Keith Vogel and Rick Oswald in the Finals.

Ed Arias and **Greg Zivov** continued their winning ways by taking the Mens 50+ Championship. Ed and Greg are one of the most talented teams anywhere. In the Finals, they defeated Jack White and Tom Blakeslee.

And then, there were the Juniors. Twenty-two Juniors took to the courts bright and early Sunday morning. They were split into 3 divisions and played until they dropped. When the dust settled in the Junior Open, **Brad Schopieray** and **Trevor Sporer** defeated Lucas Arias and Sam Zeng to win the championship. Eric Sporer and Mercedes Arias got past Matt Barbuscak Bryan Schopieray and to claim Third place. Over half of the matches in this division went to a tie-breaker.

The Junior A Division also had half of the matches decided by tie-breakers. In the Junior A and Junior B divisions, the players traded partners and played round-robin before being split into teams. This helped produce the tie-breakers. In the end **Grant Hoffecker** and **Myles Kelly** were the champions. Cory Zeng finished third and Ines LeCland finished in fourth Place.

The Junior B Championship went to **Zack D'Almeida** and **Caige Duryea**. Katie Bowles and Braeden D'Almeida finished in fourth Place.

USAR SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD

Have you seen anyone display outstanding sportsmanship? Perhaps someone called a skip ball on themselves on game point. Perhaps you've seen a player call a penalty hinder on themselves. Perhaps you know another player who shows great sportsmanship at all times. If so, then USA Racquetball is looking for you. Every year, USAR gives out a Sportsmanship award to a player, either for one particular act, or for a pattern of sportsmanship. Every year, they do not get enough nominees. If you would like to nominate someone for the national award, please contact Jim Hiser at jhiser@usra.org, or you can let me know and I will pass it on.

Each year the Racquetball Association of Michigan give the same award. The past three winners were: **Paul Stanwick**, **Twayne Howard** and **Mike Malcolm**.

Don't forget, RAM also gives out the following awards: Most Improved Player, Most Improved Junior Player of the Year, Club of the Year, Tournament Director of the Year, Junior Player of the Year, Female Player of the Year and Male Player of the Year. If you see someone who deserves those awards, you can nominate them by contacting me directly or nominate a player by using the State Singles entry form. *(You do not need to enter the tournament to nominate a player for one of the awards.)*

This matched our previous best turnout for Juniors, and from the looks of it, they all had a great time. I love to see the kids play. They are the future of the sport, and we can't possibly do enough to help encourage them.

Make sure you clear your calendar for the first weekend in December, 2008. State Doubles will be coming your way again. Don't miss it.

WHY I ALWAYS WEAR APPROVED PROTECTIVE EYEGUARDS

- Keith Bryan

I had just finished a Tae Kwon Do work out and was asked by a couple of fellow racquetball buddies to jump in for a quick game of cut throat. For league play or tournaments, I always wore my contact lenses with an approved protective eye guard. For this one spontaneous game of cut throat, I had my glasses on which were a polycarbonate (shatter-proof) lens, and figured my glasses would suffice.

It was a return of serve. I never saw it. The impact was a direct hit to my left eye, and knocked me completely off of my feet. My racquetball buddies immediately came to my aid, checked me over, and reported the eye looked fine, but there was a cut on my nose. However, it wasn't the laceration on my nose that had me worried, rather it was the complete loss of vision in my left eye. Every thing was white with a numb sensation, which soon turned to agonizing pain. My eye was not bleeding externally, so I was hopeful all would be fine when I called my wife to come to take me to the ER.

One ER visit, three eye specialists, and four surgeries later, I had partial vision restored in my left eye. I suffered a severe corneal

abrasion, vitreous hemorrhaging, and acute glaucoma was threatening the optic nerve, all from the racquetball forcing the shatter-proof eyeglass lens back into my eye socket imploding my eyeball. One ophthalmologist remarked that I was very fortunate that I was not completely blind.

"Each year, more than 40,000 athletes suffer an eye injury. Racquet sports are responsible for more eye injuries than any other sport." (*Racquetball Safety: Proper eye protection is vital* by Michael Gerdt) "People mistakenly believe that racquet sports are safe compared to sports like football and hockey. However, the ball can travel at speeds up to 175 miles per hour and the size of the ball fits perfectly into the eye socket." (*Saving Your Sight* by Mark A. Sibley, M.D)

Wearing protective eyewear can prevent 90% of sports-related injuries. Eyeglasses do not provide protection and can even place an athlete at an increased risk for such injuries. Because sports eye injuries often result from high impact and blunt trauma, protective eyewear should be considered **necessary equipment** for all racquetball athletes every time.

2008 TIEBREAKER OPEN LIVES UP TO ITS NAME

- Don Schopieray

The 2008 version of the Tiebreaker open is in the books and wow, what a weekend. This tournament is fast becoming a premier event on the RAM calendar and this year was no exception. With over 90 players entered, you just knew it was the place to be if you wanted some quality racquetball.

The weekend featured over 135 matches in the adult divisions and a staggering 57 of those matches went to tiebreaker, more than one player had to endure tiebreaker matches all the way through the draw to the finals. Most draws had 12-16 players and our Junior group featured 30 of the up and coming players in the state.

Great food and prizes highlighted the weekend making it one of the best tournaments so far this year. Special thanks go out to tournament desk master, Jim Woolcock, for keeping the event on time and even ahead at times. Also thanks go out to Randy Minto, and Steve Doucette for all their help. The number of tiebreaker matches is a real testament to Randy's expertise in making the draws and really leveling the playing field.

We really look forward to seeing everyone back here at the beautiful Davison Athletic Club in March for the State Singles tournament.

ADVERTISING RATES FOR THE RAQUETBALL REPORTER FOR 2007-08

The Racquetball Reporter is published quarterly throughout the year - August, November, February, and May. Items to be included in the Racquetball Reporter for the **2006-07** year must be submitted by the following dates:

August 3, 2006	January 5, 2007
October 4, 2006	April 20, 2007

Advertisement material is subject to approval by the RAM Board of Directors. The prices for advertisement material are:

\$400 - Full page ad to run in all four issues (7" w x 9.5" h)

\$250 - Half page ad to run in all four issues (7" w x 4.75" h)
\$150 - Quarter page ad to run in all four issues (3.5" w x 4.75" h)
\$100 - Club listing for all four issues (3" w x 2" h)

All advertisements must be submitted in camera ready format in the appropriate size. E-mailed graphics can be accepted in either a **.TIFF** or **.JPG** format. All advertisements will be in black and white for all issues, except the May issue which will be in full color. Payment must accompany submission of all advertisement material. Information may be mailed to The Racquetball Reporter, 321 Village Dr., Lansing, MI 48911 or sent electronically to djeasterling@earthlink.net.

HISTORY OF RACQUETBALL IN MICHIGAN

- Jim Easterling

Do you play racquetball trivia? Are you a racquetball history nut or interested in past players and their accomplishments. Would you like to know. . .

Who used to be the best men and women players in Michigan . .

Who won what divisions in what tournaments in what years . .

Who in Michigan won Regional or National tournaments . .

What Jim Hiser used to do with racquetball in Michigan . .

Where all the state tournaments and pro stops were located at in Michigan . .

How many "Women only" tournaments have been run in Michigan . .

Who has been on the state racquetball association over the years . .

How many "6 and Under" divisions did Jack Huczek win . .

Where was the first referee/rules clinic held . .

Who was "Radiation Man", "Killshot Carpenter", and "Big Z" . .

What was "MRA", "MARA", "MCRA", "IRA", and "AARA". .

How long has there been a state association in Michigan and who was the first President . .

Who ran the first "eye guards mandatory" tournament in Michigan . .

Where and when was the first round robin Seniors/Masters tournament . .

This information is a must for all racquetball trivia aficionados and

is now preserved all in one place. This information could previously only be found in various state association newsletters which have spanned the past thirty years.

Jim and Dianne Easterling have been working for a few years now organizing, reducing the size of, coming up with dates, and scanning their copies of state racquetball newsletters. All of the information is now contained on one CD.

The CD preserves copies of newsletters that are thirty years old. The CD contains the results of many tournaments (local, state, regional and national). It has pictures of racquetball players in their prime both in color and black and white. The CD has 113 different newsletters containing 985 pages of information as well as copies of tournament entry forms from years past.

This CD which contains over 30 years of racquetball history, is a perfect compliment to the current newsletters contained on the RAM website.

If you would like to have a copy of this CD contact Jim Easterling at (517) 887-0459 for more information on the CD and how to obtain one.

If you really are a racquetball history nut, like I am, you really need this CD as it chronicles the history and development of racquetball in Michigan.



LETTER FROM FRANK TADDONIO TO TOM BLAKESLEE

Tom,

As I mentioned to you during our conversation at the US Open, I am extremely grateful to the Easterlings for including me on your State newsletter mailing list for both of my overseas trips.

As background, recall that I stepped down as President of the USAR for an opportunity in Afghanistan but maintained contact as a member of the Hall of Fame Committee chaired by Jim Easterling. I received the newsletter during my year in Kabul then I, again, received the newsletters during my year in Baghdad, Iraq. I cannot tell you how much I appreciated the thoughtfulness of having the newsletters sent although I am not from your State and I was overseas. I even shared the newsletter with fellow coalition members from Michigan and they loved it even if they didn't play racquetball!

You and all the members of your State association can be extremely proud of the Easterlings for this but also for all the work they and your other Board members contribute to this first class newsletter. It is easy to see, and read, that your association is top notch and serves the Michigan racquetballers extremely well.

Thanks again for this and all you and your Board members are doing. Happy Holidays to you all.

Sincerely,

Frank

This was a letter of appreciation sent to Tom Blakeslee from Frank Taddonio, former USA Racquetball President who was serving in Afghanistan.



RACQUETBALL ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN

2008 RAM STATE SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIPS

MARCH 14-16, 2008

DAVISON ATHLETIC CLUB

2140 Fairway Dr., Davison, MI 48423

phone (810) 653-9602



ENTRY FEES & DEADLINE

First Event	\$45	USAR Membership	\$35
Second Event	\$20	Juniors	\$15

Telephone & Late entries additional \$5

Entries must be received by MONDAY MARCH 10, 2008. You may sign up ONLINE at www.r2sports.com. Any entries received after the deadline of March 10 will be subject to a \$5 late fee. To be entered, we must receive your entry form, a phone call or email AND PAYMENT. THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS. Please help us by signing up early to avoid the crush at the deadline.

RULES

Single elimination format with matches consisting of two games to fifteen and a tie-breaker to eleven. USA Racquetball rules apply including **mandatory USAR-approved lensed eyeguards**. Divisions with less than four players may be run as a round robin event.

STARTING TIMES

Play will begin on Friday, March 14 for draws of 16 or more. Every effort will be made to reduce Friday play. **Call the club on Thursday, March 13, 2008 after 12:00 pm** for starting times or check online at: <http://www.michiganracquetball.net>

AWARDS

Awards will be given for the first four places in divisions of 16 or more. Each participant will receive a tournament souvenir. All juniors will receive a Team Michigan shirt and participation award.

ELIGIBILITY

Any participant must live or work full time in the state of Michigan, and be a member of RAM. Players must be able to provide proof if challenged.

TOURNAMENT DIRECTORS

Tom Blakeslee (586) 468-2787 Twayne Howard (616) 540-7925 Dan Mullin Don Schopieray Jack White

ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY MARCH 10, 2008

Name _____ Club Affiliation _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip Code _____

Phone (days) _____ (evenings) _____ Date of Birth _____

Email address: _____

Make checks payable to RAM, and mail to RAM State Singles Championships, 38114 Lakeshore, Harrison Twp., MI 48045

Entry Fee	\$45	_____
2nd Event Fee	\$20	_____
Junior Fee	\$15	_____
USAR Membership	\$35	_____
Telephone/Late Fee	\$5	_____

TOTAL AMOUNT _____

Waiver clause: I hereby for myself, my heirs, executors & administrators, waive & release any & all claims for damages I may have against RAM, the host club, tournament staff, & their agents, for all injuries which may be suffered by me in conjunction with my participation in this tournament.

Signature: _____ Date: _____
(parent/guardian signature if under 18)

DIVISIONS

circle correct choices - limit 2 divisions

MENS ☐ WOMENS ☐ JUNIORS ☐

Open	45+ Open	25+ A	35+ D	50+ C
A	50+ Open	25+ B	40+ A	50+ D
B	55+ Open	25+ C	40+ B	55+ A
C	60+ Open	25+ D	40+ C	55+ B
D	65+ Open	30+ A	40+ D	55+ C
Novice	70+ Open	30+ B	45+ A	55+ D
24-Open	75+ Open	30+ C	45+ B	60+ A
25+Open	24 - A	30+ D	45+ C	60+ B
30+Open	24 - B	35+ A	45+ D	60+ C
35+Open	24 - C	35+ B	50+ A	60+ D
40+Open	24 - D	35+ C	50+ B	18 & Under

Alternate Division: _____

 14 & Under
 12 & Under
 10 & Under
 8 & Under

Mail To: RAM STATE SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIP, 38114 Lakeshore, Harrison Twp., MI 48045

AWARD NOMINATIONS - You may nominate people without playing in the tournament

Please nominate only one person per category.

You may choose to nominate for one or more categories

Awards are based on accomplishments during the 2007-08 season

You may submit nominations with out playing in the tournament & you can email them to
president @michiganracquetball.net

Female Player of the Year _____

Male Player of the Year _____

Junior Player of the Year _____

Most Improved Player _____

Sportsman of the Year _____

Tournament Director of the Year _____

Club/Owners of the Year _____

Other (specify contribution) _____

Racquetball Reporter

321 Village Dr.
Lansing, MI 48911



2008 STATE SINGLES ENTRY ENCLOSED