



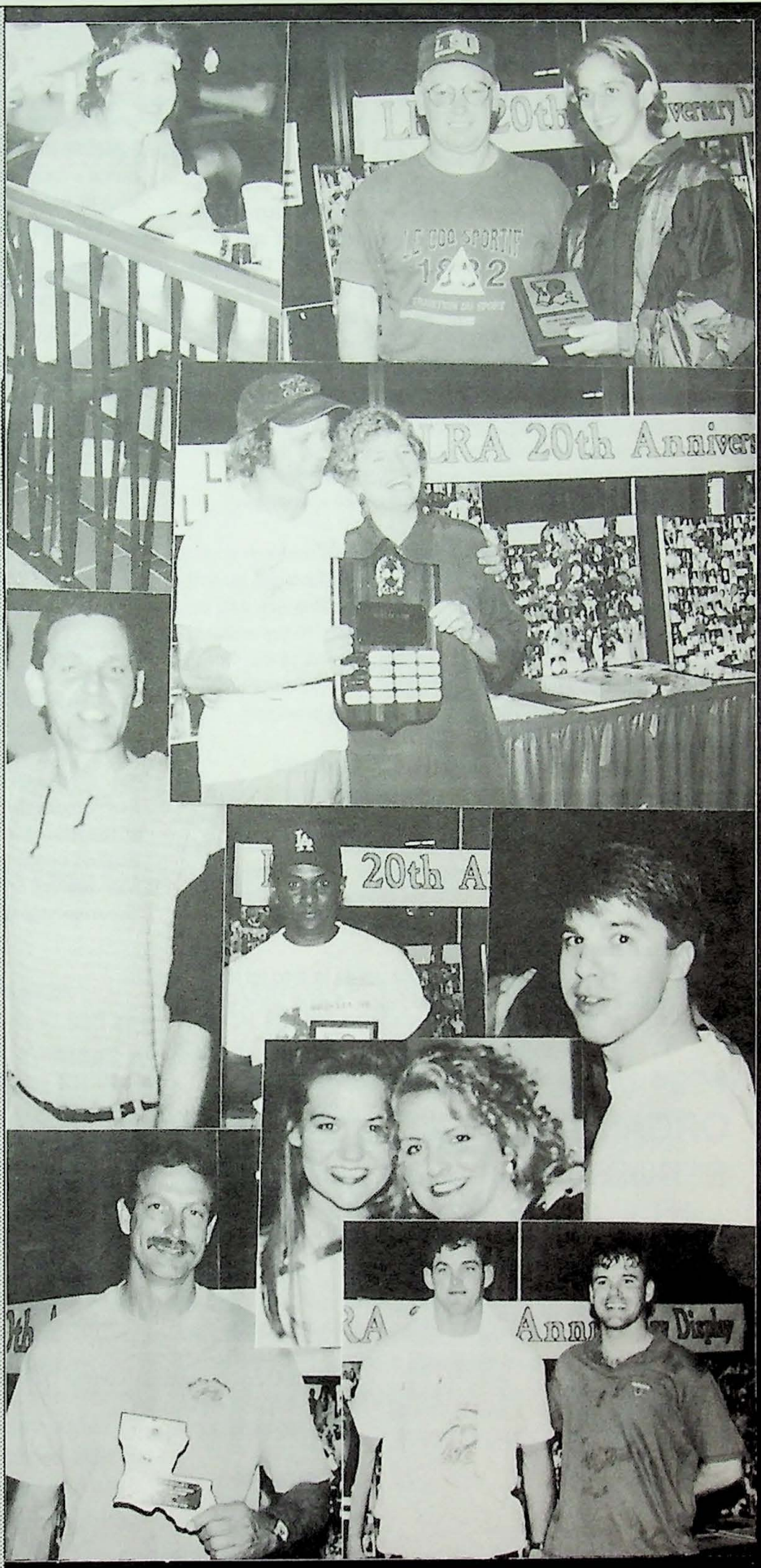
DOWN THE LINE

LOUISIANA RACQUETBALL ASSOCIATION

"DEDICATED TO
PROMOTING THE GAME
OF RACQUETBALL"

June/July, 1995 Vol 16, No. 11

The Louisiana Racquetball Association
P.O. Box 669
Mandeville, Louisiana 70470



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

THE STORY ON THE DECLINE OF RACQUETBALL

Is racquetball really a declining sport? If you look at the sport on the local level, you might tend to agree with some individuals who say racquetball is dying. I will disagree with that!! I have been traveling for the past seven years and have been experiencing racquetball on different levels. I think this great sport has made great strides and it is time for us to get moving again toward promoting the sport at the local level.

Racquetball is not falling off--racquet companies are pouring more and more money into developing and improving the technology of the equipment. Look at how far the racquets have come. You can look at a player and see if they have been in the sport or are just coming back by looking at the racquet they are using. The market is becoming more and more competitive. The days of Ektelon dominance is changing. This will only keep the sport moving.

The Pro Tours for the men and women are seeing more sponsorships--more endorsements. Our own Elmwood hosts a VCI men's pro stop every year. This year the Pro-Am will be held August 9 - August 13. Plan to either play in the amateur divisions or just come watch the top men players in the world compete. Elmwood was voted the top club in the state this year and this is just one reason they do such a good job promoting the sport of racquetball.

This year the Pan American games included racquetball as one of the events. Our U.S. team took the gold in the overall team competition along with a gold in the men's and women's divisions. Becoming an Olympic sport is not just a dream any more. The future is very near and we can only hope that the efforts of the AARA become a reality. Read more about the Pan American Games in this month's Racquetball magazine.

It is time for us racquetball die-hards to step up and start promoting the sport we love so much. Speak up if your

club is starting to close courts. Speak up if your club does not organize any programs. Every club cannot afford to pay someone to develop programs and run clinics; but every club needs a racquetball enthusiast. Every club needs someone to help us promote the sport at all levels. The general public (those people who do not belong to a club) need to be exposed to the sport. How can we get them to experience that first rush we got when we first stepped onto the court? Having a tournament at your club can give the sport a lot of exposure. When was the last time your club had a tournament (club or sanctioned)?

Yes, when we look at the small picture it may seem dim. However, the number of participants at the 1995 State singles and doubles tournaments has grown. Two years ago we only had 70 players at State Singles. This past March, we had 130 entries. With the number of entries on the rise; so has the number of Louisiana players competing at Regionals and Nationals. This year we had 15 entries representing Louisiana at Regionals with 10 of them attending Nationals. You don't have to be an "A" or "Open" player to enjoy the competition at Regionals. You get the same excitement and intensity of the open players but you are competing in your own division. The National Skills Tournament is in its second year. If you can not play in the National Singles, you can play in the National Skills Tournament.

The LRA is looking to address the local issues. We already see some clubs having tournaments again. Foxy's tournament this past May was a huge success. Already some of the women at that club are looking forward to playing leagues or tournaments. Manhattan Athletic Club is joining us this month. Racquetball is not on the decline, we are just experiencing some growing pains.

MARCIA RICHARDS

1994 LRA ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Chairperson

Marcia Richards
11622 Delray, Baton Rouge, 70814
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Scheduling

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Fritz Owens
4819 Walmsley Ave.
New Orleans, 70125
H (504) 865-7027

Rules

Jamie Arroyave

State Program Directors

Women

Carrie Landry-New Orleans
Mandy Farris-Baton Rouge

Area Representatives

Al Schof-New Orleans

7TH ANNUAL ELMWOOD OPEN

March 3, 1995 - March 5, 1995

Men's Open

1st Charles Pecot
 2nd John Davis
 3rd Brian Lowe
 Cons Rory Arcement

Men's A

1st Shishir Mohan
 2nd Brent Fitch
 3rd Jeff Wilkes
 Cons Ken Hood

Men's B

1st Brian Collins
 2nd Myron Gibson
 3rd James Bixler
 Cons Billy Ray

Men's C

1st Bill Boada
 2nd David Anastasio
 3rd Rayne Thomas
 Cons Micah Luftig

Men's D

1st Robert Vance
 2nd Jareth Rosman
 3rd Elliott Mistich
 Cons Jason Aquillard

Men's 35+ A

1st Lance Landry
 2nd Warren Reuther
 3rd Ken Hood
 Cons Cyril Hentze

Men's 35+ B

1st Ken Davis
 2nd Vaughn Schmitt
 3rd Roger Anastasio
 Cons Tony Fanelli

Men's 45+

1st Rich Sousa
 2nd Michael Harris
 3rd Gene Ferris
 Cons Dennis McCluer

Men's Open/A Doubles

1st Charles Pecot/Ted Alvendia
 2nd Ricky Gonzales/Brent Fitch
 3rd Shirshir Mohan/Jim Bayhi
 Cons Jeff Wilks/Freddie Wilks

Men's Open/A Doubles

1st Jeffrey Griffin/Brian Recasner
 2nd Billy Ray/Doug Short
 3rd Ray Ronquilla/Bill Boada

Women's A

1st Pattie Schof
 2nd Caie Landry
 3rd Christie Vongruben

Women's B

1st Anne Schaefer
 2nd Neyda Leslie
 3rd Clara Simien
 Cons Christie Vongben

Women's C

1st Clara Simien
 2nd Tricia Antonie
 3rd Terry Pierce

STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS ROLLOUT IN MANDEVILLE

The State Singles Tournament was a huge success this year. We want to thank Franco's and all its staff for their hospitality. It is always a pleasure to come to Franco's for a tournament. Hosting the 20th Anniversary of State Singles Tournament took a lot of preparation, and without the extra time and efforts of Al Schof, we would not have been able to attend to the details of securing sponsors or keep in constant contact with the club. Thanks again Al!

A special thanks should be extended to our sponsors. Benson Automotive World donated \$500.00, Copeland's of New Orleans donated \$200.00 and lunch on Sunday, Rag's Po-Boys provided us with lunch on Saturday, Popeye's started our tournament off right with dinner Friday night, Pelican Tomato and Pelican Produce donated fruit for players all weekend. Lowe's Jewelers provided gift certificates for all skill level winners. A extra special

thanks goes out to Wade Garcia and Feelgood's Live Music Club for keeping us very happy at the party Saturday night; a good time was had by all.

If you did not stop by the archives or missed this year's tournament, you will need to come to State Doubles. Pattie Schof put together all of the old, OLD, newsletters, pictures of past and present members which shows that the times are changing from equipment to styles to looks, etc. Also on display were the stories of our two Hall of Fame recipients, Gail Woods and Bo Champagne. We also had video tapes available to watch if you wanted to be entertained or add something new to your game. It as all well received and will be on display at future tournaments.

(continued on Page 7)

1995 STATE SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIPS

March 24, 1995 - March 26, 1995

Men's Open

1st David Rahn
2nd John Davis
3rd Mark Bloom
Cons

Men's A

1st Shishir Mohan
2nd Chris Pellerin
3rd Ken Hood
Cons Jay Berger

Men's B

1st James Bixler
2nd R.J. Tamplain
3rd Raymond Harney
Cons Robert Davis

Men's C

1st David Anastasio
2nd Bill Boada
3rd Micah Luftig
Cons Harry Cole

Men's D

1st Robert Vance
2nd Buddy Wertz
3rd Elliott Mistich
Cons Jareth Rosman

Men's 19+

1st Ted Alvendia
2nd Al Schof
3rd Jeff Wilkes

Men's 25+

1st David Rahn
2nd John Davis

Men's 35+ A

1st Lance Landry
2nd Rick Chiquelin
3rd Larry Sharpe

Men's 35+ B

1st Mike Harris
2nd Robert Davis
3rd Mike Fusilar

Men's 45+

1st Joel Markert
2nd Warren Reuther
3rd Ken Hood

Men's 55+

1st Gene Ferris
2nd Bob Baudry

Women's A

1st Karen Kattengell
2nd Pattie Schof
3rd Carrie Landry

Women's B

1st Helyn Ingram
2nd Neyda Leslie
3rd Rosie Bloom

Women's C

1st Davina Bloom
2nd Mandy Farris
3rd Paige Holstein
Cons. Michelle Creel

Women's D

1st Stephanie Braud

Women's Age

1st Marcia Richards
2nd Debbie Spica
3rd Pattie Schof

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS:

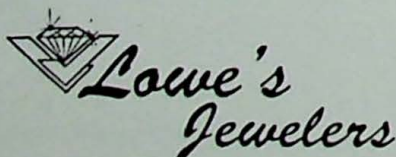
RAG'S PO-BOYS



FEELGOODS LIVE MUSIC CLUB



Franco's



Beacham Place
5150 Hwy 22 West
Mandeville, LA 70471



**LA. SPORTS & FITNESS 2ND ANNUAL ST. JUDE
HOSPITAL/BISHOP HUGHES RACQUETBALL TOURNAMENT
April 7, 1995 - April 9, 1995**

Men's Open

1st Steve Rogers
2nd Jim Bayhi
3rd Rick Chiquelin

Men's A

1st Ken Hood
2nd Clarence Simmons
3rd Marcia Richards
Cons Randy Lea

Men's B

1st Randy Lea
2nd Myron Gibson
3rd Micah Luftig
Cons Pattie Schof

Men's C

1st Micah Luftig
2nd Roy Raziano
3rd Fritz Owens
Cons Richard Butler

Men's D

1st Fritz Owens
2nd Helen Ingram
3rd Michelle Creel

Men's 45+

1st Ken Hood
2nd Joel Markert
3rd Ray Peterson
Cons Bernard Sonnier

Women's C

1st Mandy Farris
2nd Tricia Antoine
3rd Carla Rogers

**GOING FOR THE ONE
Foxy's Athletic Club
May 5, 1995 - May 7, 1995**

Men's Open

1st John Davis
2nd Shishir Mohan
3rd Jim Bayhi

Men's A

1st Charlie Smith
2nd Danny Bordelon
3rd Ken Hood
Cons Marcia Richards

Men's B

1st Yves Audet
2nd Randy Lea
3rd Michael Chambers
Cons Mark Higdon

Men's C

1st Joe Austin
2nd Micah Luftig
3rd Doug Ledet
Cons Fritz Owens

Men's 45+

1st Ken Hood
2nd Joel Markert
3rd Ray Peterson

Women's C/D

1st Gina Funk
2nd Melanie Cook
3rd Becky Hisey
Cons Suzy Poirier

Men's Open Doubles

1st Shishir Mohan/Steve Rogers
2nd Randy Lea/Al Schof
3rd Chris Baker/Charlie Smith



RACQUETBALL--NOT ALWAYS FUN AND GAMES

April 28, 1995

LRA Executive Committee,

As a former board member, player and spectator I would like to formally request the suspension of the LRA competitive licensee of Rayne Thomas and his exclusion from participation in any LRA tournament for the next year.

In my 17 years of tournaments I have never witnessed a worst case of sportsmanship, court etiquette, verbal abuse of a referee, and total disregard for those persons like myself who had women and children exposed to his behavior.

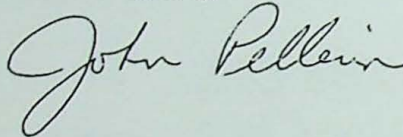
My sons match on the next court had to be stopped because the referee couldn't communicate with the players because Rayne was yelling so loud at Albert. My wife and 12 year old son saw a side of tournaments behavior that cannot be allowed to continue.

Franco's is a private club and his members witnessed the yelling outside the court as well and this gives the LRA a black eye.

We have worked extremely hard over the last 20 years to promote racquetball as a family sport please let the members know through the newsletter that his behavior will not be tolerated.

As a spectator everything else about the tournament was spectacular, GOOD JOB.

Sincerely,



As per the above complaint by John Pellerin, the LRA followed the due process guidelines outlined by the AARA/USOC.

The letter from the LRA to Mr. Rayne Thomas (above right) is the first step of the due process guidelines. This letter was never acknowledged by Mr. Thomas; therefore, the LRA proceeded as follows:

The special panel met on Saturday, June 24, 1995 and voted to suspend Mr. Thomas' AARA/LRA competitive license for a six month period, effective July 1, 1995. This includes all AARA/LRA tournaments held locally and nationally through December 31, 1995.

Please refer to the memorandum (right) from Jim Hiser of the AARA concerning other suspended players.

This is the first time an incident of this nature has occurred in Louisiana. Even though Louisiana has a motto of "Laissez Le Bon Temp Rouler" at tournaments, this type of disciplinary action was necessary in order to allow racquetball's continued growth in Louisiana.



THE LOUISIANA RACQUETBALL ASSOCIATION
"Dedicated to promoting the game of Racquetball"

Fritz Owens
Director of Membership/Ranking
4819 Vallesley Avenue
New Orleans, LA 70125
Phone (504) 865-7021

May 8, 1995

Mr. Rayne Thomas
10950 Jefferson Highway, W-5
New Orleans, LA 70123

CERTIFIED MAIL
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Dear Mr. Thomas,

This letter is in response to complaints from your fellow LRA members concerning your on-court behavior. These complaints have been received over the past several months culminating with a written request from member John Pellerin asking for your suspension from all LRA/AARA events because of your behavior during a match at the 1995 Louisiana State Singles Championship. A copy of that letter is enclosed.

The Board of Directors of the Louisiana Racquetball Association considered this matter at the meeting on April 4, 1995. The issue was again discussed at the meeting on May 7, 1995 and a special panel of three (3) impartial jurors was appointed to decide what disciplinary action, if any, should be taken in response to these charges against you. At least 10 days prior to the hearing, you will be advised by certified mail of the date, time and place that it will be held.

In accordance with your rights as a member of the Louisiana Racquetball Association, the special panel will consider any evidence introduced by you or other members either in person at the hearing before the special panel, or in writing sent by certified mail to:

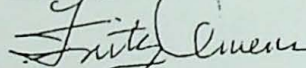
Ms. Marcia Richards
Chairman of the Board
Louisiana Racquetball Association
11622 Delray Drive
Baton Rouge, LA 70814

You must respond within 30 days of receipt of this letter by certified mail to the Chairman of the Board as to your intentions to either appear in person before the special panel or submit a response in writing. If you do not acknowledge this letter, the special panel will hold the hearing in your absence and take whatever action is deemed justifiable with respect to the charges against you.

Please be advised that Mr. Jim Hiser, Director of Due Process for the AARA has informed us that the AARA will concur with any action that the LRA special panel resolves is essential. Any sanctions imposed by this special panel will be honored in full by the AARA. A copy of the AARA pamphlet, "Due Process" is enclosed for your information.

It is the decision of the Board of Directors of the Louisiana Racquetball Association that, until the charges against you are reviewed and acted upon by the special panel, you will be denied entry to all LRA sanctioned tournaments.

Sincerely,



Fritz Owens
Director of Membership/Ranking

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 2, 1995
TO: All State Directors, Metro Regional Directors, Tournament Directors for Invitationals
FROM: Jim Hiser
SUBJ: Athlete Suspensions

Included is a list of individuals who have been suspended by either state or national governing bodies. Each individual has been provided due process as outlined by the AARA/USOC Due Process Guidelines.

These individuals are not permitted to compete in any AARA sanctioned events during their suspension. Please support these suspensions and refuse applications for any of the enclosed during their designated suspensions.

If you have any questions, please contact me at the AARA offices.

Kevin Bech - Idaho April 19, 1995 thru April 18, 1996
Tom Ochoa - Arizona August 29, 1994 thru August 29, 1995
Tony Jelso - California February 27, 1995 thru July 27, 1995

1995 CALENDAR

U.S. NATIONAL SKILL LEVEL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Lakewood, CO

AARA

ELMWOOD FITNESS CENTER PRO-AM

Elmwood Fitness Center - Harahan, LA

August 9, 1995 - August 13, 1995

LRA/AARA

IRF WORLD SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS

Albuquerque, N.M.

AARA

LOUISIANA STATE DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIPS

Location and Date to be Announced

LRA/AARA

NATIONAL DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIPS

Phoenix, Arizona

October 19, 1995 - October 22, 1995

AARA

ELMWOOD FITNESS CENTER TURKEY SHOOT

Elmwood Fitness Center - Harahan, LA

November, 1995 (Date to be Announced)

LRA/AARA

IRF WORLD JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS

Jacksonville, FL

December 16, 1995 - December 20, 1995

AARA

At a very special award ceremony on Sunday, Mark Bloom was presented with the Lance Nelson Sportsmanship Award. The award is presented each year to the outstanding junior sportsperson. This year's award was very special because Lance's parents were there to present it to Mark. Lance was true mentor to Mark and Lance's legendary talents will always live on.

Marcia Richards

HALL OF FAME

**Gail Woods
Bo Champagne**

TEAM CHAMPION

Elmwood Fitness Center

CLUB AWARDS

**Franco's - Host Club
Elmwood - Best Supporting Club**

MOST IMPROVED

**Male - Myron Gibson
Female - Davina Bloom**

SPORTSMANSHIP

**Freddie Wilkes
Mark Bloom**

ATTENTION CLUB OWNERS/PRO'S:

Please contact Pattie Schof, (504) 468-2813, regarding scheduling 1995 tournaments. Tournaments added to the schedule early will receive added coverage in *Racquetball U.S.A.*,

GOT A GRIPE? FULL OF PRAISE?

We want to hear from you!

This is your organization and the LRA Board is only trying to do the best for you, but without your input, we cannot.

Every letter that is received will be responded to in writing from the LRA Board and both the letter and the response will be published in the next issue of *Down the Line*.

Al Schof

Renew Your AARA Competitive License Today Through the LRA

*You become eligible to compete in all State Tournaments
and receive
Ranking Points from Entry Into Each Tournament Through Finish
Four to Six Issues of "Down The Line"
PLUS*

*Become eligible for over 1200 additional AARA sanctioned tournaments held in the
U.S. each year. You'll also receive: Membership Kit - Personalized Competitive License -
Competition Accident Insurance - Six Issues of "Racquetball USA" - State Publications &
Entry Forms - AARA Official Rulebook - National Ranking Points for Quarterfinals, or
Higher Finishes in Sanctioned Play - Industry, Product & Service Discounts*

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

LRA # _____ DATE OF BIRTH: _____ HOME PHONE: _____ WORK PHONE: _____

Mail This Form To:

LRA

P.O. Box 669

Mandeville Louisiana 70470

**By renewing your AARA Membership directly with LRA, the
State organization receives the larger portion of the renewal fee*

LRA/AARA MEMBERSHIP - \$25.00 Per Year

**THE LOUISIANA
RACQUETBALL
ASSOCIATION**

P.O. Box 669

Mandeville, Louisiana 70470

"Dedicated to promoting the game of Racquetball"