

Racquetball Reporter

quarterly publication of the Racquetball Association of Michigan

September 2013

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Jim Easterling Steps
Down as Head of
RAM Hall of Fame



RAM BOARD OF DIRECTORS DOUBLES IN SIZE

Twayne M Howard

The RAM Board of Directors is THRILLED to announce the addition of five incredible members to the Board. I don't want to over-hype this, but when you see who they are, you're going to wonder how we made it this far without them.

First up is Keith Bryan. In the past few years Keith has become a regular on the RAM tournament circuit playing all the events and running half of them. Keith has also traveled to Regional and National events. Most of this is done with his running mate Rich Westerbrink, but almost always on the right side. Keith has been honored as Tournament Director of the Year several times.

Mike D'Almeida has been a tournament regular for years, often chaperoning one or more of his kids to events all over the country as well as playing a ton of tournaments. Mike is an accomplished player in his own regards, getting better and better each year. You can always count on Mike to compete hard, and bring a ton of smiles to any event. Mike was the RAM Sports-person of the Year in 2011 - 2012.

If you've been around the Michigan tournament scene over the past couple decades, you probably know our next new Board member, even if you don't know him by name. Ray Emerson is one of THOSE guys. He's always there, playing

the events, always friendly, and always playing tough Racquetball. He's immediately one of our more experienced Board members and we are thrilled to have him on "this side of the desk."

Jen O'Meara is a relative newcomer to the tournament scene, but she has already claimed Gold at the State and National level as a Doubles Specialist. Not a bad start. She brings tremendous passion, energy and a killer e-communication skill set. Expect great things on a new RAM web site and a greatly improved Facebook presence. Jen was the 2013 Female Player of the Year.

Rich Westerbrink is a tournament regular and a great addition to the Board. Rich and his left-side cohort Keith Bryan are always at every tournament, run about half of them, and still find time to compete and get better and better. Rich was the 2008 Sports-person of the Year and has been honored as Tournament Director of the Year several times.

I told you it was a special group. The RAM Board has never had such an overwhelming infusion of talent. I'm thrilled to work with this amazing group including the Officers for 2013 Vice President Don Schopieray, Secretary Dan Mullin, Treasurer Tom Blakeslee (HoF 2004) and Ms. Sharon Huczek (HoF 2011).



**2013-2014
Board of Directors**

President

Twayne Howard
(616) 771 - 0312

Vice President

Don Schopieray
(810) 287 - 9394

Secretary

Dan Mullin

Treasurer

Tom Blakeslee
(586) 295 - 9772

Board Members

Keith Bryan
Mike D'Almeida
Ray Emerson
Sharon Huczek
Rich Westerbrink

Webmaster

Jen O'Meara

Sanctioning Committee

Twayne Howard
Tom Blakeslee
(586) 295 - 9772

Junior's Committee

Don Schopieray

Newsletter

The Racquetball Reporter
5753 S. Corey Rd.
Perry, MI 48872

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VIEW OF THE PRESIDENT

Twayne M. Howard

Labor Day has come and gone and that means one thing, time to get back to the friendly confines of your favorite Racquetball club and get your court time in. Why? THE SEASON IS HERE!!! THE SEASON IS HERE!!! I know, I know, you've got to get some practice in, but take a few minutes to read this wonderful Newsletter in your hands.

With every new season, there are some things that stay the same, and some things that change. This season, we've got a whole slate of tournament action. That doesn't change. But, we've got two new additions. How exciting is that? To kick off the season, Jen O'Meara and David Holden are hosting the Dubble Bubble Splat at Franklin Athletic Club. It is, of course, a doubles-only event, and what makes it doubly-better? RAM is returning to Franklin for the first time in a few years. I can't imagine what would be even half as much fun.

And then later in the season, is the Winter State Games of Michigan. Racquetball is once again an inaugural sport and this time it's for the Winter Games. Coming to you February 15-16 in Grand Rapids, you can expect the same great event as the Meijer State Games of Michigan with all the frills and pageantry, but in Racquetball's proper

season. Mark your calendar and make your plans to get there. You won't regret it.

And back to the new, we've got a whole slew of shiny, new, talented members of the RAM Board of Directors and we say "thanks and good luck" to a great Hall of Famer who moves on to a new chapter in his life. We called out for new Board members and Keith Bryan, Mike D'Almeida, Ray Emerson, Jen O'Meara and Rich Westerbrink stepped into the breach. There's a full article later and a whole lot of awesome to come.

And finally, we thank Jim East-erling for his years of service to RAM and its predecessor MRA. Jim has stepped down from his role as Chair of the RAM Hall of Fame Committee. Check out the full details in the article included.

Okay, now finish the rest of the Newsletter and then get outta here! Holy cow you gotta get some court time and fast!

Have a great season!



2013-2014 RAM SCHEDULE

Sept 28	Dubble Bubble Splat, Franklin Athletic Club, Southfield http://www.r2sports.com/tourney/home.asp?TID=11594	Jan 11-12	MAC Open Racquetball Championship, Michigan Athletic Club, Grand Rapids
Oct 12-13	West Michigan Open Pro-Am, Tier 4 Pro Tournament, Michigan Athletic Club, Grand Rapids http://www.r2sports.com/tourney/home.asp?TID=11582	Jan 25-26	Southwest Michigan Shootout, Bronson Athletic Club, Kalamazoo
Oct 26-27	Spartan Splat, Michigan Athletic Club, East Lansing	Feb 8-13	Michigan Senior Olympics, Courtland Athletic Club, Utica
Nov 7-10	Red Swain Shootout, Tier 1 Pro Tournament, Davison Athletic Club, Davison http://www.r2sports.com/tourney/home.asp?TID=11538	Feb 15-16	Winter State Games of Michigan, Michigan Athletic Club, Grand Rapids
Nov 16	Riverview Fall Brawl, Riverview Athletic Club, Grand Rapids	Feb 22-23	Motor City Rollout, Tier 5 Pro Tournament, Courtland Athletic Club, Utica
Dec 7-8	RAM STATE DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP, Total Sports, Mt. Clemens http://www.r2sports.com/tourney/home.asp?TID=11641	Mar 7-9	Capital Challenge, Michigan Athletic Club, East Lansing
		Mar 28-30	RAM STATE SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIP, Davison Athletic Club, Davison http://www.r2sports.com/tourney/home.asp?TID=11640
		Jun 28	Meijer State Games of Michigan, Michigan Athletic Club, Grand Rapids

Make sure you check R2Sports.com and MichiganRacquetball.Net for updates
For further Information e-mail President@MichiganRacquetball.Net

JIM EASTERLING STEPS DOWN AS HEAD OF RAM HALL OF FAME

By Twayne M Howard

At a recent Committee meeting, the founder and head of the RAM Hall of Fame announced his resignation to search for greener pastures, a more time to spend in them.

After twenty years of guiding this committee of the Racquetball Association of Michigan, and forty years of leadership to Racquetball, Jim has decided that it's high time for a break, although he has promised to stay involved. Jim still runs the USA Racquetball Hall of Fame and that has taken more and more effort in recent years.

Jim is an accomplished Hall of Famer in his own right having served as President of The Michigan Racquetball Association and the Racquetball Association of

Michigan for over a decade, running countless local, state and regional tournaments as well as being instrumental in establishing the first national referee certification test.

I can tell you from personal experience I don't expect his guidance to the standing President to diminish. I can't tell you how many times I've picked up the phone and heard "Hello Mr. Pres" knowing that I've likely screwed something up. His guidance has always been much welcomed and appreciated.

I have no doubt he'll enjoy at least some of his newly found spare time with his wife and fellow Hall of Famer.

I would like to thank Jim for his many years of dedicated service and I wish him the best as he moves on to a more leisurely pace.

JOIN THE RACQUETBALL ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN

Membership Includes:

- *Membership card, USA Racquetball Official Rule Book, travel and equipment discounts
- *USA Racquetball medical, life, and liability insurance at sanctioned events
- *Three issues of the RAM newsletter, THE RACQUETBALL REPORTER
- *Four issues of the USA Racquetball national magazine, RACQUETBALL MAGAZINE
- *RAM sanctioned tournament entry forms mailed to your home
- *Eligibility to play in all sanctioned tournaments and receive national ranking points (except Limited event)

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

DATE _____ EMAIL ADDRESS _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

DATE OF BIRTH ____ / ____ / ____ HOME PHONE _____

WORK PHONE _____

_____ \$50.00 – Adult Competitor

_____ \$25.00 – Junior Competitor (21 and under)

_____ \$20.00 - Limited Event

MAIL TO: RAM, 38114 Lakeshore, Harrison Twp, MI 48045

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