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ON THE COVER

Doubles champs stack up, with new winners Jake Bredenbeck and Jose Diaz getting to the medal stand for the first time. Aimee Ruiz and Janel Tisinger capturing their third national title together, which also marked Ruiz's tenth overall.

Photos by Roby Partovich

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Local Phoenix athlete Gary Desanti got into the holiday mood in a big way on Valentine's Day and went into his Sunday Mixed A final with purpose and humor. He and partner Nancy Green had advanced out of their round robin pool to reach the playoff then defeated Francine Fulp / Ricky Villanueva in an 11-6 tiebreaker. Desanti kept up the good work to earn a second win In Men's 35+ with Herman Deluna. Photo: Steve Czarnecki.



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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.

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NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS & TEAM QUALIFYING

All future national events details remain tentative until entries are published and registration opens.

IN 2016

National Singles - May 25-29
Denver, CO | Highlands Ranch Recreation Center

Junior Olympics - June 22-26
Minneapolis, MN | Life Time Fitness / Fridley

UnitedHealthcare US OPEN - October 5-9
Minneapolis, MN | Life Time Fitness

IN 2017 ... LOOK FOR ...

National Doubles in February
National High Schools in March
National Intercollegiates in April
National Singles in May
Junior Olympics in June

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 for 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:

- 2015 UnitedHealthcare US OPEN Pro Division
- 2016 U.S. Team Singles Qualifying Division at USA Racquetball National Doubles Championships
- 2016 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>.



FROM THE
Executive Director

By Steve Czarnecki
Executive Director
USA Racquetball

National Headquarters *Big (Office) Changes*

Over the holidays, USA Racquetball moved its national headquarters into new offices in Colorado Springs. Having called 1685 West Uintah home for more than 20 years, the move marked the end of an important local era in America's Olympic City. The move was quite a task in itself, but the opportunity now offers a new beginning for USA Racquetball and our staff.

It made sense to make the move for a number of reasons: more space, lower costs, better location. However, what really inspired us was the prospect of having staff in a more collaborative and collegial environment. Our offices are now physically closer to each other and we all find it easier to stay connected and on the same page. While we might have given up a small degree of privacy, we're excited to serve our members even better from our new space.

Perhaps the most unexpected positive outcome was the opportunity to re-discover, review and gain perspective from sifting through nearly 50 years of USA Racquetball history. One of the most challenging, yet rewarding, tasks was moving USA Racquetball's magazine archive – which must weigh thousands of pounds. We have issues of RACQUETBALL and National Racquetball (and, in many cases, multiple copies) dating back to 1976. At times it was hard to pack when the distraction of flipping through old issues and perusing the history of our sport was so appealing. As a reminder, when we have enough copies held in inventory we do sell back issues, so if you need proof of what a great player you once were, give us a call!

Another great find of the move was the extensive video archive that USA Racquetball possesses. We've been working with Luke St. Onge of the International Racquetball Federation who has volunteered to review and catalog the archive. The first order of business was finding a VHS player! We hope to un-earth some great content that we can digitize and share with you.

REALLY ... ?

Want to prove to someone in your life that you were once a highly ranked player on the national scene? Call us to see if there's a back issue available that includes your name!

much less paper is used these days, thanks to digital filing systems and online services like R2 Sports to document tournament results. It was nice to retire several file cabinets and condense our office footprint.

We're still settling into our new space and working to identify how to best preserve and share the history of USA Racquetball through our displays and wall hangings. We look forward to inviting our constituents in for an open house. Of course, if you find yourself in the neighborhood, whether sooner or later, please Google the address and stop by anytime. We'd love to see you at 2812 West Colorado Avenue, Suite 200, in Colorado Springs, Colorado 80904.

During the move, it was impossible to overlook the amount of paper that had been collected and stored over the years. We were careful to keep everything of historical value, but we still managed to fill four recycling dumpsters and shred several boxes of material on top of that. It's amazing how

TEAM STANDINGS IN THE HOME STRETCH

The race for the U.S. National Team singles positions is two-thirds of the way done, but many are within striking distance as they head into the home stretch at the U.S. National Singles Championships in Denver, May 25-29.

The UnitedHealthcare US OPEN comprised 20% of the qualification points, followed by new Singles Team Qualifying divisions at National Doubles making up 30%. The weighted formula leaves 50% of the points still up for grabs, with four men's and four women's singles positions on the line at National Singles.

Follow the point leaders and join us for exciting singles matches that will shape the National Team that will represent us at this summer's World Championships in Cali, Colombia.

Top Singles Point Leaders Heading Into National Singles:

Rocky Carson	42	Rhonda Rajsich	46
Jose Rojas	30	Sharon Jackson	25
Marco Rojas	24	Sheryl Lotts	20
Jose Diaz	20	Cheryl Gudinas	19
Jansen Allen	15	Michelle Key	15
Jake Bredenbeck	11	Da'Monique Davis	11
David Horn	11		



Find more information about U.S. Team Qualifying, and follow the race at USARacquetball.com!





FROM THE
President

By Larry Haemmerle

REBATES *THREE STATES SHINE*

In the last issue I described the State Rebate Program: the funds that have been disbursed and the intent of the program. The article generated significant interest, and I would now like to share some of the uses of these funds at the state association level.

The Texas Racquetball Association (TXRA) has invested funds in support of the growth of grassroots racquetball. When an individual completes the USA Racquetball Instructor Program (USAR-IP), the association reimburses 50% of the instructor's costs for the program. In further support, if an instructor completes a designated number of clinics in accordance with their criteria, they provide funds to the instructors in recognition of their work.

Also, the TXRA invests substantially in their junior program. Juniors who attend the Junior Olympics Championships are provided lodging by the TXRA while at the tournament. They are also regularly provided apparel reflecting their representation of the TXRA. If a junior has difficulty with any remaining expenses, additional funding is considered on an as-needed basis. Membership assistance and reduced costs for entries to state events are also vehicles they use to encourage junior growth.

The Racquetball Association of Michigan also provides support for young players in a variety of ways. However, what is unique to Michigan is their investment in improving upon their State Championship events. Utilizing the rebate funds, they purchase prizes to be raffled off during the event. Large screen TVs, iPads, and other prizes are purchased. Each player who enters the event is provided a raffle ticket. Additional tickets can be purchased by the players and also spectators to increase their odds of winning these valuable prizes.

At Michigan's State Singles, players can also purchase \$10 tickets for their Hall of Fame banquet. Non-players may also purchase tickets for \$30. These amounts don't cover the cost of the banquet, so rebate funds are used to supplement the difference.

The California/Nevada Association (CNRA) has developed their own methods for investing rebate funds. A decision was made to focus on their junior and collegiate programs. Financial assistance is provided in various ways to collegiate players, including providing an event for them with an entry fee of only \$5. Rebate funds are used to supplement the event to cover costs above this very minimal entry fee.

California/Nevada financial assistance is also provided regularly to juniors wishing to compete in the Junior Olympic Championships and IRF World Junior Championships. Reduced entry fees are regularly provided for young people in pursuit of State Championship competitions and, for first time players in any CNRA junior tournament, their entry is paid by the association.



These three states are to be commended for their efforts in supporting the growth of racquetball. I am certain there are a number of other states that have programs to direct rebate funds that are instrumental in growing our sport. Hopefully, your state is investing revenue they

generate in similar programs to increase racquetball participation. Get involved and find out how your state invests rebate funds!



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United States Racquetball Foundation
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Association

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JOIN THE CHALLENGE IN 2016!

Familiar and New Faces Win National Doubles

By Steve Czamecki | Photos by Roby Partovich

The 49th U.S. National Doubles Championships, presented by Penn, drew more than 300 elite players from around the country to beautiful Tempe, Arizona, over Valentine's Day weekend. Flocking to the campus of Arizona State University, players spent a handful of days enjoying great racquetball competition and camaraderie along with unbeatable southwest weather.

At National Doubles, the annual headliners are the U.S. Team Qualifying divisions for doubles champions, but this year also included an official round of singles qualifying which helped bring more top players and exciting playoffs to ASU. The new opportunity allowed Rocky Carson and Rhonda Rajsich to add singles points to their team standings, while the doubles finals saw both familiar faces and first-time national champions in the winner's circle.

On the women's side, Aimee Ruiz of Whitehouse Station, New Jersey, and Janel Tisinger of Simi Valley, California, won the title for the third time in four years by defeating Rhonda Rajsich and Sheryl Lotts in a thrilling three-game match, 15-12, 12-15, 11-10. Coincidentally, Ruiz and Tisinger had lost their title bid in last year's tiebreaker final, by the same slim margin.

In the men's final, Jake Bredenbeck of Chandler, Arizona, and Jose Diaz of Stockton, California, captured their first National Doubles title. The young pair, considered to be among the top U.S. prospects, showed great promise as a team when they finished second in Doubles at the 2015 UnitedHealthcare US OPEN Championships. Re-grouping in Tempe, they repeated that strong showing by defeating Rocky Carson and Jansen Allen in straight games, 15-14, 15-11, for the benchmark win.

Each team to reach the doubles finals qualified for the 2016-17 U.S. National Team and all eight players accepted those roster spots. The winning teams are now slated to represent the United States at the up-



coming International Racquetball Federation World Championships to be held July 15-23, in Cali, Colombia.

Fielded in over 65 competitive divisions, players of all ages and skill levels battled it out for national championships across the board. Those who were victorious are recognized in the results summary and have been added to the recently published National Doubles Record Book online. Find those expanded references at USARacquetball.com, under

the Championships > National Doubles Recordbook link, and under "2016 National Championships" to locate full results from the current season.

Whether or not you joined us for National Doubles this year, plan to do so for the 50th annual celebration in 2017. There are few better places for a winter weekend escape than Tempe, and we're tentatively scheduled for February 8-12 ... which is NOT over Valentine's Day!

2016 NATIONAL DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIPS RESULTS

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY - SUN DEVIL RECREATION COMPLEX, TEMPE AZ • FEBRUARY 10-14

Men's U.S. Team Qualifier Division

Champions: Jake Bredenbeck / Jose Diaz
Runners Up: Jansen Allen / Rocky Carson
Third Place: Anthony Herrera / David Horn

Men's U.S. Team Qualifier Singles Division

Champion: Rocky Carson
Runner Up: Jose Rojas

Women's U.S. Team Qualifier Division

Champions: Aimee Ruiz / Janel Tisinger
Runners Up: Rhonda Rajsich / Sheryl Lotts
Third Place: Da'Monique Davis / Jacqueline Paraiso

Women's U.S. Team Qualifier Singles Division

Champion: Rhonda Rajsich
Runner Up: Sharon Jackson

MEN'S CHAMPIONS

Open	Charlie Stalder / Jason Conway	B	David Martinez / James Clemmons	60+ B	Glenn Cunningham / Mitch Milewski
24-	Jesse Giron / Zachary Petterson	C	Kevin Keys / Michael Brennan	65+ B	Dan Greene / Keith Vogel
25+	Anthony Herrera / Bryan Crosser			50+ C	Bruce Adams / Lynn Stephens
30+	Jonathan Clay / Richard Eisemann	30+ A	Jon Rafkind / Richard Aal	55+ C	Paul Gordon / Ben Farnsworth
35+	Gary DeSanti / Herman Deluna	35+ A	Derek Stutz / Takashi Yamashita	65+ C	Ira Beyah / Andrew Blasquez
40+	Keith Minor / Jeff Stark	40+ A	David Piper / Herman Deluna		
45+	Keith Minor / Jeff Stark	45+ A	Alex Baker / Ro Blackwood	Centurion	
50+	Tim Hansen / Jimmy Lowe	50+ A	Drake Deavours / Jose Martinez	Open	Rocky Carson / Mike Lippitt
55+	Dave Azuma / Mike Lubbers	55+ A	Ken Angelocci / Adolfo Paradoa	A	Alan Baron / David Piper
60+	Dave Azuma / Mark Baron	60+ A	Billy Cannon / Bill Deluca	B	Michael Aguas / Brian Ancheta
65+	Joe Lee / Russ Montague			C/D	Jeffrey Mira / Keith Vogel
70+	Donald Gunderson / Jerry Noonan	25+ B	Jerry Reyes / Martin Martinez		
75+	Francis Florey / Donald Sperber	35+ B	Kevin Scroggins / Takashi	Classic Racquet	
		40+ B	James Lamont / Ron Couch		Tim Herman / Michael Myers
Elite	Michael Myers / Tim Herman	45+ B	Nick Frontczak / Michael Semanco		
A	Antonio Vazquez / Danny Ortega	50+ B	John Marinich / David Pardun		

WOMEN'S CHAMPIONS

Open/Elite	Miriam McCloskey / Fran Transfiguracion	50+ Elite	Debra Bryant / Wanda Collins
35+	Francine Fulp / Fran Transfiguracion	60+ Elite	Cheryl Kirk / Susan Hendricks
45+	Debra Tisinger-Moore / Mae Chin-Varon		
50+	Debra Tisinger-Moore / Mae Chin-Varon	30+ A	Rebecca Bowman / Kim Reimschisel
55+	Mary Lyons / Susan Pfahler	50+ A	Vicky Birkmann / Tami Costanza
60+	Wanda Collins / Terry Rogers	55+ A	Patrice Calvi / Cathy Clements
65+	Nancy Kronenfeld / Shirley Parsons	30+ B	Dragana Bulatovic / Heather Hojat
75+	Marquita Molina / Mildred Gwinn	40+ B	Lori Kidd / Peggy Markert
		50+ B	Pam Lillich / Fariba Roughead
A	Susie Boulanger / Kerri Brown		
B	Lori Kidd / Peggy Markert	Centurion Open	Malia Bailey / Debra Tisinger-Moore
		Centurion A	Debra Bryant / Nidia Funes
40+ Elite	Melody Gorno / Thao Le		

MIXED CHAMPIONS

Elite	Brent Huff / Rebecca Bowman		
25+	Jonathan Clay / Sharon Jackson	30+ A	Laura Morin / Tyler Vorhies
30+	Bryan Crosser / Janel Tisinger	40+ A	Kerri Brown / Myron Hicks
40+	Keith Minor / Aimee Ruiz	50+ A	Debra Bryant / Chris Poucher
45+	Erik Blood / Susie Boulanger	60+ A	Carla Francis / James Troutt
50+	Malia Bailey / Jimmy Lowe	30+ B	Roby Partovich / Paula Tran
55+	Anita King / Doug Kite	40+ B	Cathy Law / Joe Law
60+	Dave Azuma / Susan Pfahler	50+ B	Alan Bennett / Pam Lillich
65+	Nancy Kronenfeld / Joe Lee	60+ B	David Lovinger / Mary Zordan
70+	Nidia Funes / James Troutt	40+ C	Peter Berger / Nancy Bortfeld
75+	Mildred Gwinn / Donald Sperber		
		Centurion Open	Malia Bailey / Glenn Bell
A	Gary DeSanti / Nancy Green	Centurion A	Steve Kowalski / Richelle Kulju
B	Kim Holderness / James Lamont	Centurion B	Warren Bailey / Cathy Law
		Centurion C/D	David Lovinger / Mary Zordan
30+ Elite	Laura Morin / Tyler Vorhies		
40+ Elite	Lance Lacour / Thao Le		
50+ Elite	Clinton Imholte / Patty Willyard		



Aimee Ruiz Captures #10

With this year's doubles gold medal in hand, Aimee Ruiz captured her tenth Women's Open USA Racquetball National Doubles Championship title, and qualified for the U.S. Team a total of 11 times – all in only the past 12 years. The southpaw accomplished this amazing feat with the aid of 2016 partner Janel Tisinger, who shares in three of those ten wins, along with earlier partners Jacqueline Paraiso and Laura Fenton.

With win #10 this year, Ruiz cemented her legacy as being among the best female doubles players of all time. She now claims more women's National Doubles victories than anyone other than Paraiso, who boasts 14 wins.

Beyond her women's record, Ruiz has also made her mark in Mixed Open by earning 11 added national titles with partners Jansen Allen, Mike Dennison, Andy Hawthorne, Jason Thoerner, and Shane Vanderson. She also won the 2009 National Singles title, all on her own.

By qualifying for the U.S. National Team 11 times, Aimee is now tied for sixth all-time among women, following Cheryl Gudinas (22 times), Jacqueline Paraiso (21), Rhonda Rajsich (15), Kim Russell-Waselenchuk (14), Malia Bailey (12), and matching Laura Fenton (11).

USA Racquetball strives for accuracy in our records. If you believe there to be any errors or omissions, please notify us at championships@usra.org.

Daniel Rojas and Jordan Cooperrider **WIN HIGH SCHOOL NATIONALS**



By Steve Czarnecki | Photos by Jeff Oliver



The 29th U.S. National High School Championships were held in late February at the Multnomah Athletic Club and Lloyd Athletic Club in Portland, Oregon, where more than 300 students from across the country played in the team-based competition. Highly-successful Oregon and St. Louis, Missouri high school leagues fielded a large percentage of the participants, and U.S. Junior National Team members dominated the top singles divisions.

Mauro (Daniel) Rojas, a senior at Aspire Langston Hughes Academy, emerged victorious over Kevin Vazquez in a hard-fought 15-11, 15-9 final. It was Rojas' second High School title, after a win in 2014, and not competing in 2015. Assistance from the Reaching Your Dream Foundation allowed him to return to seek this year's title, and be named to the 2016-17 Junior National Team for that win. The cousin of top IRT pros José and Markie Rojas, Daniel placed second in Boys 16- and 18- singles at last year's Junior Olympics and earned a bronze medal in the Boys 18- at the IRF Junior World Championships in November.

Jordan Cooperrider, a junior at Palm Harbor University High School, defeated Hollie Scott with relative ease 15-5, 15-3 in their final after giving up only four points in her three previous round matches. She dominated with the type of excellent serving rarely seen at the high school level, following up on a runner-up finish in the Girls 16- singles division at last year's Junior Olympic Championships in June, along with doubles gold there and at IRF World Juniors with partner Erika Manilla in November. She also re-qualified for the 2016-17 Junior National Team with the High School victory.

Putting up some serious team points for the Oregon team, Beaverton High School swept the doubles divisions beginning with Mixed, where Justin Ide and Kaitlyn Boyle successfully

defended their title by defeating siblings Erik and Kristine Holman of Sprague High School in two games with scores of 15-4, 15-8.

In Boys Doubles, Beaverton's Justin Ide and Robert Flor won the title with a 15-4, 15-5 win over Gavin Usher and John Curley of Portland's Lincoln High School. Beaverton teammates Kaitlyn Boyle and Natalie Lorati outlasted defending champions Kristine Holman and Madison Kerzel of Sprague High School 15-13, 5-15, 11-5 in a hard-fought Girls Doubles final.

Find complete National High School Championships results online at USARacquetball.com > 2016 National Championships to locate full season results.

We look forward to returning to St. Louis to celebrate the 30th High School Championships in the first week of March 2017, and we invite all high school student athletes to join us for a great time.

2016 NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Multnomah Athletic Club & Lloyd Athletic Club, Portland, OR • February 24-28

TEAM COMPETITION

Overall

Champions:

Beaverton HS (5,800 points)

Runners Up:

Sprague HS (4,272 points)

Third Place:

Kirkwood HS (3,232 points)

Boys

Champions:

St. Louis University HS
(2,846 points)

Runners Up:

Beaverton HS (2,405 points)

Third Place:

Kirkwood HS (1,757 points)

Girls

Champions:

Beaverton HS (2,553 points)

Runners Up:

Sprague HS (2,205 points)

Third Place:

Cor Jesu Academy (2,047 points)

BOYS' SINGLES

Champion

#1 Mauro (Daniel) Rojas
#2 Kyle Westendorf
#3 Robert Flor
#4 Charles Mueth
#5 Zachary Rabin
#6 James Storgion

Runner-Up

Kevin Vazquez
Timothy Juergens
Clay Hallman
Noble Smith
Mark Duffie
Jacob Sullivan

BOYS' DOUBLES

Champion

#1 Justin Ide/Robert Flor
#2 John Correa/Rich Helfrey
#3 Noble Smith/Peter Day

Runner-Up

Gavin Usher/John Curley
Brendan Justin/Jacob Hauck
Mark Duffie/Johnny Greenberg

GIRLS' SINGLES

Champion

#1 Jordan Cooperrider
#2 Madison Kerzel
#3 Ashley Smith
#4 Mikayla Harvey
#5 Annie Wissmiller
#6 Hannah Rasch

Runner-Up

Hollie Scott
Natalie Lorati
Maria Zak
Kimaia Gassner
Makena Johnston
Anna Lorati

GIRLS' DOUBLES

Champion

#1 Kaitlyn Boyle/Natalie Lorati
#2 Hannah Grebing/Maria Zak
#3 Hannah Rasch/Mikayla Harvey

Runner-Up

Kristine Holman/Madison Kerzel
Ashley Smith/Samantha Fretwell
Anna Lorati/Annie Wissmiller

MIXED DOUBLES

Champion

#1 Kaitlyn Boyle/Justin Ide
#2 Hayato Yokoyama/Natalie Lorati
#3 Zachary Rabin/Anna Lorati

Runner-Up

Eric Holman/Kristine Holman
JT Westcott/Samantha Lovett
Paul Bringas/Lindsey Regalado



2016 HIGH SCHOOL ALL AMERICANS

Justus Benson
Kaitlyn Boyle
Lindsay Briglia
Megan Conrad
Jordan Cooperrider
Brian Cross
John Curley
Allison Darmody
John Dowell
Elyse Duffie
Dane Elkins
Robert Flor
Sydney Ferguson
Eric Garske
Jenna Heaton
Erik Holman

Kristine Holman
Justin Ide
Timothy Juergens
Madison Kerzel
Natalie Lorati
Katy Moran
Atossa Rejael
Ingrid Robledo
Mauro Rojas
Charles Roselli
Hollie Scott
Gavin Usher
Kevin Vazquez
JT Westcott
Kyle Westendorf

209 to 5 RACQUETBALL

THE LIFESTYLE OF JOSÉ ROJAS

Markie (L) and José Rojas teamed up to reach the Pro Doubles semifinals at the 2015 UnitedHealthcare US Open. Photo courtesy ReStrung.

By Tim Landenyou | Photos courtesy IRT

The life of professional athletes is rarely serene. They trade certainty and routine comforts for the excitement and ever-changing landscape of a vagabond lifestyle. As many do, they dedicate themselves to training and improving their craft every day, but they often have to do so between hotel rooms, multiple clubs, and in many cases different countries. Currently ranked No.4 on the IRT, José Rojas is no exception, and in the realm of pro racquetball, his calendar over the last year would be considered busy by any major-league standard.

I recently caught up with Rojas to discuss his demanding off-season activities, the first half of the 2015-2016 IRT season, and the training atmosphere in “The 209” racquetball community.

History of Training in the 209

Most IRT touring pros have a home base from which they travel to most of the events. Over the years many have called “The 209” home, including José’s brother, No.7-ranked Markie, and training partners No.10 Robbie Collins and No.16 José Diaz. Due to their success, the community (nicknamed by Stockton’s area code) has developed quite a reputation.

Aided by former IRT pro John Ellis and his father, legendary coach Dave Ellis, Stockton offers a rich history of racquetball even though it isn’t the wealthiest of cities. “I feel lucky to have found

racquetball, that we all found racquetball, because without it who knows where we’d be,” Rojas said. “We were blessed to have this sport to provide us with choices.”

After being coached first by his father, and then by Jody Nance, when José decided to go pro he sought the help of Dave Ellis. “Once he became my coach everything got more structured and became more of a training group,” Rojas said. “We all trained together before life started pulling some in different directions.”

Dave Ellis recently stepped back from traveling to coach at pro tournaments to focus on other areas of his life, so the number of players training in “The 209” has decreased and their goals have shifted toward the future of the sport.

“It’s not quite the same anymore,” Rojas said. “Markie and I still train together consistently. Robbie [Collins] is there as well during the season, but the larger group is focused more on the junior kids there now, which is awesome.”

Markie and José now have a new coach who chooses to remain anonymous, and the transition seemed to go smoothly. José reached the finals of the 2016 Lewis Drug IRT Pro-Am and won

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Gold at last summer's Pan American Games in Toronto. "We trained hard all summer and I peaked right when I needed to peak," Rojas said. "I was extremely confident in my game going into Toronto."

2015 Pan American Games

Rojas teamed up with fellow Ektelon-sponsored athlete, No.6-ranked Jansen Allen, to represent the U.S. in Men's Doubles at the Pan Ams. After losing to Canada in their second match of pool play, the team's road to the final became a lot tougher.

"We ran into a juggernaut Canadian team who really put it on us," Rojas said of the team's lone loss in the tournament. "They utilized the court to perfection. After that loss we had time to regroup. I think the loss actually gave us the little kick in the butt we needed to get on the right track. From that point on we both made more of

an effort to play smarter and more solid and we started playing better as a team."

The loss led to his top moment in the competition (other than winning it all, of course), which occurred in the semis against Mexico's top-seeded team of Javier Moreno and Alvaro Beltran.

"We were down against Mexico pretty big in the second game; I think 6-12 after winning a close first game," Rojas said. "I remember telling Jansen that the last thing we wanted to do is go into tiebreaker [since] that's where Alvaro excels. Something clicked in my head at that moment, and before I knew it we'd come back to win 15-14 and moved on to the finals. They were the heavy favorites going in, having not lost in international competition in over 10 years, and to upset them and book our ticket to the final at the same time was definitely my favorite moment."

Competing on the IRT

Even after his gold-medal performance, returning to tour competition wasn't a lock for Rojas, who debated retiring before he re-signed with one of the sport's premier manufacturers. "Ektelon has been nothing but good to me, and I couldn't be more grateful," Rojas said after the signing. "I'm happy they've stuck by my side to still give me a chance to play this game I love. The fact that their equipment is great just makes it a bonus for me, which has also always made it easy to play for them. They're a great company to compete for."

And IRT competition this season has been some of the most exciting in recent memory, with several young, talented players (like Mario Mercado, Sebastian Franco, and Felipe Camacho) making deep runs into Tier 1 draws and climbing quickly up the rankings. Rojas was quick to point to the exponential growth and popularity of racquetball in Latin America as the cause and thinks that it's great for the game in general.



José Rojas reached the quarterfinals of the 2015 UnitedHealthcare US Open Championships where he lost to Daniel De La Rosa. Photo courtesy ReString.

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GRAPHENE





José Rojas faced Daniel De La Rosa in the 2015 UnitedHealthcare US Open quarterfinals. Photo courtesy ReStrung.

"They have large, organized junior programs [in Latin America] and all the coaches are paid by the government just to coach racquetball." he said, "I think that's fantastic. There are so many great young players coming up."

While that influx hasn't yet loosened the stranglehold on the top three positions held by Kane Waselenchuk, Rocky Carson and Alvaro Beltran, the questions on everyone's minds have to be: 1) when will these youngsters upset the established order, and 2) who will be the first to break through that glass ceiling? It's clear that there are some talented youngbloods out there capable of beating anyone on any given day (except maybe Waselenchuk), so it's only a matter of time before it happens consistently. Rojas reiterated that the new talent pool will only be positive for racquetball and the IRT.

"I think it will make the tour better," he said. "You'll have more competitive and entertaining matches to watch, which adds value and makes it better for everyone involved. I love to compete so I just think it will make the tour more fun. I definitely see these kids shaking up the rankings which should make for some great racquetball."

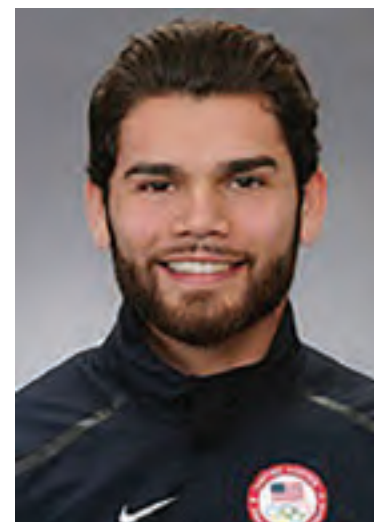
Where does Rojas fit in to this new order? "I want to see José Rojas at the top," he said. "That's where my goals are and I won't settle for less."

Promoter of the Sport

Besides competing on the tour and abroad for Team USA, Rojas wants to see this sport expand and thrive. He loves connecting with fans on Facebook.com/rojasracquetball and on any given weekend you can find him offering clinics, giving lessons, or hosting Ektelon demos around the country.

"I'm trying to create a presence for myself and get my name out there, let people know I don't just play racquetball but that I'm trying to grow the sport while making a living so that I (and others) can continue to do this," Rojas said.

For more news ... visit IRT-Tour.com, sign up for the newsletter, like facebook.com/IRTFan, follow @proracquetball on Twitter and @irtproracquetball on Instagram, and subscribe to the IRT's YouTube Channel.



José Rojas competed for Team USA in the 2015 Pan American Games in Toronto, Canada, where he won Gold in Men's Doubles with Jansen Allen. Photo courtesy USA Racquetball.

Tim Landeryou is a competitive racquetball player from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada. He began playing racquetball at the age of 10 and has represented Canada internationally since 2010 and achieved a career-high IRT season end ranking of 16 in 2014-15. He completed his Master of Science in Kinesiology at the University of Saskatchewan in 2015 and now works as a sport administrator in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.



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2015-16

SEASON MIDPOINT

Trio of Stops Wraps up the Year

By T. J. Baumbaugh

Following the UnitedHealthcare US OPEN, the LPRT wrapped up the 2015 calendar year with two trips to Mexico and a final trip to Arlington, Virginia.

The Longoria Experience

The first of two trips south of the border featured a very special Tier 1 stop in Paola Longoria's hometown, where tour athletes were invited to a formal dinner attended by local dignitaries, along with the Governor of the State of San Luis Potosí. Once play began, the "Paola Longoria Experience" was dominated by its namesake, who won both the doubles crown with partner Samantha Salas and the singles title over Maria Jose Vargas. As determined as ever, Longoria did not disappoint her loyal following.

Most of the seeds advanced as expected, with the most outstanding singles matches taking place in early rounds, including three marathon tiebreakers that lasted more than two hours each. In them, No.17 Masiel Rivera defeated No.16 Gabriela Martinez 12-10 in the round of 32, No.9 Susy Acosta defeated No.8 Sofia Rascon 11-4 in the final game of their quarterfinal, and No.2 Maria Jose Vargas defeated No.3 Rhonda Rajsich 11-9 in their semifinal to advance and face Longoria.

The doubles action also led to some incredible play, with all of the draw's quarterfinal matches going to a tiebreaker. The team

of Susy Acosta and Jessica Parilla survived the breakers, then defeated Monserrat Mejia and Michelle Key in a follow-up five-game semi to face off against Longoria and Salas in the final.

Monterrey Extravaganza

To cover the second south-of-the-border stop, Jonathan Clay, LPRT Director of Marketing, traveled to Monterrey for his first glimpse of a Mexico Grand Slam and filed this firsthand account:

The city of Monterrey hosted 24 of the best female

racquetball players in the world, competing for the season's largest prize purse, at the 2015 Paola Longoria Invitational. The Tennis Center was transformed into the "Racquetball Center" with a state of the art made for TV portable court, bleachers, VIP seating, sound, lights, a tent overhead and a couple of thousand screaming fans for one full weekend! The players were hosted by Paola and her team on Thursday evening at a formal welcome dinner that was attended by a number of local and national dignitaries,

but just 12 hours later on Friday morning, the fun was over for the players and it was time to get down to business!

The most notable match in the round of 32 was Masiel Rivera's 5-game, 11-8 thriller win over Carla Muñoz. Then even more excitement came during the afternoon, as 6 of the 8 round of 16 matches needed extra games to decide a winner! Alexandra Herrera upset Michelle Key in five games to make her way into the quarterfinals, and Frederique Lambert came back from being down 10-2 in the



Paola Longoria surrounded by fans.
Photo by Andy Kulback.



Paola Longoria

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fifth to defeat Jessica Parrilla 12-10 and squeak her way into the quarters! The fans really felt like the tournament was in full swing by mid-day Friday.

Friday evening Paola treated the crowd to a beautiful opening ceremony which featured a DJ, lights, and the color guard bringing the crowd their national anthem. The atmosphere of this tournament from this moment on was one of a kind. Paola brought home the title in this event, playing every match in front of a crowd of thousands of fans, LIVE on Mexican television. Afterward she spoke with media and fans, then signed autographs for almost three hours. This event truly shows the impact that this amazing athlete has had on the sport.

However, the most notable moments of the weekend came in Pro Doubles when the new pairing of Rhonda Rajsich and Sheryl Lotts defeated two of the best doubles teams in the world enroute to the tournament title! Their semifinal and final matches were epic performances of shot-making and the highest levels of doubles, and marked the first LPRT tour win for Sheryl Lotts.

Public events like this in Mexico are like nothing we see in the United States or anywhere else in the world. Check out the archived matches to get just a small feel for the scope of what Paola has accomplished and is bringing to the sport. It's something that should be highly respected - and duplicated - worldwide. Monterrey was one of the best experiences I have ever had in racquetball. It was an honor to be present for

one of the biggest events the sport has to offer. As a fan, player, and promoter within the sport, events like that light a fire under me for what can be done in racquetball. – Jonathan Clay

Crystal Gateway Finale

It was bittersweet to host the 24th Annual Christmas Classic at the Crystal Gateway Sport & Health Club in Arlington, Virginia, where we made sure to thank Karen Turner for so graciously hosting and supporting the LPRT over many years. Here are some excerpts of her thoughts about this historic club:

I have enjoyed running tournaments at the Crystal Gateway Sport and Health Club, in Arlington for going on 30 years - along with my predecessor Ed Willis and many of our amazing friends. We hosted many events, from LPRT and IRT pro stops that included legends like Cliff Swain, Ruben Gonzalez, and Marty Hogan to current powerhouses Paola Longoria, Rhonda Rajsich, and Maria Jose Vargas. Many amazing players have graced the club's walls with their amazing play and competitive spirit.

I played my first Virginia tournament at Crystal Gateway in 1999, two months after moving to the D.C. area from Connecticut. I was fortunate enough to meet so many wonderful people that weekend, many of whom are great friends today, 16 years later. As I first helped and then took over running tournaments there, I was constantly

amazed and grateful for the enthusiasm, support, and camaraderie shown by members of our close-knit racquetball community.

The club was home to some very large and popular leagues, as well as extremely competitive challenge courts – and I'll now work with other clubs to host a few tournaments - including the LPRT stop. Until then, I'd like to take the opportunity to say thanks - to Ed Willis for "adopting" me as a tournament director; to Wayne Toyne, Bill Milbach, Ira Holland, T. J. Baumbaugh, and Al Shipman for working with me all of these years to make our tournaments successful; to Andy Kulback and T.J. Baumbaugh for bringing the LPRT to Crystal Gateway for the last decade; to Sport and Health for their years of support; and most of all to my racquetball family, for so many things.

– Karen Turner

Players and fans made sure to close out with a bang, with many who had not played in years entering just to compete at this club one last time. Paola Longoria, who did not lose a single game, won the pro singles draw, then paired with a new partner, Alexandra Herrera, to also take home the pro doubles title.

Sheryl Lotts and Rhonda Rajsich.
Photo by Roby Partovich.





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DOUG GANIM

to be inducted into Racquetball Hall of Fame

Doug Ganim has been selected for the sport's highest honor – induction into the USA Racquetball Hall of Fame – in recognition of a stellar playing career in the Amateur Open category.

Now 50, he earned his first set of national titles as a junior in 1983, with gold medal finishes in the Boy's 18 and under singles and doubles. Over the next three decades of doubles prowess, his textbook backhand became legendary, and he's now viewed as one of the best left-side partners in the sport's history. He reached the finals of the U.S. National Doubles Championships U.S. Team Qualifying division eight times with four different teammates, winning the national title four times.

Internationally, he captured doubles gold on the sport's grandest stage at the 1999 Pan American Games, after having earned world doubles titles at the 1988, 1990 and 1992 International Racquetball Federation World Championships. He added more top doubles titles to his record at the 1990 and 1999 Tournament of the Americas and medaled three times at United States Olympic Festivals with gold medal doubles finishes in 1990 and 1991.

Since his early U.S. Team successes, this non-stop competitor has gone on to earn ten more age division titles at National Doubles, plus two age division singles gold medals from the United-Healthcare US OPEN and the IRF World Senior Championships. Off court, he has served the industry as an executive for HEAD/Penn racquetball for 28 years and as the President of the Ohio Racquetball Association for 25 years. At the same time, perhaps his greatest contribution to racquetball was his part in the development of its marquee Grand Slam US OPEN championship in 1996, along with his continued leadership of that effort ever since.

"It is truly an honor to receive this prestigious recognition," remarked Ganim. "I have been blessed to have the sport of racquetball in my life since the age of 14. On-court accomplishments have been fun, but it is really all the great people I have had the pleasure to meet and know over the years that have brought me the most joy. Nearly all my best friends in life have come from the sport of racquetball!"



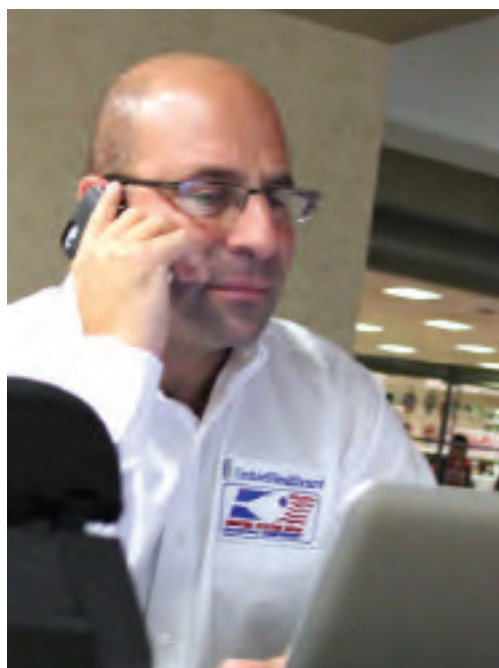
Doubles is his game, and the early photos in which Ganim is pictured in a red shirt are circa 1989, shot by AARA staff. In blue, he's at the 2016 National Doubles in Tempe. Photos by Roby Partovich

Formal induction ceremonies for the Westerville, Ohio native will take place during the U.S. National Singles Championships in Denver, where he is expected to be accompanied by his wife of 24 years, Mary Beth, and sons Doug Jr. and Logan.

Founded in 1973, the USA Racquetball Hall of Fame recognizes excellence by Professional, Amateur Open, Amateur Age and Outdoor players, along with outstanding contributions to the sport. In total, 57 of the sport's greatest have been enshrined over the 40+ year history of the Hall of Fame. More information is available at USARacquetball.com, and nominations are due no later than September 15 each year.



Above: Ganim successfully partnered with Dan Obremski (who was inducted in 2005) for many years. [USAR archive photo]. Below: More recently, former top pro Tim Doyle teamed with Ganim to capture back-to-back gold medals in Men's 45+ in 2014 & 2015. [Photo by Ken Fife, 2014]



Coincidentally, Doug Ganim's most important off-court contribution to the sport was highlighted along with feature coverage of the UnitedHealthcare US OPEN in the last issue, which contains his reflections on the 20-year history of the marquee event. In it, Ganim recalled his 25+ years in racquetball, and how he came to combine an amateur athletic career with an unshakable drive to market and develop the sport. Here's an excerpt that describes how it all started:

I was still in college when I started running racquetball tournaments in the early 80's, under the tutelage of Jim Hiser, and I built a series of 16 events known as the Coors Light Racquetball Series. For more than 20 years it was the largest and most successful series of its type in the country.

By the early 90's, I had become an elite level amateur player and a member of the US National Racquetball Team. My peers voted me as their athlete representative to serve on the USA Racquetball (then USRA) Board of Directors and on the USOC's Athlete's Advisory Council. In those early years of attending Board meetings, there were countless discussions about how to grow the sport. Naturally, my thoughts always migrated towards creating huge Grand Slam style events to showcase racquetball. My vision incorporated high-level corporate sponsorship, a national TV broadcast, major media coverage, and bringing together ALL the pro and amateur organizations in a big way.

And the rest, as they say ... is history!



2016 WSMRA 27th Annual National Championship



Group photo by Ric Shorrock

by Cheryl Kirk

Tucson Racquet & Fitness Club - Tucson, AZ • January 15-17, 2016 • Tournament Director: Cindy Tilbury

Let's begin with the stats for this year's long-awaited WSMRA championship: 77 participants, 11 divisions, 21 U.S. states plus Guatemala (Marie Gomar, a frequent participant, makes this an international event!). This largest and longest continually running event for women players in the world features a self-refereed format with plenty of court time: all round robins/pool play with playoffs, 2 games to 11 with bonus points for game and match wins. This is the second year that doubles divisions have been offered, a very popular addition.

The Tucson Racquet & Fitness Club provided the perfect setting for this competition – eleven excellent courts (two with glass back walls, all with top viewing), outstanding restaurant, full spa and workout facilities, pool, pro shop, friendly staff...what's not to love?

Here's a quick rundown of how this event unfolded...

- **Thursday:** fun doubles and raffle for Racquet for the Cure followed by player orientation meeting
- **Friday/Saturday/Sunday:** singles and doubles competition; silent auction benefiting the USAR scholarship fund and the WSMRA
- **Saturday:** Banquet, DJ Mark Mann
- **Sunday:** Finals and awards

There was an unexpected fun occurrence at the banquet when 18 young girls and their chaperones from the Venom Soccer Team of Gilbert, Arizona, in town for a competition, stuck their heads into our banquet room, curious when they heard the music. We invited them in, and we all had a wonderful time with the inclusion of an additional generation for dancing and general merriment. They might have taught us a few dance moves...or maybe it was the other way around. Lifting as we climb...

Much gratitude goes out to Tournament Director Cindy Tilbury, Desk Coordinator Joe Williams, and WSMRA Tournament Committee members Terry Rogers, MeriJean Kelley, and Paula Sperling. Volunteers Linda Moore, Ric Shorrock, Vickie Onesti, Marie Gomar, Nidia Funes, Carol Gellman, Pat Meyer, and Kathy Yurrick helped ensure a smooth-running event.



Front L-R: Carla Phillips, Victoria Pickard, Tina Marchie, Stacie Cato, Vickie Onesti; rear: Jane Nixon, Susie Boulanger. Photo by Tina Marchie.



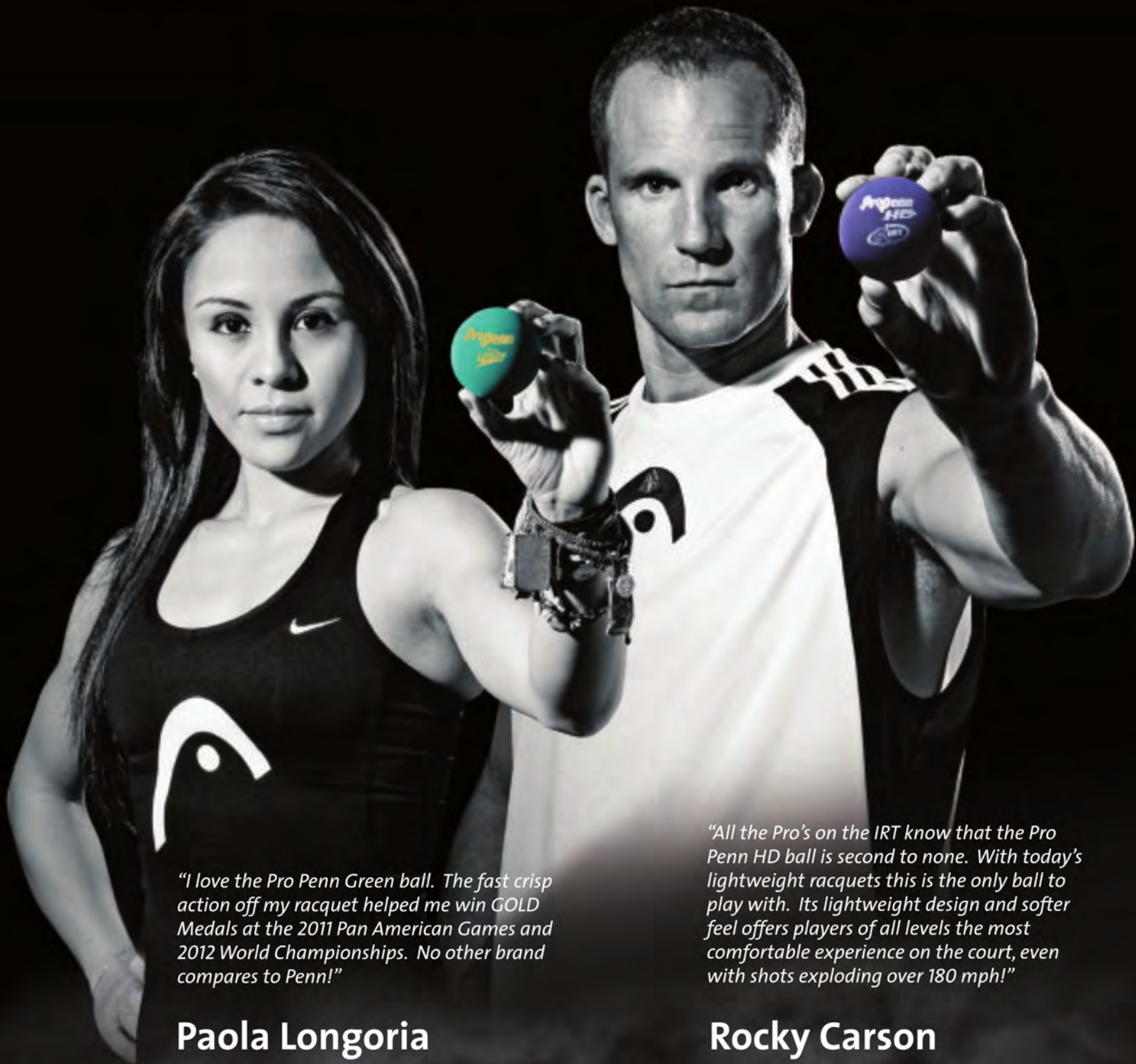
Kendra Tutsch and Cindy Tilbury. Photo courtesy Kendra Tutsch

Sponsors included Wilson Sporting Goods; Malibu Ladies Racquetball Camp; Sun-Rise Baking Co., Tom Rossier, Tucson; Ric Shorrock Photography, Tucson; King Label, Phoenix; Dr. Mary Lee Amerian, Los Angeles; Splatshotz Apparel, Minneapolis; and generous individual donors.

WSMRA Board Chair Kendra Tutsch commented, "I played in the first Women's Senior Masters because it was at my club and I thought it would be fun to compete against some new players. I have played nearly every one since then and now I find that more than the competition, I enjoy the friendships that I have made and continue to make. There is really nothing like the combination of competition and fun that you find at our tournament. I also must say that we have a very

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Paola Longoria

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Rocky Carson

loyal and hardworking core of Board members and volunteers without whom we could not continue to run such a great event."

Linda Covault is a medical technologist, racquetball instructor and 30-year enthusiast who was at the first two WSMRA events, both held at Supreme Court in Madison, Wisconsin. "I've heard from women here in Tucson that they think the WSMRA event is fantastic because they don't often have the opportunity to compete with a lot of different players." This long-time supporter also shared, "This should be on every woman player's bucket list! Thanks to everyone who contributed their time and energy to make this such a great tournament for women!"

Cindy Tilbury added, "I first played the WSMRA tournament in Orlando in 2007 and have been hooked ever since. Even before then, the women of racquetball have been so special and dear. Putting on this tournament was my gift to them. I hope I get the chance to do it again in the future. There are not all that many tournaments that can boast "the 27th Annual" and this one is still going strong. See you all at the 28th Annual WSMRA Championship!"

The 2017 Women's Senior/Masters National Racquetball Championships will be held in the Chicago area at the Glass Court Swim & Fitness Club in Lombard, Illinois, January 13-15. Visit our website at wsdra.com and find us on Facebook for pictures, updates, and announcements year-round.

2016 WSMRA CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS

40+: Victoria Pickard, Pennsylvania

45+: Marie Gomar, Guatemala

45+B/C: Ingrid Crawford, Texas

50+: Jean Halahan, New York

55+: Lisa Bu, Arizona

55+ B/C: Althea Bailey, Maryland

60+: Marsha Berry, Kentucky

65+: Laurie Kitchen, New York

70+: Teresa Rock, Delaware

75+: Mildred Gwinn, North Carolina

35/45+ Doubles: Marie Gomar, Guatemala/Jean Halahan, New York

55+ Doubles: Lynette Froehlich, South Carolina/Marsha Berry, Kentucky

65+ Doubles: Nancy Kronenfeld, Illinois/Shirley Parsons, Colorado

WSMRA Board of Directors: Kendra Tutsch, Terry Rogers, MeriJean Kelley, Paula Sperling, Jean Halahan, Cindy Tilbury. Advisory: Tina Marchie, Nancy Kronenfeld, Debbie Tisinger.

Jen Memhard

Jen Memhard, a business intelligence consultant for CSG Pro, played 55+B/C as a first-timer in Tucson. Hailing from Portland, Oregon, she has played off and on for 30 years.

When asked what she liked about the event that would bring her back again, she replied, "I love that it's all women, experienced women. With such grace, elegance, and finesse, it's great to see high-level women athletes compete. I also love that we have round robins and get to meet and compete with so many different players."

Jen recently received a sportsperson of the year award from the Multnomah Athletic Club racquetball committee recognizing her efforts to develop women's racquetball. "It's a challenge to keep the women coming to play. It would be great to have the WSMRA come to Portland!"



Photo by Cheryl Kirk

Tina Marchie

New York resident Tina Marchie first played in Sarasota. She had originally attended tournaments with another great New York player, Jean Halahan, primarily to photograph the action, but Tina soon decided she had to take part. "Within that time, I met so many great people of all ages. I admired them! I remember taking pictures and watching the 75/80 age group. I was in awe of them. I wanted to be like them at that age. The competition was there, but the sport brought them together as a family. I remembered the feeling it gave me, and I had to be a part of it. I wanted to support and keep it alive."

Tina worked hard on her game and names Mildred Gwinn as a mentor, saying "Each tournament, Mildred would watch and coach me between her matches. By the end I would have a written list of things to work on and practice. I cannot tell you how much this has helped me and how much it meant to me."

Tina adds, "What keeps me coming back to these tournaments is the love of a sport that brings competition and friendship together to another whole another level. Every tournament is a reunion of old and new friends and a great competition." From her first tournament Tina also jumped right into volunteering, offering to set up a Facebook page for the WSMRA and taking many great pictures at each tournament.



Marie Gomar, Jean Halahan, Laurie Kitchen, Tina Marchie (in front of the camera!). Photo courtesy Tina Marchie.

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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 continue to complete the "Racquetball Success Triangle" we first introduced in the Winter 2010 issue of this magazine.

In the Fall 2015 issue, I discussed the Return of Serve in detail, a key element in creating your "championship game."

This issue I am going to discuss the Ceiling Ball used in the Return of Serve. The ceiling ball shot is the foundation of ALL defensive shots. The ceiling shot does EXACTLY what it is supposed to do -- it hits the ceiling and draws your opponents out of the middle and puts them 35 feet and back which is the most difficult position to score from because they are the furthest from the target: the front wall. It also gives you time to get back to good center court position, a must in the game of racquetball.

The ceiling ball is a shot in which you want to have LOTS of confidence, both when you are returning serve or during a rally. If your opponents know you lack confidence in your ceiling ball, they will pick on it by serving you lob serves and will hit ceiling balls to you during a rally. What often happens is you will get frustrated and try to shoot more balls and be too offensive from your shoulder rather than just go back up to the ceiling and start a ceiling ball rally. This can only lead to one thing: self-destruction.

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.

1-RACQUETBALL SKILLS

Let us show you how to hit the ceiling ball correctly since it is the #1 defensive shot in the game of racquetball. Having confidence in this shot is absolutely necessary in order to be a solid player. The mechanics of the ceiling ball is exactly the same as the attacking forehand and penetrating backhand, except for the differences below.

A. FOREHAND CEILING

1-Grip: the same

2-Stance: the same, except your knees are only slightly bent since you are not hitting the ball below your knees but rather above your shoulder.

3-Step and Swing: the same, except your step is short, 1-2 feet, as you are not looking to get generate power; the face of the

racquet is pointing up toward ceiling at a 45-degree angle; and the racquet is above your head.

4-Contact Point: the same, except in your hitting zone the racquet is above your head. On the ceiling, the ball should hit the ceiling before the front wall, approximately 5 to 8 feet back from the front wall, so that on its second bounce it hits as close to the back wall as possible (ideally in the crotch of the back wall). It is based on how hard the ball was hit.

5-Follow-through: the same mechanics, except the racquet comes across the body and points down.

B. BACKHAND CEILING

1-Grip: the same

2-Stance: the same, except your knees are only slightly bent as you are not hitting the ball below your knees, but rather chest to shoulder high.

3-Step and Swing: the same, except: your step is short as you are not looking to get low to generate power. The racquet and elbow begins to move forward and across the chest to shoulder area. The tip of your racquet is pointing to the side wall and the face of the racquet is pointing toward ceiling at a 45-degree angle.

4-Contact Point: the same, except in your hitting zone, the ball is contacted approximately chest to shoulder high. On the ceiling, the ball should hit the ceiling before the front wall approximately 5 to 8 feet back from the front wall so that on its second bounce it hits as close to the back wall as possible (ideally in the crotch of the back wall). It is based on how hard the ball was hit.

5-Follow-through: the same.

2-MENTAL SKILLS

Creating and Using Affirmations

An affirmation is a personal and present statement of what you would like to happen in your game. It is as if you are bringing the future into the present moment. Your mind does not know the difference between a self-created statement and reality, so it sends triggers to your body as if it is a reality now. The beauty of the mind is that you really can control so many aspects of the way it works and how it affects your game.

The law of attraction states that whatever we desire and truly believe in the goodness of our hearts, we can achieve. Our strongest desire starts out as a seed thought, and then we pay attention to the desire and decide whether it is within our realm of possibilities. If we think we have a 50 percent chance of accomplishing it, then our minds start to figure out ways to make it happen. Next we create an image (visualization) in our minds of the end

result that we want, and we make it as clear and colorful and real as possible. Then we add a feeling of pleasure and decide what price we are truly willing to pay to achieve this goal. For example, if you want to nail your ceiling ball shot, then add a great feeling. Once you have nailed this shot, you will be playing at a higher level, which gets you excited about your future possibilities—and then there is no stopping you. Each time you hit the perfect ceiling shot, it just deepens your desire and imprints the technique deeper into your muscle memory until all your body remembers is the good feeling, and it will strive for it every time.

Once you have decided on what you truly want and you are able to see the end result, it is time to add an affirmation, or a statement about its truth, such as “I am now a champion racquetball player!” or “I can hit perfect ceiling balls!” or “I am a quick, powerful, and intelligent player!” Whatever you repeat over and over becomes your mental truth. First comes the desire, then the image, then the thought, and finally your actions. Once you do that, it gets imprinted into your gut (sports brain), and you literally start to create what you want.

3-FITNESS SKILLS

Dynamic stretching is stretching while you are moving. It has been proven through studies with many types of athletes that dynamic stretching is what you want to start with at the beginning of every workout session or racquetball match. You will be taught to warm the muscles with many different exercises while stretching at the same time.

Almost all conditioning coaches use these stretches to increase flexibility. Dynamic stretches involve movement that causes the muscles to extend but not beyond their normal range of motion. Here are some of my favorites:

- Walking lunges with twist** - do a lunge and when you are in the lunge position twist with control to one side then the other, and repeat as stated above.
- Walking Frankenstein** - arms stretched out straight in front of you and then as you are walking you have your legs one at a time come up straight and have your toes touch your hands.
- Knees to chest walking** - knees come up in front of you one at a time
- Quad stretch walking** - knees come up and heels go behind you and try to touch your heel to your butt.

Paola, Rocky and Jason have fitness trainers who work with them on a regular basis and focus on developing their dynamic stretching in their training routines.

4-NUTRITION SKILLS

Sleep: Athletes need 6-8 hours of deep R.E.M. state sleep in order to totally repair their tissues and cells and also for their mental visualization images to imprint into their gut. It is in the third phase of the sleep cycle where the body takes all of the nutrients that have been consumed that day to repair itself. In the fourth cycle, the subconscious imprints images into muscle memory. A good night's sleep is imperative.

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Fax: 206-260-7909

Taylor Knoth
Jr. World Champion

Sharon Jackson
Jr. Nat'l Champion

Jason Mannino
#1 Pro Player 2003

Rocky Carson
#1 Pro Player 2008

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

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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March 11-13	Findlay, OH
April 1-3	Las Vegas, NV
Apr 29-May 1	Warren, NJ
June 3-5	San Francisco, CA
September TBA	San Antonio, TX
TBA	Atlanta, GA
TBA	Houston/Dallas, TX
TBA	Phoenix, Tucson, AZ
TBA	Los Angeles, CA
TBA	Denver, CO
TBA	St. Louis, MO

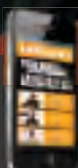
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SAFETY HOLDUP CAN BECOME A "FAILURE TO MOVE" PENALTY HINDER

by Otto Dietrich, USA Racquetball National Rules Commissioner

One does not have to actually hit the opponent for a Penalty Hinder (Rule 2.15) to be called as stated in the last two sentences of Rule 3.14(a)6 (the Safety Holdup rule). Whenever a shot is held up, it normally is for a valid safety concern. We strongly encourage such sportsmanlike behavior, but in all fairness to the player who holds up, if the opponent was in error, then that opponent does not deserve a chance to play that rally over. In assessing such plays, even when an opponent is hit by the ball, the referee should try to "visualize" the direction that the ball was going or would have been going had it been taken. Also try to project where the ball would have contacted the front wall had it "magically" passed through that opponent. Of course, if that direction was one of the two paths prescribed in Rule 3.15(a) and it had sufficient velocity and height to reach the front wall, then that should be called a Penalty Hinder for "Failure to Move".

Some other questions I've answered in recent weeks include:

Ron K. asked: Can you serve overhanded?

I answered: An overhead serve is perfectly legal as long as it fully complies with all of the other serving rules which are Rules 3.1 through 3.10 in the rulebook.

Andy G. wondered: This concerns the server repositioning after a lob serve (or any serve for that matter) even at the pro level. If I understand the rule correctly, the server cannot relocate outside the service box until AFTER the ball crosses the plane of the short line, right? I saw that almost no one follows this rule nor is it enforced. This gives the server a slight advantage in that he/she can get back to center court quicker and in position while the receiver is still judging the ball on its way. I ran into Jason Mannino who said that that rule was more for safety than anything else, but he gave the impression that it was no big deal. I believe a rule is a rule and should be enforced. Is there a way for me to call attention to this if I notice it in a match? Would the server lose his serve?

Otto told Andy: USAR (amateur) rules do require that the server and his partner remain within the confines of the Service Zone until the served ball crosses the short line. However, the IRT Men's Pro rules allow the server and his partner in doubles to go about anywhere they want on the court after the served ball has been struck by the server. So Jason was right as far as the IRT is concerned. You could see this happen often, and it would not be a violation (loss of serve) if the match was an IRT match. But the call should always be made in amateur play for safety reasons. Lots of amateurs watch the pros and if they see the pros do that without penalty (which is perfectly legal) they incorrectly think that they can do it, too.

Peter asked: If a player calls an "injury time out," how long does that period last? How many "injury time outs" may a player and/or team use per game/match? Is an "injury time out" any different from a "non-injury time out"? At a past National Doubles, we've run into teams that seem to use the "injury time out" to their advantage to stop our momentum. Refs typically don't keep a close eye on the clock, so often we are looking at a 20-minute delay as the opposing team repeats this process along numerous times. I don't know for sure if the player was in fact injured at all or simply using the rule to their advantage.

I responded: Answers to your questions can be found in the Rule 3.16(b). To qualify for this type of time out, the injury must have been incurred during the on-going match as the result of some type of contact. That could be contact with the ball, racquet, floor, wall, or another player, but contact must be involved. An injured player gets no more than 15 total minutes of recovery time per match (not game), however, it can be used in various increments of time throughout the match if needed. So, you say this happened at National Doubles? Wow! All of those matches should be played in accordance with the published rules! Please download the rulebook to your smart phone and politely offer to show that rule to the ref if he applies it incorrectly. This type of referee challenge is allowed by Policy B.9 near the end of the rulebook. Most refs probably won't have the rulebook handy, but can just show him yours!

Ken P. emailed me this question: We have always played it as an out serve when the ball hits the server on the way back from the front wall. We also call for a do-over should the ball hit the receiver on its way to the front wall (with the obvious "out" situation being called depending on the ball's direction and velocity) during a rally. The other day, the ball struck my opponent after he hit it off the front wall during a rally. In the past, we always played that similar to the out serve, basically saying if you hit yourself after returning, you lose the point or the serve. He said it should be a do-over. I did not find this in the rules, maybe I'm missing it or maybe he is correct. Who is correct in this case?

I told Ken: Anytime a player (or his doubles partner) hits themselves or each other with the ball before the other player/team touches the ball at all, then the player/team that hit themselves lose that rally immediately regardless of which way the ball is headed. See Rule 3.13(c)5. On a return of serve, if the receivers happen to hit one of the serving team with the ball, then that is either a replay hinder or a penalty hinder just like during a rally and subject to the criteria cited in Rules 3.14 and 3.15. By the way, what makes this so (since technically this is not a rally since the ball has not yet hit the front wall) is Rule 3.11(e). Few players are aware of that little-known provision, but all of them play it like that.



photo by Geoff Thomsen

DO YOU HAVE A RULES/REFEREEING QUESTION?

Be sure to email it to me at rules@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.

The Design and Performance of Nylon Racquetball Strings

By Steve Crandall | VP Sales & Marketing, Ashaway Racquet Strings

In the last issue, we looked at the properties of Zyex® as used in racquetball string. This time, we'll look at the world's most popular racquet string material, Nylon, or as it is also called, synthetic gut.

A bit of history: Nylon is one of the oldest polymers around, having been invented by DuPont scientist Wallace Carothers in 1935. Considered a "do anything" material, various nylon compounds have been used in everything from nylon stockings to machine bearings, automotive parts and boat anchor line. The first multifilament nylon tennis string was developed by Ashaway in 1949, and the first multifilament nylon racquetball string -- Ashaway's original SuperKill® -- appeared in the mid-70s. Today, despite decades of 'space age' material innovation, nylon remains the most popular string material for squash, tennis, racquetball, and badminton.

In racquetball, nylon has been the dominant string material since the game first began its rise to popularity in the early 1970s. Gut never made it as a contender -- despite having a very racquetball-sounding name -- and only in recent years have newer, space-age materials like Zyex® begun to replace nylon in our racquets.

There are several reasons for the long popularity of nylon strings. They are relatively inexpensive compared to other high tech synthetics. They are very responsive. They are not sensitive to moisture (or other chemicals), and they provide good abrasion resistance. In studies conducted by USRSA, the dynamic stiffness ratings for several nylon string brands were approximately 190 lb./in, which is quite respectably low compared to Zyex at 145. Nylon's main drawback is that it loses tension and wears more quickly than other string materials leading to a shorter life in the racquet.

Although it doesn't spring back quite as quickly as Zyex, nylon stretches more, so the amount of power it generates is comparable. In fact, depending on the design and gauge of the string, nylon can be either quite stretchy or quite stiff. Nylon is also quite versatile, providing players with a range of characteristics, and is often cited for its playability and feel. Nylon strings are still the standard for beginning players, and have been used by just about everybody who has ever played the game, including the world's top professionals.

String designers use nylon's broad range of properties for different purposes. When used as a string core, nylon provides a great deal of resilience. Multifilament cores are made from thousands of very thin fibers twisted and/or braided together, but not chemically bonded: they're free to stretch somewhat independently of one another. As a result, multifilament cores are less stiff, i.e., more resilient than monofilament cores of the same material. And resiliency, as we know, generates power.

Nylon is also used in the outer jacket, or wear layer, on most strings, including those with Zyex cores. For this usage, string designers often choose a harder, less resilient monofilament nylon fiber to resist wear and to protect the core fibers from notching during heavy play. Some designs, like our SuperKill XL string, include a textured surface on the wear layer, greatly enhancing ball control and adding another degree of playability.

But the story of nylon racquetball strings has been evolving with the sport for over 40 years. As racquet head designs and styles of play have changed, so have manufacturers expanded and enhanced their



As the official string of USA Racquetball (and the only string made in the USA), Ashaway works continually to improve its broad line of racquetball strings to help you improve your game.

string offerings to meet the needs of a broad spectrum of players. For example, our original SuperKill string -- now called SuperKill II -- is a real heavyweight at 1.3 mm, or 16 gauge. It has a monofilament nylon core wrapped in a tough nylon wear surface that offers both power and durability with excellent resiliency, standing up to even the most powerful strokes.

As the sport matured in the late 1980s and 90s and players began to demand thinner strings, along with more power and ball control, we developed SuperKill 17. Also built on a monofilament core, SuperKill 17 is 1.25 mm in diameter (17 gauge) and offers an excellent balance of power and ball control, along with superior resiliency and above-average durability. Designed for optimum playability at all skill levels, SuperKill 17 was used exclusively by several top touring pros in the 1990s.

Introduced in the early 2000s, SuperKill XL incorporates a multifilament nylon core and is designed to provide a softer feel with excellent response and resiliency. Also 1.25 mm (17 gauge), SuperKill XL is a thin lively string that provides enhanced grip on the ball and shot placement. It is used by many top players looking to optimize power, touch and ball control.

Finally, as we noted last time, we have recently combined a multifilament nylon core with a specially woven Zyex wear layer to produce yet another variation in the evolution of nylon racquetball strings, our PowerKill® family. Originally intended simply to improve tension holding, we were surprised to find that this new combination also increased the power and durability of the string, yet still retained that soft nylon "touch" and playability so many players favor. Who knew?

Which, when you come down to it, is really the point. Even though nylon has been around for some 80 years now, we don't know what else may be possible: a new weave or core combination, a new formulation or additive, even a new surface texture may open up new possibilities and playing characteristics. That's why we keep working: as the official string of USA Racquetball (and the only string made in the USA), we want to continually improve our string offerings to help you improve your game.

Zyex is a registered trademark of Zyex Ltd.



Today's SuperKill® family includes three strings, SuperKill II, SuperKill 17, and SuperKill XL; each has a nylon core with a high tenacity nylon wear surface, and offers a range of design and construction features.

Since racquetball's first surge of popularity in the 1970s, Ashaway SuperKill® strings have been a popular choice for players at all levels. And as the game has evolved, so have SuperKill strings. Today, the SuperKill family of strings offers an array of playing characteristics optimized to meet the needs of both recreational and competitive players.

The most recent addition to the family is SuperKill XL, which incorporates a multifilament nylon core that provides a softer feel with excellent response and resiliency. Also 1.25 mm (17 gauge), SuperKill XL is a thin, lively string that provides enhanced grip on the ball and shot placement. Designed for use by top players looking to optimize power, touch and ball control, SuperKill XL is white in color with a distinctive red and blue cross pattern. Recommended stringing tension is up to 50 lbs. (22.5 kgs.).

"The story of our SuperKill line of racquetball strings has been evolving now for nearly 40 years," said Ashaway Vice President Steve Crandall. "As racquet head designs and styles of play have changed, so have we expanded and enhanced our SuperKill strings to meet the needs of a broad spectrum of players."

Ashaway Racket Strings are made by Ashaway Line & Twine Mfg. Co., the only U.S. manufacturer of string for squash, tennis, racquetball, and badminton. Operated by the Crandall family since 1824, Ashaway has been making racquet strings since 1949, and has been the Official String of USA Racquetball for more than ten years.

[SIDEOUT State News]

COLORADO | ON A MISSION

- by Kathleen Erickson, CRA Treasurer

To kick off the new year, the Colorado Racquetball Association Board revisited its strategic goals and released a new mission statement – which dedicates CRA “to promote awareness and involvement through strong and supportive community engagement.”



Several volunteers had stepped forward earlier to accept appointments to vacant board seats, including myself, Matt Dockter, Kim Pedrie, CJ Sanders and Alyssa Street. The new officer lineup named David Stone as President, Marcia Richards as VP, George Tellez as Secretary, and Kathleen Erickson as Treasurer. This re-energized CRA Board convened in January to both re-frame its mission and brainstorm ways to grow the sport. After all, we all agree that it's time to take back the courts that have been re-purposed over the years – right?

Toward this end, the CRA Board has taken a closer look at how our sport differs from others - even down to the minutia of how we run and promote tournaments. We felt that one key differentiator was the sense of community and social interaction among players, and that - by nurturing that unique culture, the sport will grow in Colorado, and we'll see courts converted back to their original usage.

In the coming months, the CRA Board plans to work on various strategic initiatives designed to:

- Generate awareness through social media and at clubs that have racquetball courts
- Support coaching programs and current coaches as they develop players
- Assist clubs in developing and growing racquetball programs
- Promote tournament events throughout Colorado
- Develop social functions to build, nurture, and engage our community



In related news, the Colorado Racquetball Association has long supported the original Racquet for the Cure Benefit Tournament that originated in Denver in 2000. This year event organizers reached a fundraising milestone by donating – in cumulative total - over \$100,000 to the Denver Affiliate of Komen for the Cure. Doing good by having fun ... that's what we're talking about. See you at National Singles!

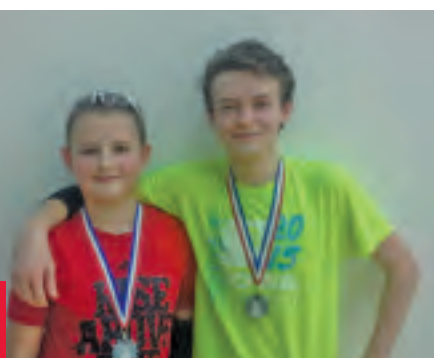


FLORIDA | HOGAN DELIVERS –
photo courtesy Belinda Dettman
Marty Hogan autographed a frame for Gino Martinez of West Palm Beach – and Gino was thrilled to meet the frame's namesake!



ILLINOIS | GROUP DYNAMICS - photo courtesy Cheryl Kirk

Team Illinois at the Women's Senior Master National Championship - enjoying Tucson's sunshine and balmy weather. Illinois is known for consistently bringing the most players to this event!



Pictured L-R: Carter Harbeck and Andrew Gleason. Photo courtesy Mike Gleason.

IOWA | GLEASON ADDS TO RESUME AS STATE JUNIOR CHAMP - by Josh Paul

Hard work pays off. Just ask 12-year old Andrew Gleason of Urbandale, who recently took first place in the Iowa State Junior Championships by sweating his way through the 12-player Olympic style format without dropping a game. Gleason defeated 15-year old Carter Harbeck, also of Urbandale, in the final 15-11, 15-4.

Gleason finds himself on a racquetball court

5-6 times per week, with three of those days being dedicated to practice. That training played a key role in his recent success at the Iowa State Junior Championships. Along with the junior division matches, Gleason also played A doubles and finished 1st place in consolation with partner Kirk Hunsicker, for a total of 13 games in the one-day shootout.

After the final, Gleason was asked what he was thinking when he scored match point against Harbeck. "It's finally done," he said, "I'm going to go home and take a shower. I am gassed!"

Gleason began playing racquetball in 2011 after the sport caught his interest when he saw several players hitting at a local club. What started out as a hobby quickly transformed into a passion. He has played 15 tournaments so far, recently taking first place of 28 entrants in the Pinchshot.com St. Louis Open in the "C" division. He also participated in the 2015 USA Racquetball National Junior Olympic Championships in Stockton, where he was a tri-medal winner (14- White silver, 12- Doubles silver, 12- Blue bronze).

Two years ago, Gleason began training with Coach Jim Winterton, and he credits Winterton with much of his success. "Coach Winterton has been helping teach me things, and I've finally grasped ahold of them. I'm learning more about the sport and working on my game every day," Gleason said, "I told Coach I wanted to take my game to the next level."

Every tournament experience motivates Gleason to strive for excellence. With a smile, he relays a few words of wisdom: "Work hard. It'll get you where you need to be, and this is not a bumper sticker."

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TENNESSEE | WORSTOCK IN MAY -

by Brad Tursky, Racquetball Ranch Owner

You're invited to make your way to the Racquetball Ranch in Jackson, Tennessee for WORStock, May 20-22 – Super Series event featuring \$2,500 in cash prizes. The two-court specialty venue will host Men's B/C Doubles, Elite/A Doubles, Pro/Open Doubles, Elite/A Singles, Pro/Open Singles, and Mixed Open Doubles. Spaces are limited so enter early!

The unique Racquetball Ranch setup offers camping on location, a pond just steps from the courts, a large barn for shade, plus plenty of great food. When you're not playing racquetball, you'll be able to enjoy Cornhole, Pickleball, disc golf, and other games set up across the spacious, seven-acre property. It's a must-see and a great time ... don't miss it!



TEXAS | NATIONAL POLICE RACQUETBALL ASSOCIATION

by Mike Welch, VP, NPRA

As part of its campaign to give back the community, the National Police Racquetball Association launched its Christmas toy drive tournament on December 5, 2015, at the L.A Fitness in League City Texas. As expected, the racquetball community responded with support and generosity. Registrants were asked to supply a toy as part of their discounted registration for the one-day doubles shoot out. Each player donated one or more toys to the event which allowed two large bins to overflow with gifts for underprivileged children. All gifts were then donated to the Pasadena Police Department's Officer Santa Program. This year the program provided toys and bikes to more than 120 children in the surrounding community. "This was a well run tournament supporting a good cause" said Rhonda Hasselbarth, one of the players at the event.

[FIRSTSERVE Juniors]

EXCITING THINGS ARE HAPPENING WITH JUNIOR RACQUETBALL

By Sharon Brezina, US Racquetball Foundation



We've seen an increase in racquetball activity by passionate and dedicated supporters who are reinvigorating existing Juniors Programs. These programs are showing great promise, but we need a more organized way of sharing our successes with others who want to take up the same challenge. More state and local associations (as well as public and private clubs!) need to help get more juniors onto courts and also find ways to keep them interested in the healthy, fun, life-long sport of racquetball.

Kids-On-Courts is a new volunteer national group that coordinates these efforts from around the country. With a goal of promoting Junior Racquetball and dramatically increasing participation at national tournaments, Kids-On-Courts is spearheaded by the United States Racquetball Foundation, Life Time Fitness, USA Racquetball, and the Minnesota Racquetball Association. The group meets monthly to address agenda items like: Kids-On-Courts goals, how you can help, identifying and overcoming barriers, and increasing participation.

Right out of the gate, Kids-On-Courts is recruiting players for USA Racquetball's 2016 National Junior Olympic Championships that will be hosted by Life Time Fitness in Minneapolis, June 22-26. The group is currently reaching out to state associations and junior programmers to identify barriers to participation, then offering help in overcoming these challenges so that each state will be able to field more entrants to future Junior Olympic Championships.

Want to help blow the lid off of the current status quo of junior racquetball? Get more information on how to join the Kids-On-Courts effort by contacting Kathleen Klukas, Executive Director of the USA Racquetball Foundation, at Kathleen@USRacquetball-Foundation.org or 651-262-4452.

! Thank you ! from the Kids-On-Courts Leadership Team

Kathleen Klukas, Executive Director, USRF
Andrea Hartman, Volunteer Leadership Team
Jonn Olson, President Minnesota Racquetball Association
John Wilinski, National Racquetball Manager Life Time Fitness

... and the Kids-On-Courts Advisory Committee

Steve Czarnecki, Executive Director, USA Racquetball
Peggie Tellez, Manager Sport Development, USAR



Don Schopieray,
President Michigan
Racquetball
Association

Junior Team Minnesota | Back row L-R:-
Ellis Syke, Jordan Barth, Sam Bredenbeck,
Jake Bredenbeck. Middle row: Owen
Forsythe, Raina Hartman, Cole Hartman,
Nathan Soltis, Roland Siverling. Front: Sage
Hartman. Photo courtesy Andrea Hartman.



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KIDS ON COURTS

Our national volunteer movement & organization determined to grow Juniors Racquetball in the United States and dramatically increase junior participation at National Tournaments

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Or go to *KidsOnCourts.com*



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NPRA's Mike Welch with a very happy little boy. Photos courtesy Bill Bearden.

**HAVE
NEWS?**

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TO MAGAZINE@USRA.ORG TO BE
CONSIDERED FOR A FUTURE ISSUE.



NPRA's Bill Bearden, Mike and Kyle Welch working the desk

The on court play was impressive, with awards being given to first and second place teams in each division. However, the best action was displayed off the court as the participants wished each other well and showed good spirit to all. "We are always amazed at the class displayed by the racquetball community and can't wait to spend more time with them in the near future," said NPRA President Bill Bearden.

The National Police Racquetball Association would like to thank L.A. Fitness and the local management staff in League City for their support of this endeavor. We also look forward to an exciting new year hosting tournaments and making a few stops across the country to play the game we love.

Heading into a new year, the NPRA would like to acknowledge our Brothers and Sisters in the Fire Department, Emergency Medical Services, and Military, who stand guard on the front lines every day. To each, we say...Godspeed, train hard and stay safe.



2016

NATIONAL JUNIOR OLYMPIC CHAMPIONSHIPS

JUNE 22 - 26, 2016

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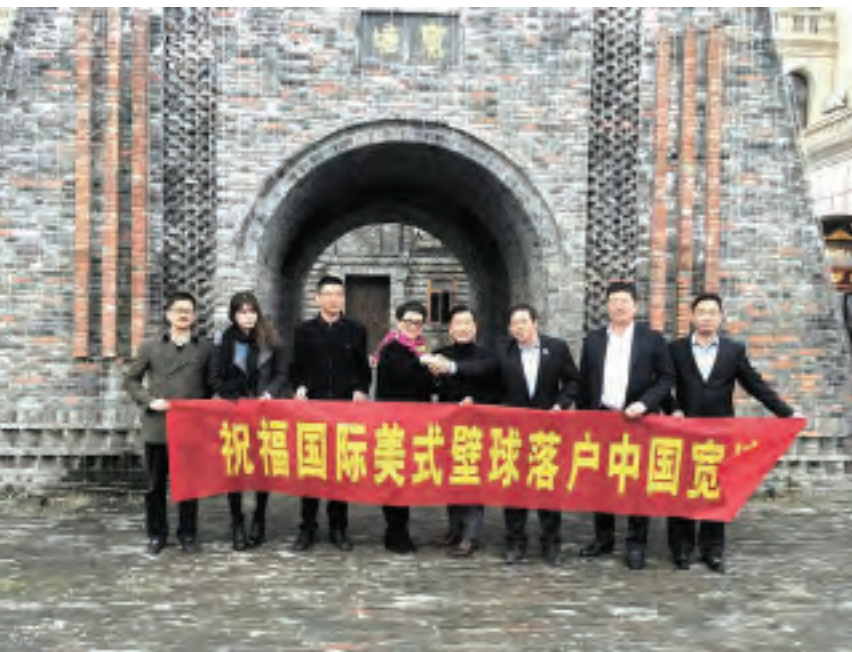
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INTERNATIONAL UPDATE

WHAT IN THE WORLD IS GOING ON WITH RACQUETBALL?

by Luke St. Onge Kirk | IRF Secretary General & Cheryl Kirk | IRF Board of Directors



ASIA

China is building between four and seven racquetball courts in Shanghai with probable completion this year. The courts will be built under the newly formed China Racquetball Federation headed by Dr. Chris Zhao.

The Asia Racquetball Championships will be held in Goyang, South Korea, March 21-22.

CENTRAL AMERICA

Guatemala is expected to finish its project of ten new courts by the end of 2016.

NORTH AMERICA

The four portable courts built for the 2015 Pan American Games have been relocated to a sports complex in Regina, SK, Canada.

The 2016 Pan American Racquetball Championships were held March 19-26 at the La Loma Sports Complex in San Luis Potosí, Mexico. La Loma was the site of the 2000 IRF World Championships and the 2004 IRF Junior World Championships. It features six glass backwall courts and two sidewall glass championship courts. San Luis Potosí has a great history in hosting racquetball events including the first Central American Caribbean Games in 1990. The PARC General Assembly was conducted at this event.

The 32nd IRF World Senior Racquetball Championships will be held August 30-September 3 in Albuquerque, NM, USA. This will be the second year for inclusion of doubles divisions in this popular event.

The US Open will be held October 5-9 and will be sanctioned by the IRF.

SOUTH AMERICA

The IRF World Championships will be held in Cali, Colombia, July 14-19. The biennial IRF World Congress will be convened at the World Championships.

Argentina is building four new racquetball courts that will become part of one of the most popular football (aka soccer) complexes in Buenos Aires. The courts will feature three glass backwall courts and one championship glass court. The courts are under construction by The Court Company, Memphis, Tennessee, USA.

Negotiations have begun to build a racquetball complex in Uruguay with construction hopefully underway by the end of the 2016.

IN GENERAL NEWS...

The IRF will be in attendance at the 2016 SportAccord convention in Lausanne, Switzerland, April 17-22. IRF officials will meet with the IOC regarding funding and inclusion in future Olympic Games.



The IRF World Junior Championships will be held in November with the site yet to be determined.

The IRF has applied to be part of the first-ever Beach Games under the Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC). The competition for 24 sports will be held in San Diego, California, USA, in 2017. Racquetball would be competed as an outdoor discipline at this event.

Visit the IRF website at www.internationalracquetball.com for frequent updates and for live streaming of the IRF World Championships (July), and the IRF World Junior Championships (November).

Please "Like" our Facebook page, International Racquetball Federation.



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CALENDAR of EVENTS

For the latest in USA Racquetball Sanctioned Events visit USARacquetball.com

Date(s)	Event	City	State	Venue
Apr. 8-10	USA Racquetball Regionals - Missouri	St. Louis	MO	Vetta Sports-Concord
Apr. 8-10	USA Racquetball Regionals - New York	Bay Shore	NY	World Gym
Apr. 8-10	RacquetFest 4 MS-Presented by WearRollout.com	Warren	NJ	The Racquet Club at Warren
Apr. 8-10	Daniel Delarosa Pro-Am Internacional	Edinburg	TX	University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley
Apr. 8-10	14th Duboise Electric Pro- Am Classic	Ft Smith	AR	World Class Fitness
Apr. 8-10	Washington State Singles	Seattle	WA	Washington Athletic Club
Apr. 8-10	VA - James River Open	Lynchburg	VA	The Sports Racket
Apr. 8-10	Dee Patalano Memorial Tournament	East Providence	RI	Healthtrax Fitness
Apr. 9	Spring Shootout	Sacramento	CA	Florin High School
Apr. 9-10	Kentucky State Singles Championships	Louisville	KY	Downtown Louisville YMCA
Apr. 15-17	USA Racquetball Regionals - Colorado	Colorado Springs	CO	YMCA Downtown Colorado Springs
Apr. 15-17	USA Racquetball Regionals - Georgia	Atlanta	GA	Emory University
Apr. 15-17	USA Racquetball Regionals - Maryland	Laurel	MD	Sportfit Laurel Racquetball
Apr. 15-17	USA Racquetball Regionals - Michigan	Davison	MI	Davison Athletic Club
Apr. 15-17	USA Racquetball Regionals - Oregon	Gresham	OR	Life Time Fitness - 98th St.
Apr. 15-17	USA Racquetball Regionals - Pennsylvania	Pittsburgh	PA	Fitness 1440
Apr. 15-17	CNRA State Singles Championship	Stockton	CA	In-Shape: West Lane
Apr. 15-17	No Strings Attached Open	Tucson	AZ	Tucson Racquet & Fitness Club
Apr. 16	Indiana State Singles	West Lafayette	IN	Purdue University
Apr. 16	Coast to Coast Computer Products Eastlake Doubles	Chula Vista	CA	Eastlake High School
Apr. 21-24	American Door & Glass Classic	Roanoke	VA	Carilion Wellness Roanoke
Apr. 22-24	USA Racquetball Regionals - Illinois	Lombard	IL	Glass Court Swim and Fitness
Apr. 22-24	USA Racquetball Regionals - Kansas	Wichita	KS	YMCA Wichita Downtown
Apr. 22-24	USA Racquetball Regionals - Battle at the Alamo	San Antonio	TX	YMCA Thousand Oaks
Apr. 22-24	WY State Singles Championship	Casper	WY	Wyoming Athletic Club
Apr. 23	RYDF Fundraiser	San Ramon	CA	Club Sport San Ramon
Apr. 23-24	AZ Doubles Revolution WOR Shootout	Phoenix	AZ	Rose Mofford Sports Complex
Apr. 24	Young's Tampa Realty.com Tampa Bay Shootout	Pinellas Park	FL	Forbes Recreation Center
Apr. 28 - May 1	USA Racquetball Regionals - FL IRT Pro Stop	Sarasota	FL	Sarasota Family YMCA (Frank Berlin)
Apr. 29 - May 1	Fran Davis Racquetball Camp	Warren	NJ	Warren Health & Racquet Club
7-May	Coast to Coast North County Shootout	San Marcos	CA	Woodland Park Middle School
May 12- 15	ProKennex Tournament of Champions & MAC Pro-Am	Portland	OR	Multnomah Athletic Club
14-May	Maverick May Racquetball Shootout	Arlington	TX	Maverick Athletic Club
14-May	IRT Singles Doubles Saturday Shootout	Lilburn Georgia	GA	Recreation Atl
May 20- 22	WORstock II Presented by Ultimate Racquetball	Jackson	TN	Racquetball Ranch
May 20- 22	NOR CAL Doubles	Redding	CA	Shasta Athletic Club
May 25- 29	USA Racquetball National Singles Championships	Highlands Ranch	CO	Highlands Ranch Recreation Center
Jun. 3- 5	Fran Davis Racquetball Camp	San Francisco	CA	Prime Time Athletic Club
Jun. 10- 11	Rocky Mountain Senior Games	Greeley	CO	Greeley Recreation Center
Jun. 11	Beat the Heat	Sacramento	CA	Florin High School
Jun. 11- 12	June Triple Crown Racquetball Shootout	Arlington	TX	Maverick Athletic Club
Jun. 11- 12	Soda Man 3WB June Shootout at the Stratosphere	Las Vegas	NV	Stratosphere Hotel & Casino
Jun. 11-12	Florida Sunshine State Games	Sarasota	FL	YMCA Sarasota
Jun. 18	Norman Borden Belle Isle Fun Doubles	Detroit	MI	Belle Isle Park

Jun. 22-26	USA Racquetball Junior Olympic Championships	Fridley	MN	Life Time Fitness
Jun. 25	Meijer State Games of Michigan Summer Games	Grand Rapids	MI	Riverview Athletic Club
Jun. 25	Sarasota 1 Day Shootout	Sarasota	FL	Sarasota Family YMCA (Frank Berlin)
Jul. 6- 9	NMRA International Championship	Portland	OR	Sunset Athletic Club
Jul. 7- 10	WOR Championships	Huntington Beach	CA	Marina Park
Jul. 9- 10	July Triple Crown Shootout	Arlington	TX	Maverick Athletic Club
Jul. 15- 16	Racquetball Training Center w/ Coach Winterton	Scottsdale	AZ	Lifetime Fitness
Jul. 15- 16	Kansas Sunflower State Games	Topeka	KS	Downtown Topeka YMCA
Jul. 15- 16	Florida Open	Port St Lucie	FL	Port St Lucie Civic Center
Jul. 16	Belle Isle Summer Classics	Detroit	MI	Belle Isle Park
Jul. 16- 17	Hot Tamale	San Antonio	TX	YMCA Thousand Oaks
Jul. 22- 24	Rocky Mountain State Games	Colorado Springs	CO	YMCA Downtown Colorado Springs
Jul. 28 - Aug. 1	Elite Racquetball Camp	Centennial	CO	Life Time Fitness
Jul. 30- Jul 31	Coast to Coast Battle of the Borders	San Marcos	CA	Woodland Park Middle School

2016 USA RACQUETBALL REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

State	City	Dates	Venue	Director	Email
Missouri	St. Louis	April 8-10	Vetta Sports Concord	Dan Whitley	dwhitley@vettasports.com
New York	Bay Shore	April 8-10	World Gym	Tom Keogh	tkeogh1070@gmail.com
Colorado	Colorado Springs	April 15-17	Downtown YMCA	Joe Williams	rballjoe@gmail.com
Georgia	Atlanta	April 15-17	Emory University	Will Costanza	willc@interserv.com
Maryland	Laurel	April 15-17	Sport Fit Laurel	Traci Valentine	msfeb14th@hotmail.com
Michigan	Davison	April 15-17	Davison Athletic Club	Tom Blakeslee	Racketboat1@aol.com
Oregon	Gresham	April 15-17	Cascade Athletic Club	Brian Ancheta	brianancheta1@yahoo.com
Pennsylvania	Pittsburgh	April 15-17	Fitness 1440	Adam Stein	adam661@yahoo.com
Illinois	Lombard	April 22-24	Glass Court	Geoff Peters	petersgeoff@hotmail.com
Kansas	Wichita	April 22-24	YMCA Downtown Witchita	Scott Wolford	yoscooterw@yahoo.com
Texas	San Antonio	April 22-24	YMCA Thousand Oaks	Mike Cantu	mike@alamoracquetball.org
Florida	Sarasota	April 28-May 1	Sarasota YMCA	Chad Bailey	auchad99@hotmail.com



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WOR TO INDUCT THREE IN JULY



Craig "Clubber" Lane
2016 Hall of Fame Inductee

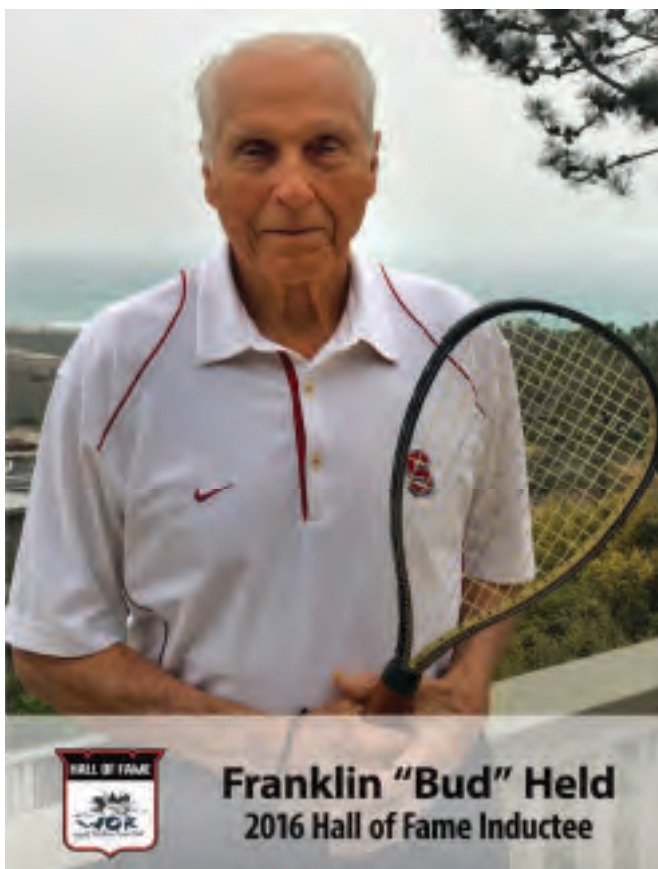
One outstanding contributor and two "powerball" athletes will be inducted into the WOR Hall of Fame at the mid-summer WOR Championships in California. Franklin Bud Held, 88, will be honored along with Marty Hogan and Craig "Clubber" Lane at courtside ceremonies scheduled in Huntington Beach on Saturday, July 9.

Bud Held is widely considered one of the sport's greatest contributors, from his personal sponsorship of the sport's elite players and major tournaments, to developing unique patents in both racquet and stringing technology. He is credited with forming the sport's longest ongoing company, Ektelon, along with inventing a revolutionary stringing machine. He is a two-time world champion in the javelin plus a member of the USA Track & Field Hall of Fame and the Stanford University Hall of Fame.

Over a 40-year career, **Marty Hogan** has a well-documented outdoor "ironman" history, beginning with his very first outdoor national appearance in the pro/open singles division as a 16-year-old in 1974. Today, he continues to display incredible showmanship, sportsmanship, and talent at annual outdoor nationals. His storied career includes 13 major outdoor championship titles; however, his greatest victory may have taken place just last year, where (at 58 years "young") he captured the heart and soul of the racquetball community by winning the Florida Ektelon Long Wall Pro Doubles Championships.

Boasting the game's greatest nickname, **Craig "Clubber" Lane** is arguably the hardest-hitting outdoor player in racquetball history. Along the way to 18 major Pro National titles over four decades, he captured the hearts and imagination of outdoor fans everywhere with his athleticism, sportsmanship, discipline, and determination. Of course, "sporting" a Ph.D. in Kinesiology has also come in handy, and Craig is popular with the fans and well known for his outstanding fair play, on and off the court.

The Hall of Fame induction ceremony will suspend play at the WOR Championships, to allow for an "outdoor style" award ceremony, with acceptance remarks delivered in shorts!



Franklin "Bud" Held
2016 Hall of Fame Inductee



Marty Hogan
2016 Hall of Fame Inductee

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