

Racquetball Reporter

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September 2014

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THE MICHIGAN RACQUETBALL HALL OF FAME WELCOMES THREE NEW MEMBERS

By Twayne M Howard

The 2014 Michigan Racquetball Hall of Fame is thrilled to welcome three new members in the Class of 2014. Randy Anderson and Bob Gravelyn are being honored for their on-court Ability and Twayne M Howard is being honored for his Leadership.

Randy Anderson lives in Grandville, MI and he began playing in 1976. Randy amassed an impressive win record in the 1980s and 1990s winning countless local, state and regional championships. In addition to being a great player and a fierce competitor, Randy is one of the true gentlemen in the sport. Randy's talent placed him among the best to ever play the sport, and he was not found lacking. Congratulations to Randy.

Bob Gravelyn lives in Rockford, MI and has played for over 30 years. Bob has a rich history of achievement which includes two National Doubles Championships as well as dozens of local and state championships. Bob has been a top-ranked player in his age bracket for over two decades. He also served on the RAM Board and was a corporate sponsor

for the West Michigan Open. Congratulations to Bob.

Twayne Howard lives in Byron Center, MI. In over 30 years in the sport, Twayne has won 40 championships including two age/skill national championships, but his greatest accomplishments have occurred off the court. Twayne has served as RAM President since 2004 after serving as Treasurer for 4 years. He has been tournament director or staff for nearly 100 tournaments including West Michigan Open which has raised nearly \$20,000 for Helen DeVos Children's Hospital. Congratulations to Twayne.

The Michigan Racquetball Hall of Fame now has forty members and is housed at the Michigan Athletic Club in East Lansing. The Hall of Fame members are also honored at the Davison Athletic Club.

Randy, Bob and Twayne were formally inducted into the Michigan Racquetball Hall of Fame at a ceremony on Saturday, March 29, 2014 at the Davison Athletic Club.



Randy Anderson, Twayne Howard, Bob Gravelyn



**2014-2015
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Newsletter

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

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VIEW OF THE PRESIDENT

Twayne M. Howard

The Summer Sun is fading, the three wall tournament season is past, and Labor Day is but a memory. Sigh. But wait... what's that? It's indoor season?! AWE-SOME!!! And not the dumb kind of awesome like "This latte is awesome." But the really important level of AWESOME. As in: "DANG IT, THAT'S AWE-SOME!!!!!"

But never fear, we've spent our Summer setting up another great indoor season for your enjoyment. But you know, that's how we roll at RAM...

And never fear, the very last thing to kick off the season is in your hands even as we speak. Yup, just look down and there it is... the Fall, 2014 Racquetball Reporter. Ahhhhh.... I love the smell of a freshly printed Newsletter in the Fall. Smells like... "Victory". (My apologies to Francis Ford Coppola and Robert Duvall).

Now where were we? Right. The NEWSLETTER IS HERE! THE NEWSLETTER IS HERE!! (Okay, my apologies to Steve Martin as well.) Now, to the real business. Make sure you check out the all the details in the Newsletter.

One big change this year is that the Limited Event Membership is moving to \$20. Yup, all it takes is \$20 to play any tournament on the schedule, even the State Championships. (Awesome!)

The schedule is there with the R2 registration info for those events that have been sanctioned. The season kicks off September 27 with the Dubble Bubble Splat at Franklin Athletic Club, now with Squash! The Racquetball is of the doubles-variety and the event is first class. Jen O'Meara and David Holden are back and year two is going to be (yes, you guessed it) AWESOME!!!

And then we are off and running! A ton of great events – singles, doubles, East Michigan, West Michigan Central Michigan, a new event in Bay City.....! No matter what type of event you want, you'll find amazing action. Say it with me.... AWESOME!!

Okay. That's it. I'm spent. I know one thing for sure, though.

You gotta read the Newsletter and the go! Shoo! Get to the court and get your game on.

Have a great season!

AWESOME!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



2014-2015 RAM SCHEDULE

Sept 27	Dubble Bubble Splat, Franklin Athletic Club, Southfield http://www.r2sports.com/tourney/home.asp?TID=13057
Oct 18-19	Spartan Splat, Michigan Athletic Club, East Lansing
Nov 6-9	Red Swain Shootout – Tier 1 Pro Tournament, Davison Athletic Club, Davison http://www.r2sports.com/website/event-website.asp?TID=13073
Nov 15	Riverview Fall Brawl, Riverview Athletic Club, Grand Rapids
Dec 6-7	RAM STATE DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP, Total Sports, Mt. Clemens http://www.r2sports.com/tourney/home.asp?TID=13029
Jan 24-15	Southwest Michigan Shootout, Bronson Athletic Club, Kalamazoo
Feb 7	Michigan Senior Olympics, Warren Racquet Club, Utica
Feb 21-22	Motor City Rollout, Courtland Athletic Club, Utica
Feb 28-Mar 1	Meijer State Games of Michigan – Winter Games, Riverview Athletic Club, Grand Rapids http://www.r2sports.com/tourney/home.asp?TID=13027
Mar 6-8	Capital Challenge, Michigan Athletic Club, East Lansing
Mar 14	Bay City Rollout, Bay city YMCA, Bay City http://www.r2sports.com/tourney/home.asp?TID=13026
Mar 27-29	RAM STATE SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIP, Davison Athletic Club, Davison http://www.r2sports.com/tourney/home.asp?TID=13028
Apr 17-19	Michigan Regional Pro-Am Championships, Davison Athletic Club, Davison
Jun 28	Meijer State Games of Michigan, Riverview Athletic Club, Grand Rapids http://www.r2sports.com/tourney/home.asp?TID=13025

Make sure you check R2Sports.com and MichiganRacquetball.Net for updates

Got a Hall of Fame Nomination?

It's that time again! We are seeking the special people that belong in the Michigan Racquetball Hall of Fame. The Nominee must be 35 years old, played or was involved in racquetball for ten years and lived in Michigan for a period of 5 years. Pretty simple huh? I need your nominee's name by October 21 so I can gather the necessary credentials for review and examination. After that, the Hall of Fame committee will make their recommendations to the voting body. Last year's winners, Twayne Howard, Randy Anderson and Bob Gravelyn will be hard to top, but every year another group of deserving individuals seems to rise to star power. Seriously!

The final step in the process is the Hall of Fame and RAM player award banquet on Saturday March 28, State Singles weekend. We get to hear the new Hall of Famers express their appreciation for being elected and tell a few "tall tales". Last year over 70 people attended the event. The dinner is already a terrific event, however the RAM board is trying to improve the event so more players will want to attend. Stay tuned for further details.

Don Schopieray's Pro Stop will host a "Pre-Glow" for all the current Hall of Famers that attend the banquet. Last year over 20 Hall of Famers told stories of their battles on the courts in the Tie Breaker lounge. It was great to hear from some of our sport's most ICONIC players. Mark your calendar for this event next spring.

Finally don't forget I need your nominee by October 21.

Tom Blakeslee
Hall of Fame Chair - Hall of Fame 2004
racketboat1@aol.com 586-295-9772

RAM STATE SINGLES – A GREAT END TO A GREAT 2013-2014 SEASON

By Twayne M Howard

The last weekend of March was the time Davison Athletic club was the place. The reason – STATE SINGLES BAY-BEE!!! Davison rolled out the red carpet as it always does and 125 players came out to vie for the title State Singles Champion. Let's get right to the action.

Michele Geile earned yet another Women's Open Championship by defeating Cheri Speier-Pero in the finals. Melody Gorno made it to the Semi Finals.

Melody Gorno won the Women's 25+ Open Championship by defeating Michele Geile in the Finals. Cheri Speier-Pero and Tia Lecland were the Semi-Finalists.

The Women's B Championship went to Kathy Stellema. Candy Davis and Sharon Huczek rounded out the draw.

Nathan tucker broke through to win the Men's Open Championship getting past his nemesis Steve Goedker in the Finals. Jim Floyd and Scott Yong were the Semi-Finalists.

Men's Elite Gold went to Jason Kennedy who defeated Chuck White in the Finals. Rik Lepine and Roy Gelerman made it to the Semis.

Neal Brand outslugged Scott Goudie to win the Men's A Division. David Combs and Dan Mullin rounded out the Semis.

Stephen Schwitzer beat Matthew Brand to win the huge Men's B Championship. Bruce Keeling and Bryan Hall made it to the Semis.

New Tournament Director, Larry Eischer defeated Jack Bowles to earn the Men's C Championship. Bill Bedard and Rick Bhirdo made it to the Semis.

The round robin Men's 30+A Championship went to Bryan Galloway. Adam Diehm and Clint Perryman rounded out the division and took Silver and Bronze respectively.

Mark Mohr won the Men's 30+B Gold after defeating Jeff Bershad. Stephen Switzer and Mathew Brand were the Semi-Finalists.

He Men's 40+ Open Championship went to Steve Clark over Bill Garow. Rik Lepine and Scott Duryea made it to the Semis.

Nick Frontczak defeated Darryl Bartkowiak in this year's "Battle of the Beef". Nick took home the Gold, Darryl the Silver, and Ben Marciniak-Jennings and Paul Berry were the semi-Finalists.

Jerry Foster was the Men's 45+C Champion. Luis Ortega was the Silver medalist and Rudy Varela took home the Bronze.

The Men's 50+ Open Championship went to Walt Podraza who defeated Roy Gelerman in the Finals. Mike Anderson and Jeff Connell were the Semi-Finalists.

The Men's 50+ A Division went to Rob Grozenski who defeated Steve Tomczak. Todd Imhoff and Jeff Stankiewicz made it to the Semis.

Rob Grozenski made it a double-Gold after he defeated Stan Dolot in the Men's 55+A Division. Pat Essian and Kevin Keys were the Semi-Finalists.

Sam Gauchpan defeated Jerry Cano to win Gold in the Men's 50+ B Championship. Greg McClellan and Keith Bryan made it to the Semis.

Big Walt Podraza also went double-Gold after defeating Edson Borgess in the Final of the Men's 55+ Open Division. Tom Blakeslee and

Randy Anderson made it to the Semis.

Bob Gravelyn defeated Jim Easterling in a battle of Hall of Famers I the Men's 60 Open finals. Bill Hagedorn and Chuck Van Hoose rounded out the Semis.

Don Stolla was the Men's 60+ B Champion, defeating Art Murphy in the Finals. Bill bedard and Greg McClellan made it to the Semis.

Art Murphy defeated Dennis Drury in the Finals to win the Men's 70+ Open Championship. Tom Sharum and Dave Lund were the Semi-Finalists.

In doubles action, Mike Urquhart and Steve Tomczak defeated Tom blakeslee and chris Kelly to win the Men's Open Doubles Division. The teams of Darryl Bartkowiak and Mike Semanco and Russell Baker and Daryl Hunter were the Semi-Finalists.

Bryan Galloway and John Leggett defeated Bruce Keeling and Mike D'Almeida to win the Men's A Doubles Championship.

The Men's B Championship went to the Super-Kids: Braeden D'Almeida and Caige Duryea who defeated Jen O'Meara and David Holden.

Paul Schultz and Don Stolla defeated Jeff Bershad and Ben McCleary to win the Men's C Doubles Championship.

Nick Frontczak and Tia Lecland re-teamed to win the Mixed Open Doubles Championship. They defeated Dan Mullin and Cheri Spero-Pero.

Jen O'Meara and David Holden won the Mixed A Doubles Championship by defeating Candy Davis and Mark Davis.

Whew! What a weekend.

All I can say is that the next one will be here sooner than you can believe. Better start working on your game RIGHT NOW!!! GO!! PAY!!!!

See you there!

Hall of Famer wins ANOTHER Championship

By Twayne M Howard

A quick shout out to Mike Stephens. The 2012 inductee into the Michigan Racquetball Hall of Fame has added even more hardware to his resume.

This summer Mike won the Silver Medal in the 65+ Open at the 30th World Senior Racquetball Championships in Albuquerque. His is perhaps the premier event for the Senior circuit and a huge accomplishment. His lovely Nancy reported that he lost 11 -7 in the tiebreaker.

This was on top of Mike winning the 65+A National Championship and winning Bronze in the 65+ Open Division at National Singles in May. It was another awesome year for one of our greatest champions.

Congrats Mike! STICK EM!!

Ambassador Program

Dan Mullin

The RAM Board, spear-headed by Twayne Howard, initiated the new RAM Ambassador program in 2013. The overarching concept was to have someone from each club become an ambassador for their perspective club to help facilitate the growth of racquetball in Michigan that works closely with RAM. The goal of the program is to let those go-getters out there in the racquetball world be recognized for promoting racquetball in their local areas. The highly successful program outlines certain points allocated to specific activities and tallied at the end of each year to recognize and reward those high achievers. Each activity has a point value, add those up to be recognized for one of four different tiers, Special Recognition, Bronze, Silver, or Gold.

The Special Recognition level needs a total of 5 points and earns a RAM Ambassador T-shirt and your photo on the RAM Facebook Page, RAM web page, included in the Racquetball Reporter, and in email blasts.

The Bronze level needs 15 points and you are recognized with the Special Recognition level recognition as well as a special RAM Ambassador jacket AND a free pass to the Annual Awards Banquet at State Singles.

The Silver level needs 30 points and you are recognized with the Bronze level recognition as well as one year USA Racquetball Membership and pin to wear to display your achievements.

The Gold level needs 50 points and you are recognized with the Silver level recognition as well as free entry to State Singles and pin to wear to display your achievements.

The inaugural Ambassadors for 2013/2014 were:

Bronze Level Awards go to Jim Kutt and John Kutt

Gold Level Awards go to Twayne Howard, Jen O'Meara, Dave Holden, Rich Westerbrink, Keith Bryan, and Dan Mullin

Will you be one the 2014/2015 RAM Ambassadors?

For a full list of point earning activities and apply to become an Ambassador, email mullindan@gmail.com.

Introducing...RAM Live!

Our no-frills web broadcast from the State Singles Championships last March was so successful that we've committed more resources to bringing you RAM racquetball on the web this season.

RAM is now the proud owner of two hi-def webcams, professional audio equipment, and premium broadcasting software. We'll be broadcasting a number of tournaments live on the web, and then editing the matches for our new video archive. As far as we can tell, RAM is one of the few organizations bringing state-level racquetball to new media. We will hopefully become a model for other state organizations as we work to bring racquetball into the modern era.

Dave Holden and Jen O'Meara are looking for people to join the broadcast team, either behind the scenes or on the air. If you're interested in becoming part of RAM Live!, please let Dave or Jen know. They're easy to find. They're the ones with the cameras and headsets and cords and stuff.



RAM on the Web

If you haven't seen the RAM website lately, it's time for you to head over to <http://michiganracquetball.net> for a visit. Our newly (again!) redesigned website features the 2014 Tournament Schedule, the Hall of Fame, our Photo and Video Archives, and more. It's also where you'll be able to tune in and watch the live broadcasts of many 2014 RAM tournaments. More information is available -- where else? -- on the web!

Follow us on Facebook - <http://facebook.com/RacquetballAssociationOfMichigan>

Visit us on YouTube - <http://youtube.com/RAMRacquetball>



Red Swain Shootout

Don Schopieray

For the fourth year in a row on November 6-9 the best racquetball players on the planet will descend upon the Davison athletic Club for the International racquetball Tour's Red Swain Shootout. Players will be battling it out for their share of the \$20,000.00 in prize money available that weekend.

Last year saw veteran Alvero Beltran claim his first Tier 1 victory defeating young superstar Daniel DeLarosa, tournament co-director Cliff Swain made a great run to get to the semi finals winning exciting matches against the best the Stockton California's 209 had to offer. Who will come out on top this year??

Qualifying matches will start Thursday afternoon November 6th around 5pm and the first round of 16 matches will start Friday morning around 10am. General admission tickets are available, and included in the amateur entry fee, amateur play will begin Friday afternoon for the Open division and most other divisions will start on Saturday.

This tournament is fast becoming known for the high level of hospitality we have in our VIP lounge, VIP guests can expect once again to be treated to great food and drinks in our VIP lounge, streaming IRT Network coverage so you don't miss a shot, and opportunities to rub elbows with the top players on the IRT tour all for \$125....great value to say the least.

Court sponsorships are still available and start at \$500 which includes many ways to promote your company. Contact Don Schopieray (810) 287-9394 for details.



**RACQUETBALL ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN
2014 RAM STATE DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIPS**

*PRESENTED BY MCLAREN MACOMB
ATHLETIC MEDICINE INSTITUTE*

December 6-7, 2014

TOTAL SPORTS - 40501 Production Drive, Harrison Twp., MI 48045

ENTRY FEES & DEADLINE

First Event \$45 per person - \$90 per team
Second Event \$15 per person
Third Event (Mixed or Centurian only) \$15 per person
Juniors \$15 per person - \$30 per team
USA Racquetball Membership \$50 (Ann.) / \$20 (LEM) per person

Entries must be received by December 3, 2014. Play is limited to two events per person. Tournament is USA Racquetball sanctioned. A \$5 late fee will be charged for all entries received after the deadline. This includes all phone entries. Phone entries must be confirmed by Twayne or Tom.

The Centurian or Mixed divisions can be your third division and will take place on Sunday.

This year's tournament will feature a Junior multi-bounce Team Challenge that will test your skills in the court and on the bowling lanes. Pizza, pop and big fun are on the menu, you won't want to miss this. Beginner players are welcome, no tournament experience needed. The Junior cost will be \$15.

RULES AND REFEREES

Single elimination format with matches consisting of two games to fifteen and a tie-breaker to eleven for most divisions. USA Racquetball rules apply including mandatory **USA Racquetball-approved lensed eye guards. Violators may be forfeited.**



MACOMB

Athletic Medicine Institute

Penn HD purple balls will be used for all matches. Referees will not be used. All players will use the honor system.

STARTING TIMES

Starting Times will be available after 12:00 pm on December 5 at: <http://www.r2sports.com/tourney/home.asp?TID=13029>

AWARDS

Medals will be given for the Champions and Runners Up teams in divisions with draws of at least eight teams. Each player will receive a great gift.

ELIGIBILITY

All players must live or work full time in the state of Michigan, and be a member of RAM. Players must be able to provide proof.

TOURNAMENT DIRECTORS

TOM BLAKESLEE (586) 295-9772 -- **Twayne Howard** (616) 540-7925
Don Schopieray -- Dan Mullin

ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY December 3, 2014

Name _____ Club Affiliation _____
Address _____ Partner 1 _____
City/Zip _____ Partner 2 _____
Phone (days) _____ (evenings) _____ Date of Birth _____

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

Entry Fee (first event) \$45 _____
2nd Event Fee \$15 _____
3rd Event Fee \$15 _____
Junior Fee \$15 _____
USA Rac. Membership \$50/20 _____
Late/Phone Fee \$5 _____
TOTAL _____

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

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

DIVISIONS

Circle choices—2 divisions- Mixed or Centurian can be a third division

	<u>MENS</u>	<u>WOMENS</u>	<u>MIXED</u>
Open	25 Open	25 A 25 B	25 C
Elite	30 Open	30 A 30 B	30 C
A	35 Open	35 A 35 B	35 C
B	40 Open	40 A 40 B	40 C
C	45 Open	45 A 45 B	45 C
D	50 Open	50 A 50 B	Centurian Open
	55 Open	55 A 55 B	Centurian A
60 Open	60 B	65 Open 65 B	Centurian B/C

Juniors: (specify age division) _____ (All Juniors play will be on Saturday)

Alternate Division _____
(Divisions may be combined if fewer than 8 teams)

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

JOIN THE RACQUETBALL ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN

Membership Includes:

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

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

DATE _____ EMAIL ADDRESS _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

DATE OF BIRTH ____ / ____ / _____ HOME PHONE _____

WORK PHONE _____

_____ \$50.00 – Adult Competitor

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

_____ \$20.00 - Limited Event

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

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