

RACQUETBALL

IN THIS ISSUE:

IRF

WORLD JUNIOR
CHAMPIONSHIPS



UNITEDHEALTHCARE
US OPEN
RECAP

THE BEST DOUBLES

MATCH OF ALL TIME?

U.S. Racquetball Association
2812 W. Colorado Avenue, Suite 200
Colorado Springs, CO 80904-2483



NATIONAL DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIPS

FEBRUARY 7-11, 2018 - ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY - TEMPE, AZ

NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL CHAMPIONSHIPS

FEBRUARY 28-MARCH 4, 2018 - MULTNOMAH ATHLETIC CLUB - PORTLAND, OR

NATIONAL INTERCOLLEGIATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

MARCH 14-17, 2018 - UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA REC CENTER - MINNEAPOLIS, MN

NATIONAL SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIPS

MAY 23-27, 2018 - CLUBSPORT PLEASANTON - PLEASANTON, CA

NATIONAL JUNIOR OLYMPIC CHAMPIONSHIPS

JUNE 20-24, 2018 - WELLMARK YMCA - DES MOINES, IA



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RACQUETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

OCTOBER 3-7, 2018 - LIFE TIME TARGET CENTER - MINNEAPOLIS, MN

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Paola Longoria defeated Frédérique Lambert in the Women's Pro Singles final at the 2017 UnitedHealthcare US Open Championships.

Photo By Restrung Magazine

ON THE COVER

Alvaro Beltran, Ben Croft, Kane Waselenchuk, and Daniel De La Rosa in the Men's Pro Doubles final at the 2017 UnitedHealthcare US Open Championships.

Photo By Restrung Magazine

USA RACQUETBALL STAFF

Jason Thoerner

Executive Director

jthoerner@usaracquetball.com

Renée Gundolff

Membership Manager

rgundolff@usaracquetball.com

Nick Irvine

Programming Manager

nirvine@usaracquetball.com

Barb Pyle

Accounting Assistant

bpyle@usaracquetball.com

Submissions

Racquetball Magazine welcomes submissions from our members and readers. If you have an idea for an article, propose it by email to: magazine@usaracquetball.com. All submissions are subject to editing.

Editorial Consultant

Aimee Ruiz | ABR Communications
abrcommunications@gmail.com

Publisher

USA Racquetball

2812 West Colorado Ave. Suite 200
Colorado Springs, CO 80904-2444
(719) 635-5396 | USARacquetball.com

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CONTENTS

3	<i>From the Executive Director</i>	26	<i>The Making of a Champion</i>
4	<i>From the President</i>	28	<i>90% Mental</i>
6	<i>IRF World Junior Championships</i>	32	<i>International Racquetball Tour (IRT)</i>
10	<i>Racquetball at the Tracks</i>	34	<i>Ladies Professional Racquetball Tour (LPRT)</i>
14	<i>UnitedHealthcare US Open Recap</i>	36	<i>World Racquetball Tour (WRT)</i>
20	<i>UnitedHealthcare US Open Thank You</i>	38	<i>World Outdoor Racquetball (WOR)</i>
22	<i>Where Are They Now?</i>	40	<i>Schedule of Events</i>
24	<i>What's the Call?</i>	44	<i>Ashaway - Stringing Trends</i>



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.

USA RACQUETBALL CORE VALUES

Communication • Customer Service • Dedication • Excellence • Integrity



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U.S. Junior Olympic



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NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS & TEAM QUALIFYING

All future National Championship details remain tentative until entries are published.

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 beginning with the 2017-2018 U.S. National Team.

While the process for qualifying for the Team as a doubles team is the same, the singles selection procedure will be determined by performance at three selection events:

- UnitedHealthcare US OPEN Pro Division
- U.S. Team Singles Qualifying Division at USA Racquetball National Doubles Championships
- 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 Jason Thoerner

National Headquarters

REMARKING ON 2017

Photo by Roby Partovich

As we enter the holiday season, USA Racquetball is thankful for so many positive things that have happened over this past year. We have hosted five National Championships plus the 21st UnitedHealthcare US OPEN which crowned new champions in dozens of divisions. We have enhanced our hospitality at our National Championships to add value for our players. Signing outside-the-sport sponsorships has been key to this effort, but we could not make these events successful without our Official Partners who have stood by our side for years.

We have seen our Ambassador and Facility Partner programs start to take off. These relationships are key to reaching the recreational players in facilities across the country so they, too, can grow as players and become a part of the USA Racquetball family. You will see more programs targeted towards these players in 2018 to get them more involved in a variety of ways such as free challenge ladders, leagues, and first-time tournament participation.

Another exciting development this past year is the purchase of World Outdoor Racquetball by USA Racquetball. We are excited to be able to include all aspects of our great sport under the USA Racquetball umbrella. We will leverage USA Racquetball's marketing and corporate connections to increase participation in the outdoor game. Outdoor racquetball provides a unique opportunity to introduce new players to our sport with low-cost accessibility that often cannot be found indoors.

Our US Teams have performed remarkably well this year in International play. Rhonda Rajsich had a huge win over Paola Longoria at the Pan American Racquetball Championships in Costa Rica to take home Gold in the Women's Singles! Charlie Pratt also had an amazing run and brought home the Silver in the Men's Singles division. Jake Bredenbeck and David "Bobby" Horn brought home Silver medals in the Men's Doubles. Our US Junior Team represented their country at the IRF World Junior Championships in Minneapolis, bringing home six individual Gold medals including Mauro Daniel Rojas who won the Boy's 18 and under Singles title. (See the article in this issue.)



Dan Salamone showing his Team USA Spirit at the recent IRF World Junior Championships

Photo by Jason Thoerner

Without your generous support of the Team USA Challenge, these phenomenal athletes might not have the opportunity to represent our country and all of us in international competition. Not only do they achieve great results and make us proud on the court, they are incredible ambassadors for racquetball. Their effort to grow the game not only here in the United States but around the world is something we can all be proud of and support.

As we all seek to grow the game, thank you to the members of USA Racquetball for spreading the word in your local areas. Have a great holiday season, and I hope to see you on the court in 2018!

DON'T FORGET TO FOLLOW US ON ALL OF OUR SOCIAL NETWORKS, WATCH OUR LIVE AND ARCHIVED VIDEO STREAMS, AND VISIT OUR OFFICIAL WEBSITE.

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Use the hashtag #racquetball in all your posts so we can follow you as well.

Livestream Channel



**For all the action visit
www.USARacquetball.com**



FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Dan Whitley

Do You Know..

ABOUT THE USA RACQUETBALL FACILITY PARTNER PROGRAM?

What is the Facility Partner Program? The goal of the program is to help grow racquetball by leading new and current players to participating facilities around the country and providing support to those facilities through several resources made available exclusively to facility partners (see below).

Is my facility eligible? All you need is one court at your facility. It can be an indoor or an outdoor court. Private health clubs, national chains, municipal recreation centers, and outdoor park and recreation complexes are all eligible! USA Racquetball wants to be able to point racquetball players toward whatever racquetball activities you have to offer and help you grow new programs.

Is your facility listed? Participation in the program for your facility is really a “no-brainer.” Your facility gets listed as part of a national directory on USA Racquetball’s website in the “Where to Play” section. Lots of people search there when looking for a place to play. It’s a simple (and FREE) way to promote your facility.

What else does my facility get? In addition to being listed on USA Racquetball’s national directory, there are a lot of benefits to take advantage of as part of the Facility Partner Program. The list is long! Enjoy and participate in all of the benefits listed below...

- Programs to support and promote instructors offering lessons in your facility (become a part of the USAR Instructor Certification program (USAR-IP) if you or anyone else wants to teach or coach racquetball).
- Ability to designate a Racquetball Ambassador at your facility to help organize players and programs.
- Secondary insurance coverage for your instructors, sanctioned events, and participants.
- Direct access to our National Office Staff for assistance and support when needed.
- Free use of Club Challenge Ladder software from R2 Sports.
- “How To” Guides are available for:
 - Running RB 101 clinics free of charge for all members.
 - Organizing in-house leagues or events.
 - Recruiting or starting Junior, High School, or Collegiate programs.
- Marketing resources for all things racquetball at your facility:
 - Templates for after-school Junior or High School programs.
 - Materials to promote programs, such as leagues, within your facility.
 - Press release template about your facility’s programs that can be modified and sent to local media outlets.
 - Partnership with USA Racquetball that you can advertise within your facility (our goal is grow racquetball in your facility; we are here to help you!). USA Racquetball wants to introduce more new players to the game. We want to direct those new players to you and your facility.
 - Be part of a national campaign promoting the health benefits of racquetball. This campaign will direct people to the “Where to Play” section on our website where your facility is listed.

What do you have to do to become a Facility Partner? THIS IS EASY. Go to www.usaracquetball.com and select the Facility Partnership Program as an option under Programs. There you will be asked for the following information...

- Facility Name, Facility Contact Name, Address, Phone Number, and Email Address
- Racquetball Contact’s Name, Phone Number, and Email Address
- Number of Courts at the Facility and Number of Players
- Is there a Pro Shop? Is there a Stringer?
- Are there Leagues, Challenge Courts, or Tournaments?

There is no reason that your racquetball facility shouldn’t be participating and listed as a USA Racquetball Facility Partner. It is a simple process to enroll in the program, and there are lots of benefits for your facility.

Please ask the contact person at the facility where you play racquetball to enroll in the USA Racquetball Facility Partner Program today! Thanks in advance for your help!



ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE

WITH YOUR SUPPORT, WE CAN RAISE MORE THAN **\$30,000** FOR THE TEAMS!

Support the U.S. Adult and Junior National Teams with a tax-deductible contribution today. Your support is vital to the players and coaches as they prepare to represent the United States in international competition. Funds are primarily used for travel expenses, entry fees, and training.

Donations of \$100 or more, made in 2017 to the TEAM USA CHALLENGE, *will be matched* by the group of generous Team Benefactors at right, who have each pledged up to \$2,500 to support the cause. With your support, the USA Racquetball family can raise more than \$30,000 for *your* U.S. National Teams!

TEAM USA CHALLENGE BENEFACTORS

Usher Barnoff • Rick Betts • Cheryl Kirk & Kit Lawson •
Michael Lippitt • Chris Poucher • Jason Thoerner

Under the TEAM USA CHALLENGE, donations will be used to support direct travel costs of U.S. Junior and Adult National Team Members.

To become a benefactor for the 2017 Team USA Challenge, please contact USA Racquetball at 719-635-5396, ext. 129.

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will receive an
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more will receive
a etched **Cheese
Board with Knife
Set.**

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Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA

November 5-11, 2017

By Cheryl Kirk

Team USA

Photo By Cheryl Kirk

What a great opportunity for so many junior players to experience World Juniors, right here in our own country, and what a wonderful experience to offer to the players and delegations from 12 other countries. We were proud to host everyone at Life Time Target Center, the Home of the US OPEN!

Forty-six players, eight US Team coaches and staff members, ten private coaches, and an impressive number of parents/siblings/friends populated the U.S. Delegation. Approximately 136 attended. This had to be a record!

U.S. States represented were Arizona, California, Florida, Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin. Thirteen in all, plus staff members hailing from Colorado, Hawaii, and Illinois meant that over 30% of the U.S. States were represented at World Juniors!

US JUNIOR TEAM -- 46 STRONG

World Cup (18-, 16-, 14-)

Boys Singles

18 & Under -- Mauro "Daniel" Rojas (CA), Dane Elkins (CA)

16 & Under -- Sahil Thakur (CA), Cayden Akins (TX)

14 & Under -- Akul Ramayani (NY), Antonio Rojas (CA)

Boys Doubles

18 & Under -- Mauro "Daniel" Rojas (CA) / Lukas Le (TX)

16 & Under -- Mitchell Turner (OR) / Julian Singh (CA)

14 & Under -- Akul Ramayani (NY) / Antonio Rojas (CA)

Girls Singles

18 & Under -- Jordan Cooperrider (FL), Hollie Scott (WA)

16 & Under -- Briana Jacquet (AZ), Nikita Chauhan (CA)

14 & Under -- Annie Roberts (OR), Julia Stein (PA)

Girls Doubles

18 & Under -- Hollie Scott (WA) / Megan Carver (WA)

16 & Under -- Briana Jacquet (AZ) / Graciana Wargo (FL)

14 & Under -- Julia Stein (PA) / Heather Mahoney (CA)



Back Row: Mitchell Turner, Julian Singh, Charlie Pratt, Lukas Le, Dane Elkins, and Jordan Cooperrider

Front Row: Megan Carver, Briana Jacquet, and Annie Roberts

Photo By Jason Thoerner



Hollie Scott, Jordan Cooperrider, and Daniel Rojas

Photo By Jason Thoerner

Esprit (14-, 12-)

Boys Singles

12 & Under -- **Vedant Chauhan (CA)**, **Josh Shea (NY)**, Benjamin Horner (IA), Nikhil Prasad (CA), Gatlin Sutherland (MT), Aidan Weller (TX)

10 & Under -- **Joseph Marshall (TN)**, **Angel Eden Galvan (CA)**, Eshan Ali (CA), Advait Kartik (CA), Bobby Singh (CA)

Boys Doubles

12 & Under -- **Vedant Chauhan (CA)** / **Josh Shea (NY)**, Nikhil Prasad (CA) / Gatlin Sutherland (MT)

10 & Under -- **Angel Eden Galvan (CA)** / **Eshan Ali (CA)**, Joseph Marshall (TN) / Bobby Singh (CA)

Girls Singles

12 & Under -- **Heather Mahoney (CA)**, **Ava Kaiser (MN)**, Arya Cyril (CA), Esha Cyril (CA), Camila Gomez (CA), Kareena Mathew (OR)

10 & Under -- **Sonya Shetty (CA)**, **Ava Naworski (CA)**, Ashlyn Carver (WA), Adriana Perez (CA)

Girls Doubles

12 & Under -- **Arya Cyril (CA)** / **Esha Cyril (CA)**, **Ava Kaiser (MN)** / Kareena Mathew (OR)

10 & Under -- **Sonya Shetty (CA)** / **Ava Naworski (CA)**, Adriana Perez (CA) / Ashlyn Carver (WA)

CHALLENGER (Boys 14-, 12-, 10-)

Boys Singles

14 & Under -- Andrew Gleason (IA), Krish Maini (WI), Armando Angel Perez (CA), Cody Thomas (CA)

12 & Under -- Krish Maini (WI)

10 & Under -- Alexander Gomez (CA), Caleb Marshall (TN), Taij Singh (CA), Joshua Tramm (MN)

STAFF

Charlie Pratt (OR/FL) – Head Coach

Jennifer Meyer (CO) – Assistant Coach (Esprit)

Jody Nance (CA) – Trainer/Assistant Coach

David “Bobby” Horn (CA) -- Assistant Coach

Robert “Robbie” Collins (HI/CA) -- Assistant Coach

Cheryl Kirk (IL) – Team Leader

Jason Thoerner and Renée Gundolf -- USAR Staff Support

Esprit Point Earners

Notice that some of the names are bolded in the Esprit roster above. The IRF stipulates that up to six singles players and up to two doubles teams can compete in each of the Esprit divisions (Boys and Girls 12- and 10-, singles and doubles). However, each country must designate two singles players and one doubles team in each gender/age category as “point earners,” i.e. their results will count toward the Esprit Cup Overall Team Championship.

Opening Ceremonies

The festivities began just after 6:00 pm with the Parade of Nations where 13 participating countries marched in to stirring Olympic music. Delegations from Argentina, Bolivia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Ireland, Korea, Mexico, and the USA (last as host country) entered proudly into the ceremonies.

After the Color Guard entered and the U.S. National Anthem was played, several individuals delivered comments to the audience: Marcelo Gómez (Master of Ceremonies), Cheryl Kirk (USA

U.S. INDIVIDUAL RESULTS**TEAM USA Overall Results -- Individual -- WORLD CUP**

Girls 14 Singles -- Annie Roberts -- BRONZE

Boys 14 Singles -- Akul Ramayani -- GOLD; Antonio Rojas -- BRONZE

Girls 14 Doubles -- Julia Stein/Heather Mahoney -- BRONZE

Boys 14 Doubles -- Akul Ramayani/Antonio Rojas -- GOLD

Girls 16 Singles -- Nikita Chauhan -- BRONZE

Girls 16 Doubles -- Briana Jacquet/Graciana Wargo -- BRONZE

Boys 18 Singles -- Mauro Rojas -- GOLD

Girls 18 Doubles -- Hollie Scott/Megan Carver -- SILVER

TEAM USA Overall Results -- Individual -- ESPRIT CUP

Girls 10 Singles -- Sonya Shetty -- GOLD

Boys 10 Singles Red -- Bobby Singh -- SILVER; Eshan Ali -- BRONZE

Boys 10 Singles Blue -- Angel Eden Galvan -- BRONZE;

Joseph Marshall -- BRONZE

Girls 10 Doubles -- Sonya Shetty/Ava Naworski -- GOLD;

Adriana Perez/Ashlyn Carver (BRONZE)

Boys 10 Doubles -- Joseph Marshall/Bobby Singh -- SILVER

Girls 12 Singles Red -- Arya Cyril -- SILVER; Camila Gomez -- BRONZE

Girls 12 Singles Blue -- Esha Cyril -- SILVER; Kareena Mathew -- BRONZE

Girls 12 Singles Gold -- Heather Mahoney -- GOLD; Ava Kaiser -- BRONZE

Boys 12 Singles White -- Benjamin Horner -- GOLD

Boys 12 Singles Red -- Vedant Chauhan -- GOLD

Boys 12 Singles Blue -- Gatlin Sutherland -- BRONZE

Boys 12 Singles Gold -- Josh Shea -- BRONZE

Girls 12 Doubles -- Ava Kaiser/Kareena Mathew -- BRONZE;

Esha Cyril/Arya Cyril -- BRONZE

Boys 12 Doubles -- Vedant Chauhan/Josh Shea -- SILVER;

Nikhil Prasad/Gatlin Sutherland -- BRONZE

TEAM USA Overall Results -- Individual -- CHALLENGER CUP

Boys 10 Singles -- Taij Singh -- GOLD; Alexander Gomez -- SILVER;

Caleb Marshall -- BRONZE; Joshua Tramm -- BRONZE

Boys 12 Singles -- Krish Maini -- SILVER; Taij Singh -- BRONZE

Boys 14 Singles -- Andrew Gleason -- GOLD; Cody Thomas -- SILVER;

Armando Angel Perez -- BRONZE

OVERALL RESULTS -- COUNTRY STANDINGS**World Cup -- Girls**

1. Bolivia
2. Mexico
3. USA
4. Canada

Esprit Cup -- Girls

1. USA
2. Mexico
3. Bolivia
4. Costa Rica

World Cup -- Boys

1. Mexico
2. USA
3. Bolivia
4. Ecuador

Esprit Cup -- Boys

1. Mexico
2. USA
3. Bolivia
4. Ecuador

World Cup -- Combined

1. Mexico
2. Bolivia
3. USA
4. Ecuador

Esprit Cup -- Combined

1. Mexico
2. USA
3. Bolivia
4. Costa Rica

Racquetball), John Wilinski (Life Time), Ron Grimes (E-Force), Ms. Li Fu (President, China Racquetball Federation), and Osvaldo Maggi (President, International Racquetball Federation). Sudsy Monchik, highly decorated former US Junior Team member, provided some inspiring words for the players as well.

The Athletes' Oath was read by Daniel Rojas accompanied by Hollie Scott (US Junior Team Captains), and Gustavo Farell administered the Officials' Oath to the referees. Brief entertainment was provided, and then it was time for President Osvaldo Maggi to declare the tournament officially open.

Parents, Grandparents, Siblings, Friends = Cheering Squad!

Warm gratitude goes to these folks who contributed time and resources so that our players could have an experience they will remember for the rest of their lives:

Wendy Akins, Anwar Ali, Kadambari Beelwar, Richard Carver, Debbie Carver, Hannah Carver, Anuj Chauhan, Kirti Chauhan, Sunita Chauhan, Susie Clark, Sue Cooperrider, Daryl Cooperrider, Dimple Cyril, Patrick Cyril, Brett Elkins, Bruce Elkins, Eric Jacquet, Angel Galvan, Mayela Galvan, Mike Gleason, Francisco Gomez, Christina Gomez, Rod Guadalupe, Dan Horner, Melissa Horner, Zane Horner, Ved Kartik, Rhonda Kimler, Rick Kaiser, Loc Le, Louann Le, Louise Le, Liam Le, John Mahoney, Melodese Mahoney, Hardy Marshall, Kristy Marshall, Prem Mathew, Matt Naworski, Jessica Naworski, Lisa Naworski, Ray Peebles, Armando Perez, Regina Perez, Ishika Prasad, Parag Prasad, Pendem Prasad, Atul Ramayani, Bryan Roberts, Danielle Roberts, Mauro Rojas, Ashween Sahni, Mr. Bob Santoro, Alyssa Serio, Beth Shea, Dave Shea, Aarya Shetty, Shrinivas Shetty, Baljinder Singh, Jennifer Singh, Nikhil Singh, Salil Singh, Adam Stein, Archana Sudamalla, Kartik Sundram, Scott Sutherland, Andrew Tramm, Ben Tramm, Nicole Tramm, Frances Turner, Tim Turner, Gary Wargo, Kathleen Wargo, George Weller, and Anna Zachariah.

Private Coaches in the House

This year, USA Racquetball introduced a program that invited private coaches (who work with the players year 'round) to come to World Juniors and support their students. Required was completion of SafeSport training, a background check, and CPR and USAR-IP certification. These ten coaches were Anwar Ali, Brian Ancheta, Dean Baer, Fran Davis, Elaine Dexter, Brian Dixon, Eric Jacquet, Ken Stone, Cliff Swain, and Jim Winterton, and we thank them for their teamwork with the US Junior Team coaches throughout the entire week of competition.



Above: Sonya Shetty and Heather Mahoney

Photo By Jason Thoerner

Below: Parents and Grandparents Support Team USA!

Photo By Cheryl Kirk



THANK YOU

The US Junior Team Delegation wishes to deliver much gratitude to those who made this event so truly memorable:

All the individuals who made contributions large and small...every bit counts! The Team USA Challenge on www.usaracquetball.com provides the opportunity for racquetball players to support the US Teams with their participation at international competitions.

The Local Organizing Committee, headed by John Wilinski (Life Time) and Luke St. Onge (IRF), for putting on this great event. The work behind the scenes to pull off a tournament of this magnitude is extensive.

Sue Cooperrider, who organized the World Cup Team dinners each night, and the many parents and others (including the Illinois and Oregon State Associations and the Oregon Junior Association) who made donations to help feed those players. Thanks also to so many parents in the delegation who pitched in with snacks and with lunches to feed the coaches who had no time to eat! We were grateful for everyone's kind words, their courtesy, their enthusiasm, and their teamwork!

The tournament staff (Francisco Kurzbard, Amanda Barletta de Kurzbard, Mauro Grandio, Pablo Berriel, and Maria De Los Angeles Sarria).

The referees, headed up by Carlos Cuadri (Argentina) and Gustavo Farell (USA), who came in from several countries to provide a quality experience for the players, including the happy gift that no player had to ref the next match!

Pablo Fajre and Laura McCormick for bringing quarterfinals, semifinals, and finals action to viewers on the IRF Network, and Gary Mazaroff and Tim Baghurst for providing professional commentary.

The staff of the Hampton Inn & Suites and Embassy Suites who were friendly, efficient, and responsive to all requests.

The management and staff of Life Time Target Center for providing a first-class facility for this World Juniors competition.

Ben Roy of E-Force and resident stringer Terry Kisling who served the players all week long.

The volunteers at Life Time who performed any task large or small to help the event run smoothly: TJ Beagan, Skip Lecy, Lilly Lecy, Cheryl Jones, Maymuna Yahyaha, Muhammad Yahyaha, Anil Yahyaha, Ahmed Yahyaha, Monica Wilinski, Sudsy Monchik, Veronica Sotomayor Monchik, Steve Johnson, Cliff Swain, Paul Ryan, and Jonn Olson.

Brooke Magleby of doTerra for donating samples to the team to get them through the tournament. These were essential oil and lotion products to help with sore and tired muscles.

Rhonda Kimler who loaned Jody Nance two stim units and an ultrasound machine. Rhonda is the epitome of "Yes! Now, what's the question?"

A big thank you to Aarya Shetty, Ishika Prasad, and Hannah Carver for their help in presenting the medals!

The parents and cheerleaders who were there for every match, living every point as if they were out there playing themselves, and pitching in to provide/arrange meals and snacks.

Jason Thoerner and Renée Gundolff, USA Racquetball staff members, who supported the team throughout the entire event.

Thanks to these World Juniors sponsors for their support of this event and all its players: Rollout, Penn, E-Force, Sprint, Rollga, Reaching Your Dream Foundation, Life Time, and USA Racquetball.

Rocktape, for their sponsorship in providing taping supplies to Jody Nance (team trainer) for our players over the week of competition.

Last but not least, Leo Vasquez who stopped whatever else he might have been doing as soon as a blog and photos were ready for posting.

Coach Charlie Pratt summed it up: "I cannot thank the parents, kids, coaches, IRF, and USA Racquetball enough for everything. It was truly a special week. There was something in the air. The excitement of our home country, the community, the racquetball family. In all my years on the team, I never felt anything like that. It's hard to describe unless you were there, just an overall unity. See you all in Iowa for Junior Nationals next June. *Go USA!!*"

Please see the overall results within this article and visit www.internationalracquetball.com for a look at the full draws.

UPDATE: RACQUETBALL AT THE TRACKS

**Photos & Article By Marie Gomar,
Vice President/Women's Development
Pan American Racquetball Confederation**

It has been a little over eight months since we started the Tracks Racquetball Program in Guatemala. I am overwhelmed by the help and support received from so many of you. All of this help has enabled exciting things for our children, and I would like to take this opportunity to tell you about it.

All 350 of the school's children receive at least 30 minutes of racquetball lessons per week. Those who have shown more interest and engagement have become a part of a selected team that stays after school hours to receive an extra hour three times a week. Thirteen children make up our selected team presently.

Motivated by the anticipation in their sparkling eyes when talking about playing on real courts someday, we managed to get the private school that owns the only four-court complex in Guatemala to welcome our Camino de Luz Racquetball Team. On July 27th, a bus picked them up and transported them for an hour to their first friendly tournament and particularly for their first experience inside a real racquetball court! These words and photos do not even closely convey the emotions of the day. Warmly welcomed by the Country Day's Racquetball Team, the insecure, shy, and even fear-filled faces entering the facilities turned into joyful, confident, and competitive ones as they grew comfortable in the foreign space of the courts. To witness what participating in a competitive sport can enable in the character of a child was captivating to behold. We had food, gifts, medals, gratitude speeches, smiles, jitters, and laughs. It was a truly awesome day, and the kids quickly fell in love with Racquetball all over again on real courts!

Inspired and motivated by such a heartwarming experience, the school approved the proposal to train in the school's facilities once a month and, when possible, to compete against some of the school's players. This will surely pave a road to enabling our young players to develop their game, to help them stay away from less desirable activities, and to take steps forward for the future of Racquetball.

We have also moved forward in helping Karina, our program coach, to strengthen her knowledge of the sport and training methodologies. During the week of September 4-8, she was part of a group receiving a Racquetball Training Course organized by the Asociación Nacional de Racquetball de Guatemala and offered by Mexican Coach Aaron Palomino. Karina actively participated during the course, showing eagerness to learn and sharing her own experiences she has gained as Coach of the Tracks Program.

Donations have been lifeblood of our program. The last NMRA tournament in Milwaukee gave us a space for selling Guatemala T-shirts and coffee, and important cash donations were made to cover the program's expenses. The first week of October, I returned from participating in the US Open with my hands and heart again full, thanks to more donations made towards the program. A bag full of racquetball gloves, shoes, and clothes; racquet grips and cords; a box full of racquets; special people transporting and carrying the donations until they were in my hands; and a most heartfelt donation made to fund Karina's salary for the whole of next year.

As you can see, these are exciting times for these children and for our program at the Tracks. I want to end this by expressing my deepest gratitude, in the name of each child, in the name of Karina and her family, in the name of Guatemala and in the name of our Pan American Racquetball Confederation community, to each of you, to every single person who has held a hand out to this program. Please know that you are making a big difference that is well acknowledged here. Every single gesture means the world to these children. Thank you so much!





Paola Longoria

PAOLA LONGORIA
#1 RANKED PLAYER
IN THE WORLD



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Champion	100 Points
Runner-Up	80 Points
Semifinalist	60 Points
Quarterfinalist	30 Points
Round of 16	10 Points
Round of 32	5 Points



U.S. National Team Singles Qualification Standings - Men

STANDING	PLAYER	US OPEN IRT DIVISION POINTS	WEIGHTED POINTS 20%	SINGLES DIVISION AT NATIONAL		NATIONAL SINGLES DIVISION POINTS	WEIGHTED POINTS 50%	TOTAL POINTS
				DOUBLES POINTS	POINTS 30%			
1	Rocky Carson	80	16					16
2	Sudsy Monchik	30	6					6
T3	Jansen Allen	10	2					2
T3	Jake Bredenbeck	10	2					2
T3	Charlie Pratt	10	2					2

U.S. National Team Singles Qualification Standings - Women

STANDING	PLAYER	US OPEN LPRT DIVISION POINTS	WEIGHTED POINTS 20%	SINGLES DIVISION AT NATIONAL		NATIONAL SINGLES DIVISION POINTS	WEIGHTED POINTS 50%	TOTAL POINTS
				DOUBLES POINTS	POINTS 30%			
1	Rhonda Rajsich	60	12					12
2	Sheryl Lotts	10	2					2
T3	Adrienne Fisher	10	2					2
T3	Laura Brandt	5	1					1
T3	Jordan Cooperrider	5	1					1
T3	Michelle De La Rosa	5	1					1
T3	Sara Jeys	5	1					1
T3	Erika Manilla	5	1					1
T3	Cecilia Pratt	5	1					1
T3	Hollie Scott	5	1					1
T3	Janel Tisinger	5	1					1
T3	Robin Whitmire	5	1					1

The qualification process for doubles teams continues to be based on the Team Qualifying Doubles Division at National Doubles.

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ONE FOR THE RECORD BOOKS

AT THE UNITED HEALTHCARE US OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS

Pro Singles Champions
Paola Longoria & Kane Waselenchuk

By Jeff Oliver
Photos By Restrung Magazine & Roby Partovich

The 22nd UnitedHealthcare US OPEN Racquetball Championships provided a little bit of everything. For Paola Longoria and Kane Waselenchuk, it was yet another showcase for their current dominance of the sport. For past US OPEN Champions Sudsy Monchik and Rhonda Rajsich, it rekindled past glory. And for newcomers Natalia Mendez, Javier Mar, and Conrado Moscoso, it gave a glimpse of bright futures.

In addition to the top professional racquetball players in the world, nearly 700 amateur players joined the party at the sport's original Grand Slam during the first week in October in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Boasting the largest prize purse of the year for the professionals, the action is just as intense for amateurs with more than 1,000 matches played among four venues across the Twin Cities region over five days.

Three LIFE TIME clubs and the University of Minnesota Recreation & Wellness Center hosted matches throughout the week. The

LIFE TIME – Target Center club serves as the main location and the nerve center for the UnitedHealthcare US OPEN Racquetball Championships. Located in Downtown Minneapolis, the facility is in the same building where the NBA's Minnesota Timberwolves play. The Target Center recently underwent a \$140 million renovation highlighted by a two story all-glass atrium which now serves as the stunning entrance to the fabulous LIFE TIME facility underneath the arena.

The Target Center renovation was completed just in time for the UnitedHealthcare US OPEN Racquetball Championships to be the first major sporting event in the glistening upgraded building. It was fitting that racquetballers from around the world were the first to enter into the Target Center's new all-glass atrium because just two floors down sat the all-Lucite portable racquetball court. Set up in a stadium seating configuration, the crown jewel of racquetball courts allows viewing through all four walls for more than 1,200 spectators. From the early rounds through the finals,

all the top professional players in the world play on the stadium court after being introduced to the raucous crowd with booming music, a laser light show, and spotlights.

Since 2012, UnitedHealthcare has served as the Title Sponsor for the US OPEN Racquetball Championships. The sponsorship agreement partners racquetball's largest and most prestigious annual tournament with one of the nation's largest health and well-being companies. During the award ceremony at the conclusion of the tournament, Andrew Mackenzie, UnitedHealthcare's Chief Marketing Officer, announced an extension to continue the company's generous sponsorship of racquetball's original Grand Slam.

The US OPEN is also fortunate and appreciative of the following national co-sponsors who help make the event possible: Cardinal Health, Lewis Drug, KWM Gutterman, LIFE TIME, Dick's Sporting Goods, and Sports Minneapolis.

DEFENDING CHAMPIONS REIGN SUPREME

For the sixth consecutive year, the UnitedHealthcare US OPEN Racquetball Championships Women's & Men's Professional Singles titles were successfully defended by Paola Longoria (Mexico) and Kane Waselenchuk (Canada/resides in Texas). The last time the duo DID NOT win the US OPEN in the same year was in 2010, the tournament's first year in Minneapolis.

PAOLA LONGORIA WINS EIGHTH US OPEN TITLE

Longoria continued her dominance of the Ladies Professional Racquetball Tour (LPRT) by defeating Frédérique Lambert (Canada) in the US OPEN Women's Professional Singles Final, 11-1, 11-4, 2-11, 11-3. The appearance in the final for Paola was her 10th consecutive and the win was her seventh consecutive US OPEN Championship.

Frédérique finished the 2016-17 season as the No. 2 ranked player on the LPRT. Her journey to the top of the rankings was concurrent with the start of her medical school studies at the Université de Montréal. While her attention towards the classroom kept her away from the first few LPRT events of the current season, her on-court talent shone through in Minneapolis. Lambert's appearance in the US OPEN Final was what is hopefully the first of many more to come.

KANE WASELENCHUK WINS 13TH US OPEN TITLE

For the 13th time in the last 15 years, Waselenchuk is again the US OPEN Men's Professional Singles Champion. In the 2017 Final, Kane defeated Rocky Carson (USA - California), 11-6, 11-4, 8-11, 11-4. The match-up between the top two players on the International Racquetball Tour (IRT) was the 73rd time they have met during their professional careers – an all-time professional racquetball record.

While Kane winning yet another US OPEN wasn't shocking news, his dropping not one -- but two! -- games during the tournament definitely was! Before losing a game in his semifinal match against Alvaro Beltran (Mexico), you had to go back 16 months to find another lost game for Kane – a stretch of 106 games.

Waselenchuk has played in 16 US OPENs and reached the final 13 times. Every time he has made the US OPEN final, he has won.

Thrilling Pro Doubles Action Highlights Saturday Night

In one of the most epic professional doubles matches ever seen, Kane

Waselenchuk and Ben Croft (USA) needed a tiebreaker to defeat Alvaro Beltran (Mexico) and Daniel De La Rosa (Mexico), 15-10, 10-15, 11-7. The match featured several multiple dive and behind-the-back shot rallies before a packed house of fans surrounding the all-Lucite stadium court. The Professional Doubles divisions were introduced to the US OPEN in 2014 and Kane and Ben have won the Men's Division three times.

Paola Longoria and Gabriela Martinez (Guatemala) defeated Cristina Amaya (Colombia) and Adriana Riveros (Colombia), 15-5, 15-8 in the Women's Professional Doubles Final. Longoria has also won the Professional Doubles division each year since 2014, although with three different partners.

A LEGEND RETURNS TO THE COURT

Four-time US OPEN Champion Sidsy Monchik (New York) last played in the sport's largest Grand Slam event in 2006. This year at the age of 42, he made quite the triumphant return to the US OPEN. Not only did he make it through the tough Qualifier Draw, he kept his winning streak going and reached the Men's Professional Singles Quarterfinals before falling to Alvaro Beltran.

BACK WHERE SHE BELONGS

After a tough year on and off the court, Rhonda Rajsich (Arizona) made her emotional return to the stadium court with a semifinal appearance in the Women's Professional Singles draw. Rhonda has played in 18 US OPENs, where she has reached at least the semifinals nine times, made the finals seven times, and is a four-time US OPEN Champion. Before falling to Paola in the semifinals, Rhonda had yet to drop a single game in the tournament and was allowing opponents just over four points a game.

REMEMBER THESE NAMES!

Natalia Mendez – At just the age of 20 and just over a year spent on the professional circuit, the player for Argentina made the US OPEN Women's Professional Singles Semifinals. Natalia already holds a Top 8 ranking on the LPRT and will be a force to be reckoned with for many years to come.

Below: Natalia Mendez



Javier Mar – This 19-year-old from Mexico was playing in just his second US OPEN and fourth IRT professional event overall. Javier had to qualify for the main Men's Professional Singles draw, but once there he made his presence known by upsetting the No. 10

and No. 7 seeds. His reward was becoming the youngest player to reach the quarterfinals this year.

Conrrado Moscoso – Hailing from Bolivia, this 22-year-old made the trip to Minneapolis for his first-ever US OPEN Racquetball Championship appearance. It was also his first IRT pro stop, so he had to go through an extra round of qualifying from the Round of 128! Conrrado's run ended in his face-off against the eventual champion Waselenchuck in the quarterfinals.

BIGGEST PROFESSIONAL UPSETS OF THE TOURNAMENT:

As an unseeded qualifier, Sudsy Monchik defeated the No. 5 seed Jansen Allen (USA – Texas) in the Men's Professional Singles Round of 16.

In the Women's Professional Singles draw, qualifier Angelica Barrios (Bolivia) upended No. 8 seed Susana Acosta (Mexico) in the Round of 32.

THE 2017 US OPEN BY THE NUMBERS:

726 - Number of players competing in the 2017 UnitedHealthcare US OPEN Racquetball Championships.

15 - Countries represented at this year's US OPEN - Argentina, Bolivia, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Great Britain, Guam, Japan, South Korea, Mexico, Pakistan, Peru, United States, and Venezuela.

1,247 - Total matches played at the three LIFE TIME clubs and the University of Minnesota.

THE AMATEURS CAME TO PLAY, TOO!

Nearly 700 amateur players came to Minneapolis to play in more than 80 USA Racquetball age and skill divisions.

WINNERS OF THE TOP AMATEUR DIVISIONS:

Men's Open Singles:

Dylan Reid (Oregon) def. Mario Mercado (Colombia), 4-15, 15-11, 11-8

Women's Open Singles:

Jenny Daza Navia (Bolivia) def. Angelica Barrios (Bolivia), 15-2, 15-14

Men's Open Doubles:

Jose Diaz (California) & Harold Jagoda (California) def. Conrrado Moscoso (Bolivia) & Roland Keller (Bolivia)

Women's Open Doubles:

Maricruz Ortiz (Costa Rica) & Melania Sauma (Arizona), Won Round Robin Division

Mixed Open Doubles:

Francisco Troncoso (Chile) & Maria Renee Rodriguez (Guatemala), Won Round Robin Division

RACQUETBALL AFTER DARK

Of course, the reason everyone came to Minneapolis was for the smashing of racquetballs, but just as fun as playing against the world's best players is all the off-the-court fun the UnitedHealthcare US OPEN provides. Downtown Minneapolis is full of top-quality restaurants, nightclubs, and



Left: Kristy and Leo Klimaitis

Above: Women's Pro Doubles Finalists Gaby Martinez, Cristina Amaya, Adriana Riveros, and Paola Longoria

Right: Rocky Carson in the Men's Pro Singles Semifinals

other entertainment options that were filled with racquetball players all week long!

The Northern Shores Grille & Bar at the Marriott Hotel hosted the Players Gathering on Thursday. On Friday, the City Works restaurant and bar (with its 90 local and domestic beers on tap) hosted another Players Party.

Buca di Beppo, Capital Grille, Murray's, Oceanaire, Randle's, Rare, Red Cow, Rock Bottom, Ruth's Chris, Seven, and the Yard House, and many more local restaurants are favorites of tournament goers.

On Saturday, racquetball's biggest bash of the year went down at the Downtown Minneapolis hotspot, The Pourhouse. Racquetball's top players in the world hit the dance floor with all their fans for a free party that went into the early hours of the morning.

RACQUETBALLERS GIVING BACK

For the entire history of the UnitedHealthcare US OPEN, players and fans have helped support Children's Charities through playing in the Pro-Am Doubles Event, winning items at the Silent Auction, donating their referee fees back, or making other contributions.

Thanks to everyone's support this year, the US OPEN has now raised more than \$460,000 over the last 22 years. One hundred percent of monies raised has gone directly to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, and Rapha House.



PROFESSIONAL TOUR CHAMPIONS

IRT MEN

2017 Kane Waselenchuk (Texas)
 2016 Kane Waselenchuk (Texas)
 2015 Kane Waselenchuk (Texas)
 2014 Kane Waselenchuk (Texas)
 2013 Kane Waselenchuk (Texas)
 2012 Kane Waselenchuk (Texas)
 2011 Kane Waselenchuk (Texas)
 2010 Kane Waselenchuk (Texas)
 2009 Kane Waselenchuk (Texas)
 2008 Kane Waselenchuk (Texas)
 2007 Rocky Carson (Calif.)
 2006 Jason Mannino (Calif.)
 2005 Kane Waselenchuk (Can.)
 2004 Kane Waselenchuk (Can.)
 2003 Kane Waselenchuk (Can.)
 2002 Sudsy Monchik (N.Y.)
 2001 Cliff Swain (Mass.)
 2000 Sudsy Monchik (N.Y.)
 1999 Jason Mannino (Calif.)
 1998 Sudsy Monchik (N.Y.)
 1997 Cliff Swain (Mass.)
 1996 Sudsy Monchik (N.Y.)

LPRT WOMEN

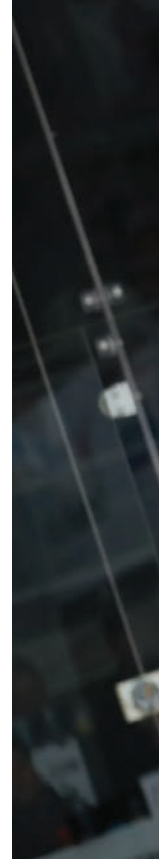
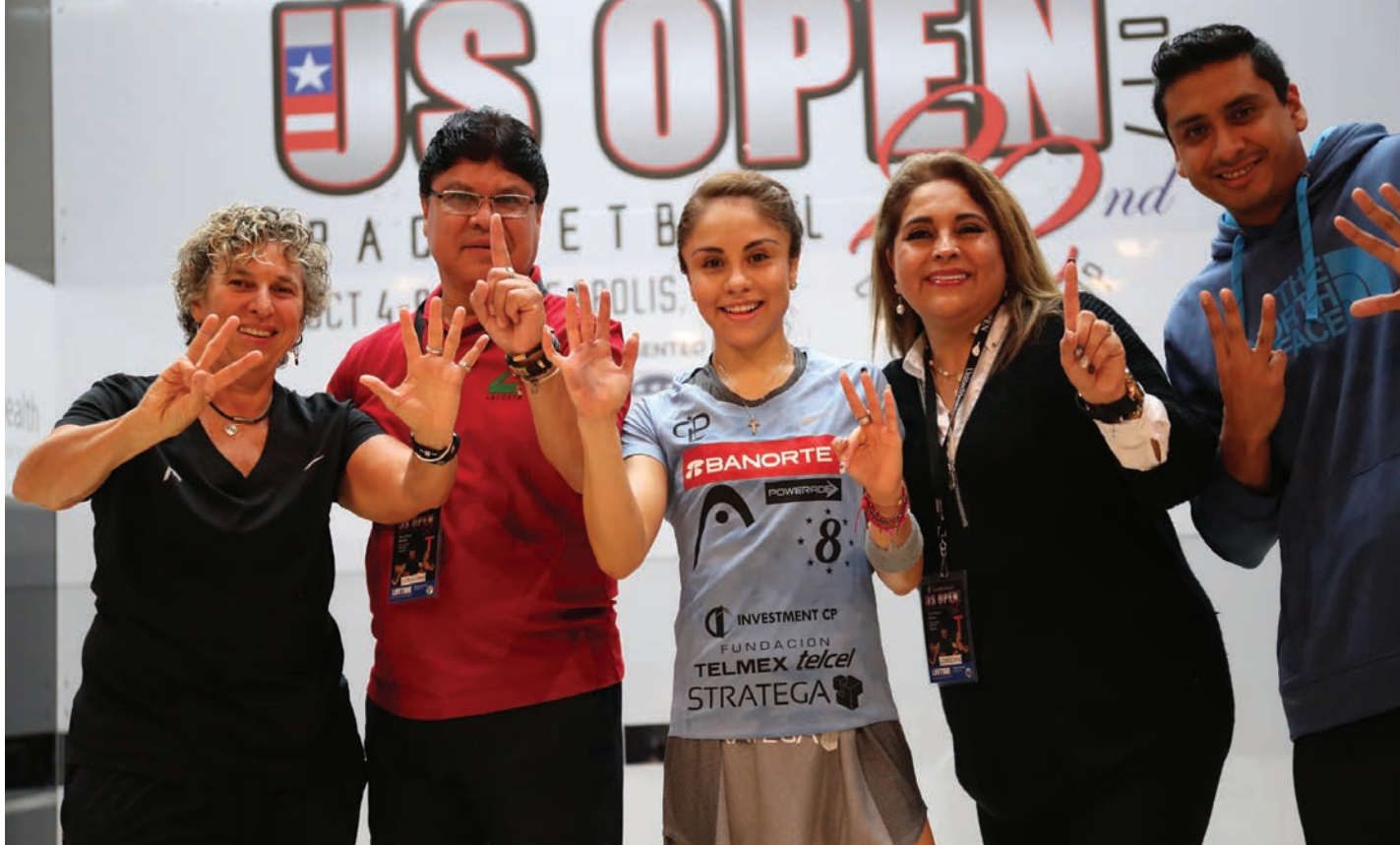
Paola Longoria (Mex.)
 Paola Longoria (Mex.)
 Paola Longoria (Mex.)
 Paola Longoria (Mex.)
 Paola Longoria (Mex.)
 Paola Longoria (Mex.)
 Paola Longoria (Mex.)
 Rhonda Rajsich (Calif.)
 Rhonda Rajsich (Calif.)
 Paola Longoria (Mex.)
 Rhonda Rajsich (Ariz.)
 Christie Van Hees (Can.)
 Christie Van Hees (Can.)
 Cheryl Gudinas (Ill.)
 Rhonda Rajsich (Ariz.)
 Cheryl Gudinas (Ill.)
 Kerri Wachtel (Ohio)
 Christie Van Hees (Canada)
 Jackie Paraiso (Calif.)
 Jackie Paraiso (Calif.)
 Michelle Gould (Idaho)
 Michelle Gould (Idaho)

IRT Men's Pro Doubles

2017 Ben Croft (Georgia) / Kane Waselenchuk (Texas)
 2016 José Rojas (Calif.) / Marco Rojas (Calif.)
 2015 Ben Croft (Calif.) / Kane Waselenchuk (Texas)
 2014 Ben Croft (Calif.) / Kane Waselenchuk (Texas)

LPRT Women's Pro Doubles

2017 Paola Longoria (Mexico) / Gabriela Martinez (Guatemala)
 2016 Paola Longoria (Mexico) / Samantha Salas (Mexico)
 2015 Paola Longoria (Mexico) / Samantha Salas (Mexico)
 2014 Paola Longoria (Mexico) / Veronica Sotomayor (Ecuador)



Thanks to all who made a donation, and an extra special thanks to Sal and Dee Perconti for organizing the US OPEN Silent Auction again this year.

JOIN US NEXT YEAR

Start making plans now to join us for the 2018 UnitedHealthcare US OPEN Racquetball Championships, back in Minneapolis, October 3-7, 2018. Come see the best players in the world and compete for yourself on racquetball's grandest stage!



Top Left: Paola Longoria and her team after winning #8
 Top Right: Alex Landa making sure the referee sees it's two bounces
 Middle Left: Sudsy Monchik back on the court
 Middle Right: The atmosphere at the UnitedHealthcare US Open is always high level
 Left: Joanie and Robert Testa with Nancy and Victor Manilla
 Right: Frédérique Lambert



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 Sargodha, Punjab (Pakistan)
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 Player**

Seve Royster
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 Men's D Singles



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 8th US OPEN TITLE

KANE WASELENCHUK
 13th US OPEN TITLE



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WHERE ARE THEY NOW? -- LYNN ADAMS CLAY

By Aimee Ruiz



Where Are They Now? is a column in *Racquetball* magazine that features past pros from both the men's and women's tours throughout the years. What have they been up to since they stepped away from playing professionally? What do they think of today's game and the players who are currently competing?

Our next interview is with former #1 Player, Lynn Adams Clay. Let's check in with Lynn:

Your last year on tour was 1991. What are you currently up to? I just celebrated my 27th wedding anniversary with my husband, Rich Clay, on December 8th. We have two girls, Chris, 24, and Jasmine, 20. I never wanted to have kids growing up, so it still surprises me when I think about being a mom and how it's one of the best things I've ever done. I am a better person from being a mom. Our girls are amazing!

In my work life, I am a pastor! Who would have thought?! I have been on staff at The Chapel, a non-denominational church in the Chicago area, for the last 18 years. I am also a chaplain in our County Jail. I have a very interesting and eventful life!

Who was a player that you looked up to when you made your start on tour? Heather McKay was and still is the most amazing athlete I have ever met. That I got to compete and learn from her is still a highlight for me. I didn't really realize the magnitude of how amazing she was until I turned 36 (the year she started competing in racquetball) and was stunned that she was able to play and do things with her body that put most of us to shame! She retired at age 42. She was physically a beast and mentally a giant!

Do you watch any of the current women's pros play? What do you find different about the game now than when you played? It saddens me to say that I haven't watched any racquetball since I left the sport in 2000. I read the magazine, and I long to watch Paola Longoria play. I think it's exciting to see someone dominate the way she has, and I have

heard and read great things about her. I hope to get to a major event sometime soon.

Your racquetball career is one of the most impressive ever. Was there one win that sticks out the most to you? Hmm...They all were cool for different reasons. I loved the first Nationals I won because it was the first. It was something I had been training for, preparing for, and dreaming of for so long. It was against Shannon Wright in Colorado. I literally had a dream about it, and I won exactly how the dream said I would win. I told several people about the dream before the match so people wouldn't think I made up the story of the dream. I won 11-10 in the tiebreaker of a five-game match. It was one of the biggest career highs and subsequently one of the biggest lows of my career. I was pretty depressed all summer long after that win. I know that sounds crazy, but the truth is, when you put so much emphasis on an outcome, then you achieve that outcome and then life goes on and you have to do it again?? It was a huge life lesson for me, and what I learned from it set me up to be successful over the course of a long career.

Who was your biggest competition on tour? Heather McKay. I had tough matches with Shannon Wright but never to the degree I had with Heather.



Left: Lynn and Mike Yellen
Above: Lynn and Michelle Gould

What would you say was one of your biggest strengths on the court?

Being fearless, NEVER giving up, a ruthless work ethic, always working to turn a weakness into a strength, finding joy in the moment...Oh wait, you said one? Sorry! They kind of all go together.

Is there anyone you still communicate with from your days on tour?

Every now and then Caryn McKinney and I talk. Terri Gilreath and I have also talked on occasion. Jim Carson (my coach and ex-husband) and I stay in decent communication, and I see him whenever I go back to California.

My good friends John Dickenson and Brian Hawkes are who I talk to the most. They were great workout and practice buddies, and I consider them to be influential and important in my life. Thanks, guys!

This past July you were inducted into the WOR Hall of Fame. Congratulations! What did you like most about outdoor? The atmosphere. There is no greater party than an outdoor tournament and outdoor players! It is a joyful place to be.



Lynn against Shannon Wright - February 1981
Photo By Art Shay

Which did you like more, outdoor or indoor? Indoor! It is the perfect sport. It is fast, strategic, powerful, athletic with the tricky addition of having to navigate space with a competitive opponent. You have to be mentally tough to be that close to your opponent and not let them affect you in a negative way. In my opinion, it is the perfect combination of brains and brawn.

Have you ever thought about coaching? Nope. I LOVED teaching though! If you are a coach, you have to be able to motivate people to do what they don't want to do. I didn't have the patience to do that. But I loved showing people how to do things...then they could decide if they wanted to put in the sweat work to actually implement it into their games.

What would you say to someone who wants to break into that next level and begin playing the pro tour full time? Become a student of yourself, first and foremost...meaning, you need to know your strengths and weaknesses and be willing to do the hard work to turn your weaknesses into strengths. Most people will think they want to do this, but very few

actually will go through the heartache and pain of actually doing it. It's not just about physical stuff. You have to dig down and find out what you're afraid of, why you get defensive, what things can your opponent exploit about you, etc. I was so blessed to have my coach, Jim Carson, dedicate himself to my self-discovery and not let me run and hide. Thanks, Jim!



Above: Lynn receiving her award at the 1982 LPRA Nationals where she defeated Shannon Wright at the Denver Sporting Club

Photo Courtesy of John Foust

Below: Lynn on the cover of *National Racquetball Magazine*



Lynn's Highlights

- Six-time #1 Ranked Woman's Pro Racquetball Player (1981/82, 1984/85 1985/86, 1986/87, 1987/1988, 1989/90).
- Six-time WPRA Pro National Champion (1982, 1983, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988).
- Two-time winner of WPRA Triple Crown. The only player to win the Woman's Triple Crown: 1) Diversified Product Championship; 2) Ek-telon Nationals; and 3) WPRA Nationals.
- Eight-time Pro WPRA Pro Racquetball Player of the Year (1982-1988; 1990).
- Two-time finalist USRA National Doubles Amateur Champions 25+ (Jim Carson and Rich Clay).
- 1997 USA Racquetball Hall of Fame Inductee.
- 1997 Orange Coast College Alumni Hall of Fame Inductee.
- 2017 World Outdoor Racquetball Hall of Fame Inductee.
- Won 325 of her 369 professional matches for a .887 winning percentage.
- The Woman's Pro Racquetball Association Professional Tour (WPRA) created the "Lynn Adams Spirit Award" in her honor.

Interference With The Stroke Is Surely A Penalty Hinder.

By Otto Dietrich, USA Racquetball National Rules Commissioner

Are you attending a college/university that has racquetball courts? Many students do, and some of those schools even have organized teams that regularly attend our annual Intercollegiate National Championships. (By the way, the 2018 National Intercollegiate Championships event is scheduled for March 14-17, 2018, in Minneapolis.)

While these institutes of higher learning are certainly a growing hotspot for racquetball, some could do a better job of preparing their students to face the real world of racquetball. How so? Well, some of them have published on-line "rules" that vary greatly from those USA Racquetball has published, even going so far as to declare them to be "Official." I understand that some intramural directors may want to promote some modifications for their students, but I recommend they also provide information for where the actual Official Rules can be viewed.

I will keep the identities of these schools to myself, but if you attend a school that does this, I recommend contacting the program director to suggest that he/she make USA Racquetball's official rules available to the players. Here are a few examples of rule distortions that have been brought to my attention:

Example One. "After Return - Any ball returned to the front wall which on the rebound or on the first bounce goes into the gallery or through any opening in a side wall shall be declared dead and the serve replayed." However, USA Racquetball Rule 3.13(c)3 provides that any ball that leaves the court without first bouncing on

the floor results in the loss of the rally (not replaying the serve).

Example Two. "The receiver has the option of returning a long serve." However, USA Racquetball Rule 3.9(e) says that a long serve is a served ball that first hits the front wall and rebounds to the back wall before touching the floor. So, a serve is NOT long at all until it touches the back wall at which time it is at once considered dead and deemed a fault serve.

I simply ask that players and administrators in schools and clubs across the nation take a careful look at any "rules" published under their organizations' banners and take steps to either bring them in line with USAR's standardized and official rules available on-line at: <https://www.teamusa.org/usa-racquetball/rules> or else post a link to the official rules adjacent to modified on-line versions.

On to some rules/refereeing Q&A...

Jeremiah S. asked: I had read in the past (I believe maybe in *Racquetball Magazine*) that a Z serve hitting the sidewall crotch is a good serve and that a drive serve hitting the back wall crotch is a good serve. At a tournament this weekend, I was told that my understanding was incorrect -- that while the drive serve hitting the backwall crotch would be good, a Z serve hitting a sidewall crotch would be considered a 'three-wall serve' fault.

I responded: Of course, you are right and whoever told you different is incorrect.

The general concept is that when the ball hits the juncture of two surfaces (one horizontal and the other vertical -- that form a crotch), it is always ruled as if it hit the horizontal surface FIRST. There is NO special third choice that can be called -- it must be ruled as if it hit one surface or the other. We have declared that surface is the horizontal one. Thus, at the front wall, the ball hitting the crotch it is a SKIP BALL, but at the back wall crotch (on a serve), it is a GOOD SERVE as it is at the third wall crotch (on a Z-Serve). This ruling has NOT varied one bit in all the years that I have been in racquetball (since about 1968, as I recall).

Carly F. wondered: I am reviewing the rules on serving and wonder about serving, without really holding the ball, after the practice bouncing, but just touching it. If they don't touch it, then obviously that is a violation under Rule 3.3, but I don't know about the other situation.

I answered: Please read Rule 3.3 very carefully. It says, in effect, that the server must first take a SET position -- i.e. not moving at all, like in baseball -- then the ball must LEAVE (not just touch) the server's hand and next, after bouncing from the floor, the ball must be struck by the server's racquet. Doesn't that cover the idea of NOT just touching the ball or, say, dribbling it three times and then hitting it after just any of the three bounces?

Rob F. said: Certain players that I have observed take up their service position (bending over in a crouched position)

DO YOU HAVE A RULES/REFEREING QUESTION?

Be sure to email it to me at ODietrich@usaracquetball.com 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

... 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.

and touch the floor with their racquet past the short line. The rule clearly states that no part of the player or the racquet may break the plane of the service zone. Am I missing something? I feel like extending the racquet outside of the service zone whether touching the floor or not is a fault serve. Do you agree?

I replied: The lines on the court define several different zones, but those defined zones are only on the floor. (The Receiving and Drive Serve Lines are exceptions.) Thus, a player is not considered to be out of any of those other zones until he actually touches the floor that is located somewhere beyond or outside of the floor that is defined as being in the zone. So, merely hanging over any line (but not touching the floor out there) is okay and does NOT violate any published rule. Again, there are two exceptions. By the way, a server CAN touch his racquet on the floor beyond the short line just before his service motion begins, but not as part of his service motion which is defined as any continuous motion that results in the serve.

Steven S. wrote: I tried to find this in the rulebook but was unable to see anything about it. If during a rally one of the players dives and creates a wet spot on the floor and continues to play and on his next opportunity to hit the ball he slips and falls on his own wet spot from the previous dive, can he call a replay of the rally because he slipped? I won the rally by hitting the ball away from where he fell on the floor when he made his dig on his last shot.

So, I told Steven that: No, he CAN'T call a hinder for that type of incident. It's just a simple case of bad luck for whoever is adversely affected by that wetness -- including YOU as well. However, if the court wetness adversely affects the ball and that impacts the next play, then that's a replay hinder.

Mike K. emailed me saying: In doubles, if we know one opponent loves the reverse pinch and we take it away and still provide cross court and straight shot to the front wall; can the ref keep awarding a safety hinder? A ref at a recent tournament gave one safety hinder call and then advised the player that he is not entitled to any shot other than just the two I mentioned. He then went on to say in the future he would not grant a safety holdup if another shot was available. The rules don't call out this referee interpretation. What do you think?

My answer: In racquetball -- singles or doubles -- the person striking the ball on offense can hit the ball in any direction he wants as long as it reaches the front wall without touching the floor. The defense must be somewhere on the court as this happens, but not blocking the offense's path to get to the ball and swing at it, but they also must "keep clear" those two specific paths mentioned in Rule 3.15 (a). What this means is that the defense CAN, in theory, block the reverse pinch path and NOT be in violation of any rule. Of course, we also have the safety holdup rule that says if a player thinks he might hit his opponent with the ball or racquet, then HE (not the ref) can call a replay hinder. The ref can always change that to a penalty hinder if he thinks the conditions are there. So, a player wanting to take a reverse pinch shot is RIGHT to hold up if he might hit the other player and should almost always get a replay hinder. He CANNOT be required to take some other shot instead. Of course, this potentially is a circular problem. What if he wants take the shot, you block it, and he holds up? Neither of you is wrong! I'd say just work it out the best you can or else don't give him that opportunity/setup! Thank him every time he does hold up, because I'll tell you there are those players who won't. Those who don't hold up in that situation

are innocent of everything except they are exercising very poor sportsmanship (due respect for one's opponent's safety) for which I, as a referee, would (at some point) give a technical foul -- loss of a point. Of course, if you are playing for fun, you could just stop playing with someone who makes that kind of poor choice. I hope that gives you some useful insight about how to handle the situation.

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. Do you have a rules/refereeing question? Be sure to email it to me at odietrich@usaracquetball.com and you might find your question featured in an upcoming issue of Racquetball Magazine. I always answer every question I get, no matter how simple or complex it may be!



Sonya Shetty & Ava Naworksi at the recent IRF World Junior Championships in Minneapolis
Photo By Jason Thoerner

CONTINUING THE Making of a Champion



■ By Fran Davis (The Coach) • Diana McNab (Sports Psychologist) • Dan Obremski (Fitness Expert)

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.

In this issue, I am going to discuss "Playing One Point at a Time," a concept I get asked about all the time.

Playing One Point at a Time

In sports, the past is gone and the future never comes, so in racquetball you have to learn that there is only one ball, one shot, one serve, and one point at a time. The time is always now. That is truly the real beauty: every shot you hit only happens "in the now."

Play one point at a time... Most players think too far back (in the past) or too far ahead (in the future) instead of being "in the now" (the present).

The Past - If you lost the first game and the second game is about to begin, you CANNOT be thinking, "Oh, I lost the first game, so how am I going to win the second game and force a tie-breaker?" Just think of playing "one point at a time" and let the end result take care of itself. If you get a bad call and keep thinking about it and lose five points because you can't let it go, you are in the past. Instead of just losing that one point from the bad call, you lose five points, and now you are four points in the deficit. Let it go.

The Future - If you are up 1-0 in games and you begin to celebrate your win in your mind, you are in the future. Because you are not "playing one point at a time" and you are not "in the now," you could end up losing the match.

The Present - Take it one point at a time and be in the here and now, and you will see the astounding results in your favor.

I have witnessed my players "Playing One Point at a Time":

Rocky Carson versus Alex Landa in the semi-finals of the 2017 US Open:

After winning the first two games against Alex, Rocky had a commanding lead, 2-0. Alex came back and won the third game which made the match 2-1, with Rocky still in the lead. I reminded Rocky after the third game to ONLY focus on "Playing One Point at a Time," stay "in the now," and not to worry about winning the match (the future). Rocky did just that, regrouped and began "playing one point at a time" and "in the now." He came back and won the fourth game and the match.

Paola Longoria versus Frédérique Lambert in finals of the 2017 US Open:

Paola found herself up 2-0 in games on her way to winning her 8th US Open Championship. There's a lot of pressure on Paola about winning and breaking records each and every time she walks on the court. Between games 2 and 3, I told Paola to stay focused and to "play one point



Rocky Carson, Fran Davis, and Paola Longoria
Photo By Restrung Magazine

at a time." I knew Frédérique was going to fight hard and be aggressive on every point. Frédérique came out strong and fought back to win the third game. I reminded Paola to stop thinking of the future and to "play in the now...one point at a time." Paola did just that -- she refocused and began "playing in the now...one point at a time." She came back and won the fourth to become the 2017 US Open Champion. Paola kept her streak alive and added her 8th US Open title.

The best of the best like Rocky Carson, Paola Longoria, Jason Mannino, and my juniors Wayne Antone, Jordan Cooperrider, and Mitchell Turner (all 2017 Jr. National Champions) all know just how important it is to "Play One Point at a Time." This is one of the key components that have led to their accomplishments.

Hope to see you at one of my camps for live personal instruction. If you can't make a camp at this time, buy my video, "Building Your Racquetball Dream House" or my book, "Championship Racquetball." For details go to www.FranDavisRacquetball.com.

Fran Davis coaches Paola Longoria (6X #1 LPRT, 5X World Champion, 4X Pan American Champion, 7X US Open Champion), Rocky Carson (#2 IRT, 5X World Champion, 2X Pan American Champion, US Open Champion), and junior sensations Jordan Cooperrider (Junior National Champion & USA Junior National Team), Wayne Antone (Junior National Champion & USA Junior National Team), and Mitchell Turner (Junior National Champion & USA Junior National Team). Fran's achievements include USAR Hall of Fame 2004, Woman of the Year 2009, former U.S. National Team Coach, and Master Professional (USAR-IP).

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Jason Mannino
#1 Pro Player 2003

Rocky Carson
#1 Pro Player 2008

Paola Longoria
8X #1 Pro Player

Fran's Credentials

- 30+ Years Camp Experience
- 2004 Hall of Fame
- U. S. National Team Coach 1989-1996, 2002
- Coaches Rocky Carson & Paola Longoria.
- 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

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www.FranDavisRacquetball.com

Presented by
featuring Fran Davis and Jason Mannino





It's All In Your Mind... REALLY!!

All too often, athletes, coaches, and parents get so caught up in winning that they forget how to have fun! Yes, the F-Word is “fun”! Call me crazy, but isn't that why we got started playing our sport in the first place? When did it stop being fun and start being stressful?

Sports today are getting so competitive at such a young age. Parents, coaches, and athletes are putting so much pressure on the kids and on themselves to win and excel that they are taking the fun out of the sport. After every game, instead of rewarding effort, they are focusing on all of the things they did “wrong.” Some of the repercussions from this type of feedback include:

1. Athletes are playing to “not” make a mistake.
2. Anxiety increases in the athlete, which tenses up the body.
3. The athlete's focus is taken away from the moment.
4. Focus is placed on the outcome instead of the process.

The expectation of athletes is that they always give 100% effort. The most fun of any sport comes from the challenge of always being able to improve. If an athlete did everything perfectly all the time, it would be very boring! If you only played to win and played in the C Division but were actually an Open player and beat everybody 15-0, would that be fun?

Athletes learn the most from the mistakes they make, and this helps them grow on and off the court. It gives them goals to work toward and motivates them to train even harder. How sweet is it for a baseball player to see his batting average go up, or for a racquetball player to beat an opponent that she has never beaten! Now that is fun!

As athletes, enjoy the game and the process of making adjustments along the way. If you are solely focused on the outcome, you are missing the opportunities “in the moment” to truly enjoy what you are doing.

If you look back on a time you were playing your best, I guarantee you were using the “F-Word”!

About Toni: Toni Bevelock Delos Santos, former National Racquetball Champion, has an extensive background in sports and fitness. Toni has a unique gift of relating to athletes of all ages and skill levels. Toni partners with teams, coaches, and facilities across the nation, including Athletic Republic, Matchpoint Tennis Academy, Tony Zuniga Baseball, Winterton Racquetball, Elite Pitching Performance, Tustin Western Little League, and Orange County Nutrition Coaching. Toni is available for coaching thru Facetime or in-office appointments. For more information on 90% Mental: <http://www.tonidelossantos.com/services/> or contact Toni at tonimentalgame@gmail.com.



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MRF AT THE 3WALLBALL WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Military Racquetball Federation (MRF) was once again invited to be a part of the 3WallBall World Championships at the Stratosphere Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas. The event kicked off Wednesday evening with ProAm Doubles to benefit the MRF. The amateurs and pros all had a great time, and the money donated will benefit the MRF and its programs.

On Saturday morning, our wheelchair players Bryan Dornon (OR) and partner Freddy Ramirez faced off against Paul Stewart (NC) and partner Rhonda Rajsich in the championship game of the Up/Down Doubles division. The match, officiated by Vic Mandella, was exciting to watch. After a hard-fought tiebreaker, Bryan and Freddy emerged victorious.

The evening concluded with a color guard ceremony presented by the ROTC program at UNLV. Vic Leibofsky thanked and praised our military and all first responders for their service, and Terry Rogers thanked 3WallBall and Mike Coulter for their continued generous support of the MRF.



MRF PARTNERS WITH THE CAPITOL RIVERFRONT NEIGHBORHOOD, SUPPORTED BY THE HOME DEPOT FOUNDATION

The Military Racquetball Federation (MRF) teamed up with the city of Washington, DC and The Home Depot Foundation (THDF) at The Yards in the Capitol Riverfront neighborhood to present another outdoor racquetball rehabilitation demonstration for Disabled Veterans and Wounded Warriors. This event took place July 27-30, 2017, and was open to the public to promote racquetball and handball for new players.

The MRF, with the help of Home Depot, built two temporary outdoor racquetball courts at the corner of M Street SE and New Jersey Avenue SE across from the Department of Transportation building. One court was used for wounded warriors, disabled veterans, and the public to experience a different type of therapeutic adaptive racquetball. The second court was used for a weekend shootout for racquetball and handball players. World Outdoor Racquetball (WOR), USA Racquetball (USAR), and World Players of Handball (WPH) supported this event.

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SCOTT & KULBACK

ANTICIPATE *BRIGHT FUTURE FOR THE IRT*

By Kelly R. Diesel
Photo By Jeff Oliver

The International Racquetball Tour (IRT) is steadily climbing back into the national sport's spotlight, and it is just the beginning of a new era in professional racquetball history.

The 2017-2018 IRT season started with a top Tier 1 tournament at the Bay Club in Canoga Park, California. From September 7-10, 36 singles players and 13 doubles teams competed in the Phase IV Scientific Health & Performance Pro/Am hosted by Tournament Director Wes Obana.

The #1 ranked player in the world, Kane Waselenchuk, (Austin, Texas, by way of Canada), defeated the #2 ranked player in the world, Rocky Carson (Ladera Ranch, California) in the finals by scores of 11-0, 11-2, 11-4.

In doubles, the #1 seeded team of Waselenchuk and his teammate Ben Croft (Alpharetta, Georgia), took home the championship. Waselenchuk and Croft defeated the #3 seeded team of Daniel De La Rosa (Gilbert, Arizona, by way of Mexico) and Alvaro Beltran (Tijuana, Baja California) by scores of 15-5, 15-13.

Along with the two successful tournaments so far, the IRT has also been featured on ESPN's Sportscenter show two times in the first three months of the 2017-2018 season. Sportscenter's Top Ten Countdown reveals the "top ten" plays that happen each day in the sports world. Waselenchuk holds a #4 and #2 spot in two different countdowns from the show. Along with highlight plays on ESPN, the Tour has attracted celebrities like

Harland Williams and Tom Berenger to come out and attend these top tier tournaments. The Tour has also increased its Tier 1 events from last year's nine to 13-and-counting in the new season.

The IRT has made these professional strides under new management and ownership positions. CEO of the Tour, John Scott, from Marthasville, Missouri, and Tour Commissioner Andy Kulback, from Cincinnati, Ohio, have held their positions for a little more than four months, and they are doing things the right way according to IRT player and former IRT referee, Charlie Pratt.

Pratt, who resides in Gainesville, Florida, and is currently ranked #14 on Tour, believes Scott and Kulback have done a great job at bringing players and fans together and increasing the passion for the sport. "They are involving the right people and getting everyone excited about the future of the pros," Pratt said. "They offer a lot of experience in being around the pro game from a business standpoint as well."

Increasing the unity within the community of the sport is something Kulback and Scott have really focused on. Kulback, who was the former commissioner of the Ladies Professional Racquetball Tour (LPRT), said he has enjoyed reconnecting with friends and players and also popularizing the sport.

"The biggest thing I have noticed is the passion of the players -- their loyalty to the IRT and their desire to see it succeed," Kulback said. He mentioned that he is excited about the future of the Tour and where it can ultimately

end up. "I believe that we can provide a viable place for professional athletes to make a living playing the game they love."

Kulback mentioned he would like to thank Scott for his faith and his decision to hire Kulback as the Tour's commissioner. Scott said Kulback is one of the "good guys" in the sport and that he works harder than anyone he has ever seen. "Andy is the single most important component to the Tour's management structure," Scott said. "I really enjoy working one-on-one with Andy because his strengths are my weaknesses and together we make a really good team."

Scott also mentioned that he can't wait to see what the future has in store for the sport of racquetball. "Since the U.S. Open, I've received daily emails and phone calls from players, partners, and fans all sending the same general message: the community is buzzing about the direction of the professional sport," Scott said. "I couldn't be more thankful and humble for the position that I am in with this wonderful sport."

You can be a part of the IRT's future by attending any of the Tour's events. With more than 13 Tier 1 events scheduled for the 2017-2018 season, don't miss the chance to witness the beginning of this new era in racquetball history. For more information about the Tour, visit: <http://www.irt-tour.com/>.

Contact:
Kelly R. Diesel
IRT Staff Writer
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LPRT Kicks Off Action-Packed Season

By T. J. Baumbaugh



Paola Longoria, Cristina Amaya, Adriana Riveros, Monserrat Mejia in the Women's Pro Doubles finals in San Luis Potosí
Photo By T. J. Baumbaugh

Paola Longoria, the LPRT's #1-ranked player, made this statement by winning the first four events of the 2017-2018 season: she is ready for her next streak. Maybe the loss to Samantha Salas Solis at the end of the previous season was just the right motivation. Note: One of the four event wins just happened to be Longoria's 8th US Open title!

What makes the four events (San Luis Potosí, Tijuana, US Open, and Boston Open) so interesting, is that Longoria faced off against three different players in the finals. If you add the two finalists in Chihuahua last season, that makes six LPRT players who have made a final within five months: Longoria, Salas, Rhonda Rajsich, Jessica Parrilla, Alexandra Herrera, and US Open Finalist Frédérique Lambert. For this reason alone, this season is set up to be remarkable.

If the sheer number of singles finalists isn't reason enough, add to that the depth in the doubles draws. The San Luis Potosí doubles final was won by Longoria who partnered with talented young player Monserrat Mejia. However, Longoria and partner Nancy Enriquez were upset in the semis at the Torneo Milenio in Tijuana. The Tijuana doubles finals went to an exciting 11-10 tiebreaker where the team of Alexandra Herrera and Natalia Mendez edged out Jessica Parrilla and Carla Muñoz. Moving on to the US Open, Longoria and partner Gabriela Martinez prevailed over the team of Cristina Amaya and Adriana Riveros. At the Boston Open, Longoria paired up with earlier finalist Alexandra Herrera to win the doubles final. That makes a total of nine players who played in doubles finals so far (four events) this season.

One more fact... The top 10 LPRT players represent six different countries. If you look at the doubles rankings, the top 11 ranked doubles players represent seven different countries. These players bring a variety of experiences, cultures, and personalities to the tour. They are not only

extraordinary on the court, they are remarkable and interesting off the court.

The 2017-2018 season is shaping up to be one of the most competitive seasons to date.

The Boston Open

The Latitude Sports Club in Peabody, Massachusetts was a perfect setting for our Halloween event. Hosted successfully by Tournament Director Stewart Solomon, the off-court events were as interesting as the on-court action. The pro draws were pretty straightforward except for the unfortunate injuries to Rhonda Rajsich and Frédérique Lambert which affected their semi and final matches, respectively. The real event craziness started with the Saturday evening pro player Halloween Costume Contest. If you didn't attend, at least enjoy the pictures. The contest was won by Natalia Mendez who entered as Bat Girl.

Spotlight on LPRT #3 Jessica Parrilla San Luis Potosí, Mexico

When Jessica Parrilla made the commitment to play the Tour full-time, she quickly



shot up the ranks. She is a talented player with an aggressive game style and incredible court coverage. It is not unusual to see her diving through rallies during both singles and doubles matches. Parrilla reached the semifinals eight times in 2016-17, and she started off the first event of the 2017-2018 season with a trip to the finals.

Off court, Parrilla is a morning show TV personality in San Luis Potosí. She also does some modeling and recently competed in Miss Cosmopolitan World which was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

When and why did you start playing racquetball?

JP: I starting playing when I was 13 years old. I became interested in the sport because my dad was already a coach.

Your dad coaches you a lot. What is that like?

JP: At the beginning, he was very tough. Now it is an advantage to have him on my side because he knows me better than anyone, and we work very hard to have a great relationship.

Did you play any other sports?

JP: I used to play basketball, and I love to dance. I also love to watch sports: American football, tennis, basketball, boxing, and NASCAR.

You competed in Miss Cosmopolitan World this year. How was the experience?

JP: This year I got the title of Miss Cosmopolitan Mexico, and then I went to participate in Miss Cosmopolitan World. It was an awesome experience to share my culture and traditions with the ladies from 38

different countries. I really enjoyed it. I learned a lot, and I was very proud to represent my country in a beauty contest.

If you could choose any city in the world to have an LPRT event, where would it be?

JP: I would love to have a pro stop in Paris or any country in Europe. They say Paris is the "City of Love," and I would love to go to the Eiffel Tower. Plus, it would be great for racquetball to grow throughout Europe.

Do you have any favorite racquetball moments?

JP: My favorite moment was when I won the IRF World Junior Championships in Dominican Republic and then hearing my national anthem played during the awards ceremony. Also, when the World Games were in Colombia and the Mexican Team went into the stadium for the opening ceremony, I was very excited to hear a full stadium of people cheering for Mexico.

Do you have a favorite player to watch?

JP: My favorite player to watch is my brother Andre Parrilla. He always makes me nervous, but I love the fast style he has on the court. I also enjoy watching Kane play.

Is there anything else you would like to tell the racquetball world?

JP: I would like to tell people to dream big. It doesn't matter how crazy your dream may sound. Be patient, and work for it. Focus on yourself and enjoy the process!



Above Left: Jessica Parrilla

Above Right: Contestants from the Halloween Contest at The Boston Open

Photos By Restrung Magazine

INTRODUCTION TO THE WORLD RACQUETBALL TOUR

By Laura McCormick



The World Racquetball Tour, (WRT) is a professional tour that averages 12 events per year and provides a live free broadcast of every event that can be found at www.worldracquetballtour.com and on the WRT Facebook page WorldRballTour. Events are archived on the WRT YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/WorldRballTour) going back to 2013.

Former racquetball player Pablo Fajre created the WRT in 2012. He was determined to fill an unanswered need for growth in racquetball. He felt there were a lot of young players abandoning the sport, and if this problem continued, it would jeopardize the future of racquetball. Pablo found that in terms of providing opportunities for competition and growth among juniors, international players, and upcoming players, they needed a platform where they could establish a professional racquetball career. Alex Cardona, a key player behind Pablo's plan, is an excellent example of the program's success. Cardona was a thriving junior player from Mexico who didn't possess the financial means to enter into the professional field. Cardona found himself from racquetball until the WRT was created. Utilizing the opportunities provided by the platform of the WRT, Cardona has played professional racquetball for the last five years; currently holds the most tour wins with 12 titles; finished two years as the year-end champion (2015 and 2016); and used his prize money to invest in his own business in Mexico. At its core, the WRT exists to provide future racquetball generations a space to transition from junior competition to a professional racquetball career, but it also creates opportunities for players to enhance their lives.

Since its inception, the tour has operated primarily in the USA and Mexico. However, the WRT has a wide geographical reach given the nature of its operations in the sphere of the world wide web. The WRT is owned and operated by Sport Online Productions (SOP), a sports marketing and TV production company founded by Fajre in 2009. In addition to producing, managing, and broadcasting professional racquetball tournaments, the company is in the process of expanding its reach through a new partnership with the International Racquetball Federation (IRF).

This past November at the 2017 IRF World Junior Championships in Minneapolis, IRF Secretary General Luke St. Onge and Pablo Fajre signed an agreement that will put racquetball on the Olympic Channel. This new development provides racquetball exposure to the Olympic Channel's three million followers on social media and reaches a new fan base. SOP has been broadcasting IRF events since

2016, but now the company will create content for the

Olympic Channel from IRF events including the Pan American Racquetball Championships, IRF World Championships, and IRF World Junior Championships. This agreement also requires all WRT events to be sanctioned with the IRF and allows WRT events to be included in year-round content produced for the Olympic Channel.

With this agreement, the mission to help continuously to improve the current state of racquetball is accelerated. The sanctioning of WRT events as international events by the IRF leads to an international ranking system that will be developed to combine results from both IRF and WRT events. This also puts all WRT athletes under the governance of the IRF's anti-doping program, an action that supports the ongoing goal of racquetball's inclusion as an Olympic sport.

The WRT will kick off the 2018 season in Austin at the Longhorn Open, the biggest racquetball tournament in Texas. The event is a fundraiser for the UT Racquetball Club, supporting their trip to the USAR National Intercollegiate Championships. Registration for the Longhorn Open sold out in just one hour, filling all 350 spots, with a waiting list of 100 players! The WRT Longhorn Open starts January 12th, and pro matches will be live streamed.



Above: Alex Cardona

Photo By Restrung Magazine

Left: Luke St. Onge & Pablo Fajre

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USA RACQUETBALL ANNOUNCES PURCHASE OF WORLD OUTDOOR RACQUETBALL

USA Racquetball (USAR) announced the purchase of World Outdoor Racquetball on October 1st, 2017.

WOR will continue to operate in the same way as in the past, with the same great people and the same popular events. USAR and WOR have always worked together, and this agreement formally sustains and strengthens the sport as the indoor and outdoor games move forward together.

USA Racquetball President Dan Whitley said, "We welcome WOR and all of its outdoor players to the USA Racquetball family. By offering both indoor and outdoor programs, USA Racquetball now has a larger net to cast in bringing new players into the sport. I work in an indoor racquetball environment, but my kids have learned how to play racquetball at the outdoor courts in the park near my home. The outdoor game provides access and opportunity to introduce racquetball to many more new players."

WOR Executive Director Hank Marcus commented, "This move positions WOR and Outdoor for future growth and stability. I have spent many years working with Dan Whitley on high school events, and I am excited and confident in what he and USAR bring to Outdoor. We are all interested in the same goals: growing the outdoor game, providing continuing service to our members, and introducing outdoor racquetball to new players."

Greg Lewerenz, WOR National Director, added, "I am excited about this step forward for outdoor racquetball and for the growth and stability of the game. This brings together two groups of players with the single-minded focus of getting people playing the sport. We are at a pivotal moment in the history of racquetball. It is time to bring together the players, sponsors, manufacturers, and organizations to help promote and support each other and keep our sport alive and well in all of its forms. Let's get people playing racquetball!!"



Photo By Belinda Dettman



Photo By Stephen Fitzsimons



Photo By Stephen Fitzsimons



Top Center: ProAm Doubles benefited the MRF
Middle Center: Janel Tisinger and Michelle Poage
Bottom Center: Ladies in Vegas!
Bottom Left: David "Bobby" Horn -- Airborne!



Outdoor Racquetball Invades Vegas

3WallBall World Championships

Presented by ProKennex

By Vic Leibofsky, Tournament Director

For the eighth consecutive year, racquetball players from around the world met at the Stratosphere Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas for the 3WallBall World Championships, presented by ProKennex.

The play was fierce by every competitor all weekend. There were 40 divisions, attracting players of all ages and skills level from 25 states as well as Mexico and Spain.

In the Professional divisions, two players dominated all weekend.

Daniel De La Rosa took the trifecta, winning every division in which he played: Men's Pro Singles, Men's Pro Doubles with Alvaro Beltran, and Mixed Pro Doubles with Michelle De La Rosa. Daniel was unstoppable on the court and a ray of sunshine to be around off the court. Daniel selected 8-year-old Khilyn Natale to be a line judge for his Pro Singles final against Alvaro, who also gave Khilyn a thumbs-up of approval.

Janel Tisinger continued her outdoor dominance, defending her titles in both Women's Pro Singles and Women's Pro Doubles with partner Aimee Ruiz. Mental toughness has become Janel's trademark, and she plays with a verve and ferocity that racquetball fans love to watch. The singles final against Rhonda Rajsich was a great display by both women of lights-out effort and grit, coupled with class and respect for each other and the referee.

In the Classic Professional Racquetball Tour (CPRT) doubles, Patrick Allin and Greg Solis continued their hot streak, taking the CPRT Championship in an incredible final against defending champs Robert Sostre and Gabe Medina.

One-wall racquetball has become a player favorite at 3WallBall. Many 3wall and indoor players truly enjoyed stepping out of their comfort zone to give 1-wall racquetball a try, with over 100 participants taking the challenge!

The 1-Wall Pro divisions welcomed four new Champions in 2018. Will Rolon and David Blatt were able to win a highly contested tiebreaker final over Alfredo Ramirez and Nick Montalbano to be crowned as Men's 1-Wall Pro Doubles champions. In the Mixed 1wall Pro, Rick Koll and Rhonda Rajsich were able to take down 1-Wall veterans Jasmine Suarez and Steven Acevedo in a final match that was a thrill to watch.

To find out more about upcoming 3WallBall events, be sure to visit the website at www.3wallball.com.



Photo By Stephen Fitzsimons



Photo By Belinda Dettman



Right: Men's Pro Singles finalists Daniel De La Rosa and Alvaro Beltran along with line judge Khilyn Natale

Photo By Belinda Dettman



CALENDAR of EVENTS

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

Date	Event	City	State	Location	Email
Jan. 4 - Jan. 7	2018 LA Open	Canoga Park	CA	Harman Fitness	briancpineda@aol.com
Jan. 5 - Jan. 7	2018 Georgia State Doubles Championships	Atlanta	GA	TBD	grpatournaments@earthlink.net
Jan. 5 - Jan. 7	2018 Pennsylvania State Doubles Champ.	York	PA	Athletic Club of York	pastatedoubles@pa-racquetball.com
Jan. 6 - Jan. 7	AZ WOR IV Battle Clash of Chavez	Laveen	AZ	Cesar Chavez Park	azor@azoutdoorracquetball.com
Jan. 12 - Jan. 13	2018 St. Louis Racquetball Blizzard	St. Louis	MO	Vetta Racquet Sports - Concord	dwhitley@vettasports.com
Jan. 13	2017 WOR San Ann Shootout	San Antonio	FL	San Antonio City Park	vaulthigh26@hotmail.com
Jan. 12 - Jan. 14	WSMRA 29th Annual National Championships	Tucson	AZ	Tucson Racquet and Fitness Club	cindy.tilbury@att.net
Jan. 12 - Jan. 14	2018 New Jersey Open	Warren	NJ	Warren Health and Racquet Club	jonathan@wearrollout.com
Jan. 12 - Jan. 14	Longhorn Open	Austin	TX	University of Texas	utlonghornopen@gmail.com
Jan. 13 - Jan. 14	2018 ACES OF ANTIOCH Shootout	Antioch	CA	In-Shape Sport: Antioch	ellistyle@comcast.net
Jan. 13 - Jan. 14	2018 WOR Holiday Park Shootout	Fort Lauderdale	FL	Holiday Park	jeffery.wright@sunbeltrentals.com
Jan. 13 - Jan. 14	New Year's Bash at UCF	Orlando	FL	University of Central Florida Racquetball	ucfrball@gmail.com
Jan. 13 - Jan. 14	Kentucky Singles/Doubles Championships	Louisville	KY	Downtown Louisville YMCA	rscanham4@yahoo.com
Jan. 17 - Jan. 20	2018 Orem Open	Orem	UT	Orem Fitness Center	kbuhler@orem.org
Jan. 19 - Jan. 20	2018 Missouri High School Racquetball League	St. Louis	MO	Vetta Racquet Sports - Concord	dwhitley@vettasports.com
Jan. 20	MERC Event #3	Berea	OH	Baldwin Wallace University	timiller@bw.edu
Jan. 20	Delaware State Doubles	Wilmington	DE	Kirkwood Fitness and Racquetball Club	delaware.racquetball@gmail.com
Jan. 18 - Jan. 21	Beaver Classic	Corvallis	OR	Timberhill Athletic Club	durbin_rob@comcast.net
Jan. 18 - Jan. 21	40th Annual Lewis Drug Pro/Am/SD State Chps.	Sioux Falls	SD	Sioux Falls Family YMCA	lewisproam.director@gmail.com
Jan. 19 - Jan. 21	Grand Canyon State Games 2018	Tempe	AZ	Arizona State Sun Devil Fitness Center	dprattski@cox.net
Jan. 19 - Jan. 21	2018 NC Courts Plus Racquetball Charity	Jacksonville	NC	Courts Plus of Jacksonville	coachjan@suddenlinkmail.com
Jan. 20 - Jan. 21	CNRA Jr State Championships	Burlingame	CA	Prime Time Athletic Club	jt5816@hotmail.com
Jan. 26 - Jan. 27	14th Annual Downtown Showdown	Omaha	NE	Downtown YMCA	ysguy65@gmail.com
Jan. 25 - Jan. 28	2018 LPRT Sweet Caroline Open	Greenville	SC	Sportsclub Greenville	scrball@hotmail.com
Jan. 26 - Jan. 28	2018 ND Minot Open	Minot	ND	YMCA	knowles007@yahoo.com
Jan. 26 - Jan. 28	2018 Illinois State Doubles Championships	Lombard	IL	Glass Court Swim and Fitness	laurelmdavis@comcast.net
Jan. 26 - Jan. 28	2018 Florida State Singles	Sarasota	FL	Sarasota Bath and Racquet Club	jburns@gmail.com
Jan. 26 - Jan. 28	New York State Doubles Championships	Montrose	NY	Premier Athletic Club	bkshea@optonline.net
Jan. 27 - Jan. 28	2018 Florida CPRT Championships	Boca Raton	FL	South County Regional Park	scott@appsbar.com
Feb. 2 - Feb. 3	2018 Pinchshot.com Midwest Championships	St. Louis	MO	Vetta Racquet Sports: Concord	dwhitley@vettasports.com
Feb. 3	MERC Event #4	Cleveland	OH	Advantage Club	timiller@bw.edu
Feb. 10 - Feb. 11	2018 IRT ATL Singles Championships	Atlanta	GA	Recreation ATL	info@recreationatl.com

CALENDAR of EVENTS

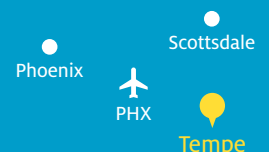


Date	Event	City	State	Location	Email
Feb. 17	2018 Missouri High School League JV3	St. Louis	MO	Vetta Racquet Sports: Concord	dwhitley@vettasports.com
Feb. 17	MERC Event #5	Columbus	OH	Advantage Club	timiller@bw.edu
Feb. 15 - Feb. 18	Mt. Hood Doubles	Sandy	OR	Mt. Hood Athletic Club	brianancheta1@yahoo.com
Feb. 16 - Feb. 18	2018 Orange and Blue Shootout IRT Tier 5	Gainesville	FL	Gators Racquetball	rslapikas@ufl.edu
Feb. 17 - Feb. 18	Motor City Rollout	Mt. Clemens	MI	Total Sports	ccvanhoose@comcast.net
Feb. 24	2018 Missouri High School League Boys Team State	St. Louis	MO	Vetta Racquet Sports: Concord	dwhitley@vettasports.com
Feb. 24	Delaware State Singles	Wilmington	DE	Kirkwood Fitness and Racquet	delaware.racquetball@gmail.com
Feb. 22 - Feb. 25	2018 Illinois State Singles Championships	Lombard	IL	Glass Court Swim & Fitness	cherylkkirk@aol.com
Feb. 23 - Feb. 25	2018 Northeast Collegiate Regional Championships	Warren	NJ	Warren Health and Racquet Club	vanschalkwykr@hotmail.com
Feb. 23 - Feb. 25	44th Annual Tornado Alley Racquetball Classic	Wichita Falls	TX	YMCA Bill Bartley Branch	tarc42@hotmail.com
Feb. 25	2018 Missouri High School Girls State Championships	St. Louis	MO	Vetta Racquet Sports: Concord	dwhitley@vettasports.com
Mar. 2 - Mar. 4	Team Ocala Classic 5	Ocala	FL	Ocala YMCA	teamocala@gmail.com
Mar. 3 - Mar. 4	2018 Rollout Classic	Warren	NJ	Warren Health and Racquet Club	jonathan@wearollout.com
Mar. 10	2018 Maryland State Singles Championships	Laurel	MD	SportFit Total Fitness Racquet	msfeb14th@icloud.com



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In our NMRA Board Meetings, one of the topics we spend the most time on is “New Members.” The second most popular topic is “Current Members.” We are all about finding and keeping players and are trying some new things to get people to play in our events. We love moving the tournaments around the country to support tournament clubs, find new 40+ players, and encourage players to explore new places. We understand that traveling across the country to play a four-day racquetball tournament might not be a top budget item for a lot of players, so we have some ideas to help with your racquetball budget...

Although we wish we could help with airfare, it's not really logistically possible. So the next expense on the list, even higher than airfare, is hotel costs. Behind the scenes, we have been paying NMRA Future Fund and Operation Fund money to make your hotel bill more manageable. We find that weekend rates are usually pretty reasonable at hotels, but the weekday rate can be \$50 more. If we only had one weekday night, that might be easier to take, but our players usually come in Tuesdays to check in and practice on unfamiliar courts. If it's possible, you will only see one rate for our hotel nights.

The entry fee can seem daunting to players who are used to shootouts and local weekend events. We ask for \$165 but we promise to feed you, give you plenty of racquetball, have you meet new friends, award great medals, and send you home in a great jacket or sweatshirt. The banquet and slideshows are always big hits, and you rarely have to rent a car since we shuttle you between the hotel and the club. Even with all of that, we know that we can show our appreciation by providing complimentary entry fees for our players who enter the 80+ and older divisions. We will also offer a free second division fee for our 44 and younger players. Another incentive to note is a free entry if you bring a friend to play in our event (reference this in your comments when entering).

To take advantage of these deals or for any questions, please contact Cindy Tilbury at 303.888.4461 or cindy.tilbury@att.net.

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Test Your Knowledge On HYDRATION

Hydrating before, during, and after exercise is important for achieving peak performance, healthy everyday living, and preventing dehydration. Every athlete's hydration needs are a little different, but there are some general guidelines you can follow to help you attain an appropriate amount of fluid intake throughout the day.

Use the word bank below to fill in the blanks on the following hydration tips. Not all words will be used.

Dehydration | 20 | Soda | Bottles | Watermelons | Thirst | Breathing | 100 | Gulps |

Lemonade | Intoxication | Tomatoes | Pretzels | 75 | Sweating | Sugar | Hydration

TIP 1: By the middle of the day, your urine should look like _____.

TIP 2: Do not rely on _____ to tell you when you need to drink more water.

TIP 3: If an athlete weighs 150 pounds, they should drink at least _____ ounces of water throughout the day.

TIP 4: Sweet drinks like _____ should be avoided when trying to hydrate. So should energy drinks, which contain stimulants and _____.

TIP 5: Throwing up, headaches, dry mouth, muscle cramps, and feeling extra tired are all symptoms of _____.

TIP 6: Drinking too much water (liters and liters rather quickly) is dangerous and can result in a condition called hyponatremia, or water _____.

TIP 7: Exercising in the heat increases the amount of fluids you lose through _____, while exercising in the cold increases the amount of fluids you lose through _____.

TIP 8: Many fruits and vegetables, like _____ and _____, are made up of over 90% water.

TIP 9: During exercise, taking two to three large _____ every 15-20 minutes is a great way to stay hydrated.

TIP 10: Food provides nearly _____% of your suggested water intake throughout the day.



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1. Lemonade
2. Thirst
3. 75 (150÷2)
4. Soda/Sugar
5. Dehydration
6. Intoxication
7. Sweating/Breathing
8. Watermelons/Tomatoes
9. Gulps
10. 20

ANSWERS:

STRINGING TRENDS

AT THE 2017 UNITEDHEALTHCARE US OPEN RACQUETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS



Official String



As we have for several years now, Ashaway again teamed up with Lawler Sports' Ian Titus to provide stringing services for this year's UnitedHealthcare US Open Racquetball Championships in Minneapolis. We have had a lot of fun providing this service over the years. We've strung a lot of racquets, met a lot of very nice people, and not coincidentally, learned a great deal about the types of strings top racquetball players prefer and how they like them strung. Here's some of what we learned...

As many of you know, the US Open is racquetball's premier event and the largest racquetball tournament in the world. It features top professional players from the IRT and LPRT and offers the largest prize money purse in the sport. It also provides opportunities for amateur players of all age and skill levels to compete in both singles and doubles, and this year included over 750 players from throughout the world!

The stringing booth was busy, stringing over 200 racquets during the five days of play. Of these, some 50% were strung with Zyex®-based multifilament strings, while the majority of the other 50% were strung with two types of nylon string. Of this latter segment, some 35% were multifilament nylon and the other 15% multi-stranded monofilament nylon.

In total, these figures are consistent with the trends in Ashaway's overall sales for racquetball and string selection by Ashaway sponsored players. Both reflect a 70/30 preference of Zyex over nylon. Thus, we see a continuing strong trend toward strings that use this PEEK (poly-etheretherketone) material, which provides superior feel, more power, and improved tension stability.

In terms of string gauges used, we also saw a continuing trend toward thinner strings. Some 70% of all racquets strung used 17-gauge string. An additional 20% used even thinner 18-gauge string, and only 10% a heavier 16-gauge string. These numbers are a bit surprising for racquetball, as racquetball has historically used thicker string. We think this reflects the increased durability of newer string materials, which allows players to use thinner strings in competition with more confidence.

Racquet tension was also a surprise and somewhat counterintuitive. On average, 16-gauge strings were strung between 32 - 35 lbs. tension, 17-gauge strings between 33 - 36 lbs., and 18-gauge at 34 - 38 lbs. tension. Overall, the mean tension of racquets strung was 35 lbs., which is the highest we've seen at the Open.

What does this mean? For a start, it's clear that newer string materials like Zyex provide greater elongation and resiliency, which allows players to use higher tensions. Second, newer racquet designs require longer string lengths, and you need to string with higher tension to compensate for that greater length.

But there is also something of a puzzler here: the old rule of thumb is to string at low tension for power, higher tension for control. Thus, if you use a 16-gauge string, which is inherently more powerful than a thinner gauge, you would expect to string it tighter to gain more control with that power. Conversely, you would expect to string an 18-gauge string with less tension to add power to what is inherently a finesse or control string.

Yet this is not what we see in the tension data. Could it be that the newer string materials and/or larger frame designs are changing the old power/control equation? Is it that styles of play are becoming more pronounced, that power players really want power, and finesse players really want control? I'm not sure what the answer is, but I would welcome any thoughts.

Finally, a couple of general observations:

First, strings with multifilament construction -- either using Zyex or nylon -- now account for some 85% of the racquetball market, while the popularity of multi-stranded monofilament string appears to be sliding. I take this to be the result of the greater flexibility of multifilament construction, which is reflected both in better playability and superior durability on off-center hits.

The other thing that struck us was that while Zyex-based strings continue to grow in popularity, there is still a strong base of multifilament nylon string adherents, even among the world's top players. This tells us that despite nylon's chief liability -- tension loss -- it still has properties that make an excellent racquetball string. Players like the way it feels and wears. More importantly, there are also some material innovations involving multifilament nylon that promise to make it an even better racquetball string. But more on that in our next column, Trends in Racquetball Stringing, Part II.



Tommy Troutman and Ian Titus
Photo Courtesy of Ashaway

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