

RACQUETBALL

Cheryl GUDINAS

The Softer Side of a Champion

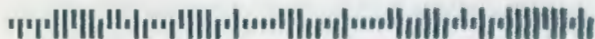
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WINTER 2012 • VOLUME 22 • ISSUE 1



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VISION STATEMENT

To provide racquetball opportunities in the sport of racquetball for all levels of participation through:

Objectives:

- **MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT** - USAR values its members and will strive to provide the best possible member services at all levels.
- **MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT** - USAR believes that racquetball is a lifetime endeavor and the benefits of health, recreation, and competition should be available to everyone. USAR will strive to expand its membership in order to share these benefits with as many players and supporters as possible.
- **PROMOTION OF THE SPORT** - in order to sustain a strong player base USAR will promote the numerous benefits of participation through mass marketing efforts.
- **COMPETITIVE SUCCESS** - USAR strives to maintain America's position as the number one racquetball nation in the world. Success at the elite levels has a positive influence on every other facet of our sport.
- **SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS** - USAR values its relationship with sponsors and will continue to maximize benefits and exposure.



22 Nationals Players' Guide

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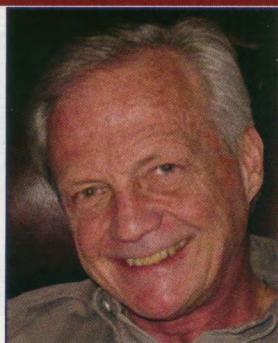
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Submissions

Racquetball Magazine welcomes submissions from our members and readers. If you have an idea for an article you may discuss your topic with the editor either by email or telephone. Contact: Editor, Racquetball magazine, lrutzen@usra.org. All items submitted are subject to editing.

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RACQUETBALL PLAYERS

A Perspective on INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

James Hiser, Ph.D.
USAR Executive Director

As a new year begins, this may be the time to reflect on the results of our U.S. Teams in 2011. This was perhaps the most disappointing year from a results perspective, as the U.S. Adult Racquetball Team, for the first time in history, placed second at the Pan American Games, and the U.S. Junior Team placed third at the IRF Junior World Championships.

The abrupt turnaround had actually begun to be predicted almost ten years ago when Mexico began to dramatically improve at Junior Worlds. It was evident to those who observed the Mexican program and the influx of juniors in the lower age groups, that it was only a matter of time until Mexico began to make waves in the adult divisions. That time has come and the alert for the United States is that Mexico's recent success shows signs of continuing. What may surprise many is that the threat to Mexico's dominance may not come from the U.S. but from other countries, especially Bolivia.

The Bolivian team has some great junior players in their pipeline - both male and female - and they are very young, 18 and 19 years old. Ecuador and Colombia are also improving and developing some young talent and will be a factor in future events. How could this have happened, and how have these countries seemingly caught up with the U.S. in such a short time?

Some thoughts:

Long-range Planning

It hasn't been a short time - these countries have been actively pursuing improvement for the past 15-20 years. They have all competed internationally for at least this length of time and have consistently improved over the years.

Pan American Games

The U.S. does not receive any government funding for its Pan Am Teams; many, if not all, of the other countries do receive some type of government assistance. The inclusion of racquetball in the Pan Ams was a

tremendous boost to their racquetball programs as the Olympic Committees recognized the possibility of medals for their athletes. In the 2011 Pan Ams, all the above countries won medals - another great boost.

Culture

Racquetball is recognized as an elite sport in many other countries and the accomplishments of the athletes are highly recognized by the public, press and the Olympic Committees. To use Mexico as an example, Paola Longoria, in winning three gold medals, has achieved celebrity status in her country equal to movie star status in the U.S. Along with significant financial rewards, racquetball now provides her the self-satisfaction of accomplishment and national recognition.

The youth in these countries are able to identify with racquetball "stars." Many of these young players go directly from school to the clubs, take lessons from full-time teachers and coaches, and play three to four hours each day. Many also have a goal of someday being on every television station and newspaper in the country and making a very good living as an athlete.

Development

These countries invested, and are still investing, in knowledge. For many years some of the best instructors in the U.S. have traveled and taught not only the players but also the coaches. Even today, U.S. national instructors such as Tom Travers, Jim Winterton and Fran Davis travel to many of the aforementioned countries.

Coaching and Discipline

Many countries recognize the importance of coaching and have invested in developing teachers and coaches, where few U.S. clubs do. In Mexico, for example, most clubs believe a full-time racquetball instructor is a must. These instructors take a great deal of pride in the juniors they develop and often follow their students all the way through their adult careers.

National Subsidies

Some countries like Canada and Mexico support their athletes on a yearly basis by supplying them with a yearly training subsidy. This helps reduce the financial pressures of real life and promotes training time, although the program currently is struggling to produce results in Canada.

Our U.S. culture can and should learn from the examples of other countries' dedication to racquetball. However, even with all of the above factors affecting peak performance in the U.S., we should not lose perspective of the great accomplishments of the athletes who represented the U.S. at the Pan Am Games.

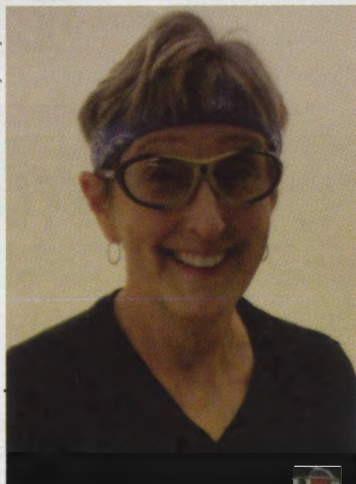
All of our athletes felt this was one of the best, if not the best racquetball experience of their lives. The event was outstanding in every respect and everyone who participated will have extraordinary pages for their racquetball scrapbooks. From the late-night conversations with other athletes from many nations to walking into a stadium of 60,000 cheering fans, our athletes brought home stellar memories.

In addition, for many members of the U.S. Team this was the first time they really experienced what it was like to represent their country in a true international setting. Believe me, it meant everything to our athletes. The pride and joy on their faces as they entered opening ceremonies was something I'll never forget. Each athlete left this event with a new-found pride in their country - and we are extremely proud of them.

Although it is great to travel and enjoy other cultures, there is no place like the good ol' USA. Yes, we have many challenges ahead if we want to compete in the future, but there is no other place our athletes or I would rather live and represent.

Thanks to everyone for your support, and a giant thank you to our athletes for your dedication and effort!

Photo courtesy Cheryl Kirk



The Response From OUR MEMBERS

Cheryl Kirk, President
USAR Board of Directors

Mission Statement – USA Racquetball

USA Racquetball is the National Governing Body for the sport of racquetball, recognized by the United States Olympic Committee, and is committed to excellence and service to our members.

We provide the infrastructure and organization for racquetball.

We also provide competitive opportunities for members and enthusiasts through our coordination of racquetball organizations, development and administration of rules and programs, sanctioning of events and development of teams for international competition.

In the last issue of *Racquetball*, Jim Hiser and I requested assistance from our members regarding your thoughts on USA Racquetball's performance and what changes you recommend. We wrote:

"... this an ideal time to take a close look at USA Racquetball in terms of the value we provide to our sport, our members and our partners (the states, organizations, and manufacturers).

"Input from our constituents is incredibly valuable – as USA Racquetball members you are the subject matter experts on being served by the National Governing Body."

You didn't let us down. A number of people responded, and the input was well-thought-out, intelligent and heartfelt. Thanks to everyone who weighed in... it was all incredibly useful feedback. You provided your perspectives on the association, administration, rules, international relationships and competition, marketing, programming (especially junior and collegiate), events, court facilities, and much more.

Here's one comment that resonated on a high level: "Review the mission statement!" Clearly, this should be the key to everything we must accomplish now and in the future. In business, when divergent interests begin to muddy the waters and the way becomes less clear, you always refer back to the mission (see above).

The Board of Directors takes its fiduciary responsibility to the members of USA Racquetball very seriously, and we have every intention of conducting business on your behalf honestly and in service to the mission. If divergent interests present roadblocks, we will endeavor to make the right choices for our most important constituents, the amateur players of the sport.

The next several months will keep the Board busy analyzing your input and making decisions on the future structure of the association. The pathway to keeping this sport healthy for future generations begins here, in 2012. Last month, we asked:

"What is our Brand? What are our values? How will we define success?"

Our Brand is amateur racquetball. Among our core values are open and honest communication and taking the high road to preserve this sport for now and the future. Strategies, goals and objectives must all cycle straight back to this one simple statement: Success will always be defined in how well USA Racquetball serves you, our members.

One more note: This issue is chock full of information on the Ektelon Nationals in Fullerton, California. I hope many, many of you are planning to attend. We've added some exciting enhancements, like doubles divisions, to make this year's event even tougher to miss than ever before. Join the party!

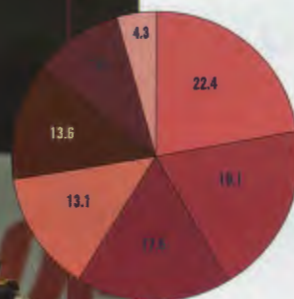
MORE RACQUETBALL PLAYERS... PLAYING MORE RACQUETBALL!

Source: SGMA

TOTAL
PARTICIPATION
SINCE 2000

UP
3.5%

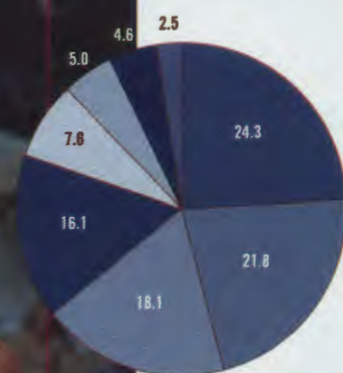
WHERE THEY LIVE



ALL PLAYERS

U.S. participants	4,993,000
Core players (13+ times per year)	2,079,000
Male	75%
Female	25%
Under 35 years old	58%
Household income of \$75,000+	47%
Live in metro areas of 2 million+	43%
College degree	52%
Play tennis	40%
Play Squash	8.2%
Hike and camp	35%
Bicycle	36%
Jog	51%

PLAYERS BY AGE

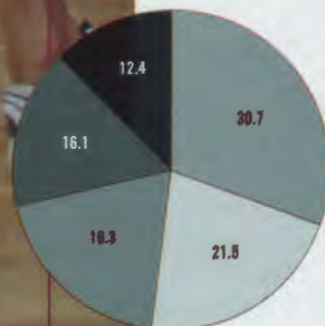


PLAYERS BY GENDER

MALE
75%

FEMALE
25%

HOUSEHOLD INCOME



PLAYERS *Helping* PLAYERS

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THE KANE TRAIN

STOPS IN NEW YORK CITY

By Bryan Shaw

Photos by Freddy Ramirez/Restrung Magazine



ROCKY CARSON & KANE WASELENCHUK

With two top-tier pro stops starting the second half of the season, there wasn't a break after the Coast to Coast California Open as the Cactus Salon NYC ProAm immediately followed January 12-15. Last year it was Jack Huczek over Rocky Carson in a five-game final after Kane forfeited in the semi-finals due to illness. Would there be any surprises this year?

Blast from the Past in Qualifying

Possibly the most highly anticipated aspect going into the tournament was the return of former great Sudsy Monchik. He committed to play several pro stops this season, and New York was the kickoff. He faced a tough draw getting through the qualifying rounds as he met three consecutive tough competitors on Thursday: Agustin Tristan, Vincent Gagnon, and then Javier Moreno in order to advance to the Round of 16. Sudsy's miracle run through the draw was stopped before it began as Agustin took advantage of Sudsy's rust and won in three quick games, 11-7, 11-3, and 11-3.

Round of 16

Several players saw their first berth of the season after advancing through the qualifying rounds: Ruben Gonzalez, Agustin Tristan, and Polo Gutierrez. Also noteworthy is that Brad Schopieray made his second appearance this season in the Round of 16.

Top seed Kane Waselenchuk disposed of Gonzalez in a

quick three games, and Rocky Carson followed suit by taking out Schopieray in three games. Chris Crowther ended Agustin Tristan's run in three games, and Andy Hawthorne sent Anthony Herrera packing in three as well. Jose Rojas gave Alejandro Landa a rude welcome with an 11-0 first game. Landa rebounded nicely in the second game but lost 12-10, and Jose finished off the third game 11-7 to advance to the quarterfinals. Jose has not been upset in the opening round so far this season.

The first Round of 16 match to go beyond the minimum of three games was #12 seed Alvaro Beltran against #5 seed Charlie Pratt. Alvaro has artificially low seeding due to a couple years of limited playing time due to injuries. As he works his way back up the ladder, it creates extremely difficult opening round matches for the top eight players. This week it was Charlie Pratt who drew the short straw. This was actually the first match-up in Tier One history between these two players. The first game was tight, but Charlie executed his shots with precision to show why he is a top player on tour, taking game one 11-9. Alvaro made the necessary adjustments, dialed in his game, and took the next three games to win the match, 9-11, 11-6, 11-4, and 11-9.

The next Round of 16 match to go extra innings was #8 Shane Vanderson and #9 Tony Carson. Shane has had a relatively disappointing season. Aside from getting knocked out in the opening round in Kansas City, he has gotten to the quarterfinal of every other tournament but has been unable to advance beyond that. Shane has finished the season as high as fifth several times in his career, but last season he slipped to seventh, and this year is looking worse unless he can turn it around in the second half of the season. Tony Carson is on the doorstep of getting into the top eight. He advanced through every qualifying division this season but couldn't get past the Round of 16. Last week in Canoga Park, he upset Charlie Pratt to earn his first quarterfinal appearance. With the taste of quarterfinals still in his mouth, he came out and played exceptional ball, capitalizing on Shane's mistakes and taking the first two games. Shane rebounded and won the third convincingly then squeaked out a tight fourth game to force the tie-breaker. It was a good fifth game with Shane ending up on top, 9-11, 5-11, 11-5, 12-10, and 11-7.

The final Round of 16 match that went beyond the minimum number of games showcased #3 Ben Croft against #19 Polo Gutierrez. Despite Croft establishing himself as a

top player and deserving of his top four ranking, Polo was not going to be a walk in the park. He doesn't play a lot of Tier One events, but he is an excellent player. He has a laid-back style but still manages to be very quick, and he has a unique grip that allows him to hit unorthodox shots with remarkable precision. The players had only faced each other a handful of times in the past, and Polo won all those Tier One match-ups.

Play was tight the first game. Ben was having a little trouble getting his lines dialed in and seemed frustrated most of the game, but he was able to edge it out with an 11-9 win. Game two was much of the same, but Polo raised his level of play and kept Ben frustrated, winning 11-9 to even the match. Ben fell into the vortex in the third game as Polo's style kept Ben off balance and frustrated. Ben never quite seemed in it and lost 11-3. Down big in the fourth, Ben fought back. It looked like Polo was going to win but Ben clawed back and fought off two match points to eventually come out on top

13-11 and force a deciding fifth game. The players dueled another suspense-filled game in the tie-breaker. The players were tied deep in the match, and a tough late call against Ben opened up the door for Polo who finished it off, 9-11, 11-9, 11-3, 11-13, and 12-10.

Quarterfinals

The quarterfinals were set to showcase Kane Waselenchuk vs. Shane Vanderson, Jose Rojas vs. Alvaro Beltran, Polo Gutierrez vs. Chris Crowther, and Rocky Carson vs. Andy Hawthorne.

Kane cruised past Shane in three quick games, 11-5, 11-5, and 11-3. Andy played great in the first game and caught Rocky flat-footed, winning 11-9. Rocky struggled to get comfortable, but played well enough to take the next three games and the match, 9-11, 11-4, 11-4, and 11-8. Crowther was in the zone and put on a power clinic and ended Polo's run with a crushing 11-4, 11-4, and 11-4.

The last quarterfinal match featured a replay of last week with Alvaro Beltran facing Jose Rojas. Alvaro was previously undefeated against Jose, entering the match with a 4-0 head-to-head record in Tier One events. Alvaro won in four games the previous week in Canoga Park, dominating the last two games. The question was, who went to the drawing board and studied the most during the past week to prepare for this potential match-up.

Both players came out firing. Alvaro has a more laid-back approach but hit his shots nonetheless. Jose ripped his

angles and played tough. He pulled out a tight first game 11-9 and repeated for a close second game 11-8. With his back against the wall, Alvaro kept hanging around and chipping away to win the next two, 11-8 and 11-6, to tie the match. Experience dominated the fifth game. Alvaro stayed cool and played his game to win the match 9-11, 8-11, 11-8, 11-6, and 11-6.



Semifinals

The first semifinal featured a familiar pairing seen this season: Kane vs. Jose. While anybody facing Kane has a seemingly impossible challenge, the situation normally appears even worse for Jose. Jose entered the match 0-9 against Kane, and aside from a 12-10 loss at the US Open in Memphis years ago, Jose can't seem to score more than five or six points in a game against Kane. This day was no different, as Kane had an answer to every move Jose made, winning in three games 11-5, 11-0, and 11-6.

The second semifinal featured Rocky Carson and Chris Crowther. Despite Rocky winning 96% of their previous Tier One match-ups (24-1), they typically have great battles. This match was no exception. Chris couldn't get his serve going, and Rocky took quick advantage, winning game one 11-3. Chris suddenly locked in and started blasting lasers, winning the next couple of games 11-5 and 11-3. Rocky began mixing up speeds again and messed up Chris' timing, winning the fourth game 11-3. Rocky's superior conditioning appeared to play a factor in the fifth. Chris was still hanging but didn't have the energy he showed during the first part of the match. Rocky built a lead and kept Chris at bay, winning the fifth game and match 11-3, 5-11, 4-11, 11-3, and 11-6.

Finals

It was "déjà vu all over again" as Kane and Rocky were scheduled to duel in the Sunday final. Rocky played Kane well the prior week, so the crowd was curious as to whether Rocky found a chink in Kane's armor.

Rocky jumped out to a 5-0 lead and Kane called for a timeout. His mobility was noticeably affected. A regular timeout turned into an injury timeout. He managed to get on the board, but once Rocky built a 6-2 lead, Kane had to pull out of the tournament with a back injury that prevented him from finishing the match. Rocky took the victory. Kane took to the recovery room to heal and get ready for the next Tier One in Salt Lake.



Salute to My Father

AN AMERICAN HERO

Kim Cameron wrote this tribute to her father. The Atkins family has made a generous donation to the MRF in Mr. Atkins' memory.

Jack Hughes
MRF Program Coordinator

My dad has always been my hero. It took me a long time to realize that he is one of America's heroes as well. Like many of his generation, he was a quiet hero, seldom talking about himself or his many war-time experiences. It wasn't until I was in my 20s that my dad actually shared some of those experiences with me. Occasionally over the years, other stories would emerge. I wonder how many stories he never told.

It's July 1940. Imagine, if you can, being a kid from middle-of-nowhere Texas, who, after two years in the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps), convinces your dad to sign the papers to get you into the Navy before your 18th birthday. The next thing you know, you're at boot camp in San Diego, seeing palm trees and the ocean for the first time. You board a ship for the first time. You attend more school than you ever thought possible as you learn everything you can about diesel engines and all of the electrical systems aboard a ship. You even learn how to swim.

Suddenly, it's December 7, 1941. You are aboard the USS Chandler (DMS-9), a minesweeper, on a training exercise off the Hawaiian Islands when Pearl Harbor is attacked. For two agonizing days, your ship is held off-shore in case the enemy returns. You can't believe the devastation that meets your eyes as you return to port. Due to your size and knowledge of ships, you are selected to dive into two of the partially-sunken ships to look for survivors. For hours, you dive and swim past so many fallen sailors. Finally, against all odds, you find a sailor who is still alive and bring him up to the surface. Shortly after that jubilant moment, the task of bringing up the fallen begins. You are 19 years old.

In June 1942 you are part of the commissioning crew of the USS Fletcher (DD-445), the first of a new class of destroyers. By October, the ship arrives at Guadalcanal and becomes a vital part of the Navy's war in the Pacific. The crew nicknamed her "Lucky 13" because her hull numbers totaled 13, she was the 13th in line of Task Force 67, and at the "Friday the 13th" November Battle of Guadalcanal. After engaging the enemy at the Battle Tassafaronga, the Fletcher rescued 646 survivors of the torpedoed cruiser USS Northampton.

For three more long years, the USS Fletcher participates in numerous battles in the Solomon and Marshall Islands, supports General MacArthur's jungle campaign along New Guinea's north coast, is involved in the Philippine



James L. Atkins LT. USN retired

Photo courtesy Kim Cameron

Liberation, sweeps for mines in Subic Bay, and participates in many more engagements. At the end of 1945, the Fletcher leaves the war zone for the last time. You are 23 years old.

Dad's Navy career continued with postings in many different states and countries with land and sea duty stations. He patrolled off the Korean coast at the height of the Korean War. One of my Dad's dreams came true around the 20-year mark: Officers Candidate School, a much-coveted reward for his service – he was so proud!

A tour of duty in Taiwan as an advisor to the Republic of China's Navy with the entire family in tow was next. Then the Vietnam War took Dad away from home for almost three years. It was so different from his WWII experience.

To celebrate my dad's 85th birthday a few years ago, he and I took a cruise around San Francisco Bay on the SS Jeremiah O'Brien, a restored Liberty ship. He wore a hat that his family had given him to show the world his service to his country, and he couldn't walk more than a dozen yards without being stopped by other visitors. They thanked my dad for his service and shook his hand; some saluted; some shared stories of their own. Dad tried to spend all of his time in the Engine room, talking with the volunteer crew and getting his hands dirty. He said it was like coming home.

The Navy. My dad chose it and lived it for 70 years, my mom married into it, my brothers and I were born into it. It sent my dad to three wars and kept him away from home for months at a time, and it moved my parents 17 times in 30 years. It gave us the opportunity to travel and live all over the world, and housed us in everything from Quonset huts to mansions. It also gave us lifetime friends who were there when family couldn't be.

The Navy buried my dad this past December. The flag was folded and presented to my mom, Taps was played, and a gravestone with an etching of his service medals was put in place. A well-earned final salute to an American hero...to my hero.

Kim Cameron is a USAR member, player and supporter. She lives in Fremont, CA. Her mother, Helen Cameron, contributed to this article.



MRF Teams Up With Pets For Vets

The Military Racquetball Federation (MRF) is pleased to announce a partnership with Pets for Vets, Inc. (PFV) to support their efforts in our mutual goal of assisting wounded service members. MRF will be a vehicle to raise awareness as well as funds for PFV by providing exposure through MRF media outlets, events, and dedicated promotions.

Pets for Vets will be provided opportunities at MRF events to distribute literature, show videos, and have representatives and dogs on site. In addition, the MRF will utilize its partners like USA Racquetball and its state affiliate organizations, racquetball manufacturers, and IRT players to extend reach and awareness.

Major events like the MRF National Championships, the 3 Wallball World Championships, and the World Outdoor Racquetball National Championships will feature this partnership.

Hank Marcus, MRF co-founder, was enthusiastic about this joint venture, stating, "Pets for Vets is a great initiative supporting the healing process for wounded service

members who have made great sacrifices for our country and who return from battle with injuries of all kinds. It is one of our key programs at the MRF to help support these individuals by offering them the opportunity to learn and perhaps ultimately compete in the sport of racquetball."

Clarissa Black, Founder of Pets for Vets, is excited about partnering with MRF. "MRF has already changed the lives of numerous veterans and this partnership will provide both organizations additional opportunities to positively impact more wounded warriors."

Pets for Vets is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization whose goal is to help heal the emotional wounds of military veterans by pairing them with a shelter dog that is specially selected to match his or her personality. Professional animal trainers rehabilitate the dogs and teach them good manners to fit into the veteran's lifestyle. Training can also include desensitization to wheel chairs or crutches as well as recognizing panic or anxiety disorder behaviors. For more information visit www.pets-for-vets.com.



WORLD FIREFIGHTERS RACQUETBALL

Bringing Help and Hope TO OUR HEROES

By Peter S. Berger

The World Firefighter Racquetball Association wishes every member of the racquetball community a happy, healthy, prosperous and safe New Year. We look forward to making more of an impact in the lives of first responders in the coming months and are committed to starting off on the right foot.

WFRA is teaming up with WOR to present the on the 2nd Annual WFRA/WOR Doubles Shootout. Last year it was a huge success, bringing in outdoor players from all over. This tournament was to benefit a firefighter who was injured off duty and needed some financial help. Not only was it a fun tournament, the participants were able to raise \$1,000 for the family via a check presented on the last day of the event.

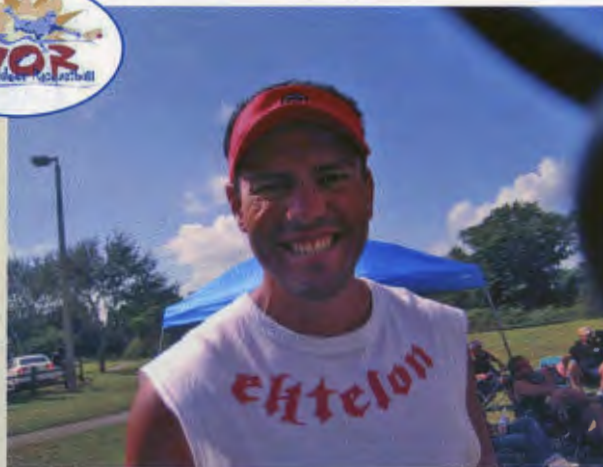
This year the tournament is being held at CB Smith Park in Pembroke Pines, and two charities will be receiving monies. The first is the Firefighter Cancer Foundation, established to assist firefighters who suffer from cancer and require financial as well as other aid to help fight the disease.

The other charity comes on the heels of a tragedy. On January 6, 2012, during a routine training activity, a firefighter fell and did not survive his injuries. He worked in a fire department where members of the WFRA are employed. The firefighter was a 25-year member of the

service and is survived by his parents, sister, and brother. The members of the WFRA asked if there was a way that we could raise money for Greater Broward Firefighters Charities C/O Firefighters Local #1549, and of course, the answer was yes -- this is why this racquetball association runs charity tournaments.

We at the WFRA would like to thank the following sponsors who donated items for the event: Cheesecake Factory, Brimstone Grill, Brio, The Coldwater Spa, Bru's Room, RA Sushi, Donny's Auto Body, LA Fitness, The Pub, and the Village Tavern. All of these places stepped up and gave without hesitation. We believe it's important to support businesses that demonstrate generosity in support of our local heroes.

We're excited about our upcoming tournament schedule. In April, the State Firefighter Racquetball Tournament will be hosted by Embry Riddle University in Daytona Beach, FL. With the help of some local businesses, there will be one- and two-day shootouts so that the promotion of racquetball will continue to grow in the ranks of the fire departments. As we play more and more, we get healthier. As we get healthier, the #1 cause of firefighter death, cardiac arrest, will decrease. We need our first responders out there, and so do you. Keep supporting us and we will always be there.



WORLD OUTDOOR RACQUETBALL PK CHAMPIONSHIPS



By Chris Young • Photos courtesy of WOR

WOR and the PK Championships returned to South County Regional Park on November 5-6 for a third consecutive year. Once again the weather was picture-perfect with overflowing hospitality led by Harvey "Grillmaster" Bernstein and DiSalvo's Italian Restaurant. Over 130 players competed in all skill levels from first-time outdoor players all the way through top outdoor pros from around the nation.

Sizzling competition entertained the excited crowds. The team of Rob Sostre and Fabian Pedraza was

awesome; Rob is a one-wall legend with his own line of Iceman paddleball equipment, and Fabian is a top indoor guy from the New York area.

Coming from the other coast, the team of Jesus Ustaroz and Brian Pineda also had a good run, making it to Sunday. This team kept spectators laughing with their unique on-court chemistry.

Even with the out-of-state teams challenging the long-wall specialists from West Palm Beach, the local gang earned bragging rights in the Pro Doubles with Tommy Ale and Yelandi Rivero defeating Joe

Young and Tim Hansen in a close 13, (14), 9 battle. These guys play on a weekly basis, and the familiarity with each other's games provided some exciting rallies for the spectators.

In the Pro Singles, the final ended with Vinny Carvallo defeating Eric Harper in two games 10, 13. Vinny is an indoor player who has been in the Florida State indoor finals for the last few years, and there is no doubt with his work ethic and pure athleticism he will continue to show up in finals of both indoor and outdoor events.

A Tournament WE'LL NEVER FORGET

By Jaden Elkins and Dane Elkins
Photo courtesy of Brett Elkins

On Sunday, November 6, 2011, in the stunning landscapes of Claremont, California, a junior tournament was held in conjunction with the Pomona Valley Open Tier 3 Racquetball Tournament. The picturesque Claremont Club contains seven partially glass paneled racquetball courts, 15 lush tennis courts, a gourmet cafe and a hair salon.

Juniors who played were Dane, Cody and Jaden Elkins, Llewyn St. John, Tommy Andraeos, Tyler Adams and Iain and Shanon Dunn. The first place winner was Dane Elkins, who dominated the division. Tommy battled all comers and beat Jaden Elkins, who ended up squeaking by on total points to capture the second place medal.

Some juniors also played in the men's division. Twelve-year-old Miguel Rodriguez battled his way up to the quarters in the B's while ten-year-old Sebastian Fernandez was runner-up in the C's. Dane Elkins went to the semis in the C's while fourteen-year-old Luis Fernandez

reached the semis in the A's.

At the conclusion, some of the juniors invented an invigorating sport where you play tennis with a racquetball, and we have still not found a winner yet. A special thanks to tournament directors Christie Riley-Solano, Diane O'Brian, and Brett Elkins.



L to R: Tournament Director Christie Riley-Solano, Llewyn St. John, Iain Dunn, Tom Andraeos, Cody Elkins, Shannon Dunn, Tyler Adams, Jaden Elkins, Dane Elkins.

Doubles Only

Article and photos by Bruce Adams, NMRA Secretary

The NMRA completed its "Doubles Only" tournament at The Maverick Club in Arlington, Texas, December 1-3. Eighty-five participants played anywhere from ten to sixteen matches apiece!

This is the only event where we lower the minimum to 40-years-young so that the locals can get a taste of the NMRA lifestyle. A barbecue dinner on Friday evening was a real hit as was the outstanding lunch and dinner hospitality throughout the event. Thanks to all of the sponsors at the event. Tournament Directors Howard Walker and Pat Gibson did a terrific job!

The schedule is nearly set for the rest of 2012. The March event will be in Orem and Provo, Utah. North Carolina State University in Raleigh, North Carolina, will host our tournament in July, and the 2012 Doubles Only event is scheduled to take place in Pleasanton, California, tentatively December 6-8.

Come try out one of our events – you will be hooked like many others after their first event! The NMRA is dedicated to the mature racquetball player 45 years and up. All matches (singles, doubles, and mixed doubles) in a self-officiated round robin format -- No More One Round and Out. Your first event does not require membership to the association, but we'd love to have you join. We look forward to see you at an upcoming event...the camaraderie and friendships you will establish will last a lifetime.

For more information, including our newsletter The RacquetRacket, please visit our website at www.NMRA.info; and for tournament registration or viewing match results, visit www.R2Sports.com. We also encourage our members and readers to visit the USA Racquetball website at www.usaracquetball.com. We are now on Facebook, too: Search NMRA.



NATIONAL MASTERS RACQUETBALL



Rhonda Jenkins, Rhonda Look & Anita King



Bob McAdam & Leo Vasquez



FABULOUS FUN

on the Florida Gulf Coast

By Joan Vande Kieft

Winter arrived with a vengeance across most of the US on January 12th, but that didn't hamper the start of the 23rd Annual Women's Senior Master's Racquetball tournament in Sarasota, FL. Many of the 91 competitors from 19 states arrived early, raising \$474 for Racquet for the Cure at the traditional doubles-for-fun warm-up activity. At the evening meeting at the Sarasota Bath & Racquet Club, players received their welcome packets containing the tournament match schedule, goodies from local businesses, water bottles, Wilson Hope pink racquetballs, and best of all, beautiful purple fleece jackets embroidered with the WSMRA logo. Players chatted and reconnected, and the local organizing committee and the WSMRA tournament committee explained tournament logistics for the self-organized round robin matches.

Play began the next morning with hospitality provided by local restaurants. Matches were grouped back-to-back so the participants could enjoy the warm and sunny weather during their free time. Two massage therapists arrived each day to work out the aches and pains, and racquets were restrung the whole weekend. The Tournament Committee, Chad (aka "Brad") Bailey, Kathy Trotter, Judy Arnold and Bob Kulscar, with lots of support from Jean Trimble and Renee Fish at the YMCA venue, kept the matches on time. All the courts had glass on the back walls so it was easy to cheer the players on and witness some truly awesome racquetball.

On Saturday prior to the banquet, Susan Pfahler conducted a silent auction with wonderful sports clothing and equipment donated by Wilson and Chris Evon as well as loads of great items from other donors, local businesses and sponsors. Bids



photo by Larry Deamund

were submitted for Racquetball Girl logo'd hats and shirts, candles, wine, racquets, bags, gloves, bathrobes, watches and other jewelry - even a bag of home-grown Honey Bell oranges! Nearly \$1,400 was raised for three causes close to our hearts: WSMRA operating account, USAR Collegiate Scholarship Fund, and Rapha House, an organization operating in Cambodia devoted to ending human trafficking, bonded labor and the sexual exploitation of children.

The banquet was held at host Bentley's Resort Hotel featuring delicious fare including, of course, Key Lime pie for dessert. A local DJ had everyone on the dance floor until it was time to think of the next days' semifinal and final matches.

Competition was tough, but eventually the following results were logged with the finalists receiving a unique Florida-themed trophy designed by a local Sarasota artist at Cabbage Palm Glass.

80+ Lola Markus (IL)
 75+ Karen Porter (FL)
 70 + Mildred Gwinn (NC), Pauline Kelly (IL)
 65+ Meri Jean Kelley (CA), Sharon Chandler (WA)
 60+ Nancy Kronenfeld (IL), Kathy Ruzycski (IL), Donna Heinzl (IL), Joan Vande Kieft (IL)
 55+ Susan Pfahler (FL), Marsha Berry (KY), Marcia Richards (CO), Lynette Froehlich (SC)
 55+ B/C Nancy Large (CA), Cheryl Kirk (IL), Joanne Nache (NC), Mary Crambles (IL)
 50+ Janet Tyler (FL), Janelle Williams (CO), Cindy Tilbury (CA), Lori Pizzini (FL)
 45+ Anita Maldonado (NY), Lynn Fonseca (GA), Claudia Andrade (FL), Debbie Beldring (CO)
 45+ B/C Xia Yang (TX), Judy Redding (NY), Audrey Sorrento (NY), Julianne Valentino (IL)
 40+ Jean Halahan (NY), Sara Noyes (FL), Kelly Van Zant (FL), Lori Inskeep (CO)
 35+ B/C Tara Borrero (GA), Jenny Hickman (TN), Stacie Cato (NC)

The players and the Board members of the Women's Senior/Masters Racquetball Association express their thanks to Wilson and Chris Evon for their endless generosity as well as to the local organizing committee, the tournament sponsors and all the many and varied individuals and groups that helped make this event such a success. Everyone enjoyed another racquetball adventure, and we are looking forward to next year when the tournament will be held in Arlington, TX at the Maverick Club on the weekend of January 18-20, 2013. For results, pictures and much more about this year's and next year's event, please visit our web site, www.wsmra.com.

by Otto Dietrich
USA Racquetball National Rules Commissioner

FIRST POINT LAST POINT

"Treat the last point exactly the same as the first point!"

photo by Geoff Thomsen



National Doubles is nearly upon us (or just past us, depending on when this issue hits the streets), but nevertheless, here are a few quick tips on reffing/playing doubles.

As you may know, the serving order in doubles can now be changed each time a team comes in to serve. This puts a little extra pressure on the referee to make sure that no one serves more than one time each inning. The other team also has an interest in avoiding that happening, so they are bound to help the ref. My personal experience with this rule change has indicated that teams rarely change their serving order even though they can. Thus, the worry is limited. I ask each team before the match begins "Which of you will generally be serving first even though you can alter that during the match?" I then put a "1" beside or above those players' names on the scorecard. When a team steps in to serve, I glance at the scorecard and hold it with my thumb covering the name of the person who steps up to serve first. If that name is the one with the "1" beside it, then everything is normal and the scorecard properly reflects the actual order of serve. But if it's NOT the person with the "1" next to their name, then I know instantly that they are in a different order and pay closer attention to who is and should be serving. Whenever there is a "hand-out," I begin holding the card with

two fingers (actually my thumb and forefinger) on top to tell me that the team's second server is serving. You should recall who served first.

By the way, any time you as a player are not sure who should be serving, it's perfectly acceptable to ask the referee whose serve it is.

Here is a commonly violated rule covering the non-serving partner. At the start of the service motion and until the ball crosses the short line, the non-serving partner must have both feet on the floor inside the box, generally be standing upright, and have his back facing toward the sidewall! To do otherwise is a foot fault. This is especially critical in the one-serve game. While this is a paraphrasing of the actual rule, it is what the rule means. Incidentally, if the non-serving partner (or the server) steps across the short line before the ball crosses it, the proper call is a "side out" rather than a mere "foot fault." While the IRT rule modifications allow both players to move once the ball has been struck, USAR rules DO NOT.

In doubles, both players on a team are entitled to try for the ball. So, even when a shot is obviously one that the right side player would normally get, his partner is still entitled to try for the ball and thus can possibly be hindered in that attempt assuming, of course, that he could have gotten to the ball had there been no hinder. The fact that it may have obviously been "the other player's ball" is no excuse.

On another note, I still overhear some referees who add extra words to their call of the score once a game or match point is reached – words like "possible game point serving" or "possible match point serving."

Although this issue not addressed in the rulebook, the referee's use of such "added verbiage" is generally considered to be in poor taste. Why? Well, first it unduly emphasizes and announces to all that the receiver is "on the verge of losing." Surely the players already know how important this particular rally is since the game could be over soon. There's no need to advise them of that at this time. Moreover, at this very critical place in the game, saying that disrupts the usual verbal rhythm that the ref has used for calling the score during the rest of the game. Need further convincing? Watch a major tennis event on TV and, if you pay very close attention at game or match point, you will find that while the TV announcer may comment that the server has three championship points (to win the title) on his racquet, the chair umpire (on court) will still call the score exactly like he did all the other points in the games, i.e. "40 – love." The referee should always call and make judgments for the potential last point exactly the same way as he does the first point!

Incidentally, two astute readers told me about the error that made its way into my article in the Summer Edition of *Racquetball*. Yeah, that's right, I should have said that the "joint" where the front wall meets the floor is "twenty feet" long, not ten feet. Otherwise, I stand by everything else in that article.

Always "Play by the Rules" and, if you don't have a copy, I encourage you to download them for free at <http://usaracquetball.com/Rules.aspx>.

DO YOU HAVE A RULES/REFEREING QUESTION?

Email it to me at odietrich@usra.org and you might find it featured in an upcoming issue of *Racquetball*.

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. This way you'll complete the Racquetball Success Triangle we introduced in the Winter 2010 issue.

This is a great time to reevaluate and create a mid-season checkpoint for your game. It's important to continue to do what is working for you and change what is not. Take a good hard look and be honest with yourself. I've charged the athletes on my Championship Team (including Rocky, Paola, Taylor and Sharon) as well as my Jr. Championship Team (including Jordan and Spencer) with technically, physically, mentally, and emotionally evaluating their games, i.e., making a "grocery list." NO ONE was let off the hook; they ALL had to do it. This is a critical part of growing their games.

All of my athletes had a phenomenal first half of the season and I am so proud of them:

Rocky Carson placed second at the 2011 US Open, earned gold and silver medals at the 2011 Pan American Games, and placed second at the Seattle Pro/Am Racquetball Championships.

Paola Longoria is the reigning 2011 US Open Champion, captured three gold medals at the 2011 Pan American Games, and has regained the WPRO #1 ranking.

Taylor Knott qualified at the 2011 US Open into the Men's Pro main draw and placed second in the Men's Open. He qualified at the 2011 Seattle Pro/Am into the Men's Pro main draw and took home first place in both the Men's Open Singles and Doubles.

Sharon Jackson qualified at the 2011 US Open into the Women's Pro main draw and placed third in the Women's Open.

The key for these athletes is to replicate their routines from August-December 2011.

Take a closer look at their routines and gain a better insight into what makes them champions...

1. RACQUETBALL SKILLS

Check your progress: It isn't good enough to just get on a court and practice for a specified time. You must qualify your drill sessions by keeping track of your practices. Regardless of what technique you are working on, this information holds true. My Championship Team members DO NOT practice without writing it down.

Decide what shots to practice and how many you are going to hit. We recommend 15 for intermediate and 20 for advanced.

Count how many you did correctly. Depending on your level of play, your percentages will change:

1. 10 out of 15, or 67% for intermediate
2. 17 out of 20, or 85% for advanced

These percentages are merely guidelines - benchmarks for you to try to achieve as you move into the intermediate level and then onto advanced. As your percentages climb and you move beyond 85 percent, you are moving up into the elite

and open levels. Consistency is what separates one level from the next, and the drilling sessions create the consistency needed to move up and win more matches.

2. MENTAL SKILLS

Routines and Rituals: Athletes thrive on consistency and routine. We are creatures of habit and perform best when there are no surprises. In order to obtain optimal performance levels, develop a pre-performance routine.

How is a routine or ritual created? It's a progression:

- 1. Behavior:** An athlete chooses behaviors that enhance his or her game (e.g., bouncing the ball three times before serving).
- 2. Habit:** A behavior done over and over again (seven times) becomes a habit. If you bounce the ball three times every time you serve, you will eventually do it unconsciously.
- 3. Routine:** A healthy habit soon becomes a routine. As you are preparing for your upcoming match, you choose specific routines that will guarantee consistency and success. Bouncing the ball three times has now become a routine since you stop thinking about your serve and go into it automatically.
- 4. Ritual:** A ritual is a specialized routine. If a routine works and improves your accuracy, consistency, and timing, you move it into a specialized category called a ritual. This means it is your own personal behavior that you use to play your personal best because it triggers your muscle memory and puts you into automatic pilot.

Successful athletes thrive on rituals and routines that help their mind and body to relax and focus on the essentials of the upcoming competition. Everything in sports is a learned behavior, so each consistent pre-competition ritual that an athlete does automatically sets up an ideal performance state.

3. FITNESS SKILLS

Flexibility is the ability to elongate the tissues and fibers in your muscles. It can be increased by proper stretching routines performed consistently to get a fuller range of motion. Your ability to reach, act, and react depends upon your level of flexibility, and it is something we all need to work on all the time.

4. NUTRITION SKILLS

Too many players do not eat breakfast at all or do not eat enough breakfast especially if they have a match in the morning. If you expect to perform your best you must eat.

Start your day off right and eat, but remember to eat the right foods! Here is what Diana McNab recommends:

A breakfast of champions consists of either: whole grain cereals, fruit and juice; eggs, toast and fruit; or hot oatmeal, yogurt, and fruit. These wholesome foods turn into muscle glycogen. Stay away from white flour, white sugar, chemicals, fats and preservatives. They stay in your stomach too long, driving up your glucose index too high and making you feel more fatigued.



Managing **ANXIETY**

By Stanley Popovich

photo by Kavitha Shi

At times, our worries and anxieties can overwhelm us. In addition, our worries can distort our perception of what is reality and what is not. As a result, this may interfere with your performance. Here are some great techniques that a racquetball player can use to help gain a better perspective on things during their anxious moments.

Sometimes we get stressed out when everything happens all at once. When this occurs, a person should take a deep breath and try to find something to do for a few minutes to get their mind off of the problem. A person could read the newspaper, listen to some music or do an activity that will give them a fresh perspective on things. This is a great technique to use right before your next event.

Remember that our fearful thoughts are exaggerated and can make the problem worse. A good way to manage your worry is to challenge your negative thinking with positive statements and realistic thinking. When encountering thoughts that make you fearful or anxious, challenge those thoughts by asking yourself questions that will maintain objectivity and common sense.

Remember that all the worrying in the world will not change anything. Most of what we worry about never comes true. Instead of worrying about something that probably won't happen, concentrate on what you are able to do.

Another technique that is very helpful is to have a small notebook of positive statements that you can carry around with you. Whenever you come across an affirmation that makes you feel good, write it down. Whenever you feel stressed before your event, open up your notebook and read those statements. This will help to manage your negative thinking.

In every anxiety-related situation you experience, begin to learn what works, what doesn't work, and what you need to improve on in managing your fears and anxieties. For example,

you have a lot of anxiety before your event and you decide to take a walk to help you feel better. The next time you feel anxious you can remind yourself that you got through it the last time by taking a walk. This will give you the confidence to manage your anxiety the next time around.

Take advantage of the help that is available around you. If possible, talk to a professional who can help you manage your fears and anxieties. They will be able to provide you with additional advice and insights on how to deal with your current problem. By talking to a professional, a person will be helping themselves in the long run because they will become better able to deal with their problems in the future. Remember that it never hurts to ask for help.

It is not easy to deal with all of our fears and worries. When your fears and anxieties have the best of you, try to calm down and then get the facts of the situation. The key is to take it slow. All you can do is your best each day, hope for the best, and when something does happen, take it in stride. Take it one step at a time and things will work out.

Don't Stress Over Your Competition

Many athletes sometimes get anxious when they play against a tough opponent. They get nervous about their competition and they get so worked up that they lose focus on playing their sport. In the end, they make mistakes and end up beating themselves up if they do not win. Below are some ways that an athlete can help manage the stress of playing against the competition.

The first step is to learn as much as you can about your opponent. Although this may seem obvious, some athletes may think they already know what they need to know. Remember, there is always something to learn about your competition. Read the reports about your opponent and watch his or her performance. Try to figure out an angle on how you can

beat them. The more you know about your competition, the better your chances are you will win. This will also help to reduce your worries in the future.

Do not assume anything about your competition whether they are stronger or weaker than you. Every athlete has good and bad times, and just because you may be facing a stronger opponent does not mean that you will lose. Remember that you and your opponent both have an equal chance of winning. You are both starting from scratch. This should help you to give you confidence going into your next event.

Focus on how you can best strive for perfection in your own event instead of worrying about your opponent. For instance, you are going against the number one athlete in the tournament and you are nervous. Instead of focusing on how good your competition is, focus on your performance. Concentrate on how you can perform your event and how you can best improve on your problem areas.

Realize that you can't win all of the time, and that includes your competition. You may be the best athlete in the world but you will still sometimes lose. No one can win all of the time. When facing a tough competitor, use this fact to your advantage. Even the best athletes will make some mistakes.

It isn't uncommon to get nervous when you go against a better opponent. All you can do is to focus on your skill sets and do the best you can. This will help you in the long run.

Stan Popovich is the author of "A Layman's Guide to Managing Fear Using Psychology, Christianity and Non Resistant Methods," an easy-to-read book that presents a general overview of techniques that are effective in managing persistent fears and anxieties. For additional information go to: www.managingfear.com/

Cheryl GUDINAS

A Look at Her Softer Side

BY SARAH WARHAFTIG

competing in Rosarito Beach, Mexico where Diego, a stray at the time, happened to be hanging close to the club. Cheryl took one look and immediately was on the phone to plan his adoption and travel back to Chicago. A few years later, Cheryl found Newman, who had been turned in to a local shelter. After an agonizing three-day wait to see if anyone would claim him, she was the proud owner of a second gorgeous rescue dog.

Cheryl recalled her love for animals at a very young age. She remembers growing up with neighbors who owned horses, and despite a vivid memory of the day her uncle's dog bit her in the face, she's never lost her passion to be around animals. She recalls the devastating experience of her childhood dog being given up because it was unable to be housebroken. This had a profound impact on her.

With the intense travel schedule and time away from home, Cheryl is grateful for her parents' ability and willingness to watch Diego and Newman when she can't bring them along. But if you happened to be at the US Open this year, you might've seen her two babies! "The hardest part of traveling is leaving them...it's painful. I had to bring them to the Open this year, or it would have been three weeks before I saw them again," Gudinas says.

With her extensive international travel, it's a surprise Cheryl doesn't come home with even more additions to the family! At the Pan Am Games in the Dominican Republic, Cheryl discovered a newborn litter of kittens right outside the racquetball club. Finding the kittens malnourished with a mother unable to provide milk, her heart melted and she immediately made a trip to the store, returning with a year's supply of cat food. She asked the club owner to feed the kittens, and she has since found out from WPRO player Claudine Garcia, whose home club is where the kittens were found, that many of them are still healthy and have stayed at their home outside the club doors.

Cheryl has had thoughts of opening a business that brings in animals and then places them in loving homes. "I lose sleep at night knowing that animals are abused and neglected. It's unfathomable what people have done to animals - I can't take it," she says. She has no sympathy for anyone who has abused or injured any animal. Her real dream is to be an animal control police officer and to have the chance to put these people in their rightful place where they can't hurt animals anymore.

For now, Cheryl will keep her aggression on the court, and she will continue to love her animals and encourage people who are looking for a pet to look at shelters and rescue an animal in need of a home. "My dogs give me unconditional love, and I have had some of the best conversations with them. After a tough tournament or training day, Diego and Newman don't care. They just love me for me."

If you've ever had the pleasure of talking to Cheryl Gudinas, you'd immediately pick up on her incredible work ethic, champion heart, and desire to win, all of which have all helped propel her successful career. Cheryl's domination and quest to break a national singles record with a ninth win have placed her among some of the greatest women racquetball players in the game.

Cheryl is carried along by a tremendous support system (family, friends, trainers and coaches) that keeps her mentally tough and motivated to pursue her quests on a daily basis. And after a long day of work and training, the best part of Cheryl's day is coming home to her two favorite members of her support system. Like any proud parent, Cheryl beams when talking about Diego and Newman, and she can't wait to spend time with them. Of course, the interesting thing about her two "sons" is that they happen to have four legs, wet noses, and tails!

Both Diego and Newman are rescue dogs who were lucky enough to find a home with Cheryl. In 2005, she was

PHENOMENAL

Cheryl's Winning Numbers

U.S. Team member for 20 years straight

Attended 4 Olympic Festivals

- 3 gold (Singles), 1 silver (Team)

Member of 4 Pan American Games Teams

- 2 gold (Singles)
- 1 silver (Singles)
- 1 bronze (Singles)
- 3 gold (Team)
- 1 silver (Team)

Member of 9 World Championship Teams

- 3 gold (Singles)
- 5 bronze (Singles)
- 1 silver (Singles)
- 7 gold (Team)
- 2 silver (Team)

Made U.S. Team in 18 National Singles Events

- 8 gold (Singles)
- 3 age group gold

U.S. Open

- 2 U.S. Open titles

National Doubles

- 3 gold medals

US. Team Assistant Coach, Jr. Team –

12 years under Jim Winterton and Kelley Beane



photo by Geoff Thompson

Praise for Cheryl

To me, Cheryl Gudinas is the ultimate professional. Any USA event I coached, she was fully prepared, performed under pressure match after match, and is a true champion. I have coached with her and against her; she is and has always been a great competitor.

-Jim Winterton, coach

Cheryl has been a great friend to me over the years and I had the pleasure of attending the Pan Am Games with her in October 2011. As we walked into the stadium, she started tearing up. I asked her what was wrong and she simply said, "You just never know if this could be your last one." Cheryl takes SO much pride in being a member of the U.S. Team and representing Team USA at competitions. It's really an honor having her on the Team.

-Aimee Ruiz, teammate

Cheryl has proven time and again that she is a true competitor with a work ethic that is unparalleled. She has always been willing to listen and learn in order to win and improve her game. Her success and longevity in the sport is proof that she has adapted her game in order to remain competitive for over 20 years.

-Mike Guidry, coach

Cheryl taught all of us on the Team the meaning of true dedication and commitment. No one works harder on improving their game than Cheryl.

-Doug Ganim, former Pan Am Games teammate

Cheryl has always been driven to be the best she can be. When she first started playing on the tour, she had a goal and developed a play to achieve that goal. She is always outgoing yet unassuming, hiding under her hat. My favorite is how she goes out of her way to make sure an animal is safe - just one of her many attributes. Thank you, Cheryl, for making racquetball part of your life.

-Malia Bailey, former teammate

Cheryl is a unique individual. She is quietly humble and always helpful to juniors and adults alike, even if they are potential opponents. Her ability to compete and succeed to the degree she has is due to her personal fitness, study of the game, dedication to excellence, and her tremendous mental toughness in situations where most others falter.

-Usher Barnoff, Executive VP, International Racquetball Federation

As one fortunate enough to actually have seen many great players compete during their prime, few truly convey the word "Champion" like Cheryl Gudinas does.

Cheryl's legacy will always be the numerous victories, National and World titles and USA appointments, but it also includes the impact she has had on so many young athletes, coaches and friends during her career. Her excellence on the court, integrity, strong work ethic and passion for the game are her winning characteristics.

-Kelley Beane, Head Coach, US Jr. Team

photos courtesy Cheryl Gudinas

25TH NATIONAL

HIGH SCHOOL CHAMPIONSHIPS

February 22-26, 2012
Multnomah Athletic Club



Portland, Oregon
503-223-6251

Download entry form at www.usaracquetball.com



40th National **COLLEGIATE** Championships

March 27-31, 2012 • Arizona State University
Student Recreation Center

HOST HOTELS:

Twin Palms Hotel
800-367-0835

Four Points Sheraton
480-968-3451



FULLERTON, CA • MAY 23-27



PARTICIPANTS' CHAMPIONSHIP GUIDE



*Insider's Guide
to the*

**BIGGEST
EVENT
of the
YEAR**

New for 2012





FULLERTON, CA - MAY 23-27

THE GUIDE



EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF FULLERTON 2012



Hello, Racquetball Players!

The Ektelon Nationals presented by Penn is the perfect way to end your season. It's time to start thinking about how to make this your most memorable racquetball year ever!

With a little preparation and planning, you can make sure your trip to the National Championships is everything you want it to be, and we want to help make your planning process smooth and efficient.

Racquetball players from across the US and the world will be competing in the 2012 Ektelon Nationals. The inclusion of doubles divisions, the women pros, and the Military Racquetball Federation (MRF) create an even more dynamic atmosphere, building on the 2011 arrival of the event in California.

Whether you're a first-timer or a seasoned veteran, there will be something new and exciting to experience. We're here to assist in ensuring all competitors and spectators have the best racquetball experience of their lives!

Important Web sites for additional information:

1. USA Racquetball: www.usaracquetball.com
2. Event site: <http://www.r2sports.com/tourney.asp?TID=8987>
3. GET Travel: http://www.gettravel.com/racquetball/travel_resources.shtml
4. IRT: www.irt-tour.com
5. Ektelon: <http://www.ektelon.com/racquetball/files/index.aspx>
6. WPRO: <http://www.wprotour.com/>
7. Military Racquetball Federation: <http://www.militaryracquetball.com/>

TRAVEL, ARRIVAL, AND CHECK-IN:

UNITED AIRLINES – The U.S. Olympic Committee and United Airlines join USA Racquetball in offering the lowest possible United airfares to national events. Contact the U.S. Olympic Travel Desk toll-free at (800) 841-0460 weekdays between 7:30 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Pacific Time. Reference the special USA Racquetball membership account code ZMH6.



GET TRAVEL – Book online or call (888) 877-4445, option 3. Registration: Tues., 5 p.m.-9 p.m.; Wed., Thurs., Fri., 8 a.m.-8 p.m.

Enterprise Rent-A-Car – Racquetball members receive a discount on Enterprise rentals. For reservations visit www.enterprise.com and provide member savings number 50C0261.

PRIOR TO TRIP:

- Make sure you have played in a designated qualifier
- Check the local weather forecast to dress appropriately (Fullerton gets cool in the evenings)
- Purchase your match tickets for the opportunity to see the best players in the world
- Make hotel reservations early and make transportation arrangements from the airport

WHEN TO ARRIVE:

See entry form to verify when your divisions start. Plan on starting on the designated days.

QUALIFICATION:

All players competing in amateur singles events (see USAR Web site for specific events) must be US citizens/residents and qualify in either a state championship, regional event, or other approved qualifier. Pro events and doubles divisions do not require qualification nor U.S. citizenship.

TICKETS AND VIP BOOTHS:

VIP booths are limited and many of last year's attendees have already reserved for 2012. Please contact Terri at (719) 635-5396 ext. 123 for more information.

Stadium tickets are available for all matches, but tickets are limited. Go to the Event site, <http://www.r2sports.com/tourney.asp?TID=8987> to reserve your tickets

NEW FOR 2012

Doubles – Numerous skill divisions for all levels of play (Open to ALL competitors)

WPRO – Featuring the best women players in the world

MRF – Featuring inter-military competition and a fundraiser for MRF Racquetball Rehabilitation Clinics for wounded service members

Live Entertainment – featuring local singers and artists

Hall of Fame Inductions – Legends Michelle Gould and Steve Serot will be inducted in a special Hall of Fame Ceremony on Friday evening



photos by Geoff Thompson

2012 EKTEN NATIONALS

FULLERTON, CA • MAY 23-27



TRAVEL INFORMATION

GET Travel Sports & Events is excited to be the Official Travel Provider and to help with all of your travel needs while in Southern California.

Why book your 2012 USA Racquetball Travel Options through GET Travel?

- Discounted hotel prices for participants and spectators with the tournament. GET Travel offers the best rates on our program hotels that are available to the public.
- Specially priced Disneyland® Resort Theme Park Tickets available for purchase, as well as discounts on other area attractions.
- On-site information desk at the Meridian Sports Club during the tournament to answer questions and to assist with any travel challenges that might arise.
- Friendly and knowledgeable customer service staff to help with travel arrangements.

For Accommodations, Specially Priced Disneyland® Resort and other Attractions, and Travel Resources Options:

1. Book online
 - For Hotels click on a select event program page. Review program hotels. Then click "book now"
 - For Travel Information, click on the "Travel Resources" link
 - For Theme Park Tickets, click on the "Area Attractions" link -OR- select Disneyland® Resort theme park ticket event page. Review options. Then click on Book Now.
2. Call our toll free number at (888) 877-4445, option 3
3. For more event information about all of the USA Racquetball Tournaments, click USARacquetballEvents.com

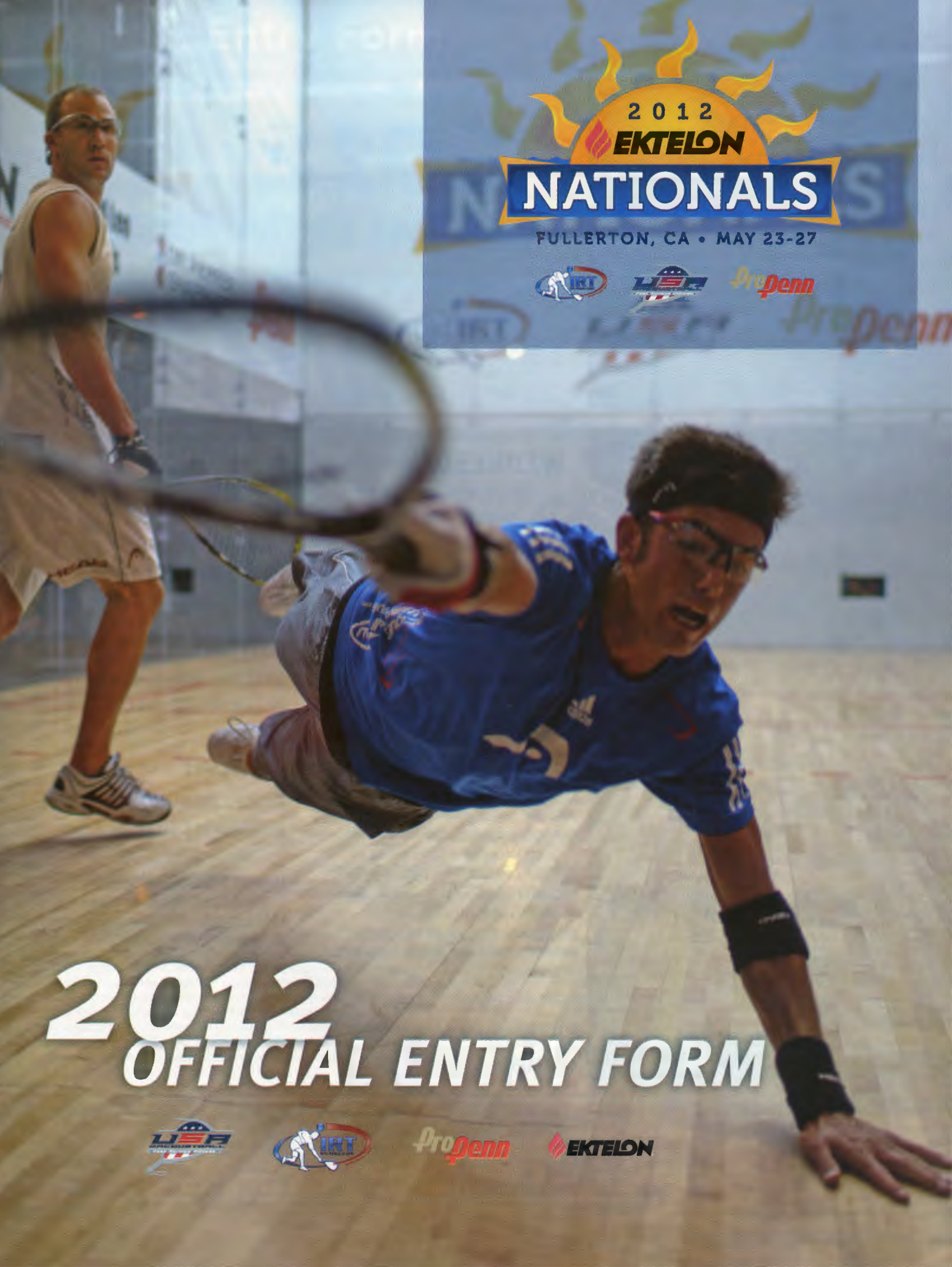
Call Today! Come to Compete, Stay to Play in the Parks!

888.877.4445, option 3

Hotel Pricing: 5/22/12 - 5/28/12

Hotels	Room Type	Rate Per Night
Marriott Cal State Fullerton	Standard Room (sleeps up to 4)	\$109.00
Marriott Cal State Fullerton*	Standard Room & Breakfast for 2	\$129.00
Holiday Inn Fullerton*	Sleeps 1 - 4 Guests	\$115.00
Fairfield Inn Placentia*	Standard Room	\$89.00

*=Breakfast Included in Rate



2012
EKTELON

NATIONALS

FULLERTON, CA • MAY 23-27



2012

OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM





FULLERTON, CA • MAY 23-27



2012

OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM

NEW FOR 2012!



■ WEDNESDAY

PRO AM DOUBLES TO
BENEFIT MRF
RACQUETBALL
REHABILITATION
CLINICS

The Ektelon Nationals is proud to announce the MRF Racquetball Rehabilitation Clinics as its designated charity. Twenty-four lucky amateurs will have the opportunity to play in a single elimination (one game to 15) doubles challenge with top professional players as their partners. All proceeds will be donated to MRF Racquetball Rehabilitation Clinics, and each amateur player will receive an autographed gift from their pro partner. Call 719-635-5396 if you are interested in participating as spots are limited. Pro/Am Doubles for MRF Racquetball Rehabilitation Clinics - \$225 donation. (Your matches for any other divisions you enter will not be scheduled Wednesday evening so you can participate in this event).

STATE/REGIONAL
CHAMPIONS RECEPTION

■ THURSDAY

LADIES NIGHT OUT

■ FRIDAY

HALL OF FAME
INDUCTION CEREMONY

■ SATURDAY

EKTELON PRE-SEMIS PARTY
AT THE MERIDIAN CLUB

■ SUNDAY

PARTY IN THE BAR AT THE
MARRIOTT HOTEL

There will be special events scheduled throughout the tournament. Keep updated at USARacquetball.com. Follow us on Twitter @ektelonnational for updates and the latest information.

photo by Geoff Thompson@doubleout.com



Part 1: Entry Form

If you are FAXING (\$15) your entry, be sure to fax both Part 1 and Part 2 of this form. Fax: 719/635-0685 or enter online at www.usaracquetball.com



Please PRINT

Name _____ Gender: M | F

Birthdate _____ Age _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Email _____

Phone (Day) _____ (Eve) _____

Employer _____ Occupation _____

Regional (required) _____ Division(s) _____

SEEDING INFORMATION:

* Player may enter only one of the divisions shown in RED, and must be approved to compete at that skill level (see "Qualifiers and Certifications").

Event Sponsor:



GET TRAVEL
SPORTS & EVENTS

** Age + Skill Level – Players may enter divisions such as 35A and 40A. If a player enters a division such as 60A and 45B they must be approved at the B level in order to qualify to play.

First-round losers may sign up for only ONE consolation round.

WAIVER I hereby, for myself, my heirs, executors, and administrators, waive and release any and all rights and claims that I may have against USA Racquetball, Ektelon, Meridian Club, Penn Racquet Sports, and all other event sponsors or their respective agents for any and all injuries. I also acknowledge the potential risk of eye injury during competition, and can provide certification in writing that my protective eyeguards (including prescription frames/lenses) conform with all standards specified in USA Racquetball Rule 2.5(a).

By registering to compete in this event, I consent to subject to drug testing as administered according to the USA Racquetball/USOC guidelines, and release all rights to the use of event photographs in which my image appears. Full waiver to be signed at check-in.

Participant Signature & Date _____

ALL players in the amateur divisions must have pre-qualified by competing in any division at a qualifying event. See "Qualifiers & Certifications."

- ☐ PRO QUALIFIER
☐ PRO MAIN DRAW
☐ U.S. NATIONAL TEAM QUALIFIER/OPEN
U.S. National Divisions

AGE

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 24- | <input type="checkbox"/> Elite (state open) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 25+ | SKILL * |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 30+ | <input type="checkbox"/> A |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 35+ | <input type="checkbox"/> B |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 40+ | <input type="checkbox"/> C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 45+ | <input type="checkbox"/> D |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 50+ | AGE + SKILL ** |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 55+ | 24- <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 60+ | 25+ <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 65+ | 30+ <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 70+ | 35+ <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 75+ | 40+ <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 80+ | 45+ <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 85+ | 50+ <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 90+ | 55+ <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C |
| | 60+ <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C |
| | 65+ <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C |

U.S. Military Divisions

- ☐ Open & A ☐ B & C ☐ D & Novice
☐ 30 plus ☐ 40 plus

Junior Divisions

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10 & under | <input type="checkbox"/> advanced | <input type="checkbox"/> intermediate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 14 & under | <input type="checkbox"/> advanced | <input type="checkbox"/> intermediate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 18 & under | <input type="checkbox"/> advanced | <input type="checkbox"/> intermediate |

Physically Disabled

- ☐ Wheelchair ☐ Amputee

Doubles & Mixed Doubles Divisions**

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Open | <input type="checkbox"/> 19+ | <input type="checkbox"/> MX Open | <input type="checkbox"/> MX C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A | <input type="checkbox"/> 35+ | <input type="checkbox"/> MX A | <input type="checkbox"/> MX 30+ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> B | <input type="checkbox"/> 45+ | <input type="checkbox"/> MX B | <input type="checkbox"/> MX 40+ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> C | <input type="checkbox"/> 55+ | | |

Partner's Name _____ Div _____

Partner's Name _____ Div _____



Don't forget to complete Part 2!

Part 2: Fees & Payment

REVISED TEAM QUALIFYING PROCEDURES (As of November 2011)

USA RACQUETBALL MEMBERSHIP

Current Membership # _____ Exp. _____
 USAR Membership(\$50.00) \$ _____

FIRST EVENT(\$104.00) \$ _____

Each entrant will be provided hospitality, plus nightly social events. Entrants will also receive a high-quality souvenir.

PRO QUALIFYING

IRT (includes IRT dues)(\$124.00) \$ _____

WPRO (includes WPRO dues)(\$114.00) \$ _____

SECOND EVENT(\$53.00) \$ _____

THIRD EVENT(\$53.00) \$ _____

must be pro qualifying or pro doubles

JUNIORS(\$35.00) \$ _____

JUNIORS SECOND EVENT(\$27.00) \$ _____

MILITARY/DISABLED DIVISIONS

1st Division IF USAR Divisions(\$99.00) \$ _____

1st Division IF Military or Disabled Division.(\$52.00) \$ _____

2nd Division IF Military or Disabled Division.(\$32.00) \$ _____

3rd Division IF Military or Disabled Division.(\$32.00) \$ _____

LATE FEE(\$20.00) \$ _____

TELEPHONE & FAX ENTRY FEE(\$15.00) \$ _____

Regional Waiver fee (all waivers)\$100.00 \$ _____

Tax deductible donation

to Olympic Dream..... \$ _____

ADDITIONAL TICKETS

Player fees

No. of Tickets

- ☐ 5 day ticket pass - \$55 _____
☐ 3 day ticket pass - \$40 (Thurs, Fri, & Sat) _____
☐ 1 day ticket pass - \$20 _____

Non-player fees

No. of Tickets

- ☐ 5 day ticket pass - \$75 _____
☐ 3 day ticket pass - \$55 (Thurs, Fri, & Sat) _____
☐ 1 day ticket pass - \$25 _____
 \$ _____

TOTAL DUE: \$ _____

Use your USA Racquetball affinity credit card to charge your entry, and receive an additional 10% off your fees. Only USA Racquetball affinity cards receive this discount!

MC/Visa _____

Exp. _____ Sec. code# _____ Affinity _____

Name on Card _____

Signature _____



Entries are NOT accepted without pre-payment and required signatures. Surcharges may include: \$25.00 for returned checks and \$10.00 for declined credit cards.

US TEAM QUALIFYING

Men's Criteria: The three U.S. citizens ranked highest on the IRT tour at season end who accept the appointment, the winner of the U.S. Team Qualifying event at U.S. National Singles, winner of Men's #1 Gold at the U.S. National Collegiate Championships, and both finalist teams from the U.S. Team Qualifying event at U.S. National Doubles.

Women's Criteria: The U.S. citizen ranked highest on the WPRO tour at season end who accepts the appointment, top three finishers in the U.S. Team Qualifying event at U.S. National Singles, winner of Women's #1 Gold at the U.S. National Collegiate Championships, and both finalist teams from the U.S. Team Qualifying event at U.S. National Doubles.

GOLD LUXURY BOXES

Four-person courtside luxury box seats. Includes access to VIP Lounge with food and drink for the week. \$1,999 for full box. Half-boxes available for \$1,000. Only a few of each remaining. Call for locations at 719-635-5396 ext. 123.

MAIL COMPLETED ENTRY & FEES TO:

EKTELON NATIONALS

1685 West Uintah, Suite 103

Colorado Springs, CO • 80904-2906

[Fax: 719/635-0685]

**Entries must be received by
WEDNESDAY, MAY 9**



Propenn

EKTELON



photo by Geoff Thomassen/doubleadonut.com

MEMBERS ONLY

THE FORM

THE FEES

THIS NATIONAL EVENT IS HOSTED FOR USA RACQUETBALL MEMBERS ONLY.

A USA Racquetball membership is required of all participants. Entrants may either join online at www.usaracquetball.com; include fees with their entries; or present a current membership card, receipt or cancelled check indicating recent enrollment as proof of membership. **PLAYERS WITHOUT VAILID MEMBERSHIPS WILL NOT BE ENTERED IN THE DRAW.**

You'll find the entry form here or online at usaracquetball.com. You must submit both completed pages with fees to be entered into the draw. If you are faxing your entry, be sure to include both pages. Fax entries require an extra fee.

- **ENTRY:** First event is \$104; second event is \$53, third event is \$53 (must be pro qualifying or Doubles)
- **LATE FEES:** Entries received after the deadline will be surcharged an additional \$20.00 late fee. No payments will be accepted on-site at the registration desk.
- **PROCESSING:** Telephone/Fax entries will be accepted through the deadline with an \$15.00 service charge and pre-payment with Visa/Mastercard at 719/635-5396.

May 9th deadline, postmarked no later than May 4th. Only pre-paid entries are placed into the draw; any withdrawals will be subject to

ENTRY DEADLINE

a \$15.00 fax fee; no refunds will be issued after the deadline date, regardless of cause (including unforeseen injury or illness).

Confirmation: Players may verify their entry and divisions by referencing an online participants' list (updated regularly through the entry deadline), linked through "Marquee Event" at usaracquetball.com.

Registration: Players must register at the Meridian Sport Club prior to their first match, during these hours: Tues. 5 pm to 9 pm, Wed. 8 am to 9 pm, Thurs. 8 am to 9 pm, Fri. 8 am to 8 pm.

All players must have a bag tag to be admitted into the Meridian Sport Club racquetball area, and to complete their registration in the Hospitality Park. Players may register online and pick up their bag tag – and one free guest pass per entrant – at the USA Racquetball desk located just inside the entrance to the Meridian Sport Club. Additional guest passes can be purchased from the Meridian Sport Club for \$5.00 per day or \$15.00 for the entire week.

EVENT ADMINISTRATION

USA Racquetball @ 719/635-5396, ext. 123.

REGISTER ONLINE

www.usaracquetball.com





FULLERTON, CA • MAY 23-27



TRAVEL

The U.S. Olympic Committee Travel Desk and United Airlines join USA Racquetball in offering the lowest possible United Airfares to national events. Travel Orange County/Santa Ana/John Wayne Airport (SNA) or Los Angeles International Airport (LAX).

For reservations, phone United's U.S. Olympic Travel Desk, toll-free, at (800) 841-0460 between 8:30 am and 8:00 pm Mountain weekdays. Reference the USA Racquetball account number 565 EF to receive United's lowest fare!

We look forward to seeing everyone in Sunny Southern California in May. The USA Racquetball Association is excited to announce a special partnership with GET Travel Sports & Events to be the official travel provider for the National Singles Tournament. This will enable all participants and spectators for the tournament to receive the best price on select hotels and to take advantage of special deals on local area attractions, restaurants, and transportation. This year hotel reward points will be given.

Book your USA Racquetball National Singles travel plans through GET Travel Sports & Events!

1. Discounted hotel prices for participants and spectators with the tournament. GET Travel offers the best rates on our program hotels that are available to the public.
2. Specially priced Disneyland Resort® Theme Park Tickets available for purchase as well as discounts on other attractions.
3. Shuttle service GET Travel has worked with the program hotels to offer you complimentary shuttle service to and from the Meridian Sports Club that will be provided by the hotel
4. On-site support information desk at the Meridian Sports Club during the tournament to answer questions and to assist with any travel challenges that you may have.
5. Friendly customer service to call and help you with travel arrangements.
6. Restaurant guide provided with deals at select local Anaheim area restaurants.

2012 USA Racquetball National Singles Program Hotels: USA Racquetball and GET Travel Sports & Events have worked with the following quality hotel properties to provide you with a great value on your hotel accommodations during the tournament.

TOURNAMENT HEADQUARTERS HOTEL

Marriott Cal State Fullerton: \$109

\$129 with breakfast

- Conveniently located .7 miles from the Meridian Sports Club
- Complimentary parking, internet, and shuttle service to and from the Meridian Sports Club
- Deluxe breakfast buffet may be added for \$10 per person per night

TOURNAMENT PROGRAM HOTELS

Holiday Inn Suites \$115

- Conveniently located .7 miles from the Meridian Sports Club
- Complimentary breakfast buffet, internet, parking, and shuttle service to and from the Meridian Sports Club

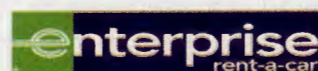
Marriott Fairfield Inn Placentia \$89

- Located 3 miles from the Meridian Sports Club
- Complimentary continental breakfast, parking, internet, and shuttle service to and from the Meridian Sports Club.

Call (888) 877-4445 Option 3 to speak to one of our friendly customer service representatives.

Specially Priced Disneyland Theme Park Tickets!

We are happy to offer all tournament participants and spectators, specially priced Disneyland Resort ® Theme Park Tickets.



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LODGING

Schedule

For starting times visit online at: usaracquetball.com

Individual starting times will be available on Monday, May 23 after 5 pm or call the National Office at 719-635-5396 during normal business hours, 9 am to 5 pm MDT

Be prepared to play at 8:00 am on the days shown next to your entered divisions. These estimates are provided for your travel planning purposes only — actual starting dates/times may change (possibly later, but no earlier) according to the final number of players entered in each draw.



U.S. TEAM QUALIFIER/OPEN

Men: Wednesday • Women: Thursday

MEN PRO QUALIFIER

Wednesday

MENS PRO DOUBLES

Thursday

MEN'S ROUND OF 32

Thursday

WOMENS PRO QUALIFIER

Wednesday

WOMEN'S ROUND OF 32

Thursday

U.S. NATIONAL DIVISIONS

AGE: 24-

Men: Thursday • Women: Friday

AGE: 25+

Men: Thursday • Women: Friday

AGE: 30+

Men: Wednesday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 35+

Men: Wednesday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 40+

Men: Wednesday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 45+

Men: Wednesday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 50+

Men: Wednesday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 55+

Men: Wednesday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 60+

Men: Thursday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 65+

Men: Thursday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 70+

Men: Thursday • Women: Friday

AGE: 75+

Men: Friday • Women: Friday

AGE: 80+

Men: Friday • Women: Friday

AGE: 85+/90+

Men: Friday • Women: Friday

MILITARY • DISABLED

Wednesday • Friday

JUNIORS

Thursday

SKILL: ELITE

Men: Wednesday • Women: Thursday

SKILL: A

Men: Wednesday • Women: Thursday

SKILL: B

Men: Wednesday • Women: Thursday

SKILL: C

Men: Wednesday • Women: Thursday

SKILL: D

Men: Wednesday • Women: Friday

AGE: 24- SKILL: A

Men: Wednesday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 24- SKILL: B

Men: Wednesday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 24- SKILL: C

Men: Wednesday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 25+ SKILL: A

Men: Wednesday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 25+ SKILL: B

Men: Thursday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 25+ SKILL: C

Men: Thursday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 30+ SKILL: A

Men: Wednesday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 30+ SKILL: B

Men: Wednesday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 30+ SKILL: C

Men: Wednesday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 35+ SKILL: A

Men: Thursday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 35+ SKILL: B

Men: Wednesday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 35+ SKILL: C

Men: Wednesday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 40+ SKILL: A

Men: Wednesday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 40+ SKILL: B

Men: Wednesday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 40+ SKILL: C

Men: Wednesday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 45+ SKILL: A

Men: Wednesday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 45+ SKILL: B

Men: Wednesday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 45+ SKILL: C

Men: Wednesday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 50+ SKILL: A

Men: Wednesday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 50+ SKILL: B

Men: Thursday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 50+ SKILL: C

Men: Thursday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 55+ SKILL: A

Men: Thursday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 55+ SKILL: B

Men: Thursday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 55+ SKILL: C

Men: Thursday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 60+ SKILL: A

Men: Thursday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 60+ SKILL: B

Men: Thursday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 60+ SKILL: C

Men: Thursday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 65+ SKILL: A

Men: Thursday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 65+ SKILL: B

Men: Thursday • Women: Thursday

AGE: 65+ SKILL: C

Men: Thursday • Women: Thursday

DOUBLES: OPEN

Men: Thursday • Women: Friday

DOUBLES: SKILL: A

Men: Thursday • Women: Thursday

DOUBLES: SKILL: B

Men: Wednesday • Women: Friday

DOUBLES: SKILL: C

Men: Wednesday • Women: Friday

DOUBLES: 19+

Men: Friday • Women: Thursday

DOUBLES: 35+

Men: Thursday • Women: Thursday

DOUBLES: 45+

Men: Wednesday • Women: Thursday

DOUBLES: SKILL: 55+

Men: Thursday • Women: Thursday

MX: OPEN

Thursday

MX: A

Thursday

MX: B

Friday

MX: C

Friday

MX: 30

Friday

MX: 40

Thursday

MX: 50

Thursday

USA Racquetball Official Rules will govern competition, including the mandatory use of protective lensed eyewear tested to ASTM F803 or CSA impact standards (including prescription frames and lenses).

It is the player's responsibility to make certain that their eyewear conforms with the standard specified in Rule 2.5(a). Find a listing of ASTM eyeguards online at www.usaracquetball.com > Rules > Approved Eyeguards.

CITIZENSHIP & AGE REQUIREMENTS

Only U.S. citizens may compete in the U.S. Team Qualifying divisions; all other age & skill divisions are open to U.S. citizens and residents. For age division competition, players must meet the proper age requirement as of the first day of competition of their division. Any player from any country may compete in the Pro Qualifier or the Doubles Divisions.

QUALIFIERS & CERTIFICATIONS

REGIONALS:

All players must have competed — in any division — at a recognized Regional/State Qualifier to be eligible to

compete in "Ektelon Nationals". Any legitimate waivers of qualifying competition must have been directed to — and approved by — the USA Racquetball Headquarters prior to the scheduled regional weekend. National waiver fee of \$100 must be included with entry fee. Individual regional tournament directors may not approve exclusions from play, for any reason.

SKILL DIVISION CERTIFICATION:

Skill level entrants (to A, B, C, D divisions) must:

- be certified at that level, OR
- have played in the same division at the mandatory regional qualifier, OR
- be approved by the state director or representative as being legitimately competitive in the entered skill division at the national level.

Tournament directors will use these benchmarks to determine eligibility for skill competition, and reserve the right to re-classify or disqualify players when/if they are improperly placed.

JUNIOR DIVISIONS:

For juniors who want to accompany their parents or others who simply want to participate in this historic event, special junior divisions will be included.

MILITARY:

The Military Divisions are open to active duty, National Guard and Reserve forces only (entrants must show a valid DoD military ID card at event table check in). Retired members, their dependents or DoD. Contractors can not compete in these divisions.

DISABLED DIVISIONS

The disabled divisions are open to all players who either require a wheelchair or are an amputee. No qualification is required.

DOUBLES DIVISIONS

All doubles divisions are non-championship divisions and are open to any player national or international. No qualification is needed. Skill level certification still applies.



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Championships
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Eddie Meredith
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April 13-15, 2012
Cascade Athletic Club
Gresham, OR
Brian Ancheta
503-665-4142

April 13-15, 2012
Spectrum Athletic Club
Canoga Park, CA
Debbie Tislinger-Moore
818-884-5034

April 19-22, 2012
In-Shape Sport
Stockton, CA
John Ellis
209-969-4497

April 19-22, 2012
Triton Sports Center
San Antonio, TX
Lance Gilliam
210-573-2324

April 13-15, 2012
Athletic Club of Overland Park
Overland Park, KS
Mike Wedel
913-383-9060

April 12-15, 2012
Highlands Ranch Rec Center
Highlands Ranch, CO
Colorado Racquetball Assoc.
720-841-1513

April 20-22, 2012
Vetta Sports Concord
St. Louis, MO
Dan Whitley
314-842-3111

April 13-15, 2012
Glass Court Swim & Fitness
Lombard, IL
Geoff Peters
773-251-4413

April 13-15, 2012
Recreation ATL
Lilburn, GA
Will Costanza
404-317-7992

April 13-15, 2012
WellworX
Memphis, TN
David Gross
810-287-9394

April 13-15, 2012
Richey Racquet Club
Port Richey, FL
Kim Roy
603-491-1494

April 20-22, 2012
Davison Athletic Club
Davison, MI
Don Schopleray
810-287-9394

April 13-15, 2012
Severna Park Racquet &
Fitness
Millersville, MD
Susan Flaesch
410-365-6144

April 13-15, 2012
Nautilus Fitness Center
Erie, PA
Keith Eller

April 13-15, 2012
Sportset-Syosset Club
Long Island, NY
Tom Keogh
516-305-5670

April 13-15, 2012
Nashua Athletic Club
Manchester, NH
Chris Zalegowski
603-235-1529

2012

2012

FACILITY CITY	FACILITY STATE	CONTACT NAME	CONTACT EMAIL
WEST VALLEY CITY	UT	RUTH MCGOVERN	RMCGOVERN@SLCO.ORG
MILWAUKIE	OR	ANGIE HENDERSON	ANGIE@EASTSIDEATHLETICCLUB.COM
SARASOTA	FL	CHAD BAILEY	AUCHAD99@HOTMAIL.COM
ARVADA	CO	BRENT ANDERSON	BRENTA@APEXPRO.ORG
LEBANON	OH	ANDREW KULBACK	AMKULBACK@YAHOO.COM
RALEIGH	NC	ED REMEN	RACQETBALL@GMAIL.COM
MIDLOTHIAN	VA	ERIC WATKINS	EPW316@CS.COM
RALEIGH	NC	PHIL WHEELER	DRIVESERVE@EMAIL.COM
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TEMPE	AZ	JIM HISER	JHISER@USRA.ORG
ROANOKE	VA	PHIL WHEELER	DRIVESERVE@EMAIL.COM
TBA	FL	KIM ROY	KIMBERLY_ROY@HOTMAIL.COM
MOBILE	AL	STEVE KOWALSKI	CAMPS@FRANDAVISRACQUETBALL.COM
WILMINGTON	DE	JEFF ZEGNA	JEFFREY.M.ZEGNA@CITI.COM
FORT LAUDERDALE	FL	CHRIS YOUNG	MIJA5599@BELLSOUTH.NET
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Fran's Credentials

- 25+ Years Camp Experience
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- 2004 Hall of Fame
- U. S. National Team Coach 1989-1996, 2002
- Pan American/World Championship Coach
- USOC National Coach of the Year 1997
- Coaches Rocky Carson, Paola Longoria, Taylor Knott, Sharon Jackson
- Coached Legends Jason Mannino and Sudsy Monchik
- USARHP Master Professional

Jason's Credentials

- #1 IRT Professional Player 2003
- 2X U.S. Open Champion
- IRT Most Improved Player 1998
- IRT Rookie of the Year 1996
- International Racquetball Tour President

Camp Schedule:

Weekend Camps 2012

January 27-29	Las Vegas, NV
February 3-5	Seattle, WA
March 2-4	Findlay, OH
March 16-18	TX
March 30-April 1	Mobile, AL
April 20-21	Salt Lake City, UT
May 4-6	Woodbridge, NJ
June 8-10	San Diego, CA
July 20-22	Millersville, MD
August 3-5	San Francisco, CA
September 7-9	Sarasota, FL

So. CA Outdoor Camps w/Rocky Carson

Week Long Fantasy Camps 2012

November 29 - December 6, 2012-Aruba
(Caribbean Island...Intermediate to Advanced Camp)

Possible future cities: AZ, NM, New England and more
The above dates are subject to the IRT schedule.

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The Rankings Guru

USHER BARNOFF

BY JIM HISER



You've been playing your heart out, traveling to tournaments, winning matches and losing some, and you want to know your rankings.

The go-to guy, the final authority, is Usher Barnoff, aka The Rankings Guru.

Usher's commitment to the sport's growth and positive ideals has been apparent throughout an extraordinary life of service to the sport of racquetball. For 28 years, he has worked tirelessly to ensure excellence and fair play. Along with his hard work on behalf of USA Racquetball, he is the Executive Vice President of the International Racquetball Federation and Vice President of the Pan American Racquetball Confederation.

Usher began volunteering in the early 1980s with the Calgary Racquetball Association and then with the Alberta Racquetball Association (ARA) as head of officiating. His work included creating draws for tournaments and establishing player rankings as well as being chair of the Officiating Committee (including rules book updates, accreditation of officials and clinics instruction). His volunteer role expanded when he became President of the ARA in 1990. He then became a Team Canada Referee at numerous Pan American Championships and World Championships as well as at the 1999 Pan American Games.

Usher first became involved with Racquetball Canada in 1984. He was a member, then later chairman, of the Officiating Committee. For 21 of the past 22 years,

he has been a member of Racquetball Canada's Board of Directors and Executive Committee, serving as Board President from 1999-2010. Usher is also a member of Racquetball Canada's officiating and tournament committees as well as being their drawmaster for all national events.

Impressively, Usher has continued to actively volunteer in the international racquetball arena. He served as chairman of the Rules Committee for the International Racquetball Federation (IRF) from 1992- 2011. His international role expanded further when he was appointed Technical Director of the IRF, a role which also makes him the recognized Technical Director and Rules Committee Chairman of PARC. In those positions since 2003, Usher has been in charge of organizing all technical aspects of the World Championships, Junior World Championships, the Central American and Caribbean Games and the Pan Am Championships.

For his continued commitment and dedication to racquetball, Usher has received several international and PARC awards. In May 2006, he received Racquetball Canada's highest honor, the Ivan Velan Award, as a sport builder and then the Calgary Booster Club Award as a sport builder in 2007. In 2010, Racquetball Canada created the Usher Barnoff Men's Open Doubles National Trophy to be awarded each year at Nationals.

"Since I started playing racquetball in 1983, I have loved the sport for the thrill of competition, the continuous action and

the enthusiasm of the participants at all levels. I

have found the years of volunteering to be, by and large, very gratifying. However, I do regret that in our sport, as in many others, the best efforts of the majority of our volunteers are sometimes stymied by some individuals whose main motivation for involvement is self-serving, which ends up hindering our sport's true potential for advancement. I am sure that, with some genuine and united efforts, we will see racquetball flourish once again and achieve its proper recognition in the world of sport," says Usher.

USA Racquetball is the fortunate recipient of Usher's expertise. He has developed programs for both ranking and tournament software. As our volunteer IT advisor, he coordinated the transition to, and development of, the membership program that USAR now utilizes via R2 Sports. And, he apparently likes hanging out with Yankees, because he attends National Doubles and Singles each year, lending on-site IT expertise!

Rankings are important – and complicated. They reflect years of training and perseverance, and you want the people in charge of them to make sure they are done right. With Usher Barnoff, racquetball players and fans alike are in good hands.

For USAR rankings, visit www.usaracquetball.com and click the Rankings icon.

SEARCH UNDERWAY *for U.S. Adult Team Coach*

The USA Team Committee will be reviewing resumes and making their recommendation to the USA Racquetball Board of Directors at the Annual Meeting on May 22, 2012. Below is the description of the U.S. Adult Team Coach's responsibilities.

USA ADULT TEAM COACH LENGTH OF TERM

- Four years: June 1, 2012 - June 1, 2016
- Reviewed annually at Board of Directors Meeting in May of each year

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Select assistant coaching staff (subject to Board approval)
- Maintain communication with athletes
- Develop training schedule for athletes
- Confirm all athletes sign team contract

- and administer team requirements and guidelines
- Coach team at a minimum of one event per year (Pan American Racquetball Championships) and potentially two (IRF World Championships every 2 years)
- Attend selection events (National Singles, National Doubles)
- Lead fundraising efforts to assist athletes with event expenses
- Serve as non-Board member of US Team Committee
- Advise US Team Committee to ensure proper selection procedures are followed
- Other assignments as designated by USA Racquetball

QUALIFICATIONS

- International coaching and/or playing experience at Open level

- Teaching or instructional certification
- Experience with camps such as High Performance, US Team, or individual instructional
- Proven fundraising skills and experience
- Spanish language proficiency preferred but not required

Individuals interested in applying for the U.S. Adult Team Coach position should submit a resume to: USA Racquetball Coaching Position, 1685 W. Uintah St., Suite 103, Colorado Springs, CO 80904. Alternatively, email resume to jhiser@usra.org with USA Racquetball Coaching Position in the subject line.

Deadline for applications is May 1, 2012.

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DEREK ROBINSON RECEIVES PROMOTION

at Wilson Sporting Goods

Wilson



Former World Racquetball Champion Derek Robinson has been promoted to National Account Manager of Golf & Racquet Sports at Wilson Sporting Goods. In this new title, Derek will be responsible for growing our business with key retail accounts.

Derek's racquetball career extends over 20 years on the International Racquetball Tour, United States National Team, Collegiates, and United States Junior Racquetball. He won over 100 championships before retiring from competitive play in 2008.

Derek has founded a grass-roots campaign, Big D Roadshow, that focuses on growing the game by introducing racquetball to amateur players all over the world and conducting over 80 clinics per year.

"Very few people have done more for the game of racquetball than Derek. His passion is contagious and his drive to promote the sport is commendable," says Wilson's Terri Graham.

"I am so excited to continue my 17-year career with Wilson Sporting Goods," enthuses Derek. "Growing our racquet sports category, including Racquetball, at key retailers is a fantastic opportunity, and I am looking forward to this new challenge."

Derek continues to play racquetball in his hometown of Denver, CO. He is married to a former top-ranked junior racquetball player, Tina (Alonzi) Robinson, and they have two children, Ethan and Emily. Wilson looks forward to the fantastic success Derek will create in the future.

Xteam – The Next Generation of Ektelon Superstars

Ektelon knows when it's time to turn the heat up a notch! The new EXO3 RG Toron is on fire, right along with the play of Paola Longoria and Rhonda Rajsich and the marketing of Team Adrenalin. It's time to ignite the fire for our youngest Team Ektelon players. Going forward, the Ektelon Junior Elite Team will now go by the name Xteam.

Ektelon has established Team Adrenalin as the next group of future stars in the game. Ektelon Xteam features a portfolio of top junior talent, all with an eye on someday being selected for a spot on the Adrenalin Team! This group currently consists of top-ranked junior players of all ages. Players may apply directly or by being nominat-

ed by an Ektelon Regional Advisor, Sales Representative or Industry Official to Ektelon's Junior Player Program Manager or Promotions Manager.



Ektelon has enjoyed a very successful run of Junior Elite National Champions over the past decade. Ektelon's Xteam members are positioned to win the top divisions and a record-breaking number of medals at the 2012 Junior Olympics in Fullerton, CA. We're very excited about next year's event and will be represented in full force by the Ektelon Management Staff.

Ektelon Xteam training events are in the plans for the summer of 2012 and we'll be looking to add a few new members this coming June.

Players	Hometown
Justus Benson	Sun Prairie, WI
Sam Brendenbeck	Marine on St. Croix, MN
James D'Ambrogia	Petaluma, CA
Dana Elkins	Los Angeles, CA
Alexis Iwaasa	Lethbridge, Alberta
Sebastian Fernandez	San Diego, CA
Conor Laffey	Salem, OR
Victoria Leon	San Diego, CA
Sawyer Lloyd	Petaluma, CA

Players	Hometown
Adam Manilla	Centennial, CO
Erika Manilla	Centennial, CO
Devon Pimentelli	San Bruno, CA
Sam Reid	Portland, CA
Nicholas Riffel	Loveland, CO
Antonio Rojas	Stockton, CA
Daniel Rojas	Stockton, CA
Kaitlyn Simmons	Crofton, MD
Samantha Simmons	Crofton, MD

THE FIRST OVERSIZED RACQUET

A Slice of History

BY RANDY STAFFORD

It was the summer of '72, I had just graduated from high school, and I lost in the second round of the Klondike Open to Dr. Bud Muehleisen. "Come to San Diego and spend the rest of the summer at my home and play racquetball," he urged. "Wow!" I said. I had no money to pay him, so I brought two ice chests on the plane with me that were full of bear meat I had just shot in Alberta. I thought if I couldn't pay him, at least I could cook for him.

My life changed forever that summer...but what does that have to do with the first oversized racquet?

After my arrival in San Diego, Dr. Bud hooked me up with a great southpaw named DC Charleston who was attending college. DC picked me up every day in an old Volkswagen and we played at Mel Gorham's and at the beach in La Jolla. DC was a top national doubles player with Charlie Brumfield. Charlie was the county's smoothest beach runner, and he could "Name that Tune" of any rock 'n roll song after hearing two notes.

Racquetball was in its infancy, especially equipment-wise. I had just changed over from the Dayton Steel racquet (the first metal racquet in racquetball, one with an intricate wooden handle) to the legendary 1970 Ektelon Muehleisen racquet (the first racquet ever made of lightweight aluminum). Leach was also coming on as a popular racquet brand. So, basically there were two companies making racquets, and both were located in San Diego.

Both DC and I were playing with Ektelons at the time, and we would sit around after our matches talking about the sport. Invariably it wound around to every detail of the racquets. A racquet could make or break a player.

One afternoon DC said, "Let's go over to the Ektelon plant and look around." We arrived at a small metal building with a stringer machine rolled outside so the stringer could enjoy the sunshine as he worked. Inside the door was a modest machine shop and we zeroed in on a guy bending aluminum frames for the Dr. Bud racquet. Overhead, a dozen frames hung at the mid-point of fabrication, ready for wood handles to be installed.

We fingered the metal frames, looking at the throat where the metal extended into the wood grip. One of us exclaimed, "We can make this throat an inch longer and install the wood grip, and that will make the racquet an inch longer!" Our thought was to get more power out of the racquet.

We walked out of Ektelon with one slightly longer racquet and headed off to the beach court to give it a try. It worked! It did allow us to hit the ball harder, so we made up a few more and used them throughout the summer. A few months later, a black Ektelon racquet came on the market called the Schmidtke XL.

The first oversized racquet was born, and with it, power racquetball!

Steve Keeley is the author of the best-selling book, The Complete Book of Racquetball and a '70's top pro. Randy Stafford is a past president of USA Racquetball and founder of The Court Company. Brett Elkins is co-creator of The World Junior WOR Outdoor Racquetball Championships presented by Ektelon and co-founder of www.SportsChampionship.com.

THE RACQUETS

These are two different Sportcraft wooden racquets that show the name change from "paddle rackets" to "racquetball." On the left is a pre-1969 model with the original name of our sport - "Paddle Racket." It is autographed by Hall of Famer Gary Mazaroff: "My first racquet."

The Sportcraft racquet on the right (post-1969) has the new name "Racquetball" along with the name of the newly organized association called "International Racquetball Association" or IRA. This racquet is a rare example of a wooden racquet (or any racquet) that has the name racquetball on it (other than if included in the governing body's logo). Nowadays, most racquets do not have the word racquetball on them because everyone now knows them as racquetball racquets.

The racquets are from Brett Elkins' personal collection.



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