

Racquetball Reporter

March 2003

Volume XIII, Issue 1

RUSSELL AND EASTERLING ELECTED TO RAM HALL OF FAME

January 2003, saw the Michigan Racquetball Hall of Fame grow from 21 to 23 members. The Racquetball Association of Michigan would like to congratulate Duane Russell and Dianne Easterling, both from Lansing, as they become the newest inductees into this prestigious society.

The Michigan Racquetball Hall of Fame was started in 1984 and is currently housed at the MAC Club in East Lansing, Michigan. The Hall of Fame, developed by RAM, is to honor those recipients who demonstrate outstanding achievement, leadership or contribution to the sport of racquetball in Michigan. The award is based upon years of consistent excellence and a person may be nominated for providing excellence in one or more of the categories of ability, leadership or contribution.

Duane Russell has been playing racquetball for over 25 years. He started playing in 1976 at the age of 50 and has been playing and winning tournaments ever since. He won a Men's B division in 1980 and was ranked 1st in the 75+ in the USRA Racquetball Magazine in the July-August 2002 issue. Duane has won many National Singles, National Doubles, and National Mixed Doubles tournaments over the years, not to mention many State Championships over the years as well in the Men's 65+, 70+ and even 75+ divisions. He also served as a member of the state racquetball association board for over 5 years. Duane is retired from the State of Michigan, Department Civil Service, has 4 children, 8 grandchildren and has been married to JoAnn for 50 years.

Dianne Easterling started playing racquetball in 1978, at the Oak Park Athletic Club in Lansing. She was elected to the Michigan Racquetball Association (MRA) board as treasurer in 1981 and held that office until

the merger of MRA and MARA formed the Racquetball Association of Michigan (RAM) in 1984. She was elected as the RAM board's treasurer in 1984 and continued to serve in that capacity until 1991 when she left the board. Over the years she was editor of the newsletter, head of tournament sanctioning, tournament director for numerous State Singles and State Doubles tournaments, in charge of the ranking system for MRA and developed and published Michigan's only Court Club Guide. Dianne works for the State of Michigan, Department of Education and has been married to Jim Easterling for 17 years.

These two individuals will be honored at the Hall of Fame RAM Anniversary Banquet to be held in conjunction with the State Singles Championship in March. Also honored at this banquet will be J.D Driver (2001), Lou Ellen Fecher (2002) and Randy Minto (2002). There will be an induction ceremony at the banquet to be held March 29, 2003 at the Georgian Inn in Roseville, MI. *(See more details about the banquet in this newsletter on page 4.)*

Please plan to attend the banquet to honor all of the members of the Michigan Racquetball Hall of Fame. You do not have to play in the State Singles Championships to attend the Hall of Fame banquet.

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A VIEW FROM THE PRESIDENT

March 2003

The first thing you should have noticed by now is the newsletter is different! That's because **Sandy Alberto**, our editor, has resigned after many years. She is a wonderful person, did a wonderful job and won a couple of awards from the USRA along the way. She will be missed! I would like to thank her for the many years of hard work and effort, putting up with my late articles and my demanding phone calls from time to time. However it is time to move on and **Dianne Easterling** has agreed to become our newsletter editor. Many thanks to her, it is good to see her involved with the RAM board again. She spent years as our treasurer.

By the time you read this **Randy Pagels**, our new webmaster, should have the our new website

michiganracquetball.org

completely redesigned. You got to surf there, he did an outstanding job with it! Thank him when you see him as it is all volunteer work on his part.

Old news by now, but worth mentioning, the State Doubles Championship was very successful with many positive comments. The hats seemed to be popular. Keep your ideas coming.

The Courtland tournament was extremely successful. It's great to see a tournament in January again. I probably should say tournaments, as I did find time to drive over to play in the Penn tournament our own **Twayne** managed to put together in Grand Rapids. Nice door prizes and **Joel Bonnett** even played. Finally, **Augies'** tournament was

great as always! Continues to push the capacity of Total Sports to the limit.

Don't forget the remaining tournaments, check them out on the website. (also see below)

As for the Hall of Fame, the votes are in and congratulations to both new members, **Dianne Easterling** and **Duane Russell**.

Finally don't forget to play in the State Singles tournament. It will be at Players Racquetball Club just like last year and should be quite an event. We are having a banquet and hope to honor the new hall of fame candidates. It will be at the Georgian Inn which is relatively close to the club. Please include the banquet amount with the entry form. The entry form is in this newsletter. If you can't find one contact me or Twayne and we will help you out.

Tom

RAM Board of Directors

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Newsletter

The Racquetball Reporter
321 Village Dr.
Lansing, MI 48911

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 14-16

Grand Rapids MAC Tournament
MAC Club, Grand Rapids, Michigan

March 28-30

RAM STATE SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIPS
Players Club, Warren, Michigan

April 3-6

E-Force 31st US Intercollegiate Champ.
Phoenix, Arizona

April 10-13

Ektelon USRA Regional Championships
Strongsville Recreation & Health Center
Strongsville, Ohio

May 21-26

Ektelon 36th US National Singles
Downtown YMCA, Houston, Texas

LADIES LEAD THE WAY IN MEMPHIS

By Twayne M. Howard

Racquetball's only Grand Slam event kicked off in Memphis, Tennessee last November as play began in the seventh Choice Hotels US Open. Over 800 players came from all over the globe to compete in this first class event. Any player can tell you that this event gets better and better every year.

Every year play begins on Tuesday with the Pro Am Doubles benefiting St. Jude's Children's hospital. Thirty-two amateurs donate \$250 for the opportunity to be randomly paired with one of the top pros for a single-elimination tournament. Twayne Howard was fortunate to be paired with Jack Huczek as they looked to kick the tournament off for Team Michigan. Howard and Huczek first defeated the team anchored by Jack's long-time doubles partner and LPRA #1 Cheryl Gudinas. They then went on to defeat the team anchored by Jason Thoerner, whom Jack defeated for the World Championship. The streak, however, would go no further. IRT #1 Jason Mannino was clearly out for blood and his team halted "Team Michigan's" run in the Quarters. "Jack worked harder for me than all of my previous pros combined, and I appreciate that", Twayne said. And then it was time for the more serious stuff.

In many ways, Memphis felt a lot like Nationals in Houston last Spring. Many of the same members of Team Michigan were back, and the women won most of the medals. Following up her success at Nationals, Diana Courtney proved she could do it at the next level as she took home a gold in the Women's B.

Melody Gorno and Laura Patterson teamed up to compete in the Women's 35+Open Doubles. This formidable pair finished Third in this abbreviated, round-robin division. Laura also finished in the Quarters in the Women's 45+ Open Division. Melody also met Felicia Mann in the Women's 35+A/B Division, only there it was as opponents in the finals. This one ended in a tough tiebreaker as Felicia got past Melody to take home the Gold. Felicia also fin-

ished in Fourth Women's 35+ Open Division.

Karen Green also continued her great play at big tournaments by winning the Women's 45+ A/B Division. "Retirement" has clearly been good for her game.

Jeff Johnson avenged his finals loss from Houston by taking home the Championship in the Men's 25+C/D Division. Now his "Significant Other" Jenny can quit calling him a "Sandbagger". As can we all.

Jeff's partner-in-crime, however, has an excuse to continue on. Chuck Van Hoose fell just short in the Men's 55+C/D Division. He lost a close final to finish Second. His disappointment was certainly offset by spending quality time with his future son-in-law.

Paul Licari had a successful first trip to Memphis. He rolled into the Finals of the Men's 35+A/B Division, but couldn't close it out. Paul had a great week, but had to settle for Second.

The irrepressible Art Murphy proved to himself that he could play with the big boys as he finished fourth in the Men's 55+A/B Division. Art remained undaunted when faced with the challenge of sitting next to the Augie and Adrian show, and also proved he was a good sport.

As always, Team Michigan was anchored by the play of Jack Huczek. Jack came in ranked #4 on the IRT, but with little of the hype of recent years. It seems that Jack has moved from the role of "young upstart", to "seasoned veteran" almost to the point where there was little talk about him before the tournament got started. Those who looked past Jack were in for quite a surprise. After routine victories in the opening rounds, Jack faced John Ellis, IRT #5 in the Quarters. Last year's runner-up could not keep up and Jack cruised into the Semis. Unfortunately a reinvigorated Sudsy Monchik was waiting for him there. Sudsy proved why he is one of the best to ever play the game. Jack was able to take one game and hang close the rest of the way,

but Sudsy was not to be denied as he pounded into the finals and on to the Championship. Jack enjoyed great support from Team Michigan throughout the week and had one of the strongest finishes of the year. It's great to see him become a fixture at the top of the IRT.

Other Michigan players at the Open:

Tom Blakeslee - HarrisonTwp.
Chris Cole - Flint
Brandon Cortese - Kentwood
Jim Easterling - Lansing
Mike Easthope - Harrison Twp
Lewis Forrest - Rochester
Joe Heltsley - Waterford
Greg Hodges - Detroit
Twayne Howard -GrandRapids
Sharon Huczek - Rochester
Charles Kaiser - Grand Rapid
Allan Kohl - Jenison
Shannon Kohl - Jenison
Stanley Kurzman - Bloomfld Hls
Steven LaFayette - Canton
Augie Pasko - Clinton Twp
Andre Roy - Madison Hts
Alisha Williams - Detroit

Results from Memphis:

Blakeslee, Tom - Harrison Twp.
M50, 32
Cortese, Brandon - Kentwood
MA, 32
M24-A/B, QF
Courtney, Diana - St. Clair Shores
WB, **First**
Mixed A/B, 16
Easterling, Jim - Lansing
M50, FF
Easthope, Mike - Harrison Twp
M45 C/D, 32
Mixed A/B, 16
Forrest, Lewis - Rochester
M40, 32
M45, 16
Gorno, Melody - Trenton
W35A/B, Second
W35 Dbls, 3rd
Green, Karen - Waterford
W45A/B, **First**
Heltsley, Joe - Waterford, MI
M45C/D, ff-ns
Hodges, Greg - Detroit
M40, 32
Howard, Twayne - Grand Rapids
MB, 64
M35A/B, 16 (continued page 8)

HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE AND RAM 25 YEAR CELEBRATION BANQUET

Do you like good food?? Do you like racquetball?? Do you like old racquetball stories and old racquetball pictures?? If so, then I have an evening of fun and laughs that you will not want to miss. Come and join us on March 29 as

RAM and the Michigan Racquetball Hall of Fame will host a banquet on March 29 in conjunction with the 2003 State Singles Championship. This banquet will honor the inductees into the Michigan Racquetball Hall of Fame for the last three years – J. D. Driver (2001), Lou Ellen Fecher and Randy Minto (2002) and Duane Russell and Dianne Easterling (2003), as well as to help celebrate 25 years of organized racquetball in Michigan.

The banquet will be held at the **Georgian Inn, 31327 Gratiot Avenue, Roseville, Michigan on Saturday March 29.** A cash bar will begin at 6:30 pm and the meal will be served at 7:00 pm with the program and presentations to follow the meal. The meal will be a buffet with the main course including chicken marsala, top round of beef and meat lasagna. A variety of salads and dessert will round out the dinner. The cost of the banquet is \$25.00 per person.

You MUST prepay to attend the banquet. We will be unable to accommodate walk ins on Saturday March 29. If you are playing in the State Singles Championship, simply enclose the additional amount with your entry form as well as the names of the people who will be attending the banquet.

You DO NOT have to play in the tournament to come to the banquet. If you wish to attend the banquet only, please send a check in the amount of \$25.00 per person made payable to RAM, to Hall of Fame Banquet, 321 Village Dr., Lansing, MI 48911. Also include the names of the people who will be attending the banquet.

This evening will be something special. We hope to have as many current Hall of Fame members there as possible and will be taking several group pictures. This will be a great chance to see former Michigan racquetball players, such as Jim Hiser, Denny Wood, Bob Wilhelm, Gordon Kelly and others. (We are actively twisting arms and have commitments from 14 of the Hall of Fame members to attend.)

If there are any former "old time" racquetball players you know, please share this information with them and extend the invitation to join us. If you have questions on the banquet, please contact Jim Easterling at (517) 887-0459. For those of you who may wish to spend the night, the Georgian Inn has hotel rooms available at special rates for banquet attendees. Rooms can be reserved directly with the Georgian Inn by calling (586) 293-4500. Mention you are with the Hall of Fame/RAM Anniversary banquet to receive the special room rate.

Please make plans to join us on March 29 at 7:00 pm at the Georgian Inn. The food is great, the company outstanding, and quite possibly an evening to remember forever.



Turkey Shoot Tournament November 9-10, 2002

By Karen Green

The Turkey Shoot Tournament was held at Frankin Fitness and Racquet Club on November 9-10, 2002. Approximately 88 adults and 16 juniors participated in the tournament. The hospitality, particularly on Saturday, was wonderful thanks to Veronica Brown and Felicia Mann. It consisted of a traditional Thanksgiving feast that was enjoyed by everyone who attended.

Matches were self-officiated throughout the tournament and this system worked out quite well. Referees were available upon request. The players enjoyed being at Franklin and the crowd support was excellent. Many Franklin members came to watch the tournament as well as many racquetball aficionados from our surrounding communities.

Century Doubles (both partners combined ages equal or exceed 100) was very popular and is unique to Detroit Amateur Racquetball tournament formats. The draw was very competitive in this division.

Junior racquetball is truly growing throughout our State and it was wonderful watching all of the enthusiastic young participants in their matches. Felicia and Veronica also should receive kudos for their dedication to our juniors. They always award trophies to every junior who participates in a Detroit Amateur Racquetball Tournament.

Vallana Perrault won the Women's Open Division. Vallana moved to Michigan from Minnesota recently and she is taking the Women's Open division by storm.

Thanks to all, those who participated and also to our spectators who were there throughout the weekend. For specific results in each division, please refer to the Michigan Racquetball website.

www.michiganracquetball.org

RACQUETBALL ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN
2003 RAM STATE SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIPS

MARCH 28-30, 2003

PLAYERS ATHLETIC CLUB
 13750 E. Eleven Mile Rd., Warren, Michigan
 phone (586) 774-6900
 fax (586) 774-3869

ENTRY FEES & DEADLINE

First Event	\$40
Second Event	\$15
Juniors	\$15
USRA Membership	\$30
Hall of Fame Banquet (per person)	\$25

Entries must be received by **MONDAY, MARCH 24, 2003.**

RULES AND REFEREES

Single elimination format with matches consisting of two games to fifteen and a tie-breaker to eleven. USRA rules apply including **mandatory USRA-approved lensed eyeguards. All Open division losers** (except quarter- or semifinalists) **will drop down into the AA Division.** Referees will not be used. All players will use the honor system when conducting matches.

TOURNAMENT DIRECTORS

Tom Blakeslee (586) 468-2787
President@michiganracquetball.org
 Twayne Howard (616) 771-0312

STARTING TIMES

Play may begin on Friday, March 28 for draws of 16 or more. Every effort will be made to reduce Friday play. **Call the club on Thursday, March 27, 2003 after 12:00 pm.** for starting times or check online at:

<http://www.michiganracquetball.org>

AWARDS

Awards will be given for the first four places in divisions of 16 or more. Each participant will receive a tournament souvenir.

HOTEL

HOLIDAY INN

11500 E. 11 Mile, Warren, MI
 (586) 754-9700
Ask for the tournament rate

ELIGIBILITY

Any participant must live or work full time in the state of Michigan, or be a member of RAM. Players must be able to provide proof if challenged.

ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY MARCH 24, 2003

Name _____ Club Affiliation _____
 Address _____ City _____ Zip Code _____
 Phone (days) _____ (evenings) _____ Date of Birth _____

Make checks payable to RAM, and mail to RAM State Singles Championships, 111 Pearl St., NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Entry Fee	\$40	_____
2nd Event Fee	\$15	_____
Junior Fee	\$15	_____
USRA Membership	\$30	_____
Hall of Fame Banquet	\$25	_____
Total		_____

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

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

DIVISIONS

circle correct choices - limit 2 divisions (1 age, 1 skill)

	MENS		WOMENS		
Open/AA	25 Open	35 Open	45 Open	55 Open	
A	25 A/B	35 A/B	45 A/B	55 A/B	
B	25 C/D	35 C/D	45 C/D	55 C/D	
C	30 Open	40 Open	50 Open	60+	
D	30 A/B	40 A/B	50 A/B	65+	
	30 C/D	40 C/D	50 C/D	70	

Juniors: 8 10 12 14 16 18

Alternate division _____

(Divisions might be combined if fewer than 7 players)

NEED DIRECTIONS

Driving directions to the **RAM STATE SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIPS**, to be held at the **PLAYERS ATHLETIC CLUB**, 13750 E. Eleven Mile Road, Warren.

From the West:

Take I-696 EAST toward Port Huron.

Take exit number 26, towards M-97/Groesbeck Hwy.

Merge on to East 11 Mile Rd.

Club is on the south side of the road.

From the East:

Take I-696 WEST towards Lansing.

Take exit number 26, towards M-97/Groesbeck Hwy/Schoenherr Rd.

Merge onto East 11 Mile Rd.

Turn LEFT on to Clarponte Drive.

Turn LEFT on to East 11 Mile Rd.

Club is on the south side of the road.

(Directions courtesy of Mapquest)

Driving directions from **PLAYERS ATHLETIC CLUB** to the **HALL OF FAME BANQUET** to be held at the **GEORGIAN INN**, 31327 Gratiot Avenue, Roseville.

Head EAST on East 11 Mile Road.

Bear LEFT on to I-696 towards Port Huron.

Follow I-696 east as it bears left.

Merge on to I-94 EAST towards Port Huron.

Exit LEFT on to S. Gratiot Ave., (HWY 3 NORTH).

Turn LEFT on to S. Gratiot Ave., (HWY 3 SOUTH).

Georgian Inn is on the WEST (right) side of the road.

(Directions courtesy of Mapquest)

CONTACT US !!!!

The Racquetball Association of Michigan (RAM) would like input from players, club owners/managers, and racquetball enthusiasts.

We encourage you to attend a board meeting or submit an article or photo for publication in the newsletter. Let us know what's going on at your club, in your town, and with your leagues.

We also accept articles and results from all USRA sanctioned tournaments for publication. *(Not sanctioned, contact Tom Blakeslee – see page 2.)* The Racquetball Reporter is published quarterly and mailed to all current RAM members. *(Not a RAM member, join now - see page 10.)*

Submit information to:

The Racquetball Reporter

321 Village Dr.
Lansing, MI 48911

Or, email:

Tom Blakeslee, President, at racketboat1@aol.com
Dianne Easterling, Editor, at djeasterling@earthlink.net

We want to hear from you!!!

"OLD" LIONS ROAR AT WEST MICHIGAN OPEN

By Twayne M. Howard

Michigan's tournament season kicked off with the fourth West Michigan Open, October 18-20, 2002 at the Michigan Athletic Club in Grand Rapids. The W.M.O. had its deepest draw this year, with each division seeing great competition.

Play started Friday evening as the MAC welcomed players from all over the state. Participants received a high-quality embroidered golf shirt, great food and lots of great play. Every year players look forward to a raffle to benefit the Grand Rapids Juniors Program. ProKennex provided over \$1,000 worth of equipment. Also raffled off were lessons donated by Dale Brown, lessons and stringing donated by Twayne M. Howard, and a certificate for a stay at the Comfort Inn Grand Rapids. Over \$350 was raised for this worthy cause. With the continued support of this raffle, the Junior's program has continued the growth of racquetball in West Michigan. Thanks to all who supported the raffle.

The W.M.O. has always endeavored to grow racquetball at the junior ranks. This year fifteen of Michigan's best juniors took to the courts of the MAC to battle it out in four divisions. Our youngest competitors squared off in the Boys 8-under division. After tough round robin play, Dan Poindexter outpaced Chris Symons and Logan Doezeema to take the Championship.

The Boys 12 & under division saw five young gunners dueling under the noon-time sun. When the dust cleared Saginaw's Andrew Price overcame tough competition and scheduling issues to take the title. Kevin Clark finished in second while Ari Present, Michael Fobar and Scott Reitman completed the division.

Another division that saw tight, round-robin play was the Boy's 14 & under division. Steve Lenio outpaced Nick Tloczynski in Second place and John Reitman in Third as all three competitors ended within three points of each other.

Our "oldest" Juniors faced off in the Boys 18 & under division. This division always features players making the next step into the Adult divisions. These four are already playing as high as the Men's B division. In the end Alex Brown defeated JD Brown to take first place. Drew Campanelli and Scott Lyons rounded out the division.

Most of these juniors have participated in the Grand Rapids Juniors Program Clinics held at Orchard Hills every Sunday from 4:00 to 6:00. Hundreds of kids have participated in the clinics over the years, and have learned about our great sport of racquetball. If you, or someone you know is interested in participating, helping, supporting, or in some way getting involved, please contact Dale Brown at (616) 224-8700.

This was the largest turnout of women players the W.M.O. has had, and we couldn't be happier. The Women's Open division went topsy-turvy from the get-go. Top-seeded Melody Gorno fought off several injuries, but wasn't able to overcome Karen Green in the first semi-final. Second-seeded Felicia Mann lost her semi to transplanted Minnesotan Vallana Perrault. Vallana completed her first step towards the top of the Michigan Women's Open division by defeating Karen in the Final. To all those in attendance, clearly there was a new girl in town.

The Women's A division saw Michelle Moran defeat tournament regular Beth Feiertag in the semis, and Mary Horne defeat Wendy Ford on their way to the finals. Grand Rapidian Michelle was able to get by Mary Horne to win the Championship.

Due to a withdrawal, the Women's D division was played out between two contestants. After a close first game, Jennifer Holberg was able to distance herself from Jamie Campanelli to win the game and the Title.

The Women's 25+ Open Division featured round-robin play between most of the top players as Vallana Perrault earned her second Championship of the weekend. Melody Gorno fought through her injuries to earn second place while Felicia Mann and Diana Courtney rounded out the division.

A shuffling of the ladies from the A division produced the Women's 35+A/B Division. Although the seeding changed, the results remained the same. Michelle defeated Mary in the final, with Beth Feiertag and Wendy Ford rounding out the semis.

Saturday evening belonged to doubles. These draws were also larger than ever before. Several of the players were in other doubles divisions, causing this round robin event to be delayed. Because of this conflict, the pairing of Wendy Ford and Twayne Howard ended up playing all four matches consecutively to close the evening's play. This added to the fun of the event as all of the competitors stuck around to see how the division would end up. Mel Zurack was more than happy to act as referee for the last match as it happened to be between the teams that could keep him and partner Lynn Kuczjada from winning the division. After losing one game to Howard and Ford, and splitting with the team of Diana Courtney and Mike Easthope, Mel had to hope for an upset to get back in the hunt. It was not to be as Courtney and Easthope squeaked past Ford and Howard to claim first place over Zurack and Kuczjada.

The "Men's" B/C Doubles featured a full round of 8 teams including one pair of ladies, one father-son pairing, and one pair of brothers. The first Semi featured Twayne Howard and Larry Meeusen against Mike and Corey Sobczyk. The Sobczyk brothers pounded through Howard and Meeusen, barely allowing them to score. On the other side of the draw, George Murphy and John Williams defeated Dale and JD Brown in a more closely contested match. In the Final, the Sobczyks continued to roll their way to the Championship.

The Men's Open Division featured seven teams battling for the top spot. Several of this year's teams are reconfigurations from year's past, and the new pairings met varied fates. Unfortunately, for all of them, "The Kids" were in the draw. Last year's state champs, Brandon Cortese and Shannon Kohl defeated the new pairing of Kevin "Stu" O'Keefe and Chuck White in the first semis. The second semi featured

(continued page 9)

RAM CELEBRATES 25 YEARS

By Jim Easterling

This tournament season Michigan will be celebrating 25 years of organized racquetball. The first state association, Michigan Racquetball Association (MRA), started its official season October 1, 1977. Throughout the year we will be celebrating our 25th anniversary. One way of doing this is putting some important racquetball facts from past newsletters in the Racquetball Reporter. Some of you MORE EXPERENCED players will have fun reminiscing and you younger ones can enjoy reading some racquetball history from Michigan.

Winter 1991 Newsletter:

Troy Hall & Chris Cole won the Men's Open Doubles for the third time in a row

Fall 1991 Newsletter:

RAM states that men cannot play in women's divisions and women cannot play in men's divisions at State Singles Championships.

Racquetball One Tournament Series started by Ken Bonnett

Summer 1991 Newsletter:

Stu Hastings named head coach of the U.S. Junior National Team

Spring 1991 Newsletter:

Jim & Dianne Easterling run 1st Seniors Masters tournament & raise \$1400 for the US National Team

Chris Cole, Jim Earley & Gary Phipps join the RAM Board

December 1990 Newsletter:

MAC in East Lansing opens after January 1, 1991

September 1990 Newsletter:

AARA increases dues, Jan 1, 1991 to \$15.00, 1st increase in 8 years

June 1990 Newsletter:

Michigan had 69 certified referees, the highest in U.S.

September 1988 Newsletter:

Court House Club, in Flint, has racquetball camp run by Fran Davis and Jim Easterling

The First Official Referee Clinic in Michigan was run at Franklin Racquet Club in October 1980 by Jim Easterling for 38 players

June 1988 Newsletter:

Fred Lewerenz purchased the die for the RAM Hall of Fame ring

September 1987 Newsletter

PARI (Professional Association of Racquetball Instructors) clinic/test at Court House Club, Flint, run by Stu Hastings

MCRA (Macomb County Racquetball Association) started by Mike Witherspoon & Pancho Gutierrez

December 1985 Newsletter:

Jim Hiser & Tom Brownlee inducted into RAM Hall of Fame

May 1986 Newsletter:

Jim Hiser appointed by Racquetball Manufacturers Association (RMA) as Commissioner for the Men's Professional Racquetball Tour

September 1984 Newsletter:

MRA & MARA become RAM on July 24, 1984

Fall 1983 Newsletter:

Court Club Guide for Michigan published by Dianne (Driver) Easterling

June 1982 Newsletter:

State Singles (April 1982) had 326 entrants. Men's Open - Bob Wilhelm defeated Ray Vanover & in Women's Open Debbie Erhart defeated Donna Henry. Roy Obery defeated Jim Hiser in Men's B & Chris Cole defeated Scott Reid in the Boys 15 & under.

March 1982 Newsletter:

AARA Regional run April 29-May 2, 1982 at Davison Racquet Club by Jim Hiser.

September 1980 Newsletter:

Jimmy Floyd won Jr National Boys 10 & under, Stacey Fletcher won Jr National Girls 17 & under.

June 1979 Newsletter:

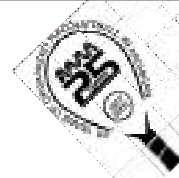
Lynn Hahn won "Sportsmanship Award" and Denny Wood won "Contribution Award"

Sept./Oct. 1977 Newsletter:

Michigan's First State Singles Championship March 1977. Gil Schmidt won Men's A & Carol Stewart won Women's A (there was no Open division). Denny Wood was the tournament

US OPEN RESULTS (con't from pg 3)

Huczek, Jack - Rochester Hills
M Pro, Semis
Huczek, Sharon - Rochester
W50, QF
Johnson, Jeff - Warren
M25C/D, QF
M35C/D, **First**
Kaiser, Charles - Grand Rapids
M70, 16
Kohl, Allan - Jenison
MB, 64
M45A/B, 16
Kohl, Shannon - Jenison
MO, 32
M24, 16
Kurzman, Stanley - Bloomfield Hills
M70, QF
LaFayette, Steven - Canton
M45A/B, 64
Licari, Paul - Macomb
MA, 64
M35A/B, Second
Mann, Felicia - Detroit
W35A/B, **First**
W35, 4th
Murphy, Arthur - Ludington
M60, 16
M55A/B, 4th
Pasko, Augie - Clinton Twp.
M30, 32
Patterson, Laura - Midland
W45, QF
W35 Dlbs., 3rd
Roy, Andre - Madison Heights
MB, 16
M35A/B, 16
Van Hoose, Charles - Rochester
M45C/D, QF
M55C/D, Second
Williams, Alisha - Detroit
WD, 16 (NS)



West Michigan Open

(continued from page 7)

Bob Gravelyn and Steve Jazwic getting past another new pairing in Dale Graham and John Coaker. The Championship went to Brandon and Shannon in a great display of doubles.

After losing one competitor to a scheduling conflict, the Men's 60+ Open division turned into a three-man round-robin event. And what an event it turned out to be. Each player won one match, two of them going into a tiebreaker leading to a debate over how to decide the winner. After adding up the total points and considering he was the only one to win his match in two games, Jess Madden was declared the Champion. Tom Sharum finished in second place and Dave Lund rounded out the division.

The Men's 55+ Open Division saw the return of two of Grand Rapids "Old-timers" to tournament play. After only sporadic play over the years, Dale Graham and Ken Bonnett returned to play the W.M.O. and ended up facing each other in the Finals. Dale defeated Dave Lund and Ken got past Bill Hagedorn to reach the final. In a re-scheduling of their usual Sunday morning match-up, with a little more on the line, Ken was able to defeat Dale to take first place.

The Men's 40+ C/D Division went to Barry Dennis who defeated two MAC members to take the Championship. After he defeated Ed Clemens in the semis, he got past Mark Draugalis to take the title. Russell Clark fell to Mark in the second semi.

Due to a series of scheduling conflicts, the Men's 40+A/B Division ended a bit anti-climactically. After a tough semi against Pete Harvey, John Gervasi was the recipient of a double forfeit from the other semi, making it the easiest championship in WMO history. Jeff Tloczynski finished second, and Jerry Spruitt was the other semi-finalist.

The Men's 40+ Open Division was so competitive that every match except the final required a tiebreaker. After two close games, Lewis Forrest and Rob Fobar were able to pull away from Butch Mitchell and Robert Schermer, Jr, in

their respective semifinal tiebreakers. In the Championship, the combination of Rob's strong play, and Lewis' bad hand led to a two-game sweep and a First Place Finish for Rob.

The Men's 30+ C/D Division saw one of the few top-seeded players win his division. Doug Flessner came out of the one-spot to defeat Kenn Kramer in the semis and Dan Mullin in the Final. Dan defeated Bob Shurlow in the big-beef semi-final. Bob played hard, but a foot injury clearly took its toll.

Andre Roy blasted his way through the Men's 30+ A/B Division, continuing his progress through the ranks. In the first semi, Pete Harvey couldn't get going in the tiebreaker, and Randy Pagels bashed his way into the finals. Andre also had a tough semi before finally closing out Kevin "Stu" O'Keefe. In the Finals, Andre turned up the pressure, and easily got past Randy to take the Gold.

The Men's 20+ Open Division figured to be a warm-up for the young guns in their pursuit of Open Gold. Brandon Cortese got past Chuck White in the first semi and Shannon Kohl defeated Augie Pasko in the other semi to set up a routine match-up between these two "long-time" sparring partners. Having played several thousand games over the last few years, it usually comes down to execution. Today it was Shannon, and with his strong play, he earned the Championship.

The first semi-final in the Men's D Division featured two Grand Rapids Juniors as Drew Campanelli defeated Scott Lyons to advance to the finals. In contrast, the other semi featured Kenn Kramer and Matthew Barbuscak, who brought his own son to play in the Juniors. Matthew defeated Kenn and then Drew on his way to the Championship.

The Men's C Division had a mix of new faces, one "reconfiguration" and several "classics". Russell Clark was one new face the made it into the semis before falling to Matt Malepszy. Two "classics" faced off in the other semi as Corey Sobczyk defeated Dan Mullin. In the Final, Matt took out Corey, to claim his first WMO Championship. For the record Glen Williams was the "reconfiguration" as he played this division left-handed.

Youngsters also made a great showing in the Men's B Division. Top-seeded Bob Gengelbach lost to Alex Brown in the first semi, and JD Brown defeated Tony Castiglione to set the final. Both JD and Alex have been regular participants in the Grand Rapids Juniors Program Sunday Clinics. With the help of the clinics, and lots of hard work, they are both making tremendous progress through the adult ranks. On this particular Sunday, Alex got past JD to win his first B Division Championship.

Although there were not many competitors in the Men's A Division, the competition was fierce. Tom Ford broke a finger on his shooting hard early in the tournament, but shook that off to defeat Randy Pagels in the semi. Andre Roy got past John Gervasi in the other semi. In the final, Andre could not be stopped as he rolled to his second Championship of the weekend.

The Men's Open Division had one of the toughest draw's ever. Just seeding this division was a considerable task. The draw shook out as expected as Mike Anderson faced top seed Brandon Cortese in the first semi. With two bad knees, and surgery scheduled in the weeks to come, few gave Mike much of a chance. We all could not have been more surprised as Mike put on an incredible show and with a determined effort he dispatched Brandon in two quick games. A tremendous effort, and a stunning "upset" considering his health. On the other half of the draw, Shannon Kohl played great racquetball but clearly did not have enough, as Joel Bonnett rolled into the finals. The Final was introduced as a match you could have seen at any Michigan tournament over the past fifteen years. This shows the caliber of play that these two have achieved, and it always provides for a great show. The match was closer than the score indicated. Although Joel's drive serve was not at its legendary level, it was close enough. Joel crushed shot after shot, Mike replied as best he could, but after the tough semi, the long weekend clearly took its toll. When the dust cleared, Joel had won his first West Michigan Open Championship. And maybe, after seeing this battle, people got a better appreciation of Michigan's great racquetball heritage.

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