***President’s Message April, 2021***

***‘Controlling the Environment’***

**The first objective when playing on the courts is to ensure a safe environment. Check the walls, floor, lighting, and hardware. Check your equipment as well. Are all racquet parts intact, including the safety cord and strings? Is lensed eyewear in place and are proper court shoes being worn? What about your partner and opponent (s)? Are they following regulations and safe practices? Once satisfied, it is time to savor the intrinsic values of the game; like fun, fitness, and skill development. There are times when random, unforeseen situations occur. We can control our shot selection, how we respond to stressors, and our comportment. However, when an opponent rejects the integrity of the game in favor of compromising the safety of others, we need immediate action. Compromises may include wild swings, invasion of personal space, and little adherence to etiquette and rules of the game. These ‘counter-actions’ may trigger combative dialogue, ‘getting in their face’, or halting play by leaving the court.**

**Smart training protocol can also assist one in securing a safe court environment. Formulate a game plan to facilitate learning and performance. Hire a certified instructor for guidance. With diligence, with patience, and with a little skill, more success and more enjoyment will be resultants. The difference between your top game and your off game will converge, making you a more consistent player. When things are not going your way, you will have the wherewithal to adjust; accessing other options from your portfolio. Examples include; positioning deeper on the court, being more aggressive, and utilizing all your time outs.**

**During competitive play, try to recognize opponents’ strengths, read their tendencies, and hone in on what gets them riled. This ‘prequalification’ process can take place by scouting their matches, during your pre-game warmup, and during the initial phases of your match. Dividends will be forthcoming. Finally, remember that things can happen, even though you are not sure how, or why, or who is culpable. Anticipate them and take precautions to ward off negative outcomes. (see photo). Gary**

***Quote of the month…***

***‘I don’t know the rules; I’m just a good ref’ Ward Myers, Puerto Rico National Team player***

**UPCOMING**

**A*pril 23-25 Covid #4 Racquetball & Racketball; Midtown, Albuquerque***

***May 13-16 Durango Championships; Rec Center, Durango, CO***

***May 17 Board of Directors Meeting; Ramada Plaza Hotel, Albuquerque***

***June 3-6 High Altitude Championships; PLPOA, Pagosa Springs, CO***

***June tbd M & M Classic***

***Aug 31-Sept 4 36th IRF World Senior Championships; NM Sports & Wellness, Albq. (R2sports.com)***

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