

# UNITED STATES OPEN RACQUETBALL



*MAKING IT LOOK  
easy*

**PAOLA LONGORIA,  
KANE WASELENCHUK  
TRIUMPH AT US OPEN**



*Plus:* ▼

- UPCOMING MOVIE FEATURES OSCAR WINNER RUSSELL CROWE AND USA RACQUETBALL
- WOR LIGHTS UP VEGAS
- 2013 REGIONALS – SPECIAL PULL-OUT MAP



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## MISSION STATEMENT

USA Racquetball is the National Governing Body for the sport of racquetball, recognized by the USA 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.

## 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.

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Gariff Thomssen

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CORRECTIONS

The names of our cover stars of the Summer issue were not noted. They are: l to r: Lam Le; JJ Guerrero; Rhonda Rajsich; Steven Harper; Marcia Richards; Michael Carrasquillo

On page 20, Alvaro Bertran was incorrectly noted as Alberto Bertran.

Our apologies!

Editor

Linda Rutzen

Contributors

Cheryl Kirk, Larry Haemmerle, Jim Hiser, Otto Dietrich, Fran Davis, Mary Helen Sprecher, Page Kern, T.J. Baumbaugh, Steven Harper, Hank Marcus, Kendra Tutsch, Sandy Schauer, Mike Welch, Peter Berger, Bruce Adams, Lynn Stephens, Jeff Oliver

Design

Matt Lupton

Cover Photo

Courtesy 20th Century Fox

USA RACQUETBALL STAFF

Jim Hiser

Program Manager  
jhiser@usra.org

Melody Weiss

Chief Financial Officer  
mweiss@usra.org

Linda Rutzen

Executive Assistant/Editor  
lrutzen@usra.org

Terri Lewis

Director - State and Membership Services  
tmorse@usra.org

Heather Izzett

Director - Sanctioning & Membership  
hizzett@usra.org

Joe Williams

Events Coordinator/Shipping

Barb Pyle

Accounting Assistant  
bpyle@usra.org

USA Racquetball Advisors

Doug Ganim – US OPEN Director  
Connie Martin – USAR-IP Programmer  
Otto Dietrich – Rules Commissioner

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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USA Racquetball  
1685 West Uintah, Suite 103  
Colorado Springs, CO 80904  
(719) 635-5396  
www.usaracquetball.com

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**By Larry Haemmerle, President**  
USAR Board of Directors

I recently attended the Junior World Championships held in Canoga Park, CA. If you can make it to a premier junior event sometime, you're in for a treat! As a former junior coach, I always enjoy seeing our youth on the courts, but this event was so gratifying.

The intensity and high level of competition was, as always, spectacular, but the pride and sportsmanship displayed was impressive. In six days of competition I didn't observe a single incident of poor sportsmanship or issues with player conduct. I only heard of one player who didn't display good conduct and his own coach forfeited him out of his match.

As an example of the excellent sportsmanship, one of our own players was running away with the first game when he was seriously injured. When he tried to continue, it was obvious he was only going to be able to hop on one foot

until he could get additional treatment for his injury between games. His opponent was patient with the delays, showed no pleasure in serving out points, and his supporters suppressed their cheering. When our coaches realized our player couldn't continue, his opponent was gracious and sympathetic.

It was so satisfying to see the players play, the coaches coach, and the parents and friends cheer. This isn't always the case in youth sports. Coaches are often presented with a difficult problem when parents, friends and relatives try to interfere, sometimes providing conflicting advice from the coach's game plan. In spite of what some may think, coaches understand their roles and are well-equipped to provide the appropriate guidance to the competitors.

Everyone involved is to be highly commended for ensuring the players had the greatest environment for

## 2012 Junior Worlds – *Inspiring!*



competition. I want to personally thank the international racquetball community for their organization of the event; the coaches for their hard work and dedication; and the players themselves for their performances and exceptional sportsmanship.

We need to intensify our efforts to bring new juniors into the sport. They have outstanding role models in our current Junior National Team members. Medals may have been awarded, but all of the participating countries finished the tournament as winners. And of course the biggest winner was our sport and its future.

Congratulations to all of the competitors. You made your parents, families, coaches, friends - and the entire USA Racquetball family - very proud!

## Upcoming Motion Picture Features Oscar Winner Russell Crowe and USA Racquetball



As the corrupt mayor of New York City, Russell Crowe's character is in trouble. His misconduct and shady deals are coming back to haunt him.

Crowe's newest film, *Broken City*, set for January 18 release, tells the story of redemption and revenge in a broken city rife with injustice. Mark Wahlberg and Catherine Zeta-Jones also star in this exhilarating crime thriller.

For a racquetball scene in the movie, Costume Designer Betsy Heimann requested USA Racquetball shirts and shorts for the athletic actor, who wanted the scene to be authentic. "Mr. Crowe felt that his character would belong to a private club that had a racquetball court and participated in racquetball competitions," said Heimann. "I made inquiries and discovered USA Racquetball. We both agreed that was the way to go."

The racquetball scenes, filmed in New Orleans, took about half a day to film, with actor Griffin Dunne playing opposite Crowe.

Special thanks to USAR's Joe Williams, who worked with Ms. Heimann throughout film production.

Racquetball players, don't miss this exciting film! See the trailer at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KaD6Ve4FDLA>.



# PLAYERS *Helping* PLAYERS

Our Warmest Thanks to All of our Generous Donors for Your Continued Support of Racquetball!

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Edward Colina	Arthur Murphy
Hugh Spellman	Bob Cole
John Wenige III	Brad McCunniff
Keith (Goose) Moncrief	Bruce Reding
	Christopher Cooper

**\$99 & UNDER (CONTINUED)**

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| Julie Decker         | Gregory McClelan        | Clint Keller        | Scott McCreedy     |
| Kit Lawson           | Gudron Ahlskog          | Daniel Hoffman      | Stan Fyfe          |
| Lynne Weisbart       | James Tyre              | David King          | Stephanie Manere   |
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*Thanks to these USAR members who chose Lifetime Member status in 2012!*

- |                      |                 |                    |
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| Bruce Greenberg      | Luis Pesqueira  | Kelly Tucker       |
| Luis Guerrero        | Fredrick Roe    | Kendra Tutsch      |
| Don Hannon           |                 |                    |



# RANKINGS

Rank	Player	Points	Advantage	Season Rank	Season Points
1	WASELENCHUK, KANE	4230	816	1	1200
2	CARSON, ROCKY	3415	652	2	1022
3	BELTRAN, ALVARO	2763	281	3	720
4	ROJAS, JOSE	2482	185	6	464
5	CROWTHER, CHRIS	2297	28	4	594
6	CROFT, BEN	2269	212	12	238
7	VANDERSON, SHANE	2057	338	5	512
8	CARSON, TONY	1720	233	7	452
9	HAWTHORNE, ANDY	1487	142	19	174
10	PRATT, CHARLIE	1345	148	10	302
11	HERRERA, ANTHONY	1197	18	13	222
12	MORENO, JAVIER	1180	337	16	180
13	SCHOPIERAY, BRAD	843	30	23	160
14	HERRERA, JUAN	813	49	25	140
15	GONZALEZ, RUBEN	764	64	27	126
16	LANDA, ALEJANDRO	700	74	16	180
17	DE LA ROSA, DANIEL	627	10	9	344
18	GUTIERREZ, POLO	617	20	15	182
19	DIAZ, JOSE	598	61	11	290
20	SCHMEISER, ARTHUR	537	22	29	94

# SCHEDULE

DEC 5-9	T4	Barranquilla Open	Barranquilla, Colombia
DEC 7-9	T4	North Dakota Minot Open	Minot, ND
DEC 7-9	T3	Lou Bradely Memorial	Sun Prairie, WI
DEC 8-9	T4	3rd Annual Christmas Tournament - Event #2	Erie, PA
DEC 13-16	T1	New Jersey Open	Fairfield, NJ
JAN 3-6	T1	Coast To Coast California Open	Canoga Park, CA
JAN 10-13	T1	Cactus Salon NYC Pro/Am	Long Island, NY
JAN 11-13	T5	2013 Winter Open	Sandusky, OH
JAN 11-13	T5	Racquetball Blizzard	St. Louis, MO
JAN 18-20	T5	Longhorn Open	Austin, TX
JAN 18-20	T5	Orange & Blue Shootout	Gainesville, FL
JAN 25-27	T4	Winter Pro Splat	Modesto, CA
JAN 25-27	T4	West Michigan Open	Grand Rapids, MI
JAN 25-27	T2	35th Annual Lewis Drug Pro/Am	Sioux Falls, SD
JAN 25-27	T5	Wichita Open	Wichita, KS
FEB - TBD	T5	Juarez IRT Series #1	Juarez, Mexico
FEB 1-3	T5	Pinchshot.com Championships	St. Louis, MO
FEB 6-9	T3	Pura Vida Classic	San Jose, Costa Rica
FEB 8-10	T4	Keystone Classic	Winnipeg, Canada
FEB 8-10	T5	2013 Sweetheart Racquetball Tourney	Columbus, OH
FEB 9-10	T5	Motor City Rollout	Utica, MI
FEB 21-24	T1	San Diego Open	San Diego, CA
FEB 22-24	T5	11th Annual Duboise Electric Racquetball Pro/Am	Ft. Smith, AR
FEB 22-24	T5	2013 Baywinds Spring Open	Sandusky, OH
FEB 28 - MAR 3	T4	Cali Open	Cali, Colombia



# READY, SET, GO!

By T.J. Baumbaugh

In August 2012, the newly incorporated Ladies Professional Racquetball Tour (LPRT) became the sole governing body of women's professional racquetball. Currently managed by Deputy Commissioner Andy Kulback and pro player and President T. J. Baumbaugh, the LPRT looks forward to a strong tour schedule. Several veteran tournament directors will welcome the ladies back to their cities, and stops in a few new cities will be added along the way.

And what an exciting start! The LPRT kicked off their season with a bang, Texas-style. The Ektelon Texas Open Pro/Am in Dallas was a booming success, thanks to Mike Franks, Keely Franks Kennedy and their incredible team of volunteers. This tournament left no detail overlooked, including an Ektelon Texas Open cake (fully decorated with a racquet) and tournament sponsors. The pro and amateur players had a fantastic time!

Paola Longoria defeated Rhonda Rajsich in a four-game final, coming out on top in yet another pro event. (Paola has won her last eleven

pro events, a streak going back to May 2011.) Krystal Csuk added another semifinal appearance to her resume (her first in Virginia in December 2011), and veteran Kerri Wachtel reached the semis as well. This tournament also marked the return of former #3 ranked pro player Samantha Salas, back after a one-year layoff due to a shoulder injury.

In other action, several LPRT players made a stop in Las Vegas in September for the 2012 WOR 3 Wallball World Championships. Congratulations to Rhonda Rajsich for winning the LPRT pro singles division and to Rhonda and Kristen Bellows for winning the pro women's doubles division. Thanks to Mike Coulter, Steve Lerner, Hank Marcus and crew who logged countless hours to make this event a big hit.

Follow the latest news from the LPRT, view live LPRT matches, and get to know the players better on Facebook and at [www.LPRTNetwork.com](http://www.LPRTNetwork.com) and [www.lprt.com](http://www.lprt.com).



## SCHEDULE

Dec. 7-9	Christmas Classic Online Entry	Arlington, VA	T1
Jan. 4-6	Winter Freeze Online Entry	Dayton, OH	T1
Jan. 25-27	Wilson Tour for Hope Online Entry	Cincinnati, OH	T1
Feb. 22-24	Winter Classic Online Entry	Overland Park, KS	T1



## RANKINGS

Rank	TOTAL POINTS	Advantage	Name	Hometown	SEASON TO DATE POINTS	Rank
1	1,884.00	540.60	Longoria, Paola	Monterrey, Mexico	780.00	1
2	1,343.40	829.20	Rajsich, Rhonda	Phoenix, AZ	551.00	2
3	514.20	4.05	Csuk, Krystal	Chicago, IL	178.00	6
4	510.15	49.65	Wachtel, Kerri	Cincinnati, OH	124.75	9
5	460.50	59.75	Acosta-Mendoza, Susy	Chihuahua, Mexico	180.00	5
6	400.75	36.25	Fisher, Adrienne	Memphis, TN	82.75	14
7	364.50	22.00	Saunders, Jennifer	Winnipeg, MB, Canada	141.50	8
8	342.50	29.75	Gudinas, Cheryl	Naperville, IL	159.50	7
9	312.75	20.00	Amaya, Cristina	Cali, Colombia	84.75	13
10	292.75	14.25	Bellows, Kristen	Pleasant Grove, UT	58.75	19
11	278.50	16.75	Salas, Samantha	Monterrey, Mexico	278.50	3
12	261.75	11.40	Baumbaugh, T.J.	Reston, VA	119.75	10
13	250.35	40.35	Davis, Da'monique	San Antonio, TX	102.75	12
14	210.00	26.10	Paraiso, Jackie	Santee, CA	206.00	4
15	183.90	39.15	Hughes, Grace	Silverdale, WA	77.50	16
16	144.75	19.25	Franks, Keely	Trophy Club, TX	40.75	22
17	125.50	13.00	Scales, Linda	Eules, TX	57.50	20
18	112.50	5.75	Sotomayor, Veronica	Stockton, CA	112.50	11
19	106.75	23.25	Brandt, Laura	Ft. Lauderdale, FL	30.75	28
20	83.50	8.50	Parilla, Jessica	San Luis Potosi, Mexico	79.50	15



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# WOR LIGHTS UP VEGAS

By Hank Marcus

The Third Annual 3 Wallball World Championships wrapped up at the Stratosphere Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas in mid-September. Racquetball numbering 225 plus 175 handball players and 20 paddleball players competed over four days in the desert sun and under the stunning Las Vegas lights. They came from 21 states and three countries with the pros competing for over \$20,000 in prize money on ten courts constructed at the Stratosphere on the Las Vegas Strip.

Men and Women Pro divisions both saw double winners as Rocky Carson and Rhonda Rajsich each took Singles and Doubles honors (the latter with Alvaro Beltran and Kristen Bellows, respectively). Jackie Paraiso and Robert Sostre were the Mixed Pro champions; top-ranked CPRT Pro Woody Clouse took his first CPRT Outdoor Singles title; and Jesus Ustarroz and Craig Lane earned the CPRT Doubles win.

In the amateur divisions, multiple event winners included Warren Pettit (Men's Open Doubles and Mixed A Doubles), Jorge Ivan Hernandez (First-Time Player and Mixed Elite Doubles) and Tracy Untalan (Women's A Doubles and Women's B Doubles). Other highlighted division winners were Dane Elkins taking Juniors

honors, Ty Kelly winning the Military/Police/Fire Singles, and Daryl Smallman and Rod Felton taking the title in the Military/Police/Fire Doubles.

The Military Racquetball Federation took the spotlight with a Saturday evening Color Guard presentation of the National Anthem featuring two wounded service members who are using racquetball as part of their rehabilitation. Play was stopped for this very moving ceremony hosted on the championship courts by MRF Executive Director Steven Harper. Tournament attendees stood silent for this special recognition and tribute.

In the early rounds of the event, the season-long race for the Championship Cup was wrapped up as Robert Sostre and Janel Tisinger were recognized with the presentation of \$500 cash prizes and week-

end Suite Packages at the Stratosphere.

Thanks to World Outdoor Racquetball, World Players of Handball, National Paddleball Association, International Racquetball Tour, Ladies Professional Racquetball Tour, and Military Racquetball Federation! Gratitude also goes to our excellent host, the Stratosphere, as well as our sponsors including Soda Man Vending, Ahern, Sports Beans, Brady Industries, Dasani, Michelob Ultra, Ektelon, Gearbox, Head, and Pro Kennex.



Freddy Ramirez/Restrung Magazine

Team Florida on the Pro Court

Rajsich, Sostre & Croft in Mixed Pro Competition



Freddy Ramirez/Restung Magazine

Jose Rojas



Freddy Ramirez/Restung Magazine



Freddy Ramirez/Restung Magazine



## HEROES ENJOY OUTDOOR RACQUETBALL

The 3Wallball Championships held at the Stratosphere Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas was highlighted by an MRF Charity Doubles tournament featuring pros from the International Racquetball Tour, Classic Professional Racquetball Tour, & World Outdoor Racquetball, and won by Tom Moore & Scott Davis. In addition, Saturday night's color guard was presented by the United States Air Force (Nellis AFB) Honor Guard. Special guests in attendance were two Wounded Warriors who are involved in the MRF's Racquetball Rehabilitation Clinic in San Diego, SGT Lam Le (USMC) & LCPL Matthew McKillops (USMC).



Freddy Ramirez/Rising Magazine



It is a new and exciting era for the Military Racquetball Federation (MRF), a recent recipient of a grant from the United States Olympic Committee. This new partnership with the USOC, who receives financial support from the United States Department of Veteran Affairs, will allow the Racquetball Rehabilitation Clinics (RRC) program to go nationwide, funding the opportunity to advance the RRC program for both wounded service members and veterans. These heroes can now learn the sport of racquetball fundamentals, build self-confidence (regain the "war-fighting" spirit), and meet fellow wounded service members and veterans, all of these leading to an improved esprit de corps. The USOC's tagline reads, "Grant funding for this program is awarded by U.S. Paralympics, a division of the U.S. Olympic Committee, through funding provided by Veterans Affairs. The grants are provided to facilitate the growth of

## MRF GAINS MOMENTUM BY HELPING VETERANS

*Newfound Partnership With U.S. Olympic Committee And Veterans Affairs*

By Steven Harper • Photo courtesy MRF

Paralympic-sport programming for disabled Veterans and disabled members of the Armed Forces."

Statistics for 2011 show there are over 40,000 service members who have been physically wounded during the Iraq and Afghanistan wars and an estimated 450,000 suffer from the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). One in five returning troops are being diagnosed with serious PTSD and less than 40% will seek help. On average, five active-duty troops attempt suicide each day. In 2011, a record-breaking year for suicides in the service, 312 soldiers ended their own lives.

The MRF has been in operation since 2009, hosting racquetball tournaments and demonstrations on military bases to increase awareness of the benefits of racquetball for wounded service members. These clinics and demonstrations are designed to instruct up to 24 students per clinic. Each clinic runs for six weeks for a total of eight clinics per year, equating to 192 students who can potentially be reached. Students receive training manuals and racquetball starter kits along with instruction from local certified racquetball instructors.

For many wounded service members and veterans, these clinics are the first steps to normalcy after losing a limb or suffering mental disabilities. Our clinics have directly impacted the participants' level of endurance, strength and overall weight management.

Currently, MRF is taking its RRC program to Long Island, NY, Prescott, AZ, Durham/Fayetteville, NC, Balboa Naval Medical Center (San Diego, CA), and Brooke Army Medical Center (San Antonio, TX). And, there are new areas where VA Medical Centers and military installations are requesting these clinics at their local facilities. If you are interested in supporting MRF and disabled service members (veterans and/or active duty personnel), please contact us at MRF ([www.militaryracquetball.com](http://www.militaryracquetball.com)) for information on how you might be able to assist in your local area.

# Penn

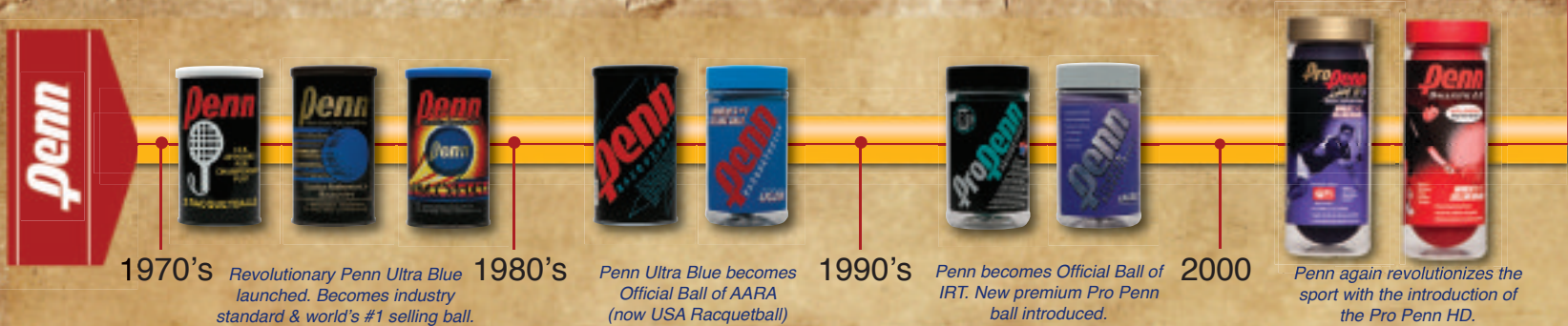
## The BEST just got BETTER!



2012

For more than 40 years PENN has been on the cutting edge of ball technology for the sport of racquetball. We have never lost sight of the fact that a better ball means more enjoyment of the game for our customers. Today we are pleased to announce another revolutionary breakthrough with the re-launch of all our racquetball ball products. PENN engineers have discovered new and improved rubber compounds and state of the art manufacturing processes that deliver unparalleled performance for every level of play. Lighter, crisper, ultra consistent, and with unprecedented durability, PENN's new line of racquetballs will have you hitting thunderous splats and blistering passing shots with ease. **PENN—The BEST just got BETTER!**

### 40 Years of Innovation



1970's Revolutionary Penn Ultra Blue launched. Becomes industry standard & world's #1 selling ball.

1980's Penn Ultra Blue becomes Official Ball of AARA (now USA Racquetball)

1990's Penn becomes Official Ball of IRT. New premium Pro Penn ball introduced.

2000 Penn again revolutionizes the sport with the introduction of the Pro Penn HD.



## NMRA HALL OF FAME INDUCTS CURRAN

Tom Curran became the 40th inductee into the NMRA Hall of Fame in July at the NMRA International Championship at Raleigh, NC. We extend Tom a hearty “thanks” for many years of service as president and look forward to working with him continually in the future.

Come try out one of our events – you will be hooked like so many others have! The NMRA is dedicated to the mature

racquetball player 45+. For more information, including our newsletter, The RacquetRacket, please visit our website at [www.nationalmastersracquetball.org](http://www.nationalmastersracquetball.org). For tournament registration and monitoring scoring after matches, visit [www.R2Sports.com](http://www.R2Sports.com). And check us out on Facebook - search NMRA for the page, and search National Masters Racquetball Association for the group page - it's interactive!



## BILL BEARDEN NAMED TO TPAF Hall of Fame

By Mike Welch, NPRA Vice President  
Photo courtesy Bill Bearden



A Hall of Fame is generally reserved for those special people whose contributions positively affect the future of an organization in big way. In 2012, the Texas Police Athletic Federation, the governing body for the Police Games in Texas, inducted Officer Bill Bearden into its Hall of Fame for his contribution to the sport of racquetball for more than two decades.

Bill began playing racquetball during his early college years. After graduating from Sam Houston State University in 1984, he joined the Houston Police Department. His love for racquetball led him to play in many local, state and national tournaments including the Texas “Police Olympics.”

Bill was asked by the TPAF to be a local racquetball coordinator in 1994. Since that time he has volunteered as tournament director for not only the Texas Police Games but also the International Can-Am Police and Fire Games as well as tournaments for the NPRA.

Officer Bearden is co-founder and the current president of the NPRA. Bill is a fierce competitor, an excellent tournament director, and an even better friend. On behalf of all the racquetball players whose lives you've impacted in a positive way, we say, “Congratulations, Bill, and thank you! We look forward to many more years of growing racquetball with you!”



## RAISING MONEY FOR THE Firefighter Cancer Foundation

By Peter Berger, President, WFRA

The WFRA began the year teaming up with WOR to raise money for the Firefighter Cancer Foundation. This fantastic tournament is becoming a mainstay, and the WFRA thanks WOR once again for helping make this one a great success.

The WFRA moved on to organize the State of Florida Firefighter Games Racquetball Tournament at Embry Riddle Aeronautical University in Daytona Beach, who generously allowed us to use their facility. In June, the WFRA and the NPRA co-sponsored the 2012 Can-Am Games in St. Cloud, MN, hosting competitors from all over Minnesota and Canada. The next Can-Am games will be in Pennsylvania in 2014.

Also in June, the first-ever U.S. Fire and Police games took place in San Diego, California. There was a boost to membership from these successful games, with some of the new members earning gold medals and really making a name for firefighters in this event.

The representatives from the Los Angeles Fire Department did extremely well. Congratulations to all of the competitors!

In September the inaugural United States First Responders Tournament was held in Tampa. This event was open to all federal agents, firefighters, police officers, and military personnel.

In October, the 2012 World Police and Fire Games (Sydney, Australia) were sponsored by the WFRA. This was the first time that the WFRA had been asked to help out internationally and we look forward to the 2012 Ireland Games.

The WFRA is always looking for corporate or private support so that we can continue to help firefighters in need, firefighter families that have encountered financial hardship, and future firefighters, paramedics and EMTs with their education. For those interested in helping out the WFRA, please visit our website at [www.worldfireracquetball.com](http://www.worldfireracquetball.com).





# DON'T MISS:

■ **2013 WSMRA 24th Annual National Championships**  
January 18-20, 2013

1. Host facility – The iconic Maverick Athletic Club, Arlington, TX
2. Divisions for all skill levels
3. Match play format
4. Fun Doubles Mixer benefiting breast cancer research
5. Saturday night dance party and banquet
6. Texas-sized hospitality all weekend
7. Fun, friendship and great competition

Contact Event Director Leo Vasquez at [leo@themav.com](mailto:leo@themav.com) for more information

Enter online at:  
[www.r2sports.com/tourney/home.asp?TID=10010](http://www.r2sports.com/tourney/home.asp?TID=10010)

# THE BEST IS YET TO COME!

■ **By Kendra Tutsch**  
Photo by Larry Deamud

### OTHER 2012 HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

**Wilson renewed as sponsor for 2013-14.** We're excited to continue our long-running partnership with Wilson Racquetball and reps Terri Graham and Chris Evon!

**New Board Members Jean Halahan (NY) and Beth Sacco (LA)** were welcomed this year, replacing Vickey Utter and Lynne Weisbart, who deserve much appreciation for their years of service to the WSMRA and to racquetball.

**We're on Facebook!** Check us out under "Women's Senior/Masters Racquetball Association." Upcoming postings will include tournament updates and other information.

**T**he women of WSMRA always have a great time! The year began with our 23rd Annual Women's Senior/Masters Tournament in Sarasota, FL, welcoming a total of 94 players from all over the U.S. Torrid competition, a fun doubles charity fundraiser and tons of food, prizes and dancing were featured. Huge thanks to Wilson Racquetball, sponsors, tournament directors, volunteers, and clubs! For results, details and more photos, visit [www.wsmra.com](http://www.wsmra.com).

# STAYING POWER



■ **By Sandy Schauer • Photo by Tina Marchie**



Nancy Hodges patiently waits for the ball to drop in a mixed doubles match at the 2012 World Senior Racquetball Championship. In front is Pat Thieman. Behind Nancy are Bill Hodges and Fred Roe.



2012 was the second year 89-year-old Ruby Bishop participated in the WSR Championship.



WSR Championship Tournament Director Gary Mazaroff congratulates 90-year-old Bill Matotan, right, on his first place finish.

**I**n an event showcasing amazing lifetime athletes, 150 men and women ranging in age from 35 to 90 played in the 2012 World Senior Racquetball Championship (WSRC) in August. Thirteen countries were represented in this long-running event.

The WSRC, created by John Koller and Ralph Waddington, has been conducted for 28 years with hundreds of players traveling to Albuquerque the week before Labor Day. The first tournament drew 91 players, and in 1989, WSRC was recognized by the International Racquetball Federation.

Some players have been participating since the event's inception, including Waddington who this year played in the 80+ division. Tournament Director Gary Mazaroff has prepared the draw since the very first tournament.

Join us next year on August 26-31, 2013. You'll enjoy the racquetball, hospitality and fun!

# 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.

It's that time of year to get back on track and get back on the court as you continue preparing for the 2012/2013 season. In the Summer 2012 issue of Racquetball, I recommended that you evaluate your 2011/2012 season, watch the video and look at your strengths and weaknesses over the summer so that you could sharpen your strengths and hone in on your weaknesses. I gave you a list of the top eight areas to evaluate. It's now time to take out that list and start practicing in those areas (strokes, shots, serves, return of serves, etc.) where you discovered some weaknesses that cost you games and matches.

The most important thing to remember in practice is that it has to be "perfect practice." That's what develops the muscle memory necessary for the skill to be automatic so it becomes automatic when you're playing.

## RACQUETBALL SKILLS

### Practice Guidelines

These guidelines will make your sessions more helpful and more valuable so that you will see direct impact on your game. Always go from the core (standard) drills to the more advanced (complex) drills.

### Core Drills

1. Use one wall because it is less complicated (only one direction).
2. Slow down the speed so you will have more reaction time and more time to set up.
3. Hit your set ups 1/2 (10 ft) to 3/4 (15 ft) of the way up on the front wall so you will have more reaction time and more time to set up.
4. Practice from one position on the court so you don't have to read the ball, then move to another spot.
5. Practice only one shot at a time so there is less thinking and decision making involved.
6. Use the same setup, then hit the ball, catch the ball, and repeat; do not use continuous setups.

### Advanced Drills (*Reading the ball, judgment, and adjustments*)

1. Use more than one wall so you get comfortable with the trajectory of the ball.
2. Hit your shots harder, with more speed, because this gives you less time to react and more closely simulates the game. You should now have muscle memory from the core drilling you have been doing.
3. Mix up heights to high, medium, and low because it's more realistic to the game.
4. Move to different positions on the court because it's more realistic to the game.
5. Combine shots and movements such as hitting ceiling balls to yourself and then hustling into position to shoot an offensive shot when you make a mistake.
6. Combine two shots at a time from the same position, first taking the same shots using continuous setups and then taking different shots using continuous setups.
7. Combine two shots at a time from different positions, first taking the same shots using continuous setups and then taking different shots using continuous setups.

Moving from core to advanced drilling is important, but you must master the core drills first, because those are your foundation. Only then can you build on the core drills and start combining them to make the drills more advanced and more like a game situation—the key to moving from one level to the next level.

## MENTAL SKILLS

Now let's focus on a particular form of visualization called "Guided Imagery."

Visualization involves creating images in your mind of what you want to reproduce on the court. Guided imagery is a condensed version of visualization. Often there isn't enough time for a full or deep visualization session, so athletes use guided imagery instead. Guided imagery is when you tell your mind to create a picture of what you want instead of words. Since athletes perform best from visual cues rather than auditory cues, guided imagery is a

great shortcut to success.

Close your eyes and instantly create an image on the movie screen of your mind, six inches in front of your forehead. It is like a 5x7 photo of what you want to happen next, how you want to perform, or how you want to drill. You can do this on the court between points or outside the court in your car, on a plane, or in the locker room. Guided imagery is a mental flash or a visual reminder of what you want to happen next. Desire it, see it, feel it, and hit it. It's as easy as that.

As a result, when a shot you visualized comes up during a match, your body will proactively respond to those prior images. Perfect mental practice leads to perfect results.

Jason religiously visualized every day for hours which played a huge part in his consistency level and was critical to his success. Now Rocky, Paola, Taylor, Sharon and my Junior superstars follow suit.

## FITNESS SKILLS

Agility for a racquetball athlete can be most clearly defined as the ability to maneuver your way around the court as you are getting into position to hit the ball when it comes off the wall at different angles, heights, and speeds, all while having a sense of where your opponent is on the court. We can also call this being light on your feet or being on the balls of your feet - in other words, being able to make adjustments on a dime.

Concentrating your efforts on maneuvering your body around the court and around your opponent will not only enable you to get to more shots but also enhance your ability to perform the techniques and shots you've practiced once you get there, because you will have more time.

## NUTRITION SKILLS

Often during the post-season (or off-season), players have a tendency to "treat" themselves and stray from eating well and drinking lots of water. As you enter back into your pre-season training, you want to make sure you get back into the routine of eating right and hydrating. Your body and mind must have this in order to perform at their best.

# MORE ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS

By Otto Dietrich  
USA Racquetball National Rules Commissioner

“The ball remains in play (is not “dead”) until it touches the floor a second time . . .”

photo by Geoff Thomssen



Here are some rule questions I have recently answered:

**Alan Katz wondered whether the following represented either a replay or penalty hinder:**

Player A is standing directly in front of Player B who hits the ball to the front wall avoiding Player A on the way, but resulting in the ball returning directly at the two players who are in the same basic alignment. Player A doesn't swing at the ball and moves out of the way to play the ball of the back wall. But the ball then hits Player B instead. Can Player B claim this as a hinder because he was screened by his opponent and did not have a chance to move out of the way?

**Otto says:** After a player on offense (Player B, in this case) hits the ball, he must then allow his opponent a free path to move to and hit the ball. He must also avoid being touched by the ball that he hit or he will immediately lose that rally because he hit himself with the ball (as provided for in Rule 3.13(c)5). Furthermore, he generally cannot be hindered in any way since he is no longer on offense and the term hinder basically refers to a person having been impaired in an effort to get to and hit the ball. So, it's no hinder at all, and Player A wins that rally.

**Alan's other question was** about the same situation as above – except that Player A does swing this time but completely misses the ball. However, is he then prevented from a second try off the back wall because the ball hits Player B (the defensive player)?

**Otto says:** Same basic answer as above, but with one added comment. The ball remains in play (is NOT “dead”) until it touches the floor a second time and so the offensive player can keep trying to hit the ball. He can still be hindered in his other attempts until then, too! That is addressed in Rule 3.13(e). Once again, Player A wins that rally.

**Danny Rodriguez of Rustburg, Virginia, asked several questions about screen serves.**

**Otto says:** In calling a screen serve, the referee should (1) first determine whether the ball passes close to the server (or his doubles partner in doubles) and, if it does, then the referee must

(2) rapidly determine whether the receiver's view/return of serve was affected by the serve's closeness. If it was, then the referee should call a “screen serve” right away. See Rule 3.9(i).

A screen serve called by the referee is always a fault. Of course, a fault in a two-serve game on the first serve results in a second serve, but if it occurred on the second serve, then that server is out. In the one-serve game, a screen serve is also a fault. However, if the server did not have a prior fault serve, then he gets one more serve, i.e., a “second serve” (sort of). If he did have a prior fault, then he, too, would be out!

So, to be a screen serve, the serve must meet two basic criteria – not only pass close to the server or his partner but also that closeness must impair the receiver. However, it's important for the referee and players to keep in mind that no matter how close the serve may pass to the server, the referee should not call a screen serve until he sees whether there was an impact of that closeness on the receiver's return. Why? Because the serve must be close and there must be impairment caused by that closeness. Unless both conditions are present, then it is not a screen serve.

Now, consider this observation... As players become more skilled, they can often return a very close (what some might consider a “screen”) serve much easier than a serve that's placed in one of the far corners. Why? Because all they have to do is pivot (that's much quicker than running ten feet to the corner) and then the server is faced with a real problem: moving out of the way of the receiver's “straight-in” return to the front wall or else losing that rally on a “failure to move” penalty hinder.

In this instance, the referee, noting that the serve is “close,” should NOT declare it a screen serve until he's certain the impairment caused by that closeness is apparent. I always tell that to the players in my pre-match briefing and also say that I will determine “impairment” based on how the receiver reacts to the close serve. If the receiver plays the ball cleanly and normally, I will conclude that there was “no impairment.” However, if I detect any hesitation in the receiver's body language or if the receiver raises either his hand or racquet, I then conclude that there was impairment and usually assume it was caused by the closeness I observed. Of course, if the serve didn't pass close at all to the server or his partner, then it can never be a screen serve.

Of course, the referee must always apply the rules consistently – whether it is the first serve or the very last serve of the game!

## DO YOU HAVE A RULES/REFEREEING QUESTION?

Email it to me at [odietrich@usra.org](mailto:odietrich@usra.org) and you might find it featured in an upcoming issue of *Racquetball*. I answer every question I receive no matter how simple or complex it may be!

Always “Play by the Rules” and, if you don't have a copy, I encourage you to find and review them online at: <http://www.usra.org/usra/pub&ref/Rulebook.htm>.

Rajsich on the court with the Kindergarten to 2nd graders



# RHONDA RETURNS TO SCHOOL

Article and photos by Page Kern

Following the US Open in Minneapolis, Rhonda Rajsich traveled 2½ hours into farm country to visit students in Windom, a community of 4,600 in southwest Minnesota.

On her first day, Rhonda spoke with students from the Alternative Learning Center about the importance of making good decisions, taking care of yourself physically, mentally and socially, and knowing that things happen for you not to you.

After visiting with the high school Psychology class about competition, mental prep, and visualization, she conducted three clinics with 10 juniors per session, then met with high school athletes

to discuss recovery, competition prep, visualization, and training.

The next day, Rhonda addressed a 4th grade class about making good decisions, taking care of oneself, and then answering the 10 million questions they posed! Later in the morning, she repeated the topics with three PE classes before departing for the airport.

Page Kern, facilitator of the event, said, “We so appreciated Rhonda’s visit! And thanks to Aimee Ruiz for sending trading cards for Rhonda to sign for the students as well as the LPRT posters she autographed as gifts for the classrooms.”



Rajsich with the 5th to 8th graders



Rajsich with high school athletes

# 46th National Doubles Championships

February 13-17, 2013  
(Valentine's Day weekend)

Arizona State University  
Student Recreation Center  
Tempe, Arizona

## HOST HOTELS:

Twin Palms – 800-367-0835  
Holiday Inn Express – 480-966-7202



- Parties, Prizes for Each Division
- Make it a sweetheart getaway weekend!





Before the renovations



After the renovations by Eagle Scout Justin Mace

# COURTING EXCELLENCE

## *A Boy Scout Earns His Badge*

By Lynn Stephens  
Photos courtesy Lynn Stephens

**F**resh air, sunshine, good friends, and racquetball. What more could you want from your spare time? This is outdoor racquetball at its best but up until two years ago almost non-existent in North Carolina. Then Steven Harper (Executive Director of the MRF) convinced me to help him erect the Ektelon portable outdoor court in a parking lot in Clayton, NC, for a daylong exhibition.

After returning home, I remembered there were two short-wall outdoor courts in a town park in Southern Pines, a small town of 13,000 only 12 miles from where I live. It had been years since I had last laid eyes on them, so I figured it was worth a shot to see what kind of condition they were in now.

As it turned out, they weren't too bad. The walls and floors needed some cleaning, patching and paint, and the brush was

overtaking the fence, but there was promising potential to bring these courts back to a better standard and begin to introduce the game of outdoor to the players in NC.

After consulting with the town Parks and Recreation Director, I volunteered to do the work if the town would supply the materials. He agreed and was excited that the courts would be used again. My racquetball playing partner and I began using the courts as they were, and when I told him what I was going to do, he shared that his son, Justin Mace, needed a public service project to earn his Eagle Scout badge. This project would be perfect for him!

Justin began the task of putting together a plan, securing approval from the local Boy Scout Council, lining up other Scouts to help, obtaining materials donated by local businesses, and securing equipment for pressure washing. The color scheme from

the Marina Park courts in Huntington Beach was used. The town cut all the brush back from the fence, and Justin built a set of benches outside the courts after finishing all the other work.

Now North Carolina has two tournament-quality outdoor courts in beautiful tree-filled Memorial Park. For his efforts, Justin earned his Eagle Scout badge and was also recognized by the Town of Southern Pines with a Resolution of Appreciation presented to him by the Mayor at the October Town Council meeting. Justin dedicated his project to Leland Daniels who had

built the court over 20 years ago. The town affixed a plaque to the courts that gives Justin credit for his project and notes the dedication to Leland "The Builder" Daniels.

The courts are now being used regularly by racquetball and handball players, and many people in North Carolina who had never played outdoor racquetball are now hooked on the sport. I have run two successful WOR-sanctioned events on the courts this year and already have at least three scheduled for next year.

For more information on outdoor racquetball in North Carolina, contact Lynn Stephens at [racquetball@gmail.com](mailto:racquetball@gmail.com).



Left to Right: Joanne Mace, Lynn Stephens, Marquita Daniels, Sterling Mace, Robert Reeve, Pete Mace, Justin Mace

# MORE POWER



## HOW KILL SHOT GOT ITS NAME

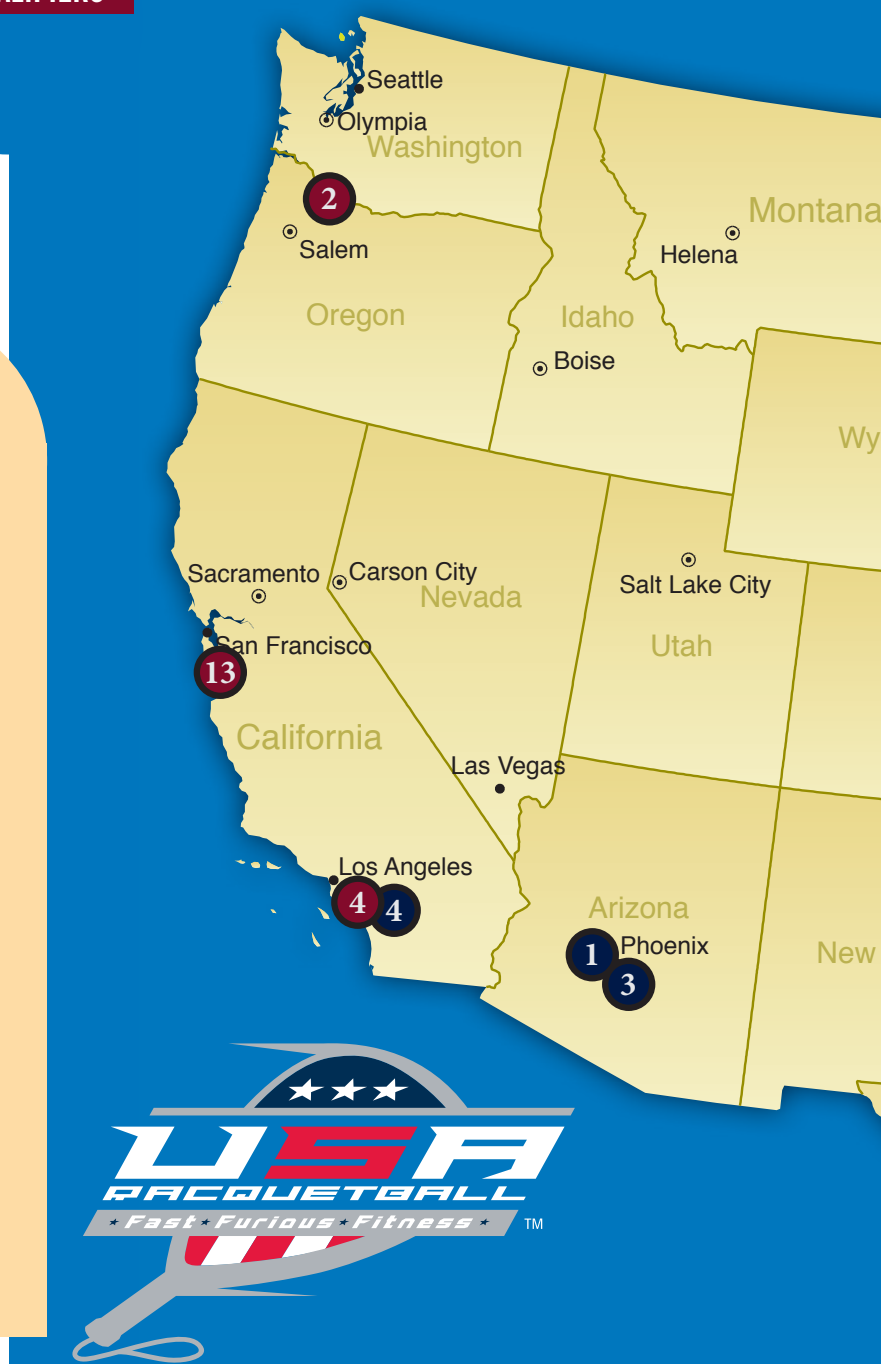
That's right. It's from the unstoppable performance packed in every Wilson racquet. Unleash the power in your game with the Hit Stick BLX. Developed to deliver explosive force with Power String technology. Dominate the court with the pure insanity of the Crazy Stick. Meticulously designed to be lightweight, maneuverable and seriously fast. What separates the players from the champions? The relentless technology of the Hit Stick BLX and Crazy Stick from Wilson.

**Get More At [Wilson.com](http://Wilson.com)**

**Wilson**  
MORE WIN.

# National EVENTS

- 1 46th National Doubles Championships**  
Tempe, AZ • Feb. 13-17  
Director: Jim Hiser  
Arizona State University  
Student Recreation Center  
719-635-5396 ext. 130  
jhiser@usra.org
- 2 26th National High School Championships**  
St. Louis, MO • Feb. 27-Mar. 3  
Director: Jim Hiser  
Vetta Sports  
719-635-5396 ext. 130  
jhiser@usra.org
- 3 41st National Intercollegiate Championships**  
Tempe, AZ • Mar. 19-23  
Director: Jim Hiser  
Arizona State University  
Student Recreation Center  
719-635-5396 ext. 130  
jhiser@usra.org
- 4 46th National Singles Championships**  
Fullerton, CA • May 15-19  
Director: Jim Hiser  
Meridian Sports Club  
719-635-5396 ext. 130  
jhiser@usra.org
- 5 40th National Junior Olympic Championships**  
Des Moines, IA • June 26-30  
Director: Jim Hiser  
Oakmoor Racquet Health Center  
719-635-5396 ext. 130  
jhiser@usra.org
- 6 UnitedHealthcare US OPEN**  
Minneapolis, MN  
October 2-6  
Director: Doug Ganim  
Life Time Fitness Target Center  
719-635-5396 ext. 123  
tmorse@usra.org



# Regional QUALIFYING EVENTS

CHECK R2SPORTS.COM FOR UPDATES



	City	State	Date(s)	Event Director
1	Haverhill	MA	April 5-7	Rob Van Schalkwyk
2	Gresham	OR	April 10-14	Brian Ancheta
3	Highlands Ranch	CO	April 11-14	Joe Williams
4	Reseda	CA	April 12-14 LPRT stop	Debbie Tisinger-Moore • Randy Lam
5	St. Louis	MO	April 12-14	Dan Whitley
6	Erie	PA	April 12-14 IRT stop	Keith Eller
7	Fridley	MN	April 12-14	Dave Tornell
8	Long Island	NY	April 13-14	Tom Keogh
9	Memphis	TN	April 19-21	David Gross
10	Millersville	MD	April 19-21	Robert Corsello
11	Athens	GA	April 19-21	Will Costanza
12	Davison	MI	April 19-21 IRT stop	Don Schopieray
13	Sunnyvale	CA	April 19-21	Dave Ralstin
14	Lombard	IL	April 19-21	Geoff Peters
15	San Antonio	TX	April 26-28 LPRT stop	Lance Gilliam
16	Overland Park	KS	April 26-28	Mike Wedel

Whatever the size of your tournament...all you have to do is play.



Venue	Phone #	Email
Cedardale Health & Fitness	978-273-3110	vanschalkwykr@hotmail.com
Cascade Athletic Club	503-665-4142	baancheta@aol.com
Highlands Ranch Recreation Center	719-635-5396 ext.133	jwilliams@usra.org
360 Health Club	818-705-6500	rbjaws@hughes.net • rjlam@hotmail.com
Vetta Sports Concord	314-842-3111 ext. 3	dwhitley@vettasports.com
Nautilus Fitness Center	814-881-5320	keitheller2@gmail.com
Life Time Fitness	(612) 616-7009	torneld@charter.net
Sportset-Syosset Club	347-415-9918	tkeogh1070@gmail.com
Well Worx Sporting Club.	901-833-2269	DGross@fabtn.com
Severna Park Racquetball and Fitness Club	301-509-6112	rqtball1@verizon.net
Ramsey Athletic Center	404-317-7992	willc@interserv.com
Davison Athletic Club	810-287-9394	don113x@comcast.net
Supreme Court I Athletic Club	408-739-1250	dralstin@aol.com
Glass Court Swim & Fitness	630-629-3390	petersgeoff@hotmail.com
Triton Sports Center	210-979-7055	lance@gilliamcpapc.com
The Athletic Club	913-291-4420	mwedel@mokancomm.net



UnitedHealthcare



Kane Waselenchuk and friends with the championship trophy

# RACQUETBALL'S ROYALTY Reigns Again

*Waselenchuk, Longoria & Clouse Triumph at Racquetball's Premier Event*

By Jeff Oliver, US OPEN Media Manager  
Photos courtesy *Restrung Magazine*

The 2012 UnitedHealthcare US OPEN Racquetball Championships was a smash hit! Beautiful Minneapolis, hosting for the third time, once again rolled out the red carpet for racquetball's biggest, baddest event as more than 650 players from 13 different countries descended on three Life Time Fitness locations for five days of racquetball fun - both on and off the court.

The UnitedHealthcare US OPEN is racquetball's original "Grand Slam" event and the most prestigious tournament of the season. With cash prizes totaling more than \$65,000, it boasts the largest total prize purse in the sport. One of the most exciting aspects of this competition is the "made-for-TV" portable racquetball court set up in a stadium seating configuration that allows viewing through all four walls for more than 1,200 spectators - an awesome sight. From the early rounds through the finals, the top professional players in the world play on the Stadium Court after being introduced to the raucous crowd with booming music, spotlights, and a laser light show.

In addition to the marquee International Racquetball Tour (IRT - Men's), Ladies Professional Racquetball Tour (LPRT - Women's) and Classic Professional Racquetball Tour (CPRT - Men's 40+) divisions, the event offers more than 80 USA Racquetball (USAR) sanctioned singles and doubles divisions separated by age and skill.

The 2012 UnitedHealthcare US OPEN Racquetball Championships ushered in an exciting new era for the now 17-year-old event. Over the summer, US OPEN leaders struck a title sponsorship deal with UnitedHealthcare. The agreement partnered racquetball's largest tournament with one of the nation's largest health and well-being companies, bringing this celebrated event to even greater heights. Many of the company's executives and employees were in attendance throughout the week, and other major co-sponsors of the event included Life Time Fitness, 3M, ACE, Sanford Health, Lewis Drug and MeetMinneapolis.

The main location and nerve center for the UnitedHealthcare US OPEN is in downtown Minneapolis at the fabulous LIFE TIME FITNESS Target Center, home of the celebrated Minnesota Timberwolves. All pro matches and many of the amateur matches are battled out at this eight-court facility located in the center of the exciting Entertainment District with restaurants, nightclubs, hotels, and world-class shopping nearby. The event's second location, the Minneapolis LIFE TIME Athletic Club, is just a few blocks away. A complimentary shuttle ride provides transport to the third venue, the LIFE TIME FITNESS St. Louis Park, a sparkling facility only eight minutes away.

## EIGHT IS GREAT - WASELENCHUK REWRITES HIS OWN HISTORY

Before the semifinals of the Men's Professional division were locked and loaded with four of the top-ranked players on the International Racquetball Tour (IRT), a series of upsets from a few players who fought through as qualifiers sparked the draw. Former U.S. National Champion Alex Ackermann (Texas) had taken some time away from the game to focus on school, so his ranking on the tour slipped into the 30s, forcing him to win two qualifier matches for the chance to play #5 Ben Croft (California) in the main draw. Making it even tougher for Alex, who played two matches in the span of just a few hours on Wednesday, his match against Ben was the first of the morning on Thursday. But his momentum and solid play stayed with him overnight as he jumped out to a 2-0 game lead over Croft. Last year's semifinalist fought back to take the next two games before a hard-fought tiebreaker played out in front of a packed house. A few close calls didn't go Ben's way as Alex's solid play earned him the 11-9 game victory and the match. In the next round there was enough left in Ackermann's tank to knock off #12 Anthony Herrera (Arizona) before falling to #4 Alvaro Beltran (Mexico) in the quarterfinals.

In the other half of the draw, Daniel De La Rosa (Mexico) was making just as much noise. Two qualifier wins earned him a spot in the Round of 32 against Ruben Gonzalez (New York). In what would be Ruben's last-ever match on the Men's Professional Tour, De La Rosa prevailed to earn a Round of 16 matchup with #3 Jose Rojas (California). While Ackermann needed a tiebreaker to go for his top ten upset, De La Rosa defeated Rojas relatively easily with a four-game victory, 11-5, 10-12, 11-9, 11-4. In the quarterfinals, De La Rosa pushed #6 Chris Crowther (California) to a tiebreaker before eventually falling. De La Rosa, 19, was already in the Top 20 on the IRT before the 2012 UnitedHealthcare US OPEN. His performance in Minneapolis should shoot him toward the Top Ten - racquetball fans, keep an eye on this kid!

The top three players in the world reached the semifinals where they were joined by Chris Crowther, whose draw was opened up thanks to the young De La Rosa. The world's #1 player Kane Waselenchuk (Canada) faced off against #3 Alvaro Beltran in the top half of the draw. These two met in the finals at the US OPEN in 2010 where Beltran took the first game. Many feel the player with the best chance to beat Kane in a fully played match is Alvaro, but it wasn't to be in this semifinals match-up. Waselenchuk cruised to an 11-5, 11-9, 11-8 victory to punch his return ticket to yet another final.





Gold medalist Paola Longoria

There the Canadian met his familiar IRT finals opponent in #2 Rocky Carson (California) who had disposed of Crowther in the semifinals in three straight games, 11-1, 11-4, 11-4. The Waselenchuk vs. Carson final was the 46th career match-up between the top two players in the world and their third appearance against each other in a US OPEN final. Kane had won both previous meetings at racquetball's top event and overall held a 43-2 record over Rocky. Of course, one of those losses came last season in New York in an injury forfeit that "ended the streak" and the other loss came way back in May 2003. Needless to say, it wouldn't have been a surprise where the oddsmakers would place the line had it appeared in the sports books in Las Vegas.

Last year, Rocky took the first game over Kane in the finals and for one brief moment it appeared that it would happen again this year as he held a fleeting 8-7 lead in the first game. Kane then ran off four straight points to jump out to a 1-0 game lead. In the second game Waselenchuk built a 5-1 lead before Carson came back within one point at 6-5. At 8-5, the two traded serves nine times before Kane killed an easy back wall setup and eventually took game two, 11-5.

In game three, it appeared Kane would cruise to his coronation as an eight-time champion after jumping out to a 10-2 lead. Carson fought off a championship point, strung together a few points, but eventually fell 11-5. The win broke Kane's own record of OPEN titles, giving him eight titles in just eleven appearances (five consecutive).

During his post-match interview in the media room, Waselenchuk's voice cracked a bit when talking about his staggering accomplishments. But he also made sure to note that he isn't done yet. He still feels he has much to learn about the sport of racquetball and that he can get even better. Uh-oh...the best player in history thinks he can get even better? Sounds like those oddsmakers won't be taking the IRT field anytime soon!

#### **LONGORIA AVOIDS UPSETS GALORE TO WIN THIRD CROWN**

The recently reincarnated Ladies Professional Racquetball Tour (LPRT) began the year with the goal of providing high-level competitive opportunities to the growing number of female racquetball players in the world. The 2012 UnitedHealthcare US OPEN served as the LPRT's first Grand Slam event and provided one of the deepest draws in recent women's professional racquetball

history. That depth started to show early in the Round of 32 where in the 16 matches, just eight were won by the player with the better LPRT ranking. Highlighting the upsets were #24 Maria Paz Muñoz (Ecuador) who took out the #8 and #9 ranked players in the world to reach the quarterfinals. Veronica Sotomayor (#28, Ecuador) also led her own upset train with wins over the #4, #5 and #21 ranked players to earn her spot in the semifinals. Also earning a semifinal spot was #14 Samantha Salas Solis (Mexico).

Meeting up with Sotomayor and Salas Solis were #1 Paola Longoria (Mexico) and #2 Rhonda Rajsich (Arizona), respectively. The upsets ended at the semifinals level, and the predictable finals match-up between Paola and Rhonda graced the Stadium Court on Sunday for the fourth consecutive year. In 2009 and 2010, Rajsich defeated Longoria for her third and fourth career US OPEN titles. Last year, Paola required just three games to reclaim the championship and in 2012 repeated that performance with a dominating 11-4, 11-7, 12-10 win over Rhonda.

Paola jumped to a quick 10-1 lead in the first game, leading the crowd to suspect the rout was on. But Rhonda fought off three game points and battled back only to drop the game, 11-4. Rajsich built on her momentum and stacked up a quick 3-0 lead in the second game in an effort to square the match. Longoria scored the next four points to take the lead before the two players were knotted up at 7-7 for a series of side-outs. Another string of four points in a row were

earned by Paola, though, and tilted the match strongly in her favor.

In the third game, Rhonda again built an early 3-0 lead before Paola came back to tie it up at 3-3. Then, only moments later, Longoria ran the game up to a 9-4 lead and it appeared her third OPEN title was now clearly in her grasp. However Rhonda wasn't going to go down quietly, fighting off a match point at 10-6 before tying up the game at 10 all. After a few side-outs Paola was in the service box with her second championship point. Rhonda couldn't fight it off this time, and Paola's third title was now hers.

The win pushed Longoria's WPRO/LPRT winning streak to twelve consecutive tournaments in which she competed, stretching back to May 2011. That span includes eleven consecutive wins over Rajsich when the two met in the finals and 14 of their last 15 match-ups.

While Paola holds the current upper edge over Rhonda, Rajsich's all-time performance is absolutely remarkable. The event has been played 17 times and Rhonda has competed in it on twelve occasions. Of those twelve appearances, Rajsich has reached the finals an outstanding nine times! She has won the prized trophy four times, a record in the Women's Professional division.

#### YET AGAIN, NOBODY CAN BOUNCE CLOUSE

The Classic Professional Racquetball Tour (CPRT) is always a UnitedHealthcare US OPEN treat for long-time racquetball fans. Names like Woody Clouse, Jimmy Lowe, Doug Ganim, and Cliff Swain fill the draw.

Clouse has reached every CPRT Final since 2007 in Memphis. This year, he continued his outstanding play on the court and earned his fifth US OPEN title, although he had a scare in the quarterfinals when he found himself down 2-1 games to Ganim. Woody fought back to take game four, tied up at 5-5 in the fifth game tiebreaker, then cranked up his big drive serve from there and took the final game 9-6. He cruised into the finals, capturing a straight-game victory in the finals over surprise finalist Keith Minor (Illinois).

#### THE LEGEND GOES OUT ON HIS OWN TERMS

Long before the 2012 UnitedHealthcare US OPEN, Ruben Gonzalez announced that this event would be his last on the Men's Professional tour. We all knew that at some point this week there would be an emotional ending to Ruben's remarkable 32-year career. Daniel De La Rosa was his opponent in the first round of the Men's Professional main draw, and the players split the first two games. De La Rosa took game three, but Gonzalez battled back to a 10-10 tie in the fourth game. In reaching for a forehand shot during the next rally, Ruben fell to the floor. After administering medical attention to Ruben for a leg injury, event staffers were ready to carry the native New Yorker off the court. But Ruben had never forfeited a match in his long career, and he wasn't going to start now!

In true Ruben fashion, he dug deep through the pain and courageously took position in the back court, watching De La



Sean Royster



Kane Waselenchuk



Rhonda Rajsich

Rosa's serves go by him. At 11-10, Daniel served again, this time directly at Ruben so that he could return the shot. On his own terms, Ruben skipped the ball and the match ended, concluding his pro career. The crowd leapt to its feet to deliver a standing ovation for Ruben Gonzalez.

On Saturday during the Men's Professional Semifinals, IRT President Jason Mannino presented Ruben with a Lifetime Achievement Award honoring all he has done for the sport of racquetball. In his emotional acceptance speech, Ruben vowed to return to the court after rehabbing his leg injury and to continue to compete in age group divisions at the national level.

#### THE AMATEURS CAME TO PLAY, TOO!

The UnitedHealthcare US OPEN is about much more than just the top professional players. More than 600 amateur players came from around the United States – and the world – to play in the more than 80 amateur skill and age divisions.

#### TOP OPEN SKILL DIVISION WINNERS:

**Men's Open Singles:** Carlos Keller Vargas (Bolivia)

**Women's Open Singles:** Veronica Sotomayor (Ecuador)

**Men's Open Doubles:** Alejandro Landa (Texas) & Polo Gutierrez (Mexico)

**Women's Open Doubles:** Aimee Ruiz (New Jersey) & Janel Tisinger (California)

**Mixed Open Doubles:** Aimee Ruiz (New Jersey) & Jose Diaz (California)

For complete results, visit [www.unitedhealthcareusopen.com](http://www.unitedhealthcareusopen.com)

#### RACQUETBALL AFTER DARK

Just as great as playing against the world's best players is the off-court fun this stellar event provides! Downtown Minneapolis is bursting with top-quality restaurants, nightclubs and other entertainment options that were filled with racquetball players all week. Official host restaurant and bar Huberts, the choice of many players for relaxation after a hard day on the courts, also played home to Thursday's Ladies Night Out. Also on Thursday evening was the annual "Player's Party" at The Shout House where the dueling pianos always put on a good show. O'Donovan's Irish Pub hosted Friday evening's "Luck of the Irish" party, and on Saturday, racquetball's biggest bash of the year went down at The

Pourhouse. The world's top players and their fans hit the dance floor for a party that lasted into the wee hours. (Rumor has it there were some other professional athletes in The Pourhouse on Saturday night as well. Hey, Kevin Love may be able to dunk a basketball, but would he be able to take a point off of Kane!?)

#### RACQUETBALLERS GIVING BACK

US OPEN players and fans have always supported St. Jude Children's Research Hospital by playing in the Pro-Am Doubles event, winning items at the Silent Auction, donating their referee fees, or making other contributions. This year a portion of the proceeds was also gifted to the Minneapolis-based JDRF (Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation). More than \$13,000 was raised this year, bringing the 17-year total of donations to charity to more than \$325,000.

#### JOIN US NEXT YEAR

Start making plans now to join us back in Minneapolis for the 2013 UnitedHealthcare US OPEN Racquetball Championships, October 2-6, 2013. Come see the best players in the world, and compete on racquetball's grandest stage!



Alex Ackermann and Alvaro Beltran



Chris Crowther and Daniel De La Rosa



Rocky Carson



Alvaro Beltran, Sudsy Monchik, Ruben Gonzalez, Jason Mannino and Kane Waselenchuk



Pro Am finalists Andy Hawthorne, Sal Perconti, Brad Schopieray and John Scott



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l. to r - Dean Kaplan, Raul Brown, Rocco Saccente, Kyle Gahagan

## NRAD TACKLES RACQUETBALL CHALLENGES *in Deaf and Hearing Environments*

By Mary Helen Sprecher • Photos courtesy of Mark Heflin and NRAD

When a player walks onto the court, he or she expects to use every advantage available. That includes the best of his or her athletic ability -- and all five senses! Take away just one of those senses, and the challenges become more daunting. Members of the National Racquetball Association of the Deaf (NRAD) face these challenges in every match.

NRAD serves the deaf and hard of hearing community, defined as those with a hearing loss of at least 55 decibels in his or her better ear. The group is fully active in the sport, with its members competing, not just against one another, but against the larger hearing population as well. In February, NRAD will celebrate its 30th anniversary.

A lot can happen in three decades! While the sport has had fluctuating fortunes, individuals with handicaps are better served. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the amendments made to it in 2011, have helped expand opportunities for a previously underserved population.

And as the long-time members of NRAD can attest, the association has endured and continued in its mission. But, they note, the hardest part is reaching players.

"It's a huge challenge to get deaf and hard of hearing youth to play racquetball," notes NRAD Treasurer Mark Heflin. "Most of those students attend state schools that do not have access to racquetball courts. We usually go to Gallaudet University and Rochester Institute of Technology/National Technical Institute for the Deaf to find them and teach them to play."

One of the big drawbacks, Heflin adds, is the fact that while schools might have courts, they often lack pros or instructors.

The group currently has both active and retired members. Membership tends to be grouped demographically in what NRAD President Slemo Warigon refers to as "population clusters," meaning areas where deaf individuals have established communities. The Baltimore/Washington, D.C. corridor is one example because of

nearby Gallaudet University and the Maryland School for the Deaf's Columbia Campus.

"Other areas include New York, because of Rochester Institute of Technology's National Technical Institute for the Deaf, as well as California (Fremont and Riverside), Colorado, Illinois, Florida and Arizona that have numerous deaf retirees still involved in the sport," notes Warigon. "NRAD has hosted events in those states, and will continue to hold them there in the future. Next year, we will be hosting our annual championship tournament in Charlotte, NC."

The group's most recent championship tournament took place in April at the Severna Park Racquetball and Fitness Club in Millersville, MD, with play in singles, doubles and mixed doubles. Competitors came from up and down the east coast and from the Southeast.

Both Warigon and Heflin would like to build attendance, but say that it starts with building awareness of the sport.

"We're trying to open up our events to individuals who are not hearing impaired in order to facilitate interaction with our members and to enhance the level of competition," states Warigon. "We would also like to increase collaboration between NRAD and USAR in terms of promoting the sport at the grassroots level."

Funding, as always, remains the critical issue for the organization. "The vast majority of our members are struggling financially," says Warigon. "So if our events are held in distant states, these members will be unable to afford the required travel, hotel, and food expenses. We try to obtain sponsorship funding to assist financially challenged deaf racquetball players."

Acceptance from the hearing community, however, is not as much an issue. Racquetball is a close-knit sport where participants are valued and play is encouraged at every level. "We play in many USAR-sanctioned tournaments including the US OPEN, MWRA, CVRA, and NYRA," says Warigon.

“Because the majority of players in the hearing world don’t know sign language, the language barrier might give a new player pause, but only the first time,” offers Heflin. Heflin and Warigon participate in tournaments including those sponsored by the Maryland Washington Racquetball Association. Both play and referee games with both hearing and hearing-impaired individuals.

“It’s never easy to referee games whether you’re deaf or not,” says Heflin. “In fact, I tend to referee Open and IRT/LPRT games because I can see where the ball goes. Most deaf people have sharper eyes because they depend upon their eyes the way hearing people depend on their ears. Most of us use standard sign language for skipping, points, calling shots long or short, etc. On the bright side, players cannot argue with me because most of time I would just ignore him/her, and if he/she uses bad language, I can tell since I can lip-read!”

“We don’t necessarily need people who know sign language to referee the games,” adds Warigon. “We can teach them manual numbers on the fly. Or, we can make do with basic hand signs to indicate scores.”

There are additional aspects of the deaf experience that the hearing world generally doesn’t contemplate -- long, silent car trips to faraway tournaments, the inability to hear announcements, and the importance of watching a doubles partner at all times since there may be no way to ask him or her to get a shot in the split second it takes you to realize you can’t reach it.

NRAD continues to work to raise its profile. Its website, [www.nrad.org](http://www.nrad.org), and its Facebook page bring in hits, but Heflin and Warigon note that grassroots work remains an essential task.

“We’re always working very hard trying to raise money for NRAD and to attract youth and college students to learn our great sport and have fun playing it!”

**Mary Helen Sprecher** is Managing Editor of *Sports Destination Management* magazine, Contributing Editor of *Racquet Sports Industry* magazine, Technical Writer for *American Sports Builders Association*, and blogger for *Athletic Business*.



I. to r - Slemo Warigon, Olivia Malcom, Rocco Saccente, Monika Senzer



Board members, I. to r. - Jay Scotton, Franklin Torres, Mark Heflin, Bill Milbach, Slemo Warigon, Brian Suchite, Tom Burnside



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Silent Cheers



# WATER: Beverage of Champions



Photo by Freddy Ramirez

By Linda Rutzen

Nutrition facts courtesy US Olympic Committee

## Drink Up!

These are times when your fluid requirements are higher:

- Heat
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- Beginning of heat acclimatization

Also, watch your hydration status during...

- Travel
- Altitude training
- Surgery
- Illness
- Recovery days

Consult with your sports dietitian to identify individual fluid replacement strategies using sweat rate testing and USG monitoring

Life-giving water makes up 92% of our blood plasma, 80% of our muscle mass, 60% of our red blood cells and 50% of everything else in our bodies. A person can survive for days, even months, without food, but only three to five days without water.

Research shows that water cleanses the body of toxins, helps digest food and circulate blood, and generally makes everything in our bodies run smoothly.

In the high-intensity sport of racquetball, proper hydration is a crucial part of a winning strategy. Fluid loss puts your performance at risk; when dehydrated, muscles are more injury-prone and won't work to optimum performance, so make sure you maintain proper fluid balance by consuming fluids before, during and after exercise. Read on for some recommendations developed by professional sports nutritionists at the United States Olympic Committee. For more information, check out [www.teamusa.org](http://www.teamusa.org).

## Fluid for Athletes

Optimal hydration supports daily training and recovery. Dehydration's effects can take hours to days to recover. Athletes need to develop strategies to monitor and adapt their hydration plan to intensity, duration, and frequency of training, fitness level, and environmental conditions.

At a temperature of 68-70F, an exercise-induced body weight loss of 1-2% does not appear to affect performance of less than 90 minutes. Once dehydration exceeds 2% body weight loss and exercising for greater than 90 minutes, performance decrements will likely occur.

### Signs and Symptoms of Dehydration

- Lack of concentration
- Early fatigue
- High perceived exertion in training
- Difficulty tolerating heat
- Delayed recovery
- Muscle cramps

## What's the Best Sports Drink?

Athletes who exercise for extended periods of time both during training and at events can lose a substantial amount of sweat. When you sweat, you lose both water and sodium, as well as deplete the carbohydrate stores that help fuel your exercise. Sports drinks contain water, carbohydrates, sodium and other electrolytes such as potassium and calcium.

The best fluid to consume is water; however, sports drinks also have their benefits because they combine fluid, electrolytes and carbohydrates.

The best sports drink depends upon personal taste and tolerance. Choose sports drinks that are:

- 40 to 80 calories (10 to 20g carb) and
- 55 to 110 gm sodium per 8 ounces



# MEMBERSHIP

## WHAT'S IN IT FOR US

**W**hy would anyone invest \$50 for an annual USA Racquetball membership instead of spending it on, say, an extra latte every month that year? Caffeine buzzes aside, being a member of a large, internationally recognized organization carries a variety of perks, including some of which you're probably not even aware.

The list below should help any racquetball player realize that being a member of USAR is worth considerably more than its dollar value in coffee and cream!

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Jason Mannino  
#1 Pro Player 2003

Rocky Carson  
#1 Pro Player 2008

Paola Longoria  
2X #1 Pro Player

Sudsy Monchik  
5X #1 Pro Player

### Fran's Credentials

- 25+ Years Camp Experience
- Woman of the Year 2009
- 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 Knoth, Sharon Jackson
- Coached Legends Jason Mannino and Sudsy Monchik
- USAR-IP Master Professional

### Jason's Credentials

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

### Camp Schedule:

#### Weekend Camps 2012

October 26-28	Dallas, TX
November 2-4	Chicago, IL
December 7-9	Marlborough, MA (Boston area)

#### Weekend Camps 2013

January 18-20	Sarasota FL
January 25-27	Las Vegas, NV
February 1-3	Seattle, WA
March 1-3	Findlay, OH
March 22-24	TBA
April 5-7	Woodbridge, NJ
April 26-28	San Diego, CA
June 7-9	TBA
July 12-14	San Francisco, CA
July 26-28	Millersville, MD

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# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

EVENT TITLE	EVENT DATES	FACILITY NAME
NMRA 2012 DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP	DECEMBER 6-8, 2012	CLUBSPORT PLEASANTON
SNOWBALL OPEN	DECEMBER 6-9, 2012	EAST SIDE ATHLETIC CLUB
2012 ND MINOT OPEN - IRT TIER 4 PRO-AM	DECEMBER 7-9, 2012	MINOT YMCA
FRAN DAVIS RACQUETBALL CAMP - BOSTON, MA	DECEMBER 7-9, 2012	WAYSIDE RACQUET & SWIM CLUB
21ST ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CLASSIC PRO-AM	DECEMBER 7-9, 2012	CRYSTAL GATEWAY SPORT & HEALTH CLUB
COLORADO MADNESS	DECEMBER 7-9, 2012	APEX RACQUETBALL AND FITNESS CENTER
2012 FLORIDA SENIOR GAMES STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS	DECEMBER 8-9, 2012	LAKELAND YMCA
2012 PA TRI-STATE OPEN	DECEMBER 8-9, 2012	PHILADELPHIA SPORTS CLUB AT HIGHPOINT
2012 GRPA GEORGIA STATE DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIPS	DECEMBER 8-9, 2012	UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA RAMSEY CENTER
2012 NEW JERSEY OPEN TIER ONE PRO STOP, PRESENTED BY ROLLOUT	DECEMBER 14-16, 2012	THE RACQUET CLUB AT WARREN
2012 MO VETTA SPORTS HOLIDAY CHARITY CLASSIC	DECEMBER 15, 2012	VETTA SPORTS - CONCORD
TOYS FOR KIDS CHARITY DOUBLES SHOOTOUT	DECEMBER 15, 2012	CLUB SPORT
ONE-DAY DOUBLES WARM UP (MEN'S)	JANUARY 5, 2013	GLASS COURT SWIM & FITNESS
ONE-DAY DOUBLES WARM UP (WOMEN'S AND MIXED)	JANUARY 6, 2013	GLASS COURT SWIM & FITNESS
2013 MO RACQUETBALL BLIZZARD - MISSOURI IRT SERIES STOP #2	JANUARY 11-12, 2013	VETTA SPORTS - CONCORD
2013 NC BUILD OF ARC RACQUETBALL TOURNAMENT	JANUARY 11-12, 2013	COURTS PLUS
OSU OPEN	JANUARY 17-20, 2013	TIMBERHILL ATHLETIC CLUB
2013 WSMRA 24TH ANNUAL NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS	JANUARY 18-20, 2013	MAVERICK ATHLETIC CLUB
LONGHORN OPEN	JANUARY 18-20, 2013	GREGORY GYM
FRAN DAVIS RACQUETBALL CAMP - SARASOTA, FL	JANUARY 18-20, 2013	TBA
PRO RACQUETBALL ACADEMY 3-DAY CAMP	JANUARY 18-20, 2013	IN-SHAPE WEST LANE @ STOCKTON
IDAHO 2013 ADCOPE WINTER CLASSIC	JANUARY 18-20, 2013	ADCOPE ATHLETIC CLUB
2013 DE 9TH ANNUAL STATE DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP	JANUARY 19-20, 2013	CENTRAL YMCA
FRAN DAVIS RACQUETBALL CAMP - LAS VEGAS, NV	JANUARY 25-27, 2013	CLUBSPORT GREEN VALLEY
ISRA STATE DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIPS	JANUARY 25-27, 2013	LANDMARK RACQUET & HEALTH CLUB
2013 WEST MICHIGAN OPEN PRO-AM BENEFITING HELEN DEVOS CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL	JANUARY 26-27, 2013	MICHIGAN ATHLETIC CLUB
2013 MO PINCHSHOT.COM MIDWEST CHAMPIONSHIPS - MO IRT SERIES STOP #3	FEBRUARY 1-3, 2013	VETTA SPORTS - CONCORD
2013 ECRC MEET #4	FEBRUARY 1-3, 2013	I M BUILDING - PENN STATE MAIN
FRAN DAVIS RACQUETBALL CAMP - SEATTLE, WA	FEBRUARY 1-3, 2013	WASHINGTON ATHLETIC CLUB
14TH ANNUAL GREAT BALLS OF FIRE	FEBRUARY 1-3, 2013	UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI WELLNESS CENTER
2013 NC STATE WOLFPACK CLASSIC RACQUETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS	FEBRUARY 1-3, 2013	NC STATE UNIVERSITY - CARMICHAEL GYM
MICHIGAN WINTER SENIOR OLYMPICS	FEBRUARY 6, 2013	COURTLAND RACQUETBALL CLUB
OREGON STATE DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIPS	FEBRUARY 7-10, 2013	EAST SIDE ATHLETIC CLUB
PROFESSIONAL INSTRUCTION RACQUETBALL CAMP	FEBRUARY 8-10, 2013	IN-SHAPE WEST LANE @ STOCKTON
MOTOR CITY ROLLOUT	FEBRUARY 11-12, 2013	COURTLAND RACQUETBALL CLUB
2013 USAR 46TH NATIONAL DOUBLES	FEBRUARY 13-17, 2013	ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY
2013 MO HIGH SCHOOL RACQUETBALL LEAGUE JV3 STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS	FEBRUARY 16, 2013	VETTA SPORTS - CONCORD
BATTLE OF MISSOURI	FEBRUARY 16, 2013	YMCA
2013 NORTHEAST INTERCOLLEGIATE REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS	FEBRUARY 22-24, 2013	SEVERNA PARK RACQUETBALL AND FITNESS CLUB
2013 MI CAPITAL CHALLENGE	FEBRUARY 22-24, 2013	MICHIGAN ATHLETIC CLUB
11TH ANNUAL DUBOISE ELECTRIC RACQUETBALL PRO-AM CLASSIC	FEBRUARY 22-24, 2013	WORLD CLASS FITNESS
39TH ANNUAL TORNADO ALLEY RACQUETBALL CLASSIC	FEBRUARY 22-24, 2013	YMCA BILL BARTLEY BRANCH
ISRA STATE SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIPS	FEBRUARY 22-24, 2013	GLASS COURT SWIM & FITNESS
2013 MISSOURI HIGH SCHOOL RACQUETBALL LEAGUE BOYS STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS	FEBRUARY 23, 2013	VETTA SPORTS - CONCORD
2013 DARA SNOWBALL OPEN	FEBRUARY 23, 2013	KIRKWOOD FITNESS & RACQUETBALL CLUB
PK TOUR SATELLITE SERIES PRESENTS THE CORPUS CHRISTI BAYFRONT PRO-AM	FEBRUARY 23-24, 2013	CORPUS CHRISTI ATHLETIC CLUB
2013 MISSOURI HIGH SCHOOL RACQUETBALL LEAGUE GIRLS STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS	FEBRUARY 24, 2013	VETTA SPORTS - CONCORD
2013 USAR 27TH NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL CHAMPIONSHIPS	FEBRUARY 27-MARCH 3, 2013	VETTA SPORTS
FRAN DAVIS RACQUETBALL CAMP - FINDLAY, OH	MARCH 1-3, 2013	FINDLAY YMCA
NORTHSOUND SHOOTOUT	MARCH 2, 2013	YMCA
NMRA 2013 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS	MARCH 6-9, 2013	TUCSON RACQUET & FITNESS CLUB
2013 IRT FLORIDA SPRING BREAK PRO-AM	MARCH 6-10, 2013	HARBOUR ISLAND ATHLETIC CLUB
OREGON STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS	MARCH 14-17, 2013	LLOYD ATHLETIC CLUB
SHAMROCK SHOOTOUT	MARCH 14-17, 2013	GLASS COURT SWIM & FITNESS
2013 USAR 41ST NATIONAL INTERCOLLEGIATE CHAMPIONSHIPS	MARCH 19-23, 2013	TBA
MILE HIGH PRO-AM	MARCH 21-24, 2013	DENVER ATHLETIC CLUB
2013 RAM STATE SINGLES RACQUETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS	MARCH 22-24, 2013	DAVISON ATHLETIC CLUB
2013 DE STATE SINGLES	MARCH 23-24, 2013	KIRKWOOD FITNESS & RACQUETBALL CLUB
2013 WOR IN THE PINES 3	MARCH 30, 2013	MEMORIAL PARK

FACILITY CITY	FACILITY STATE	CONTACT NAME	CONTACT EMAIL
PLEASANTON	CA	STEVE COHEN	SCOHEN@NATIONALMASTERSRACQUETBALL.ORG
MILWAUKIE	OR	ANGIE HENDERSON	ANGIE@EASTSIDEATHLETICCLUB.COM
MINOT	ND	STEVE KNOWLES	KNOWLES007@HOTMAIL.COM
BOSTON	MA	FRAN DAVIS	CAMPS@FRANDAVISRACQUETBALL.COM
ARLINGTON	VA	BILL MILBACH	BILLRACQUETBALL@GMAIL.COM
ARVADA	CO	BRENT ANDERSON	BRENTA@APEXPRD.ORG
LAKELAND	FL	JEAN TRIMBLE	JTRIMBLE1255@GMAIL.COM
CHALFONT	PA	TOM GAFFNEY	TOM@ARCHWAYPRESS.NET
ATHENS	GA	WILL COSTANZA	GRPATOURNMENTS@EARTHLINK.NET
WARREN	NJ	JONATHAN CLAY	JONATHAN@ROLLOUTRBALL.COM
ST. LOUIS	MO	DAN WHITLEY	DWHITLEY@VETTASPORTS.COM
SAN RAMON	CA	JOHN ELLIS	ELLISTYLE@COMCAST.NET
LOMBARD	IL	DAN JASKIER/CHERYL KIRK	DAN@GLASSCOURT.COM
LOMBARD	IL	DAN JASKIER/CHERYL KIRK	DAN@GLASSCOURT.COM
ST. LOUIS	MO	DAN WHITLEY	DWHITLEY@VETTASPORTS.COM
NEW BERN	NC	ERIC NEW	ERICNEW@HOTMAIL.COM
CORVALLIS	OR	ROB DURBIN	DURBIN_ROB@COMCAST.NET
ARLINGTON	TX	LEO VASQUEZ	LEO@THEMAV.COM
AUSTIN	TX	SOLY KOR	SOLYKOR@GMAIL.COM
TBA	FL	FRAN DAVIS	CAMPS@FRANDAVISRACQUETBALL.COM
STOCKTON	CA	JOHN ELLIS	ELLISTYLE@COMCAST.NET
LEWISTON	ID	STEVE PURCELL	ADCOOPERACQUETBALL@GMAIL.COM
WILMINGTON	DE	CHARLES MATHERS	CMATHERS@HOTMAIL.COM
LAS VEGAS	NV	FRAN DAVIS	CAMPS@FRANDAVISRACQUETBALL.COM
PEORIA	IL	LAUREL DAVIS	LAURELMDAVIS@COMCAST.NET
GRAND RAPIDS	MI	TWAYNE HOWARD	TBLAKESLEE@TEAMEKTELON.COM
ST. LOUIS	MO	DAN WHITLEY	DWHITLEY@VETTASPORTS.COM
STATE COLLEGE	PA	ROB VANSCHALKWYK	VANSCHALKWYKR@HOTMAIL.COM
SEATTLE	WA	FRAN DAVIS	CAMPS@FRANDAVISRACQUETBALL.COM
CORAL GABLES	FL	LYNNE OLVEY	GREATBALLSMIAMI@AOL.COM
RALEIGH	NC	LYNN STEPHENS	RACQETBALL@GMAIL.COM
UTICA	MI	CHUCK VAN HOOSE	CCVANHOOSE@COMCAST.NET
MILWAUKIE	OR	ANGIE HENDERSON	ANGIE@EASTSIDEATHLETICCLUB.COM
STOCKTON	CA	JOHN ELLIS	ELLISTYLE@COMCAST.NET
UTICA	MI	CHUCK VAN HOOSE	CCVANHOOSE@COMCAST.NET
TEMPE	AZ	JIM HISER	JHISER@USRA.ORG
ST. LOUIS	MO	DAN WHITLEY	DWHITLEY@VETTASPORTS.COM
JEFFERSON CITY	MO	BRENDAN GILJUM	BOG6FD@MAIL.MISSOURI.EDU
MILLERSVILLE	MD	ROB VANSCHALKWYK	VANSCHALKWYKR@HOTMAIL.COM
EAST LANSING	MI	DANIEL MULLIN	MULLINDAN@GMAIL.COM
FT. SMITH	AR	DANN SCHWINGER	DSCHWINGER@ABF.COM
WICHITA FALLS	TX	RANDY LANFORD	RANDYLANFORD@YAHOO.COM
LOMBARD	IL	CHERYL KIRK	CHERYLKKIRK@AOL.COM
ST. LOUIS	MO	DAN WHITLEY	DWHITLEY@VETTASPORTS.COM
WILMINGTON	DE	CHARLES MATHERS	CMATHERS@HOTMAIL.COM
CORPUS CHRISTI	TX	JOANNA REYES	STXRACQUETBALL@YAHOO.COM
ST. LOUIS	MO	DAN WHITLEY	DWHITLEY@VETTASPORTS.COM
ST. LOUIS	MO	JIM HISER	JHISER@USRA.ORG
FINDLAY	OH	FRAN DAVIS	CAMPS@FRANDAVISRACQUETBALL.COM
EVERETT	WA	BRIAN GILLESPIE	INFAMOUSBEEGEE@GMAIL.COM
TUCSON	AZ	CINDY TILBURY	CINDY.TILBURY@ATT.NET
TAMPA	FL	KIM ROY	KIMBERLY_ROY@HOTMAIL.COM
PORTLAND	OR	BRIAN ANCHETA	BAANCHETA@AOL.COM
LOMBARD	IL	DOUG HALVERSON	DHHAL@AOL.COM
TBA	TBA	JIM HISER	JHISER@USRA.ORG
DENVER	CO	DEBBIE BELDRING	DBELDRING@DENVERATHLETICCLUB.ORG
DAVISON	MI	TWAYNE HOWARD	TBLAKESLEE@TEAMEKTELON.COM
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SOUTHERN PINES	NC	LYNN STEPHENS	RACQETBALL@GMAIL.COM



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# HEAD/PENN DOMINATES IRF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

**H**HEAD Penn's Paola Longoria and Rocky Carson each earned the title "World Champion" by winning the Women's and Men's Singles titles, respectively, at the International Racquetball Federation (IRF) 2012 XVI World Racquetball Championships. In addition, Longoria teamed with HEAD Pro staff member Samantha Salas Solis to win the women's doubles World title for her second gold medal at the event.

For Longoria, the world's No. 1 ranked female racquetball player, the IRF World championship completes the "perfect season" after going undefeated during the 2011-12 WPRO tour. Carson's World Championship comes after finishing the International Racquetball Tour (IRT) 2011-12 season as the No. 2 ranked player in the world.

Longoria, 22, a native of San Luis Potosi, Mexico, signed a long-term contract with

HEAD/Penn in April. The 2012 Women's Singles World Championship title resides next to her other international competition achievements for Mexico: the 2011 and 2012 Women's Doubles champion and the 2012 Pan American Games Women's Singles champion. With her win in the final event of the WPRO season, Longoria captured her third season-end career title as a professional. She finished the 2011-12 WPRO season with nine tournament victories and an overall match record of 36 wins and 0 losses.

Carson, 33, lives in Orange County, California. He has been a member of the United States National Team twelve times. Winning gold in the Dominican Republic makes Rocky a "three-peat" champion after becoming the gold medalist at the World Championships for singles in 2008 and 2010. After winning silver in 2000

and bronze in 1998 and 2004, along with five other international competition medals, Rocky Carson is the most decorated male American racquetball player on the international stage.

Both Longoria and Carson are coached by HEAD/Penn Senior Staff member and USAR Hall of Fame member Fran Davis.

Also playing for Team USA and Team HEAD/Penn in Santo Domingo was Tony Carson (no relation to Rocky), who teamed up with his fellow American partner to capture the silver medal in Men's Doubles competition. The US Men's Team swept the field and won the overall team title, making both Rocky Carson and Tony Carson Team World Champions.

Follow Paola, Rocky, Tony, Samantha and the rest of the HEAD/Penn Professional Team at [www.facebook.com/headpennracquetball](http://www.facebook.com/headpennracquetball).



## Charlie Pratt EKTELON SIGNS ANOTHER TOP 10 PRO

**T**op touring racquetball professional Charlie Pratt has joined Ektelon, signing a three-year agreement. Pratt joins IRT Pros #3 Jose Rojas and #8 Andy Hawthorne to give the brand great men's pro tour exposure with three players ranked in the Top 10.

An International Racquetball Tour (IRT) player since 2009, Charlie achieved his highest season-end ranking of #8 in 2012 and is looking forward to rising up the ranks even higher during the next three years. "I've always admired Ektelon and the way they take care of their players. I look forward to the first Grand Slam event of the season so I can get out there with my EXO3 RG Toron racquet," said Pratt. Charlie also serves as official tour referee for IRT tournaments.

Hailing from Portland, Oregon, Charlie is known as a real road warrior during the season. Catch him at all IRT Tier 1 and Grand Slam events as well as many Satellite events and World Outdoor Racquetball (WOR) tournaments. You can also join Charlie at demos and clinics in the Portland area or possibly at an IRT event near you.

"Charlie is an up-and-coming player to watch. He has been training hard all summer, and we look forward to watching him live up to all of his potential this season using our Ektelon product." says Aimee Ruiz, Ektelon Pro Player Manager.

Check out Charlie on his Facebook Player Page at Charlie Pratt Racquetball.

## HEAD/PENN SIGNS PRO RACQUETBALL PLAYER NICK MONTALBANO

**H**HEAD/Penn Racquet Sports has signed men's professional racquetball circuit rising star Nick Montalbano. Nick is a New York native currently attending college at Colorado State University, Pueblo. He finished the 2011-2012 season on the International Racquetball Tour (IRT) ranked No. 33, his current USA Racquetball ranking among all male players. Nick joins a HEAD/Penn professional playing team that includes Paola Longoria and Rocky Carson.

Montalbano is the reigning International Racquetball Federation's (IRF) Junior Boy's 18 & Under Doubles title holder and the USA Racquetball Men's Collegiate Doubles champion. His impressive junior career includes three World Championships and nine National Championships and appointments to the USA Racquetball Junior National Team. Nick was also runner-up at the 2012 World Outdoor Racquetball Championships.

"We are thrilled to add Nick Montalbano to our group of top young up-and-coming professional players. He is not only a phenomenal talent on the court but is a true ambassador for the sport as a full-time student and athlete," says Doug Ganim, Indoor Promotions Manager for HEAD/Penn. "Nick has embraced this concept and excels in both areas."

Nick will be armed with HEAD's latest weapon of destruction, the new 160g BLACK WIDOW racquetball racquet. "I can't believe how much power the HEAD racquets have!" exclaimed Montalbano. "I was blown away when I picked it up. The maneuverability is awesome as well. I am really excited to be joining the HEAD/Penn team."

To follow Nick, Paola, Rocky, and the rest of the HEAD/Penn Professional Team, check out [www.facebook.com/headpennracquetball](http://www.facebook.com/headpennracquetball).

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