

# RACQUETBALL

## CHAMPIONS!

### SPRAGUE HIGH SCHOOL



U.S. Racquetball Association  
1661 Mesa Avenue  
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IN THIS ISSUE:

# NATIONAL DOUBLES & HIGH SCHOOLS



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St. Louis University High School's Boys Team -- Ninth Straight Title at the recent USAR High School Championship  
Photo By Tom Hartwig

## ON THE COVER

National Champions, Sprague High School  
Photo by Tom Hartwig.

## STAFF

Mike Wedel - Executive Director  
Renée Gundolff - Director of Events & Operations  
Brittany Clark - Membership Coordinator  
Bailee Jackson - Membership Coordinator

## SUBMISSIONS

Racquetball Magazine welcomes submissions from our members and readers. Propose article ideas by email to: [magazine@usaracquetball.com](mailto:magazine@usaracquetball.com). All submissions are subject to editing.

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## USA RACQUETBALL MISSION STATEMENT

USA Racquetball, recognized by the United States Olympic Committee as the National Governing Body for the sport, is committed to our members and the growth of racquetball from recreational play to international competition.

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## NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS & TEAM QUALIFYING

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

### U.S. NATIONAL TEAM QUALIFYING

In an effort to help ensure that the top American racquetball players have an equal and fair opportunity to qualify for the U.S. National Team, USA Racquetball adopted changes to the qualification process which began with the 2017-2018 U.S. National Team.

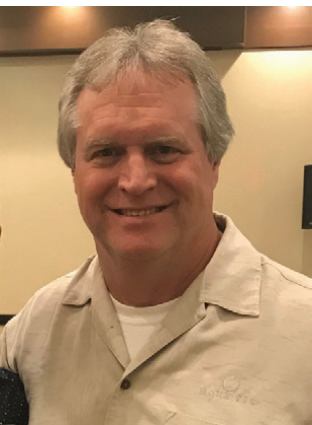
While the process for qualifying for doubles on the US Team is the same, the singles qualification procedure is determined by performance on a weighted scale at three qualifying events:

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

To learn more and for complete details, please visit: <http://www.teamusa.org/usa-racquetball/programs/team-usa>.

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BE CONSIDERED FOR A FUTURE ISSUE.



FROM THE  
Executive Director

By Mike Wedel

## National Headquarters

# Jerry Quenette SPIRIT AWARD

I have been running racquetball tournaments in the Kansas City area for about 15 years. A few weeks ago I had a situation arise that was truly unique. I want to share it with you as a relevant important aspect of growing our sport and keeping it a part of our lives.

Each year at our Winter Classic Tournament, I personally bestow an annual award during our Saturday night player party titled the Jerry Quenette Spirit Award. I select it based on the impact a person has had on the sport and his/her sportsmanship on and/or off the court.

The award is named after a racquetball friend who played at our club in Overland Park, Kansas. Jerry was a well-known competitive open level player. He was always willing to help with junior clinics or beginner classes. Jerry was a fierce competitor on the court and a great guy to sit with and have a beverage afterwards. He lost his battle with cancer 11 years ago, and the Winter Classic Spirit Award became the Jerry Quenette Spirit Award.

Each year in the weeks leading up to the tournament, I wonder who the recipient will be for that year's award. I do not spend a lot of time thinking about it or discussing it with others. It always just comes to me 3-5 days prior to the event. It may sound strange, but the person is always somewhat of a surprise to me when it pops in my head. This year a couple of days prior to the event, no names had come into my head, and I had considered the possibility that there would be no award recipient this year. It has never been my practice to diminish the importance of the award by choosing "just anyone."

The day before the event was scheduled to start, I had come to grips with the thought of not giving the award this year. That is when it hit me; I knew exactly who this year's recipient was to be with such certainty that I printed the certificates immediately and knew exactly what I was going to say at the ceremony. Some friends I have told this story to insist that it was Jerry who told me who should receive the award (he was like that).



Photo by Lucy Delsarto

This year's recipient (or in this case recipients) was a mother and her daughter who embody exactly what we all love about racquetball: it is about friends and family. This mother and daughter play together almost every week or as much as their very busy lives will allow them. With jobs, kids, and families, they still find time to get to the gym and compete together and against each other. They also do a great job of involving their families in the sport. You will often see their husbands and young children/grandchildren at the gym cheering them on during tournament matches. It is great to see the entire family enjoying the friendship and competition.

This mother and daughter duo, Theresa McCoy and Becca Reyelts, are great examples of how we can all help to grow the sport in our clubs. These two are always available to volunteer to stuff bags for tournaments or help at the tournament in any way possible. They have found a way to keep their passion for racquetball alive. In the 2019 Winter Classic, Becca won first place in the Women's Open; Becca and Theresa together won first place in Women's A Doubles; and Becca and her partner won first place in Mixed Open Doubles. Congratulations to

both for a great tournament and for being a great example of how you can have both a family and a racquetball family!

These kinds of moments keep me motivated help grow this great sport of ours. It was a wonderful experience to watch Theresa and Becca's family members cheering for their wives/ mothers/grandmother/sister/and daughter at our event! The message I hope everyone will take from this story is to try to involve your friends and family in the sport as much as you can. We need to make sure we each are doing all we can to help to bring racquetball to the next generation.



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Dan Whitley

# Let's Grow Racquetball

We often ask our membership to “support racquetball.” That support can come in many forms. One critical way is to help grow the game. It is imperative that we all work to bring new players to the game, ensure retention of current players, and welcome back, with open arms, previous racquetball players. What are the easiest ways to do that?

- Become a tournament director and add an event to your state’s annual tournament schedule.
- Reach out to your state association and ask how you can help.
- If a national championship is in your area, reach out to our national office staff and offer to lend a hand at the event.
- Become a racquetball instructor. Level 1 of the USA Racquetball Instructor Program is FREE.
- Organize a league at your club. Become the “captain” of the program to keep players engaged and have someone to go to with challenges. Be the glue that keeps the program together, thinking ahead to ensure retention. The captain can also help recruit and onboard new players into the league.
- Establish a grassroots program and offer monthly open houses to introduce the game to new players. Schedule and promote a “bring a friend” week at your club.
- Reach out to municipalities and offer to provide programming at outdoor courts. They are seeking programs to put in parks program guides to ensure courts are in use. Outdoor courts provide the best means to bring the game to new players since they are indeed often located in parks and visible to so many passersby.
- Create a junior racquetball program or start a college racquetball club team. These are two excellent ways to create and sustain the racquetball players of tomorrow.

### Junior Racquetball

The foundation to a junior racquetball program is to find that one “key person” -- that leader or role model who can ensure kids stay engaged and have a fun experience. Once there is an established key person, they need to connect with a local racquetball club to find an unused block of court time after school (before prime time) or on the weekends. The ideal recipe for the program would be to use a “drill and play” format where the kids would learn or review a skill and then engage in play. Think of a PE class where kids learn some basic skills and then can immediately begin playing and participating in the activity fairly quickly.

Involving parents is just as critical as engaging kids. By late elementary school (3rd - 5th grade) or middle school, kids are beginning to seek new sports outlets, and parents are seeking to continue to have their children involved in sports. Racquetball is a great outlet for kids. It’s highly probable that one or both parents of the player have played racquetball at some point in life. How many “coaches” for other youth sports, at beginner levels, are actively playing the sport they coach? It’s easy to bring in support to chaperone and keep the kids engaged and organized.

As part of the curriculum, the key person should always display the “next level” program to help shape aspiration for the players. Build up with goals for the players to strive for. It could be as simple as creating a junior challenge ladder or striving to play the D division in a future tournament. Maybe it’s creating a middle school or high school intramural program? Coordinate with a school. Student organizations create peer-to-peer engagement and recruitment. A “Racquetball Club” gives kids an outlet to participate in an individual life sport with the feel of a team environment. Kids join a lot of clubs, so participation in other sports wouldn’t prohibit participation. Reach out to a local school to learn the best way to start a student organization. Often, it only requires a few kids to get it started. Once a core is established, they can become the influencers to help grow the program.

### Collegiate Racquetball

College campuses around the country have racquetball courts in their recreation centers. As ambassadors for racquetball, we need to ensure they are well-utilized. As with any program, a collegiate program would require one key person. This person could be either a college racquetball player or a local enthusiast. They would lead the effort to grow the game on campus with the objective of introducing racquetball to new players and sustain/retain/improve those who already play. The program could be in the form of a club team or simply a campus challenge ladder.

If the college goes the club team route, officers can be named for the club just like any other student organization. This encourages accountability within the ranks and inspires succession playing to sustain the team. Bylaws would need to be written (samples can be requested from any active college club team in the country), and the club would need to become familiar with the student organization funding allocation procedures. A dues structure should be developed to encourage the school to help fund the team. A relationship must be formed with the campus rec center to reserve blocks of courts on a weekly basis for team practices. The team can recruit via a trial/tryout basis (no cuts, just a way to organize at the start of the semester), an organizational meeting, or an open house. The team can create awareness and generate funds with a campus tournament. The best and easiest ways to fundraise would be through your state association, promoting to tournament players at events your team attends, and reaching out to alumni. Through the team’s budget, your team can help bring your players to area tournaments and send a team to Intercollegiate Nationals in the Spring.

If you are interested in starting a college program, the USA Racquetball Collegiate Committee is ready and willing to help get programs started. Please contact the chairperson for this committee, Dr. Brendan Giljum, at [brendangiljum@gmail.com](mailto:brendangiljum@gmail.com) for more information.



# ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE

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

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

Donations of \$100 or more, made in 2018 to the TEAM USA CHALLENGE, *will be matched* by the group of generous Team Benefactors at right, who have each pledged up to \$2,500 to support the cause. With your support, the USA Racquetball family can raise more than \$30,000 for *your* U.S. National Teams!

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

*To become a benefactor for the 2018 Team USA Challenge, please contact USA Racquetball at 719-635-5396.*

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# MEET THE USA RACQUETBALL STAFF



**Renée Gundolff, Director of Events and Operations:** Renée has wanted to be a part of the Olympic Movement since she was three years old. Graduating from Portland State with a degree in Sports Public Relations, Renée speaks English, Japanese, French, and American Sign Language. She has worked in nearly every department with a National Governing Body (NGB), including Membership, Coaching Education, Events, and High Performance. *Congratulations to Renée, whose last name will change to Isherwood after her wedding in April!*

**Brittany Clark, Membership Coordinator:** Brittany graduated from the University of Colorado - Colorado Springs (UCCS) in 2017 with a bachelor's degree in Marketing. She interned at USA Field Hockey before interning and working part time at USA Racquetball in 2017. Brittany has six years of event and membership experience working at the Colorado Springs Country Club in many different roles. During her free time she enjoys hiking, playing golf, and spending time with her friends and family.



**Bailee Jackson, Membership Coordinator:** Bailee comes to us from USA Wrestling where she worked with the state services department and diversity and inclusion. She is a graduate of Coppin State University in Baltimore, Maryland, and has a passion for sport. She is excited to be a part of USA Racquetball and help in any way she can. When she is not working, you will see Bailee either coaching or playing volleyball or reading a good book. She is always up for a challenge, and if anyone wants to teach her to play racquetball, she is open to it!

## USA RACQUETBALL ANNOUNCES 2019 ELECTION CYCLE RESULTS

The USA Racquetball Election Committee, chaired by Terry Rogers, announced recently the results from the 2018-2019 election cycle. Current Board members Thurman Brooks, Cheryl Kirk, and Dan Whitley will be rejoining the Board to serve three-year terms, the second for each.

Three seats were coming available in this election cycle, and the solicitation process began in November with announcements on the USA Racquetball website and Facebook and via emails to members outlining the process, requirements, and deadlines. Follow-up notifications were sent. While the Election Committee anticipated there would be a number of candidates who would like to try their hands at a run for the Board, at the deadline only the three above mentioned candidates had applied to find a spot on the slate and move into the formal election process. Therefore, with three seats available and three individuals applying, no formal election was held in March 2019. Thurman, Cheryl, and Dan will be installed as returning Board members at the Annual Board of Directors Meeting in May.

We invite and encourage USA Racquetball members to consider Board service when the next cycle opens in October/November 2019. Another way to become involved is to join a committee of interest. Please visit <https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Racquetball.aspx>, About/Contact Us/Volunteer Committees, or contact Vice President Scott Fish at [scott@32digital.com](mailto:scott@32digital.com).



# HIGH SCHOOLS EARN HONORS, Champions Crowned in St. Louis

By Renée Gundolff  
Photos By Tom Hartwig

The 32nd Annual USA Racquetball National High School Championship presented by Penn and the Missouri High School Racquetball Association was held in St. Louis, February 27th-March 3rd. This event surpassed the largest National High School Championship with 420 athletes from 42 schools competing for top honors. An impressive note is that the participants were evenly split, 51% boys to 49% girls.

Vetta Racquet Sports Concord and Vetta Racquet Sports West hosted, showing the players championship-level hospitality and going above and beyond for the players and tournament staff. USA Racquetball extends sincere gratitude to all of the staff members who made this a great week for all. Special thanks go to Dan Whitley, Hanna Schuermann, and Heather Chavez who led the coordination of volunteers and meals. This was no easy task with over 100 volunteer parents providing meals for all players and coaches!

This Championship emphasizes team competition with players slotted into divisions based upon their rankings at their schools in singles and doubles. In singles, each team can roster a player in Divisions #1 through #6, and in doubles, they can roster one team in Divisions #1 through #3. The Olympic format ensures that players get to compete in at least three matches in each of their respective divisions. Each player starts in the Gold section of his/her division, advancing with wins but dropping down to Red, Blue, or White based on which round was lost. Medals and team points are earned in each of these divisions, so each round advanced means a lot toward team totals. It was great to see someone who earned a medal in the Red division take as much pride in that accomplishment as a player who earned a medal in the Gold division. Parents and coaches beamed with pride as players received their medals and had their pictures taken in front of the championship banner.

Matches began at 8:00 am every day and ran until midnight! Thank you to the coaches and parents who were there for their kids every hour of every day (even during two snowstorms during the event!).

After over 1,100 matches were played, the Boys, Girls, and Overall Team Champions were announced. Congratulations to Sprague High School of Salem, Oregon, for winning the prestigious Overall Team Championship. The second-place team was two-time defending champion Parkway West High School who trailed by 833 points. In the Boys Team competition, St. Louis University High School of St. Louis took home the title with 3,674 points, with Sprague Boys coming in second. The Girls Team competition came down to a mere 28 points separating champion Parkway West over Lindbergh High School (both in the St. Louis area) in the closest margin ever.

Very special recognition and congratulations go to St. Louis University High School for winning nine straight Boys Team titles. What a record, what an achievement!



Several current and former US Junior National Team members as the top seeds highlighted the Girls #1 Gold Singles division. Reigning National High School Girls #1 Champion Annie Roberts from Barlow High School in Oregon played a rematch of last year's final against Nikita Chauhan of Dougherty Valley High School in California. Congratulations to Annie on her repeat Gold medal performance and appointment to the 2019 Junior National Team after winning 15-6, 15-9!

The Boys #1 Gold Singles division also had a deep field of high-level players gunning for the top-seeded Antonio Rojas of Langston Hughes Academy. Antonio took on freshman Vedant Chauhan of Dougherty Valley High School in California in the finals. Vedant had expended a tremendous amount of energy in the Boys #1 Doubles match just an hour before to win Gold with his partner Eric Liu. Rojas was the victor in two (15-2, 15-12), winning his first High School title.

As part of the closing ceremonies, Coach Nina Klein of Nerinx Hall High School received the USOC Developmental Coach of the Year Award. She has coached at Nerinx Hall for 16 years. In addition, Abby LaChance (Cor Jesu) and Mark Duffié (Parkway) were recognized as recipients of 2019 USA Racquetball scholarships.

The 2020 National High School Championships will be held in Portland, Oregon, at the Multnomah Athletic Club. With record attendance set this year, there are high expectations for the turnout. We hope to see you there!



Above: Nina Klein, coach of Nerinx Hall High School was presented with the USOC Developmental Coach of the Year Award.  
Below: Sprague HS Boys #1 Robert Griffin



Left Top: Girls #1 Doubles finals Sam Barlow HS (Annie Roberts/Kelsey Klinger) and Sprague HS (Ayisha Tamerhoulet/Katt MacGregor)  
Left Middle: Awards Ceremony  
Left: Girls Team Champions Parkway West HS  
Above: Mixed #1 Doubles finalists Dougherty Valley HS (Nikita Chauhan/Vedant Chauhan) and Parkway West HS (Mark Duffié/Erin Slutzky)



# 2019 NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Vetta Racquet Sports Concord & West · St. Louis, MO · February 27th - March 3rd

## TEAM COMPETITION

### Overall

1. Sprague HS, OR (5,666)
2. Parkway West HS, MO (4,833)
3. Lindbergh HS, MO (3,807)
4. Lafayette HS, MO (3,116)
5. Dougherty Valley HS, CA (2,034)
6. Kirkwood HS, MO (1,981)
7. Beaverton HS, OR (1,961)
8. Sam Barlow HS, OR (1,941)
9. Sunset HS, OR (1,853)
10. Copper Hills HS, UT (1,707)

### Boys

1. St. Louis University HS, MO (3,674)
2. Sprague HS, OR (2,432)
3. Parkway West HS, MO (1,559)
4. Lafayette HS, MO (1,428)
5. Sunset HS, OR (1,190)
6. Copper Hills HS, UT (1,129)
7. Dougherty Valley HS, CA (1,034)
8. Wayzata HS, MN (936)
9. Southridge HS, OR (936)
10. Lindbergh HS, MO (840)

### Girls

1. Parkway West HS, MO (2,396)
2. Lindbergh HS, MO (2,368)
3. Sprague HS, OR (2,221)
4. Cor Jesu Academy, MO (2,214)
5. Sam Barlow HS, OR (1,473)
6. Kirkwood HS, MO (1,415)
7. Lafayette HS, MO (1,342)
8. Notre Dame HS, MO (1,184)
9. Quarry Lane School, CA (1,004)
10. Beaverton HS, OR (938)

## BOYS SINGLES

### Champion:

- #1 Antonio Rojas
- #2 Rory Lampe
- #3 Andrew Porterfield
- #4 Nick Schulze
- #5 Tanner Bach
- #6 Tom Phillips

### Runner Up:

- Vedant Chauhan
- Joseph Miner
- William Sherman
- Josh Bradshaw
- Ryan Juergens
- Ian Bell

## BOYS DOUBLES

### Champion:

- #1 Eric Liu/Vedant Chauhan
- #2 Ian Bell/Rory Lampe
- #3 Zach Pavlisin/Liam John

### Runner Up:

- Matthew Hayes/Nick Schulze
- Derek Crocker/William Sherman
- Josh Bradshaw/Joe Swartz

## GIRLS SINGLES

### Champion:

- #1 Annie Roberts
- #2 Callie Hummel
- #3 Taylor Caton
- #4 Kylie Lograsso
- #5 Ashley Gang
- #6 Bridget Klohr

### Runner Up:

- Nikita Chauhan
- Esha Cyril
- Grace Maloney
- Nicole Fritsch
- Natalie Littich
- Elise Abbott

## GIRLS DOUBLES

### Champion:

- #1 Annie Roberts/Kelsey Klinger
- #2 Natalie Littich/Taylor Caton
- #3 Zoe Hughes/Angela Auck

### Runner Up:

- Ayisha Tamerhoulet/Katt MacGregor
- Grace Maloney/Nicole Fritsch
- Bridget Klohr/Ellie Opilka

## MIXED DOUBLES

### Champion:

- #1 Nikita Chauhan/Vedant Chauhan
- #2 Malika Tamerhoulet/Rory Lampe
- #3 Liz Calvert/Alex Lancia

### Runner Up:

- Erin Slutzky/Mark Duffié
- Callie Hummel/Ethan Wood
- Elise Abbott/Josh Bradshaw

USA Racquetball strives for accuracy in our Championship Records. If you believe there to be any errors or omissions, please notify us at [championships@usaracquetball.com](mailto:championships@usaracquetball.com)



Boys #1 Singles Champion Antonio Rojas and Runner Up Vedant Chauhan

## 2019 HIGH SCHOOL ALL AMERICANS

### Boys

- Cayden Akins (Timber Creek, TX)
- Robert Arrellano (Tarija, Bolivia)
- Cody Boucher (Gilford, NH)
- Vedant Chauhan (Dougherty Valley, CA)
- Andrew Gleason (Johnston, IA)
- Robert Griffin (Sprague, OR)
- Cole Hartman (Wayzata, MN)
- Matthew Hayes (SLUH, MO)
- Ivan Hernandez (Santa Fe, CA)
- Rory Lampe (Sprague, OR)
- Eric Liu (Dougherty Valley, CA)
- Joe Miner (SLUH, MO)
- Tavish Quigley (Copper Hills, UT)
- Brady Reynolds (Gilford, NH)
- Antonio Rojas (Langston Hughes, CA)
- Nick Schulze (SLUH, MO)
- Lucas Shoemaker (Bettendorf, IA)
- Nathan Soltis (Wayzata, MN)

### Girls

- Ellie Bacich (Visitation, MO)
- Alandra Canchola (Stockton, CA)
- Nikita Chauhan (Dougherty Valley, CA)
- Arya Cyril (Quarry Lane, CA)
- Esha Cyril (Quarry Lane, CA)
- Shane Diaz (San Antonio, TX)
- Callie Hummel (Parkway, MO)
- Kelsey Klinger (Barlow, OR)
- Abby LaChance (Cor Jesu, MO)
- Sarah Lovett (Kirkwood, MO)
- Katt MacGregor (Sprague, OR)
- Joell Martin (Copper Hills, UT)
- Alice Reider (Kirkwood, MO)
- Annie Roberts (Barlow, OR)
- Erin Slutzky (Parkway, MO)
- Ayisha Tamerhoulet (Sprague, OR)
- Kate Zawalski (Cor Jesu, MO)

# 2019 NATIONAL SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIP



## NORTHRIDGE RECREATION CENTER

Newly renovated club with 10 racquetball courts. Additional host club: Life Time - Centennial



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## OTHER ACTIVITIES

Check out all of the other activities going on in the area during your stay. Go to a Rockies game, take a brewery tour, or go see all of the beautiful sites Colorado has to offer.



## HIGHLANDS RANCH REC. CENTER – NORTHRIDGE

**MAY 22-26**

**DENVER, CO**

**NATIONAL CHAMPIONS WILL BE DECIDED. DON'T MISS ANY OF THE ACTION!**

Enter to play in the championship or just come and watch the action! If you are unable to join us in person, watch the livestream available on the USA Racquetball Facebook page. Support our athletes as they compete!





## WSMRA Celebrates Event's 30th Anniversary

January 18-20, 2019 | Canoga Park, California

By Cheryl Kirk  
Photo By Scott Gallegos

The Women's Senior/Masters Racquetball Association chose a "warm" location for this 30th annual event, and the term fits both the weather AND the hospitality. As 55 players from 18 states and Guatemala (making this an international soiree) entered the Athletic Society West Valley, Operations Manager Terri Ibarra and her team were friendly and accommodating. The club features ten great courts and a central area perfect for placement of the tournament desk and the silent auction. Players visited and caught up while watching the action through the back glass on Courts A, B, and C. Formerly known as the Spectrum Club, this facility has hosted many tournaments over the years.

### Making a Difference

A significant aspect of this annual tournament down through the years is the generosity of the players, sponsors, and contributors. Starting on Thursday afternoon, the traditional Fun Doubles gives players the opportunity to get a feel for the courts and to participate in a fundraiser for breast cancer awareness and research. Donations exceeded \$300.

The popular silent auction featured highly desired items that were donated by individual players as well as Head, Gearbox, E-Force, ProKennex, Rollout, USA Racquetball, IRT, NMRA, and IRF World Seniors. This first-class fundraiser, netting over \$750 to be split between the WSMRA, the Military Racquetball Federation (MRF), and the U.S. National Teams, was organized by Carol Gellman and supported by the Albuquerque contingent.

At the banquet, a fun activity gives players another opportunity to exercise their competitive spirit by purchasing squares on a grid. A drawing ensues, and winners snare semi-fabulous prizes (and a couple of fairly fabulous ones, i.e., entries to future tournaments). Another \$750 was raised to support the WSMRA's activities and contributions to racquetball.

### Tournament Format

All eight divisions were round robins ranging from 5-10 individuals/teams. Many (not all) were combined, and after the smoke cleared, awards were bestowed according to the original divisions entered. Thirty-six amazons entered two divisions. To give a flavor of what this meant to some, here's an example: Susan Mueller from Illinois, by virtue of two 10-round robins, played 18 matches of two games to 11 points over the three days. Players in these and similar circumstances nevertheless departed the event vertical to Mother Earth, walking unaided. WSMRA events are NOT for weaklings. We are strong and proud!

### Saturday Night Banquet

A solemn moment of silence began the traditional banquet, honoring those players who have left our midst over these 30 years of camaraderie and competition. This sadly included Kathie Trotter of Florida who was entered to play in this event but passed away in December. RIP Kathie. RIP Dear Ones.

Sincere thanks went to sponsors HEAD/Penn Racquetball and Rick Betts who helped provide such a great experience.

Frossene King of New Mexico deserves grateful admiration for designing the great 30th Anniversary Holiday logo for the purple souvenir jackets that were happily in everyone's color palette.

Six loyal and fun-loving women have logged sterling attendance: Kendra Tutsch with 29 years; Nancy Kronenfeld with 26 years; and Merijean Kelley, Mildred Gwinn, Carol Gellman, and Paula Sperling each with 25 years.

During the program, Ingrid Callman and Dorette Leinemann (hailing from Lewes and Selbyville, Delaware, respectively) received recognition for having traveled the farthest. -- 2,752 miles. Wait a minute. Farther than Guatemala City? This enquiring author did some research, and sure enough, Marie Gomar traveled a mere 2,680 miles.

*Note with Raised Eyebrows: For a difference of 72 miles, shouldn't Marie have at least received an extra Wisconsin cow pie from President Kendra?? Just saying...*

Speaking of Kendra, the WSMRA Board of Directors, with special assistance from the talented and above mentioned Marie Gomar, presented her with a framed photo collage commemorating her many years of inspired WSMRA leadership.

After all the matches were played, all the awards for first and second place (in the shape of California) presented, and all the photos taken, several hardy souls spent two more days in sunny Southern California attending the popular Malibu Racquetball Camp hosted by Cindy Tilbury and Rick Betts and taught by Debra Tisinger-Moore.

So where will WSMRA #31 be competed? Details are being finalized for the WSMRA to land in St. Louis next year, January 17-19, 2020! Visit [wsmra.com](http://wsmra.com) throughout 2019 for details as they come available.

## WSMRA Hosts

Kendra Tutsch -- President  
Cindy Tilbury and Linda Moore -- Tournament Directors  
Merijejan Kelley, Terry Rogers, Paula Sperling -- Tournament Committee

### Tournament Staff

Lois Palmer -- Desk  
Mae Chin-Varon -- Desk  
Carol Gellman -- Silent Auction  
Patricia Meyer -- Fundraising  
Jassi Singh -- Meals  
Dennis Chandler -- Shuttle  
Marie Gomar -- Shuttle  
Scott Gallegos -- Photographer  
Mark Mann -- DJ  
Nidia Funes -- Wine Pourer  
Nancy Large -- Wine Pourer



Left: Ingrid Callman and Jane Snyder

Photo By Eddie Myers

Right: Marie Gomar and friends

Photo By Scott Gallegos



## Tournament Winners by Division

<http://www.r2sports.com/tourney/viewResults.asp?TID=24979>

### Singles

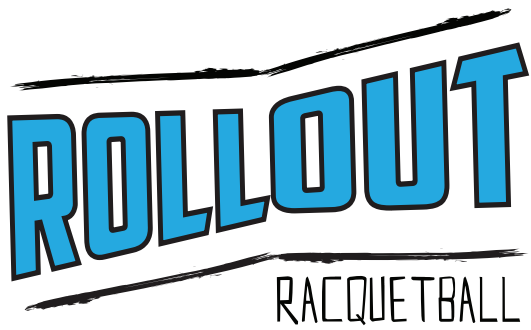
- 40 -- Maureen Baldwin (CA)
- 45 -- CJ Herceg (CA)
- 50 -- Marie Gomar (Guatemala)
- 55 -- Kathy Stellema (MI)
- 60 -- Ann Fingerhood (MO)
- 65 -- Marsha Berry (KY)
- 70 -- Sharon Huczek (MI)
- 75 -- Marquita Molina (CA)
- 35 B/C -- Courtney Justice (NY)
- 45 B/C -- Lorena Chables (AZ)
- 55 B/C -- Audrey Sorrento (NY)
- 65 B/C -- Patricia Meyer (NY)

Nancy Large -- Wine Pourer

### Doubles

- Open/A -- Shari Coplen/Cindy Tilbury (MO/CA)
- B/C -- Cheryl Kirk/Dolores Lamberson (IL)
- 35 -- Maureen Baldwin/Gwen Silbert (CA)
- 45 -- Marie Gomar/Cheryl Kirk (Guatemala/IL)
- 55 -- Carolyn Hollis/Linda Moore (CA/AZ)
- 65 -- Laurie Kitchen/Jane Snyder (NY/TN)
- 75 -- Mildred Gwinn/Marquita Molina (NC/CA)





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## New 2019 Venues for NMRA Players!

The National Masters Racquetball Association is working hard to find new players and members. Not only have we lowered our entry fees to entice new 40+ players, but we are also taking our round robin tournaments to new venues in 2019. Many players like to combine racquetball with seeing new areas of the U.S., so we do our best to move our tournaments around the country. We've lined up two new cities this year! Complete details of these tournaments, including hotel and registration information, are available on R2Sports.com and our [www.nmra.info](http://www.nmra.info) website in the Tournaments section.

First, we just finished our March 6-9 first-ever visit to the San Antonio area. The Alamo City Racquetball Association (ACRA) and the Texas Racquetball Association (TXRA) welcomed our group to the home of the famous Alamo and Downtown Riverwalk. This venue brought 40 first-time players to the NMRA family! The weather was beautiful, as promised -- not too hot for lots of round robin racquetball. The Thousand Oaks YMCA and San Antonio College have asked us to come back anytime. At our traditional banquet, we raised \$1,300 for Texas Junior Racquetball, Sandy Long's amazing program that generates national champions. Special thanks to Sandy Rios for all of her coordinating efforts and to Jeffrey Thompson from DailyRacquetball.com, who spent all day Saturday live streaming our matches. Check out his blog!

After going to a historic town, we will be visiting a historic racquetball club in the Chicago area. The Glass Court Swim & Fitness Club in Lombard, Illinois, will be hosting, June 27-30. For over 40 years, the best players in the world have competed on the three-glass-wall court in Lombard. In the 1990s, I loved to bring all of the women players from Minnesota down to Lombard to compete in the Revie Sorey Classic. And now, almost 30 years later, I'm bringing all of my NMRA friends! Chicago has so much to offer in the way of art, museums, restaurants, lakeshore relaxation, and town festivals. From our NMRA website, be sure to print the "Things To Do" document for the area.

Both of these 2019 events feature men's and women's singles and doubles, plus mixed doubles, in five-year increments. You are never eliminated—everyone plays every day!

To round out 2019, we will return to Atlanta and the Recreation ATL club. December 6-8 is set for our Doubles Only tournament. It will be chilly, but we all know that is perfect racquetball weather. Start scoping out your doubles partners now!

I'd like to conclude by pointing out that all of our 2019 clubs are all individually owned and not part of a big chain of health clubs. Without these owners who are independent thinkers and believers in our sport, we would not be able to offer the quality events we strive for, at a reasonable entry fee. I encourage you to show your appreciation for the contribution of all court owners who provide a home-away-from-home to our friends and fellow competitors. They are the heart of our sport and should be celebrated every day.

## Easterlings Work Behind the Scenes for Racquetball

By Cheryl Kirk

Jim and Dianne Easterling have been quietly contributing to Racquetball's legacy for years now. One of Jim's better-known roles was Chair of USA Racquetball's Hall of Fame Committee for nearly 15 years, from 2002 through 2015. But that's just the tip of the iceberg.

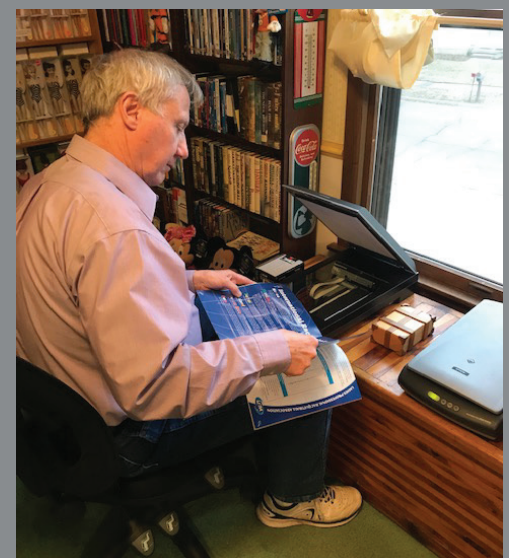
For those of us old enough to remember, "back in the day" there were no electronics, no Internet. An IBM Selectric showed up sometime along the way (that's a typewriter, FYI, with built-in correction tape). It was hot stuff. Hard copy was the way business was done, and that was no exception for the USA Racquetball Board of Directors.

A number of years back, Jim took the initiative to scan the minutes of the Board -- from 1969-2008. It took a very long time, and it was an invaluable service to USA Racquetball. Before this was done, the entire history of the sport's governing body was on paper in binders. These now safely reside in USAR's database.

Since December 2017 when he "retired," Jim spends each weekday morning from 7:30 am - 12:00 pm painstakingly dismantling donated Racquetball, Racquetball in Review, and National Racquetball magazines so that he can scan them, one page at a time, into his computer. The magazine pages then go onto flash drives, and Dianne has applied a word recognition tracking function.

When pressed, Jim estimates that he has put 215 hours of work to date into this current project and Dianne has contributed 120 hours. So far, they have scanned about 18 years' worth of issues (roughly 2000-2018 plus bits and pieces of others). Dianne has created a tracking graph to keep tabs on the project.

A recently purchased scanner will greatly expedite that process, and Jim anticipates that 2000-2018 will be available for posting on the USAR website in the first quarter of this year. The next set of years (1990-1999) should be ready for prime time by the end of March. For this labor of love, the Racquetball World owes Jim and Dianne a debt of gratitude!



If anyone has additional magazine copies dated prior to 1993 that they would like to donate to the cause, please contact Jim at [rbjim887@comcast.net](mailto:rbjim887@comcast.net).



By Jim Winterton

# Coaching A Team

## How To Get Started

One question USAR-IP Master instructors are often asked is, “How do you get started coaching a college, high school, or regional team of players?”

There could be a full book written on this subject, but here are a few guidelines:

1. Create a team rulebook. In this book, explain expectations, practices, attendance at practices, social rules, and other important guidelines.
2. Appoint or have the team or group elect captains or a players' council for decision-making and input.
3. Engage a faculty adviser. The adviser role should be defined in detail.
4. Select practice times for the team and establish a schedule.
5. Depending upon the number of courts, player skill levels, and needs for the team, begin to execute a long-term practice plan. Fall, off-season, Winter, and Spring schedules can be planned out.

Examples:

Fall Season: Install fundamentals: forehand, backhand, serve, footwork. Focus on these fundamentals with practice objectives.

December - January: Begin training and playing at least three times per week, separate from scheduled practice times.

February - Nationals: Fine-tune serves, returns, and game strategies to prepare for State, Regional, or National competition.

6. Forming practice schedules with a minimum of available courts can be a challenge. Let's say you have two to four courts available for practice:

Fall Season: Courts 1 thru 4: four athletes per court working on forehand, backhand, serve, ceiling balls. Other athletes in the hallway practicing shadow swings, forehand, and backhand.

December - January: Doubles play on courts 1 thru 4. Shadow swings with footwork in gym or hallways.

February - Nationals: Courts 1 and 2 -- singles, courts 3 and 4 -- doubles. All others -- intense off-court footwork drills with coaches. Switch courts after 30 minutes, switch groups after one hour.

7. Meet regularly with the team captains or council. Try to head off little problems before they become more significant ones.

8. Use your USA Racquetball Instructor Program (USAR-IP) mentors if you run into a problem. Also, within each region there are experienced coaches who will be willing to help. USAR-IP Master Instructors and State Association Boards of Directors can help point you in the right direction.

9. Ensure all coaches, assistants, and advisers are current with SafeSport training and certifications, including background checks.

Good luck! Many of you are experienced USAR-IP certified coaches, and we welcome any advice you may have!

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## Familiar Faces Back In the Finals

By Brittany Clark  
Photos By KSphotography

The 2019 USA Racquetball National Doubles Championship presented by Penn Racquetball and Tempe Tourism was competed at the Arizona State University Sun Devil Fitness Center, February 6th-10th. It was another successful championship with a high turnout of players and intense competition. Tempe was cooler this year due to the cold front that hit much of the northern portion of the country just days before the tournament. There were 543 matches played over the five days of the event with many teams crowned National Champions for their respective divisions. The U.S. Team Qualifying divisions were full of excitement as the top players in the U.S. competed for spots on the 2019-2020 U.S. Adult Racquetball team that will represent the United States at the 2019 Pan American Games in Lima, Peru, this August.

The Women's U.S. Team Qualifying division saw multiple returning champions battling it out for the title, and they did not disappoint. In the first semifinals match of Aimee Ruiz/Janel Tisinger-Ledkins vs. Rhonda Rajsich/Sheryl Lotts, Rajsich/Lotts proved to be tough competitors for the multi-year champions, winning 15-6 in the first game. The second game was close and full of athleticism and long rallies. The game was tied at points 11 and 13, but in the end Ruiz/Tisinger-Ledkins came out with a win of 15-13, taking the match to a tiebreaker. Ruiz/Tisinger-Ledkins used the momentum gained from winning the second game and didn't look back. They won 11-2 and secured their spot in the finals. The second semifinal match was Kelani Bailey-Lawrence and her partner Sharon Jackson against the sister team of Danielle Maddux and

Michelle De La Rosa. This was another exciting match that ended in a close tiebreaker. The reigning Women's Doubles Champions Bailey Lawrence/Jackson won the first game 15-9. However, the second game was all Maddux/De La Rosa, with a win, 15-9. Bailey Lawrence/Jackson had the lead for most of the tiebreaker, but the dynamic sister duo kept it close and were victorious in the end, winning 11-10.

The Women's U.S. Team Qualifying finals match was thrilling to watch and full of heart as Ruiz/Tisinger-Ledkins and Maddux/De La Rosa took the court. The sisters started off strong in the first game, but Ruiz/Tisinger-Ledkins fought their way back to tie the game at 7-7. From there Ruiz/Tisinger-Ledkins played consistently and won 15-7. In the second game, Ruiz/Tisinger-Ledkins took the lead and came out on top, 15-7. This marked their fifth National Doubles title together, and with this win, they secured their place on Team USA at the Pan American Games. This is Tisinger-Ledkins' first time qualifying for the Pan American Games team and Ruiz' second.

The Men's U.S. Team Qualifying division was pure enthusiasm from start to finish. Rocky Carson paired up with Charlie Pratt, and the combination proved dominant. Returning 2016 Doubles Champions Jake Bredenbeck and Jose Diaz were also in attendance. The first semifinals match had a similar feeling to last year's with Adam Manilla and his partner Nicholas Riffel taking on Carson/Pratt. In the 2018 semis, Manilla/Riffel competed

against Carson and his then-partner Sudsy Monchik. In the end, Carson/Pratt defeated Manilla/Riffel, 15-11, 15-9. The second semifinal match was Bredenbeck/Diaz vs. David “Bobby” Horn and Mauro Daniel Rojas. Bredenbeck/Diaz seemed to be running away with the first game, but Horn/Rojas came back by changing their strategy and double serving Diaz. Ultimately, Bredenbeck/Diaz won the first game 15-9 and took that momentum into the second game where they defeated Horn/Rojas, 15-11.

The Men’s U.S. Team Qualifying final was hard-fought as Carson/Pratt took on Bredenbeck/Diaz in front of a SRO crowd around the ASU stadium court. Carson/Pratt captured the first game 15-8, but Bredenbeck/Diaz thundered back and won the second, 15-5. It was Carson/Pratt in the end as the tiebreaker concluded, 11-7. This is Carson’s 11th National Doubles title and Pratt’s very first.

This tournament marks the second of three selection events where players in the Men’s and Women’s U.S. Team Singles Qualifying Divisions earn points from each event, with the Top 4 point recipients earning spots on the U.S. National Team. Rocky Carson and Rhonda Rajsich both repeated their performance from last year by winning their division and 30 points. The final selection event will be at the U.S. National Singles Championships, May 22-26, 2019 in Denver.

There is no doubt that there was impressive competition throughout the week, but there were also great social gatherings on both Friday and Saturday nights. Friday was the traditional Ladies’ Night Out, hosted by the USAR Women’s Committee at the Graduate Rooftop Bar, featuring food, drinks, games, and raffle items. Proceeds went to support the U.S. National Team. The Players’ Party was on Saturday night and was also hosted at the Graduate Rooftop Bar. Many players came out to socialize with their racquetball community. Laughter and stories were shared throughout the evening!

This 2019 National Doubles Championship was a great success and could not have been accomplished without support from sponsors, players, staff, and volunteers. Players from all over the country traveled to compete, connect with friends, and take a break from the more mundane aspects of life (for some, that included snow and frigid temperatures)! The community that racquetball provides is indeed what makes this tournament and the others like it so unique. Congratulations to all of the champions and competitors!

Left: National Doubles Champions Janel Tisinger-Ledkins/Aimee Ruiz and Rocky Carson/Charlie Pratt  
Right: Jose Diaz in doubles action



# 2019 NATIONAL DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIPS

Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona · February 6 -10



## MENS

### Division

Men's Team Qualifier  
 Open  
 24-  
 25+  
 30+  
 35+  
 40+  
 45+  
 50+  
 55+  
 60+  
 65+  
 70+  
 75+  
 Elite  
 40+ Elite  
 A  
 B  
 C  
 30+ A  
 40+ A  
 50+ A  
 60+ A  
 Centurion A  
 Centurion B  
 Mega Centurion  
 30+ B  
 40+ B  
 50+ B  
 60+ B  
 40+ C  
 60+ C  
 Heroes Open  
 Heroes Open B

### Champion

Rocky Carson/Charlie Pratt  
 Luis Avila/Will Reynolds  
 AJ Bennett/Ben Baron  
 Damian Zamorano/Preston Tribble  
 Joe Kelley/Samuel Kelley  
 Brent Walters/Jonathan Clay  
 Jason Richard Conway/Mark Monje  
 Doug Ganim/Jeff Stark  
 Doug Ganim/Kelly North  
 Mike Lubbers/Russ Bonanno  
 Mark Baron/Russ Bonanno  
 Hatch Saakian/Ruben Gonzalez  
 Michael Stephens/Robert Lattanzio  
 Bruce Hollander/Ed Mooney  
 Carlos Juarez/Jeff Baskett  
 Rod Southwood/Terry Kisling  
 Damon Chandler/Jared Campos  
 Curtis Ritchie/Luke Linhart  
 Andrew Blasquez/John Wilson  
 Freddie Villalon/John Ortiz  
 Felipe Sosa/Rod Southwood  
 Anthony Suede Harris/Eric New  
 Bill Deluca/James Corrigan  
 Felipe Sosa/Rod Southwood  
 Daniel Parker/David Pardun  
 Dave Azuma/Mark Baron  
 Daniel Parker/David Pardun  
 Jawara Riley/Sherwyn Phillip  
 Gary Stone/Jeffrey Hill  
 Bruce Adams/Michael Hiles  
 Andrew Blasquez/John Wilson  
 Bruce Adams/Michael Hiles  
 Douglas Fulp/Glenn Martineau  
 Bill Bearden/David Bandelier

### Runner Up

Jake Bredenbeck/Jose Diaz  
 Charlie Stalder/Jason Richard Conway  
 Alexander Hough/Danny Sardina  
 Anthony Herrera/Bryan Crosser  
 David Piper/Herman Deluna  
 Charlie Stalder/Darin Randles  
 Freddy Flores/Will Reynolds  
 Armando Villa/Hernan Perez  
 Unchallenged  
 Paul Morse/Tyrone Gilmore  
 Dave Azuma/Mike Lubbers  
 Howard Walker/Mark Baron  
 Jim Harvey/Mike Pawka  
 George Moore/Robert Sullins  
 Iain Dunn/Jeffery Rollins  
 Michael Blackney/Ricardo Soto  
 David Singer/Jake Ryan  
 Jason S./Ron Couch  
 Jody Ashley/Patrick Buckley  
 Dominic Maestas/Stefan Rudolph  
 Douglas Fulp/Thomas McCloskey  
 Chris Handorf/Roberto Tijerino  
 Chris Handorf/Roberto Tijerino  
 Eric New/Will Costanza  
 John Fischler/Richard Aal  
 Joe Hassey/Troy Stallings  
 Carter Jaynes/Todd Haney  
 Ari Schaff/Charles Pelton  
 Al Frear/Frank Campisi  
 Rob Craig/Russ Randolph  
 Unchallenged  
 John Esposito/Larry Carmichael  
 Ian Burgess/Thomas McCloskey  
 Jawara Riley/Sherwyn Phillip



USA Racquetball strives for accuracy in our Championship Records.

If you believe there to be any errors or omissions, please notify us at [championships@usaracquetball.com](mailto:championships@usaracquetball.com).

## WOMENS

Division	Champion	Runner Up
Open	Alejandra Lopez/Melania Sauma	Karen Grisz/Sandy Rios
Elite	Felicia Green/Kaneshia Madison	Lisa Bu/Susie Boulanger
45+	Michiele Stapleton/Sandy Rios	Diana Matthews/Linda Moore
50+	Cindy Tilbury/Debra Tisinger-Moore	Unchallenged
55+	Debra Bryant/Wanda Collins	Unchallenged
60+	Debra Tisinger-Moore/Malia Bailey	Diana Matthews/Linda Moore
65+	Terry Ann Rogers/Wanda Collins	Carla Francis/Cheryl Conrad
75+	Marquita Molina/Mildred Gwinn	Unchallenged
A	Cindy Hoops/Stephanie Bankes	Cheryl Vlacilek/Esther Lozano
B	Esther Lozano/Marti McCurdy	Ann Draudt/Traci Kourajian
C	Gina Strawn/Jacqueline Seiffert	Carol Saul/Kim Krueger
30+ Elite	Kimberly Randolph/Rebecca Bowman	Unchallenged
40+ Elite	Sarah Houghtailing/Susie Boulanger	Connie Wong/Laura Goo
50+ Elite	Maddie Melendez/Susie Boulanger	Unchallenged
30+ A	Cindy Hoops/Stephanie Bankes	Unchallenged
40+ A	Arlene Swinney/Maddie Melendez	Donna Jones/Marsha Johnson
50+ A	Cathy Law/Terri Marceron	Cheryl Vlacilek/Marti McCurdy
60+ A	Cheryl Jones/Kerri Garcia	Unchallenged
40+ B	Kelly Johnson/Julie Dillon	Unchallenged
50+ B	Pam Lillich/Fariba Roughead	Unchallenged
60+ B	Ann Draudt/Cheryl Bird	Unchallenged
40+ C/D	Denise Mayfield/Traci Reid	Unchallenged
Centurion B	Michelle Lekites/Terri Marceron	Chris Cerny/Laura Pesek
Centurion C	Denise Mayfield/Traci Reid	Unchallenged

## MIXED

Division	Champion	Runner Up
Elite	Melania Sauma/Preston Tribble	AJ Bennett/Rebecca Bowman
35+	Aimee Ruiz/Jonathan Clay	Brent Walters/Debra Bryant
55+	Sandy Rios/Tyron Gilmore	Unchallenged
60+	Dave Azuma/Linda Moore	Cindy Tilbury/Chris Poucher
65+	Nancy Kronenfeld/Billy Cannon	Jim Harvey/Shirley Parsons
70+	J.B. Smith/Mildred Gwinn	Michael Stephens/Nidia Funes
75+	Marquita Molina/William Baker	Unchallenged
Centurion Open	Darin Randles/Lisa Bu	Michiele Stapleton/Steve Strahler
A	Lisa Bu /Mel West	Carlos Rascon/Erin Boadway
B	Arlan Garcia/Judy Hulen	Gina Strawn/Jason S.
C	Lillian Ford-Crimi/Skip Lecy	Chris Cerny/Jody Ashley
30+ Elite	Brent Huff/Rebecca Bowman	Unchallenged
35+ Elite	Kenneth Courtney/Vivian Schneider	Kaneshia Madison/Ryan Wilson
45+ Elite	Michiele Stapleton/Steve Stahler	Debra Bryant/Eric New
55+ Elite	Connie Wong/Tim Mattfeldt	Laura Natividad/Richard Dew
60+ Elite	Chris Poucher/Sharon McNeill	Unchallenged
40+ A	Joe Belardo/Lorreine Reid	Unchallenged
45+ A	Michiele Stapleton/Steve Stahler	Dereck Dirks/Peggy Markert
50+ A	Debra Bryant/Dereck Dirks	Ron Couch/Susie Boulanger
55+ A	Richard Aal/Wendy Miller	David Johnson/Therese Zadnik Klecker
Centurion A	Judy Hulen/Kenneth Courtney	Felicia Green/Luis George Sr.
25+ B	Paul Ly/Theresa McSherry	Unchallenged
30+ B	James Garcia/Nancy Green	Burke Ivey/Lori Kidd
40+ B	Cindy Hoops/Ron Denler	Unchallenged
45+ B	Laura Pesek/Patrick Buckley	Unchallenged
50+ B	Cheryl Vlacilek/John Fischler	Carter Jaynes/Lorena Chables
55+ B	Daniel Parker/Marti McCurdy	Jill Avery/Skip Lecy
60+ B	Carol Saul/Mike Halligan	Unchallenged
Centurion B	Harold Jagoda/Kimberly Randolph	John Fischler/Pam Lillich
Centurion C/D	Chris Cerny/Jody Ashley	Sophie Thompson/Russ Randolph
40+ C	John Wilson/Traci Reid	Unchallenged
60+ C	Andrew Blazquez/Denise Meyfield	Unchallenged
Mega Centurion 125+	Eric Barkey/Malia Bailey	Cindy Tilbury/Rick Betts



Photos By KSpography





# The Race for the 2019-2020 U.S. National Team



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



The UnitedHealthcare US OPEN comprises 20 percent of the Team Qualification process, with a Team Qualifying Singles Division held at National Doubles contributing 30 percent and the National Singles Team Qualifying Division comprising the remaining 50 percent.

## U.S. National Team Singles Qualification Standings

STANDING	PLAYER	SINGLES DIVISION			TOTAL POINTS
		US OPEN IRT DIVISION POINTS	WEIGHTED POINTS 20%	AT NATIONAL DOUBLES POINTS	
1	Rocky Carson	60	12	100	42
2	Charlie Pratt	10	2	80	26
3	Jose Diaz	30	6	60	24
4	David Horn	5	1	60	19

## U.S. National Team Singles Qualification Standings

STANDING	PLAYER	SINGLES DIVISION			TOTAL POINTS
		US OPEN LPRT DIVISION POINTS	WEIGHTED POINTS 20%	AT NATIONAL DOUBLES POINTS	
1	Rhonda Rajsich	30	6	100	36
2	Kelani Lawrence	5	1	80	25
3	Hollie Scott	5	1	60	19
4	Janel Tisinger Ledkins	0	0	60	18

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



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# WHERE ARE THEY NOW? -- MALIA KAMAHOAHOA BAILEY

By Aimee Ruiz

Photos provided by Malia Kamahoahoa Bailey | USA Racquetball



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

Let's check in with Malia Kamahoahoa Bailey, former pro player and US National Team Member.

**Your last year on the pro tour was 1998. What have you been up to since then?** I feel so blessed to have had the opportunity to play the tour at the time I played. I have been working with the Hampton Roads YMCA organization as a fitness and racquetball instructor.

My husband Jim and I have two children, Kelani and Warren. Kelani is 24 years old and married to a wonderful young man, Sam Lawrence. She received her master's degree at Regent University and her undergrad at Shenandoah University. Kelani played field hockey at Shenandoah and also taught several players to play racquetball. Warren is 20 years old and is in his second semester at Bryant & Stratton College in Virginia Beach. He is playing baseball for the junior college. We are empty nesters with two dogs and aren't as busy as we once were.

**What players did you look up to when making your start on the tour?**

There were so many wonderful people playing on the tour while I was a player that it makes it very hard to choose just one. If I had to, I would say Lynn Adams had it all. She was not just a great player, but she was also very kind and thoughtful as well as a fierce competitor. We all played hard while competing, and then off the court we would eat together, socialize -- we all truly loved each other.



**Was there one win that sticks out the most to you in your career?** I treasure all my successes, it's the losses that haunt me. Haha...

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

can say this: I was never the strongest or fastest or most athletic, but I worked very hard on my fitness as I never wanted to lose because I was out of condition. I also worked tirelessly on having good serves. I would say perhaps that was and still is my strength, which is something I stress to my students -- to work on their serves and have a good variety and deceptive serves.

**Your racquetball career is impressive. What was one of your accomplishments that meant the most to you?** When I first started playing,

I never imagined I would have the opportunities that I have been given, so I would say it was the first time I made the US National Team. My first National Singles championship was in Buffalo, New York, in 1982. I placed third in the Open singles, which qualified me for a spot on the US Team. It was such a fantastic experience that motivated me to continue.

**You represented Team USA numerous times. Was there any trip that was the most memorable to you?** In 1991, the team made a trip to Hawaii to compete in the Pacific Rim Games. We played at Schofield Barracks, an Army base. Luke St. Onge said they would be using my maiden name (Kamahoahoa) for the trip -- that's as Hawaiian as it gets! We had some media coverage, and having grown up there, my name was mentioned quite a bit. After one of my matches, I sat on the bleachers next to a local man who was there watching. His hat was familiar to me, and I struck up a conversation. He had specifically come to watch me play -- he was my uncle who I hadn't seen in quite a while! The next day some of my cousins came to watch. I was so very thankful to Luke for taking that initiative; otherwise my family would not have been there.



**In the 80's and 90's when you were active on tour and on the US Team, did you prefer to play doubles or singles?** Hmm...great question. I really enjoyed both, but I really think I was great at picking partners. Singles forced me to stay in excellent condition because I felt if I lost, it wasn't going to be because I was out of shape.

**What would you say to someone who wants to break into that next level and begin playing the pro tour full time?** Identify someone for support who can help them achieve their goals. I come across players who have goals, but they don't want to do what it takes to reach those goals. Players need to be committed to doing those things that may seem irrelevant or may not seem "fun" to them. My question to them is, are your goals real? If so, let me help you reach them.

**You were diagnosed and treated for breast cancer in 2004. You continued to play racquetball during treatment and were (still are) an inspiration.**



**What made you want to continue playing during that difficult time?**

I can be somewhat stubborn, so to me it was just like a hinder on the court: a bit of an annoyance, but you keep playing. Also, my children mean so much to me, I wanted our home life to be as normal as possible. It would have been abnormal if I stopped doing things I usually did. I told the kids, "I may look a little odd for a while, but it's something that has to be done." Kelani was 10 and Warren was almost 6, and I wanted consistency for them. We were in God's hands, and I really wasn't afraid of the future.

**Kelani is building quite a racquetball resume in her own right. What is the most important thing**

**that you instilled in her when she started out playing racquetball, and what words of wisdom do you give her today as she competes on the LPRT and on the US National Team?** Her name Kelani means "from heaven." My prayer has always been that she would take the gifts she has been given by God and be the woman He has intended. If she does that, she won't fail. Losses come, but that doesn't mean failure, it means stronger.

**In your opinion, what does USA Racquetball need to do to grow the sport? What is the appeal?** It's fun, it's a great workout, anyone can play, it's a great cross training sport. What's the problem? Promoting the sport has to be better. Having courts available is key. Has the national association partnered up with facilities across the country? Media attention is something I don't see at National Events. I am hosting a Women's LPRT stop in September and will have local TV stations there to cover some of the matches. I know racquetball isn't a major sport, but when there is

a big event, I would think getting local media attention should be easy. We can't just rely on live streaming, since the only people who watch are other racquetball players. When I was on the team or competing for spots, Linda Mojer, who was our media person at the time, ensured results were sent to the newspapers in the towns/cities where the finalists were from. This gave players and the sport exposure to their local communities. It was very helpful in gaining support and sponsorships.

Just promoting tournaments is not going to grow the sport. I know we have said this before, but racquetball at the grassroots level continues to be neglected. The Greenbrier North YMCA is very supportive of programs I introduce, and I do have some great volunteers to help.



## "... there is NO restriction as to where the receivers in doubles may stand to receive the serve, other than ..."

By Otto Dietrich, USA Racquetball National Rules Commissioner

Here are some recent questions and answers about the racquetball rules and refereeing:

**Mark D. sent me this:** I am looking for rules related to the position of doubles players as they receive the serve. I play with a group that alternates positions in the backcourt each time they lose the serve. I don't think that is a requirement but do not find it addressed in the USAR Rulebook. What say you?

**I responded:** The reason why you have not found it addressed in the rulebook is that there is NO restriction as to where the receivers in doubles may stand to receive the serve, other than remaining totally behind the receiving line until the ball either bounces on the floor in the safety zone or else travels on the fly across the receiving line. The receivers can stand side-by-side, or one in front of the other, or even walk about in circles. In fact, they can do whatever they wish if their actions do not distract/disrupt the server. You can move about and your non-serving partner can also switch sides, too! But the non-serving partner must be in and remain in the doubles box from the time the service motion begins until the served ball crosses the short line.

**Randy L. asked:** I've let my referee certification lapse. Where do I view the video rules clinic and take the tests?

**I answered:** We need more players as interested in reffing as you are! Go to the USA Racquetball website ([www.usaracquetball.com](http://www.usaracquetball.com)) and click on "Membership" and then select "Member Login." You will be taken to the Member Profile page where you should login with your R2S-ports User ID and Password. Once there, make sure that all the personal data recorded about you is correct and current. Then look at the menu on the left side of the screen. Find the "Testing" option and click on it. This should be the area you are looking for.

**Adam V. said:** I was questioned recently about holding my racquet above my head between serves. My racquet handle was not completely above my head. My opponent stated that since the "entire" racquet wasn't above my head, and since my arm was not fully stretched upward, I wasn't complying with the rules. Many in the crowd said my gesture did not comply with Rule 3.5a, however, I disagree. Please clarify.

**So, I told him:** While there can be several problems with the way that readiness is determined and managed at the start of each serve, we just don't want any "quick serves" surprising the receivers or the elapsed time between rallies taking more than about 10 seconds.

If I were reffing, the first instance where there appeared to be an obvious miscommunication of "readiness," I would have called "no serve," i.e. replay that serve, and then taken a moment to clearly establish and agree between the two players/teams and I exactly what "signal" in the future would indicate that the receiver is NOT READY. Players should do that even if there is no referee!

**Adam V. emailed me again:** I've attached the actual video clip. It's

the same motion I used the entire match (and for several years). The ref said I was in compliance. Since there were many of the state's board members watching and in disagreement with one another, I wanted to get clarification for us all.

**After reviewing the video that Adam sent, I reacted:** Now, the question is much clearer -- she faulted on her first serve and then, without checking the readiness of the receiver, quickly served her second serve just as the receiver indicated they were no longer "NOT READY." The receiver's racquet went up very soon and was surely high enough so that it should not have been an issue. So, that's a fault serve, too! Two consecutive fault serves



Girls #1 Doubles at the recent USA Racquetball National High School Championship Sam Barlow HS (Annie Roberts/Kelsey Klinger) versus Sprague HS (Ayisha Tamerhoulet/Katt MacGregor)

Photo By Tom Hartwig

## DO YOU HAVE A RULES/REFEREING QUESTION?

Be sure to email it to me at [ODietrich@usaracquetball.com](mailto:ODietrich@usaracquetball.com) and you might find it featured in an upcoming issue of *Racquetball Magazine*. I will personally answer every question I get, no matter how simple or complex it may be!

## Always Play by the Rules

... I encourage you to go online where you can find, review, and/or download them at:  
[teamusa.org/USA-Racquetball/How-To-Play/Rules](http://teamusa.org/USA-Racquetball/How-To-Play/Rules).

equals a side out. Of course, I suspect that the receiver likely tolerated her rather quick second serves most other times during the match (which is okay, by the way) and then, perhaps for the first time, signaled as “not being ready” (and very quickly) before her second serve thus resulting in him earning the side out. That’s very tricky, but perfectly legal and certainly well within the rules. The server should check the receiver’s readiness prior to EVERY serve.

**Anthony A. said:** I play a guy who bounces the ball hard during his serve and hits it with an overhand hit. Is this legal?

**I replied:** Yes, that type of serve is perfectly legal if he swings at the ball only once.

**John H. wondered:** We have a group of approximately 40 who play racquetball at our local YMCA. We have an active league that consists of four brackets, from beginners to advanced players. One of our primary goals is to attract

new young players to the sport. We keep a binder with the latest rules in the court area for all to see. One thing is in contention, so we will look to you for the answer. A couple of players, when in the serve area, bounce the ball multiple times (as many as nine times) before striking the ball. Would you define the rule for this action?

**I commented:** I recommend that the server announce the score before serving. This is best way for a non-refed match to operate more like a refed match. After the score is announced, like in the published rules (see Rules 3.1 through 3.5), it begins a virtual 10-second timer that demands that the server serve the ball after checking the readiness of the receiver who, by the way, must be ready within that same 10-second period. The penalty for either player not being ready is a technical warning/foul (the possible loss of a point). There is no restriction on the number of bounces other than the specified time of 10 seconds. But one other issue to keep in mind is that the server must pause slightly prior to bouncing the ball for the serve and hitting it. This means he can’t just bounce the ball repeatedly and then randomly -- on one of those many bounces and without pausing -- strike the ball and declare that to be his serve. In other words, the receiver has a right to know that this “upcoming bounce” is the one that will result in the serve.



Cayden Akins and Ivan Hernandez at USA Racquetball National High School Championship  
Photo By Tom Hartwig

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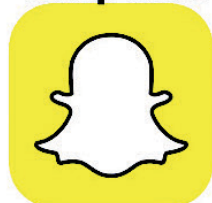
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## CONTINUING THE Making of a Champion



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

Let's continue "Making You a Champion" using the core principles of "Building Your Racquetball Dream House" as you build your championship racquetball game one assessment at a time.

In this issue, I am going to discuss "The Art of Picking a Doubles Partner."

One of the biggest myths of doubles is that if you are a good singles player, you'll be a good doubles player. This couldn't be further from the truth. No matter how talented you are individually, doubles involves two people joining their skills and unifying into a single working unit. In doubles, you must move and work independently and together all at the same time. Teamwork is the key to success.

Figuring out all the elements of picking a partner is critical as it can make or break a doubles team, so consider these points FIRST and FOREMOST when deciding on a partner:

1. **Do you have Chemistry?** Chemistry plays a big part when playing doubles. Basically, players should be able to get along and have a good connection. The better the friendship, the better the partnership. Doubles is a game of saves and covering one another.

2. **How well do you Communicate?** Communication is key in any relationship, and doubles is just another relationship. You must be able to talk to each other and share your thoughts and know what the other thinks out there -- before, during, and after the match. There needs to be a quarterback, or a leader, on the court calling the plays. The last thing you want is for both players to go for the same shot.

3. **Do you have Contrasting Game Styles?** Contrasting game styles are a necessity when you are playing doubles. The best teams generally have partners with contrasting game styles; the differences tend to complement one another and balance things out.

4. **Do you have Contrasting Personality Types?** Contrasting personality types tend to complement one another and balance things out. If two players have the same personality traits, one cannot complement the other, and they cannot feed off each other in a challenging situation.

5. **Do you each have a Specialty Position?** Specialty positions, just like in any other sport, are relevant in racquetball as well.

In football there is a running back, wide receiver, etc.; in baseball there is a catcher, pitcher, etc.; in basketball there is a forward, guard, etc. Athletes playing in these positions are skilled in their specialty. In racquetball it is no different. Knowing how to play a particular position, such as right side vs. left side, or shooter vs. retriever, takes a special skill and will usually enhance the team's performance.

6. **Can you Control your attitude, the tempo and rhythm, your positioning, service strategy, game strategy, and shot selection?** This creates the best unity between doubles partners.



Samantha Salas, Paola Longoria, and Fran Davis  
Photo by: Restrung Magazine

I use "The Art of Picking a Doubles Partner" with my "Championship Team." Rocky, Paola, and Jason at one point or another either play or have played doubles. I encourage each to use the above to pick a partner. Here's what Rocky, Paola, and Jason think personally:

**Rocky Carson regarding partners Sudsy Monchik, Alvaro Beltran, and Jack Huczek:**

"First of all, we trust each other. Knowing when to take the shot or not, knowing when to shoot for the kill/pass or not, knowing how to control the court and where to be, etc.

"Second, we also cover the court very well, which keeps the pressure on our opponents. I think that was what made Sudsy and me, Alvaro and me, and Jack and me great teams. Lastly, I believe much of the time I'm on the court in doubles, my job is to make my partner a better player and sometimes that means getting out of his way."

**Paola Longoria/Samantha Salas:**

"Samantha and I are such a great team -- we have won the Mexican National Doubles 12 times and LPRT Women's Pro Doubles more than 15 times. We have a wonderful friendship and communicate well on the court together. Our game styles complement one another, and I totally respect her and her game. I feel she is someone who always gives her best when she is playing. She is totally committed, and I am glad to have a partner who gives 100% to every single tournament we play in."

**Jason Mannino/Cliff Swain:**

"I had the utmost respect for Cliff, as every time he stepped on the court he gave 150%, never any less."

All of the players I coach, from the professionals led by Rocky and Paola to the amateurs, know just how important it is to learn "The Art of Picking a Doubles Partner," and it all begins with utilizing the above components.

In the next issue, we will continue to build your Championship Racquetball Game one level at a time so you, too, can be ready to become the champion you always dreamed of becoming. Rocky and Paola and all my athletes' Championship Racquetball Games balance their focus with all three sides of the triangle working together so they can develop into top competitors. Without a shadow of a doubt, they know how critical it is to do the work. They are living proof it works, and their titles demonstrate it!

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Jason Mannino  
#1 Pro Player 2003

Rocky Carson  
#1 Pro Player 2008 & 2018

Paola Longoria  
9X #1 Pro Player

**Fran's Credentials**

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

**Jason's Credentials**

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

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Presented by featuring Fran Davis and Jason Mannino



## IDENTITY THEFT!

By Toni Bevelock Delos Santos

**H**ow many times have you been at a social event or chatting with someone and they ask, “What do you do?” It is a common question and people will likely reply with their profession, for example, “I am a dentist (or a teacher),” or maybe the reply is, “I am a professional racquetball player!” It sounds like a standard conversation that you have probably had more times than you can count. We often confuse what we do with who we are.

What we do is only a part of what makes us who we are. Let's take a look at some examples of attributes might define our identity:

- Kindness
- Faith
- Ethics
- Loyalty
- Strong Work Ethic
- Disciplined
- Motivated

Those are some examples that are at the core of what makes you, you! So, where am I going with this and what does this have to do with racquetball? Often, we get our self esteem wrapped up in how well we did in a tournament or league and build our identity around our success (or the lack thereof). The first question asked of athletes after a match is, “Did you win?” The answer is either yes or no: “I won, therefore I am a winner,” or “I lost, so I am a loser.” It is so important not to get your identity tangled up with how you perform.

Playing a sport is what you do because you love the competition, the challenge, the training, and the personal satisfaction when you improve and, yes, win! Your identity comes from inside of you; you display outwardly those qualities that make you unique. When you concentrate on how you think people perceive you from the outside (based on your performance), and when you are always looking for other people to validate you, you are a victim of identity theft. Don't let your identity be defined or stolen by what you do but instead make a list of what makes you who you are and enjoy everything that makes you the unique and cool person you have become. When you are solid with that, you now can truly enjoy what you do.

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

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Extreme 175

*Markie Rojas*

**Markie Rojas**

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# MILITARY RACQUETBALL FEDERATION EXPANDS RACQUETBALL REHABILITATION CLINICS

The Military Racquetball Federation (MRF) is proud to announce partnership with Live Like John (LLJ) and the John Pelham Memorial Tournament of Champions. We are so pleased to be associated with this great organization and look forward to our future collaboration. Many thanks to Wendall Pelham for supporting our MRF mission in memory of his son John. We so appreciate the generous gift we received this year.

Since last summer, the MRF has expanded its Racquetball Rehabilitation Clinic (RRC) program significantly, hosting racquetball demos and clinics in Nashville, Bolling AFB (Washington, DC), Richmond, Walter Reed Veterans Administration (Washington, DC), Baltimore, Augusta, Fort Belvoir (Virginia), Columbia (South Carolina), Fort Hood (Killeen, Texas), Fort Bliss (El Paso, Texas), Louisville, Denver, and Des Moines. We also have a number of ongoing clinics that continue to grow as we reach more and more veterans. The Prescott Veterans Administration and the Phoenix Veterans Administration programs continue to serve our veterans in Arizona under the tutelage of Jerry Northwood, Cory Sanders, and Ray Bierner. The Las Vegas program, now in its third session, is gaining momentum under the instruction of Terry Rogers and Jack Hughes. Our favorable outcomes are measured by the participants' success stories and their smiles and enthusiasm regardless of skill level.

The MRF will have a presence at the Navy Trials in California, the Valor Games in California and Illinois, and the Warrior Games in Florida, where we will provide support to our veterans, both disabled and able-bodied.

We are preparing for two regional events for our service members in March and April in Texas and Virginia. This is a lead-up to the MRF National Championships to be held August 9-11, at Ft. Hood in Killeen, Texas, under the directorship of MRF Texas Liaison JoAnna Reyes. This event promises to be even bigger and better than last year!

<http://www.militaryracquetball.com>

<https://www.facebook.com/Military-Racquetball-Federation>



Above: Hank Marcus (MRF), Wendall Pelham (Live Like John), and Timm Locke (Multnomah Athletic Club)  
Photo Courtesy of Wendall Pelham  
Below Left: Bolling AFB clinic participants  
Below Right: Fort Bliss clinic participants  
Photos Courtesy of Steven Harper





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# David "Bobby" Horn: Focused and Dedicated



By Kelly R. Diesel  
Photo by KSpography

An incredibly athletic player on the court and a selfless individual off the court, David "Bobby" Horn is doing all he can to climb the rankings and grow the sport of racquetball.

Horn was born on September 20, 1989, in Stockton, California. The International Racquetball Tour (IRT) has several athletes that compete from Stockton each season -- players like the #9 Jose Diaz and his younger brother Ricardo as well as former #3 Jose Rojas, his brother Marco, and his cousin Mauro Daniel Rojas, currently #25 on the Tour.

Horn's story is a little different from those of the other players. Currently ranked #11 on Tour, he didn't start off playing racquetball -- it was more of a side hobby while waiting for basketball courts to be cleared at his gym. Jose Diaz got him interested in racquetball.

"Zumba and other dance classes would take up the gym, so Jose pulled me over one day and said I should try out this game while I wait," Horn said. "It started as just a fun side activity, something to keep me in shape for high school soccer and basketball during the off seasons. It quickly grew into something more."

The 2009 California Open was the first pro tournament Horn had ever entered in his life. He qualified and met the current #7 ranked player on Tour, Alvaro Beltran, from Tijuana, Mexico, in the Round of 16s. Beltran defeated Horn rather easily, but Horn knew he was starting to figure out the sport. After moving from Stockton to Pleasanton, California, for college, Horn started to really focus and train on racquetball.

"Training and traveling more, getting match experience, that's when I knew I could be good at this game if I worked at it," Horn said. "When I graduated and could devote all my time to the sport, that's when I wanted to really make this my thing."

Devoting all his time to racquetball is exactly what Horn has done these past four years on Tour. Traveling to different tournaments, competing, coming back from the road, and training -- that's the lifestyle Horn has created for himself in the sport. It's otherwise known as dedication.

"I love to play and compete, so I try and play in every tournament available to me," Horn said. "It's rare for me to have more than four weeks of free time in a year because I have a lot going on. I'm on the road all the time, 30 events two years in a row, for example."

When Horn does get some free time, he's back home in Stockton spending time with his family or playing golf and cards with his friends. Horn's dedication to his sport is very evident, but what's it all leading to? What's the goal of all these tournaments he competes in and the countless hours of work on the court he's put in?

"I want to be the #1 player in the world, that's why I work so hard," Horn said. "I

don't have the natural ability that a lot of these other guys do, so I train longer and more often. My goal for the end of this season (2018-2019) is to finish in the Top 5 or even the Top 4."

Outside of his personal goals, Horn mentioned that he wants to do everything he can to help grow the sport. Giving back and creating better opportunities for kids playing racquetball today are two significant objectives he has set for himself. One impressive way he has already begun accomplishing this is by serving as an Assistant Coach for the US Junior Team at the 2017 and 2018 IRF World Junior Championships. US Junior Team Head Coach Charlie Pratt appreciates Horn's dedication. "Bobby juggles his challenging workout and competition schedule to bring his expertise to our deserving athletes. His coaching ability, friendly and approachable style, and competitive experience are invaluable to our US Junior Team players and staff."

David "Bobby" Horn can be found on Instagram, Facebook, or his own website: [bobbyhornrball.com](http://bobbyhornrball.com).



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# LPRT Players

## Battle Up to the Close of 2018



By LPRT  
Photos By Restrung Magazine

Although Paola Longoria remains dominant on her #1 pedestal, the competition among the pro ranks from #2-#10 is incredibly fierce. Samantha Salas moved into the #2 spot for the first time in her professional career following a finals appearance at the first event of the 2018-2019 season. What's so impressive is how hard Salas trained to return so quickly to peak performance following her injury time off (six months). Alexandra Herrera, who is a steady regular in the semifinals, finished the calendar year at #3. Watch out for Herrera: she is a consistent player who has not yet reached her full potential. Maria Jose Vargas made a return toward the top at #4, her highest ranking after returning to professional competition. Vargas took time off from touring to start a family, returning to the LPRT in Fall 2017.

Frédérique Lambert slipped slightly this year from #2 to #5. Lambert continues to try and find time to train and compete professionally while also attending medical school. This is not an easy task, of course, and it has caused her to miss a few events in 2018. Rhonda Rajsich made a healthy resurgence this fall by making regular appearances in the semis and quarters, keeping her ranking in the single digits. Rajsich finished 2018 at #6. Rounding out the year-end Top 10 were Nancy Enriquez, Natalia Mendez, Ana Gabriela Martinez, and Cristina Amaya, respectively. Enriquez unfortunately missed the last two events of 2018, bringing her down slightly in the rankings. Mendez, the youngest player in the Top 8, made the quarterfinals at the last four events of 2018. Martinez, who has not been able to play the tour full time, still made it into the Top 10. We can't wait to see what she will do if she does play every event. Amaya is a regular Top 10 player, so it's no surprise to see her ranked anywhere from 5-10 at any time.

If you missed any of the LPRT players in action, you can find all of the event draws and recaps, as well as thousands of event and player photos and event recaps on our website at [www.LPRTour.com](http://www.LPRTour.com).



Above: ProAm Sponsor Doubles in Chicago  
Left: #3 Alexandra Herrera



## The Battlegrounds

The Latitude Sports Club (Peabody) was an amazing venue for the 2018 Boston Open. Thank you to Stewart Solomon of Solomon Sports and Racquet for inviting the LPRT back to Boston. Boston is a fun event, always scheduled close to Halloween and just down the road from Salem -- a mecca of Halloween celebration. Check out the event draws and photos here: <https://www.lprtour.com/2018bostonopen>.

The LPRT was thrilled to be invited to the Glass Court Swim & Fitness Club in Lombard, Illinois, to take part in the 27th Annual Glass Court Turkey Shoot Pro-Am. The world's best players flew to Chicago for the privilege of competing on these legendary courts. The ladies also enjoyed the bar and table tennis "hang out" area where they got to spend time with the great local players and fans. Thank you to all who supported the LPRT at this very special event. Check out the event draws and photos here: <https://www.lprtour.com/glasscourt2018>.

The final event of 2018, hosted and supported by our friends Karen and Mike Grisz, was held at the Sport Fit Total Fitness Club in Laurel, Maryland. This club sits about halfway between Baltimore and Washington, D.C. and is a favorite holiday location of the players. The Sport Fit Club houses a tremendous racquetball community that comes out in festive support of the LPRT, and we can't thank them enough.

On to 2019 and more LPRT action!

Paola Longoria, Tournament Director Stewart Solomon, and Samantha Salas

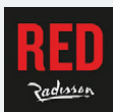


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# What's Your Why?

Why do you play racquetball? Why do you continue to give back to the racquetball community? What drives you to keep playing and share the sport with a new generation of players?

We're pleased to share the stories of why USAR members play racquetball!



## Kim Randolph San Jose, California

**R**acquetball makes everything better! Not only is it a great workout, but it is also a great stress reliever. The absolute best people play racquetball and become your extended family!

I give both time and money back to this great sport by running and playing in leagues and tournaments. I also work with the Reaching Your Dream Foundation (RYDF) to encourage health and fitness with our youth and to grow racquetball. Racquetball has given me so much more than I can ever repay, but I'll certainly keep trying!

## Bruce Adams Tulsa, Oklahoma

I play racquetball for the sport AND for the health aspect. I had not heard of it before college at Oklahoma State.

I like to give back because of the potential for youth and adults alike to learn the game. One can get a great workout (sweat) in a minimal amount of time -- by yourself or with one, two or three other players.

The personal challenge of wanting to get better is what drives me to continue playing. Plus, it helps my weight control and heart. The off-the-court activities of stretching, weights, and cardio help tremendously.

To use an old tag line - it's Fast, Fun and Furious, and Healthy.



## Jazmin Trevino Merced, California

I enjoy playing racquetball because the people I've met are like family. Racquetball has given me the opportunity to grow as a person and see others grow as well. Teaching juniors is an incredible experience. To watch their love for the game grow is an indescribable feeling. I can only hope to come close to giving back to the sport as much as it has given to me.

Photo By Stephen Fitzsimons

# What's Your Why?



## Rhonda Rajsich

LPRT Player | US National Team Member  
Phoenix, Arizona

**W**hy do I play racquetball? Because it's fun. It is a game, and it is supposed to be fun. There is a killer instinct inside me that burns nonstop, and I need to engage at a primal level. This game and this level of competition is one of the ways that I have chosen to do it. The day that it isn't fun anymore is the day that I know that I need to move on to something else that will bring me joy and satisfy that competitive animal inside me. There are so many other bonuses: competition, camaraderie, health, and fitness, just to name a few but if it isn't fun along the way, the other reasons don't matter. It's a game, it shouldn't leave you devoid of joy.

Why do I continue to give back to the racquetball community? Because I was raised in this community. My life and love of this sport were touched and shaped by so many people when I was a kid. I don't give back out of duty or obligation, I genuinely want to help in any way that I can because so many people helped me learn and grow. The best way I can thank and honor them is to strive to do the same for others.

What drives me to keep playing and share the sport with a new generation of players? I'm still hungry. I'm not done yet. I still have room to improve, and I continue to work hard to make those improvements. I enjoy the process of getting better and benefiting from everything that I learn and gain along the journey. I tend to steal a quote from Michael Jordan when I get asked questions like this: "The day I stop improving is the day I walk away from the game." I know I am still a work in progress.

## Mike Kiedrowski

USAR Board of Directors  
Woodbury, Minnesota

I dabbled in racquetball as a youngster, but it wasn't until 10 years ago that I really got hooked. A couple of coworkers and I started playing together when we could, before work or during lunch. It relieved stress, was great exercise, and fulfilled our competitive itch. To expand my pool of opponents, I decided to start playing in USAR sanctioned tournaments in Minnesota.

I love the one-two punch racquetball provides – entertainment value and health benefits. The reason I ran as a candidate to serve on the USAR Board was to help promote those benefits across all levels of players: from juniors just starting to play to our Team USA athletes, and of course, the wide range of recreational players like myself and thousands of others who toil in the courts whenever we can!





# CALENDAR of EVENTS

For the latest in USA Racquetball Sanctioned Events, visit [USARacquetball.com](http://USARacquetball.com)

\*Denotes World Outdoor Racquetball (WOR) Sanctioned Event

Date	Event	City	State	Location	Email
April 3 - April 6	USAR National Intercollegiate Championships	Tempe	AZ	ASU Sun Devil Fitness Center	rgundolff@usaracquetball.com
April 5 - April 7	Fran Davis Racquetball Camp	Las Vegas	NV	Las Vegas Athletic Club	camps@frandavisracquetball.com
<b>April 5 - April 7</b>	<b>Arizona WOR VII Final Battle</b>	<b>Glendale</b>	<b>AZ</b>	<b>Bonsall Park</b>	<b>azor@azoutdoorracquetball.com</b>
April 5 - April 7	Spring Shootout	York	PA	Athletic Club Of York	travis@theathleticclubofyork.com
April 5 - April 7	Kansas State and USAR Regional Champ.	Wichita	KS	YMCA Wichita Downtown	yoscooter@gmail.com
April 6 - April 7	Titans of Turlock Shootout	Turlock	CA	In-Shape Sport: Monte Vista	rogerstar49@gmail.com
April 12 - April 13	Spring Racquetball Camp	Chandler	AZ	Village - Ocotillo	coachrbal@gmail.com
April 12 - April 13	Missouri USAR Regional Championship	St. Louis	MO	Vetta Concord	dwhitley@vettasports.com
April 19	Indiana State Singles Championships	West Lafayette	IN	Purdue University Racquetball Club	johnpatrick88000@gmail.com
April 10 - April 14	Oregon Regional USAR Championships	Gresham	OR	Cascade Athletic Club	brianancheta1@yahoo.com
April 11 - April 14	DPJCC Racquetball Tournament	Davie	FL	David Posnack JCC	rballrick1@gmail.com
April 12 - April 14	New Hampshire USAR Regional Championships	Salem	NH	Salem Athletic Club	acamporaj@gmail.com
April 12 - April 14	Rocky Mountain USAR Regional Championships	Pueblo	CO	Pueblo Athletic Club	rballjoe@gmail.com
April 12 - April 14	GA USAR Regional Singles/Doubles Champ.	Lilburn / Atlanta	GA	Recreation ATL	info@recreationatl.com
April 13 - April 14	CNRA State Championships	Fullerton	CA	Meridian Sports Club	rogerstar49@gmail.com
April 25 - April 28	Florida IRT Pro-Am with USAR Regional Singles	Sarasota	FL	Sarasota Family YMCA (Frank Berlin)	auchad99@hotmail.com
April 25 - April 28	LU James River Open	Lynchburg	VA	Liberty University - LaHaye	racquetball@liberty.edu
April 26 - April 28	Battle at The Alamo	San Antonio	TX	Thousand Oaks Family YMCA	td@alamoracquetball.org
April 26 - April 28	Illinois USAR Regional Championships	Lombard	IL	Glass Court Swim & Fitness	petersgeoff@hotmail.com
April 26 - April 28	No Strings Attached	Tucson	AZ	Tucson Racquet & Fitness Club	nostrings@utmax.com
April 26 - April 28	Wyoming State Singles Championships	Casper	WY	YMCA	dwhoover72@gmail.com
April 27 - April 28	North Carolina Mountain Championships	Hendersonville	NC	Hendersonville Racquet Club	chris@hivillerc.com
April 27 - April 28	RYDF Spring Fun-Raiser	Livermore	CA	Livermore Valley Tennis Club	rogerstar49@gmail.com
May 2 - May 5	Southern Oregon Classic	Grants Pass	OR	Club Northwest	brianancheta1@yahoo.com
May 3 - May 5	Permian Basin Classic Zack Glasscock Mem.	Midland	TX	Midland YMCA	midlandrhonda@gmail.com
May 9 - May 10	World Doubles Championships	Denver	CO	Denver Athletic Club	hiserj@me.com
May 17 - May 19	Duboise Electric Pro/Am by Langston Drug Store	Fort Smith	AR	World Class Fitness	dschwinger@arcb.com
May 22 - May 26	USAR National Singles Championships	Highlands Ranch	CO	Highlands Ranch Recreation Center	rgundolff@usaracquetball.com
May 31 - June 2	Fran Davis Racquetball Camp	Burlingame	CA	Prime Time A. C.	camps@frandavisracquetball.com
May 31 - June 2	Silverback Slam	Fresno	CA	Centerpoint Athletic Club	naciodelgado2@gmail.com
June 7 - June 9	Georgia Open Shriners Hospital for Children	Lilburn / Atlanta	GA	Recreation ATL	info@recreationatl.com
June 7 - June 9	Capital City Classic	Tallahassee	FL	FSU Leach Center	agk07d@gmail.com

# CALENDAR of EVENTS



Date	Event	State	State	Location	Email
June 19	WOR Nor Cal Summer Smash	Tracy	CA	West High School	billgeo01@yahoo.com
June 22 - June 23	Hot Summer Nights	Indianapolis	IN	Jordan YMCA	summerracquetball@gmail.com
June 27-June 30	NMRA International Championships	Lombard	IL	Glass Court Swim & Fitness	cindy.tilbury@att.net



Some of the action at the USA Racquetball High School Championships  
Photos By Tom Hartwig



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## A Different Kind of Power?

We've done a number of columns now on Polyurethane (PU) based strings. We've talked about their market share, how they're made, and what physical properties they offer. We've compared them with Zyex® (PEEK) based strings and nylon strings. We've even reported on feedback from playtesters. So, frankly, we were ready to move on to other scintillating string topics. But then, at the end of the last column, Cliff Swain said this: "There is something about the polyurethane/nylon filament combination that also gives me excellent power. But it's power of a different sort."

A different kind of power? That was not what we had expected. It came out of the blue, like someone complimenting us on our table manners. So, of course, we had to follow it up.

First we went back to Cliff and asked if he could expand on his original comment. "It's hard to describe because the PowerKill® is so powerful," Cliff said, "but with the MultiKill® 17, it's like a sling shot off of the frame. The ball takes off faster -- just a little more power with a little less effort. I'd even say it has a little more feel up front, too."

We then talked to Ian Titus of Lawler Sports, the US OPEN stringer for many years. He agreed there is a definite difference in the response of PU-based string and speculated it was because the PU is softer. "That's where you get the power," he said. "The Zyex is more dynamic, that's where you get that pop."

Now it's an old rule of thumb that a string will provide more power at a lower tension than at a higher one -- if it feels softer, in other words. But what Ian was getting at was the notion of dwell time. Because PU-based strings like MultiKill 17 are softer, the ball stays on the strings just a little bit longer. We're talking milliseconds here, but this allows the racquet to use leverage to generate power, like a lacrosse stick. You feel like you are really whipping the ball off the racquet, as opposed to Zyex-based strings where you get that crisp feeling of the ball rebounding off the string bed really fast.

But Ian is also suspicious about the nature of that leveraged power. "I think it just tricks the mind into thinking this is more powerful than Zyex," he said. "I'll bet if you hit a hundred backhands or forehands with each string and clocked them, I don't think you'd be getting anything more out of the PU than the Zyex. But I just think the feel of it is so much softer, that it tricks people into thinking they're getting more power or that they are hitting really well."

He sees this as one of the real benefits of MultiKill 17 type PU strings: "I find that the softer strings really benefit people just getting into the game. It helps subdue arm issues from poor technique at the start, while they are still learning. When I've gotten guys who are just getting into the sport, I will put them into a string like a MultiKill before a Zyex string. As they get better and better, really competitive into the B and A levels, then I think people really want that crisp response."

"My take on it," Ian continued, "is with better players, their swing speed is high and they're hitting correctly, right in the sweet spot with proper technique. They tend to prefer the Zyex-based PowerKill or UltraKill® string because that's where they get that crisp power and precise control. They don't need a softer string. This is not to say MultiKill is not used in the upper levels, or vice versa, but I find that B level players and below love that MultiKill feel and think they're getting more power. Really, it's just softer. The softer string protects the arm and tricks them into thinking that they are not mishitting as much. With MultiKill, you can get a little farther out of the sweet spot and not really feel it on your arm. With UltraKill, if you get out of the sweet spot and start racking up those hits on the edge, you're going to feel it, and you're probably going to snap the string."

Now no one would accuse Cliff Swain of being a B level player, but he likes MultiKill 17 so much that he switched. "I did switch," he said. "I still like using the PowerKill and once in a while I pick it up and I still love it. At first, I thought switching would be a hard decision, but really, I can't go wrong either way."

"I'm also impressed with its durability," he added. "It plays like an 18 gauge string but has 16 gauge durability. And the effortless power of the MultiKill 17 is incredible. I want people to use it because I really feel it helps make their game better, especially for anybody who has elbow or shoulder problems. It can really help that because it's easier on the body but affords more power at the same time."

So, a different kind of "effortless" power, or just a more forgiving way to up your game? You be the judge. And let us know what you think!



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