

ISRA NEWS



ISRA Inducts Diane DeArmas into Hall of Fame



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From the PRESIDENT

Usually at this time of the year I reflect back on the past racquetball season to assess the things I think I could have or should have done better as the President of this Association. I'm going to give myself a break this year. I think I've done as good a job as I could have based on my time constraints, the unusual economic environment and what has been going on within my own company over the past year. And, based on the performance of a great Board of Directors, we have had a successful season and the ISRA is alive and well!

Instead, I will turn the tables and assess *your* performance over the last year. Here goes:

- Thanks to those of you who attended tournaments, including those who had to travel halfway across the state to do so. We had turnouts of over 150 players at the Turkey Shoot, the Revie Sorey E-Force Celebrity Classic, ISRA State Doubles, ISRA State Singles and the Shamrock Shootout. We had the best turnout in years at State Singles.
- Thanks to Glass Court for stepping up and taking on extra tournaments (ISRA State Singles and the USAR Regionals besides ISRA State Doubles) when we needed your help.

- Thanks to those players who volunteered to referee without complaining.
- Thanks to those who showed up on time for matches...or called in advance when they knew they couldn't show up.
- Thanks to those who wore their eye guards during warm-ups...and thanks to those who kept their warm-ups to 5 minutes.
- Thanks to the volunteers who didn't play but dedicated themselves to making tournaments a good experience for those who did – Marian Bala, Lori Good and Tamara Buss, to name a few.
- Thanks to the sponsors who kept our bellies full so we could play the matches.
- Thanks to those who played Travel League. This is the longest running league of its kind in the country. Just last week we met with Lifetime Fitness who wants to fashion a league after ours in Minnesota.
- Thanks to the loyal USAR/ISRA members who pay dues each year whether they can play the tournaments or not. Despite an increase in membership dues, our membership base has grown this year.

continued on page 3

On the Cover...

ISRA Annual Awards

Top left: Frank Milazzo (Most Improved), Cheryl Kirk (Distinguished Service) and TJ Ferro (Male Player of the Year)

Top middle: Ellen Somberg (Female Player of the Year) with daughter Jenna and ISRA President Laurel Davis

Top right: Geoff Peters and Barry Dixon congratulate Dvorak Award winners Noor Michael and Jeremy Dixon

Hall of Fame Induction

Bottom: The DeArmas and Jaskier families gathered on the Glass Court as Diane DeArmas was inducted into the ISRA Hall of Fame



ISRA

Family News

Pan American Gold for Illinois Players

Congratulations to Cheryl Gudinas and Ben Croft who represented the U.S. (and Illinois!) at the Pan American Championships, April 1-10 in Cali, Colombia. The U.S. Team won the overall Gold by one point, due in no small part to the efforts of Cheryl, who won the Women's Gold in singles, and Ben, who teamed up with Mitch Williams to take the Men's Doubles Gold!

Pitock and the Wednesday Women

A small group of three enthusiasts has grown to seven on Wednesday mornings at Glass Court in Lombard. Instructor Andy Pitock's style of teaching has made him something of a Pied Piper, with the group number expanding from one



L to R: Linda VanVlick, Carolyn Pakeltis, Andy Pitock, Pam Forsberg, Margaret Chaffee
Not pictured: Kristina Heppe, Nicole Malinowski, Joyce Urbaniak

week to the next. From the original three women to the six currently attending, they all agree that a group instruction format has been fun and a great workout to boot.

Pam Forsberg, Director of Swim Instruction at Glass Court, said, "Andy has been so helpful in coordinating and taking some time to work with us. He has a great passion for teaching with knowledge and laughter. He relates to us on a level that we all can understand. When I am on the court, racquetball is the only thing I am thinking about. (And in today's world.... this is a good thing.) I love this game!"

Joyce Urbaniak, another Glass Court staff member, added, "I have had a great time with group lessons. It has been a wonderful way to improve my racquetball game, get some exercise, make new friends and have fun all at the same time."

Carolyn Pakeltis has a story to share with club members who are thinking about trying the sport. "You know, I have watched many people play racquetball at Glass Court and thought to myself, 'there is no way I could play that game. There are too many lines and too many walls and too many ways the ball bounces.' So when the opportunity to learn the game came up with Andy I figured I would just try it once to satisfy my curiosity. Now seven weeks later I am still enjoying learning how to play. Andy and our Wednesday morn-

ing group meet, chat, laugh, and all the while we are becoming better racquetball players. Andy is fantastic at breaking down the game and making it easy to understand. If you are looking for a new way to get a little exercise and have fun, racquetball is the way to go."

If there are those of you out there who would like to learn how to con-



Kevin, Kate, Jake and Meg Brylski at U.S. Navy Pinning Ceremony

duct group lessons, Andy Pitock will gladly share his approach with you. Contact Andy for advice and/or lessons at (630) 631-2129.

Brylski Promoted to U.S. Navy Master Chief

On Wednesday, April 29th, a special pinning ceremony was held at the Great Lakes Naval Training Center to officially promote Kevin Brylski (ISRA North Zone VP) to Master Chief. An impressive achievement, only 1% of the U.S. Navy attains the rate of Master Chief. Kevin has served in the Navy since 1990 and in his 19-year career has been deployed in the Mediterranean, Europe, and the Middle East, from Kosovo, Somalia, North Africa, Iraq and Afghanistan.

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From the President

continued from previous page

- Thanks to Geoff and Deb Peters and the staff of The Southlake Club in Mundelein. Closing at the end of May, the club initially opened in the 70's and provided over 30 years of racquetball and fitness activity for tournament and recreational players. What great memories for so many!
- Thanks to those of you who weren't specifically mentioned here. Everyone is so very much appreciated for what you bring to the sport.

And...if you fell down on any of these items this season, you can do what I always do — promise yourself you will do better next year!

Have a great summer!

Laurel

ISRA Family News *continued from previous page*

Also, Kevin's degree, a BS in Liberal Studies with concentration on Psychology and Management, will be conferred on May 15th. He plans to pursue higher education centering on leadership and development.



Peters Elevated to Principal at Archstone Consulting

At the end of 2008, Geoff Peters (USAR Board VP and ISRA VP) was promoted to Principal (Partner) at Chicago-based Archstone Consulting.

Early in his career, Geoff worked at Montgomery Ward, Kraft Foods and SC Johnson and Sons in a variety of Finance and Operations positions. Prior to joining Archstone Consulting, Geoff was Director of Procurement at Sears Holdings and its predecessor companies, and a Principal Consultant at PricewaterhouseCoopers and EDS/AT Kearney. He has an M.B.A. in Finance and Economics from the J.L. Kellogg Graduate School of Management at Northwestern University, and a B.A. from Lake Forest College in Mathematics and Economics.

Geoff is one of our more widely-traveled Board members and frequently supports out-of-town clients by spending extended periods of time in far-flung locations. In recent years, he has spent a significant amount of time in Los Angeles, Indianapolis, New York and Boston. In addition, he frequently travels internationally for work, including visits to China and most of the Pacific Rim, India and Europe. Despite this, he seems to find time to help us schedule most of the major events in Chicagoland and competes on a regular basis after coming directly from O'Hare Airport.

Announcing Carly Somberg!



Ellen Somberg and Kathy O'Donnell, along with new big sister Jenna, announce the addition of "a bundle of preciousness" to their family. Carly entered the world on February 7, 2009, weighing 4 pounds, 11 ounces and measuring 19 inches long. Ellen reports, "While she was born 6 weeks early and on the small side, she's already over 10 pounds now and soon to be on the courts!"



Grigas Makes the Ultimate Sacrifice for St. Baldrick's

St. Baldrick's Foundation volunteers have fun while raising money for a very serious cause. Worldwide, 160,000 kids are diagnosed with cancer every year.

Our own Don (Buddha) Grigas joined the army of volunteers on Friday, March 13th who were *Shaving the Way to Conquer Kids' Cancer!*

Don, known as much for his powerful torque killer blast shot as for his luxurious mane, took it upon himself to be a part of the solution for children with cancer. He had his head shaved while hundreds looked on, including Pete and Karin McCauley, Cheryl Kirk and myself.

Thanks to Don, \$660 went to the fund — and we got to see him transformed from handsome manly-man to a perfect look-alike of Uncle Fester of the Addams Family.

— Kit Lawson

Racquetball Romance – Keith & Trudy Brown

On August 6, 2000, I met my future wife Trudy Kay Novak at the racquetball court at Bally's in Glendale Heights, Illinois. She had come to play with a friend of hers from church and I was on her court. After she kicked me off the court, I started to watch her play. She was playing without a glove, so at a break in the action, I offered her one of mine and told her to try it, that it would help her hold the racquet more securely. After she had finished playing, I struck up a conversation with her and she informed me that she played with her parents on Mondays around 10 a.m. I was on vacation at that time, so I decided to come to the court and play with her. I got there early and watched an older couple playing (which I correctly assumed were her parents).

Trudy arrived shortly after 10:00 and went in the court to play with her dad. Her mom came out and said, "You must be Keith." I said that I was and we began to talk. Later after her parents left, we played for a while. After we finished, I asked if I could call on her and she said yes and asked me when. I responded, "How about tonight?"

continued on next page

ISRA Family News *continued from previous page*

We dated frequently over the next 3 weeks and we were constantly talking on the phone when we weren't together. I knew this woman was the one for me, so I decided to propose to her over the Labor Day holiday. I picked up the ring before I called on Trudy to take her to the Tall Ships that were in Chicago at Navy Pier for the Labor Day weekend. I really wanted my proposal to be special, so I was agonizing over how I was going to do it. We heard over the PA system that there were going to be fireworks that evening on the south side of the pier. We bought a couple of hot dogs and wandered over to get a good spot. At about 10:15 pm, they started to shoot off the fireworks, which were timed to nautically themed music. All of a sudden, the theme from "The Love Boat" started to play and red heart shaped fireworks began to explode overhead. I knew that this was a sign, so I reached in my pocket for the ring, turned Trudy around to face me and said "I've only known you for a short time,

but I know what I feel about you is not going to change. I want to spend the rest of my life with you. Will you marry me?" She looked at the ring, then at me and said, "Yes." We were married on October 13, 2000.

What makes this story so special is that the week after we first met, Bally's closed for renovations and after it opened, they had taken out the remain-

ing racquetball court. If we hadn't met on that day in August, we probably would have never had the opportunity to meet each other. Call it fate, destiny, karma or whatever — sometimes things do happen for a reason!

Editor's Note: If you found romance in the world of racquetball, write to cherylkkirk@aol.com and share your story. We'll print it in a future issue of the ISRA Newsletter!



Keith, Trudy and Emily Brown

CHICAGO'S LEGENDARY DEEP DISH PIZZA



Authentic Chicago Deep Dish Pizza That Improves Your Drive Serve
Available in your grocer's freezer.

Tournament Celebrates 20 Years

Women's Senior/Master National Racquetball Championships Heads to L.A.

With perfect weather in southern California in January, it was difficult to go inside to play racquetball since many of us were from the Midwest! But of course we did, and as usual we began with "fun" doubles on Thursday afternoon. Players got a chance to greet old friends and check out the courts in a relaxed atmosphere. Since the doubles is planned as a fundraiser for Breast Cancer Research, it was appropriate that the women played with the Wilson pink ball. Players donated to Susan G. Komen for the Cure when they came to play and their name was entered into a raffle with prizes donated by Wilson Sporting Goods. This year over \$500 was raised.

On Friday morning the serious singles round robin competition got underway. Tournament directors Deb Tisinger-Moore and Randy Lam manned the tournament desk with the help of Janel Tisinger. When entrants weren't on the court, they could scope out their competition, snack on the great food or browse through the items offered in the silent auction. One of the highlights of the silent auction was a quilt made by the late Hall of Fame player Mary Low-Acuff who participated in the WS/MRA tournament every year until she was in her 80's. Aside from the court action, the Saturday night banquet was a big hit with

a local band "Take Cover." Illinois came in second for participants in the tourney (only behind California) with eighteen women who ventured west and played tough. Here's how Team Illinois ended up:

35+
Renee Roux – 2nd Place

45+
Julie Vincent – Semifinalist
Diane Bunker – Quarterfinalist
Ellen Somberg – Quarterfinalist

50+
Liz Molitor – Semifinalist

55+
Joan Vande Kieft – Semifinalist
Nancy Kronenfeld – Quarterfinalist

55+ B
Lynne Weisbart – 3rd place

60+
Margaret Hoff – 1st Place

65+
Pauline Kelly – 1st Place

70+
Lola Markus – 1st Place

Other Illinois entrants were Janet Christie, Mary Crambes, Donna Heinzl, Martha Huske, Patti Moser, Kathleen Ruzycski, and Joyce Satorius.

So where in the world will the WS/MRA National Championships be held next year? We're heading east to Gaithersburg, Maryland. The date is set for January 15th through January 17th. For more information on the WS/MRA, check out our website: www.wsmra.com or click on the ISRA website link.

— Nancy Kronenfeld



WS/MRA Ladies in California — That's a Lot of Pink!

Team Illinois at 2009 National Doubles

February 11-15, 2009
ASU Student Recreation Center,
Tempe, AZ



*Women's 35+A Gold medalists
Thao Le and Lynn Yeazell*

The U.S. Team and Mixed Open Results

Women's Qualifying:

Aimee Ruiz/Jackie Paraiso def. Rhonda Rajsich/Janel Tisinger, 11, 13

Men's Qualifying:

Jack Huczek/Rocky Carson def. Ben Croft/Mitch Williams, 9, (7), 10
(Notable: Jack and Rocky were behind 10-2 in the tiebreaker and came back to win)

Mixed Open: Kane Waselenchuk/Kim Russell-Waselenchuk def. Diane Moore/Andy Hawthorne 8, 6

Team Illinois

Players – 16 (9 women, 7 men)

Illinois Medalists

Ben Croft/Mitch Williams (NM), 2nd, US Team Qualifying
Brent Huff/Kevin Yeazell, 4th, Men's Elite
Keith Minor/Brad McCuniff (IA), 2nd, Men's 35+
Martin Gonzalez/Drake Deavours (IN), 1st, Men's 35+A

Krystal Csuk/Cheryl Gudinas, 4th, US Team Qualifying
Lynn Yeazell/Thao Le (VA), 1st, Women's 35+A
Chris Evon/Terri Graham, 1st, Women's 45+
Brenda White/Deb Chaney (IN), 1st, Women's 55+

Jason Thoerner/Aimee Ruiz (NJ), 3rd, Mixed Open
Chris Evon/Scott Cullins (GA), 1st, Mixed 45+
Terri Graham/Jimmy Lowe (HI), 2nd, Mixed 45+

Also attending: Patrice Calvi, Barbara Curran, Cheryl Kirk, Geoff Peters

Cheerleaders: Chris Cotton, Kit Lawson, Deb Peters, Diane (Gabrisko) Ogrodowski (ISRA Distinguished Service Award 1986)



Brenda White and Barbara Curran



*Illinois and Indiana Players at ASU Tempe
L to R seated: Jim Bono, Cheryl Kirk, Diane Moore, Cheryl Gudinas
L to R standing: Martin Gonzalez, Wil Rounsaville, Patrice Calvi, Krystal Csuk*

State Singles Championships



Glass Court Owner Joe DeArmas (R) congratulates Men's 40+ Champ Alok Mehta

**The Glass Court Swim & Fitness, Lombard
February 27-March 1,
2009**

Tournament Directors:
Laurel Davis, Cheryl
Kirk and Geoff Peters

This State Singles event was the epitome of the Team Illinois spirit of teamwork and partnership. Imagine our surprise and delight as the entries grew past the 150 level (last year's number) to 160, 175...185! At that point, there was no mathematical way that enough court time existed Friday through Sunday to accommodate all the matches to be played.

So, what to do? We combined divisions that we wouldn't otherwise have with a smaller draw. We sent out a letter to all players asking for their cooperation: start on Thursday if at all possible...respect the 5-minute warm-up time...get the scorecards up to the desk asap...say yes when asked to referee. The result: there were very few complaints and *no one* was playing at 1:00 a.m.! Players and volunteers, we offer you our heartfelt thanks for everything you did to help us keep the tournament running on time – you are The Best!

Members of the University of Illinois Racquetball Club joined us for



*Men's C State Champion
Antonio Vazquez*

the weekend (see picture page 12), as well as downstate players from Peoria, Bloomington, Champaign/Urbana and smaller surrounding towns. Thanks for making the trip to Lombard, and come back soon!

Just after the ISRA Awards Ceremony (see article this issue), we had a scare when we learned that Lori Good, our beloved Team Illinois compadre and volunteer extraordinaire, had collapsed in the downstairs hallway just prior to a match and was in an ambulance ready to be taken to the hospital. Thankfully, after a couple of days in the hospital and a number of tests, Lori was released and she's now on the mend, ready to return to the courts this summer!

We'd like to warmly thank our tournament staff and volunteers who

continued on next page



Men's B Winner Jake Ryan with fans Ashley and Austin

ISRA **STATE SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIPS** *continued from previous page*



John Mason and Jim Zidek



Junior State Medalists Sam Goodman, Jeremy Dixon and Jason Goodman



John Bertholomey, Jr.

pitched in at the tournament check-in and control desks, hospitality, and the ISRA silent auction and sale tables: Marian Bala, Kevin Brylski, Marla Cusano, Dan Flood, Lori Good, Jeff Grace, Pam Grace, Doug Halverson, Michelle Halverson, Joy Herth, Lola Markus, Ray Markus, Jim Maroon, Dave Milazzo, Liz Molitor, John O'Donnell, Jr., Joyce Satorius, Rick Seaberg, Joe Silius, John Thorson, Jr., Tom Utterback, Joan Vande Kieft, Lynne Weisbart, and Julie Wielgus.

The ISRA gives special thanks to the sponsors who supported this tournament: Anthony's Pizzeria (Tony Cosmano), Blarney Stone (Joe & Kim Keane), E-Force,

Ektelon, HEAD/Penn, I'm Embroiderlynn (Lynn Yeazell), Kirsten's Danish Bakery (Paul & Kirsten Jepsen), KWM Gutterman (Keith Minor), The Glass Court Swim & Fitness (Dan

continued on next page



Juan Martinez III and Juan Martinez — Family Gold!

ISRA **STATE SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIPS** *continued from previous page*

Jaskier & Joe DeArmas), Little Debbie (Joe Eminger), Mi Hacienda (Enrique Rodriguez), National City Bank (Laurel Davis), Underglove.com (Gary Rasmussen via David Lilly), and Wilson Sporting Goods.

Soon, the letters will be coming out announcing who'll be "Movin' on Up!" in the new season. This event added a few people to that list: Ryan Kessler to Men's Open, Marcia Warren to Women's Open, Jake Ryan to Men's A, Antonio Vazquez to Men's B, and Basilio Salazar to Men's C. Congratulations to these and all the State Champions named on page 12.

For full results, go to <http://www.r2sports.com/tourney/viewResults.asp?TID=4824>.

— *Laurel Davis,
Cheryl Kirk and Geoff Peters*



Marcia Warren — Double Gold!



Men's 45+ Champ Lem Rowans



*University of Illinois Club Racquetball Team Members
Felipe Alonso, Jacob Dibble, Daniel Graugnard, Sandra Filipp, Kevin Ross, Carl Carman, Ricardo Fleury, Tom Schenone*

ISRA **STATE SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIPS** *continued from previous page*



*Rhonda Mundhenk:
Birthday Girl/Birthday Gold!*



Max and Jim Hillman



Saad Siddiqui



Laurel Davis chats with volunteers Ray & Lola Markus and Julie Wielgus



Pam Grace, Marla Cusano and Cheryl Kirk



MA Champ Ryan Kessler with Kearsi and daughter Sloane

RESULTS

Division/# entered: First; Second; Semifinals

Men's Open (14): Geoff Goldblatt; Larry Vena; Tony Gonzalez, Brent Huff

Men's AA (6): Felipe Alonso; Kent Hadraba; Eric Battaglia, Brian Berkelhamer

Men's A (31): Ryan Kessler; Juan Martinez III; Oscar Corona, Mario Becerra

Men's B (29): Jake Ryan; Frank Valentino; Craig Herman, Craig Geller

Men's C (42): Antonio Vazquez; Arturo Barranco; Kevin Burns, Enrique Rodriguez

Men's D (22): Basilio Salazar; Elliott Johnson; Jonathan Grygus, Jeremy Gouldey

Men's Novice (3): Stephen Lucas; John Williams; Max Hillman (3rd)

Men's 24-/25/35+ (8): Felipe Alonso; Dennis Negrete; Geoff Goldblatt, John Thorson, Jr.

Men's 40+ (9): Alok Mehta; Cary Slade; Kent Hadraba, Dennis Negrete

Men's 45+ (8): Lem Rowans; Dave Milazzo; John Richier, Jim Hillman

Men's 50+ (13): Dave Milazzo; Jim Hillman; Stephen Lloyd, TJ Ferro

Men's 55+ (8): TJ Ferro; Frank Milazzo; Dennis Healy, Dave Olson

Men's 60+ (8): Dennis McKee; Horace Miller; George Kleber, Joe Silius

Men's 65/70/75/80+ (5): Pat Taylor; Roy Fouts; John O'Donnell, Jr. (3rd)

Men's 65+ (2): Pat Taylor; Roy Fouts

Men's 70+ (1): Edward Olah

Men's 75+ (1): John O'Donnell, Jr.

Men's 80+ (1): Tony Lang

Men's 25/35/40+A (9): Juan Martinez III; Chris Caldwell; John Puccio, Deepak Panduranga

Men's 45/50/55/60+A (13): Jim Zidek; John Mason; Rick Seaberg, Wil Rounsaville

Men's 25-50+ Int (14): Juan Martinez; Darren Halligan; Michael Ryan, David Paris

Men's 55/60+ Int (6): Dan Musgrove; Derek John Buckley; Ernesto Tan, Salvador Galvan

Women's Open (12): Ellen Somberg; Liz Molitor; Diane Bunker, Renee Roux

Women's AA (3): Jill Grube; Lynn Yeazell; Bernadette Bland (3rd)

Women's A (9): Marcia Warren; Pam Grace; Lynne Weisbart, Becky Gerig

Women's B/C (5): Rhonda Mundhenk; Carrie Martin; Joyce Satorius (3rd)

Women's C (1): Joyce Satorius

Women's 30-60+ (9): Liz Molitor; Renee Roux; Janet Eminger, Diane Bunker

Women's 50/55+A (5): Marcia Warren; Cheryl Kirk; Marla Cusano (3rd)

Women's 50+A (3): Marcia Warren; Cheryl Kirk; Marla Cusano (3rd)

Women's 55+A (2): Lynne Weisbart; Pam Grace

Boys 10 & Under (3): Jeremy Dixon; Noor Michael; Tristan Bush (3rd)

Boys 12 & Under (5): Sam Goodman; Jason Goodman; Jeremy Dixon (3rd)

Boys 16/14 & Under (5): John Bertholomey, Jr.; Saad Siddiqui; Miles Brugh (3rd)

ISRA

Annual Awards

The Glass Court Swim & Fitness February 28, 2009

As always, the ISRA State Singles provides the venue not only for the tournament, but also for the ISRA Annual Awards. On Saturday evening, February 28th, the awards ceremony took place at the Glass Court Swim & Fitness Club. ISRA President Laurel Davis was the MC of the event. The ceremony was conducted on the Glass Court itself with a huge crowd of friends and family turning out to remember Diane DeArmas and to witness her posthumous induction into the ISRA Hall of Fame.

Diane's husband Joe DeArmas graciously received Diane's Hall of Fame award on behalf the entire DeArmas and Jaskier families. Barb Vagedes spent a few minutes talking about Diane, remembering what a generous and loving person she was. Geoff Peters, Diane's daughter Carrie Jaskier Spaeth, and Joe also gave moving tributes to Diane, speaking of her love of racquetball and her many contributions to the sport.



Geoff Peters with Hall of Famers Lola Markus and John O'Donnell, Jr.

A host club plaque was presented to The Glass Court Swim & Fitness for hosting the ISRA State Doubles as well as State Singles. Joe DeArmas and Dan Jaskier, co-owners of The Glass Court, accepted the plaque.

The following ISRA Annual Award winners and nominees were recognized as the Best of the Best in Illinois Racquetball over the past year:

2009 ISRA Distinguished Service Award – Cheryl Kirk

Fellow nominees: Keith Brown, Lori Good, Leo Klimaitis and Pat Taylor

2008 Female Player of the Year – Ellen Somberg

Fellow nominees: Krystal Csuk and Cheryl Gudinas

2008 Male Player of the Year – TJ Ferro

Fellow nominees: Juan Herrera, Keith Minor and Jeff Mullins

2008 Most Improved Player – Frank Milazzo

Fellow nominees: Kenny Brown, Joann Kempthorne, Jim Thurber and Julianne Valentino



Carrie Jaskier Spaeth remembers her mother Diane DeArmas

Congratulations to all! We appreciate your participation, achievements and contributions in support of racquetball.

The James B. Dvorak Award was shared equally by two young men, Noor Michael and Jeremy Dixon. Barry Dixon, President of Junior Team Illinois, was on hand to present the awards. Barry made heartfelt presentations to Noor and to his own son Jeremy.

Mr. James B. Dvorak was an individual who supported racquetball and especially loved to watch young people play. The Dvorak family instituted a scholarship to be awarded annually in Mr. Dvorak's memory to an exceptional junior player who exhibits high standards in the areas of racquetball, sportsmanship, community service and scholastic achievement. To be considered for the award, the player

continued on next page

ISRA **ANNUAL AWARDS** *continued from previous page*

must submit an application in which they list their achievements in the areas of racquetball participation, sportsmanship, scholarship and community service.

ISRA Awards Criteria and History

On an annual basis, the ISRA Board of Directors requests nominations from the entire ISRA membership. Once nominations have been submitted, the Board members cast their votes and the award winners are selected. The criteria for ISRA awards are as follows:

Male and Female Players of the Year and Most Improved Player Award

- Sportsmanship
- Number of years played
- Improvement
- Personal accomplishments
- Contribution to the sport of racquetball

Nominees must be USAR/ISRA members and may play at any level.

Distinguished Service Award

- Commitment to the sport of racquetball
- Quality of service
- Accomplishments that have benefited the sport and its players



— Marla Cusano

Marla Cusano and Laurel Davis thank Pat Taylor for his many contributions to our sport



ISRA Board and Auxiliary Board members at the Annual Awards

Tom Utterback, Lynn Yeazell, Cheryl Kirk, TJ Ferro, Jim Maroon, Pam Grace, Marla Cusano, Mike Davern, Laurel Davis

2nd Annual Shamrock Shootout

**The Glass Court Swim & Fitness,
Lombard
March 19-22, 2009
Tournament Directors: Doug and
Michelle Halverson**

Another great event at Glass Court – what would we do without Joe, Dan and the staff?

The Shamrock was the third major tournament held there this year, with Regionals to come. Although the Men's Open draw was small, 160 players turned out overall. That's on top of 185 at State Singles three

weeks before and 145 each at ISRA State Doubles and the Revie Sorey E-Force Celebrity Classic (at The Chalet) in January. The year 2009 has netted some of the biggest turnouts in recent years, one tournament after another. This bodes well for racquetball in the great state of Illinois!

Thanks to Our Volunteers

Tournament Directors Doug and Michelle wish to thank the following folks for their support: Marian Bala, Char Borre, Tristan Bush, Ron Calloway, Marla Cusano, Mike Davern, Laurel

Davis, Dan Flood, Lori Good, Jeff Grace, Pam Grace, Joy Herth, Cheryl Kirk, Dolores Lamberson, Grant (and Brooke) Macuba, Geoff Peters, Joyce Satorius, Joe Silius, Chuck Snyders, John Thorson, Jr., Tom Utterback, Jim Wehrli, Lynne Weisbart, Julie Wielgus, Barb Vagedes, Julianne Valentino, and Lynn Yeazell.

Kudos to Our Sponsors

These companies contributed to the success of the Shamrock. Many

continued on next page

National Masters Racquetball Association

I recently had the pleasure of spending an hour on the phone with retired Army veteran Tom Curran. If you know or have talked with Tom, well, you know it could have easily turned into two hours of racquetball talk! We had some great conversation about the military, about the recent establishment of the Military Racquetball Foundation, and about the National Masters Racquetball Association (NMRA), what they represent and support. During our conversation, several adjectives came to mind in trying to define the NMRA contingent: camaraderie, loyalty, grassroots, advocates, and longevity. Let me tell you a little bit about longevity via an anecdote from the last NMRA event. Colonel Ben Marshall, a retired Army officer who served our country in WWII, Korea, and Vietnam earned a gold medal in Canoga Park by just showing in. Ben's 92 years old!

Don't let their ages fool you, the NMRA boasts great talents like Ruben Gonzalez, Tom Kane, and the age bracket Athlete of the Year Tom Travers, just to mention a few. The NMRA tournaments usually at-

tract between 200-220 players, 25% of them being female. Tom went on to tell me, "We have a great contingent of ex-military; 40% of the NMRA are military retirees and 60% are veterans."

Each year the NMRA hosts two major championships, a National Championship in March and an International championship in July. The National Championship this year was held in Canoga Park, California and Illinois was represented by TJ Ferro, who did us proud as always. (TJ, with doubles partner Howard Walker, tied for third in the Men's 45/55+ Doubles.)

The demographics and tournament proceedings in the NMRA are unique. Round robin play usually gets you your money's worth, unless of course you are 92 years old; tough to find competition then, I suppose. Tom went on to tell me that if there are eleven players in an age group, a round robin will be run in one bracket, that's right, from Wednesday to Saturday these high performance athletes are playing 10 matches! If there are twelve players in a particular division, the brackets are double, still offering 5 tough matches, most of which are run consecutively when possible. This tournament set-up

tests endurance and cardio, minimizes cold muscles between matches, reduces injuries, and allows lifelong friends to support each other. "Stamina is the key element; it can be more important than skill by the third day of play," Tom said. Although very competitive, the NMRA also focuses on fostering a social atmosphere. The hospitality is arguably second to none. Although the entry fee is a bit higher than other tournaments, the upscale registration gifts and Saturday evening banquet is worth every penny spent.

Without a doubt, the NMRA offers a great combination of camaraderie and intense athletic head-to-head in competition...and it's coming to a city near us! July 15-18, John O'Donnell, Jr. and the NMRA will be hosting the International Championships in Urbana/Champaign, Illinois. Those who are aged 45 and over, put it on your calendar — what could possibly be better than witnessing timeless athletes competing at the highest possible level while rekindling and forming friendships that will last a lifetime?

— Kevin Brylski

2nd Annual **SHAMROCK SHOOTOUT** *continued from previous page*

thanks to Sam Adams, Mi Hacienda, Kirsten's Danish Bakery, HEAD/Penn, Carm's Beef, Little Debbie and Comfort Suites. Additionally, a number of companies donated to the popular free raffle held at all Glass tournaments: Inland Bank, Lucky Strike Lanes, Sawas Old Warsaw, Aurelio's Pizza, Fox Bowl, Shedd Aquarium, Essence Suites, Sybaris, Hollywood Boulevard, Hooter's, Dave & Buster's, Zanies, Buffalo Wild Wings, White Fence Farms, Chicago Wolves, White Sox and Cubs.

New Approach

One of the defining points of this tournament was the decision to have winners referee after their matches on an unpaid basis (to keep tournament entry fees as low as possible). Some were a little nervous about this new aspect, but once again players stepped up and did their part, cheerfully presenting themselves for ref duty after their victories. Everyone was great, and a residual effect was that everyone got a referee in a good mood. What's better than that?

New Players

We had some folks playing their first sanctioned tournament ever – thanks to Amanda Mierdirk (mentored by Rick Ricksecker) and Ed Paulson for coming out to play.

There were a few others (forgive me for the lapse)...you are the future of our sport!

Birthday Girl

Our own Hospitality Queen Marian Bala celebrated a milestone (use your imagination) birthday on Sunday, the 22nd. On that morning, Marian got smacked in the mouth with a racquet and the power went out in the club. These two events were not connected, but those who know Marian were not surprised by either – when else but on Marian's birthday? BTW, she still played two matches that day, puffy lip and all, plus served up lunch for the tournament players! A congenial group celebrated Marian's birthday at the tournament desk, punctuated by a cake (courtesy of Janet Eminger) and bubble



Surprise! Happy Birthday, Marian!

continued on next page



Men's C winner Basilio Salazar and Dr. Ernesto Tan



Cake

2nd Annual **SHAMROCK SHOOTOUT** *continued from previous page*

wrap (from Pam Grace) presumably to help protect Marian from further injuries.

Doug and Michelle, along with Glass Court owners Joe DeArmas and Dan Jaskier, did this one up right once again. Life is good in Illinois racquetball, thanks to Glass Court and all of you who came out to play!

Results on page 19; full results at www.r2sports.com/tourney/viewResults.asp?TID=4435.

— Cheryl Kirk



Horace Miller



Kerry Spix & Marla Cusano



Ed Paulson's first tournament!



Men's Open Doubles Winners Trevor Snyder and Juan Herrera



Grant Macuba and new volunteer trainee Brooke

2nd Annual **SHAMROCK SHOOTOUT** *continued from previous page*



*Women's Open Doubles Champs
Nancy Amaro and Janet Eminger*



*Women's A Winner Sharon Hunter
and favorite fan David*



Jeff Grace, Wild Bill Wasserman, and Juan Herrera

2nd Annual **SHAMROCK SHOOTOUT** *continued from previous page*



*Men's 40+ Doubles
Eric Jensen & Andy Pitock*



*Men's C Doubles
David Walker & Darren Halligan*



*Men's A Doubles
Pete McCauley & Matt Sochacki*

RESULTS

Division/# entered: First; Second; Semifinals

Men's Open (7): Juan Herrera; Keith Minor; Tony Domelle (IN), Geoff Goldblatt

Men's A (16): Dean Hamiti; David Nelson; Clint Hickman, Mike DeGonia

Men's B (13): Juan Martinez; Aaron Pace; Oscar Madrigal, Ozzie Moran

Men's C (34): Basilio Salazar; Dan Musgrove; Sriram Ravindran, Dan Pacetti

Men's D (21): Benjamin Torres; David Paris; John Kiley, Federico Salazar

Men's 30/40+ (7): Cary Slade; Eric Battaglia; Antonio Rosselli, Geoff Peters

Men's 35/45+ Int (6): Jim Bush; Leo Formanski; Bill Wasserman, Juan Martinez

Men's 45/50+ (5): Dave Milazzo; Lem Rowans; Tom Lamberson, Frank Bunker

Men's 55/60+ (8): Horace Miller; Jeff Grace; Gene Cromwell, Pat Taylor

Women's Open (6): Liz Molitor; Renee Roux; Jill Grube, Diane Bunker

Women's AA (2): Janet Eminger; Marcia Warren

Women's A (5): Sharon Hunter; Lynne Weisbart; Pam Grace (3rd)

Women's B (4): Mary Crambes; Deanna Munro; Carrie Martin (3rd)

Women's C/D (4): Kelly Gremley (IN); Joyce Satorius; Anna Marek (3rd)

Men's Open Doubles (6): Trevor Snyders/Juan Herrera; Barry Dixon/John Thorson, Jr.; Joe DeArmas/Richard DeArmas, Todd Sauerbrun/Geoff Goldblatt

Men's A Doubles (10): Matt Sochacki/Pete McCauley; Keith Mecklenburg/Matt Malcheski; Tom Lamberson/Dick Heithoff, Jeffrey Hill/Jake Ryan

Men's B Doubles (9): Dave Wielgus/Dan Musgrove; Jim Bush/Jim Wehrli; Paul Ondrus/Jeff Martin, Omar Montes De Oca/Adrian Montes De Oca

Men's C Doubles (10): Darren Halligan/David Walker; Jamal Sinno/Art Davis, Jr.;

Carlos Moreno/Sal Oliver, Omar Montes De Oca/Adrian Montes De Oca

Men's Doubles 40+ (5): Eric Jensen/Andy Pitock; Barry Dixon/Chuck Snyders; Ron Calloway/Matthew Malcheski (3rd)

Women's Open Doubles (3): Nancy Amaro/Janet Eminger; Laurel Davis/Liz Molitor; Kathy Ruzyski/Lynn Yeazell (3rd)

Women's A Doubles (5): Barb Vagedes/Marla Cusano; Marian Bala/Cheryl Kirk; Pam Grace/Lynne Weisbart (3rd)

Mixed Open Doubles (7): Nancy Amaro/Trevor Snyders; Mike Hammel/LynnYeazell; Marian Bala/Andy Pitock, Frank Milazzo/Laurel Davis

Mixed A Doubles (6): Kerry Spix/Marla Cusano; Oscar Madrigal/Maritza Ortega; Doug Halverson/Barb Vagedes, Jim Wehrli/Cheryl Kirk

Mixed B/C Doubles (4): Deanna Munro/Art Davis, Jr.; Reyna Lopez/Antonio Vazquez; Tony Domelle (IN)/Kelly Gremley (IN)(3rd)

Travel League

2009 Results

Men's Travel League – October through March

Twenty teams
(8 Open, 5 A/B, and 7 B/C)

Wrap-up Party and Awards: March
27th at Glass Court, Lombard

Open Division & Playoff Winner: Forest
View (Brian Berkelhamer, Captain; Zach
Archer, Mitch Becker, Krystal Csuk,
Geoff Goldblatt, Mike Hammel, Alok
Mehta, Jeff Mullins, Jorge Ortiz, John
Puccio, Brant Spiewak); 2nd Place –
Glass Court

A/B Division & Playoff Winner: LA Fit-
ness Naperville (John Puccio, Captain;
Tim Brown, Dave Coyner, Randy Ems,
Scott Fauque, Brian Finley, Dean
Hamiti, Ryan Kessler, Pete McCauley,
Rick Seaberg, Raj Sondhi, Jim Wehrli);
2nd Place – The Chalet

B/C Division and Playoff Winner: LA
Fitness Bolingbrook (Wayne Lorenz,
Captain; Jim Bush, Curt Eilers, Brian
Lien, Dan Musgrove, Ray Redelman,
Enrique Rodriguez, Dominic Rossi, Jim
Wehrli, Dave Wielgus, Dale Willenbrink,
Jim Zidek); 2nd Place – Norris Center

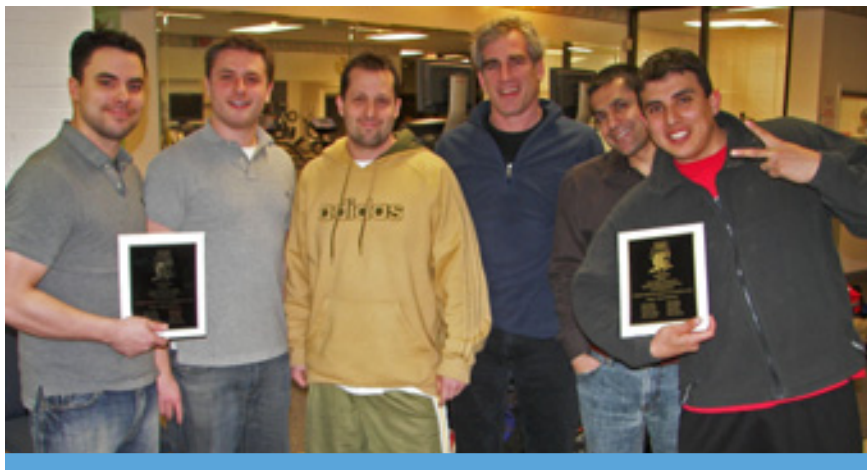
Women's League – October through February

Six teams; 20 players on the sub list

Wrap-up Party and Awards: February
23rd at The Glass Court Swim & Fitness

All teams play together at the same
club each week, rotating between Glass
Court, The Chalet and Schaumburg
Tennis Plus.

Winning Team: Janet Leet, Patrice
Calvi, Lynne Weisbart, Marian Bala and
Dolores Lamberson. Due to injuries and
absences, Nancy Kronenfeld subbed
five times for the winning team. Warm
thanks to Pam Grace and Liz Molitor
(Men's Travel League Coordinators) and
Julie Vincent and Diane Bunker
(Women's League Coordinators) for
their leadership in making the ISRA
Travel League the longest-running pro-
gram in the U.S. !



Open Division — Forest View



A/B Division — LA Fitness Naperville



B/C Division — LA Fitness Bolingbrook



2009 Tournament **CALENDAR**

For updates or edits to the ISRA Tournament Calendar, please contact
Geoff Peters at (773) 251-4413 or at Petersgeoff@Hotmail.com

May 20th – 25th

42nd USAR
National Singles
Championships
The Downtown YMCA,
Houston, TX
Heather Fender;
(719) 635-5396
Enter online at
www.usaracquetball.com

June 24th – 28th

36th National Junior
Olympic Championships
Lansing, MI
Heather Fender; (719) 635-5396
Enter online at
www.usaracquetball.com

June 26th – 27th

5th Annual Racquet for the Cure
Landmark Health and Fitness, Peoria
(Women's Divisions plus
Men's/Mixed Doubles)
John Snarr; (309) 685-8360

July 15th – 18th

2009 NMRA International
Championships
Urbana, IL
John O'Donnell, Jr.; (217) 351-9093
Enter online at
www.usaracquetball.com

July 24th – 26th

16th Annual Summerfest Open \$\$
The Glass Court Swim & Fitness,
Lombard
Doug Halverson; (630) 629-3390
Enter online at
www.illinoisracquetball.com

JR - Includes Junior Divisions

\$ - Prize Money in Open Divisions

\$\$ - Prize Money in Multiple Divisions

All tournaments listed are sanctioned by USA Racquetball

2009 ISRA Newsletter Advertising Rates

GUIDELINES:

- The ISRA Board of Directors has established a formal policy of not allowing advertisements to include **product pricing**.
- All ads are assumed to be camera ready. They can be accepted electronically in .tif, .jpg or .pdf formats.
- These rates are in effect until December 31, 2009.
- Deadlines are as follows:

- **Issue Publication Date:** 8/1/09
- **Articles/Releases/Ads Due:** 7/10/09

Ad Rates:

Full page: \$150/issue

Half page: \$75/issue

Quarter page: \$50/issue

Other sizes quoted on a case-by-case basis.

- For any questions or submission:

Send articles/releases to Cheryl Kirk at cherylkkirk@aol.com

Send ads to Joe Silius at jsilius@yahoo.com



Lend Your SUPPORT

Your membership in the ISRA has helped make our organization second to none.

Though we strive to make improvements to build and grow the sport for future success, we sometimes struggle to keep our heads above water as an organization. Our focus is not for the purpose of monetary gain but to generate enough funds to give back quality, first-rate programs, tournaments and events we can all be proud to participate in. Our volunteers who donate their time and/or money are greatly appreciated as are those who advertise in this ISRA Newsletter. For as little as \$25 for a business card size ad, we can help get your name out there to let everyone know what you do; for \$150, we can run your ad on a full page. Help Us Help You by getting your ad into the next ISRA newsletter.

Many thanks,
Joe Silius,
Advertising Editor

Attention ISRA MEMBERS!

The ISRA Newsletter has transitioned to an electronic format. As you know, it is presently available on www.illinoisracquetball.com. We may, however, move to an email (members only) format in the near future. Please take the opportunity now to update your USA Racquetball membership profile, most especially supplying your current email address so you don't miss any issues of this cutting edge publication!

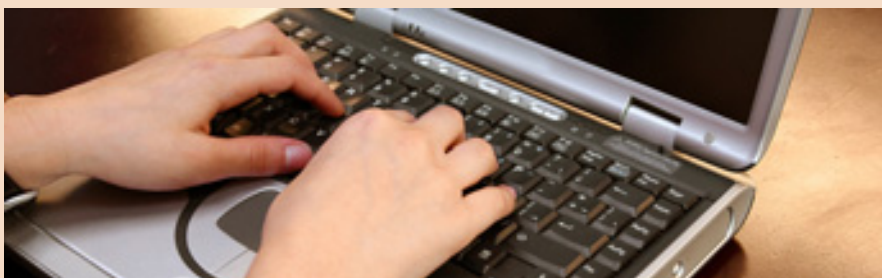
Please follow the steps below to update your profile:

1. Log into www.usra.org
2. Select Membership Login in the upper left hand box
3. Enter your six-digit USAR membership number and password*
4. Update the information in the profile
5. Click on Edit Contact Info
6. Log out

Now, wasn't that easy?

*If you don't know or have misplaced your membership number and/or password, contact Heather Izzett at hizzett@usra.org.

Thanks for taking the time...and be sure to visit www.illinoisracquetball.com for tournament schedule revisions and competition results.



Send to:

ISRA
603 E. Wilson Ave.
Lombard, IL 60148

Member Sport,
U.S. Olympic
Committee



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE/ZIP _____

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E-MAIL _____

BIRTHDATE _____

Adult competitor \$50.00 _____

Junior competitor (age 21 and under) \$25.00 _____

Tax-deductible donation \$ _____

Total enclosed \$ _____

Tournament _____ Representative _____

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CRAIG'S GOLF AND TENNIS SOURCE, Lisle, IL 630-434-0811

Racquetball

CHALLENGE COURTS

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Thursdays 7-10 p.m.

Saturday 8 a.m. - Noon

\$15 One-Day Guest Pass

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(Elmhurst Park District)

(630) 833-5064

Monday-Saturday

8:30 -11:00 a.m.

\$2.00 M-F,

\$3.00 Sat. Members

\$10.00 Non-Members

Fitness Formula Clubs –

Old Town

(312) 640-1235

1235 N. LaSalle St., Chicago, IL

Tuesdays 6:00-9:00 pm

Saturdays: 9:00 am – 12 noon

\$20 for guests

Forest View Racquet and Fitness Club

(847) 640-2574

Arlington Heights, IL

Thursday

6:30 -10:00 p.m.

\$2.00 Members,

\$5.00 Non-Members

Heritage YMCA

(630) 420-6270

Naperville, IL

Saturday

9 -10 a.m.

\$4.00

Members,

\$8.00

Non-Members

Landmark Health and Racquetball

(309) 685-8360

Peoria, IL

First and Third

Friday each month

6 - 8 p.m.

\$5.00

Life Center Health and Fitness at the Bartlett Park District

(630) 540-4848

Bartlett, IL

Wednesdays

7:30 -9:30 p.m.

Saturdays

7:30 - 9:30 a.m.

\$4.00 Members

\$6.00 Non-Members

\$9.00 Non-Residents

Norris Rec Center

(630) 377-1405

St. Charles, IL

Tuesday and Thursday

7 - 9 p.m.

Friday 5 - 7 p.m.

Sunday 8 -10 a.m.

\$5.00 Members

and Non-Members

Schaumburg Park District

(847) 490-2505

Schaumburg, IL

Saturday 8 -10 a.m.

Sunday 6 - 8 p.m.

\$3 Members,

\$9 Non-Members

Silver Lake Country Club

(708) 349-6940

Orland Park, IL

Friday 7 - 10 p.m.

\$7.00 Members

and Non-Members

West Cook YMCA

(708) 383-5200

Oak Park

Wednesday 7 - 10 p.m.

Thursday 2 - 4 p.m.

Saturday 8 -10 a.m.

Free to YMCA members,

\$9.00 Non-Members

To add your club to this list, contact: **Marla Cusano** at marcusano@comcast.net