



RACQUET RACKET

FALL 2018

Official Newsletter of the National Masters Racquetball Association (NMRA)

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Next NMRA Events

Although there are about ten great racquetball events for players 40 and over each year, I'll highlight the next three that the NMRA hosts, and you can go to the back page to find the rest. Mark your calendars now so you can join us at the 2018/2019 NMRA events:

March 6-9, 2019, in San Antonio, Texas.

The details on this event will soon be nailed down and available via our NMRA website and R2Sports.com. We are working on combining an IRT Tier 1 pro stop with our NMRA matches. For our NMRA players who don't get to see the pros play in person, this will be a treat. Wish me luck.

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President's Corner - Good Things for Our Players

By Cindy Tilbury, NMRA President

Ball Contract Extended Two Years - Penn Green

The NMRA and *Head/Penn Racquetball* are pleased to announce that we recently continued our ball contract for two more years. We plan to use *Penn Green* racquetballs at our three yearly NMRA tournaments. We couldn't be more pleased to have such a close relationship with *Head/Penn* and all of the amazing racquetball resources within their company.

Amazon Smile -- Choose USA Racquetball As Your Charity

I want to remind you of a very important, yet easy-to-do, contribution you can make to racquetball. It won't cost you a thing, but if we all do it, it will really add up.

Do you order a lot of items on *Amazon*—maybe for yourself or for your business? Then I hope you will go to *Amazon Smile* and choose *USA Racquetball* as your charity of choice. What does that mean? Legitimate non-profit organizations and charities register with *Amazon* to be on the approved list. If you choose *USA Racquetball* as your charity, our sport will receive 0.5% of every dollar you order. Once you've done this, *Amazon* will even remind you to use smile.amazon.com instead of amazon.com. It couldn't be easier to support the best sport in the world!

New USA Racquetball Executive Director – Mike Wedel from Kansas City, Kansas

After an extensive search with over four dozen applicants, **Mike Wedel** was offered and has accepted the position of Executive Director of *USA Racquetball*. He started on November 1. Mike is not new to racquetball or non-profits. He has had much experience in for-profit and non-profit organizations, including owning a business or two along the way. He has been a *USA Racquetball* board member for years, serving on several committees and championing our auto-renewal of memberships. Get the full story and see a photo of Mike on the *USAR* website here: <https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Racquetball/Features/2018/September/27/Board-Names-Mike-Wedel-as-Executive-Director>

Congratulations to Mike! I hope you will all take some time to get to know him and see what plans he has for our sport. If you have concerns and questions about the job or the organization, contact Mike at mwedel@usaracquetball.com.

If you have questions about the NMRA, I'm your contact for that.



Denver and Other Videos / Slideshows

Bruce Adams shared online the banquet slideshow and tourney photos/video. The links will be on the www.nmra.info site, with the actual videos already on *YouTube*. If you were there and would like me to send photos of yourself or someone else, just ask. That is no trouble at all. Here is the *YouTube* link for Denver and some current NMRA *YouTube* videos.

NMRA 2018 Denver Tournament YouTube Videos

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=bruce+adams+national+masters+racquetball

NMRA 2018 Warren Tournament Youtube Banquet Slideshows

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=nmra+warren+2018+racquetball

NMRA 2017 Pleasanton Tournament YouTube First-Timer Video From Leon Jackson

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iOcedzuJ73s>



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Next NMRA Events
continued from Page 1

**June 26-29, 2019,
in Chicago, Illinois.**

We are excited to go to the famous *Glass Court* club in Lombard, Illinois. The *Glass Court* is the club home of **Cheryl Gudinas**, **Cheryl Kirk**, **Geoff Peters**, and many of our *NMRA* friends.

**December 6-8, 2019,
in Atlanta, Georgia.**

The *Recreation ATL* club has invited us back for some Doubles-Only action in Lilburn, Georgia. Start lining up your partners now.

— * —

We are interested in hearing about potential new venues for *NMRA* events—have us give them a call.



National Masters Racquetball Association Announces Reduced Entry Fees

By Cindy Tilbury

Although our three *NMRA* tournaments per year are not like usual local weekend tourneys, we have potential players who look at our entry fees and decide not to play. If they have not played in our events, they aren't sure they will get the full value from an *NMRA* event. After they try us, it is a different story. Despite all that, we wanted first-timers to feel comfortable trying our all-round-robin, self-refereed four-day events so we are offering something new.

We lowered the entry fees. They are now **\$85 for the first division and \$25 for the second.** And we are still offering our 80+ players complimentary entry fees.

This does not cover our costs, which include a banquet dinner, court rental, a great jacket or souvenir, and great food all weekend. How do we do it? We have some of the greatest, most generous sponsors in racquetball who support our vision of offering top-quality events for 40+

players. Without them, this action would be creating problems for ourselves financially.

We now hope that local players and traveling players will no longer have an excuse to skip our special brand of tournaments and join the *NMRA* family of 40+ players. The next two events will be as follows, and then we will be back on the east coast:

- March 6-9, 2019 in San Antonio. Singles and doubles divisions. Wednesday through Saturday.
- June 26-29, 2019, in Chicago. Singles and Doubles divisions. Wednesday through Saturday.

I'm sure you will have questions. Please contact me at 303.888.4461 (text or voice) or cindy.tilbury@att.net. I hope to see you at an *NMRA* event very soon.

Denver and Other Videos / Slideshows
continued from Page 1

NMRA 2017 West Allis Tournament YouTube Videos and Slideshows From Leon Jackson
https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=national+masters+racquetball+west+allis+2017

NMRA 2017 Arlington Tournament YouTube Photos From Leon Jackson
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WnJ8khXTmiY&feature=youtu.be>

NMRA 2017 Arlington Banquet Slides From Leon Jackson
<https://youtu.be/jcKDBjvTio>

Also search www.youtube.com for Leon Jackson and *NMRA* to find all of Leon's great videos.

NMRA 2016 Atlanta Tournament YouTube Slideshows and Videos From Bruce Adams
https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=nmra+atlanta+2016+bruce+adams



Follow-up from Warren, New Jersey

In May, the *NMRA* had its first-ever tournament at the *Warren Health & Racquet Club* in Warren, New Jersey, where local contact **Jonathan Clay** eased our path to make this happen with the club and local suppliers.

There were almost 50 first-time *NMRA* players, including former pros **Todd O'Neil** and **Dottie Fischl Kelly**. Many of our 2011 Allentown players came across the border to join us again for some great competition and camaraderie. The weather was beautiful after a tough spring and winter in the Northeast. We hope to be back again in the next few years to take advantage of the great courts and the proximity to New York City.

Thank you to all of our sponsors in the area—especially BMCLogo.com for the donated gym bags and *Head/Penn* for the balls and giveaways that enabled us to raise \$2500 for junior racquetball causes in the area. **Peggy Prentiss** worked tirelessly to round up local grocery stores and banks to be among our generous donors. *Warren Health & Racquet Club* is a rare gem and we are so lucky to now include it in our list of *NMRA* host venues.

Thanks to all of the players and sponsor who supported our *Spring 2018 Championships*.



NMRA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

March 6-9, 2019 - Thousand Oaks YMCA & San Antonio College, San Antonio, TX

Entry By Mail Must Be POSTMARKED NO LATER THAN: 02/18/2019

Online Entries Must Be COMPLETED BY: 02/20/2019

<http://www.r2sports.com/tourney/home.asp?TID=30064>

Please Print — Be Legible, Complete & Accurate



Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: Home _____

Work _____

Cell _____

Email: _____

DOB: m____ / d____ / yr____ Age on 03/06/2019 _____

Waiver: I hereby, for myself, my heirs, executors, and administrators, waive and release any and all rights and claims that I may have against the NMRA, USAR, Thousand Oaks YMCA and San Antonio College and their staff, and all sponsors or their respective agents, for any and all injuries or damages of any nature which I, my spouse or my guest(s) may incur as a result of my participation in this tournament. I also acknowledge the potential risk of eye injury during competition, and can certify in writing that my protective eye guards (including prescription frames/lenses) conform with all standards specified in USA Racquetball Rule 2.5(a). By registering to compete in this event, I consent to and release all rights to the use of event photographs in which my image appears.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

ENTRY FEES:

First Event \$ 85 \$ _____

Second Event \$ 25 \$ _____

Spouse/Guest(s)* (Each) \$ 70 \$ _____

NMRA Membership (Total for 3 Yrs) \$ 45 \$ _____

USRA Membership (required, 1 Yr) \$ 50 \$ _____

Total Due: \$ _____

* Spouse/Guest(s) Name(s): _____

____ ****Check here if this is your first NMRA tournament ****
(First time players do not have to join the NMRA, but we hope you do.)

SHIRT SIZE: MEN _____ WOMEN _____
S ___ M ___ L ___ XL ___ 2X ___ 3X ___

PAYMENT: Send entry form & payment in U.S. dollars, made payable to **NMRA**.

Mail to: Cindy Tilbury - NMRA
23308 Bocana Street, Malibu, CA 90265

NO REFUND OF ANY FEES AFTER 02/20/2019

**Limit of two events only: singles and doubles or two doubles.
Everyone plays every day; arrive Tuesday!**

DOUBLES			AGE	SINGLES	
MEN	WOMEN	MIXED		MEN	WOMEN
			40+		
n/a	n/a	n/a	40+ B/C	n/a	
			45+		
			50+		
n/a	n/a	n/a	50+ B/C	n/a	
			55+		
			60+		
			65+		
			70+		
			75+		
			80+		
			85+		
	n/a		90+		n/a
			Jackpot		

DOUBLES PARTNER(S): Please Print

Name/Div/Age Bracket: _____

Name/Div/Age Bracket: _____

____ Check if you need us to find a doubles partner.

Emergency Contact Information:

Name _____

Phone # _____



NMRA 2019 National Championships

Thousand Oaks YMCA | San Antonio, TX | March 6-9, 2019

www.nmra.info * *Please read carefully* * <http://www.r2sports.com/tourney/home.asp?TID=30064>

Tournament Directors / Staff	Cindy Tilbury 303.888.4461 cindy.tilbury@att.net Mike and Karen Grisz mgrisz@aol.com ktracquetball@gmail.com Mike Cantu / Gary Flores – On-site Hosts Panel of Three Members - Rules Committee
Primary Host Club 	Thousand Oaks YMCA – 5 Panel-Walled Courts 16101 Henderson Pass, San Antonio, TX 78232 (210.494.5292) www.ymcasatx.org Towel service and lockers available; Bring a lock. Some practice courts available on March 5, except during registration time; Lunches available near the courts.
Secondary Host Club	Check R2Sports.com Tourney Site for Updates If required, we will line up more courts nearby at San Antonio College Lunches will be available ONLY at the primary club
Host Hotel 	Doubletree San Antonio Airport 37 NE I-410 Loop, San Antonio, TX 78216 (210.366.2424) https://doubletree3.hilton.com/en/hotels/texas/doubletree-by-hilton-hotel-san-antonio-airport-SATNSDT/index.html Call 210.366.2424 to Register Mention NMRA \$122 + Tax Per Night Regular Room (Up to 2 People) Rates available until February 2, 2019, but reserve early (30 available) Rate includes full hot breakfast, wireless internet access, parking, fitness center, airport shuttle, more RV parking is free in a designated area of the parking lot, without hookups.
Enter Online 	Enter online by February 20, 2019, at http://www.r2sports.com/tourney/home.asp?TID=30064 First event--\$85 Second event--\$25 Guests \$70 for the week You may request a doubles partner and/or roommate and we will do our best to accommodate you. (Try the "Find a Partner" list feature of R2sports) \$5 credit card convenience fee will be charged.
Enter via US Mail	Fill out the entry form at www.nationalmastersracquetball.org (Tournament Info page). Make check payable to NMRA. Mail completed entry form and fees by February 18, 2019, to: NMRA / Cindy Tilbury, 23308 Bocana Street, Malibu, CA 90265
Refunds	Refunds are available until February 20, 2019, when shirts will be ordered, banquet dinners will be committed, and match scheduling will be completed.
Nearest Airport	San Antonio International Airport (SAT) 9800 Airport Boulevard, San Antonio, TX 78216 I-410 Route 281 – Make your reservations early.
Airlines Flying into SAT	Alaska American Delta Frontier Southwest United
Alternate Airport	Austin, Texas (AUS) - 78 Miles / 6 minutes
SAT Airport Shuttle to Host Hotel	Free hotel shuttle from airport. Arrange ahead of time. Uber and Lyft are also good choices / Check R2Sports for more options. Try the "Share a Ride" list feature of www.r2sports.com when registering for this tournament.
Shuttle to Clubs	Shuttle van provided from host hotel between clubs. Tips are appreciated.
Parking at Host Club(s)	Free.
Directions from Airport SAT to Host Hotel Doubletree	1.9 Miles / 6 minutes https://goo.gl/maps/AuwqHDteEo92
Directions from Doubletree Host Hotel to Thousand Oaks YMCA Primary Club	7.4 Miles / 12 Minutes https://goo.gl/maps/3yHVfMMWayt12

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NMRA 2019 National Championships INFORMATION SHEET continued from page 4...

Tournament Check-In	Tuesday, March 5, 2019, 5 to 8 pm near the Thousand Oaks YMCA courts (Check www.r2sports.com for venue changes) Let the access desk person know you are there for the racquetball tourney. Light appetizers and drinks, with player meeting at 7 pm. Plan to stay and socialize!
Play Begins / Ends	8 am Wednesday and Thursday, March 6 and 7, to 10 pm; 8 am Friday, March 8, to 5 pm; 8 am Saturday, March 9, to 5pm <i>Every division plays every day (Wednesday through Saturday)</i> Please show consideration for all players and remember that we play every bracket every day of the event. Schedule your travel arrangements accordingly. ID/bagtag may be required at both venues.
Tournament Ball	<i>Penn Pro Green</i> is the official ball of the NMRA.
Tournament Scoring	All round robins, self-refereed matches; Every division will play two games to 15. Large "pool play" divisions will have Saturday playoff matches. Playoff format will be two games to 15, tiebreaker to 11 if needed. Bonus points are awarded for winning games (2 per game) and the match (4). Ties will split the extra four match points. Points are automatically calculated by the R2sports tournament software. When any team or player must forfeit, average scores will be used to determine final results of the division or pool. If a forfeit occurs during a match, the opposing team or player will be awarded points required to finish the match. You must play all of your matches in a division to receive a medal. In rare circumstances, a "watcher" may be requested of the tournament director to settle disputes.
Appeals	The NMRA has a rules committee that can be used by the players to submit an appeal on a rule (immediately) or issue (not necessarily immediately) that arises during the event. The decision of the rules committee is final and binding on all parties concerned.
Tournament Awards	NMRA medals will be awarded to First through Fourth place winners for each bracket. Combined brackets will be awarded medals based on age. No medal will be awarded for the combined division itself.
Eligibility	USAR-sanctioned; Current USAR membership is required to participate. Entries will not be accepted without payment for USAR membership. NMRA membership is required for all, EXCEPT players who are playing in their FIRST NMRA event. Special recognition and gift for first-time players and new NMRA members will be given out.
Breakfast / Morning Hospitality	Full hot breakfast is included in the price of the Doubletree host hotel. Fruit and drinks available at Thousand Oaks YMCA.
Lunch	Available at the Thousand Oaks YMCA only, near the courts. Check for details during the tournament. Planned lunch times will be 11:30 am to about 2:00 pm. Match times may be scheduled around lunch, but please get a lunch and set it aside if you are playing and will want to eat afterward.
Evening Hospitality	Available at Thousand Oaks YMCA only -- not a substitute for dinner.
Banquet	Friday night, March 8, 2019, at the Doubletree ballroom Cash bar at 6:00 pm; Dinner and program from 7:00 to 9:00 pm or so Videos, slide shows and possible awards (fun and serious) presentations are customary. Don't miss this!
San Antonio Activities and Attractions	Alamo fort history, golfing, hiking, biking, birding, horseback riding, shopping, zoo, museums, Riverwalk music and dining, 40-minute drive to Austin, fishing, much more. See the separate handout of Things To Do in San Antonio at our nmra.info website.
RV Parks	There are several RV parks with hookups near the host hotel. https://www.google.com/maps/search/rv+parks/@29.5890824,-98.5119798,12z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m8!2m7!3m6!1srv+parks!2sThousand+Oaks+Family+YMCA,+16101+Henderson+Pass,+San+Antonio,+TX+78232!3s0x865c8a4817ef5297:0x266a47c4cbea8744!4m2!1d-98.4506939!2d29.5889331
Laundromats	Here is a list of laundromats near the host hotel. https://www.google.com/maps/search/laundromat/@29.5890215,-98.4769587,13z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m8!2m7!3m6!1slaundromat!2sThousand+Oaks+Family+YMCA,+16101+Henderson+Pass,+San+Antonio,+TX+78232!3s0x865c8a4817ef5297:0x266a47c4cbea8744!4m2!1d-98.4506939!2d29.5889331
Doubles Partners	Contact Cindy Tilbury for a doubles partner or roommate cindy.tilbury@att.net or 303.888.4461 Please try the "Need a Doubles Partner" list feature of R2Sports when registering. There are also "Need a Roommate" and "Need a Ride" lists.
R2Sports App Free Download	To better follow the tournament and get notifications for your matches and results, please download the free R2Sports app. For questions, contact Ryan or Tish at R2Sports.com. Info and download links here. www.r2sports.com/tournament-app.asp

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Player Profiles

It is **extremely important** that you keep your **player profile, including shirt size**, up-to-date in the www.r2sports.com system. The profile is used to help you enter tournaments online and, more importantly, to contact you with the latest tournament information and changes when you enter tournaments. This profile is the same as your www.nationalmastersracquetball.org and www.usra.org profile. Contact the **USAR** staff in Colorado Springs at 719.635.5396 if you need a little help getting started or remembering your password for this feature.

Average Temperatures

San Antonio in March – High 75° F – Low 53° F – Average 64° F Precipitation 2 Inches

Altitude

790 Feet

NMRA Tidbits

By Cindy Tilbury

Results on R2Sports

In addition to reading the recent results in this newsletter, check *NMRA* scores and the detailed results on R2Sports.

The *May 2018 Warren, New Jersey* tournament had over 50 first-timers.

Official results can be found here: <http://www.r2sports.com/tourney/viewResults.asp?TID=22262>.

We had an equally great turnout for our July 2018 Denver event. Results: <http://www.r2sports.com/tourney/viewResults.asp?TID=22463>.

Fundraiser During the Warren and Denver Banquets

We were proud to raise about \$2,700 in Warren and \$1,000 in Denver at our fundraisers for junior racquetball. We split the donations between several worthy causes. We are so proud of the work going on at local junior racquetball programs! In addition to the racquetball-specific donations, we also gave some of the proceeds to **Duane Barrone** of STAHRs (stahrs.org), a student-athlete anti-bullying and relationship-teaching non-profit in Denver. We hope all of these great programs will continue with their good works.

Things to Do in the San Antonio, Texas Area

By Sandy Rios

Early March is a wonderful time to explore San Antonio, Texas. The weather is sure to be warm, letting you avoid the heat of summer. Evenings will be cooler, but still very pleasant. The things to do in San Antonio are endless and include everything from shopping, dining, hiking, shows, historical destinations and just plain fun. Below is just a sampling of the things that are available.

River Walk

You can shop, dine, walk, or just stroll the *River Walk*. It is a very leisurely way to enjoy the evening or late afternoon.

www.thesanantonioriverwalk.com

San Antonio Mission Trail

If you are into history, the *San Antonio Mission Trail* is wonderful. Nine miles of trail which includes 4 of San Antonio most important missions.

www.nps.gov/saan/index.htm

The Alamo Mission San Jose

Continue the history trail with *The Alamo* and *Mission San Jose*.

www.nps.gov/saan/planyourvisit/sanjose.htm
www.thealamo.org

King William Historic District

The *King William Historic District* consists of about 25 blocks of historic German influenced mansions set in beautifully landscaped yards.

www.sanantonio.gov/historic/historicsites/HistoricDistricts/KingWilliam

Witte Museum

The *Witte Museum* is a wonderful place to explore nature, science and culture.

www.witemuseum.org

Six Flags Fiesta Texas San Antonio Sea World

And, of course, for those looking to have some fun, we have *Six Flags Fiesta Texas* and *SA Sea World*.

www.sixflags.com/fiestatexas
www.seaworld.com/san-antonio

San Antonio Zoo

For the animal lovers, the *San Antonio Zoo* is easily found.

sazoo.org

Tanger Outlet Mall

For those who don't mind a bit of a drive, 30 minutes north of San Antonio on I35 you will find the *Outlet Malls of San Marcos*; Yes, there are 2 of them!

www.tangeroutlet.com/sanmarcos

www.premiumoutlets.com/outlet/san-marcos

Texas Hill Country Wineries, Breweries and Distilleries

For those who really want to see the *Texas Hill Country* and hit the "*Texas Napa Valley*", an easy 1.5-hour drive will take you to the heart of the wine-producing area. The wineries, breweries and distilleries are endless but this link will give you a great place to start.

<https://texaswinetrail.com/>

And, Much More

For more ideas and to check schedules, this link will connect you to the San Antonio official page. There you can find out what/who will be playing at the *Sunken Gardens* (outdoor theater), the *Japanese Tea Garden*, and other San Antonio attractions.

www.sanantonio.gov/ParksAndRec/Home



2019 NMRA Election Ballot and Voting Process

By Cindy Tilbury, NMRA President

Our yearly election is at hand. This year, we solicited players at the two previous tournaments for NMRA board member candidates and made many email and phone call communications to find qualified candidates for the open positions.

We will again be offering online voting.

The election will be available to all current NMRA members at the www.r2sports.com website (event type is Election, rather than Tournament). It only takes a few minutes to vote, so log on and voice (click) your opinion! Click this link to vote. Do it now while you are thinking about it! You must have a USA Racquetball profile in [R2sports.com](http://www.r2sports.com), but you may set it up or find your password, if you don't already know it. <http://www.r2sports.com/tourney/home.asp?TID=30048>

If you would like to run and you are NOT listed in this newsletter, we can do several things to further your campaign:

- Send a blast email with your intent to run, along with your bio and picture. In addition to phone calls/emails you initiate, you can run an effective write-in campaign.
- Invite you to run for the Board in one year. We welcome your involvement before the next election, and you can get a feel for the group's efforts.

If you are considering running for the board in the future, please contact a current or past board member to ask about the duties and commitment. You might have in mind an area of interest where you feel you can contribute. We sincerely welcome that.

Questions or comments? Contact me at cindy.tilbury@att.net or 303.888.4461.

NMRA Election Candidates 2019

Patrick Gibson, Fort Worth, TX

I am up for re-election as a board member for the NMRA. I have served for the past 9 years on the Board. I volunteered to be Treasurer 4 years ago and have continued in that role, working closely with our volunteer CPA. While on the Board, I have been a tournament director several times and have assisted in scheduling and running the tournaments. If re-elected, I will continue to serve the players who enjoy the great game of racquetball. Contact me at prgibson5@hotmail.com if you have questions for me. I plan to continue to help coordinate what I believe to be the best tournaments out there.



Karen Grisz Turner, Alexandria, VA



Thank you for the opportunity to run for reelection to the board of the NMRA. In the last two and a half years that I have been attending NMRA events, I have come to appreciate not only the hard work and tremendous effort put into the events by the tournament directors and the rest of the board, but also the supportive atmosphere these events maintain and the community feeling that develops through repeated attendance and involvement. I look forward to helping with the NMRA's efforts to continue to promote the sport and grow its memberships throughout the year, as well as providing desk support or whatever else is needed at the tournaments.

I have 20 years of experience with various racquetball organizations in several roles that I believe will benefit the NMRA. I have been running racquetball tournaments in Virginia, Maryland and nationally over the last 20 years. As a tournament director for local tournaments, I organize the entire events, from start to finish. Nationally, for the past 15 years, I have worked at the U.S. Open, first in Memphis, and now in Minneapolis, as a tournament desk organizer.

For 12 of the past 14 years, I have also served as a board member of the Commonwealth of Virginia Racquetball Association (CVRA). Over those years, I have been actively involved in working to grow the sport (at the grass roots level as well as in tournaments). I spent two years as the Board's secretary, three years as its Treasurer, and several years as its tournament coordinator.

I believe I can really contribute to the NMRA and its mission to provide quality events for the 40+ players. If you want to ask me about my background, please email me at ktracquetball@gmail.com.



Chris Poucher, GA

After a short period of time off the board, I am ready to contribute to the NMRA efforts again and would like your vote. My business background is in the insurance industry. My goal is to make racquetball bigger and better. The NMRA plays a major part in that goal, with its focus on 40+ players. I'll be working to bring the NMRA to Atlanta in December of 2019, and more eastern US venues. You can contact me at cpoucher@gmail.com.

Write-In

NMRA is currently seeking qualified candidates for our board of directors. This election, we have three candidates for three positions. If you would like to vote for a write-in candidate, you may send an email with your choice (including yourself, of course), to cindy.tilbury@att.net, the election chairperson. Thanks.





MORE NMRA Tidbits

Color is Better

I recommend you print the *NMRA RacquetRacket* newsletter in COLOR and leave it at the club for all of your 40+ players to peruse.

First-Timers

We have had an amazing number of first-timers in the past two years as we move our tournaments around the country. More than 30 first-time NMRA players have been joining our group each event. We couldn't be happier and hope they return many times. To get a few of these first-timers, we have also been quietly dropping our minimum age requirement to 40. Although we don't get many "young" players, we've found a few by doing so. Our goal is to provide a very special and social tournament experience for our players and guests. Let us know what would make your tourney better.

Patches

It is a recent tradition that we create sew-on patches with the tournament logo and make them available for sale at each tournament. NMRA logo patches are also available. If you would like to get a patch from past tournaments, just send me a quick email and we'll get it out to you right away. We ask for \$8 per patch.

NMRA National Championships

Warren Health & Racquet Club, Warren, NJ | May 2-5, 2018
Cindy Tilbury, Tournament Director



Division	Place	Name	State	Points	Division	Place	Name	State	Points
M40	1st	Simon Totive	PA	20.17	M70	1st	Michael Stephens	MI	38.00
M50	1st	Marc Cotugno	NJ	37.33		2nd	Mitch Milewski	NH	33.67
	2nd	David Barnes	RI	33.83		3rd	Fred Roe	CA	28.33
	3rd	Richard Miller	NY	30.00		4th	Larry Thomas	NJ	27.67
	4th	Joe Carrano	NY	26.17		5th	David Olson	MN	21.67
	5th	Angelo Perilli	PA	24.50		6th	Bruce Hollander	FL	15.00
	6th	Mathew Christensen	DE	19.67	M75	1st	Butch Lispi	PA	38.00
M55	1st	Roger Fudim	NY	37.33		2nd	Donald Sperber	FL	32.33
	2nd	Glenn Leib	PA	34.17		3rd	Wayne Toyne	VA	30.83
	3rd	Mike Grisz	VA	31.00		4th	Bob Magyar	CT	28.17
	4th	Bob Wright	IN	30.00		5th	Paul Wehmeyer	NJ	23.83
	5th	Bill DiGregorio	ONT	24.17		6th	Glenn Allen	VA	20.33
	6th	Terrence Pierce	GA	19.17		7th	Stu Simcox	OH	19.50
	7th	Ray Redelman	IL	10.50	M80	1st	Arthur Hotchkiss	CT	36.86
M60	1st	Rick Betts	CA	38.00		2nd	Jon Singer	PA	35.29
	2nd	Mitch Posner	NJ	29.33		3rd	Alex Gonzalez	FL	32.57
	3rd	Gary Smarsh	PA	21.17		4th	William Herron	TX	29.57
	3rd	Tim Thielke	VA	9.67		5th	Larry Leifer	CA	29.43
M65	1st	Frank Taddonio	AZ	38.00		6th	Bill Cummings	WV	14.71
Playoff	2nd	Dan Nunn	NC	31.80		7th	James Funk	CO	11.57
	3rd	Peter Holden	NJ	30.40	M85	1st	David Maitland	CT	13.86
	4th	Robert Rivera	ME	15.20					
	5th	Frank Greenfield	GA	20.60					
	6th	Donald Schmitt	CT	12.40					



Division	Place	Name	State	Points
MD40	1st	Simon Totive/ Michael Aguas	PA / NY	14.78
MD45	1st	Tim Kline / Kevin Goulet	PA / PA	19.20
MD50	1st	Todd O'Neil / Richard Miller	VT / NY	38.00
	2nd	Lars Cole / Tyrone Gilmore	MI / TX	37.00
	3rd	John Winings / Patrick Gibson	CA / TX	31.33
	4th	Glenn Martineau / Brian McCarty	TX / VA	29.56
	5th	Joe Carrano / Bill DiGregorio	NY / ONT	28.44
	6th	Michael Limsky / Eric Robinson	MD / MD	27.33
	7th	Gary Jeral / Angelo Perilli	LA / PA	26.56
	8th	Mitch Posner / David Barnes	NJ / RI	24.78

Division	Place	Name	State	Points
MD55	1st	Lars Cole / Glenn Martineau	MI / TX	37.20
	2nd	Ruben Gonzalez / Chris Poucher	SC / GA	33.80
	3rd	Carlos Lugo / Jaime Lugo	NJ / VA	27.80
	4th	Michael Limsky / Eric Robinson	MD / MD	27.60
	5th	Scott Brown / Roy Hare	VA / VA	24.60
MD60	1st	Bill Hartwell / Mark Baron	VA / DE	37.00
	2nd	Gary Jeral / Rick Betts	LA / CA	30.00
	3rd	Bruce Adams / Michael Hiles	FL / MN	20.50
MD65	1st	Ruben Gonzalez / Frank Greenfield	SC / GA	35.90
	2nd	James Kressly / Jerry Prentiss	PA / PA	23.00
	3rd	Robert Rivera / James Weathers	ME / VA	13.30
MD70	1st	Larry Thomas / Jerry Prentiss	NJ / PA	36.25
	2nd	Michael Stephens / Barry Hendricks	MI / AZ	34.75
	3rd	David Olson / Fred Roe	MN / CA	29.88
	4th	Tom Farley / Richard Halpin	PA / PA	28.00
	5th	Donald Sperber / Bruce Hollander	FL / FL	25.25
MD75	1st	Mitch Milewski / Glenn Allen	NH / VA	30.50
	2nd	Butch Lispi / Wayne Toyne	PA / VA	19.38
	3rd	Stu Simcox / Bob Magyar	OH / CT	17.88
	4th	Steven Lavorgna / Paul Wehmeyer	NJ / NJ	13.75
MD80	1st	Larry Leifer / Dario Mas	CA / DE	35.38
	2nd	Art Hotchkiss / Jon Singer	CT / PA	34.63
	3rd	Bill Cummings / Alex Gonzalez	WV / FL	22.88
	4th	William Herron / James Funk	TX / CO	19.88
MD85	1st	Ralph Carito / David Maitland	NJ / CT	21.13

Continued on Page 10...

RESULTS

NMRA National Championships *continued from Page 9*

Division	Place	Name	State	Points
W40	1st	Christine Segala	CT	21.86
W45	1st	Beth Shea	NY	32.86
W50	1st	Jean Halahan	NY	38.00
	2nd	Marie Gomer	GUA	31.71
W55	1st	Dottie Fischl Kelly	PA	31.71
W65	1st	Jere Luttner	TX	17.43
W75	1st	Mildred Gwinn	NC	13.29
	2nd	Marquita Molina	CA	5.86
WD45	1st	Marni Winings / Karen Denu Turner	CA / VA	22.50
WD50	1st	Marie Gomar / Jean Halahan	GUA / NY	37.00
	2nd	Cindy Tilbury / Beth Shea	CA / NY	30.33
	3rd	Karen Lett / Christine Segala	NY / CT	18.33
WD55	1st	Dottie Fishl Kelly / Patt Musselman	PA / PA	34.50
	2nd	Gladys Leonard / Carmen Alatorre-Martin	AL / VA	24.17
	3rd	Tami Costanza / Maddie Melendez	GA / VA	20.50
WD60	1st	Ingrid Callmann / Dorette Leinemann	DE / DE	34.83
	2nd	Laurie Kitchen / Judith Flis	NY / PA	34.17
	3rd	Barbara Vagedes / Cheryl Kirk	IL / IL	23.83
WD75	1st	Mildred Gwinn / Marquita Molina	NC / CA	15.83
XD45	1st	Karen Denu Turner / Mike Grisz	VA / VA	36.38
	2nd	John Winings / Marni Winings	CA / CA	32.63
	3rd	Maddie Melendez / Kevin Goulet	VA / PA	27.38
XD50	1st	Doug Bernardini / Pat Musselman	PA / PA	36.83
	2nd	Gladys Leonard / Brian McCarty	AL / VA	33.50
	3rd	Mathew Christensen / Ingrid Callmann	DE / DE	23.17
	4th	Tim Kline / Karen Lett	PA / NY	18.67
XD55	1st	Cheryl Kirk / Bob Wright	IL / IN	24.00
	2nd	Tami Costanza / Terrence Pierce	GA / GA	16.25
XD60	1st	Carmen Alatorre-Martin / Patrick Gibson	VA / TX	37.25
	2nd	Chris Poucher / Cindy Tilbury	GA / CA	34.75
	3rd	Kimon Ousouljoglou / Nancy Luyando	NJ / NJ	34.50
	4th	Leon Jackson / Judith Flis	VA / PA	29.75
	5th	Mike Hiles / Jere Luttner	MN / TX	26.25
	6th	Kathryn St. Juste / Brian McDermott	NY / NY	25.75
	7th	Scott Rogers / Dorette Leinemann	NY / DE	15.25
XD65	1st	Barry Hendricks / Laurie Kitchen	AZ / NY	14.63
	2nd	Barbara Vagedes / Donald Schmitt	IL / CT	12.88



A Racquetball Love Story

By Karen Grisz



We often talk about our racquetball community, our racquetball family. I think this is especially true in the *NMRA*. Not only are we a tight-knit, supportive group, but I also met my now-husband, Mike, because I started traveling the country to play in the fabulous *NMRA* events (thanks to Carmen and Curtis Alatorre-Martin for pushing me to do it!). Mike and I met in St. Louis in March 2017, although he claims not to remember meeting me there. He flew in and out for a Board meeting, and we met in passing since I was friends with some of his fellow Board members. We became friends in Milwaukee that summer, when I helped run the desk while the Board members were playing their matches. I don't think he'll be mad at me for saying that I think he was smitten from that weekend. We played our first tournament together in Albuquerque at World Seniors later that summer, having great success until he got injured late in the week. Despite that setback, we both realized that what we had started sharing was more than friendship.

It's a happy love story from that point on, for two people who have been through divorces but have used those experiences to realize what is important in life. For a while, Mike flew back and forth from Dallas to Alexandria, VA, to visit me - first for a weekend, then for a week. We met in New York for a weekend of wining and dining and Broadway plays, taking my dog for walks in Central Park. When he started spending more time in Virginia than Dallas, we knew we had to make a decision. He moved to Virginia in April. We got engaged in May; he asked me in front of my sister - very romantic!

In July, we were playing racquetball with friends, and talking about various options for when and where to get married. We talked about a destination wedding in February (2019), a party on New Year's Eve, and then somehow got to - well, what are you guys doing in August? After a series of group texts to friends and my sister, we were able to pick a date when our closest friends and family could all make it - and it was only 3 weeks away! A bit of scrambling over the next few days resulted in a restaurant reservation, a civil officiant, and a gazebo rental on the river in Old Town, Alexandria. An email to the 20 or so invitees, a \$50 dress from Nordstrom Rack for me, and new flip flops for Mike, and we were all set! (Yes, Mike is wearing shorts and flip flops in the picture). On the day of the wedding, it poured rain right before the ceremony, so we couldn't do it outside, but we had a back-up plan and we had a view of a rainbow during the ceremony. It was the perfect low-key, intimate occasion....with plenty of drinking and dancing!



So, I am now Mrs. Grisz, and Mike has adjusted to life in Virginia with me and our dog. Neither of us expected to be where we are right now, but because we were both willing to take a leap into the unknown, we are building a new life together. Which, of course, includes many more *NMRA* tournaments... so look for us behind the desk!



MORE NMRA Tidbits

Jackpot Doubles for 70+ Players (and Anyone Else)

In the upcoming year in every NMRA tournament on the afternoon of the last day, we will offer a free Jackpot (Rotating Partners) Doubles division for players 75+ and above. If there is room, we will also recruit 70+ players. To make this happen, I need your input and help. As a free event, with a medal for the winners, we offer Jackpot Doubles where all players change partners every game. We need a minimum of four players, but 16 is much better. Try to make your plane and dinner arrangements accordingly so that you can play later on Saturday. Ideas to make this a better tournament-within-a-tournament? Let me know.

Representing the NMRA to the USA Racquetball Board

In addition to being your president, I am on the USA Racquetball Board of Directors. My committees there include the Fundraising, National Events, and Collegiate Committees. It seems that, whatever I do in racquetball, I always think of the 40+ players and try to speak for them (us). Contact me if you would like me to bring up any topics or programs to the board—or if you would like to talk about donations for the USAR or NMRA.

NMRA International Championships

Highlands Ranch Northridge Rec Center, Denver, CO | July 25-28, 2018
Cindy Tilbury / Karen Denu, Tournament Directors



Division	Place	Name	State	Points
M40	1st	John Scott	MO	27.75
M45	1st	Lee Beckwith	CO	35.00
	2nd	Rick Rubin	CO	24.75
	3rd	Dan Hoover	WY	23.63
	4th	Jeremy Nickelson	CO	17.63
M50	1st	Brian Hunter	CO	38.00
	2nd	Todd Olsen	WY	34.83
	3rd	Richard Miller	NY	32.50
	4th	Byron Thompson	CO	23.33
	5th	Duane Barone	CO	21.67
	6th	Steve Cox	CO	21.00
	7th	Michael McNeely	TX	18.00
M55	1st	Dan Battershell	NE	38.00
	2nd	Bob Wright	IN	33.75
	3rd	Grant Hout	OH	15.00
	4th	John McManamon	CO	14.25
M60	1st	Glenn Leib	PA	37.00
	2nd	Tyrone Gilmore	TX	35.67
	3rd	Ted Dutcher	CO	29.83
	4th	PJ Williams	CO	27.83
	5th	Al Wieweck	WY	23.83
	6th	Ed Goldbaum	CA	18.00
	7th	Ray Nayyer	CA	12.67
M65	1st	Frank Taddonio	AZ	38.00
	2nd	John Vohland	CO	27.17
	3rd	Rick Betts	CA	27.00
	4th	David Stone	TX	8.50

Division	Place	Name	State	Points
M70	1st	Mike Wouk	CO	37.00
	2nd	Michael Stephens	MI	35.57
	3rd	Bob Smith	OR	32.43
	4th	Gordon Levy	CO	27.57
	5th	Ralph Watkins II	MO	22.14
	6th	Bruce Hollander	FL	17.43
	7th	Philip Gaerlan	CO	13.29
	8th	Leigh Adams	CO	12.29
M75	1st	Mitch Milewski	NH	37.00
	2nd	Fred Roe	CA	35.00
M80	1st	Bill Baker	CA	24.00
	2nd	Francis Florey	CO	14.25
M85	1st	Paul Banales	AZ	16.00
M90	1st	John Prigmore	KS	38.00
	2nd	Mike Martin	CO	15.00
MD45	1st	Lee Beckwith / Brian Hunter	CO / CO	34.17
	2nd	Troy Cook / Alberto Olivas	CO / CO	30.83
	3rd	Seshu Velpuri / Manish Sharma	CO / CO	18.83
	4th	Daniel Hoover / Todd Olsen	WY / WY	17.50



Division	Place	Name	State	Points
MD50	1st	Lars Cole / Richard Miller	MI / NY	37.40
Playoff	2nd	Richard Aal / Steve Strahler	CA / CO	34.40
	3rd	Jim McHale / Byron Thompson	CO / CO	26.00
	4th	Manish Sharma / Duane Barone	CO / CO	25.80
	5th	Mark Sikorski / PJ Williams	CO / CO	22.60
	6th	Steve Cox / Kerry Rohweder	CO / CO	20.20
MD55	1st	Lars Cole / Tyrone Gilmore	MI / TX	28.60
Playoff	2nd	Mark Baron / Mike Grisz	VA / VA	31.00
	3rd	John Hulick / Dan Battershell	CO / CO	30.00
	4th	Patrick Gibson / John Winings	TX / CA	34.60
	5th	Ruben Gonzalez / Chris Poucher	NY / GA	26.40
	6th	Bruce Adams / Dennis Chandler	FL / CA	8.20

Division	Place	Name	State	Points
MD60	1st	Ruben Gonzalez / Chris Poucher	NY / GA	36.50
	2nd	Ted Dutcher / Al Wieweck	CO / WY	34.83
	3rd	Gary Jeral / Rick Betts	LA / CA	33.50
	4th	Ed Goldbaum / Ray Nayyar	CA / NY	27.33
	5th	Michael Hiles / Bruce Adams	MN / FL	22.00
	6th	Bruce Green / David Nelson	MN / MN	15.83
MD65	1st	Jurgen Denk / Michael Wouk	CO / CO	20.17
MD70	1st	Bary Hendricks / Mike Pawka	AZ / CA	31.00
Playoff	2nd	Mitch Milewski / Michael Stephens	NH / MI	38.00
	3rd	Jurgen Denk / Harry Krausman	CO / CO	25.50
	4th	Philip Gaerlan / Ralph Watkins	CO / CO	17.75
	5th	Greg Kearney / Fred Rod	CA / CA	23.50
MD75	1st	Jim Spinato / Luke St. Onge	CO / CO	34.17
	2nd	Dennis Bollig / Kyle Smith	CO / CO	32.67
MD80	1st	Paul Banales / Francis Florey	AZ / CO	23.83
	2nd	Bill Baker / Harry Krausman	CA / CO	22.50

Continued on Page 14...

RESULTS

NMRA International Championships *continued from Page 13*

Division	Place	Name	State	Points
W40	1st	Michelle McNeely	TX	7.50
W50	1st	Jean Halahan	NY	39.00
	2nd	Marie Gomer	GUA	32.38
	3rd	Mary Jane Boese	CO	17.25
W55	1st	Linda Shanahan	IN	20.38
W60	1st	Sharon Huczek	MI	33.00
W65	1st	Shirley Parsons	CO	38.00
W70	1st	Annie Coburn	NM	1.67
W75	1st	Mildred Gwinn	NC	23.67
WD45	1st	Marni Winings / Karen Denu Turner	CA / VA	28.29
WD50	1st	Marie Gomar / Jean Halahan	GUA / NY	38.00
	2nd	Barb Mehegan / Micky Richer	CO / CO	23.43
WD55	1st	Carolyn Hollis / Cindy Tilbury	CA / CA	30.29
	2nd	Lisa Bu / Linda Moore	AZ / AZ	29.00
WD60	1st	Mary Keenan / Marcia Richards	CO / CO	27.71
	2nd	Page Kern / Susan Schatz	MN / MN	22.29
WD65	1st	Annie Coburn / Shirley Parsons	NM / CO	6.14
XD40	1st	Michiele Stapleton / Steve Strahler	CO / CO	34.13
	2nd	Michael McNeely / Michelle McNeely	TX / TX	16.25
XD45	1st	Karen Denu Turner / Mike Grisz	VA / VA	35.67
	2nd	Richard Aal / Michiele Stapleton	CA / CO	19.50
XD50	1st	Harold Patterson / Micky Richer	AZ / CO	26.17
	2nd	Mary Jane Boese / Troy Cook	CO / CO	15.83
XD55	1st	Lisa Bu / Mark Baron	AZ / VA	34.67
	2nd	Bob Wright / Carolyn Hollis	IN / CA	30.17
	3rd	John Winings / Marni Winings	CA / CA	29.00
XD60	1st	Gary Jeral / Linda Moore	LA / AZ	38.00
	2nd	Patrick Gibson / Cindy Tilbury	TX / CA	34.25
	3rd	Michael Hiles / Page Kern	MN / MN	29.25
	4th	Barbara Mehegan / Charles Powers	CO / CO	26.75
	5th	David Nelson / Susan Schatz	MN / MN	21.00
XD65	1st	Greg Kearney / Sharon Huczek	CA / MI	18.38
X70	1st	Mildred Gwinn / Bruce Hollander	NC / FL	13.38



Racquetball in Unexpected Places

By Cindy Tilbury

Jack-in-the-Box Commercial

The *IRT* has been running a cute commercial set completely on a racquetball court. It advertises *Chipotle Chicken* sandwiches.

Along Came Polly Movie

I have not watched this movie, but the *IRT* has also been showing the racquetball scene from this 2004X movie. Ben Stiller and Bryan Brown play some intense ball on a racquetball/squash-lined court.

The Greg Gutfeld Show on Fox News Channel February 3, 2018.

I just had to repeat this one again, because it was so funny and could be amazing if it came true. 15 minutes in, Greg has a fake ad for the Border Wall 2000. "Sick of playing tennis, racquetball and squash with a partner when you'd rather play solo? The Border Wall 2000 is the ultimate multi-purpose wall that everyone can enjoy." Very funny fake ad for the proposed border wall.

The Good Doctor March 20, 2018 "Smile"

20 Minutes in, an insurance executive finishes playing another guy (who is using a child's tennis racquet??)

Men's Health March 2018 Build Undercover Muscle Page 27

For the final season of "the Americans" TV show, the magazine suggests some partner agility exercises. Because the series is set in the 1980s, the Russian spy and *FBI* agent play racquetball against each other with small racquets and short shorts, so two of the suggested exercises show racquetball racquets in their hands, and they don't have anything to do with the exercise. Very funny. One even shows a ball breaking as the woman partner steps on it??

ESPN SportsCenter Top Ten Plays Friday May 25

World Doubles Denver, CO **Alvaro Beltran/Daniel DeLaRosa vs Javier Mar/Rodrigo Montoya** ends in a great dive by Mar.

Online Trivia App HQ Trivia

Wednesday July 11 6 pm Quiz
Which sport is played using a bat? *Hooverball*, *Corkball* or *Wallyball* Answer was *Corkball* but the host explained how *Wallyball* could not be the answer because it is a volleyball-like game played on a racquetball court without using the back wall. Very cool.

NMRA 2018 Hall of Fame Inductees

By Len Sonnenberg



Mildred Gwinn, North Carolina

Mildred Gwinn has 27 total *NMRA* medals, and 18 of those are Gold. The pool of voters had no qualms about voting Mildred into the *NMRA Hall of Fame* in 2018 as an athlete. Mildred rarely misses an *NMRA* event, where she and fellow *NMRA Hall of Famer* Marquita Molina often play Women's 75+ Doubles together. She continues to work hard on her game by taking lessons for her game and her serve.



John Prigmore, Kansas

John Prigmore is a true champion, and as all champions would do, for his *Hall of Fame* induction tournament, he entered the 90+ Men's Singles division in Denver to challenge Michael Martin (himself an *NMRA Hall of Famer*) and win the gold. It had been a very long time since we had had a 90+ or 95+ division and it was a great one. (See the story about the *ESPN SportsCenter Top Ten Plays*.) With 23 total medals and 13 of them Gold, John had more than enough medals and goodwill to qualify as an athlete *Hall of Famer*. However, the *NMRA* board nominated John as a contributor for all of his efforts to organize the older players in the *NMRA*, including running Jackpot doubles (different partner each round), helping run tournaments, and generous donations to our causes.

Mike Hiles, Minnesota

Like his father before him, Mike Hiles is a major contributor to the *NMRA* and was very emotional when he accepted his *Hall of Fame* induction in Denver. Mike is a recent board member and, while most retirees fade into the background, Mike has continued to be our source for medals and awards, including his own! His father, Cap Hiles, is very proud of his continued commitment to the *NMRA* and its smooth operation. They are both major contributors to the *NMRA* and extremely worthy for the *Hall of Fame* honor.



Mike and Leslie Pawka, California

With 36 total medals and 17 Gold, Mike Pawka was voted into the *NMRA Hall of Fame* in 2017, but chose to defer his induction until this year. Mike is an amazing competitor and a popular doubles partner. Leslie Pawka has won 24 total *NMRA* medals including 20 Gold (great percentage). A longtime *NMRA* player, Leslie has moved on to weekly pickleball but continue to come to many *USAR* and *NMRA* tournaments to support Mike, her husband. We hope she will come back one of these days, but for now, staying active in the pickleball scene keeps her very busy. Together, Mike and Leslie are an amazing racquetball couple and their 60 *NMRA* medals attest to their skill and accomplishments. They chose to forego an induction ceremony and we were happy to honor that wish.

Congratulations to all of the Hall of Fame inductees! We are so proud of our new athlete and contributor inductees. The slideshows at the induction ceremony in Denver were so fun. For those of you aspiring to be in the *NMRA Hall of Fame*, keep winning those medals and contributing to our efforts to make 40+ racquetball social and competitive. To see a complete list of *HOF* inductees, go to the nmra.info website.

Hall of Fame Committee. If you would like to be considered as a *Hall of Fame* voter, please contact Len Sonnenberg, who has been *NMRA Hall of Fame* Executive Director for the past ten years. The Committee consists of former *HOF* inductees, board members, and cross-section of members. We need new and active members. The duties primarily include responding to the secret ballots.

MORE NMRA Tidbits

Team USA Had a Good Year

One of my USA Racquetball Fundraising Committee tasks was to help raise travel dollars to get our athletes to international competitions in Chile and Costa Rica this past season. They did well, but did not take the team gold in either competition. Thank you to all NMRA players who contributed! If you would like to see the team and individual results, click here: 2018 [Pan Am Games](#) in Temuco, Chile and 2018 [World Racquetball Championships](#) in San Jose, Costa Rica (click Events/Past Events). The IRF's Facebook page and YouTube channel also have archived videos of those championship matches.

Overheard at the US Open

Watching a match on the back courts at the Minneapolis Target Center, I heard an angry player come out of the court and yell at the referee, saying he had gotten a call all wrong. The ref calmly told him to "Get over yourself," called the score and started play again. I laughed pretty hard. You just don't hear that at a local Minnesota tournament.



NMRA Passings *By Cindy Tilbury*



Steve Cohen, California/Arizona

A long-time NMRA member and ex-Treasurer, Steve Cohen organized many of the NMRA tournaments during 2008 and 2012. He was a CPA living in Orange County, California. When he was

diagnosed with Multiple Myeloma around 2012, he beat the cancer for a few years and stayed involved in WOR outdoor tournaments in the Huntington Beach area. He loved running the Junior part of the WOR Nationals tournament. Right before he succumbed to his disease, he had moved to Surprise, Arizona, where he was very involved in playing pickleball with many of his former racquetball friends in the area. Steve died in May of 2018 and he will be dearly missed. Much love to his beautiful wife, Linda.

James Funk, Colorado

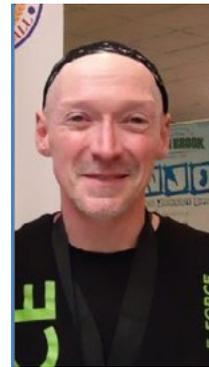
James Funk was one of the most reliable 80-year-old NMRA tournament players in recent years. A retired Aeronautical Engineer, he just loved playing many games in the round robins of our events, and hanging out with his relatively-new player friends. Of course, he also had many friends



at his club in Denver, and they all honored James at our July 2018 Denver tournament by wearing shirts and donating to the Colorado Racquetball Association junior fundraiser in his name. James died on the court very unexpectedly from a heart issue in June 2018. He was living with his



niece and nephew-in-law in Conifer. The NMRA board was happy to donate \$500 to the CRA in James' name. James was just the exact type of player that the NMRA was meant to serve. It was a great shock when we got the call right before our Denver tournament; he was so looking forward to playing doubles with Jurgen Denk and Hank Krausmann.



Tim Kline, Pennsylvania

Tim Kline had just recently found the NMRA at our Warren, New Jersey, tournament in May. Tim was an accountant and not even 50 when he passed in July, so he was one of our youngest players ever to make our Memorial list. All of the Pennsylvania and New Jersey players

knew him well, as he played tournaments in that area and ran programs at the Camp Hill club, but we just met him and were really looking forward to having him at our future events.

Tim had an accident near his home—no exact details were given. The NMRA board also voted to use banquet junior fundraiser money to have the Pennsylvania State Racquetball Association sponsor a junior in Tim's name.

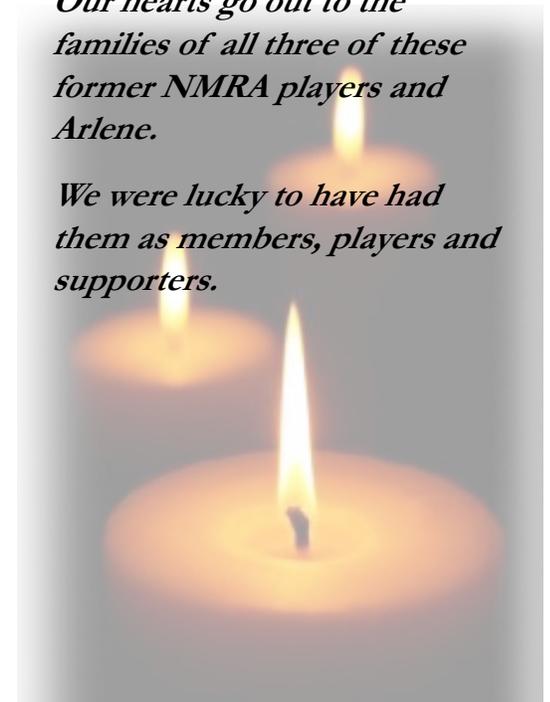


Arlene O'Donnell, Illinois

The wife of Hall of Famer John O'Donnell, Arlene, passed away recently, too. Arlene accompanied John to countless tournaments and was known by many of the competitors in John's age group.

Our hearts go out to the families of all three of these former NMRA players and Arlene.

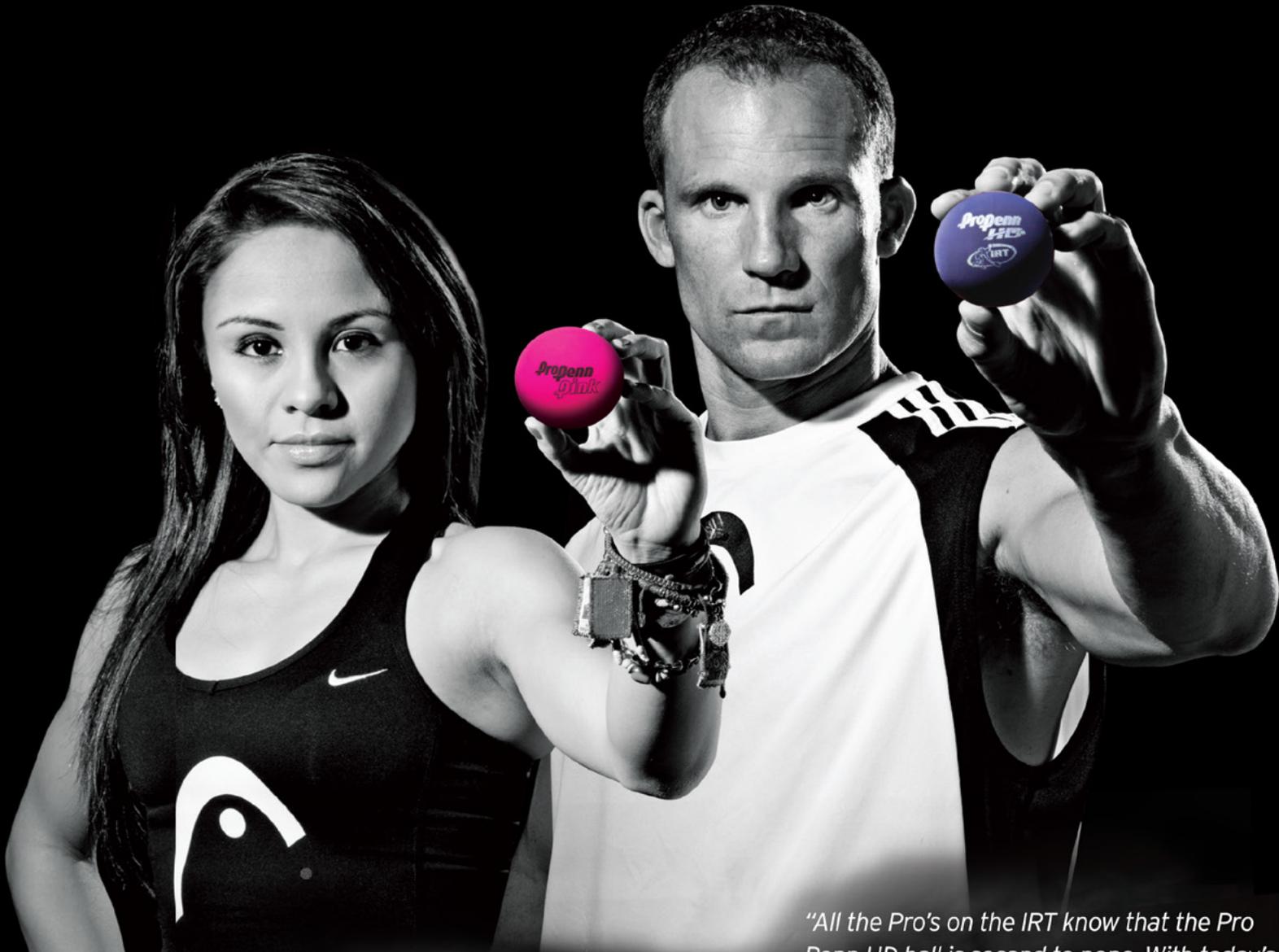
We were lucky to have had them as members, players and supporters.



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"I LOVE the new Pro Penn Pink ball! The fast crisp action off my racquet helps me dominate the competition. In addition, the vibrant visibility of the ball, especially on courts with glass walls, makes the Pro Penn Pink a joy to play with."

Paola Longoria

"All the Pro's on the IRT know that the Pro Penn HD ball is second to none. With today's lightweight racquets this is the only ball to play with. Its lightweight design and softer feel offers players of all levels the most comfortable experience on the court, even with shots exploding over 180 mph!"

Rocky Carson

MORE NMRA Tidbits

Veteran Professionals
NMRA now allows 40-year-old players into the tournaments. **Alvaro Beltran** turned 40 on October 15, 2018 and **Rocky Carson** will turn 40 on May 21 of next year. Crazy!

Online Player/Member Survey

Please take about 7 minutes to give us your opinions on past, present and future NMRA events. We are getting a good number of responses, and we can really take that information to heart. Click here to record your preferences, and maybe win \$50 for your efforts! If you see a deadline of July 31, ignore it and take the survey anyway.

Join the NMRA

If you have not already done so, we invite you to join the NMRA as a full three-year member at a total cost of \$45. Membership dues help us cover newsletter and medal costs, as well as award plaques and other organizational expenses. First-timers do not have to join to try us out. If you first-timers want to join, simply bring up the NMRA info website and click Contact. There is a Membership area of the page that allows anyone to purchase an NMRA membership.

Learn more about ...

Select Category

Membership

Our three-year membership for just \$45 is a bargain that helps ensure the success of the sport for future generations. [Download a print application](#), or [join online today!](#)

We currently have 475 members, and an interest list of 2,500.

Not for Ladies Only — Be My Guest! By Cindy Tilbury

Best Tournament of the Year For Ladies

How often does anyone get to say this to all of the 35+ racquetball ladies in the world? Never!

BE MY GUEST!

I run a lot of national racquetball events, but I have not had the opportunity to run any of those at my club in *Canoga Park, California*. I am more than excited to invite everyone to my home club for the **30th Annual Women's Senior Masters Racquetball Championships** at the *Athletic Society West Valley* (formerly *Spectrum and Bay Club* but nowhere near a bay) from **January 18th through 20th, 2019**.

We have 14 concrete-walled racquetball courts and I can't wait to have you all come to sunny Los Angeles to stay at the *Marriott Warner Center*, play some round-robin racquetball, socialize, and dance at the banquet. Entries are currently open online at *R2Sports.com* or you can send me a form or call me with a credit card number. Here is the link with all of the information you need to know.

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

Planned Surprises

I have a few surprises planned for you, but one is a special event for which you will need to reserve your spot. Friday night, after matches are over, we will have a *Paint and Wine* night for two hours and I want you all to give it a try. You don't have to know anything about painting—just be an enthusiastic instruction-follower. For a small fee of \$30, our guest artist, **Allyson Delaney**, will tell us everything we need to know. She will be supplying the paints, brushes, canvases, aprons and inspiration. We plan to supply the wine (or

whatever you drink) and hot appetizers. Some of the locals have tried painting before. It is a lot of fun and I hope we can get at least half of our ladies to join in. You may add that to your entry fee, or let me know at least one week before it happens (deadline would be January 11th). Exact details will be provided closer to the start of the tournament. Invite your friends who are not in the tournament—everyone is welcome, including men.

Consider This Offer

Not only am I hosting the tournament at my club, but I also want to make a special offer to players. Other than rental cars, I have not found Los Angeles to be an inexpensive place to visit. So if there is anyone who would not be able to play unless they have their hotel paid for, consider this: I have two guest rooms available and can accommodate up to four close friends who would like to play but need a break. I really want everyone to enjoy the tournament; I hope those guest rooms don't go unused. My tournament staff will be using the other two. We live in Malibu, 25 minutes from the club. Contact me for details.

Malibu Ladies Racquetball Camp January 21-23

Several ladies have already arranged to stay in town for a three-day camp in Malibu, taught by **Debbie Tisinger** and hosted by me. I only have room for eight ladies at the Malibu house, so call if you want details and I will send a brochure. You'll want to make your air arrangements to stay a little longer.

So that's it for now, Ladies! Get your room reservations now and join us in January (MLK weekend) for the best tournament all year for women. I'll make sure you have a great time.



NMRA HOF Match of a Lifetime

By Mike Grisz, NMRA Secretary

At the recent July NMRA International Championships in Highlands Ranch, Colorado, we had the distinct pleasure of hosting a tournament match between our two nonagenarians (that's 90-year-olds, if you didn't know) Hall-of-Famers, **Mike Martin** and **John Prigmore**. Not only did we get to see that competition, but it was a feature of ESPN's top 10 plays about a week later.

Mike Martin, the youngster, from *Golden, Colorado*, played John Prigmore of *Leon, Kansas*. Prigmore won a tight, closely-contested affair. Special thanks to **Bruce Adams** who shot the video, and to **Kelly Diesel** of the IRT men's pro tour for getting it in the hands of ESPN's SportCenter host, Neil Everett. Both players remarked how proud of them their grandkids were.

The NMRA avidly supports all of our outstanding players 80 years old and above. We provide free entries to all players over 80 and free lifetime NMRA membership. You're never too old to compete.

Teachers/Coaches Corner - Beware of Scammers

By Cindy Tilbury

I recently had an interesting thing happen to me. In fact, I guess I am still in the midst of it. I thought I would share this, in case you feel tempted to get involved in a similar situation.

I got an unsolicited email that was obviously from a foreign person, but it was specific to me. It asked me if I would provide racquetball lessons to a new student who would come to my club. The inquirer wanted to know how much it would cost to provide two months of lessons for two hours a week, and where my club was located. My name is on the internet as an *AmPro* teaching professional, so I assume they searched the internet and found my name. I'm sure the person also emailed other teaching pros, too. It is not my goal to make money teaching racquetball lessons, but I love to introduce people to the sport, of course, so I would be happy to provide some lessons to anyone, including a free introductory lesson.

I wrote back to the person, whose name I still do not know, asking what their goals would be after two months, and how they decided to take up the sport, etc. The email I got back was short and angry—the student would be the inquirer's daughter, and just tell him the price and location. I was quite sure by then that the emailer was trying to scam me, but just in case it was a real student, I went along with him and quoted him a price of \$50 x 16 lessons, or \$800. I asked how old the daughter was and if she needed any help finding a hotel.

Finally the emailer revealed the scam—he would be sending a check for more than the \$800 and I could deposit the check and he would trust me to give the extra money to the person housing the 18-year-old daughter. I told him I would be happy to do that if he wrote two checks. After some back and forth

USA Racquetball 2018

Jim Hiser Hall of Fame Induction Poem

Editor's Note: "In May at the 2018 USAR National Singles, **Jim Hiser** was inducted into the USA Racquetball Hall of Fame. Instead of a long speech, he wrote a poem--very un-Hiser-like! I thought our NMRA friends would enjoy it.

As rally followed rally
And I felt this day approaching
I thought of players I have played
And, those I've enjoyed coaching

I reviewed iconic photos
Of the past and present masters
Reflecting on some victories
And even some disasters

I thought of Dr. Bud and Brum
Who dominated their brackets
And represented with distinction
The game that began as "paddle racquets"

I thought of every athlete
With ball and racquet in hand
Competing and contending
On their courts across the land

Upon complete reflection
I can happily report
There's no greater satisfaction
Than to give your life to sport

Continuing my journey back
Through every hit and miss
I also have concluded
There's no greater sport than this

I played and I promoted
Worked where I saw the need
I gave myself to coaching
I even—refereed

And so, it's quite an honor
That you all called my name
To tell me I'd be welcome
In our Nation's Hall of Fame

That there would be a little spot
That I could call my own
Beside the greatest people
That our game has ever known

Those names from our beginnings
When strategy was king
Who with ceiling ball and rally
Would dominate with every swing

For those that now control the court
With omnipresent strength and power
Perhaps it's time to ask
Should strategy again regain the hour

If we find ourselves in conflict
That's the time to rise above
In renewed cooperation, for
The game that we all love

It wasn't by myself
But through the players I instructed
Their skill and their commitment
Are the reasons I'm inducted

My father was a quiet man
But this advice, I heard
"if you want to be successful
Always stand behind your word"

I've tried to bring that lesson
Into everything I've done
And through the game of racquetball
To leave this to my son

So, here's a father's lesson
For you sisters and my brothers
Find the thing you care about
Then share that love with others

If you like what you've been hearing
Then don't ever turn the page
That's how we'll bring to racquetball
Another Golden Age

And if you want a life that's fine
Here's all you must do
Surround yourself with people
Just as wonderful as you

Teachers/Coaches Corner - Beware of Scammers *continued...*

emailing, he sent a check for \$2,500 written on a US bank account in New Jersey belonging to an owner of one or more McDonaldses. I did not cash the check.

At this point, I never expected any young woman to show up needing lessons, but I thought it would be cool to catch a cybercriminal in the act of scamming people, so I filled out a cybercrime report on the FBI's website and will give them the check if they contact me. I have not yet heard from them, so I doubt this scammer will ever pay any consequences for trying to take my money. I haven't yet lost contact with my criminal, and there is a chance that I will actually give a lesson, but I'll let you know if there is some kind of conclusion to my little story. If you get a similar email—poor/foreign English and not a specific club or city where the racquetball lessons would be given, you might want to ignore it.

Happy teaching!

MORE NMRA Tidbits

Military Racquetball Players

The MRF Military National Racquetball Championships were held in August at Fort Hood in Killeen, Texas. If you are associated with our military and you weren't there, YOU MISSED OUT! The MRF has your interest at heart so please check out their efforts on behalf of active-duty, retired, able-bodied and wounded military personnel, including future players. Click here for results: <http://www.r2sports.com/tourney/home.asp?TID=24948>. For more about the MRF, go here: www.militaryracquetball.com/.

USAR John Lomonaco Award Winner

Randy Canham, the state association president from Kentucky, was this year's John Lomonaco Award winner. He got to visit USAR National Singles in Pleasanton and soak up lots of tips from movers and shakers in the sport. Of course, he also got to play in the tournament. He and I spoke for quite a while and he was eager to get back home and try out some things he picked up in Pleasanton. Congratulations, Randy!

Where Do You Want To Go?

If you know of clubs that you want me to pursue for a future NMRA tournament, please send them along and I will do my best. We are pretty well set through 2019 and have March 2020 reserved too.

Thought About Using KT Tape?

By Bruce Adams

KT Tape (Kinesiology Therapeutic Tape) is not a substitute for professional treatment. By Definition: kinesiology tape, Kinesio tape, k-tape, or KT, is an elastic cotton strip with an acrylic adhesive that is used with the intent of treating pain and disability from athletic injuries and a variety of other physical disorders (from Wikipedia).

Advantages

KT tape is different from regular "athletic tape" in that tape does not stretch; it actually tightens over time. And, KT Tape stretches, which allows it to follow your muscles and tendons, up to five days or more, after application.

In the old days, balms and analgesics were used a lot. Then came Ace bandages, athletic tape and various braces. I like to think of KT (stretch) Tape as similar to an "ultra sheer brace." It is a little scary at first because one does not feel it, yet the support is there.

I have found, and used, essentially two brands: PTEX and KT, which comes in Normal, Extreme, Gentle and Blister prevention. One can Locate KT Tape at Walgreen's, Wal-Mart and the Big Box sports stores such as Dick's, Academy, and Sports Authority. (USA Racquetball is currently sponsored by Rock Tape.)

I was very skeptical on the true effectiveness at first, thinking it was another fad established to get the athlete's money. Once I tried it a few times, **I was ready to throw away my many knee braces** which really did not work and smelled horrible.

My taping experiences have been on scoped knee, elbow and Plantar Fascia.

Rick Betts is also a big proponent of KT Tape, and has used it for years on his knees, and recently on his plantar fascia.

I have assisted the following with taping jobs:

- A spectator in NMRA Atlanta
- Carolyn Hollis** on shoulder in Denver
- Marni Winings** on hamstring in Warren, NJ
- Christine Wright** (wife of **Bob Wright**) on shin in Denver

One might call it "a glorified Band-Aid". You still need to:

- Stretch before and after workout
- Heat before workout
- Ice after workout
- Do strength training
- Massage
- Hydrate/ take electrolytes
- Eat properly
- Rest
- Consult a professional if the ailment persists.



As far as Instructions, each manufacturer has a set of instructions with each package of typically 20 nine-inch strips. Some are good; some are better. There are lots of videos on YouTube.com; one can also consult the manufacturer's website; our friends at Google.com; a trusted friend or Physical Therapist.

The instructions can also be modified, based on your physiology and need. Be sure and try any mods a couple of times before you enter into tournament play.

Pitfalls

- You will have to try your taping a few times to gain the confidence in it.
- Photograph and/or draw (write) any modifications so that you can repeat them in the future. I made this mistake once.
- Some producers tell you to shave your arms or legs before applying (similar to athletic tape). I find it best NOT to shave. Be aware that different skin types will make the adhesive last longer or shorter based on natural oils, etc.
- Proper application and stretching can yield a five-day tape job.
- Be aware that rubbing of clothes (e.g. stretch shorts) can shorten the duration due to the end rolling up and coming off your skin.

The *WebMD* site has an article entitled "Kinesio Tape for Athletes: A Big Help or Hype?" Read it for another opinion on the subject.

The cost varies from \$10 to \$15 normally, up to \$30 per roll. The variance is the type of packaging. It comes in various colors, and I have been told that different colors have different amounts of adhesive. I cannot prove that statement. Rick Betts also informed me that there is a "paper tape version" also. I found that version at Walgreens.com.

In summary, KT Tape is lightweight; stretchable; sheer; does not smell or sweat like braces; does not require special scissors to remove; comes in various colors; is a little more expensive than athletic tape; needs no under wrap; and does not tighten over time like Ace bandages or athletic tape.

Know your body and learn your body. Learn your body better with KT Tape the next time that you have a tendon, ligament or muscle issue.

MORE **NMRA Tidbits**

IRT on Facebook Live!

John Scott, owner and commentator extraordinaire of the *IRT Network*, decided to boost his pay-per-view racquetball broadcasts by using *Facebook Live* to get out and find some people new to racquetball. He was amazed at the response to his early-round broadcasts from just an *iPad* and a little commentary to go with it. All of the normal *IRT* lovers shared the feed and in no time, he had over 3 million hits for the weekend of the *Sioux Falls Lewis Drug Pro Am*. That is great news to *IRT Network* advertisers and to people like me who have loved watching the matches online when I could not be at the pro stop.

Pedometers Pedometers Pedometers

Are you wearing your pedometer every day to make sure you get a minimum of 10,000 steps? If not, get to *Dick's Sporting Goods* and pick up some (or other Fitbit-like devices) for you and your friends. You'll be amazed at how many steps one game of singles or doubles generates—I estimate 1,800 and 1,300, respectively. Unlike an elliptical or treadmill that gets you about 7,000 steps per hour, it doesn't take much time to reach your goal. Ask me about mine!

Court Hinders

It never hurts to remind people that court hinders are still valid, except that the professionals have decided not to allow them. In *NMRA* and other amateur events, if the ball changes direction due to something in the court, the rally should be replayed. That is also the case if the ball hits a wet spot on the first surface of contact (floor for serve, basically). Other wet spots, like walls, don't get a replay.

First Timer Experience?

If you are interested in sharing your *NMRA* first-timer experience, we would love to hear from you! Send me an article and I will put it in the *NMRA* newsletter. I hope it was a positive impression.

How Some of Us Train

By *Mike Grisz*

We are *NMRA* players. That means we're seasoned players, meaning we are old (my wife says I'm speaking about myself, not her!), and we need to take care of ourselves. So, the purpose of this article was to ask a few of our fellow players how much they play and what they do besides racquetball to keep fit. How do you compare?

Mike Stephens, one of our top 70+ players, plays racquetball twice a week. He also works out about 6 times a week powerwalking on a treadmill (highest incline) for 30 minutes, swims for 30 minutes, lifts weights, and drills on the court.

Sandy Rios plays 2 or 3 times a week and works out at a local studio near her house with a former *US National Jujitsu* champion (don't get Sandy mad at you!).

Karen Grisz, my outstanding wife, works out almost every day. Due to shoulder and knee issues, she plays racquetball only 2 or 3 days a week (and her playing is her "practice"), but on other days she uses the elliptical machines or takes spin, boot camp, and *HIIT* (High Intensity Interval Training) classes. Sometimes she drags me along on a bike ride in nice weather. She also tries to eat well and get enough sleep.

Marie Gomar plays every week day. She has learned how to moderate her playing as she (very gracefully) ages and as she competes nationally for *Guatemala*. She currently plays an hour per day, jogs for half an hour twice a week, and does 20 pushups a day. She eats well and gets her sleep. Racquetball is her "oxygen".

Cindy Tilbury, our beloved president, plays 4 times a week if possible. She works with *Debbie Tisinger* weekly, and occasionally *Tom Travers* (her coaches). She does yoga once a week, cardio every day for an hour, and muscle/strength training twice a week. Plus, she spends just a little time on promoting the sport!

Rick Betts, one of the top 65+ players, does a weight workout twice a week, plays racquetball 3 times a week and drills on the court two times a week (with *Cindy Tilbury* and *Debbie Tisinger* for one of those sessions). In addition to yoga once a week, he stretches before and after each workout and court session. When needed for aches and pains, he uses the foam roller. He eats right and gets lots of sleep.

Mike Grisz Well, I'm tired just writing this article, but here's my routine. Racquetball an average of 3 times a week - any more is too much for me; but I try to play very hard when I play. Otherwise, I do *Bikram* (hot) yoga 4 times a week. One or the other every day if possible. By the way, I highly recommend yoga (hot or otherwise). Hot yoga is not for everyone (we'll see if I can ever get *Karen* to try it again), but it does wonders for me.

Time for a nap now...



MORE NMRA Tidbits

Penalty Hinders

I don't know why penalty hinders are forever so difficult in self-refereed games, but they are. This is a long discussion, but in general, of course, if you take away from your opponent an offensive opportunity (primarily defined by a straight-in or cross-court pass) or otherwise interfere in the swing of your opponent's racquet, you should call the penalty hinder on yourself. It shouldn't cause controversy, anger or awkwardness, but somehow it usually happens. Do your best and call them when they happen.

Challenge Ladder and Jamboree League Software from USA Racquetball

Free *Online Challenge Ladder* signup and progress software is available to you and your friends—just contact the *USA Racquetball* guys for a little help. In addition, *Jamboree Leagues* are available for a small fee. Those leagues are very flexible where you can match up different partners for doubles and have more than one match per entrant each time the league meets. Be the person at your club who gets players organized! The new contact person at the *USAR* will tell you all the details.

Surveying the Membership

By Mike Grisz, NMRA Secretary / Future Fund Director

We, the *NMRA Board*, are committed to keeping our organization alive. We feel we offer a tournament format that is fun and collegial, but also competitive. We have been experiencing some declining participation numbers the last couple of years. We could have shrugged this off as a demographic issue. Instead, we have done two sets of surveys which we have studied and will hopefully use to address your concerns and improve the quality of our tournaments.

The two surveys were the online survey, still available for you to complete by the way, and the end of tournament surveys we did at *Warren* and *Denver*.

The online survey was sent to all our members through email. We received over 220 responses—a very respectable number! Let me summarize and comment:

1. 80% of the respondents were male.
2. Well over 50% of the responses were between the ages of 55 and 70. Very few under 50, this is troubling, to say the least.
3. 45% retired.
4. 30% Open, 40% A. Yes, this was self-judged.
5. Largest geographic representation was West Coast, 40%. Almost equal between the rest.
6. Almost 60% hadn't been to a tournament in last two years. Mostly because of injuries or time. Are we being honest here? How can we get you to come back?
7. More than half of us who came in the last year will fly to the tournaments.
8. Over 70% do not bring the spouse.
9. We average playing at least two national events per year (including non *NMRA* events).
10. What's good about the *NMRA*? This is close:
 - well run tournaments, the highest,
 - quality of competition,
 - amount of play,
 - sportsmanship and camaraderie,
 - destination.
11. Most found out about the *NMRA* through friends. Yes, you are our lifeblood to getting more members and participation.
12. 90% said their last *NMRA* experience was either good or excellent.
13. What can we (try to) change?
 - end matches earlier in the day,
 - end earlier Saturday,
 - more women,
 - lower fees (we've done this).

14. 80% said not to eliminate the doubles-only event in December.
15. It was almost exactly equal between a Wednesday-to-Saturday event versus Thursday-to-Sunday.
16. 70% play 2 events and prefer 2 to 3 matches per event per day. Makes me tired thinking about that one.
17. Very close on green versus purple *Penn* ball.
18. 80% ok with banquet length and 90% want the shorter version of the memorial for our deceased comrades.

I'd love more comments.

The second set of surveys was the report cards completed by participants at the *Warren* and *Denver* tournaments. Now, I helped run these so I paid very close attention. If you'd have read these you'd have thought two different sets of people or organizations had run these tournaments.

For those of you who were at these events, you'd know that one went very well and one went, well, a little rough. At *Warren*, we had some issues with 2 of the courts becoming wet and ultimately unplayable. With 8 courts going to six, and more than 100 participants, we ran, it pains me to say, just a tad bit behind. Also, the hotel we had planned to use as the tournament hotel told us two weeks before the event it wasn't going to be ready. The replacement hotel was also under renovation. I still have nightmares. Let's just say the surveys were not quite as favorable as we'd like.

Denver, on the other hand, was pleasantly on time with a very good host hotel. Ok, we get it. Be on time and have a favorable host hotel.

Ok, so where are we? My thoughts:

1. Our main job is to run three high quality events, so be on time and have a great hotel.
2. We need our core players, you know who you are, to help us continue to recruit new players, especially the younger ones.
3. If you have a less than favorable experience, let us know. We want to make everyone happy and proud to be an *NMRA* member and player.

Thanks. By the way, I am very happy to be on the *NMRA Board*. If you'd like to consider being on our Board or work on a committee, please talk to me or Cindy Tilbury or any one on the

MORE NMRA Tidbits

Get on the Lists! Ambassadors and Facility Partners

Two lists have been set up to give extra recognition to special racquetball resources—ambassadors and partner facilities. These lists are new and you will definitely want to get on them. We hope you all will consider being deemed “ambassadors” of our sport, and having your club on the list of places that have courts. If your club/school is not on the list of USAR Facility Partners, we need your help making that happen. Here are both links; more info is included there:

<http://www.teamusa.org/usa-racquetball/programs/ambassador-program>

<http://www.teamusa.org/USA-Racquetball/Programs/Facility-Partnership-Program>

Website Link Updates

For our NMRA “In Memoriam” website page, if you have more information on any of the passed players honored there, please send it along. Perhaps you know a link to the original obituary or newspaper notice. We would love to include it. And thanks!



No more “one and done”

– our round-robin format guarantees plenty of court time at a great value. Our three-year membership for just \$45 is the best deal in the sport, and – while NMRA membership is waived for your first tournament (USA Racquetball membership remains required) – your support helps ensure the success of the sport for future generations.

[Download a print application](#), or [join online today >>](#)

The Art of Matching Doubles Partners

[Why I Wait Until Just Before a Tournament to Give You a Doubles Partner]

By Cindy Tilbury

“What? Art?,” you ask! “Science? ESP? Voodoo? How hard could it be?”

For each NMRA tournament, I make it my boardly duty to get doubles partners for as many people as I can. I always feel like the Millionaire Match-maker, but with more pressure. A doubles partner for an NMRA tournament is not just a simple date, where you say goodnight if you don’t click. It is a whole four days of on-court togetherness where lifelong unions can be made or destroyed. And I’m at the heart of it! Our players have taken time out of their lives, spent travel dollars, and practiced for months. They expect to win the most gorgeous medals in racquetball. All they need is the best partner available.

Besides playing great, my personal goal is to make sure everyone has a great time at the NMRA tournaments so they will come back again and again. One way I think I can bring that about is to make sure our players meet more of the other players. There is no better way to get to know a bunch of players very quickly than to play with and against them in doubles. If you don’t mesh well with your own partner, you can scope out a partner for the next tournament or mixer. I have taken advantage of the doubles-partner generosity of many tournament directors, and am grateful for their efforts, so I volunteered to do my best to be the official NMRA matchmaker.

A few weeks before an NMRA tournament, I start a spreadsheet and list the names of all people who have asked for a partner, and then the names of all people who have not asked for a partner but have only signed up for one event. I then proceed to make about a hundred phone calls and send an equal number of emails to try to convince people to give doubles a try. That is not always easy, since our players know how physically demanding four-day round-robin tournaments can be. We can’t know, until everyone signs up, exactly how much racquetball we will be playing. I usually end up with a list of people who are willing to give it a go, and a list of people who are expecting results. I am happy to have both kinds of players, because once I know the names and ages of my potential doubles players, the real work begins.

Why don’t I just leave well enough alone with the people who specifically ask me for a partner? Two reasons—I believe some players don’t know that I will find them a partner or they are too shy to ask other players to play doubles, and, most important, the financial success of the tournaments depends on how many people play two events (singles or doubles). I enjoy contacting them before the tournament, too, so they know I will work for any of their player friends, should they decide to travel with them and play.

When I am matching people, I keep in mind what they are already entered in, what age/type of doubles they have asked for, names of people they ask for, and the ages of people in my partner pool. This tells me how to make the most teams and the best teams. I never put people together who are more than ten years apart—it makes scheduling the tournament too difficult (but scheduling and conflicts are a whole other article).

If I had my wildest NMRA dream come true, it would be to have about 40 more women players, for singles, women’s doubles, and mixed doubles. I hope you’ve noticed that the *Women’s* and *Mixed Doubles* divisions have been extremely strong lately. It’s because everyone is having so much fun playing competitive matches. Word is spreading that it isn’t just the Men’s doubles that are tough. We love that!

I feel amazingly gratified when I can make a great doubles team and they thank me for putting them together. I live for that. But sometimes I don’t do quite as well and doubles styles clash. They let me know that too. I’m not afraid to make suggestions to players to help them grow as partners, so I appreciate all of the feedback on my matchups.

Thank you all for being willing and even eager to try a doubles matchup at an NMRA tournament. Remember that you could meet a lifelong friend or partner, and have the time of your life—if not this time, then the next, or the one after that.



Check the www.nationalmastersracquetball.com website or [Facebook](#) for the latest updates.

DATE	TOURNAMENT	LOCATION	CONTACT	Website www.r2sports.com
Jan 18-20	WSMRA 29th Championships , Ladies-Only 35+, Open/A and B/C Age-Group Singles Offered *New* Open/A and B/C Doubles Divisions Now Offered	Los Angeles, CA	Cindy Tilbury	www.wsmra.com
Feb 6-10	USAR National Doubles	Phoenix, AZ	USAR	www.usra.org
Mar 6-9	NMRA National Championships 40+ Potential IRT Pro Stop Too	San Antonio, TX (tent.)	Cindy Tilbury	www.nationalmastersracquetball.org
May 22-26	USAR National Singles	TBD	USAR	www.usra.org
Jun 26-29	NMRA International Championships 40+	Chicago, IL	Cindy Tilbury	www.nationalmastersracquetball.org
Aug 27-31	World Seniors 30+	Albuquerque, NM	Gary Mazaroff	www.internationalracquetball.com
Oct 2-6	US Open	Minneapolis, MN	USAR, Doug Ganim	www.usra.org

NMRA BOARD of DIRECTORS

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RACQUET RACKET

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Cindy Tilbury, Editor
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