

OFF THE WALL

OPENING SHOTS

By Enrico Dubach



Fall has been a real roller coaster. After the tragic events of September 11th, it has been hard to concentrate on a lot of the local stuff. Some of us have taken a renewed appreciation in a lot of the simpler things in life. Suddenly it doesn't seem that important to put the extra hours in at the office. Spending time with the family and friends takes a little higher priority. The competitive game of racquetball seems to mean less and the camaraderie seem to mean a lot more. So, in spite of the bad news all around us, professional basketball and football are in full swing, baseball has the best World Series ever and the racquetball season starts off. I hope you're enjoying the tournaments as much as I am.

It was fun to see Kristen Walsh back in town running the Fall Opener tournament in September at the Sports Mall. There were a lot of great matches to watch and I had a great time playing. She did a great job and I'm already looking forward to the State Championships in March.

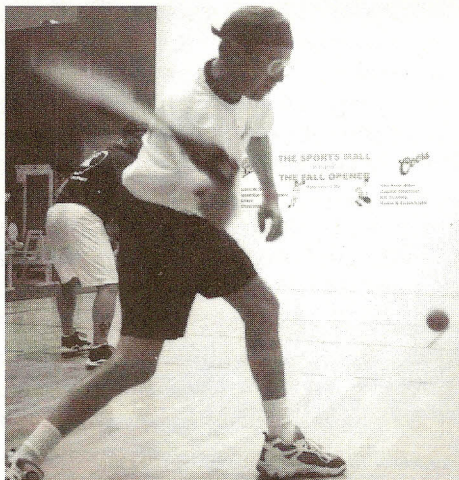


Photo by John Yorkey (Brad Bona at Fall Opener)

I just finished the State Doubles Championships tournament at Marv Jenson. Heather Woichik did an excellent job running her first major tournament. The week finished off with an awards ceremony and the URA drew for the raffle prizes. John Clift won the 19" TV, Todd Branigan won the DVD player and vacuum. Dennis O'Brien donated a Southwest Airlines plane ticket that Adam Anderson won. Pam Martin put together some nice prizes and Steven Clark was able to get some nice backpacks. Players were able to win these and other

great prizes simply by donating their ref fees. This works as a great fundraiser for the URA and we plan to use this money to print a new URA Directory. Thanks to Heather and Pam Martin for arranging the great food; there was plenty for everyone! The Board of Directors chose to move the State Doubles Championships back a couple of months this year. Traditionally, this tournament has been held at the end of September. This year we moved it to the middle of November. Most players felt this was an improvement and entries were up almost fifty percent over last year. There would have been more players but many entries were received late. We, as racquetball players need to make sure we send in our entries on time. Once a tournament director starts organizing the draws for the various divisions and schedules courts and starting times, it is very difficult to add players or change match times. One change can affect many players and in doubles it's even worse. The tournament director can usually handle reasonable time requests for the starting matches, but after that it's impossible. So do your best to help the tournament director as much as possible. Congratulations are due to Mike Deamer, a fellow racquetball player from Centerville. Mike was recently elected mayor of Centerville. It was only a year ago when Mike suffered a heart attack on the courts at the Bountiful Bash. What a great comeback! Maybe we'll see some

courts in Centerville now, right Mike? The annual membership dues for USRA/URA membership will go up to \$30 a year effective January 1, 2002. The state organization retains one third of these dues. We use the money to print newsletters, organize and produce a tournament schedule, contribute to juniors and traveling leagues, and various other projects. The national organization uses the money to produce a national magazine, maintain a ranking system for all players, supply secondary insurance for all tournament play and contribute to a variety of programs. If you would like, you can renew your membership for several years at the current \$20 rate, if you renew before December 31st. Check the USRA website or contact Gene Rolfe at (801) 533-0808. I hope you all have a safe and healthy holiday season.

See you next year on the courts.

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Mark Your Calendar

December 6-8 & 13-15
Rocky Mountain Masters
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 (801) 974-6923

January 8-12
Alta Canyon Avalanche
 Alta Canyon
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January 22-26
Orem Fitness Center
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January 26-March 2
Spring Smash
 Marv Jenson
 (801) 253-4404

March 13-16
Luck of the Heights
 Cottonwood Heights
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Off The Wall

December, 2001

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March 2002 issue...February 12, 2001

URA board meetings are held the second Monday of most months at 7 p.m. at the Redwood Recreation Center and are open to anyone interested in attending. Call if you would like something placed on the agenda.

Check out what's new with racquetball on the web at www.utahracquetball.com

SPORTS MEDICINE CHEST

By Dennis Fisher

TEN REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD USE A CARBOHYDRATE DRINK RATHER THAN PLAIN WATER DURING TRAINING AND COMPETITION

A couple of years ago one of the top endurance athletes of all time gave a seminar and was asked the question, "What do you drink during races?" His response - "Nothing's better than plain water" - was surprising not only because the person was under contract with an energy drink manufacturer but because studies have shown numerous performance benefits offered by scientifically advanced energy drinks.

Some energy drinks can be worse than water for hydration. Many commercial drinks are too high in sugar, causing digestive distress and slowing gastric emptying time. These factors can lead to dehydration. Also, liquid energy drinks (as opposed to powder) contain preservatives, binders, fillers and stabilizers necessary to suspend ingredients in liquid, making them a less potent, less healthy choice than mixing a powder drink fresh with water at the time of exercise.

1. Hydrates as well as plain water research shows that when an energy drink is mixed properly (7% carbohydrate) it has the same gastric emptying rate as plain water.

2. Advanced ingredients help prevent muscle tissue breakdown. Efficient delivery of caloric energy to working muscles helps reduce gluconeogenesis (breaking down muscle tissue for energy) during exercise. Ingredients like Alpha-l-poly lactate (lactate with the acid removed)

has been proven to accelerate the process of converting lactic acid back into glucose to be used as energy, resulting in less lactic acid production. Choline enhances brain function, reducing perceived exertion.

3. Succinates enhance oxygen carrying capacity. Succinates have been measured to improve oxygen consumption by 11% while exercising at the same intensity. When your muscles have more oxygen, you perform better and preserve tissue from damage deprived by lack of oxygen during intense workouts.

4. Antioxidants to prevent free radical damage. Ingesting antioxidants during exercise when free radical production is high will reduce the overall stress effect of the workout and speed recovery.

5. Complex carbs for sustained energy Maltodextrins, amylopectin starches and other long chain carbohydrate molecules provide sustained energy to balance the simple carbohydrate energy sources like fructose. Many commercial energy drinks derive all of their calories from simple carbohydrates, resulting in blood sugar swings and digestive difficulties.

6. Prevents cramping and restores cellular balance. The electrolytes found in sophisticated energy drinks are perfectly formulated to prevent cramping and restore cellular balance quickly after exercise.

7,8,9 & 10. While you bring home another tournament championship, these are the places your competitors will finish when they drink water instead of an energy drink.

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KNOW THE RULES



**By Gene Rolfe Treasurer
URA**

Racquetball is a great sport. I think that one of the things that makes racquetball a great sport is that you share the court with your opponent. Players are trying to come up with that great shot and move their opponent out of position. It is really sweet when you make that passing shot that not even the quickest players can reach and return. We've all had that frustration of hitting what we thought was a good shot and then having a hinder called. We've also been on the other side feeling that we had the ball in our sights and not having the hinder be called by the referee. When you take and place 2-4 people in a 20x40 foot room people are going to get in the way of each other. One solution would be to make the defensive player magically disappear so that the offensive player could take their best shot. Since this isn't possible, hinders are a necessary part of the game for both fair play and safety. Besides, half of the fun of racquetball is watching your opponent try to go 2 different directions when you hit a great shot.

This issue, I'm going to talk about dead-ball hinders and next issue I will talk about avoidable hinders. When a hinder is called, play stops and the rally is replayed. The server starts with first serve. Rule 3.14(c) states that "While making an attempt to return the ball, a player is entitled to a fair chance to see and return the ball. It is the responsibility of the side that has just hit the ball to move so the receiving side may go straight to the ball and have an unobstructed view of and swing at the ball." The receiver has to make a reasonable effort to move towards the ball and must have a reasonable chance of returning

the ball.

There are seven kinds of dead ball hinders mentioned in the rulebook. These include court hinders, ball hitting opponent, body contact, screen ball, back swing hinders, safety holdup, and other interference.

1) Court hinders-The referee stops play when the ball hits any part of the court that was designated as a court hinder prior to the start of the match. Wet spots on the floor or walls can also be called court hinders. It is not unusual in our state for open players to agree before the match to play all court hinders. This is not a USRA rule but it does eliminate any disagreements about court hinders.

2) Ball hits opponent-If the ball hits the opponent on its flight to the front wall it is a dead-ball hinder. If the ball does not have the velocity or direction to make the front wall, it should not be called a hinder. Remember that if the ball hits the front wall and then hits the player, the opponent will be awarded a side out or point.

3) Body contact-If body contact occurs that would lead to injury or the inability of a reasonable return, the referee should stop play. Incidental contact in which the offensive player has the advantage should not be called a hinder. Contact with the racquet on the follow-through is not normally considered a hinder.

4) Screen ball-The rules say that a screen ball is any ball passing so close to the body of the defensive player that it prevents the offensive player from having a clear view of the ball. A ball that passes between the legs of a player is not automatically a screen. Players often ask how far does the ball have to pass from the body to be a screen. The rules do not mention a specific distance for screens, just the ability of the receiver to see the

ball. The referee should not make the call so quickly as to take away a good offensive opportunity. The rule also states that the call should work to the advantage of the offensive player.

5) Back swing hinder-Any body or racquet contact on the backswing or just prior to hitting the ball impairs the hitter's ability to make a reasonable swing. This call can be made by the player and is subjective to the referee's approval.

6) Safety holdup-Any player about to hit a return who believes that striking the opponent with the ball or racquet is likely, may immediately stop play and request a hinder. The call is subject to approval of the referee. The player must have been able to return the shot.

7) Other interference-Any unintentional interference that prevents the player from seeing or returning the ball. An example would be when a ball from another court enters the court.

Hinders are an issue of safety and fairness to each player. The rules give the edge to the offensive player, but all players need to be safe. Several dead ball hinders can be avoidable hinders. That subject will be addressed in the next issue of *Off The Wall*. If you have any comments, questions, or suggestions please feel free to contact me. rgrolfe@hotmail.com

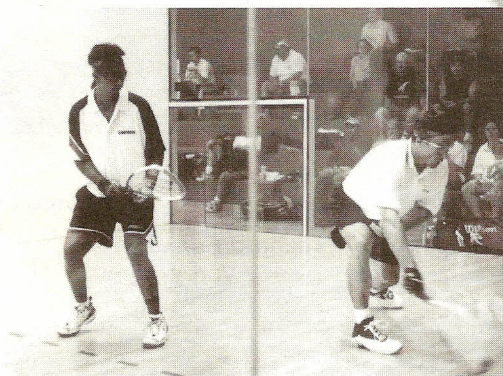


Photo by John Yorkey (Jerry Montanez, Matt Christensen Fall Opener)

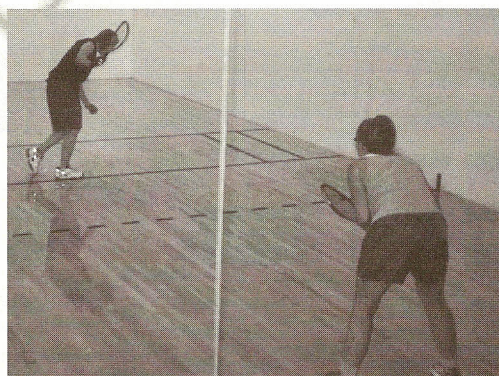


Photo by Randy Martin (Jordan Valley Wipeout)

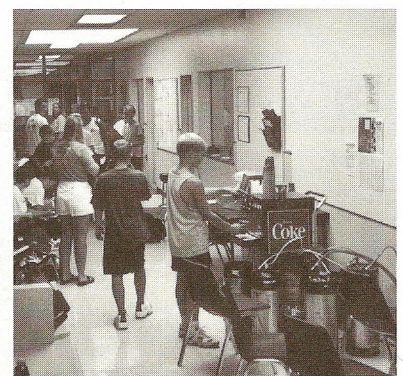


Photo by Randy Martin (State Juniors)

STATE JUNIORS: AUG. 23-25 REDWOOD MULTIPURPOSE CENTER

	First	Second	Third	Fourth
Multibounce 6-	Jesse Van Valkenburg	Gregory Shipman		
Multibounce 8-	Grant Sanderson	Zeik Montanez	Kyle Walsh	
2 Bounce 10-	Angie Yates	Grant Sanderson	Jacob Steffes	Zeik Montanez
Gold 12-	Derek Neth	Anthony Montanez	Korey Walsh	Drew Brannigan
Blue 12-	Cody Sylvester	Ryan Garner	Devan Van Valkenburg	Mike Christiansen
Red 12-	Christopher Knudsen	Angie Yates		
Gold 14-	Anthony Martin	Andrew Gale	Grady Steed	Kim Walsh
Blue 14-	Matthew Jones	Cody Sylvester	Anthony Montanez	Spencer Owen
Red 14-	Mike Steffes	Matt Steffes		
Gold 16-	Richard Terry	Quang Nguyen	Andrew Gale	John Sanderson
Blue 16-	Steven McGovern	Anthony Martin	Grady Steed	Dan Christiansen
Red 16-	Nick Grundhauser	Jim Barker	Arian Pirayesh	Matthew Jones
White 16-	Jared Ning	Spencer Owen	Alan Romney	Brad Prestwich
Gold 18-	Richard Terry	Quang Nguyen	Nathan McCoy	Steven McGovern
Blue 18-	John Sanderson	Dan McKenzie	Nathaniel Cranney	Brand Prestwich

Photo by Randy Martin (Devan Van Valkenburg, Kyle Walsh State Juniors)

FALL OPENER: SEPT. 13-16 SPORTSMALL

	First	Second	Third
Men's Open	Brian Pointelin	Adam Anderson	Brad Bona
Men's A	Adam Tueller	Randy Martin	Steve Clark
Men's B	Carlos Benson	Alvaro Mejia	Jim Weaver
Men's C	Ryan Spainhower	Ryan Nielson	Not a member
Men's D	Randy VanWagoner	Robert Quinn	Jared Ostergaard
Men's 25+	Chris Johnson	Ryan Spainhower	Kelly Cunningham
Men's 30+	Stewart Knudson		
Men's 35+	Phil Burbank	Randy Martin	Ray Griffiths
Men's 40+	Steve Clark	Enrico Dubach	
Men's 45+	Bill Yetman	Doug Douville	Roger Bird
Men's 50+	Steve Misener	Doug Douville	Jim Weaver
Men's 55+	Chris Segura	Dan Rideout	
Men's 60+	Chris Segura	Chuck Barrett	
Boys 18-	Quang Nguyen	Richie Terry	Chris Gillespie
Boys 16-	Arian Pirayesh	Jim Barker	Nick Grundhauser
Boys 14-	Anthony Martin	Andrew Gale	Grady Steed
Boys 12-	Drew Brannigan	Korey Walsh	Cody Sylvester
Women's B	Janice Gibson	Barbara Christensen	Heather Montanez
Women's C	Pam Martin	Christie Matheson	
Women's 40+	Marianne Walsh		
Women's 60+	Sylvia Sawyer	Marcus Dunyon	Jerry Montanez
Girl's 14-	Kim Walsh	Marianne Walsh	Heather Montanez
Mixed Open Doubles:	Dave Timmons	Barbara Christensen	Grady Steed
	Sheila Burner	Brad Schmidt	Kim Walsh
Mixed B/C Doubles:	Chuck Barrett	Brad Bona	Ricardo Soto
	Sylvia Sawyer	Jerry Montanez	Lee Dang
Men's Open Doubles:	Brian Pointelin	Richie Terry	Eddie Conway
	Kristen Walsh	Mike Van Valkenburg	John Clift
Men's A/B Doubles:	Robert Lopez		
	Roger Bird		

Photo by John Yorkey (Adam Anderson, Brian Pointelin)

JORDAN VALLEY WIPEOUT: SEPT. 25-29

	First	Second	Third
Men's Open	Adam Anderson	Steve Black	Matt Christensen
Men's A	Randy Martin	Alvaro Mesia	John Mattson
Men's B	Ryan Spainhower	Carlton Copa	Richard Bunker
Men's C	Cris Ridell	Richard Bunker	Randy Van Wagner
Men's D	Steve McKinnon	Steve Brumbaugh	Jake Wright
Men's 25+	Eric Carver	Ryan Spainhower	
Men's 30+	Chris Clift	Stewart Knudsen	

Men's 35+	Wade Burkett		
Men's 40+	Ray Griffiths	Enrico Dubach	
Men's 45+	Dennis Fisher	Marcus Dunyon	
Men's 50+	Steve Misener	John Clift	
Men's 55+	Larry Rogers		
Men's 60+	Chris Segura		
Women's A	Val Shewfelt		
Women's B	Paige Harris		
Women's C	Laura Bryan	Pam Martin	
Women's 45+	Val Shewfelt		
Men's Open Doubles	Hoey/Rolfe	Walsh/Dunyon	Benson/Mejia
Men's B Doubles	Anderton/Knudsen	Ridell/Wright	Geertson/Van Wagener

SWING INTO FALL: OCT. 23-27 REDWOOD MULTIPURPOSE CENTER

	First	Second	Third
Men's Open	Travis Passey	Ricardo Soto	Tom Montanez
Men's A	Randy Martin	Steven Clark	Richard Terry
Men's B	Richard Terry	Craig Gibson	Nathan McArthur
Men's C	David Cise	Aaron Langston	Michael King
Men's 35+	Chris Gale	Jonathan Meatoga	
Men's 40+	Steven Clark	Ray Griffiths	
Men's 45+	Dennis Fisher	Glen Aitken	
Men's 50+	Scott Brewster		
Men's 55+	Chris Segura	Dan Rideout	
Men's 60+	Chris Segura	Brent North	
Boys 16-	Stephen Richer	Arian Pirayesh	
Boys 14-	Anthony Martin	Andrew Gale	
Boys 12-	Korey Walsh	Cody Sylvester	Devan Van Valkenburg
Women's A	Diane Burns	Kristine Wheeler	Megan Morris
Women's B	Barbara Christensen	Laura Hasler	Janis Gibson
Women's D	Pam Martin	Heidi Carver	

STATE DOUBLES: NOV. 6-10 MARV JENSEN

	First	Second	Third	Consolation
Men's Open	Adam Anderson Travis Passey	Brian Pointelin Kristen Walsh	Brian Pointelin Steve Black	Matt Christenson Marcus Dunyan
Men's A's	Dennis O'Brien Paul Ethington	Steve Clark Brad Alston	Bill Yetman Shawn Pike	Paul & Brian Bennett
Men's B's	Nate & Dino Semerad	Brad Ballard John Matuz	Robert Dycus John Clift	Mike & Devan Van Valkenburg
Men's C's	Jim Millburn Scott Thompson	Richard Bunbar Chris Riddell	Richard Bunbar Paul Bennett	
Men's 30+	Brian Bennett Jerry Montanez	Randy Martin Chris Clift	Todd & Greg Brannigan	
Men's 35+	Lynn Corbridge Dave Timmons	Shawn Pike Bill Yetman	Chris Gale Paul Ethington	
Men's 40+	Rico Dubach Glen Aitken	Ray Griffiths Jim Grundhauser	Eddy Connor Rhino Booth	
Men's 45+	R McNabb Larry Moon	Robert Lopez Roger Bird	Pat Conway John Clift	
Mixed Open	Brian Pointelin Kristen Walsh	Marcus Dunyan Marianne Walsh	Jerry & Heather Montanez	
Mixed Lower (A,B,C)	J Chase Jeff Aiona	Deanne Hinton Perry Allen	Randy & Pam Martin	
Women's Open	Ruth McGovern Marianne Walsh	J. Chase M. Fanoimoana	Kim & Kristen Walsh	
Woman's B/C	Barbara Christenson Janice Gigson	Heather Montanez Pam Martin		
Junior's	Andrew Gale Paul Bennett	Kim Walsh Grady Steel	Cory Walsh/ Drew Brannigan	

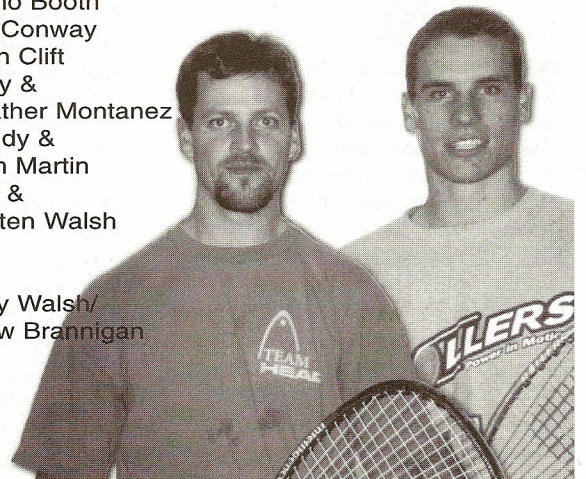


Photo by Randy Martin (Adam Anderson, Travis Passey)

WHO AM I.....



**By Marcus Dunyon
VP URA**

This player profile is a compilation of the regular article and the new article called Who Am I. I have known this player for a long time, he plays at the level of his competition, which is to say he needs a lot of help in order to play well.

MD. How long have you been playing racquetball?

A. I really didn't start playing until I was in college.

MD. You really didn't answer my question and what college was that?

A. University of Utah, back when the field house was around with dirt floors, way too many years to count.

MD. So, you're telling me it's when the racquets were small and the major color was orange or red.

A. Yea and I am proud to say I played with both colors.

MD. What about the game has kept you playing all these years.

A. Mostly the people, they are the greatest, besides where else can you eat free all week.

MD. So, based on your answer

and your girth; you must play a lot of tournaments.

A. I play a few, but more important, I know which have the best food and make sure I play in those tournaments.

MD. Who has the best food?

A. Ruth always has a good variety; the Bountiful Bash has good eats, Marv Jensen and the Sports Mall. This year I have lost a little weight because the Bash was not held. Ya know, thinking about it all the tournaments have good food.

MD. Who are some of the people you played against.

A. I really do not want to talk about the people I have played, after all they know who they are and how badly the matches went. I mean why should anyone want to re-live the pain of those types of defeats. In fact as I remember, I beat you so bad, you gave up playing for whatten years.

MD. It was only eight years and when I came back, you had put on so much weight, they couldn't find a division big enough for you to play in. So what do you have to say to that!

A. Well maybe we should start a petition to add a weight class division to racquetball to give us a chance to compete on the same court.

MD. You have seen racquetball change over the years, what do you miss the most.

A. The women! There use to be a lot

more playing, I would rather watch the women play instead of the men. I mean have you seen how ugly the men are that play racquetball?

MD. What is better about the game today.

A. The people are better athletes today than years ago, they had to be to keep up with the power and still have the ability to get out of the way of people my size. I mean I may not be the biggest guy that plays but at my advance age I have learned to block, In fact it might be the part of my game that has improved the most over the years.

MD. It might be time to finally let the readers know who you are, but before I do, is there anything you would like to say as a parting shot?

A. Racquetball is my life, and if the people in Afghanistan can't understand that, then to h--- with them. I challenge the world.

As you the reader have probably guessed, this was a rather difficult article to write, the person I was interviewing was rather difficult and evasive in giving his answers. So in the interest of preserving the purity of the game we love, I sent him on a trip out of the country to explain the game he loves to the people he mentioned above and to collect his reward if successful. I WILL LET YOU KNOW IF HE RETURNS AND DIVULGE HIS NAME AT THAT TIME.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

To the URA and its Players
In an effort to be fair to all people and to still state an opinion I feel needs to be considered by the members of the association, I am writing this letter as an open letter to all players. During the State Doubles tournament, we had many examples of good sportsmanship. In fact, for the majority of players, and considering it was the State Championship, I was very pleased with the sportsmanship that took place. However, one problem that started the first night and continued throughout the week, were players changing the time of their matches to meet their own schedules. This is not new to a tournament, however it seemed to become excessive as the week went on and really became a problem by Saturday. The tournament directors put together a schedule

that is based on court availability and number of courts. In addition, they must consider any programs or activities associated with the tournament like a banquet or awards ceremony. They also have to consider the wishes of the players early in the week to adjust for starting times. Once the tournament has started it is up to the players to follow the schedule as closely as possible. Some times exceptions can be made during the week, but only with the permission of the tournament director and once all players have agreed to the changes. One thing I personally feel quite strong about is the time of the finals. I believe the time should be set with no changes unless it is necessary. The reason is that during the week players set up their schedules to be around for the finals. I feel Heather (tourna-

ment director) did a great job of making adjustments at the request of players, but at the same time I feel her effort was not appreciated by some of the players. In fact, I personally heard complaints voiced by players that were uncalled for at any time. So if the shoe fits, be big enough to wear it.

PLAYERS GROW UP !!!

WE AS PLAYERS NEED TO REALIZE THAT THE IF WE ARE GOING TO COMPETE IN A TOURNAMENT, THEN WE NEED TO SCHEDULE OUR WEEK ACCORDINGLY. PRETTY SIMPLE!

Being a tournament director is a tough job and we do not need to make it any harder. If you want to talk to me about my feeling on this matter, I am easy to get in touch with, just call or see me at most tournaments.

Marcus Dunyon
URA Member and
Player

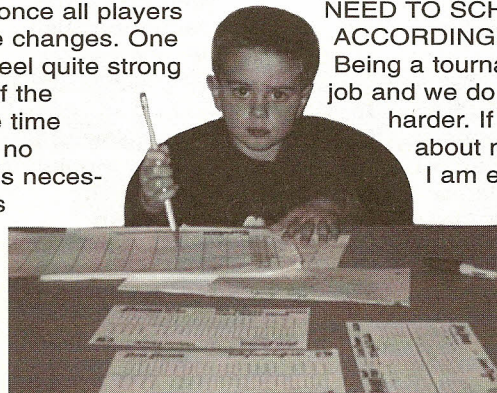


Photo by Marianne Walsh (Kyle Walsh at Fall Opener)

PLAYER PROFILE: BRIAN POINTELIN

By Marcus Dunyon VP URA



The Player Profile this month is on Brian Pointelin. Brian has recently made the United States National Doubles Racquetball Team.

Q. Brian you have had the opportunity to play racquetball at the highest level possible, and recently qualified for the US National Team. Can you share with the readers about your experiences at National Doubles.

A. Each match was a tough one in it's own right. Karp and Harnett may have been the toughest besides the finals. Every match went tie-breaker, but I think that was the toughest one. I don't know whether we relaxed during the games we lost or what. I think once we beat Jack Huczek and Eric Muller in the Quarters, I knew we were going to make the Team.

Q. When and how did you and Dan start playing together?

A. About three years ago, we were discussing playing in Baltimore and he wasn't sure if he was going to play with Erin Brannigan or not. I had talked to Erin that week and he told me he wasn't going to be able to play, so I told Dan about it. After the deadline, Erin called Dan and asked if he had entered them in the tournament, to which Dan's reply was, "I thought you weren't going to play". It was a miscommunication somewhere, but we lost in the first round that year. I was a little nervous because it was my first time at National Doubles, we didn't play well and lost.

Q. When you were playing in Las Vegas, you and Dan had the crowd and friends on your side. Did that help fuel your drive to qualify for the national team, and was there any additional incentive?

A. To see the stands packed every match in anticipation of what we were going to do next was incredible. I was nervous for every match;

so when you are in a city like Chicago, you try and do as much as you can.

Q. It must be exciting to be able to compete all over the nation, tell us about your favorite place to play and what makes them so special.

A. I think my favorite place to play is Memphis. I have never played particularly well there, especially in the Pro Division, but the tournament itself has a very special meaning to me. The fact that a lot of money is donated to the St. Jude's Children's Hospital is a very special thing to me. All the money in the world can't fix all the kids in that hospital, but every little bit helps. there in while, but most of my family lives there.

Q. Having now made the team what are your plans for the future and where do you see yourself in the next couple of years?

A. My goal now is to train a little more often, and a little harder, I have done things to get to this point in my career, and I am not going to deviate a whole lot from that.

As far as where I am over the next couple of years, that is a great question. I see myself on the National Team competing in International Competitions. My goal now that I have made the team is to stay on the team, something I picked up in a conversation I had with Kersten Hallander.

Q. What is the best part of spending so much time playing at the national level?

A. The level of competition is one of the best things about playing on the National Level. Since I qualified for the National Team in Doubles, my main focus is to now qualify again at National Singles. I lost in the Quarterfinals of the Open Singles at the US Open, so I think I am headed in the right direction. By the time National Singles rolls around, I hope to be in the hunt for the title. Another great thing is being able to reach out to people around the country. I enjoy going to cities I have never been to and seeing friends too.

Q. What is the hardest part of playing at the national level?

A. Unquestionably, the hardest part about playing on the National Level is the travel.

Q. Apart from the playing what do you enjoy most, and what do you dislike the most?

A. I think the thing I like most is the ability to travel all over the country and I am doing something that I love.

I think one of the things that I dislike about it are the bad habits that you can pick up on the road. I don't eat great at home and when I am on the road. The other thing is sleep, you only get to see some of these people a time or two a year,

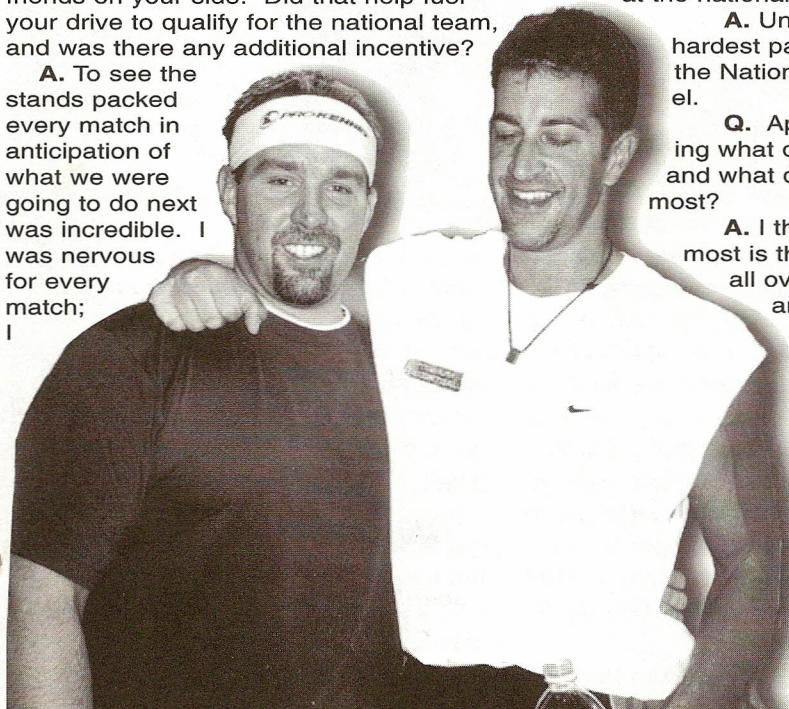


Photo by Marianne Walsh (Brian Pointelin, Dan Llacera)

Because of limited space we regret that we are not able to print the entire interview. Please check U.R.A. website for the entire interview.