

OFF THE WALL

March 1994

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

In January, the annual National Leadership Conference was held at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs for state presidents & board members. Those attending from Utah were Norma Carlisle, Vice President, John Linehan, Board Member, and myself.

Interesting and informative presentations were made which focused on a wide variety of promotional activities for racquetball. Once again, I was very impressed with the volunteer efforts of over 70 participants from across the United States. Many of the ideas from this seminar will be used to promote competitive and recreational racquetball in the state. One such program we will adopt is a new ranking/rating computerized program developed by the WRSA (World Racquet Sports Association). This rating system will go into effect as of the 1994 State Singles Tournament this month. Also, John Yorkey will be administering a newly revised referee certification test which was obtained at the seminar. Several juniors programs were presented which provided some new insights for participation.

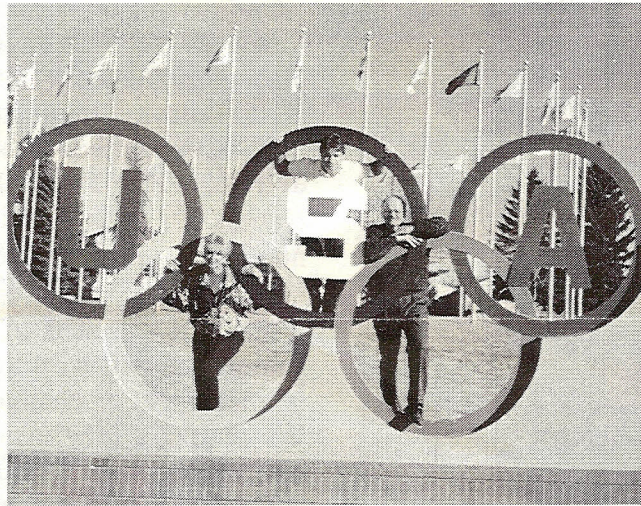
I appreciate support from the URA board members and players within the state. I feel that over the years we have had a steady growth in competitive racquetball as evidenced from tournament participation. However, it has levelled off slightly. Your continued support as a player encouraging others to participate will

help sustain the sport. It is one of the finest fitness for life sports.

Roger C. Flick
President

AARA LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

It was my privilege to attend the AARA Leadership Conference in Colorado Springs in January of this year. Representatives from almost every state were in attendance to exchange ideas and information used in running their respective state associations. This being my first leadership conference, I was truly surprised to see how many dedicated people there are involved with the AARA. The AARA is a



Norma, Johnny & Roger sent to the stocks for riotous living

member of the U.S. Olympic Committee which provided us with housing and fed us during our stay. This conference was as much of a benefit for the AARA as it was for us. They hear our complaints, concerns and ideas for improvement, with their assistance, of tournaments and also of recreational play; and, we see how other states run their associations and tournaments, how they acquire sponsorship and hold fund raisers. This is valuable information, some of which we can implement into our own state's association to keep the sport healthy and growing in years to come.

In our state, this year's number of entrants at sanctioned tournaments was down at almost all of the clubs. This is of great concern to the URA. We, as a board, will be implementing some of the ideas gathered from this year's

conference to give the sport a needs shot in the arm. One such idea is to establish a state ranking system. Every state representative I spoke with had some sort of ranking system. Ours was the only one that did not.

How many of you have paid your \$20.00 or so, only to get blasted in the first round by someone playing in your division PLUS playing in the division above yours? It's happened to me, and any complaint to the tournament director seems to fall on deaf ears. A ranking system would eliminate this scenario. Every player would have to play in the one letter category for which he or she is ranked. Players wanting to play in more than one division can opt to play either doubles or age bracket divisions. This would ensure every entrant that they would be playing someone relatively close to their ability at every sanctioned tournament. This will also benefit tournament directors with their draw sheets. There would be a ranking number next to every entrant, so they can be seeded accordingly.

Another topic we are discussing is the possibility of giving tournament directors the option of charging an extra \$5.00 on top of the entry fee. Relax...let me finish. Then, if you win or lose, after you ref a match you receive \$5.00 back. It would be possible to regain all your money spent by just hanging around and reffing games. After entering, you are not obligated to ref, win or lose. Tournament directors would make more money for their club and will find it much easier to find people to ref.

These are just two of the many possibilities the board will be considering to ensure more evenly matched play and less work for tournament directors. The board will also be looking into other areas of racquetball in our state which need attention. Some of these areas include: promotion of Juniors, Women's divisions, the possibility of playing doubles matches on a separate night, sponsorship throughout the year, and fund raisers. (Golf tournaments, softball games, car washes, raffles, etc.)

Any ideas or comments concerning the topics mentioned or anything concerning racquetball at all would be greatly appreciated.

Johnny Linehan
URA Board Member

RANKING GUIDELINES

The Utah Racquetball Association Board of Directors and Ranking Committee will be implementing the following guidelines for ranking, beginning immediately.

There has been only one change, which is in the number of participants per division due to the consistently low number of players in each division of play.

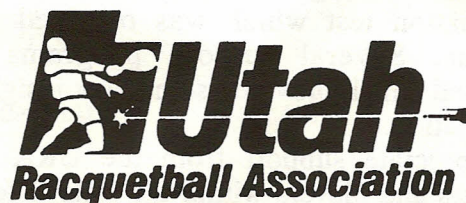
Players will be able to place in Finals (First or Second Place) two times if there are the recommended number of players or more entered in that division. If less than the recommended minimum number of players are entered in a division, the player may place in finals three times.

Once a player places either twice or three times as recommended, he or she will be placed in the next division above his or her current playing division. Players should strongly be discouraged from "playing down a division". The minimum number of women players per division will be six. The minimum number of men players per division will be eight.

The URA Board of Directors and Ranking Committee will work to keep directors informed of placement & changes in rankings of players. We realize a few bugs may need to be worked out while implementing this regulation. Your support and cooperation is appreciated.

If you have questions or comments, you may call Kris at 263-9925.

Kris Justesen
Ranking Committee Director
URA Board of Directors



JUNIORS TEAM RACQUETBALL LEAGUE

Salt Lake County Parks and Recreation and the URA are planning a new Juniors Team Racquetball League. It will be open to all junior players in Salt Lake County and the Bountiful area. It is scheduled to begin play June 13 and will play through August 12. The participants will be grouped into teams and will play once a week at various sites throughout the valley. Several of the clubs have already expressed an interest in hosting the league. Besides the weekly team play, each participant will receive a team shirt, rules and refereeing clinic, player appearance, trophy, team picture, AARA Membership, entry in the State Juniors Tournament, and an awards barbecue and pool party.

We hope to have registration forms out in March. The registration deadline will be April 30. We hope all juniors will want to participate.

We feel that we have put together a good program, and we are really excited about it. Any adults that would like to get involved may volunteer as coaches and assistant coaches. The amount of time involved will be minimal and may be very rewarding. For further information call Ruth at 974-6923.

THE INVISIBLE HINDER

Ever play someone who kept seeing hinders that you didn't? Here's some help from Rex Fisher of "Racquetball around Ohio" magazine:

"The easiest way to determine if a hinder occurred is to assume the defensive player just vanished into thin air. Now, can the offensive player get to the ball? If so, the defensive player committed a hinder.

Here are some examples. The defensive player has just hit a shot and it bounces for the second time about a foot to the right of that player. The offensive player is on the defensive player's left, about three feet away. If the defensive player vanished instantaneously, the offensive player could probably get to that shot. (For now, don't consider if it is avoidable.) The defensive player is guilty of a hinder.

In this next situation, put the defensive player on the short line, midway between the side walls. He has just hit a hard shot that bounces the second time at the right side wall near the

service line. Position the offensive player on the receiving line, five or six feet from the left side wall. Again assume the defensive player vanishes. There was no hinder because the offensive player could not possibly have gotten to the shot."

YOUR VOTE IS NEEDED !

Tim Storey has been nominated to fill one of three vacant positions on the AARA National Board of Directors. Storey's name will appear along with four other candidates in the March/April issue of "National Racquetball Magazine". Your vote is needed!

Utah will have a unique opportunity for greater representation and national recognition if Storey can be elected. However, it will not be easy. Utah currently is ranked 25th nationally in number of AARA members. The other candidates are from California, New York, Indiana, and South Carolina. All these states have larger numbers of AARA members, making it very difficult to get enough votes to finish in the top three.

If you want greater representation for your interests in racquetball, please help elect Tim Storey to the AARA National Board of Directors. Look for the ballot in the March/April issue of "National Racquetball" and follow all instructions. Only vote for people you know! You can and should vote for just one person if you are unfamiliar with the other candidates. Remember, by voting for one of the other candidates, you may be giving that person enough votes to place Storey fourth in the vote count. Only the top three vote getters will be placed on the board.

For more information please contact Tim Storey at 377-8615.

SLEEPLESS AT THE CENTER

Friday, February 11, the Orem Fitness Center Racquetball Marathon began at 10:30 pm & continued until 6:00 am Saturday morning. 25 entrants were divided into several round-robin brackets. Each match was played two games to

11 points each. A handicap was given to players of different skill levels to make the singles division more equal. Total points were tallied & the top four points winners played a final draw.

In Singles, Alan Jorgensen prevailed over Shawn Pike in the finals, with Lorin Jensen taking Third Place.

Doubles began around 2:00 am with newcomers Lynn Willden & Troy Pattee teaming up to go undefeated for First Place. Shawn Pike & Pat Murphy took Second.

Awards were given around 4:00 am & freeplay/cut-throat continued until 6:00 when the last six players were given endurance awards & sent home. Movies and Refreshments in the lobby helped to keep everyone awake and the unique tournament was rated a success.

Nathan Passey
Tournament Director

THE SHORT LINE

The Short Line is a feature of the URA Newsletter that will give an opportunity for your input and discussion on anything about racquetball (or anything else, I guess). It's meant as a spot to talk to someone outside of court.

Use the space as you need it. If you want to let of some steam, go for it. If you are the shy type and just need a place to quietly break some wind, who's to know?

Much of the talk in this issue is about a more organized ranking system. That sounds like a good place to start. Send comments about this or anything else to:

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