



Kansas Racquetball Association

Welcome, Racquetball Players!

Our goal is to keep members and all interested in Kansas racquetball informed on what's happening in and around the state, and ways to participate.

Quick Links to the articles in this issue:

- [Kansas Championships](#)
- [Jerry Quenette Spirit Award](#)
- [The Racquetball Blog](#)
- [Upcoming Tournaments](#)
- [You Make the Call](#)
- [Croft Retiring?](#)
- [Seeds of Health](#)

For a PDF version of this newsletter click here: [KRA Newsletter](#)

As we continue distribution of this newsletter, please spread the word and [forward](#) to anyone that might be interested in seeing it. It is with your help that we will be able to grow racquetball across Kansas.

FEATURED

Next Up: 2013 Kansas Championships and Regional Qualifier at The Athletic Club of Overland Park



April 26-28, 2013 – The Kansas Racquetball Regional Championships are one of the 2013 series of nationwide qualifying events, presented by Penn Racquet sports, Ektelon, and The Athletic Club

This tournament is open to everyone!

YOU DO NOT HAVE TO BE FROM KANSAS TO PLAY!!!

[Enter online here!](#)



Jerry Quenette Spirit Award

This year's recipient of the "Jerry Quenette Spirit Award" is Gina Danner! Each year during the Winter Classic Racquetball Tournament in Overland Park, KS, we award a deserving person for this prestigious award. The award was created to honor someone for his or her continued contributions to the sport of racquetball. The recipient must demonstrate good sportsmanship along with a willingness to give of himself or herself to help in a selfless way. Gina has been active in racquetball and is always willing to help promote the sport. She and her company, MailPrint, Inc., were the title sponsors for the Winter Classic and responsible for bringing the LPRT stop to Overland Park. Gina, thanks for all your contributions and time devoted to supporting racquetball!



The Racquetball Blog

by Evan Pritchard

[The Racquetball Blog - a website of "independent writing and reporting on racquetball!"](#) - began in the summer of 2008, and as of this writing - on April 1, 2013 - 1223 articles have appeared on it. In the four complete calendar years that it's been published an average of two articles have appeared every three days.

Web statistics are a little hard for me to understand completely, but from the Flag Counter on The Racquetball Blog 52,716 people have hit on the site from the top 20 countries with almost 40,000 of those from the USA. According to Google itself, the page count is 144,711 with one of the articles - on racquetball in the Olympics - being hit on 3,682 times.

The Racquetball Blog covers all that is racquetball: the pros - IRT and LPRT, US Open, the international scene, so IRF events as well as the Pan Am Games and World Games, as well as juniors and pieces on coaching and industry news.

The Racquetball Blog began after I'd been the editor of Canadian Racquetball for four years, and I realized that the only racquetball publications were those put out by the national sport organizations: USARacquetball and Racquetball Canada.

There were other sources of racquetball information, such as the Meet and Play website, which brought racquetball fans together to chat about racquetball events and issues. But that was really just water cooler type chat, and not formal or any sort of record of racquetball events.

Moreover, racquetball people have been poor at keeping track of racquetball history. For example, I don't think USARacquetball has copies of all the magazines that they have produced, because in trying research something I asked them about whether they had those magazines and I was told they didn't have them, which I still find astonishing. The pro tours have not been any better.

If we don't care about the history of our sport, then how can we expect anyone else to care?

Thus, the birth of The Racquetball Blog, which is an attempt to follow and record racquetball events, news, and other related issues with an independent voice. I've wondered whether I would have been better off by using a different name. "The Racquetball Journal" or "The Racquetball Reporter" perhaps rather than "The Racquetball Blog", because I'm not sure that 'blog' accurately conveys what I'm trying to do, but it's a virtual publication and I put it out through Blogger.com, so The Racquetball Blog it is.

I also use "we" rather than "I" on The Racquetball Blog in part, because I think it's fun - especially so when I refer to "The Racquetball Blog staff" - but also I hope it puts even more distance between the writer and the subject, because I am trying to be objective here. My model for this is The Economist magazine, as they don't have by-lines and refer to themselves as "the newspaper."

Personally, I've played racquetball since I was a kid, but only played extensively in the last 15 years. I'm Canadian, but I've lived and played in the USA (University of Illinois Racquetball Team for two years) and Europe (I was #5 in Europe in 2003; and played in all the racquetball facilities in France, which is to say both of them). However, the three words to best describe my racquetball game are: "not a professional."

In recent years, I've coached players at junior and national team levels, including coaching at two Junior World Championships. I've also been at two World Championships, and every US Open since 2003.

If you haven't read [The Racquetball Blog](#), I hope that you'll start. If you have any feedback, you can leave a comment on the site (comments don't appear automatically so as to weed out spam), or you can email me at theracquetballblogATgmail.com.

Finally, follow the bouncing ball...

More Tournaments Throughout the Summer

May is an open month for tournaments in KS, but the summer schedule has one tournament each month to participate in. June starts off with a one day shootout on the 22nd at The Athletic Club of Overland Park. In Topeka, The Sunflower State Games takes place the weekend of July 19-20 at the downtown YMCA. And to close out the summer in August is another one day shootout, the 8th Annual Summer Sizzler on August 17th at The Athletic Club of Overland Park. All upcoming events can be found at KSRacquetball.com





You Make the Call - The Role of the Referee

by Gina Danner

I have a little secret for you. One of the reasons I work the tournament desk, is so I don't have to then referee a match after I win. If you are like most players, you hate refereeing. And, if you are relatively new to tournament play, you might get more nervous when you have to ref a match than you even did playing. I hope this article gives you a little insight in how to be a good ref and how best to control the court. For the official rules visit USRA.org:
<http://www.usra.org/Portals/18/pdf/rules/RacquetballRules2013.pdf>

If you thought this was going to be a detailed outline of the rules, you need to go check out the link above. As a tournament player I wanted to give you a little perspective on the role of the ref from one player's perspective.

Other players may have other thoughts and they are welcome to share them in this newsletter, these are simply my thoughts on the role of the ref in most instances. Granted, OPEN, HIGH A, and PRO levels are different. The role of the ref in B, C, D, and Novice play is to maintain the pace of play, act as an objective observer if there are questionable shots, and to keep score.

It's pretty straight forward, but can be scary and challenging. You as the ref must walk to the court as the person in charge. You heard me, you are in charge of all play on that court and you have to take the attitude that what you say is gold and not allow a player to intimidate you.

You also have to keep perspective. It is highly unlikely that your skill as a ref will change the outcome of a match. You heard me. You can absolutely stink as a ref and it is highly unlikely that the outcome of the match would change. Now, players may want to blame their loss on a poor ref, but they are only lying to themselves.

Set the Tone

You set the tone when you brief the players before the match. Speak clear and loud. Use your command voice; you know the one that comes out when your kids are running like wild animals in public. That is the voice you want.

Tell the players that if they disagree with a call they can voice their concerns, and if both players agree the rally can be replayed. Remind them that your decision is final.

Also take a position at the court that allows you to be really engaged in the match. Stand up so you can adjust and move to see the shot. That will show the players that you are trying to see the entire court and that you are truly engaged in the game. Don't sit down and try to ref a match.

Finally, that last reminder that you should always include in your pre-match briefing... Have fun. Racquetball is a game and the most that any of us will ever receive for playing is a medal, or trophy of some type. All things must be kept in perspective.

Refereeing Friends

It is also important to keep in mind that as the ref you may end up refereeing a match that involves a good friend. Keep in mind that your friend is in the heat of battle on the court. She may question your call. She may glare at you. She may even try to take control of the match. Your job is to make sure that you stay in your role as ref and don't let your friend intimidate you.

I know for me, when I am playing I step into my hyper competitive role and focus on winning. If a ref isn't in control of the match I can be pushy. I wave on shots I think skip or a shot that the other players may have not retrieved. I ask questions between play that some may take as me being mean or pushy. Some may see these tactics as being aggressive and I'm OK with that. The reality is that I like to win and will use what advantage I can take as long as I am being a good sport. When I walk off the court I am done with the match and whatever happened was not because a ref made a bad call or miss quoted a rule.

Review the Rule Book

Yes there is a rule book and you should visit the link online a couple times a year to make sure you know the rules. <http://www.usra.org/Portals/18/pdf/rules/RacquetballRules2013.pdf> Keep in mind that the United States Racquetball Association does occasionally adjust rules for various reasons. If you are uncertain of a ruling the tournament director is a great resource as are many of the top players.

Get Out of Your Box

I know that refereeing a match can be a stretch for some players, but it is something that can also be

fun. You watch a game more intently when you have that responsibility. It also forces you to watch the court from a different perspective. Just let the tournament director know that you are uncomfortable as a new ref and that you are happy to ref any match at a certainly level. Start with Novice, D or C skill levels and work your confidence up from there.

Most of all have fun! It is the reason that we all play the game.



Ben Croft Retiring?

This press conference took place on APRIL 1st.....



Ben Croft Retirement Announcement....April 1st....



Seeds of Health, Hope and Happiness

by Lucy DelSarto

Spring has arrived and, once again, nature will teach us the cycle of life in an accelerated version. Flowers and plants emerge from the soil providing beauty and food to nourish our body, mind and spirit. Spring brings hope. Audrey Hepburn's quote captures this well, "To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow."

Another vision of spring is the caterpillar as it begins the process of metamorphosis. The monarch butterfly will emerge from its cocoon and fly away, feeding on flowers and enjoying its short life, which is only about two to six weeks.

We can learn a lot about life by embracing a few fundamentals from nature. When growing a flower or vegetable garden there is a three-step process: plant; cultivate; harvest.

The seed is truly amazing but without soil, water and sunlight the seed will remain a seed. Too much or too little water and sunlight as well as poor soil pH, and the plant will fail to thrive.

I believe we have all been given a garden to nurture and cultivate. Our life is a garden and how we live it determines the quality of our life. We have to search within ourselves to find the seeds of our garden.

The different seeds planted in our lives produce different harvests. The seeds are our thoughts, words and actions. With every thought, every word and every action, you are either nurturing or depleting your well-being.

Positive thoughts, words and actions are like Miracle-Grow for your health and well-being. These seeds can grow into something that thrives; whereas, negativity and neglect shortens and often destroys the lifespan.

Although you may not see the impact it has today, next month or even for years, there is an impact on

your life and the lives of others.

“Your beliefs become your thoughts,
your thoughts become your words,
your words become your actions,
your actions become your habits,
your habits become your values,
your values become your destiny.”

Mahatma Gandhi

Are you feeling emotionally and physically depleted? Are you frustrated because you keep waiting for the flowers to bloom when you have yet to sow the seeds? Health, good or bad, is a process of seeds planted over time.

Imagine your life full of abundance, joy and contentment. The seeds of greatness have been planted in all of us but we need to cultivate them emotionally, physically and spiritually. Choose to be empowered. Begin your wellness garden by taking the first step and invest in your future today.

Lucy DelSarto provides wellness coaching and programs created from personal experience. Learn more at www.TCOYWellness.com. TCOY = Take Care of You

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