



October 2011

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.

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[KRA Newsletter](#)

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FEATURED

The Next Kansas Tournament Stop is at Health Strategies in Wichita

by Scott Wolford

Join us at Health Strategies for the [next tournament stop in Kansas on October 21-23](#). This tournament will have divisions for all levels of play and cash prizes for the open division. Last year's tournament had a great turnout and it's expected to have more

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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.



KSRacquetball.com

Please visit the KRA website for the latest tournament and event schedule.



entries this year. All entrants will receive dry fit t-shirts and we will be serving lunch from local favorite Knolla's Pizza on Saturday.

Entry deadline is Wednesday, October 19th at 5:00. Enter early and don't miss out on a great weekend of racquetball.



Tournament Sponsor Jim Christiansen, Tournament Director Mike Wedel, Tournament Champion Kane Waselenchuk and Sponsor Bart Miller

[12th Annual Ghost of Georgetown presented by Novasors Recap](#)

The kickoff tournament of the season in Overland Park was a great event. Over 200 participants competed at all levels of play. For a complete recap of the pro event please go to [the IRT summary of the event here](#). The next IRT tournament is the biggest one of the season, The US Open. [A full preview of the event can be found here](#).

[A Moment with IRT President, Jason Mannino](#)



Facebook

Did you know there is a Facebook group for the KRA? Be sure and post your pics there.



Do you have a comment or suggestion for content for the newsletter? Or have an interest in volunteering for the KRA? Please send any feedback to info@kansasracquetball.com

by Gina Danner

I had a chance to catch up with Jason Mannino the President of the International Racquetball Tour recently at the Ghost of Georgetown tournament. A few questions popped to mind...

Q: Jason, racquetball has had its ups and downs since the 80's. Where is it headed?

A: After 2 decades of peaks and valleys, it seems that racquetball has landed on solid ground. From the International Racquetball Tour's ("IRT") perspective, our events and prize money have almost doubled in the past 2 years.

Q: How many people participate in IRT events?

A: IRT events contained 1008 pro entries and 5,888 amateur entries last season, and IRT Network (www.IRTNetwork.com, our online streaming partner) subscribers reached 30,000. Given this growth, we have a lot to talk about. We deliver the content on our website (www.irt-tour.com), which is updated daily, and our newsletter (you can sign up for on our website), which is distributed monthly. Fans can follow Kane's 117 match unbeaten streak, read industry news, track our event schedule so they can play amateur divisions or watch the pro's, check updated rankings, tips from the pro's, and much more.

Q: While the IRT has been growing, how does that growth fit into the growth of our sport?

A: IRT events are the largest in the sport, as such they are participation drivers. Amateur players seem to gravitate towards playing in IRT events because they can do both - play in a tournament, and watch the pros. Also, IRT's media team reaches out to local news stations and publications to inform them that the best racquetball players in the world are in town. In Kansas, our event received press from local news as well as a radio station broadcasted live on site at the event. We have also launched a



social media plan, which delivers our message to thousands of Twitter and Facebook fans.

Q: As we look to the 2011-2012 season what can we expect?

A: Over 60 sanctioned events are on the calendar. Our goal is to increase our pro entries to 2,000 and our amateur entries to 10,000 and the only way to do it is to increase general participation through increasing awareness of our sport through all our marketing avenues. IRT events inform people that racquetball is alive and kicking!

A Challenge to Reach One

by Shawn Herrick

Do you ever have a weekend that is surreal because it is so much fun? Even if your day-to-day life is pretty good, it's still a bit of a letdown to come home and get back into your real life.



The Ghost of Georgetown tournament in Overland Park, Kansas September 15 - 18, 2011 fits that description for me. The play, the company, the pros, the facility, the tournament directors, the other women players... it was all good.

Being the mother of three young girls, scheduling makes it difficult to make many events. However, the effort is worthwhile because tournaments are the only place I find other women enjoying the sport. I am always disappointed to hear of a tournament missed that had several women players or to enter a tournament with not enough gals so that I have to play men's divisions.



The mission of the Women's USA Racquetball Committee is to strengthen USA Racquetball through increasing the number of women playing at the state, regional and national levels.

Every time I teach someone the sport they not only like it, but also,





IRT Network

Watch Grand Slam and Tier One events streamed LIVE on [IRT Network](#).

Pictures from the Play a Pro event, "Trained By Kane"



often find it addictive. What's the mystery here?

The media is inundated with news about our bulging middles in this country. Personally, I can't think of anything more daunting than **"working"** out on a treadmill or bouncing around in front of the TV with the latest exercise DVD playing. I would much rather be **"playing"** racquetball.

Racquetball is great exercise, it's a blast, it's competitive, it's social, it does not have to consume a whole day, you only need one other person for a game, and it does not have to be expensive. You can play an hour or more without even realizing the workout you just enjoyed.

For women my age (which we really don't need to discuss in this forum) it was an oddity to be a competitive athlete. Today there are more little girls and young women playing competitive soccer, volleyball, softball, etc. than ever before. They crave sports. They need athletics to combat over-processed, over-fatty foods. They need activities alluring enough to pull them from the static electronic world. So now is the time to introduce these young women and girls to our racquetball world.

Let the secret out! Are you competitive? I challenge each one...to reach one.

Find a daughter, a sister, or a friend. Let's grow this sport for women. I want to be able to enter a tournament like the Ghost of Georgetown when I have little curly blue hairs on my head and find some other little old lady that wants to play me!

40 Plus... Training for Racquetball...

by Gina Danner



Seriously, just playing the game of racquetball will not get you really fit for racquetball. I know... all I want to do is play ball, but I just can't do it like I did when I was 20. I actually need to prepare my body for the activity and I need to allow it to rest. I mean I have a real job I have to perform at each day and they don't like it when I can't get out of my chair or I can't pick up my pen because I played in a tourney all weekend.

So here are a few things I've learned...

Cardio Conditioning - you need to have a BIG work capacity to play racquetball. You need to be able to drive hard for 15-60 seconds and then only have a 10-20 second recovery. That means you need to train in that manner and that isn't walking at 3 MPH on a treadmill for an hour. A few things to try...

- Interval Training -Being over 40 means I am conscious of how hard I impact my bones. For me interval training is on an elliptical machine. I go hard for 60 seconds then ease off for 90 seconds. Build up to repeat that cycle for 15 minutes, and then keep adding to it. Increasing my work time and decreasing my rest time.
- Fast Feet Drills - Find an agility ladder, or a set of lines on the floor. Work to move your feet FAST. The quick footwork you need on the court can be enhanced by agility drills. Keep in mind that these drills are about how quickly you can move your feet. Search YouTube for ideas
- Other work includes - running stairs, jumping rope, or on court drills. Check out YouTube and search for a variety of drills.

Core Conditioning - racquetball power doesn't come from the arm, biomechanically it comes from the engagement of the arm, shoulder, back, torso, hips and legs. It is everything all combined and the neural and biomechanical engagement of those parts. Those



parts are empowered and stabilized by a strong core.

- Start with core stabilizing movements (these are MORE than crunches) -leg raises, planks, full sit ups, Russian twists and ultimately work your way up to the Turkish Get Up. I have found that engaging with a great trainer to really teach me how to engage my core is well worth the money and time. Having a strong core not only means I can hit the ball harder, it also means that if I fall, I know how to engage my core for support when I land.

On Court Drills -Every top player will tell you to go back to the basics and make sure your stroke is clean and the only way to do that is with drill time on the court. I have found that by searching racquetball drills on YouTube I have all the drills I will ever need and I get some pointers from the pros. I plan my drills before I walk on the court so I don't have to think about what I need to work on... there is already a plan. To make my drill time enjoyable I put together a play list on my iPod and bring my speaker-ball to the court and I listen to music as I drill. Hey, it's a lot easier than it was 30 years ago when I lugged my big boom box on to the court. Amazing - I'm listening to the same music I did then.

My stroke isn't as perfect as it once was and I don't move as easily as I use to, but I know that it will get better with a full on approach to training and practicing. Put your plan together and stick to it. Set little goals and keep on working in the direction you wish to go. There is no reason, no matter your age, why you can't compete at a level that challenges you and enhances your enjoyment of the game.

See you on the court.

Upcoming tournaments

In October there will be a tournament in Wichita at Health



Strategies on the weekend of the 21-23rd. November brings the annual state doubles tournament being held at the Topeka YMCA November 11-13th. On the second weekend in December you'll have two tournament options, one in western Kansas in Garden City and one in the KC area at the Athletic Club of Overland Park. In Garden City we have an IRT Tier 2 tournament, and the 21st Annual Turkey Shootout December 9-11th. This will draw pros Ben Croft, Shane Vanderson and others. It's a small town tournament with a big draw. And on December 10th at the Athletic Club of Overland Park we have the 7th Annual KRA Shootout. We hope to see you at many of these tournaments.

Juniors

We are looking to get more juniors playing. Do you have kids interested in playing? Are you interested in helping coach? Are you interested in putting together or strengthening a juniors program? Contact us at info@ksracquetball.com. Our goal is to get juniors on the court and to build the next group of top tier athletes.

