



Your Source to Local Action

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ToledoRacquetball.com Newsletter

Our Mission

Welcome to our first news letter. We hope to put out a newsletter every other quarter or so to help keep you up to date with the local action. We've been hard at work trying to bring together a number of different ideas and visions to help revitalize racquetball in the Toledo/Northwest Ohio area.

We will also use the website and this newsletter to provide local players with local and regional programming.

We will be calling on local clubs to find out what kind of programs they provide and offer help to those that are having a difficult time getting their programs off of the ground.

We will be providing tips, ideas, event details and results from area clubs, pro shops and internet sources.

If you have any ideas, comments or suggestions that you would like to forward onto local players please let us know about them. We would love to pass them on to everyone!

We hope to be putting together some area tournaments to help bring awareness to the sport but supporting some local and regional charities. If you have a charity or an

idea for a tournament please pass those along too!

Finally, please let us know what you think about the ideas we will be presenting. Positive and negative comments are welcome.

ENJOY!



Why Play Racquetball!

Don't believe everything you read! Racquetball is a great sport. It's true that it has been in a decline in our area but, that doesn't detract from the fact that it's still one of the best individual sports that you can play for the rest of your life! I'm not going to bad mouth other

sports to support my views on Racquetball like so many other sports enthusiast do. Instead I am going to point out the positives and let you make up your own mind about the sport.

In preparing for this article I have been doing a lot of internet browsing and maga-

zine reading about the benefits of racquetball and have come up with a couple of my own observations from playing for more than two decades.

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Special points of interest:

- Be sure to add your name to the player profile so other players can find you!
- Interested in starting your own league? Drop us a line and we can help set you up?
- There has never been a better time to learn a new sport!
- Be sure to sign up for the Toledo Area Challenge Ladders.
- Beginners Wanted! Free Lessons and equipment rentals!
- Burn more calories having fun!

Why Play Racquetball!

Lets take a look at the physical benefits first.

- **Cardiovascular:** 30 minutes of racquetball burns the approximately the same amount of calories as running three 10 minute miles.
- **Muscle Groups Used:** It forces you to use your entire body. Legs, Mid-section, Back, Shoulders and Arms.

To reach and maintain optimum fitness, the key element of any workout is intensity. The high level of energy expended during a game of racquetball makes it one of the most thorough cardiovascular workouts available, resulting in increased stamina, a lowered body fat level, improved muscle tone and better concentration. Both the anaerobic and aerobic systems are utilized in racquetball.

What is so great about the above benefits is that playing racquetball is fun, social and easy to learn! Racquetball is one of the few sports where beginners can have longer rallies than advanced players.

Racquetball is also a sport that can be used as a cross training exercise for other sports. Depending on the players and styles racquetball's ball speed is the fastest of all the sports. The professionals can hit the ball close to 200mph. Imagine how a 90mph fast ball from 90 feet looks compared to a 140 mph racquetball coming

at you from 30 feet!

Racquetball is also a sport that can be played well into your golden years. We have players in their 60's and 70's. Their games are not the same, but they are still enjoying the sport. You also don't need a team of players to participate or compete!

Calories Burned in 30 Minutes								
Activity	100 lbs	120	140	160	180	200	220	240
Racquetball	239	279	326	382	419	465	512	570
Karate/Kick Boxing	245	293	342	390	440	490	539	582
Aerobic - Light	115	147	173	195	220	246	271	294
Aerobic - Vigorous	169	203	237	256	290	327	365	400
Aerobic - Water	101	122	142	162	182	203	228	243
Bicycling	180	216	252	288	324	360	396	432
Golf - Carrying Clubs	124	149	173	198	223	248	272	297
Walking Slow - 2 mph	61	74	88	101	114	127	140	153
Walking Moderate - 3 mph	91	108	129	143	160	180	196	213
Walking Fast - 4 mph	118	140	161	186	210	235	257	278
Running - Machine Moderate	161	190	223	255	288	324	364	400
Running - 12 min mile	180	216	252	288	324	360	396	432
Running - 10 min mile	225	270	315	360	405	450	495	540
Running - 9 min mile	285	342	395	450	503	559	614	668

The History of Racquetball

Source: Racquetball depot
http://www.rbdepot.com/racquetball_history.asp

Joseph G. Sobek (1918 – 1998) was the inventor of racquetball, although he is not credited with coining the name (he called it "paddle rackets"). He developed the sport while working in a rubber manufacturing plant in Bridgeport, CT. A resident of Greenwich, CT, Sobek was also a tennis pro and squash and handball player.

In the 1940's Sobek was dissatisfied with the indoor court sports available, and it is said that Sobek sought a way to make handball less hard on his hands. He and a partner began playing the sport with paddles, and in 1949, Sobek "invented" a game called "paddle racquets." This game combined the rules of squash and handball.

Using a platform tennis racket as a pat-

Did you know that there is such a sport as RacketBall? It is played primarily in England on a squash court. The rules are similar to squash including the ceiling being out of bounds. It was created as an alternative to "America's Racquetball"

tern, Sobek drew up plans for a new, short, strung racket and had 25 prototypes made in 1950. He began promoting the new sport by selling these prototypes to his fellow members of the Greenwich, CT YMCA.

The game was catching on, but players found fault with the ball, so Sobek set out to find a better ball for his new sport. He found what he was looking for in an inexpensive Spalding rubber ball for children, and bought as many as he could to keep his new sport going. Sobek eventually founded his own company to manufacture balls to his exact specifications.

In 1952, Sobek founded the Paddle Rackets Association. He codified a set of rules and printed them up, sent out promotional kits to YMCAs and other sporting organizations to promote the sport, and provided clinics to teach new players the new sport of racquetball.

The fledgling International Racquetball Association established an organized tournament structure and set of rules for the game. Meanwhile, sporting goods manufacturers developed new equipment that was specifically designed for racquetball.

The History of Racquetball Continued

In 1968, Sobek connected with Robert Kendler, head of the US Handball Association (USHA). Kendler was intrigued by the new sport, and the next year, Kendler founded the International Racquetball Association. The sport of racquetball had its official new name, as coined by San Diego tennis pro Bob McInerney.

That same year, Sobek's National Paddle Rackets Association held the first national championship tournament in Milwaukee in 1968. It was called the Gut-Strung Paddle Rackets National Championship.

Kendler utilized the USHA and its publication, ACE, to promote the new sport, while Sobek continued in his clinics and other efforts at bringing athletes to the game. In 1969, the IRA took over the National Championship, holding their first tournament in St. Louis.

In the late 1970's, racquetball history saw a huge surge in the popularity of the game. Sales of racquetball equip-

ment skyrocketed, and players demanded new racquetball clubs and courts across the country. Meanwhile, sporting goods manufacturers developed new equipment that was specifically designed for racquetball. By 1974, there were about 3 million racquetball players in the US. That year also marks the first professional tournament held by the IRA.

In 1973, Kendler parted ways with the IRA due to an internal dispute with the board, and founded two new, short-lived associations (both went bankrupt in 1982): the US Racquetball Association and the National Racquetball Club.

Meanwhile, the IRA grew despite Kendler's departure. In 1979, it changed its name to the Amateur Racquetball Association. In 1997, it took the name that it has today: The United States Racquetball Association (USRA).

In 1979, the International Amateur Racquetball Federation, now known as the International Racquetball Fed-

eration (IRF), was founded with 13 countries as members. Since 1981, worldwide championships have been held biennially.

In the 1980's, racquetball was one of the fastest growing sports in the US. The Ladies Professional Racquetball Association (LPRA) was founded in 1980. Other recent landmarks in racquetball history include:

- 1981: The first Racquetball World Championships were held
- 1982: The US Olympic Committee recognized racquetball as a developing Olympic sport
- 1995: Racquetball achieved full medal status in the Pan-American games

By 1998, there were an estimated 10 million US players, and about 14 million players in over 90 countries around the world.

Local Clubs

Courts? We've been trying to compile a list of local racquetball clubs and what they bring to our players. Unfortunately, many of the people that I've talked to don't even know how many courts they have!

Right now **Holiday Park** seems to be the most willing and equipped to accommodate our local players. They have 5 courts and anyone can walk in and just pay a guest fee. Holiday Park also has the largest population of players of all of the clubs in the area and offers free clinics to beginners.

BGSU has more courts and a great guest pass policy but not many players.

The clubs managed by the **YMCA** have the fewest courts, weakest memberships (numbers of players) and most restrictive guest policies. There are a

If you have information to help fill in the blanks or if we got something wrong please let us know.

number of other clubs in the area that we have yet to compile data on.

What about leagues? Right now only **Holiday Park** and the **East Side YMCA** seem to have leagues running. From what I personally have heard only Holiday Park's seem to be pretty strong. Leagues will be forming again in December so remember to check the website's event calendar for more details.

Tournaments/Mixers? No mixers or tournaments are planned in any of our area clubs in the coming months. Bay Winds in Sandusky is planning on running their annual tourney sometime in February.

Junior's Programs? The **JCC** and the **YMCA's** have always had strong junior

programs, just not in Racquetball.

Holiday Park has been attempting to get a Junior program going but their membership is not family or child oriented. Holiday Park will be starting up another FREE session for Juniors this winter! (I hope you caught the word FREE there!).

Group Play? Again, Holiday Park seems to be leading the way with group play. There are a number of groups that get together to play on a regular schedule. The JCC and Bay Winds also seem to have group schedules. Check out the website's event calendar for more details.

Your Source to Local Action

Have an idea or suggestion?
How about some information
about a club or program?
Need help finding players
or getting a League
started? Want to submit

Let us know !

Steve@Toledoracquetball.com
Phone: 419-704-6837

We're on the web!



Court Etiquette

The unwritten rules of racquetball

What is court etiquette? Court etiquette is the unwritten rules of racquetball. They are generally the same for all clubs but each club usually has their own little tweak or change so be sure to observe the behavior of the local players.

So what are they? In a nut shell they are the morays, SOPs(Standard Operating Procedures) or cultural behaviors of the players in a given club. Here are some basic yet very common rules to keep in mind.

- **Court Times:** if you reserve a court and your time has come to play, Don't try to kick someone off your court in the middle of a point. Interrupt the match between points and ask for the

score. If it is close to the end let them finish the game. If they just started they most likely will give you the court. Remember how you treat other players, because it will most likely be reciprocated.

- **Disputed calls:** Don't stop playing because you thought your opponent carried the ball or skipped a return. Just raise your hand and keep playing. When the point is over your can discuss the play and decide whether or not to play it over. Or you may kill the next shot and it won't matter anyways. Remember you're supposed to be playing not refereeing the match.
- **Hinders:** Take them if they're

there, but if you take the shot don't expect your opponent to give it to you.

- **Honesty:** If you have it, use it. Call your own shots. If you think you carried the ball call it. If you think you hit a double bounce, call it.
- **Call the Score:** Call the score before you serve. It helps both you and your opponent!
- **Taking too much time to server:** Technically you have 10 seconds to get the ball in play *after* you call the score. But some people intentionally try to slow down the game because they think it can give them an advantage.

Did You Know?

Ball control and ball speed off the racquet is determined by the following:

- Racquet weight and balance
- Racquet shaft stiffness
- Player's swing speed
- String type and string tension

Be sure the racquet you play with has a balance and stiffness that matches your swing speed and that the string type and string tension is right to give you maximum performance.

Be Honest!

- Wait for a the point to end before entering a court.
- If your shot skipped, or you carried the ball Call it.
- Don't call hinders when you don't have one.
- Call the score before you serve.