



The Colorado Racquetball Association Quarterly ENews

SPRING 2017

FIRST ... SHARE 5 MINUTES OF FEEDBACK

We need YOUR expertise to grow ... and YOU can win!

It's only 10 questions ... you already know all the answers ... and you might **win a new racquet** just for sharing your opinion. C'mon. You're guaranteed to nail it, so what are you waiting for? Call a timeout, take 3-5 minutes to [complete this quick survey](#) - right now - and we'll wait for you. Done? Thanks!



STATE SINGLES IN THE RECORDBOOK

In its 44th year, the CRA expanded the playing field by using the Olympic format draw for State Singles and offering some doubles play on the side. In response, overall participation went up by 18%, with the largest jump in Men's B, which saw a dozen more players than last year. But the Men's 35+ division marked the biggest shift, by filling a round of 32 - just like the good 'ole days.

That's right ... it took five, full single-elimination rounds, against increasingly tough players and higher odds, for Englewood's **Dave Hellmer** to claim his gold medal. After being seeded #31 in the bracket, Dave upset #2 Steve Strahler in the first round, then advanced past Brian Bolling, Sam Loggins, Ray Cordero and Keith Sapp for the win. Match play was the best of three games to 11, and only Cordero forced Hellmer to a tiebreaker along the way.

With 24 players in Men's B, the top six players earned byes in the round of 32, but still had plenty of work to do. Top-seeded Luis Bustos held steady to reach the final, only to be upset by #11 **Abraham Diaz** in an 11-4 tiebreaker. Diaz had already survived back-to-back tiebreakers to reach the final, so he was used to playing under pressure when he got there!

In Men's Open, **Nick Blanchard** upped his game by a key round over last year, overturning defending champ Matt Melster in an 11-9 tiebreaker for the title. Last year, the two had faced off in the semi-final coming out of pool play, where the outcome was reversed and

ON YOUR PHONE



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Melster had gone on for the win, leaving Blanchard to place third. This year, Blanchard turned the tables, advancing through a series of tough tiebreakers to earn his first CRA state singles title.

Also taking a first-time title in Women's Open, **Chantel Anderson** claimed the top seed in a combined skill bracket and showed them how it's done. She advanced to the final undefeated, then took another straight game win over perennial challenger Marcia Richards for the crown. Remaining champions

named from the satellite finishes were Taryn Boomgard in Elite, Sara Sikorski in A, and Lily Caldwell in B.

Juniors were also on hand to collect titles, with great play by Makayala and Mariley Burke (Loma), Daniel Busekrus (Colorado Springs), Lily Caldwell and Matthew Miller (Grand Junction), Mikayla Postma (Thornton), Khyathi Velpuri (Castle Rock), and Aidan, Austin and Ethan Veselka (Peyton).

Thanks to Brent Anderson and the Apex RB & Fitness Center in Arvada for stepping up to work through schedule changes and host a great event for the CRA and its grateful Board of Directors. Joe Williams and his volunteer crew also worked hard throughout the weekend to make sure that players enjoyed themselves.

Review all the [division winners](#) online, and congratulate your favorite hometown champs. They all did a great job!



Since CRA had to re-issue a series of updated calendars this season, you might stumble onto conflicting info at your club. To help keep things straight, check the lower right reference date against the [current version](#) on ColoradoRacquetball.com. If the date of the copy you're looking at is **earlier** than the online copy, toss it out! Always go with the [PDF under the competition tab](#) and look for new editions twice a year.

In its planning, the [Colorado Racquetball Association](#) strives to get a sanctioned event [on the calendar](#) every month in the season, so look for the latest edition to make sure you don't miss a thing.



Locate the CRA [Tournament Player's Guide](#) online, for everything you need to manage your State Championship experience. You'll find hints on what to expect from the time you enter to when you claim your hardware, and everything in between. Follow the link above, or navigate to it from [ColoradoRacquetball.com](#) > Competition > [Guidelines](#).

Tourney News | Events & Programs

The Denver Athletic Club is road-testing the R2 Sports [Challenge Ladder](#) Management tool, which records and publishes live results from ongoing match play over time. A [roster of 17 regulars](#) includes more than a few familiar names and faces.

[Life Time Fitness](#) in Centennial is set to host summer training camps by top names in racquetball over the coming months. **On May 5-6 ...** six-time world champion [Cliff Swain](#) will be on hand for an extensive two-day [training camp](#). The legendary southpaw and Hall of Famer will also offer private instruction to anyone who wants to seriously up their game!

On July 27-31 ... you'll enjoy [group and one-on-one training](#) with world-renowned Coach [Jim Winterton](#), along with USA Champion and #3 ranked LPRT pro Rhonda Rajsich and our own Erika Manilla, National and World Junior Champion.

Team Colorado on the Road ... The [2017 NMRA National Championships](#) were held in Arlington, Texas, where a six-member roster of Team Colorado battled to bring home an equal number of gold medals. James Funk (Conifer), Gordon Levy and Mike Martin (Golden), Marcia Richards (Littleton), and Michiele Stapleton and Steve Strahler (Colorado Springs) all took the worthwhile road trip. Levy and Martin won the Men's 70+ and 85+ singles divisions, respectively, while Stapleton tag-teamed for double-gold in both the Women's 45+ doubles with Richards and the Mixed 45+ doubles with Strahler. Joe Williams was also on hand to assist NMRA tournament staff with operations.

All rosters/results are taken from public record of the event. If you were overlooked, double-



! TAKE THE SURVEY !

Respondents will be eligible to enter a drawing for a shiny new racquet, so take five minutes (or less) to weigh in and win, by May 15!

check to make sure that your entry information is correct online, then please [let us know](#) how you did!



*In Arlington: Marcia Richards, James Funk, Mike Martin, Steve Strahler;
front - Joe Williams, Michiele Stapleton.*

NATIONAL DOUBLES | Team Colorado Road Trip

The majority of players on the Team CRA roster dialed it up and entered three events at the [USAR National Doubles](#), with Southern Colorado represented by Rick Busekrus, Sherwyn Phillip, Sara Sikorski and Steve Strahler, along with Loveland's Troy Cook and Keith Sapp, Longmont's Jorge Cuellar and Steve Roberts, metro players Bruce Penman, Peter Perez and CJ Sanders, plus perennial traveler Shirley Parsons from Rangely.

In the Centurion+A division, Jack Sapp joined Dad Keith for some early round fun on the Men's side, while Aaron Parsons

paired up with Mom Shirley in the Mixed bracket to take second place (pictured at right). Shirley also teamed with Joe Lee to win the Mixed 65+.



Men's 30+A was an all-Colorado final, complete with an 11-9 tiebreaker that went to Keith Sapp and Steve Strahler over Troy Cook and CJ Sanders. A third Colorado team almost made the cut, when Jorge Cuellar and Steve Roberts broke into the semi-final round before losing to the eventual champions.



An on site group photo included: Pete Perez, Troy Cook, Jorge Cuellar, Keith Sapp, Steve Roberts, Sara Sikorski, Sherwyn Phillip, Rick Busekrus; front Steve Strahler and CJ Sanders.



The CRA is looking forward to introducing a re-vamped team tournament to cap the season, at **Highlands Ranch, June 9-11**, so just [ask any Board member](#) for the lowdown. Now even easier to take part, there's no need for captains to drum up a full team ... you just enter on your own and we'll do all the organizing (just like Racquet for the Cure). Olympic draws offer plenty of court time, and your ranking position assures balanced brackets and divisions. Questions? [Contact CJ Sanders](#) to learn more.

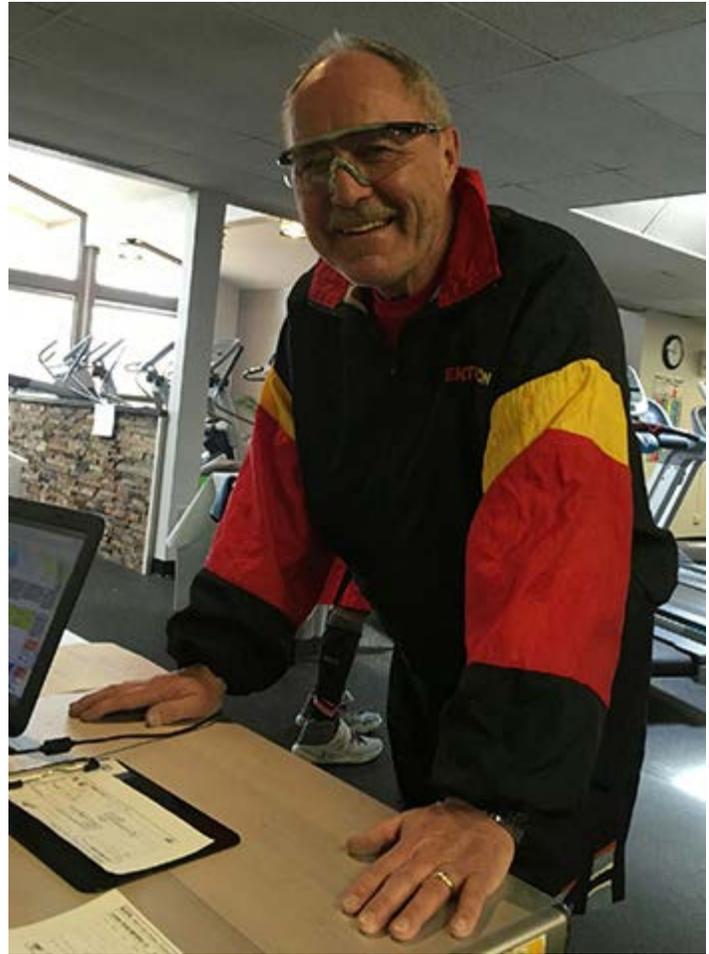
MEMBER PROFILES | Interesting News & Notes

Blast from the Past ... If you've been involved in Colorado racquetball for awhile, you may have done a double-take at seeing this name in the Men's 65+ draw at State Singles. A club owner and entrepreneur during the sport's heyday, **Jurgen Denk** served as [CRA Board President](#) in 1997 and he made a point of digging out a vintage Ektelon warm-up to mark the occasion of his return to competition in Arvada.

A quick Facebook search of pre-turn-of-the-century Past Presidents found Doug Buchanan, John Foust, Neil Frame, JoAnn Slater, and Louis Smario.

Sherry Armstrong [1986 President] still owns and operates the company she founded in 1987, [Award & Sign](#), with a retail storefront in Greenwood Village.

There are still a couple of terms with missing names, so if you served as a Board President at any time since 1974, be sure to [let us know](#) so we can complete the record!



All in the family ... WAY ... ! **Matt and Michelle Dockter** made a note of celebrating five years of Facebook togetherness online, and their second anniversary, by announcing that they'll welcome a bouncing baby boy to their family this fall. All of the Sikorski's are tickled that Michelle is pregnant, and the couple's extended racquetball family can't wait to see the little fella at State Doubles. Awww ... Congratulations!

Former tourney regular **Tony Rosales** recently updated his [Facebook feed](#) to report that he'd applied to Pima Medical Institute's Physical Therapy Assistant program, aced the preliminary placement tests and now hopes to be accepted to begin coursework in October. [He's had a tough year](#), and we wish him all the best in his continued recovery and road back to good health ... and racquetball!

Following a successful launch of his book titled *Healing Through Helping: Overcoming Grief and Loss*, local author **Adam Katz** is now [fundraising](#) to further distribute the work. Adam hopes to make copies of the book available at no cost to K12 schools through the [Doreen Katz Memorial Foundation](#).



Evan Blake and Khyathi Velpuri were the top finishers at the intermediate high school tournament at Highlands Ranch. Photo courtesy: CJ Sanders.

Grand Junction's [Lily Caldwell](#) has one proud Mom - with plenty of good reason - and Kellie isn't shy about sharing good news about her talented daughter on Facebook. While Lily was at State Singles going for her Women's B title, this item popped into her feed: *Who doesn't love to receive a message like this from their daughter's school principal? I'm super proud, but not at all surprised. You are magnificent, Lily Caldwell, and this is such a well-deserved accomplishment. I'm so super HAPPY for you!*



Mom was passing along this special request from Principal Walker: "I know Lily has a tournament this weekend, but I have a favor to ask. Would you let her know that she has been selected as West Middle School's recipient of the Masonic Education Award for Outstanding 8th Grade Female Student? We are super proud of her!"

In addition to being a gifted athlete, the 14-year old champ is an outstanding student and talented musician, public speaker and inspiration to her friends and family. Congratulations on your win, and so much else! Photo courtesy Kellie Caldwell / FB.



[SPONSORS & SUPPORTERS](#)

ENTRY PLANNER

- [Team SCRAmble](#) - June 9-11
- [State Games](#) - July 21-23

[CRA Sanctioned Tournaments](#)
[CRA Tournament Player's Guide](#)



CERTIFIED INSTRUCTION | by [Marcia Richards](#) *The Return of Ladies Days*



Over the years, we've seen plenty of peaks and valleys in the number of women players who compete in CRA events. This year's State Singles reminded us of that ebb-and-flow, along with a chance to increase the depth of field. Combining several skill levels into an Olympic format bracket allowed us to mix it up in an important way.

If you think you'd like to share your expertise by working with novice or junior players, there are plenty of opportunities. [Just contact the CRA](#) and we'll connect you with an event or program director.

Instead of small round-robins or pool play, all the women's skill divisions were combined, giving Open, Elite, A and B players a chance to face off, then continue to advance into their respective "satellite" brackets to determine the final titles. A carefully seeded Round of 16 started everything off, then drew out to name four state champs. Along the way, players gained valuable experience against higher-ranked opponents. Now we want to re-establish our regular "Ladies Days" to keep the trend going.

"Ladies Days" are normally scheduled on a free Saturday, at a different club each time, and we maintain an email list for sharing the details. Right now, we're hoping to partner with the Pueblo Athletic Club in May during a planned one-day Shootout. Want to learn more when details are finalized? [Send an email to Alyssa Street](#), with "add me to Ladies Day list" in the subject line, and we'll fill you in.

Alyssa serves on the CRA Board and elsewhere around the state, you'll find "go-to" women who can help you stay in the competitive (and fun!) loop between tournaments. In Colorado Springs, [Chantel Anderson](#) and [Barb Sims](#) are great advocates. In Pueblo, [Summer Arledge](#) is another long-time supporter, and on the Western Slope, perennial enthusiast [Shirley Parsons](#) and long-time coach [Carol Pellowski](#) keep a steady flow of new and younger players moving into the pipeline. Reach out to any of these ladies for a warm welcome and good advice. *[At right: Chantel and Marcia continue to fight over the gold medal at States.]*



KNOW YOUR RULES ! Hinder! by [Ray Cornell](#)

Today we'll review the types of hinders that can cause a rally to stop immediately: the replay hinder and the penalty hinder. In officiated match play, the referee determines which type is called. In self-officiated games, the players should agree on which call is appropriate. But making the determination is not always easy because the difference is often subjective.



Several years ago, the term "penalty" replaced "avoidable" in the rules, since intent is not necessarily a factor in making the proper determination. So when a penalty hinder is called, the offending player is "penalized" by losing the rally. A replay hinder simply triggers a replay.

The governing rules are detailed in 3.14 (replay) and 3.15 (penalty), along with self-officiating standards in Sections D.4 and D.5. Without a referee, rule D.4 generally states that "only the person going for the shot can stop play by calling a hinder, and must do so immediately and not wait to see how good the resulting shot was." The offensive player should then declare the hinder type and - if both sides cannot agree that a penalty hinder occurred - rule D.5 states that the rally should be replayed. It also indicates that when pointed out, most players will show good sportsmanship and, at least, not repeat the infraction (or presumably offer the penalty call if it does re-occur). This is where a clear understanding of the rules ([or having a copy on hand](#)) can be very beneficial.

There are seven situations that describe a replay hinder, and nine that describe a penalty hinder.

In most cases, a replay hinder situation could, potentially, be a penalty hinder. It depends on the nature of the infraction, how it affected the shot (whether made or not attempted), and the perspective of the players and/or referee. For example, "backswing hinder" and "stroke interference" have varying degrees ... "ball hits opponent" and "moving into the ball" have

Replay Hinders

Court hinder
Ball hits opponent
Body contact
Screen ball
Backswing hinder
Safety holdup
Other interference

Penalty Hinders

Failure to move
Stroke interference
Blocking
Moving into the ball
Pushing
Intentional distractions
View obstruction
Wetting the ball
Failure to move

different circumstances ...“body contact” and “pushing” have differing circumstances and degrees. All aspects of the infraction must be evaluated in order to determine whether the call is a replay or a penalty.

A penalty hinder does not require that the offensive player “be in a set in position and going for a kill shot with an opponent in front of them” (as is often claimed). Although it can present a penalty hinder scenario, “being in a set in position” is **not** stated in the rules.

This argument is usually made in the context of the “failure to move” penalty hinder, which states: “*A player does not move sufficiently to allow an opponent a shot straight to the front wall as well as a cross-court shot which is a shot directly to the front wall at an angle that would cause the ball to rebound directly to the rear corner farthest from the player hitting the ball.*”

The offensive player could be set for a kill shot, but also hitting the ball waist high, overhead, or on the run. The key considerations are the positions of the players on the court and their relation to each other when the shot is attempted.

In conclusion, the hinder call is largely subjective and requires a good understanding of the rules. It also should be used primarily as a means of ensuring fair play and safety so that no one impedes safe play or creates an undue advantage over the opponent. Recreational players may agree to call only the most obvious or intentional penalty hinders, and that’s okay among friends with that understanding. Just be aware that your “style of play” may result in a different outcome than you’re used to when you’re in a more formal competitive situation like a tournament, challenge ladder, or league.

FROM THE PRESIDENT | by [Dave Stone](#) *Communicating Effectively*



One of the main goals of the CRA is to keep players informed of matters related to the sport. Contributors diligently prepare articles for this quarterly newsletter, while others take on social media campaigns. Our lingering question is: are we getting our message out effectively? The CRA constantly reviews our processes to ensure we are providing the best service, but we need your feedback and opinion, too.

The [quarterly Rollout](#) has long served as the CRA’s primary channel for news and information. Over the years, Linda Mojer, Cindy Tilbury and others have edited state newsletters and we owe them a debt of gratitude (along with all those who take their time to provide articles). Most of us now recognize that the days of printed materials have passed, making electronic media the preferred choice. However, we find it difficult to measure whether we have a multitude, or a handful, that enjoy the information provided.

So now it’s time for **you** to ... *help us help you* ... which is not as confusing as it sounds. We need you to sound off on how we can improve, what type of news is relevant to your needs, and which medium you prefer.

ColoradoRacquetball.com hosts our newsletters, along with other information helpful to all players. How many of us routinely visit the CRA website? And, how many recreational players in Colorado are unaware of the CRA, USAR, or other bodies within the sport that have useful material? In order to maximize the distribution of information, we need to ensure that all customers, whether tournament players, recreational players, or crossover players (from squash, tennis or pickleball) gain access to available materials. How do you personally access information about racquetball?

Another significant question relates to the type of information provided. The CRA traditionally reports on local tournament results, rules of the game and tips for improvement. One area we have been proud to focus on is the success of local players on national stages. However, have we left out an area that is of interest to you? Is there interest in objective equipment reviews? Perhaps, videos of local players on the court? What type of racquetball material is important to you?

So what do you think? [Take a survey](#), or a more direct approach with an email. It's your choice but, either way, we really want to know your opinions! Feel free to contact any of the [CRA board members](#), or [email me personally](#), and we'll report back on what we learn ... and who wins the prize!

We've developed a quick survey that will help CRA focus its communication efforts more effectively. Please [complete it here](#) - in under five minutes (!) and you'll be eligible to win a free racquet.



FROM THE EDITOR | by [Linda Mojer](#)

[John Foust](#) and I often reflect upon all-things-historic about racquetball in general, and the CRA in particular. He was one of the early movers and shakers on the CRA Board [President 1982-83*] - and among the first to welcome me to Colorado ... *waaaay* back in the day.



Locally, many know John as the founder of the 30-year-long [Pepsi Cup](#). Nationally, he was also instrumental as one of the industry's leading photographers and entrepreneurs, a US Team coach and 5-time member of the US National Team. He competed internationally as a top wheelchair athlete, governed on the national board, managed multiple Colorado clubs, administered countless programs ... and hosted his fair share of sanctioned tournaments. I suspect he has a trunkfull of old drawsheets tucked away somewhere. What about you?

Did you take home your souvenir drawsheet from a win in the 70s or 80s (*or squirreled away a whole box of them ... I hope, I hope ... !*)? When you think about how easy it is today to snap a photo of something you need to capture, retain or recall, it's hard to fathom that a massive amount of print-only information is now "out of circulation" and lost for all time. Arrghhhh.

So ... long story short ... [new recordbooks](#) have been added to the CRA website (under the results tab), documenting roughly 60% of the competition years. The late 1970s and 1990s are thin, so digging up old official records is what is most needed. Anything published will do ... [want to help](#)? We'll take whatever you've got!

**Also new on the site is a Past Presidents list, appended to the [Board of Directors page](#). Should your name appear on that list ... ?*

NATIONAL NEWS



Rules Download ... USA Racquetball recently updated its edition of the [Official Rulebook](#) with a new download PDF and searchable online edition. According to Rules Commissioner Otto Dietrich, it is the latest version, covering all USAR sanctioned and non-sanctioned play in the USA, along with modifications for the IRT, LPRT, WOR, CPRT, NMRA, as well as for wheelchair, deaf, and vision-impaired play. The new edition is now referenced with a “Last Updated Date” on the cover and pagination. Make sure you have the latest set of rules in your bag - download a copy today!

National Singles ... is still just down the road apiece ... at ASU's Sun Devil Fitness Center in Tempe, Arizona, May 24-28. It will also be the time to celebrate annual award winners, and honor Hall of Fame inductees Tim Hansen and Bud Held. [Online entries are live >>](#)



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