

NPA NEWSLETTER

NATIONAL PADDLEBALL ASSOCIATION

2017-2018 Tournament Schedule



Brigham Classic

December 9, 2017

Bay Area Family YMCA

Bay City, Michigan

Bean Smith

February 3, 2018

Bay Area Family YMCA

Bay City, Michigan

Midwest Doubles

February 17 & 18, 2018

Davison Athletic Club

Davison, Michigan

National Singles & Western Doubles

March 2- 4, 2018

The Tournament House

Riverside, California

National Doubles

April 20 – 22, 2018

Sparrow Michigan Athletic Club

East Lansing, Michigan

We are also working on a tournament in Franklin MI.

For this tournament, and all of the tourneys noted above you can check the NPA website (www.paddleball.org) for details and sign-up info.

Las Vegas 3Wall Ball Tourney

By Jim Price

On September 20, 2017 paddleball players from all over the country, Mexico, and as far away as Spain descended upon Las Vegas to participate in the 2017 3Wallball World Championships. Paddleball was played in two very different formats – 1-Wall east coast style and the traditional NPA style. Both were played alongside each other under the lights of the Vegas Strip. It was very promising to see Pros from both formats giving the other a try. After watching some of the east coast style of play, spectators could easily see that the games just shared a common piece of equipment and a ball, as the style of play and strategy were completely different.

3-Wall NPA style of play had 3 different divisions, Pro, Combined A and Mixed Doubles.

Open: 8 teams played for the Liquid Nitro Energy Cup along with \$1500 in cash prizes. The first round was dominated by the top 4 seeds. It was encouraging to see some of the top outdoor racquetball players along with top Pro 1-Wall paddleball players give the division a try, but in the end, the nuances of the game and elevated level of play proved to be a bit much for these newcomers. You could clearly see that these newer players were out of their comfort zone.

The first round saw #1 seeds Andrew Price and Bobby Horn easily defeating Will Rolon and David Blatt- two highly successful one wall players. The #2 seeds Emmett Coe and Alvaro Beltran made short work of Carlos Mercado and Luis Avila defeating them 15-5, 15-4. 3rd seeded Dale Valentine and Chris McDonald had a closer match against Brian Romero, a 1-Wall player and Jonathon Clay an indoor racquetball player. Finally, 4th seeded Mike Meyers and Tim Herman took down Jesus Ustarroz and Brandon Davis who are both excellent outdoor racquetball players.

The semis put Price and Horn against Meyers and Herman. The match was well played with both teams making great offensive shots and amazing gets. After a slow start, Price and Horn proved a bit too much for the Riverside duo, eliminating them from the tournament for the 2nd time in as many years. Price and Horn won in 2 games 15-13 and 15-7.

Coe and Beltran cruised to an easy victory over McDonald and Valentine defeating them 15-2, 15-1. Coe's shot making abilities were more than they could handle. Beltran, a relative newcomer to the game, proved to be consistent and on point, complementing Coe's style of play

The finals match had 3 of 4 players returning to championship court from last year's final. While this wasn't quite a rematch from last year, it did pit the 2 best teams in the division against each other. In the end, the highly defensive match had Coe and Beltran coming out on top defeating last year's world champs 15-7, 15-8.

The win capped off an impressive year for Coe who also won the indoor National Singles crown along with the indoor National Doubles and the WOR Championships Pro Doubles titles. Spectators could see that Coe's commitment to the game and long hours of practice made the difference in this year's title match.

Combined A: the 5-team round robin match was designed to have each team play every other team then the top 2 scoring teams would face each other in a traditional outdoor format match.

When the dust settled the team of Luis Romero from Detroit and Michael Medina from South Florida finished first in the rankings followed by Tom Quiroz from Anaheim, CA and Victor Rodriguez from Riverside. The two teams squared off on championship court in a match that was much closer than the 15-9, 15-6 score indicated. Romero and Medina pulled out the win, giving the relative newcomers an A division victory on the Las Vegas Strip.

Mixed Doubles: This division was won by the team of Melissa Sky and partner Jamie Bernardo Blanco Dios from Spain, winning every game to go undefeated. Sky, an accomplished handball player from NYC,

played her first NPA style game at this tournament and took advantage of the short side walls and accurate lobs to keep her opponents off balance, Dios played a great defensive game to keep the ball in play and sealed the wins with great court positioning. 2nd place went to the Michigan team of Lorna Rose and Jim Price followed by the youngest team in the division, Victoria and Hugo Rodriguez. These two young players have a bright future ahead of them in the sport of paddleball.

(continued on next page)

The following is excerpted from Michael Dembins Facebook article highlighting the 1 wall game. Mike managed the 1 wall divisions.

The B Division included the Men's Pro Division Three Wall Handball Champion and One Wall runner-up, the Men's B Division Doubles Handball Champion, the Racquetball A Division Champion, and two legendary ladies handball champions, and two old school small ball players. In the end it was Allan Sanchez and Armando Duchesne powering by Ray Cruz and Warren Weiner 25-16.

The Women's Pro Doubles Division was dominated by the veteran team of Kathy Guinan and Susan Stephen as they defeated two extremely talented ladies, Jasmine Suarez and Cynthia Watson 25-16. The championship game was filled with smart play and terrific volleys as the fans were treated to high end paddleball. New comers to paddleball scene via handball, The legend Veronica Figueroa, Jessica Santiago, Bernice Torres, Brenda Pares-Dubose, and Melissa Sky all held their own and will certainly be contenders in future tournaments. We welcome all of you and look forward to your growth in paddleball. The Mixed Doubles Division was filled with comebacks and unpredictability as Kathy Guinan and "The Comeback Kid" Frank Savino looked all but out of it before rallying for an over the top 25-24 victory over David "The Hulkster" Blatt and Melissa Sky. It wasn't an easy road for either finalist as their respective opponents are champions in their own right. Jasmine Suarez and Paul Angel battled furiously till the end before Blatt and Sky sealed the deal. On the other side Will' The Warrior" Rolon and Susan Stephen tried to mount a comeback, but fell just a bit short as the consistency of Savino and Guinan proved too much to overcome. Congratulations to new comer Melissa Sky as she continues her climb to the top of the Ladies division.

The Men's Pro Doubles Division was insane from the first round as Brian Romero steps off a plane to team with Chris McDonald and serves nine service winners to take out Richie Gonzales and Andy Price. Later in the round first time partners Matt Mantro and Jose Serrano go on to sweep Bay 8th veterans Kevin Cullen and Stephen Tagliaferri in a minor upset, and in the process delivering the only shutout of the tournament. The next round sees Kenny Armwood and Ray Sanchez take Robert Sostre and Freddy Ramirez to the brink of elimination as Sostre and Ramirez barely survive 21-18. Meanwhile Coe and Melendez sail by Romero and McDonald 21-14. Finally favorites David Blatt and Paul Angel are also taken to the brink of elimination as they barely slip by Sammy Kawaam and Ben Goldenberg 21-19. This sets up one of the greatest comebacks in tournament history as Frank Savino and William Rolon are trailing 18-4 to David Blatt and Paul Angel and somehow rally to go on to win one of the most epic games in the last decade 21-20. Meanwhile Sostre and Ramirez breeze by Coe and Melendez 21-14 as Sostre and Ramirez prove too much for the new comer to handle. This sets up a tremendous final on the "Show Court." Dives, rallies, spikes, and rollers rule the finale, but in the end, it's Sostre building the lead and Ramirez closing the show as they capture the Championship 25-17.

Managing the tournament was a combined effort from Jim Owens, Aaron Embry, Mike Dembin and Jim Price. Special thanks to our Sponsors, Stratosphere, Pro Kennex, NES, Soda Man and Coffee Girl, Ahern Rentals, Melissa's, Penn, Head, Castle Hill, 3 WB, NPA, WOR, IRT, WPH Live, LPRT, CPRT, and MRF.

Thank you to everyone who played and congratulations to all the World Champions at this year's 3Wallball World Championships.

(tournament photos on following page)





PRO CHAMPIONS: ALVERDO BELTRAN and EMMETT COE



COMBINED A CHAMPIONS: LOIS ROMERO and MICHAEL MEDINA



MIXED DOUBLES CHAMPIONS: MELISSA SKY and JAMIE BENARDO BLANCO

Saginaw Doubles Paddleball Tournament

This past weekend 31 participants showed up to compete in the Saginaw Doubles Paddleball Tournament that was held at the Michigan, Saginaw YMCA. Jim Price was the tournament director and had players competing in 4 different divisions; Open, A, B, and our latest addition, the Vintage division. The Vintage division was first tried at the National Doubles Tournament last year in Lansing and was a big hit among those individuals in the 65-80 age group that still want to compete, experience fellowship, have fun, and play shorter games in a more condensed format. Tom Mudd, who turned 77 this year, commented on how he likes the format and plans to continue competing at this level at future tournaments, if the division is offered. The Vintage Championship bracket featured our newest player and former racquetball player Rick Bhirdo and Charlie Gilfeather, versus Rick Kogleman and Don Traxler. Bhirdo and Gilfeather won the match 15-7, 15-8.

In the B division, another new player and converted racquetball player, Scott Retelle teamed up with Paul Ferhman and played long time competitors Bill Jamrog and Pat O'shea in the finals. Team Retelle and Ferhman came out on top 16-21, 21-7, 15-11.

With the recent conversions of racquetball players to paddleball, the A bracket was the strongest it has been over many years for our tournament. Returning Champions Eric Boks and Thomas Bodary were back to defend their title from 2016. Of course, it wasn't without some controversy. Apparently in 2016, the partners were allowed to sleep in, grab a casual breakfast, watch their favorite cartoons and roll in for a late morning game, much to the chagrin of some of the more seasoned participants. This year was no different for the returning champions as they strolled in for a late morning match, much like a rooster walks around the hen house on a fresh spring morning. Not one to let a good story slip through his finger, this ink-slinger was determined to get to the bottom of all the flap. When I asked Mr. Bodary to dispel the scuttle surrounding his late morning start time, he simply gave me the look of the "cat that swallowed the canary" and with his million-dollar smile said "those are the perks that come with being a returning champion." Seeing how I had already been knocked out of the tournament and was in my street clothes, who was I to disagree. Anyway, Bodary and Boks won their second championship in two years, sweeping Jim Price and Mike Heinz in the finals 21-17 and 21-12. Congratulations guys!!

In the open division, the competition was exceptional as we had national champions and ranked players in, Mike "the Wiz" Wizniewski, Chad Krager, Andrew Price, and Jim Owens in the bracket. Of course, it didn't hurt that Mitch Larson sent out a challenge on social media to some of our brothers in Detroit, creating somewhat of a stir. Greg Lewerenz accepted Larson's challenge, borrowing a line from Kurt Russell, in the movie Tombstone he responded "you tell'em I'm coming and Hell is coming with me!" Give-em Hell, he and his partner Ian Brooks did as they battled their way into the finals to face the Wiz and Chad Krager. Lewerenz and Brooks won the first game 21-20, but later succumbed to the more experienced team of Krager and Wiz 21-8, 21-7.

The tournament wrapped up at a local watering hole, with President Jim Owens holding court, clarifying rules, telling stories, and bringing up ideas to continue to make our tournaments better and what we can do to grow our sport. Great tournament, great time, and wonderful fellowship had by everyone who participated.

The YMCA was the beneficiary of \$275.00 raised by the tournament that will go into their Growing Kids Program. Winners all around!

See you at the Turkey Shoot in Bay City November 18 and the Brigham Classic Fall Doubles Tournament December 9-10 also Bay City.

See you on the courts.

Karl Briggs

(Tourney photos on following page)



A CHAMPS: THOMAS BODARY and ERIC BOKS



B CHAMPS: SCOTT RETELLE and PAUL FERHMAN



OPEN CHAMPS: CHAD KRAGER and MIKE WISNIEWSKI



VINTAGE CHAMPS:

RICK BIRD and CHARLIE GILFEATHER

THE 41ST PIG ROAST

August 27, 2017

The 41st Pig Roast was lots of fun as usual. With the temperatures in the mid-seventies and sunny skies, conditions were just right on the lawn of the VFW Hall in Portage, Michigan. The tournament at the Bronson Athletic Club featured several competitive and exciting matches. There were 20 players placed into 10 teams by grab-bag selection. The food was plentiful and good at both the parking lot lunch and the roast.

The pig and the side dishes were once again exceptional thanks to Big Daddy, his crew, and the attendees. Among other things, we got to celebrate Big Daddy's (aka Rick Phillips) birthday.



The Tournament

Hall of Famer Andy Mitchell and Bobby Lapekas defeated Ron Harris and Matt Kollig in the final, 21-17. Mitchell, Lapekas, and Kollig are from the hosting Kalamazoo, Michigan area. Ron Harris resides in Ypsilanti, Michigan. Each of the teams in the final were undefeated in respective halves of the draw.



The Roast

Eugene Rush of Ypsilanti, Michigan was the honoree (**Human Sacrifice**). He and his eldest son Joshua successfully digested the eyes of the pig, an annual tradition for the honoree. Joshua, in support of his father, volunteered to partake, making it the first father-son team in Pig Roast history.



A surprised Rochelle Balkam of Ann Arbor, Michigan was awarded the **Woody**, an annual award given to a person who supports paddleball and demonstrates love for the game. Rochelle, my wife, has attended several tournaments a year since 1980. She has certainly supplied many of us with an abundance of support, especially me.



All and all, it was a very good day in Kalamazoo.

Jim Owens

What's in a name?

A lot of errors

if it's like mine

By LOU GIAMPETRONI

Years ago, a post card addressed to me came from the Bay City, Mich., YMCA and it concerned the entry of Barry Lucas and myself in the Bean-Smith Paddleball Tournament.

The writer of the card didn't have any trouble with Barry's name but mine came out Gambtrowi.

The spelling reminded me of the many misspellings I received when I worked at The Flint (Mich.) Journal for 43 years.

I had a variety of assignments.

Included were sports, business, courts, police, etc.

Consequently, I received a lot of mail with atrocious spellings of my last name on letters. Here are some of the more atrocious ones:

Peggerlia, Gin Petroni, GM P...troni, Mr. Fau Grampetroni, Grimpatroni, Piapetroni, Giambalonie, Giapaloupee, Giampetrino, Giampstroni.

Grampeterri, Flampetroni, Grampertronie, Guam Petroni. Lo Giamtetproni, Jempton- ni, Graintetraine, Grampstroni, Jan Petroni, Griempatroni.

There were more but you get the idea.

And then I received a letter from the League of Women Voters of Flint, with the correct spelling of my last name, but with a postal clerk's notation: "Addressee Unknown."

At that point, I had been with The Journal for 18 years.

(Editors Note: This was one of the many articles that Lou G always had at the ready for the NPA newsletter, we will always miss his contributions and wit)



THE NPA WANTS TO KNOW WHERE YOU PLAY

We want to expand the “Looking For A Place To Play” section on the web. To get your club included please send the following info to: jmowens2@gmail.com

- The name, address and phone number of the club you play at
- Any drop-ins or scheduled times for regular paddleball play
- A contact person in the area (if possible)

OTTO League

By Matt Kollig

First off, what is an OTTO? Or who is OTTO? Kalamazoo paddleball tradition is giving a nickname to a player and OTTO is Steve Dinges. Even though I believe OTTO was called OTTO before paddleball! Anyway, how he got that name is another story!

Steve Dinges*Dave Charkowski*Bob Berg*Jeff Biggers*Bruce Williams*Jeff Burkham*Andy Mitchell*Jeff Bowne*John Anderson*Gary Vanstean*Ed Maher*Jack Stewart(RIP)*Mark Camp*Paul Montgomery*Gary Zurenko*Andy Kasalo*Tim Helton*Joel Kloosterman*Matt Kollig*Pat Chapit*Dave Westervelt*Chuck Glad-ding*Dave Blunt*George Hobbs(RIP)*Ted Ruble*Bill Farmer*Jared Arnold*Pepper Powers*

The OTTO league started in 1986. We played at the Court Players Club in Kalamazoo. Kalamazoo in the 80's was a hotbed for paddleball. We had a drop in on Sunday which was second to none. Playing in a facility with ten courts, if you found yourself losing a game you might have to wait 30 – 45 minutes before you could get back on the court. On occasions we'd have a "special" drop in. A keg of beer would be brought in and good times would be had by all. Many friendships and I might add long time friendships were developed that are continued today.

Don Kirconnell*Jack Kurtz*Mark McClish*Tom Wigert*Kit Snyder*Paul Sylvester*Steve Weir*Mike Mallos*Joanne Schaffer*Bob Jeffries*John Hacht*Norm Bruemmer*George Miller*Toby Gleason*Dan Per-rin*Dan McLaughlin*Kevin McLaughlin*Bill Sprague*Curt Rychlinski*Doug Hartung*Steve Raklovitz*Jeff Kalinowski*Bobby Lapekas*Brad Ex*Scott Schrum*Eugene Rush*Scott Glass*Jeremy Wheaton*

It was discussed that we needed to come up with another night to play to continue to hone our paddleball skills. Steve Dinges took the bull by the horns and started this league. He wanted a league that would be very competitive and help tournament players continue to improve their game. We had two sessions per year, one in the fall and one in the winter. Our format was three games to twenty-one, which still continues today. Looking at early league schedules, every team was a tournament team. League would typically end the week of National Doubles. It was truly a tournament league!

Rick Imbordino*Greg Wood*Mike Mair*Chris Cornelius*Steve Fleckenstein*Steve Haines*Rick Ma-honey*Larry Algaier*Ron Gipson*Andy Wenzel*Mark Graff*Mark Scheffers*Denny Bunce*Doug Greene*Larry Moerman*Chuck King*Les Devries*DJ Jackson*Dean Pennala* Pat Conroy*Carl Myles*Dick Fridley*Mike Heinz*I apologize if I left off any names!

Now, I might add this wasn't a league for your "lightweight player"! Above, I stated "very competitive"! Truly an understatement! Everyone knows what happens when you have four 30ish guys in the court trying to get that game point that could possibly move you up the standings!! And it wasn't only that league point....it was the bragging rights that go along with it! I can't forget the night when my partner and I were playing another team who will remain unnamed (AJM &EM). We got into such a heated debate about a hinder that I walked off the court saying "#@\$ % this! I don't need this!!" Tempers settled down and I believe my partner and I came back and won!! (not sure if that's true!!) The saying what happens in the court stays in the court was very appropriate in this league.

Now-a-days the format has changed. We still play three games to twenty one, maybe a little longer break between games. It's not nearly as competitive as in previous years however players get a little (continued on following page)



OTTO and BRAD EX

“chippy” every once in a while! It seems like winning the league isn’t as important as bragging rights when you come out victorious on a certain Wednesday night.

For me, a big part of this league was the friendships that develop. Most of these players are guys that I’ve known for thirty plus years. After our matches we always end up at a local bar. We’re laughing about our previous matches, bragging if you happened to win that night. A little trash talking here and there. We typically have a season ending party which lately has been at Bobby Lapekas’ Tiki Bar. Great food is brought in and occasionally a shot of tequila or two!!

Over the years players have come and gone. Facilities have come and gone. League managers have been set out to pasture!! We’ve celebrated milestones along the way. This year marked 30 years and one important statistic is half of the players in this year’s league were members back in day one! That to me is pretty remarkable!!

Being a player from day one, I’ve looked forward to Wednesday nights! Typically, in the spring and summer, paddleball has taken the back seat to other activities. This year you could find most of us at a park in Portage playing pickleball. Pickleball was a nice change, not as stressful on our bodies.

In honesty most of us were looking forward to the fall when paddleball started.

One thing continues every time we step on the court. We continue to play the game we’ve loved for so many years....PADDLEBALL!

Here’s a Kalamazoo Paddleball History Lesson. Can you put the “nick names” with correct name?

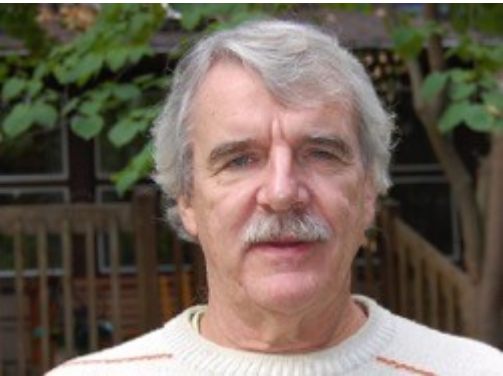
Steve Dinges	Hammer
Dave Charkowski	No Name
Bob Berg	Clean Dean
Bruce Williams	Fast Ed
Jeff Burkham	Chico
Andy Mitchell	Big O
Jeff Bowne	The Crab
Ed Maher	Otto
Andy Kasalo	Snappy
Matt Kollig	Boo Brothers
Bill Farmer	Demo
Jack Kurtz	Herbie
Bob Jefferies	Junior
Bob Lapekas	Chicken Legs
Jeff Biggers	Diddler
Steve Haines	Meat
Mark Graff	Wild Man
Doug Greene	Maniac Jack
Dean Pennela	

San Diego Court Sports Association Goes Live
by Jamie Lawson

In November 2017, the San Diego Court Sports Association began business as a 501c3 non-profit corporation. Its mission is to promote and cultivate court sports at the local level. This includes coordination with national and international sports governing bodies such as the NPA, and putting the principles and objectives of these governing bodies to work growing sports at the local level.

The SDCSA supports a range of court sports including enclosed court sports like squash and racquetball, and net sports like badminton and tennis. However, SDCSA is rich with paddleball supporters, and its inaugural Board includes current NPA singles and doubles open champ Emmett Coe, former national champs Charlie Brumfield and Aaron Embry, former Risky Award winner Len Sonnenberg, and yours’ truly, also a member of the NPA Board.

One of the first SDCSA events will be an early Spring 2018 outdoor tournament with both 3-wall and 1-wall paddleball events at beautiful Robb Field in the Ocean Beach neighborhood. The courts are, literally, across the parking lot from the water’s edge. Dates have not been finalized, but the plan is to have the tournament at a time where Midwesterners and Northeasterners could take a sunshiny tournament vacation and still have a chance for a little ice fishing when they get back home. So leave room in your calendars for some outdoor paddleball and a little surfing in the Southern California sun.



PRESIDENT’S CORNER

Encroachment and Stalling

Is there an encroachment rule in paddleball?

There is an encroach rule in NPA paddleball contrary to what many paddleball players think. Violations are rare, probably due to the predominance of service lobs. Why crowd the server when you are going to have to rush to the back wall to retrieve the serve? Most receiving players naturally prefer to stand within three steps of the back wall, a significant distance behind the encroachment line, called the receiving line in the rules.

Rule 5.1a: *The receiver must remain behind the receiving lines (5 feet behind the short line) until the ball crosses the short line.*

Almost all indoor 4 wall indoor courts have a line painted on them or have two short segments on the floor, one on each side of the court touching the side walls defining the receiving line. The line or segments are usually solid but may be dashed, occasionally, segments are painted on the side walls. In the case of segments either on the floor or walls, the receiving line connects the segments.

Violations result in a point for the server. Beware encroachers!

What would you do if while in a tournament match your opponent repeatedly stalls and breaks your rhythm? Are there any rules against stalling?

Several ago, there was a highly skilled paddleball player who was considered by many to be a master at stalling, repeatedly unnerving opponents. A case in point, he and I were playing in a National Senior Final (now called the 35+ Division).

This unnamed player painfully stretched out the time between each point: Routinely not catching the ball when I tossed it to him. Then, walking ever so slowly to retrieve the ball that he didn’t even attempt to catch and slowly getting back in position to serve. After the referee called out the score, taking a very long time to serve the ball each time.

In addition, my opponent took an injury time out at a point in the match, getting a bag of ice, returning and sitting on the court with the ice on the apparent injured body part until the referee called time-in. As he stood up, he spilled the melting ice on the floor, requiring us to get towels to clean-up the mess.

Rule 5.11: *a) In a match, play may be suspended for up to 15-minutes for an injury. b) Each player is allowed at most one injury time out per match.*

Unlike when this match took place, most NPA tournament matches are currently played without referees. But, a player can request a referee before or at any time during the match and a tournament official will appoint one.

Rule 6.1: *Upon request from player or by assignment from an NPA Board of Manager’s representative, tournament matches will be conducted with a referee.*

When faced with a match like the one described, the referee should put players on the clock, making sure they take no more than 10 seconds after the score is called out to serve the ball. A violation results in a serve-out.

Rule 4.5 b: *The server is to put the ball into play within 10 seconds after the score is called.*

A referee who thinks a player is stalling should issue a warning. For each violation after the warning, the referee is to declare a serve-out or award the other player or team a point.

Rule 4.5 d: *A player must take no action to delay a game.*

In my case, the referee did his best and my opponent complied, albeit with a bit of gamesmanship. It was one long and grueling match. My opponent, I regret, did prevail.

Jim Owens

NPA President