

January 2019



NPA NEWSLETTER

NATIONAL PADDLEBALL ASSOCIATION

2019 TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

2019 MIDWEST SINGLES

SATURDAY, JANUARY 19TH, SAGINAW YMCA
1915 FORDNEY STREET, SAGINAW MI 48601

2019 MIDWEST DOUBLES

FEBRUARY 9TH & 10TH / SCHOOLCRAFT COLLEGE
18600 HAGGERTY ROAD, LIVONIA MI

2019 NATIONAL DOUBLES

MARCH 1ST TO 3RD / MERIDAN SPORTS CLUB
1535 DEERPARK DRIVE, FULLERTON CA 92837

2019 NATIONAL SINGLES

APRIL 13TH & 14TH / DAVISON ATHLETIC CLUB
2140 FAIRWAY DRIVE, DAVISON MI

Entry information will be posted on the paddleball website at:
www.paddleball.org

As each tournament date approaches.

**PLEASE CHECK THE WEBSITE FREQUENTLY
FOR THE POSTINGS OF LOCAL TOURNA-
MENTS**



**Gearbox is the OFFICIAL ball
and paddle of the NPA.**

Mudd-Slingers Singles Saginaw YMCA

By, Karl Briggs

The Mid-Michigan Paddleball Association held our 2nd annual singles tournament at the Saginaw YMCA. Our intention of hosting the Mudd-Slingers Singles Tournament along with the Midwest Singles January 19th is to bring attention to and promote the National Singles Tournament in Davison late April of 2019.

With our tournament format, everyone started in the same bracket, dropping down to the loser’s bracket after a loss, then try and battle back for 2nd and 3rd place.

The morning started off with some donuts, great matches, and a grumpy sponsor, who based on his daily habits is not conducive to anything physical before 11:00 am, when he can casually drink a couple cups of coffee, consume several newspapers in his pajamas and rabbit-eared slippers while sitting in his Lazy-Boy chair. Needless to say, he was a little cranky when he showed up for his 9:00 am match, but after a half dozen frosted donuts, his pleasant demeanor flowed like the sun rising on a beautiful clear morning day. All kidding aside, special thanks to Tom Mudd for your sponsorship, the Mudd-Slingers Singles would not be possible without the generous contribution from your family.

There were a couple of key matches of the day that stand out. Jim Owens battled Doug McIntyre in the second round of action, a match that lasted well over an hour. The two more experienced players were like a couple of seasoned bulls, fighting for the last inch of pasture, knowing the losing bull would be culled from the herd. They hammered each other with one corner Kill shot after another. McIntyre won the match to move on to the semi-final round only to lose to Jim Price, who advanced to the finals.

The other Bru-ha was in the Semi-final round, where Scott Retelle fell to Don McIntyre , the eventual tournament champion. The two players reminding me of a couple of linebackers, both agile, quick hands, very strong, physical and can really hit the ball hard. Retelle took McIntyre to 3 games only to lose in the extra game 15-6. Retelle was last year’s Mudd Slingers runner-up with eyes on winning the championship this year. Only to run into a hurdle in the likes of McIntyre, who is new to the singles game and other than Retelle pretty much dominated everyone else that he faced. Congratulations Don on your first Singles Paddleball Championship, way to go!!!

Price lost to Don McIntyre in the finals, dropping down to the loser’s bracket only to face Jim Owens who worked his way back through the consolation bracket. Owens taking out his angst on everyone he faced after he had lost to the Elder Doug McIntyre in the upper bracket. Owens soundly beat Price in the loser’s bracket to lock up 2nd place, while Price finished a respectable 3rd.



When I asked Price about how we are handling the awards, he stated that “awards would be given out to the top 3 place winners.” When I asked him about my 4th place finish, Jim politely shook my hand, said congratulations, and that I get to write the article for the tournament. Yeah, thanks Jim!

See you November 3rd at the 11th Annual Saginaw Doubles Tournament.

I would like to thank the following people for making the tournament so much fun and possible.

Tom Mudd, Major Sponsor	The Saginaw YMCA
Karl Briggs, Tournament Director	Elycia Price, Greeter
Mitch Larson, Facility Manager	Chef Jody Henning, Food Manager

The Paddle Ball Players



Fifty years ago. It was the summer of love. 1967. Racquetball did NOT exist. Paddleball was the game in San Diego and other parts of the country.

The mecca. San Diego. Our games' legends emerged on cue... Dr. Bud and the Brum.

Dr. Bud Muelheisen. The White Knight. A gentleman. A fierce competitor. An entrepreneur. Dozens of national championships. The father of racquetball – he wrote the rules and was at the meeting when 'racketball' was thankfully named 'racquetball'. Imagine the impact of ck vs cq on the name/game. Huge. Tennis...Tinnis...Tinitus. Yep, it matters. Dr. Bud...the FIRST national racquetball champion – over Charlie Brumfield no less, 21-20 in a tiebreaker.

Joe Sobek may have been the fella to cut off that first tennis racquet to speed up paddleball that led to racquetball, but who was THE first inductee into the racquetball hall of fame? The man referred to as "Mr. Racquetball"? Dr. Bud. We all owe more than we realize to this good man. If not for Dr. Bud, racquetball might not even exist and paddleball may have faded away. Thanks to his love of both games, we have these great sports to this day.

Abner Doubleday (baseball), James Naismith (basketball), Walter Camp (football). Dr. Bud (racquetball/paddleball). Racquetball exploded in the '70s and '80s thanks to his vision, passion and evangelism. Imagine being able to play on the original playground that Abner, James or Walter created. Bud's court still exists. Living history. Dormant for years. It is now renewed.

Charlie Brumfield, esq. The People's Champion. The HOLDER of all titles. The smartest player who ever lived or shall. The most intense competitor I've ever known. A savant. A comedian. A psych artist without peer. A coach. An author. An endless encourager. A bumfighter. An ass-kicker with glee. A nickname auteur of scathing truth (e.g., the Pillar of Salt, the Bovine, the Blur, Gristle, the Freak...)

Handball was first and paddleball followed. The court dimensions were and are the same. Forty by twenty by twenty. We all share this affinity for perfect geometry. Somehow it works perfectly.

Think about it for a minute...we take it completely for granted – we simply reserve a court when we want a game. Flash back 50 years – before racquetball existed. A few courts – all booked and a serious hassle to reserve. The idea of a long game – forget it. What do you do for the sport you love? Build your own. Yes, Dr. Bud and his merry band of buds decided to BUILD a court. I'm exhausted at the thought. They named it the Pacific Paddleball Association (The PPA). The perfect place. High on a hill overlooking San Diego's football stadium with an incredible panoramic view of Mission Valley, perched in the backyard (where there used to be a horse ranch) of a homeowner on a nondescript street. The PPA may have the best view and coolest setting in the history of the game.

Yes...they built their own court. Think again before moving on – Concrete. Foundation. Plumbing. Electricity. Wood. Permits (...okay, it was the 60's). Land. Materials. Design. Leasing. I'm exhausted at the thought. Building a bird feeder is out of reach for the paddleball players that I know. Undaunted, they moved ahead and built a legendary court that holds its own in quality to this day. A beauty preserved in time – that looks and plays as good as it did (like fine wine, maybe better) from the start.

Bud and his merry gang signed a lease that expired in the mid-1980's. They said they figured they would all be dead by then – fortunately they miscalculated. When the lease ran out they had all moved on; the explosion of racquetball, new clubs, new opportunities, ya know...life.

Fast forward to 2017. Dr. Bud lives in Minnesota. Charlie is in San Diego and has passionately built the finest paddleball hotbed of talent that the planet knows. Sorry, Michigan.

Dr. Bud came back to San Diego for a visit and reconnected with the daughter of the PPA's property owner. In September of 2017 a visit was arranged. Dr. Bud, Charlie, their long-time friend Bill Torres and the author knocked on the front door. After reminiscing and sharing some great stories, we made our way from the house down the 50 rickety wooden steps to the court. To be with these great champions as they shared hilarious and sometimes bawdy memories was unforgettable. Fortunately, I caught it all on video, so you can enjoy the visit as well.

Fortunately, the daughter is open to a few members. Despite the burden of one of Charlie's not-so-flattering nicknames (Gort – look it up), she allowed me to join the PPA. Current legends (Emmett Coe) and multiple masochists are now reviving the love of the court and its remarkable history. The court exceeds my expectations. Plays consistent off of all walls and the floor has been re-laid. The locker room is wonderfully old school with chairs, lockers, paneling, a fridge. The perfect cave.

In June of 2018 we celebrated Brum’s 70th birthday. We brought together some of the greatest players and pioneers to celebrate, and to tell tall tales (another hall of fame for Brum) lies and exaggerations. It was epic.

Thank you, Dr. Bud, and your compatriots for the vision to build such a gem. Thank you, Brum, for the unforgettable stories and your passion for the game and camaraderie. You have both added much to our lives thanks to these great games and your dignity and friendship. We’ll do our best to honor the legacy and continue to play hard, have fun and create new tales. If you’re in town, give us a holler. Maybe you’ll have the opportunity to play where history was made – just like Abner/James/Walter/Dr. Bud.

Peter Callstrom



Dr. Kim Hill Dr. Bud Muelheisen Charlie Brumfield
1968 NPA National Championships



Muelheisen Brumfield
Ames, IA
1969



Members of the original Pacific Paddleball Association, April, 1969: Carl Loveday, Chuck Hanna, Charlie Brumfield, Bud Muehleisen, Al Chamberlain.



Brumfield’s 70th Birthday



Dr. Bud Muelheisen Emmett Coe Charlie Brumfield

ROCKY MOUNTAIN DOUBLES

PADDLEBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS 2019

Presented by: Visit Albuquerque

***NMRacquetball.com R2sports.com National Paddleball
Association IPRO***



DATES: January 25-27, 2019 Friday, Saturday, Sunday
Deadline: Jan 12th by 6pm

LOCATION: Midtown Sports & Wellness 4100 Prospect NE Alb.,
NM 87110 (505) 888-4811

FEES: \$75 for one event; \$100 for two events Make payable
to NM Racquetball

Credit card payment add \$5

Fee includes shirt, welcome packet, drawing, Saturday lunch,
Saturday banquet

Send to: NMRA PO Box 36179 Albq., NM 87176

DIRECTOR: Gary Mazaroff (505) 321-1110
(619) 339-9979 aaron@playrball.com

Aaron Embry

DIVISIONS: Open/AB/C 35+ 50+ 65+ Womens Open/A Wom-
ens B/C

LODGING: Ramada Plaza Hotel 2020 Menaul NE Albq., NM
87107 (505) 884-2511

\$79 + tax (single or double); includes: airport/club shuttle, full
breakfast,

drink coupons...make reservation early to assure tourney
rate. 5 min to club.

AWARDS: Plaques for 1st & 2nd place in all divisions with 8 or
more teams.

Prize money (\$1000 total purse) for Open/A ** based on 8
or more teams.

Payout is for 1st, 2nd, and semi-finalists.

2018 Brigham Classic, by Jim Owens

The National Paddleball Association returned to Midland Community, the site of numerous NPA tournaments in the past, for the first time since 2011 for the 2018 Brigham Classic.

Thirty-five players participated in the first NPA sanctioned tournament of the season. Scott Rettelle and the community center staff were gracious hosts. Vice president Jim Price provided strong leadership serving as the tournament director. Jim was assisted by Karl Briggs, Lorri Brigham, Jody Henning and me.

First event entry fees were discounted because of generous contributions from State Farm Insurance of Saginaw and Karl Briggs. \$85 was donated from tournament players to reduce entry fees for the upcoming 2019 Midwest Singles tournament to be held in neighboring city Saginaw, January 19th.

There were many competitive and entertaining matches. It was a good day for paddleball.



Open Division

Ron Harris (Ypsilanti, MI) & Jim Swendris (Ann Arbor, MI) defeated the team of Robert Stone (Jackson, MI) & Ted Wray (Jackson, MI) in the final 21-7, 13-21, 21-5.

A Division

Greg Keenan (Bay City, MI) & Mike Wisniewski (Bay City, MI) prevailed over Scott Rettelle (Midland, MI) & Don McIntyre (Standish, MI) in the final 21-14, 21-15.

B Division

Lance Krager (Bay City, MI) & Paul Carr (East Lansing, MI) beat Paul Toth (Dearborn, MI) & Jim Howland (Redford, MI) in the final 21-6, 21-13.



C Division

Kurt Ullstrom (Linden, MI) and Jim Cipponeri (South Lyon, MI) defeated Steve Pope (Midland, MI) and Trevor Keys (Bay City, MI) in the final

B/C Grab Bag Division

Karl Briggs (Saginaw, MI) & Paul Carr (East Lansing, MI) beat Jim Price (Freeland, MI) & Mitch Larsen (Saginaw, MI) 21-18, 21-11 in the final.



Vintage Division

Don Kitson (Clarkston, MI) & Kerry Snow (Clarkston, MI) claimed the title defeating

Don Traxler (Midland, MI) & John Holmes (Midland, MI) in the final 15-12, 15-4.

2018 Board Of Managers Meeting

The annual meeting of the Board Of Managers was held in September of 2018. Among the changes that we voted in are:

John Lowman has left the Board and Joe Baldori was elected.

The qualifications for moving to another division was slightly amended. You can read the entire document on the website, but the major change was that you only have to move out of “B” or “C” divisions if you win a National tournament – it previously stated if you win the Midwest or Western event you would have to move the next tournament year. The language now reads:

If you win this division in a National event you must move up to a higher skill level or an age division in the next year of tournament play. You can appeal to the tournament director of the next tourney if you feel you have a valid reason to remain at this level.

Changes To The Round Robin Rules

- 1) Each player or team will play a single 21-point game against each of the other players or teams in the division.
- 2) Players or teams are then ranked based on the number of games won.
- 3) If two players or teams tie, total points scored overall determine the ranking. After which, if there is still a tie, the player or team winning the head to head game is ranked higher.
- 4) If three players or teams tie, a calculation of the points scored, and the points scored against the two other players or teams will be conducted. The resulting higher difference will produce the higher ranking.
- 5) The first and second highest ranked players or teams will play a best two out of three 21-point games match to determine the championship of the division. In a like manner, the third and fourth highest ranked players or teams will play for third place.

The Board is always open to hearing from any and all players. You can contact any board member through the NPA website. The list of managers is below:

CURRENT BOARD OF MANAGERS

Jim Owens, President
Lorri Brigham, Executive Vice President
Jamie Lawson, Vice President
Jim Price, Vice President
Joe Baldori
Vince Carlone
Brandon Creamer
Mike Czabala
David Fleetwood
Chad Krager
Andy Mitchell
Dennis Negrete
Andy Pappas
Mike Wlsniewski



THE 42nd ANNUAL PIG ROAST held on August 4, 2018

Kalamazoo, Michigan

The Grab-Bag Tournament



Don Kirkconnell (Kalamazoo, MI) and Ted Wray (Jackson, MI) defeated a team that has won many paddleball championships, Hall of Famer Andy Mitchell and Ed Maher (Kalamazoo, MI) in a single game final, 21-16 Both teams were undefeated in round robins play in their respective five-team groups. There were 20 players and several competitive matches.



Rick Imbordino of the Kalamazoo area was the honoree (**Human Sacrifice**). He and friend Bob Lapekas successfully digested the eyes of the pig, an annual tradition for the honoree.



Bill Farmer, a long-time Kalamazoo area paddleball player was awarded the prestigious **Woody**, an annual award given to a person who supports paddleball and demonstrates a love for the game.

11th Annual Saginaw YMCA

Doubles Paddleball Tournament

By Karl R. Briggs

The Saginaw YMCA hosted our 11th Annual Doubles Paddleball Tournament on Saturday, November 3rd. We had teams from Detroit, Lansing, Midland, Bay City, and Standish pretty much covering the State. Gregg Keenen and Don McIntyre dominated all competition with Keenen's finesse and Macintyre's power. This duo reminded me of the New England Patriots quick thinking Quarterback Tom Brady (Keenen) and the power of Rob Gronkoski (McIntyre) as they teamed up to easily pick apart everyone's defensive scheme. They crushed John Holmes and myself in the finals....leaving no doubt about who are the 2018 Champions of the Saginaw Doubles Tournament. Congratulations guys!!



In the B finals, Trevor Keys and Joe Martin teamed up on the courts as they handled Jim Price and newcomer Jason Beckers. Jason said he really enjoyed the competition and had a lot of fun in his first tournament. Trevor has really come into his own as this is his second championship in just this last year. It is really a joy to watch the younger players improve their game and become more competitive every year. Way to go Trevor and Joe!!!



Don Kitson said, "history will be made on the court today!" Must be Don knew something the rest of us didn't, as Dan Gutzke and newcomer Bruce Hernandez won their first tournament at the Saginaw Doubles in the C bracket. They beat the feisty veteran duo of Kerry Snow and Don Kitson in a real battle of the Titans. Great tournament Dan and Bruce!!



11th Annual Saginaw YMCA

Doubles Paddleball Tournament

continued

Congratulations and thanks to everyone and our numerous sponsors who made our 11th annual Saginaw Doubles a huge success.

Special Thanks to:

Tournament Director, Jim “there is no tournament I can’t handle” Price

Facility Manager, Mitch “everything is good to go” Larson

Food Director, Chef Jody “I’ve got the subs” Henning

Sponsors:

The Saginaw YMCA

Gearbox Paddleball

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Mid-Michigan Paddleball Association

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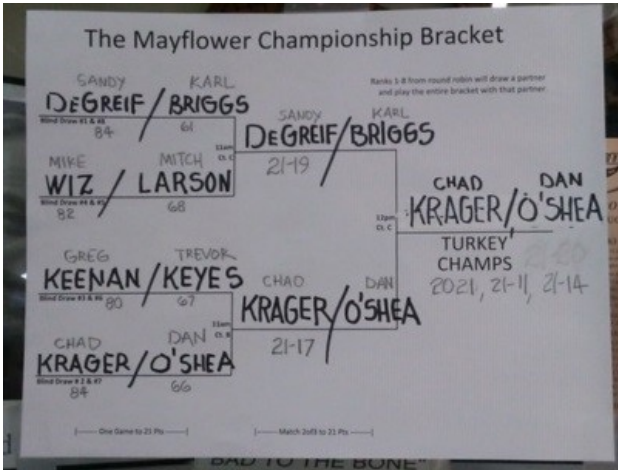


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50th ANNUAL PADDLEBALL TURKEY TOURNAMENT, by Chad Krager

Since 1969 turkeys and paddleball players have united to create a tradition unlike any other here in local paddleball lore. It's the annual Thanksgiving Turkey Shoot. This year's 50th session saw twenty paddleball players climb the 31 steps to the four paddleball courts at the Dow Bay Area Y. After the Gatorade was gone and the muscle cramps commenced, the champs were crowned.

Bay City's own Chad Krager and upstart Dan O'Shea are the 2018 Turkey Champs!! They defeated Bay City's Sanford Degreif and Karl Briggs of Freeland 20-21, 21-11, 21-14. Degreif & Briggs reversed the momentum during game one by flipping a 14-20 deficit with seven straight points for the win. However, Krager & O'Shea stood tall and went back to the grind to regain the momentum and subsequent victories in the next two games to claim their turkeys. Dan is the second of the O'Shea family to capture a piece of Bay City Turkey Paddleball History, as his uncle Patrick won with Mark Piechowiak in 1998.



The day started with 20-men in a round robin affair whereby each person would rotate partners for 4 games to accumulate the most points. The top 8 went on for the Turkey Championship. The bottom 12 went onto the consolation brackets.

In the Cape Cod consolation bracket, Bay City's Lance Krager Jr. and Ann Arbor's Jim Owens defeated Paul Carr (Lansing) and Doug McIntyre (Saginaw) 21-20, 21-7. The consi-winners took home Cornish hens.

In the consolation Mashed Potato Bowl, Bay City's Marty Doyle and Kirk Elsea splashed gravy on the hopes of Jason Beckers and Dan Gutzke in their 21-15 victory. Marty and Kirk actually won mashed potatoes!



A special thank you to Nancy Powers! She has helped coordinate this tradition for about 45 years running now.

Paddleball and Outdoor Racquetball Meet in San Diego

Jamie Lawson

A nice kinship has emerged in Southern California between paddleball and outdoor racquetball. That relationship is captured by some recent events.

Isaiah Cruz runs the group “Game of Thrones Outdoor Racquetball” on Facebook. As indoor racquetball courts have closed across the region, Game of Thrones has given racquetball players a place to go. Many racquetball players who do still have an indoor place to play have also turned to the Game of Thrones group for competition, and as of this writing, Game of Thrones has 557 members.

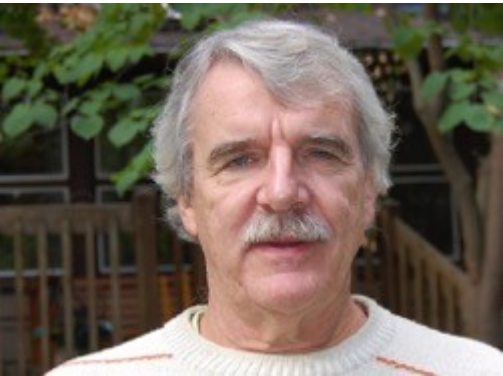
But Isaiah recently turned his attention to the creation of a paddleball league at the Kearny Mesa LA Fitness. Using the reach of the Game of Thrones Outdoor Racquetball group, Isaiah was able to bring superb players, like Steve Tillotson, who don’t typically compete in paddleball, into the league. The first league, which met Saturday mornings, ended October 20, and was followed the very next Saturday by a paddleball shootout with both singles and doubles draws. That shootout was organized by Dorcy Norton, well known to outdoor racquetball players everywhere. Steve Tillotson and Steve Melendez took the doubles prize in the shootout, while this author won the singles division with a victory over Ricardo Callado.

Not resting for even a moment, Isaiah started a new Saturday morning paddleball league at the Kearny Mesa LAF on November 3. This league is expected to draw even more heavily from the outdoor racquetball community as seasonal weather makes the outdoor game less hospitable.

Isaiah has also started a paddleball doubles open court Wednesday evenings, also at the Kearny Mesa LAF. In addition, Dorcy Norton has organized another paddleball shootout for December 8, this time at the Oceanside LAF, which is LA Fitness’s flagship facility in Southern California.

Meanwhile, on November 17, “Dale and Todd’s WTF Outdoor Doubles Shootout” closed the outdoor season in Riverside with draws in both racquetball and paddleball. Mario Meza and Frank Hernandez took the outdoor paddleball prize.

The bonds between the paddleball community and the outdoor racquetball community continue to grow, and we expect to see more events that bring the two communities together over the winter.



PRESIDENT’S CORNER

(A revision of an article I wrote for the 2018 3-WallBall Sports Festival)

The National Paddleball Association proudly joined our court sports brothers and sisters from 1-Wall and 3-Wall paddleball, racquetball, and handball at the 2018 3 WallBall Sports Festival in Las Vegas, Nevada in late September. It was the 8th consecutive year the NPA had managed the paddleball component at this annual outdoor grand festival. Where else can you witness terrific matches in six distinctly different sports at the same venue? Yes, six distinctly different sports. If you counted just three: paddleball, racquetball, and handball--the number of walls changes things in a big way.

The National Paddleball Association sanctioned its first 4-Wall tournament in 1960 and began supporting 3-Wall events just about a decade ago. NPA paddleball is the form of the game Earl Risky started at the University of Michigan in 1930, and spread to colleges, YMCAs, and community centers after World War II. 1-Wall paddleball has probably been around longer and is very different from NPA paddleball. Other than hitting a ball with a paddle, there is very little these sports have in common.

Handball is the mother sport for 1-Wall and NPA paddleball. 1-Wall more closely resembles handball today, where players are allowed to use both hands during a rally. The switching of hands was legal in the early days of NPA paddleball, but in time, players were required to attach the paddle to the wrist with a safety strap. Beyond the switching of hands and the number of walls, issues so mentioned, there are other significant differences such as the ball, hinders, general-positioning, and shot selections.

NPA paddleball and racquetball probably have more in common than 1-wall paddleball and NPA paddleball. The International Racquetball Association was founded in 1969, and pretty much adopted the NPA's rules. Rules have evolved in time, but the way racquetball is played today is a lot more like NPA paddleball than is 1-wall paddleball.

Jim Owens