

NPA

(INDOOR / FOUR-WALL)

National Paddleball Association

WWW.PADDLEBALL.ORG

NPA, 7642 Kingston, Portage, Mich. 49002

NEWSLETTER / WINTER 2012-2013

A message from the prez for the NPA

(Editor's Note: This letter was written by Jim Owens, the new NPA president.)

NPA Members:

Our style of paddleball will hit its 83rd year this season.

The NPA launched the 2012-2013 season with the Brigham Classic in Bay City, Michigan's beautiful, new Dow YMCA. The Midwest Singles will be held at the Bronson Athletic Club, in Kalamazoo MI, January 19 & 20, 2013, followed by the Midwest Doubles at the Michigan Athletic Club in East Lansing MI February 9-11, 2013, and the Western Championships in San Diego the Saturday before the Super Bowl.

The National Singles Tournament will be March 2-3, 2013, in Lombard, Ill.

The NPA returns to Riverside, Calif., April 26-28, 2013, for the 52nd National Doubles Championships.

Todd Entrikin -- our 2012 Earl Risky Award winner and Ektelon-sponsored paddleball player, multiple champion and an

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NPA Schedule

Midwest Singles, Jan. 19-20, 2013, Bronson Athletic Club, Kalamazoo, MI.

West Coast Doubles, Feb. 2, 2013, Sorrento Valley Fitness Center, San Diego.

Midwest Doubles, Feb. 8-10, 2013, Michigan Athletic Club, E. Lansing, MI.

National Singles, March 2-3, 2013, Glass Court Swim & Fitness, Lombard, Ill.

National Doubles, April 26-28, 2013, Tournament House, Riverside, CA



Hey, folks, just a little reminder that the NPA newsletter is published four times a season.

They are titled Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer and are available between October and June -- the duration of a season.

It is available on the Web page at www.paddleball.org and also is mailed to players. We prefer that most everyone go to the Web page for two reasons.

Mailing hard copies is expensive and many of the photos on line are in color.

There are no specific publishing dates so you will have to go to the Web page to see if it's there.

MESSAGE

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active member of the NPA Board of Managers -- resides in the Riverside area. Todd, the local paddleball community and the Tournament House are gearing up predictably for the largest tournament of the year.

We have been invited back to the Las Vegas 3-wall outdoor event for 2013. The dates are Sept. 18-22.

Lou Hekhuis, long-time NPA president, retired from the presidency and will be our president emeritus. We appreciate all he has done for the game.

The Board of Managers was restructured when it approved a proposal from Chad Krager. As a result, the board will be divided into two parts: an executive board and an auxiliary board.

The five-member executive board is charged with making normal operational decisions and the execution of NPA business.

The auxiliary board will provide regional representation, advise and aid the executive board, and vote on major issues.

Executive Board: I was elected president, Lorri Brigham executive vice-president/treasurer; Ed Maher, Todd Entrikin and Charlie Brumfield vice-presidents of the NPA.

Auxiliary Board (sub-divided) -- Regional representatives: Andy Mitchell, Mike Wisniewski, Andy Pappas, David Fleetwood, Dennis Negrete, Jamie Lawson, Mike Czabala, John Lowman. **Advisors:** Lou Hekhuis (president emeritus), Chad Krager, Ron Malecki, Lou Giampetroni.

The NPA made a profit of \$1,063 this past season primarily from tournament fees, logo wear, and ball sales. We do have a large inventory of balls. This Ektelon ball lasts considerably longer than the Penn product.

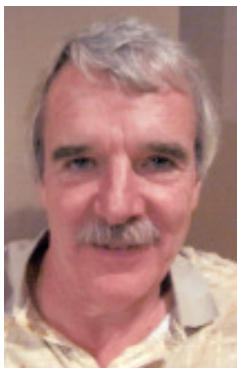
Ed Maher has established a Facebook Page for the NPA. View it at: <http://facebook.com/nationalpaddleballassociation>

The Craig Melvin Promotional Fund was officially established at the board's summer meeting. The late Craig Melvin had requested that the NPA be designated as a recipient of memorial contributions. There is an article in the 2012-13 Fall newsletter with specifics.

Players no longer have to enter the A division only as a second division.

An Andy Mitchell suggestion resulted in The Brigham Classic offering a grab-bag division. Players signed up as either Open or B level and as a left- or right-side player and were assigned a partner. Adjustments were made to promote a competitive field.

Enjoy the game.



Owens

BRIGHAM CLASSIC RESULTS

(Dec. 1-2, 2012, Bay City, MI)

OPEN: First, Chad Krager-Kevin McLaughlin; second, Brandon Creamer-Don Kirkconnell.

GRAB BAG (Open): First, Robert Stone-Brandon Creamer; second, Paul Sylvester-Don Kirkconnell; third, Ron Harris-Andy Mitchell. Consolation: Eugene Rush-Kevin McLaughlin.

MEN'S A: First, Jim Swendris-Scott Lawrence; second, Doug Hartung-Sonny Salazar.

MEN'S B: First, Bret Mitea-Paul Toth; second, Ted Ruble-Scott Schrum.

GRAB BAG (Men's B): First, Ted Ruble-Jim Howland; second, Jim Price-Scott Schrum.

MEN'S C: First, Gary Levandoski-Kelth Thurlow; second, Natalie Gilbert-Jody Henning; third, Jim Price-Rick Kogelman.

MASTERS: First, Jim Sterken-Jim Swendris; second, Andy Mitchell-Ed Maher; third, Mike Wisniewski-Greg Keenan.

MIXED: First, Chad Krager-Pat Gahan; second, Jim Owens-Judy Pretzer.

Stone-Wray win Murray Memorial

There was a lot of paddleball played November 10, 2012, at the Jackson, Mich., YMCA.

It was the Tom Murray Memorial, named for one of the area's long-time players.

There were 10 teams competing in a double-elimination bracket.

Robert Stone and Ted Wray defeated Chris Burke and Tim Stone in the final.

Lynn Vermuelen and Jim Owens were third.

Owens said "It was a real marathon for us, playing 12 games, five matches, from 9 a.m. to about 3 p.m. or so."

Fund-raiser held for player

A fund-raiser was held on November 17, 2012, at the Sorrento Valley Racquet Club in San Diego for Leo Gurnoe.

Gurnoe, who has been described as a local legend in racquetball, paddleball and squash, is battling cancer.

The event -- **Killshots for Cancer** -- included a fun doubles shootout for racquetball and paddleball players and a silent auction.

Northern CA group plays some PB, too



The gang at the club in Pleasanton, CA, poses for a group shot.

While paddleball players in southern California get the most publicity, there's a group in the northern part of the state that wants everyone to know that they are part of the picture.

Geoffrey Janovetz sent along the photo and news of "our first Turkey Shoot ... and had the best turnout yet."

It was at the Clubsport of Pleasanton,

about 30 minutes southeast of San Francisco.

Janovetz said there were 13 players who signed up to play for six Butterball turkeys on November 17.

"We played a round-robin format with each player playing with a different partner in each round," he said.

"The eight highest point-getters played for the birds."

Janovetz said "a great time was had by all and we are very pleased with the turnout.

"We will be doing more of these events to get as many people as we can playing the greatest game on the planet."

The winners: First, Carlos Contreras and Mark Bartolone; second, Amir Jabbari and Greg Burg; third, Scott Holm and Elaine Dexter.

Appropriate

Randy Wackerle and his wife, Jane, met a former longtime paddleballer -- John Scheppele -- at the Wrought Iron Grill in Owosso, Mich., and talked about old times. Randy, who does a lot of wood work, said he carved out the nickname on a paddle and gave it to John, who played out of E. Lansing, Mich. Scheppele and Wackerle played together in a lot of tournaments. Why 'Mr. Pinch' on the paddle Randy gave to Scheppele? "John had the nickname from (Dick) Jury and Val (Valenciano) because he could pinch the ball from mid-court at will. We played together about 10 years in the 1980s and won the National Seniors in 1990."



A salute to Bay City paddleball

By JIM OWENS

The third Brigham Classic, formerly the NPA's Fall Doubles, was held at the new Bay City, Mich., Dow YMCA a few weeks ago.

Lou G. featured pictures, an article and results of the first tournament -- the Bean-Smith Memorial -- at the new Y in the 2011-2012 Summer newsletter. Randy Wackerle noted some of the history of the old Y in an article in the 2011-2012 Winter newsletter.

Two very different facilities indeed: Unlike the old Y, to note one difference, there is no gap between the floor and the front wall at the new Y.

Bay City was one of the hot spots for paddleball when I started playing in NPA tournaments in 1979 and has continued to be so, producing several notable tournament players over the years. Three of Bay City's all-stars are Randy Wackerle, Mike Wisniewski and Chad Krager.

In 2001, Wackerle was inducted into the Bay City Hall of Fame primarily for his tournament successes and contributions to paddleball. Randy has 11 national titles and numerous smaller tourney wins in both singles and doubles.

He ran a youth program for 30 years, introducing numerous young people to our sport. Mike Czabala, Bob Groya, Chad Schwall and Chad Krager all participated in Randy's program, to name a few. The "Wack" also has served for several years on the NPA Board of Managers.

Wisniewski has more open singles

national championships than anyone who has ever played the game -- 9. The Wiz miraculously claimed his latest open singles title at age 52 and an open national doubles title at age 53.

In total, Wiz has 21 NPA national championships in singles and doubles. He also has been a Board of Managers member for several years. Wiz designed and constructed the impressive traveling trophies for the national open doubles and singles champions.

Anyone playing our style of paddleball today owes Chad Krager an expression of thanks. He spent a lot of time successfully securing a deal with Ektelon to produce a quality paddleball after Penn Athletics stopped manufacture of its ball.

Chad also has been one of the NPA's top open players over the last several years with two national open doubles titles and four national titles in other divisions. Chad has made several contributions to the NPA organization. This past year, his proposal for reorganization of the NPA Board of Managers was adopted.

Bay City hosted NPA State Doubles tournaments in 1981 and 1983. Wackerle recalls there were nearly 110 teams in the 1981 tournament.

Four-wall, indoor paddleball runs deep in Bay City. The "Turkey Shoot," an annual fall tournament, hit its 44th year this past November 10. The classic Bean-Smith Tournament will hit year 36 this coming February.

All in all, Bay City has been a spectacular setting for the great sport of PB over the years -- and we're hoping it continues that way.

Progress is our most important product ...



Did your hometown ever host a national PB tourney?

By LOU GIAMPETRONI

Hosting a national paddleball tournament to close out the season does not guarantee a lot of money for the host city but it does guarantee a lot of excitement for the players involved.

Over the years, there have been 20 U.S. cities which have been the sites of a national singles tourney and 24 which have hosted a national doubles tournament. Some have hosted more than one such event.

There have been 51 national singles events and the same number of national doubles tourneys.

When the first NPA tournament was held in 1962, both singles and doubles were held at the same time in the same city. That was the case in the first 14 tourneys.

But by 1976, the numbers of entries -- singles and doubles -- were overwhelming and a decision was made by the NPA to split the events into separate tournaments. Each of the tourneys

NATIONAL SINGLES

Ann Arbor, Mich.	11
E. Lansing, Mich.	8
Midland, Mich.	5
San Diego	3
Davison, Mich.	3
Madison, Wis.	2
Flint, Mich.	2
Eau Claire, Wis.	2
Saginaw, Mich.	2
Pontiac, Mich.	2
Livonia, Mich.	2
Bloomington, Ind.	1
Minneapolis, Minn.	1
Ames, Iowa	1
Fargo, N.D.	1
Knoxville, Tenn.	1
Adrian, Mich.	1
Ypsilanti, Mich.	1
Kalamazoo, Mich.	1
Arlington Heights, Ill.	1

held before that year was conducted over a four-day period. Since that time, the events have been held over a three-day weekend.

Can you imagine the scheduling problems that were caused when 58 players entered the open division in 1979? It was Marty Hogan's first paddleball tournament and he was seeded 23rd, primarily because his PB experience was limited.

Hogan, then the reigning No. 1 racquetball player in the country, topped Steve Keeley in three games for the first of his two national singles championships.

Hogan won his second in 1987 over Steve Wilson. That year, there were 19 players in the open division.

By that time, B and C divisions had been established and many of the players who had been forced to play in open dropped down into the new divisions.

The tournament locations:

NATIONAL DOUBLES

Eau Claire, Wis.	5
Ann Arbor, Mich.	5
E. Lansing, Mich.	5
Flint, Mich.	4
Kalamazoo, Mich.	3
Midland, Mich.	3
Dearborn, Mich.	3
Madison, Wis.	2
Portage, Mich.	2
Bloomington, Ill.	2
Riverside, Calif.	2
San Diego	2
Davison, Mich.	2
Bloomington, Ind.	1
Minneapolis, Minn.	1
Ames, Iowa	1
Fargo, N.D.	1
Knoxville, Tenn.	1
Livonia, Mich.	1
Pontiac, Mich.	1
Southgate, Mich.	1
Canton, Mich.	1
Taylor, Mich.	1
Arlington Heights, Ill.	1

A little paddleball history

At one time, there was a collegiate paddleball tournament.

The first was on April 5-7, 1968, at the Old IM Building at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. Singles and doubles were offered.

There were 16 players in singles, which was won by Paul

Lawrence of the U. of M.

Two players who went on to bigger PB things were eliminated in the quarterfinals: Steve Keeley and Craig Finger.

Entry fee was \$5 and dormitory-type rooms were available at the Michigan Union for \$3.50 per day.

T-shirts, we got T-shirts, we got lots and lots of T-shirts

By LOU GIAMPETRONI

I don't know about other paddleballers, but I have a ton of T-shirts stashed down my basement.

Over the years, I've played in many, many, many tournaments. And of course, you always got a very basic T-shirt when you played.

More recently, wearing apparel has improved considerably and collared shirts and gorgeous sweats are the rule.

But in the early days, you got a plain T-shirt.

I have a lot of them. My wife, Sue, says there are more than 100.

Actually, there were more but I gave them to Goodwill or Salvation Army.

Two of the oldest I have are shown on this page. The MSU one brings back memories of probably the only tournament in paddleball history that featured some form of double elimination that meant you had to lose twice.

It went on into the wee hours of the morning for two days. It seemed to last forever. Keeping track of wins and losses was mind-boggling.

That was the last one that even approached such a format.

The other T-shirt is from the 1973 National Championships in Eau Claire, Wis.

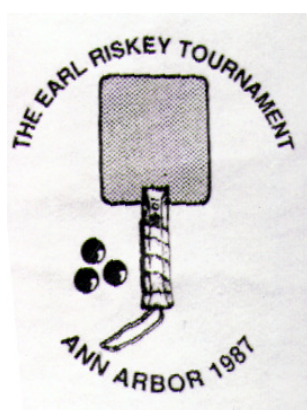
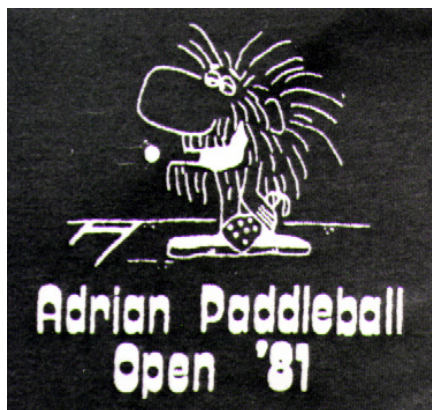
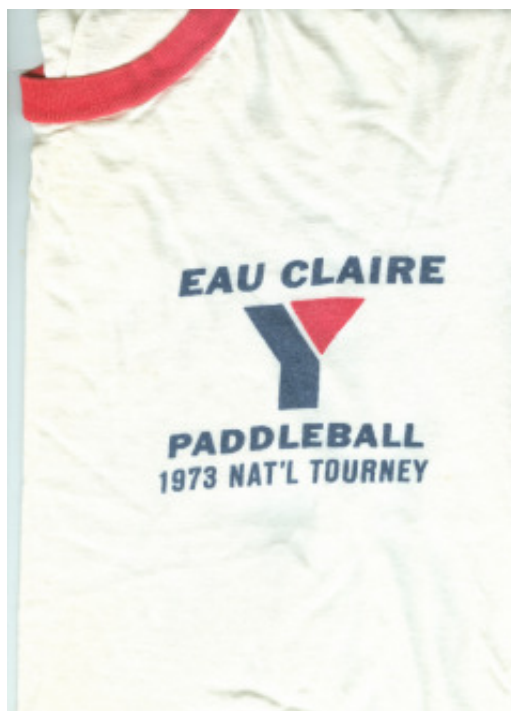
At any rate, beginning in 1976 our T-shirt input doubled. The National Singles and Doubles championships had been held in the same tournament on the same weekend since the start in 1961-62.

But because of a tremendous increase in entries, the NPA Board of Managers decided to separate the two championships and have them on different weekends.

Thus, if you entered both you got two T-shirts. And of course, you always got a T-shirt for playing in state singles and doubles tourneys, the Earl Risky, the Midland (Mich.) Iron Man, the Bean-Smith, etc., etc.

So if you happened to play in a lot of tournaments (as I did), you built up your T-shirt treasury. I liked the shirts. But my wife was a little less ecstatic about them.

Maybe it was because she had to wash them all.



Paddleball -- a great influence

(Editor's Note: These are excerpts from an article written by Renee Callies, a former longtime PBaller from the Kalamazoo, Mich., area.)

By RENEE CALLIES

While college and career changes pulled me from the sport, paddleball and the friends I made playing on that four-walled court continue to influence my everyday life.

As a writer, I find material in the battles I had on the court; as a teacher, I can't help referring to the physical benefits of the exercise or the persuasive examples of integrity and sportsmanship.



Callies

Despite our hectic lives, several paddleball friends and I continue to meet monthly. When we get together, we laugh with an abandon normally reserved for intimate partners. I've learned that like high school, paddleball fosters friendships where people know you at your best and your worst ... and still accept you.

I've found that the players in Kalamazoo acknowledge a 2-, 4-, 6-, 10-year hiatus from the sport with welcoming handshakes and bear hugs. They take care of one another. Together, they've built a garage; shingled a roof; attended funerals, christenings, and birthday parties.

They've organized golf outings, pig roasts, holiday celebrations, baby showers, and even a wedding.

While I recall these attributes of Kalamazoo players specifically, I realize they transcend this area and cover paddleball players in general.

I know that quirkiness is an attribute, not a detriment in this sport; that using the left hand exclusively to develop the right side of the brain deserves notice and that spewing noodles from the nose might bring moans of disgust but it also brings laughter.

I know that if you stopped playing, you'd be welcomed back in any capacity.

For those unfamiliar with the sport, paddleball looks deceptively like racquetball, a little like squash, remotely like tennis. Unlike sports of egos and attitudes, however, paddleball protocol resembles that of golf -- they're gentlemen's games.

We're not easily fooled by disingenuous egos. Our desire is not to diminish those personalities, rather to bend them to our side through our sportsmanship, integrity, honesty.

I'm saying nothing new to those who play. This goes out to those who don't know that sports and exercise can transcend the basic instinct of health and competition.

Paddleball can reach into the heart and soul and teach us all about the struggle for inner peace.

Paddleball players have developed their own Zen. Paddleball players have:

- an unmistakable ability to enjoy each moment.
- a loss of interest in judging other people.
- a loss of interest in conflict.
- a loss of the ability to worry.
- frequent, overwhelming episodes of appreciation.
- contented feelings of connectedness with others.
- frequent attacks of smiling.

PB potpourri

By LOU GIAMPETRONI

Until I had lymphatic cancer in 2002, I rarely took any pills or any medication of any kind. That changed, of course, and I probably had more pills and more shots in a year and a half than I did for the previous 70 years.

But it reminded me of a paddleball match about 25 years ago.

I was playing with Scott Lawrence, a fine player, in the Men's B division of the State of Michigan Doubles Tournament.

I've always had some lower back pain; well, not pain but at least lower back discomfort.

The late R. P. Valenciano told me about Momentum, an over-the-counter tablet that basically is a muscle relaxant and aspirin.

Scott and I reached the final in that tourney against Ron Malecki and Dick Chapin. As a matter of fact, we had to play the semifinal and final on Sunday. That's how many entries there were.

We won the semifinal in two games and then went to the final. We split the first two games with Malecki-Chapin and had to go into a tiebreaker.

Along around the middle of the tiebreaker, I slowed down noticeably ... and ... almost ... came ... to ... a ... complete ... halt. I could hardly move.

Scott called a timeout, came over to me and said: "How many of those things did you take? For crying out loud, you have foam coming out of your mouth!"

I looked at him in a daze and slowly said: "I took two this morning before the semifinal, two this afternoon before this match and two before the tiebreaker."

Scott couldn't believe it. Needless to say, we lost the tiebreaker and the match.

To this day, I use only one of the tablets (the name since has been changed to Percogesic) when I play paddleball -- whether it's one game or 10.



MITEA

PADDLEBALL PROFILE

Bret Mitea of Beverly Hills, MI, was asked if he had any suggestions on how tournaments could be improved.

His response: "Cold beer."

Mitea, 47, said he "played (paddleball) as a kid in the 1970s but started in 2003. My father (the late Nick Mitea) was an avid player."

Mitea, who is in sales, said he enjoys the sport because of "great sportsmanship and great camaraderie."

He said he took third place in a Men's C division in the National Doubles in Ann Arbor, MI, in 2006 with Carrie Taylor.



It happened on a Monday night in July 2011 at the Flint, Mich., YMCA. I was in a doubles match and one of the opponents was Fred Khirfan, one of our avid paddleballers. I NEVER turn around to look at an opposing player. Well, I did that night. And the ball came off Fred's paddle,

hit me in my glasses and knocked out one of the lenses. I had a bruise for quite a while. But never one to give up an opportunity for some fun, the next night we played I wore a fencer's mask, which my son, Dan, had given me years ago. (He knows I go in for goofy stuff like that.) So

I walked into the locker room, approached Fred and asked "Are you the guy who hit me in the glasses?" Of course, Fred (above) managed to force a little smile and say "Me too," one of his favorite expressions for ANY topic.

-- LOU GIAMPETRONI



"O.K., O.K., YOU PLAY THE LEFT SIDE AND I'LL PLAY THE RIGHT."

