

NPA

(INDOOR / FOUR-WALL)

National Paddleball Association

WWW.PADDLEBALL.ORG

NPA, 7642 Kingston, Portage, Mich. 49002

NEWSLETTER / SPRING 2012-2013



Paddleballers from the Kalamazoo area gather to show off their trophies at a tournament in 1983 in Midland, Mich. All were a big part of the PB scene in the 1980s and 1990s and some into the 21st century. They are (from left) Joe Emaar, Doug Greene, George Hobbs, Andy Mitchell, Andy Kasalo, Jeff Burkham, Dean Pennala, Brad Ex and Bill Farmer.



All hail Kalamazoo, Michigan!

By JIM OWENS

The hosting area of the 2013 NPA Midwest Singles Championships -- Kalamazoo, Mich. -- has certainly been one of the largest stables of tournament players for years.

Lou Giampetroni, our newsletter editor and our most dependable source for paddleball history, ranks the area as the No. 1

source of tournament players over the years. I believe the area owns more national championships in NPA history than any other area in the country.

Ed Maher credits the "Otto League" with Kalamazoo's success in doubles, along with the influence of the "best doubles team ever" (Andy Kasalo and Andy Mitchell).

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Six have won both NPA major awards

The National Paddleball Association awards two major trophies at the end of each season.

They are the Earl Risky Memorial Trophy and the Sportsmanship Trophy.

The Risky is awarded in honor of the founder of the great game of paddleball to the "person who has contributed most to the sport."

The Sportsmanship Trophy is given annually to the person "who most represents the American ideal of good sportsmanship under extreme competitive conditions."

Only six players have received both trophies in the nearly 50 years since the first was awarded in 1968.

They are: Randy Wackerle, Jim Owens, Mark Smith, Randy Hoyle, Mike Cooperstock and Lou Giampetroni.

Risky:	Wackerle	Owens	Smith	Hoyle	Giampetroni	Cooperstock
	1982	1989	1992	1987	1978	1996

Sportsmanship:	1981	1985	1997	1998	1977	1991
		2010				

Owens is the only player to have won the Sportsmanship Trophy twice -- in 1985 and 25 years later in 2010.

Lorri Brigham, the NPA secretary-treasurer, has the distinction of being the only person to win the Risky twice, in 1986 and 2005.



Lorri Brigham
Two Risky Awards



Jim Owens
Two Sportsmanships

Andrew Price grabs Midwest Singles crown

KALAMAZOO, Mich. -- Andrew Price of Freeland, Mich., won the NPA's Midwest Singles Championship on Jan. 20, 2013, at the Bronson Athletic Club.

Andrew was impressive throughout the tournament, displaying considerable skill and speed.

He defeated another fine young player, Kevin McLaughlin, of Kalamazoo, in an exciting open final, 21-10, 21-14.

When asked to comment on the match, Kevin noted:

"Andrew played a great match and employed an effective mix of crisp kills and pass shots.

"His speed and power make him a tough competitor and his game seems to still be improving. He's fun to play against."



Andrew Price

Andrew is sponsored by Ektelon as a racquetballer and his victory was featured on the firm's Facebook page.

-- JIM OWENS

MIDWEST SINGLES RESULTS

OPEN: Andrew Price def. Kevin McLaughlin, 21-10, 21-14.

MEN'S A (Dropdown from Open): Mike Wisniewski def. Joe Baldori, 21-17, 21-18.

MEN'S B: Chad Krager (left-handed) def. Matt Kollig, 19-21, 21-18, 21-17; third, Ron Harris.

MEN'S C: Jim Price def. Adam Koehler, 21-16, 21-8.

MASTERS: Andy Mitchell def. Robert Stone, injury forfeit.

GOLDEN MASTERS: Andy Mitchell def. Jim Owens, 21-15, 21-6; third, Jim Swendris.

GOLDEN B (dropdown): Jared Arnold won by no-show forfeit.

SAGINAW FUN DOUBLES (Saginaw, Mich. YMCA) Jan. 26, 2013

Teams were divided into two divisions: A and B.

Mike Wisniewski and Jim Richter teamed to win the A group. Ron Malecki and Greg Keenan were second.

Jim Howland and Keith Thurlow won the B division. Jim Price and Jody Henning were second.

HAIL

Continued from Page 1

Steve "Otto" Dinges started the league in the early '80s; it has provided area players with competitive matches for nearly thirty years.

The annual Kalamazoo summertime grab-bag doubles tournament and pig roast will mark its 37th year this summer.

"The Pig Roast and Human Sacrifice" is one of a kind and consistently a good time. You never know beforehand who your partner is until the tournament starts.

Otto and JR (Andy Kasalo) start cooking the pig in the early morning. The delicious results are served late afternoon.

Paddleball players and others arrive at varying times in the afternoon and evening.

The "Woody" is awarded to a player who has demonstrated a zest for life. The "Honoree" or the "Human Sacrifice" -- in addition to having his or her caricature pictured on shirts given to tournament participants -- must eat the eye of the pig.

The Kalamazoo area has contributed a great deal to the running of the National Paddleball Association. Currently, three key members of the NPA Board of Managers are from the area -- Andy Mitchell, Ed Maher and Lorri Brigham.

Each has been a recipient of the Earl Risky Memorial Trophy for their contributions to the sport.

Andy Mitchell, NPA regional representative and 1997 Risky Award winner, has been a fixture at NPA tournaments since the mid-1970s.

He has amassed the most national titles in the history of the game. I counted 38 -- 3 open singles, 20 open doubles, 1 senior singles, 2 senior doubles, 5 masters singles, 5 masters doubles, 1 golden masters singles, 1 golden masters doubles.

Of the 20 open titles Mitchell and partner Andy Kasalo claimed, 15 were consecutive.

Mitchell is still a force in any division he enters. He continues to be an active board member; being involved in all of the major policy decisions of the day.

The 1998 Risky winner, Ed Maher, serves as our Web-master, chairman of the Otto League, and as a vice president of the NPA. Ed put us on the



web in 1997 and has kept it updated since.

www.paddleball.org is now an integral part of the NPA. We rely on it for tournament information, schedules and entries, newsletters, approval of paddles, rules, buying of balls, a list of places to play, announcements, links, and more. This summer, Ed put the NPA on Facebook.

Ed has been the chairman of the Otto League since 2001, preceded by Steve Dinges and Matt Kollig. He is a very competitive player locally and in NPA tournament, in addition to being a major contributor to the local and national paddleball organizations. He has claimed 2 national titles. Andy Mitchell and Ed are the reigning Masters Doubles Champions.

Lou Giampetroni sums up Lorri's contributions to our sport -- "I hate to think about the NPA without Lorri. Of course, there are others who have contributed -- but she's the key."

If you are at all aware of the NPA, you know Lou hit the nail on the head.

She is the only person to date to receive the Earl Risky award twice: 1986 and 2005. I heard a player once say that she should win it every year.

Lorri, who has not played paddleball in years and does not get paid, keeps it going for the rest of us. The NPA is clearly a labor of love for Lorri. We all owe our vice-president/treasurer/tournament director an immense debt of gratitude.

Three years ago, the board of managers changed the name of the Fall Doubles Tournament to the Lorri Brigham Classic. This, the Earl Risky Awards and other gestures reflect how much we value her efforts.



Champs Todd Entrikin (left) and Mike Orr.

Entrikin, Orr grab West Coast title

Todd Entrikin and Mike Orr won the 2013 West Coast Doubles Championship on February 2 at the Sorrento Valley Fitness Center in San Diego.

Entrikin-Orr defeated Aaron Embry and Kevin Williams in the open final.

“We had an Open/A division with nine teams playing in a round-robin,” said Jimmy Coggburn, Sorrento Valley manager.

“Then by point totals, we had a one-game final between the top teams in each flight.

“Then from the drop-

down teams, we had the A division final, with the top point-getters out of that group.”

Other winners:

A division -- Peter Callstrom-Steve Price def. Joe Ski-Dave Ratynski.

Upper B -- Greg Childs-Jeff Thon def. Dan Trubovitz-Greg Swanson.

Lower B -- Ryan Hase-Mike Trent def. Len Sonnenberg-Bruce Beare.

C division -- Jeff Janovetz-Carlos Contreras def. Aaron Embry (left-handed) and Andy Tabar.

Max's example highlighted PB

Mordechai E. Kreinin was a pretty good paddleball player (he was known as Max to most of us).

The E. Lansing, Mich., resident, an expert on economics, was a faculty member at Michigan State University.

He was one of the hundreds of players who played shortly after the reorganization of the NPA in the late 1970s.

He usually played with Lou Hekhuis, the long-time president of the NPA.

Kreinin had one national masters doubles title to his credit (1986) and several lesser wins, usually with Hekhuis.

With his PB background, Kreinin used an example involving the sport in an economic text he wrote. It concerned “supply” and read:



Kreinin

“The following experiment may be useful in generating a supply schedule.

“Assume that this class consists of 500 students. Your instructor is about to participate in a paddleball tournament and is in need of cheerleaders.

“If the instructor offers an A grade for each student who comes to cheer, there would undoubtedly be 500 volunteers.”

Then, using lesser grade possibilities, Kreinin said there would be fewer volunteers.

In his usual dry style, Kreinin said: “A bunch of people said they liked the example but they all said: “What is paddleball?”

-- LOU GIAMPETRONI

2013 Midwest Doubles Results

OPEN: Andrew Price-Chad Krager def. Andy Mitchell-Kevin McLaughlin, 21-17, 18-21, 21-17.

MEN'S A: Eugene Rush-Kevin McLaughlin def. Ron Glosser-Pete Ruhala, 10-21, 21-20, 21-17; 3rd, Paul Sylvester-Don Kirkconnell.

MEN'S B: Ron Harris-Matt Kollig def. Jared Arnold-Scott Schrum, 21-13, 21-6; 3rd, Bret Mitea-Paul Toth.

MASTERS: Andy Mitchell-Pete Ruhala def. Jim Swendris-Scott Lawrence, 21-13, 21-5; 3rd, Ron Harris-Greg Keenan.

GOLDEN MASTERS: Sandy DeGreif-Ron Malecki def. Jim Swendris-Jim Owens, 21-12, 17-21, 21-12; 3rd, Jim Howland-Steve Fleckenstein.

MIXED: Natalie Gilbert-Andrew Price def. Judy Shirley-Jim Owens, 21-19, 21-18.

Andrew Price, Krager capture Midwest Doubles title in barnburner over Mitchell-McLaughlin

By LOU GIAMPETRONI

Andrew Price and Chad Krager won the 2013 NPA Midwest Doubles Championship February 10 at the Michigan Athletic Club in E. Lansing, Mich.

But it wasn't easy.

They managed to survive in a humdinger of a match over Andy Mitchell and Kevin McLaughlin, 21-17, 18-21, 21-17.

Price, 21, of Freeland, Mich., who is sponsored by Ektelon as a racquetballer, hammers the paddleball in the style of the hardest hitters in the game.

He reminds one of Steve Wilson, the four-time NPA national singles champion of the early 1980s.

Wilson, of Flint, Mich., hit the ball hard ALL the time. Every shot. So does Price.

Mitchell, generally considered the best doubles player in the history of the sport, was the "old timer" in the foursome at 59. He and McLaughlin switched sides throughout the match. Mitchell held his own against the booming shots of Price most of the time.

But every once in a while, he had difficulty handling them. So did McLaughlin, who is 29. In a match like that, just a few "handcuffers" can mean the difference.

Price-Krager controlled the first game and little by little eked out a win. But Mitchell-McLaughlin got going in the second and had leads of 7-3, 11-4, 14-4 and 17-7. Mitchell-McLaughlin won it although Price-Krager made a strong bid near the end and narrowed the margin.

Krager, of Bay City, Mich., played the right side and occasionally was content to let Price come across behind him and take the



Andy Mitchell (left) and Kevin McLaughlin



Champions Chad Krager (left) and Andrew Price

shot when Mitchell-McLaughlin of Kalamazoo, Mich., kept the ball away from the youngster.

The game was similar to the first with Price-Krager taking a lead and hanging on to comfortably notch the victory.

Said Krager: "Andrew was on fire."

Said Price in an E-mail: "Our strategy ... was to get Mitchell tired. Also, the way Chad and I play together is Chad making great defensive shots

Price also found time to win the Midwest Mixed Doubles title with Natalie Gilbert of Saginaw, Mich. They topped Judy Shirley and Jim Owens, of the Ann Arbor, Mich., area, 21-19, 21-18.

and myself shooting every ball I can. We are a great team."

Price thanked his sponsor, Ektelon, for its support "and everyone else that has supported me throughout the years in both sports; paddleball and racquetball have made me the person I am today."

He also gave credit to his father, Fred Price, "for teaching everything I know about both racquetball and paddleball."

Price was asked which he prefers.

"I would normally say that I like racquetball more but the more I play paddles the more it grows on me," he said.

"I really like how in paddleball there is more strategy to it than racquetball; kind of like a game of chess whereas in racquets it's shorter rallies and all about the serve."

How does Price hit the ball so hard?

"Hitting the ball hard is something I learned from racquets and having good form helps too."

Chicago area to showcase NPA's best singles players

By JIM OWENS

The 2013 National Paddleball Association National Singles Championships will be held in Lombard, Illinois, March 2nd and 3rd, at Glass Court Swim and Fitness.

The Glass Court is a full-service athletic facility with eight courts and a bar; housing the only three-wall glass court in the state of Illinois. The website is: www.glasscourt.com

This will be the first NPA tournament at the Glass Court and the fourth national NPA tournament in the Chicago area (Chicagoland).

Additionally, Chicagoland has hosted a number of Midwest Championships and 15 consecutive annual three-wall outdoor tournaments.

When summer nears each year, I look forward to traveling to Chicagoland and playing marathon paddleball in the grab bag-formatted three-wall outdoor tournament. I encourage you to give it a try, if you haven't already.

The primary force behind Chicagoland paddleball is, without question, Dennis Negrete. The NPA awarded Denny the 2002 Earl Risky Award for his considerable contributions. He has served on the NPA Board of Managers for several years, is currently a regional representative for the Chicago area, and promotes paddleball whenever he can.

Negrete is a formidable left-sided doubles player with an explosive backhand. He and Bay City, Mich.'s Chad Krager have teamed to be one of the NPA's best doubles teams in recent years.

They claimed the national open title in 2010; finished second in open and won the seniors national title in 2011. Denny has also had success in singles and promises to be a contender in open, March 2nd and 3rd. Negrete owns two national singles titles in seniors: 2003 and 2004, and finished 2nd in both in seniors and open in 2011.

This national singles tournament could feature one of the most talent-laden open divisions we have seen in years. Following is a list of some of the players who intend to enter open in addition to Negrete.

Cesar Carrillo of Memphis, Tennessee, the reigning national champion, has entered three previous NPA singles tournaments, never lost a game, and claimed a national title in each: 2009, 2010, and 2012. Certainly, the masterful Cesar will be the No. 1 seed.

At least three serious contenders are expected from California: Todd Entrikin, Emmett Coe, and Justin Ivers. Entrikin has claimed a share of four national doubles titles and finished second to Cesar in singles last year.

Coe teamed with Brian Pineda to win last year's open national doubles championship and the open division at the 3 Wall Ball World Championships.

Emmett is eager to make his mark in open singles this year. Justin is a fine young player with a lot of potential.

Michigan will, in all likelihood, send the largest open contingent -- Mike Wisniewski, Andrew Price, Don Kirkconnell, Brandon Creamer, Kevin McLaughlin and Joe and Sam Baldori.

The remarkable "Wiz" has earned more national open singles titles than anyone in the history of the game: 9. The last one was in 2010 at age 52.

Kevin has won two A national singles titles, won the Midwest Open singles in 2012 and was runner-up this year. Don won the 2011 A national singles title.

Brandon has developed into a competitive open-level singles player. The Baldoris -- Joe and Sam -- are very good with considerable potential.

Earl Riskey Memorial Trophy

Awarded in honor of the founder of the great game of paddleball to the person who has contributed most to the sport.

- 1976: Tom Ballantyne, Flint, Mich.
 1977: The Rev. Walter L. Taylor, Flint, Mich.
 1978: Lou Giampetroni, Flint, Mich.
 1979: Dick Pitcher, Ann Arbor, Mich.
 Lou Hekhuis, East Lansing, Mich.
 1980: Ron Pudduck, Dexter, Mich.
 1981: Andy Kasalo, Kalamazoo, Mich.
 1982: Randy Wackerle, Bay City, Mich.
 1983: Bob Paige, Dearborn, Mich.
 1984: Ed Matusko, Pontiac, Mich.
 1985: John Scheppele, Lansing, Mich.
 1986: Lorri Brigham, Kalamazoo, Mich.
 1987: Randy Hoyle, Midland, Mich.
 1988: O. J. Cunningham, Bay City, Mich.
 1989: Jim Owens, Ann Arbor, Mich.
 1990: Bob Heitjan, Dearborn, Mich.
 Carol Perrin, Dearborn, Mich.
 1991: Joan Azeka, Chicago, Ill.
 1992: Mark Smith, Wausau, Wis.
 1993: Harv Tomter, Eau Claire, Wis.
 1994: Terry Smith, Pontiac, Mich.
 1995: Mike Wisniewski, Bay City, Mich.
 1996: Mike Cooperstock, Ann Arbor, Mich.
 1997: Andy Mitchell, Kalamazoo, Mich.
 1998: Ed Maher, Kalamazoo, Mich.
 1999: Cindy Cook, Ann Arbor, Mich.
 2000: Mike Carlson, Eau Claire, Wis.
 2001: Dave Haehnle, Brooklyn, Mich.
 Gordy Hatt, Jackson, Mich.
 2002: Dennis Negrete, Bloomingdale, Ill.
 2003: Don Traxler, Midland, Mich.
 2004: Charlie Brumfield, San Diego, CA
 2005: Lorri Brigham, Kalamazoo, Mich.
 2006: John Lowman, Owosso, Mich.



- 2007: Steve Keeley, Blythe, CA
 2008: Chad Krager, Bay City, Mich.
 2009: David Fleetwood, Memphis, TN
 2010: Sonny Salazar, Adrian, Mich.
 2011: Jimmy Coggburn, San Diego
 2012: Todd Entrikin, Riverside, CA



TOTH

PADDLEBALL PROFILE

“Great workout and great people after the game to have a beer and talk.”

That’s what Paul Toth of Westland, MI, enjoys about playing paddleball.

Toth, 50, began playing the game in 1980.

He is a driver for a beer company.

Toth said he took a first in Men’s B in state and national competition and a second place in open.

Any suggestions on how tournaments can be improved?

“Get younger people to play,” he said.

‘These guys are good’ ... And they were

By LOU GIAMPETRONI

One of the wonderful things about paddleball is remembering great matches in your career.

One such was a 1978 encounter with two legendary players -- Gale Mikles and Herb Olsen -- on the staff of Michigan State University.

My partner, the late Barry Lucas, and I reached the final of the masters division against the pair in the National Doubles Tournament at Portage, Mich.

We had talked Mikles and Olsen into playing masters.

They could have played in the division for a number of years -- they were eligible age-wise -- but refused to do so.

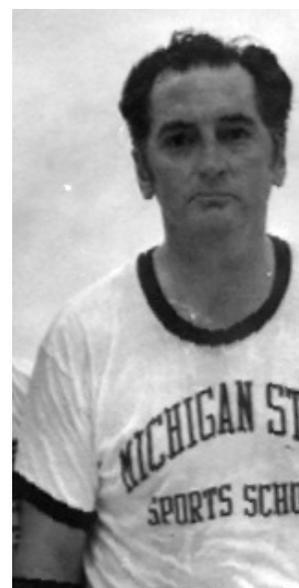
For years, Mikles and Olsen had played in the open division -- despite their age which was a little higher than most of the top-level hotshots.

And Mikles and Olsen beat several very good open teams, once in a tournament final.

So there Lucas and I were -- playing Mikles and Olsen for the masters title.

I mean this was something special for us. Playing those guys.

Well, they won the first game rather comfortably, 21-12. They were leading in the second



Gale Mikles (left) and Herb Olsen

game, 20-13. That’s when Lucas, usually stronger on defense, opened up and starting scoring some points for us.

We narrowed the margin. They had several serves but couldn’t get match point.

We finally pulled out the second game, 21-20, as we scored 8 unanswered points.

I remember as we walked out of the court for the rest between games before going in for the tiebreaker, Lucas bellowed: “We’re gonna beat these (expletive deleted).”

I said: “Hold on, these guys are good.”

And they were, as they easily won the tiebreaker, 21-8.

But it still was a thrill for both of us to have given Mikles-Olsen a pretty good run for their money.

I still have the trophy plate from that match. On the back, I had placed a piece of tape with the final score.

NPA 2012-2013 Schedule

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

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