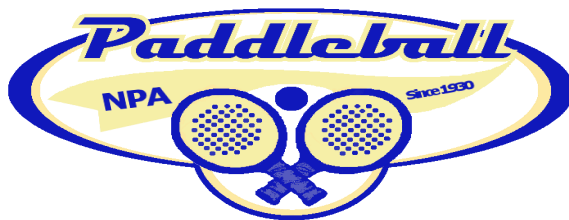


SUMMER 2016



WWW.PADDLEBALL.ORG

NATIONAL PADDLEBALL ASSOCIATION

2016 National Doubles Championships

Glass House Swim and Fitness

Lombard Illinois

April 16 & 17.

Open Division

Todd Entrikin (Riverside, CA) & Emmett Coe (San Diego, CA) won their third consecutive National Open Doubles Championship defeating second place Chad Krager (Bay City, MI) & Andrew Price (Chicago, IL) 11-21, 21-7, 21-9 in final. Brandon Creamer (Lansing, MI) & Don Kirkconnell (Kalamazoo, MI) finished in third place. Albert Gutierrez (Riverside, CA) & Michael Myers (Riverside, CA) won the consolation bracket.

A Division

Champions Joe Baldori (East Lansing, MI) & Dennis Negrete (Schaumburg, IL) defeated second place Jack Tamplin (Batavia, IL) & Russ Tatar (Chicago Area, IL) 21-6, 21-9 in the final. Eugene Rush (Ann Arbor, MI) & Mike Myers (Riverside, CA) came in third.

B Division

Champions Dan Bresina (Fall Creek, WI) & John Eckardt (Fall Creek, WI) with a 4 wins, 0 losses record topped second place John Mason (Palatine, IL) & John Moscato (Westmont, IL) who had a 2 wins 2 losses record. Adrian Montes De Oca (Elgin, IL) & Paul Nicotra (Carol Stream, IL) also had a 2 wins 2 losses record. Mason & Mascato won the match with Montes De Oca & Nicotra

C Division

Dan Bresina (Fall Creek, WI) & John Eckardt (Fall Creek, WI) with a record of 3 wins, 0 losses claimed their second 2016 National Champion finishing ahead of second place Jim Price (Freeland, MI) & Joe Mascato (Westmont, IL) who had a 2 wins and 1 loss record.

70+ Combined Division

Todd Entrikin (Riverside, CA) claimed a second 2016 National Championship with Albert Gutierrez (Riverside, CA) defeating Chad Krager (Bay City, MI) & Kevin McLaughlin (Chicago, IL) 21-7, 21-14 in the final. Andy Mitchell (Kalamazoo MI) & Mike Czabala (Camarillo CA) finished in third place. Brandon Creamer (East Lansing, MI) & Don Kirkconnell (Kalamazoo, MI) won the consolation bracket.

55+ Division

There was a three-way tie in matches: 2 wins and 1 loss. Jim Sterken (Ann Arbor, MI) & Jim Swendris (Ann Arbor, MI) were determined to be the champions. Charlie Brumfield (San Diego, CA) & Jamie Lawson (San Diego, CA) finished second. The outcome was based on the difference of points scored and points scored against between the three teams: Sterken/Swendris +7, Brumfield/Lawson +6 Randy Wackerle (Bay City, MI)/Mike Wisniewski (Bay City, MI) -13

PHOTOS OF THE NATIONAL DOUBLES WINNERS FOLLOW ON THE NEXT TWO PAGES



Open: Emmett Coe (San Diego, CA) & Todd Entrikin (Riverside, CA)



MEN'S A: Dennis Negrete (Schaumburg, IL) & Joe Baldori (East Lansing, MI)



MEN'S B & C: Dan Bresina & John Eckardt (Falls Creek, WI)



**70+ Combined: Todd Entrikin
& Albert Gutierrez
(Riverside, CA)**



**55+: Jim Swendris (Saline,
MI) & Jim Swendris (Ann Ar-
bor, MI)**

**CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF THE NATIONAL DOUBLES
CHAMPIONS AND TO ALL OF THE PLAYERS WHO COM-
PETED IN THIS FINE EVENT.**

2016 NATIONAL SINGLES ...by Jamie Lawson

There were a couple of “now that’s interesting” exclamations on the NPA Singles open draw sheet. Firstly, Chris Crowther is in the tournament. Chris is a polyracket. He loves pretty much anything with a paddle or a racket on a court: one wall, three wall, four wall, doesn’t matter. I met Chris back in ‘95. Three of us, Ed, Fred, and I, were playing the Pomona Open racquetball tournament. We didn’t have a place to stay and let’s just say that Pomona is not a town for the parsimonious. So Chris, who was about 19 at the time, says “why don’t you guys come back to my house? We’ll setup cots and you can stay over for the night.” Neat! We avoid a big hotel bill and get to hang with the Crowthers, who are a famously cool family.

So we three guests are staying in the great room, and there is a cricket chirp chirp chirping throughout the night. Chirp, chirp! Chirp, chirp! No one can sleep. It’s annoying and frustrating. Fred moans like he’s got a kidney stone. Ed says “I’m gonna kill that f___ing bug!” He gets up, turns on the light and the cricket goes silent. We hunt for 20 minutes. Denied, we turn out the light, go back to bed, and chirp, chirp! Chirp, chirp! . We suffer. In the morning we’re all tired from lack of sleep. Chris comes in and asks “when’s your first match?” “8AM” Ed says. “Hmmm, you must be playing me. My first match is at 8 as well,” Chris says. We realize that all of us are playing Chris that day. Perhaps that cricket’s on the payroll. Chris beats Ed at 8, then beats Fred at 10. I face Fred and Chris--the Twin Towers--in doubles at noon. Somehow we prevail. Probably because Fred can’t see straight from sleep deprivation. That’s the last time I’ll be able to challenge Chris because shortly thereafter he gets really really really good.

Now I see him in the NPA singles draw for the first time since he won it in 2006. He retired from pro racquetball two years ago but still helps young pros train. I’ve worked out with Chris. The guy is hardcore. I bump into him an hour or so before his first round and ask him what’s up and how his workout’s going. He says, “I’m slackin’ these days. Squash a couple times a week and that’s about it.” Chris is a great squash player. One of the best in Southern California. His matches with Tim Doyle and Mike Orr are the stuff of legend. So the irony is that “squash a couple times a week” might be slackin’ for Chris Crowther, but for the rest of us, we’d be coughing up chunks of a lung if we did that workout. At one point in time, this was Chris’s home club, but in recent years he hasn’t been given a particularly warm welcome here. There are lots of great players at this club: Steve Lerner, Dale Valentine, Todd Entrikin, Vince Carlone. They are the hometown favorites now, and Chris is treated more like a challenger. He draws into Todd Entrikin in the semis and wins in a breaker. Todd’s play has been up and down, so that’s not entirely un-

Surprise number two on the draw sheet is Joey Paraiso. This is the first time he’s ever played in NPA National Singles. He’s seeded fourth and gets by Mike Czabala in the quarters with relative ease. Joey has always had great hands, great feet, and a great heart. A month or so prior he was runner-up in a paddleball doubles tournament with a cash prize, and without a moment’s hesitation he signed the check back over to the tournament director for their youth program. Joey comes from a large family, four of whom are star racquetball players, two or three of whom have been on the US national team. His sister, Jacqueline Paraiso-Larsson is in the Racquetball Hall of Fame, but she has at times remarked that, of all of siblings, Joey has the most natural talent. Anyone who has played with Jackie knows what a capital statement this is. If it’s true, it must be that she just works harder. So I talk to Joey about his training regime. He says he’s working out six days a week: a couple days of soccer, a couple racquetball and paddleball in open level groups. His easy days are cardio and weights. Yipe! And it’s probably true that his sister Jackie works even harder. She runs paddleball and racquetball programs at a major gym. For her it’s 9-5. The Paraisos are sort of racquetball royalty. They’re fairly new to paddleball, but man can they play! Joey is a beast. His leg muscles have always been, well, “robust”. That’s the soccer training. His movement to the ball is great, and his swing is textbook. He faces top seed Emmett Coe in the semi-final. Joey has hope. He says he’s been beating Emmett on occasion in practice, but he well understands that tournaments are a different deal. Emmett takes it in two, but Joey puts up a good fight. In my opinion, Joey is still playing a racquetball style--the sport he knows best--but watch out next year as he learns a bit more about how paddleball differs. Especially his serve. He’s going to be tough in 2017.

The third surprise in the open bracket is that Mike Orr isn’t in the division. Mike has been overcoming shoulder surgery, but every time I’ve seen him, he’s played great! Mike’s in the seniors and playing with Emmett in the doubles, but not entered in open singles. He’s tearing everyone up in seniors. No one else is close. Brannon Allison won the As two years ago and is playing even better today. And Mike is just toying with him in the seniors. They laugh between points. Sometimes Brannon laughs during the point. With Mike in the open, this would be a different tournament. On any given day, he can beat any of these players.

with his body and then hits blistering passes to the back right. Emmett quickly comes around and gets most of these but by that time, Chris is in control of the rally, and even when he doesn't close it immediately, he maintains and extends his advantage in the rally eventually putting the ball away. Emmett comes back, adding 7 points with quick slashing pinch kills from his kneepads, but he's still down 15-12. At that point it's all Chris, who takes the first game 21-13.

Some people in the crowd notice that Chris is a little flushed and breathing hard. His complexion is pink. "He's vulnerable!" Well, maybe, maybe not. There are two machines on the court. Chris is a big, strong, bone crushing machine that looks like it's made of some fancy hardened alloy, and that's how it got its nickname "The Crippler". Yes, it's breathing hard, but that's just part of the machine that is Chris Crowther. That machine is still working well within its operating specifications. The Emmett machine is small, light, fast, made of some fancy super strong graphite composite material. It shifts direction quickly. It drops to its kneepads without making a sound or leaving a ripple in the air. It uses far less energy than the Crowther machine, but can it break that hard shiny alloy?

Emmett cuts off a lob to make a fly kill and goes up 2-0 in game two. But then it's more of the same from Chris. He's not killing the ball, but he's trapping Emmett on the left wall and hitting rocket passes to the back right that put Emmett at a disadvantage. Chris goes up 9-2 before Emmett switches into high gear. He pulls out all the stops bringing it to 9-9, and then it's a dogfight to 14-14, at which point there is a long series of side outs. Then something stokes the fire inside the big metal machine. Chris runs six points taking it to 20-14. At match point, Emmett makes a great diving get to deny Chris the championship, but then Chris rekills the ball in the right corner and that's the match!

This was a profoundly unexpected result. General consensus was that Emmett would take it fairly easily. He had taken two other finals from Crowther recently, also with big prize money at stake. Those were doubles matches where Chris was partnered with Alvaro Beltran, a top four pro racquetball player who is even more gifted in paddleball. Interestingly, both of those matches went to breakers, and in both of those matches, Chris and Alvaro had switched sides for the second and third games. In all games where Emmett and Chris played on the same side, Emmett prevailed. I had talked to Alvaro after one of those matches, and he said that he thought Emmett just had Chris's number. After Chris's win in the singles, some people speculated that Emmett was too tired; that he played two divisions where Chris played only one, and that was the difference. Some spectators noticed that Chris got the win without a blizzard of kill shots. Some speculated that the break Emmett took from training the week of the tournament might have made the difference. Emmett himself said that this was just the worst he had played in a year.

My explanation is different. For two decades, Chris Crowther made a living--and a fairly good living--playing singles racquetball. Singles is different from doubles, and as good as he is in doubles, he's better in singles. That's what he got paid for. That's why they call him a pro. All of his serves to Emmett were lobs, but they were vicious. Nothing effective could be done with them. No amount of training on the part of Chris's opponents could change that. Those serves put Chris in early control of the rallies and he used his size and strength to maintain control of the rallies. When Emmett was able to take control it was through his amazing shot making abilities. Emmett served lobs to Chris, but they were an eyelash less precise. They let Chris into the rallies and as soon as that happened, the big shiny metal machine took over. My opinion is that Emmett played a fine match. Maybe not his best ever, but I would not have wanted to face him that day. I would have been blitzed. Chris played great! He played a style that took advantage of his strengths and allowed him not just to control the court but also to put his opponent where he wanted on the court and win without needing to hit perfect kills. Chris's performance in the open singles final is something good players should give

2016 National Singles/Western Doubles Summary

Chris Crowther (San Diego, CA) is the 2016 National Open Singles Champion, defeating Todd Entrikin (Riverside, CA) in the Semi Final 15-21, 21-14, 21-6 and Emmett Coe (San Diego, CA) in the final 21-13, 21-14. Look for the Jamie Lawson article on the Open Singles Division.

Mike Orr and Emmett Coe (San Diego, CA) are Western Open Doubles Champions, defeating Joe Paraiso (El Cajon, CA) and Steve Price (San Diego, CA) 15-11, 15-14 in the final

To view completed R2 brackets use the link: <http://www.r2sports.com/tourney/home.asp?TID=16955>

Additional National Singles Results

A Champ Steve Melendez (Santee, CA) 2nd Alex Robles (Riverside, CA) 21-20, 21-14
Cons. Randall Slager (Germantown, TN)

B Champ Nate Taylor (Pasadena, CA) 2nd Brian Davis (Riverside) 21-17, 21-9 3RD Joe Pomathy (Ann Arbor, MI) Cons. Rick Aten (Riverside)

C Champ Brandt Dixon (Riverside) 3 wins 1 loss 2nd Rick Ingles (Riverside) 3 wins 1 loss
21-12, 21-18

35/45+ Champ Mike Orr (San Diego, CA) 4 wins 0 losses 2nd Albert Gutierrez (Riverside, CA) 3 Wins 1 loss

55+ Champ Vince Carlone (Riverside, CA) 3 wins 0 losses 2nd Jamie Lawson (San Diego, CA) 2 wins 1 loss

Additional Western Doubles Results

B Champs Mike Trent (San Diego, CA)/David Ratynski (Lemon Grove, CA) 2nd Alex Robles (Riverside, CA)/ Rick Ingles (Riverside, CA) 15-9, 15-7 Cons. Mike Burgett (Riverside, CA)/ Brian Davis (Riverside, CA)

C Champs Brandt Dixon (Riverside, CA)/Mike Burgett (Riverside, CA) 4 wins, 0 losses 2nd Phil/Rick Aten (Riverside, CA) 3 wins 1 loss

Sponsors: Sonnenberg & Associates, Charlie Brumfield, Jerry Molell, Siemienowski & Associates, TMH Roofing, ABG Construction, Liquid Nitro, and John Falkiner

CHAMPION PHOTOS FOLLOW



Brandt Dixon
(Riverside, CA) C Champ NS



Vince Carlone
(Riverside, CA) 55+ Champ NS



Steve Melendez
(Santee, CA) A NS



Mike Orr (San Diego,
CA) 35/45+ NS



Nate Taylor
(Pasadena, CA) B NS



Chris Crowther
(San Diego, CA) Open NS



Emmett Coe (San Diego, CA)

Mike Orr (San Diego, CA)
OPEN WD



Mike Trent (San Diego, CA)

David Ratynski (Lemon Grove, CA) B
WD



Tim Herman (Corona, CA)

Albert Gutierrez (Riverside, CA) A WD

2016 Midwest Shootout

Emmett Coe of San Diego, CA and Gearbox dominated at the first time Midwest Shootout at one of the nicest facilities in the country, Sparrow Michigan Athletic Club in East Lansing Michigan, February 6th and 7th. The Shootout, a Brandon Creamer initiative, featured a Pro Singles Division and a full offering of doubles divisions.

Some of the best paddleball players in the country showed up for Pro Singles to compete for a total purse of \$2100: \$1100 for first, \$500 for second, and \$250 for the other two semi-finalists.

Currently the apparent three best paddleball singles players in the country are all sponsored by Gearbox: Emmett Coe, Todd Entrikin from Perris, CA, and Andrew Price from Chicago, IL.

Coe prevailed in the Pro Open, defeating Price in the semi finals 21 – 19, 21 – 15 and Entrikin in the final 21 – 11, 21 – 3. Emmett was simply spectacular. The fourth player in the semi finals, tournament coordinator Brandon Creamer, also has a Gearbox link, being sponsored in racquetball.

Emmett Coe teamed with Kevin McLaughlin of Chicago to win the Open Doubles Division, defeating Andrew Price and Bay City, Michigan's Chad Krager 21 – 19, 20 – 21, 21 – 7 in the final.

It was a good weekend for Dennis Negrete of the Chicago area. He and Greg Keenan of Bay City, MI defeated Brandon Creamer and Jeff Connell of East Lansing, MI, 21 – 14, 21 – 9 in the A Division final. Ed Maher and Andy Mitchell of Kalamazoo, MI came in third.

Negrete and Chad Krager finished on top of the collective Age Division. They won all of their three matches in round-robin play. Jim Swendris of Ann Arbor, MI and Andy Mitchell of Kalamazoo, MI came in second with a two wins and one loss record. Negrete and Krager beat their second place rivals 20 – 21, 21 – 6, 21 – 4.

The B Division final was a war, fairly played but extremely competitive. Brothers Marty and Daniel Gauthier of Highland and Novi, MI respectively squeaked by in the tiebreaker 21 – 20, defeating Paul Toth of Westland, MI and Jim Howland of Redford, MI. The match margin of victory was literally just a single point. The two teams split the first two games 21-14 each.

The Shootout was an exciting and fun tournament. Veteran tournament director Lorri Brigham kept the tournament on or ahead of schedule. Two of Brandon Creamer's friends from racquetball, Richard Westerbrink and Keith Bryan, helped set the tournament up on R2 and posted matches immediately on R2 after the results were communicated to the tournament desk, enabling players and fans to view current results via the internet. Richard and Keith also gave paddleball a try. Their presence was clearly noticeable and certainly appreciated.

Tournament Coordinator Brandon Creamer put in a lot of work for this tournament. His efforts were apparent and unquestionably paid off. As is the policy, no NPA funds were used for prize money. Brandon successfully raised enough for the Pro Singles awards and more.

A special thanks to the sponsors: Pro Taught Painting, Wrought Iron Grill, and Gearbox. As per usual in NPA sanctioned tournaments, Ektelon provided the balls.

Jim Owens

The 2016 Earl Risky Award Winner

Brandon Creamer was presented with the Earl Risky Award, April 16, 2016, for his significant contributions to sport of paddleball at National Doubles in Lombard, Illinois. He has been increasingly active the last few years as an NPA Board of Managers member and a promoter of the sport.

Brandon, a very good open division player, has encouraged a number of racquetball players to try paddleball and has successfully enticed some to play in NPA paddleball tournaments. As an advocate for using R2 Sports, he has taken charge, learned the basics of the system, and has helped others utilize the R2's offerings. R2 provides clear online brackets, instant match results, and more.

There was a change in tournament offerings this past season, more focus on local and individual initiatives. The change was formulated at the 2015 Summer Board of Managers Meeting. At that meeting, Brandon stepped up and committed to having a tournament in East Lansing at the Sparrow Michigan Athletic Club.

He wanted to put together a distinctively new and exciting paddleball tournament. After much consideration, he decided to go with a two-day tournament with a Pro Singles Division and a full offering of doubles divisions. Brandon raised enough money from sponsors and a \$15 bump in the Pro Division entry fee for a \$2100 total purse: \$1100 for first, \$500 for second, and \$250 for the two remaining semi finalists in the Pro Division.

Brandon contacted the top paddleball players in the country and made sure there was a premier quality Pro Division, including two Californians who were the eventual finalists: Emmett Coe and Todd Entrikin.

The Midwest Shootout was certainly a very successful and fun tournament. Brandon tells me, he intends to do it again next season. I look forward to it.

I have discussed numerous issues related to paddleball and the NPA with Brandon over the years. Increasingly, I depend on him to provide me with honest assessments and occasionally a different perspective.

On behalf of the NPA players, thank you Brandon Creamer for your many contributions to the sport of paddleball on and off the court.

Jim Owens



Adam Koehler 2016 NPA Sportsmanship award winner!

Congratulations!

Adam in a very short time has proven to be quite a fierce competitor in the sport of paddleball, and while being competitive and playing a sport that has been known to frustrate mere mortals, Adam has repeatedly showed his ability to remain calm, courteous and fair throughout a grueling match.

Not an easy thing to do commented Wiz, as he remembered the demons he had overcome back in the 80s and 90s that would preclude him from ever receiving the award.

That's just one of his attributes since his baptismal to paddleball in 2012 by co-worker and friend Mike Wisniewski.

Right from the start he has shown a coolness and almost Zen like ability to stay focused and not let the small stuff bother him during play. This has served Adam well because his progress to play open level paddleball has been lighting fast; in just 3 short seasons he has brought his level of play to an open level. He has proven himself in the "A" division with a 2015 National Singles title and a 2015 Mid-West A championship.

Adam graduated from Midland High in 2007, where he excelled in wrestling, baseball, and also played on a racquetball league at the Midland Community Center during this time.

After graduation Adam attended and graduated from Kettering University, he played intramural racquetball while there and won several championships no less.

He has since gone back as coach for the Kettering ultimate Frisbee team, which is another sport he has excelled at.

Adam lately has been combining Yoga with his paddleball training regimen and between the yoga and his conditioning from playing outdoor ultimate which is a lot of running and sprinting, he is really accelerating his abilities on the paddleball court.

His training may get put on hold for a couple years as Adam contemplates a move to China latter this fall on assignment for Nexteer automotive, where he also has been doing very well and has accomplished a lot in a short time with his ability to learn and more importantly apply what he has learned just like on the court!

Good luck Adam and take a couple of paddles and a squash racquet!

Mike Wisniewski





LOU ON LOU

Editor's Note: Giampetroni has been involved in paddleball and the operation of the NPA for nearly 50 years. He periodically will contribute articles to the newsletter.)

By LOU GIAMPETRONI

My initiation into the great sport of paddleball was not a very auspicious one.

In 1968, I wasn't feeling well and decided to join the Flint, Michigan, YMCA, and try to get in better shape. I had played the usual sports as a kid (baseball – American Legion; basketball – Catholic Youth Organization; football – Detroit City League and a semi-pro league.

I went to the front desk at the Y and borrowed a paddle. I had watched a number of men playing the game and figured it would be easy. One player took me into a court and we hit the ball back and forth. No problem. Then the guy hit a shot along the left wall.

I ran over and tried to underhand the ball.

I missed, followed through and whacked myself in the mouth with the paddle. Except for a bruised lip, I didn't do too much damage. But I remember that first attempt at a "backhand" shot. Later, my backhand consisted of me squeezing along the left wall, trying to get inside the line of flight and maybe hitting the ball that way.

Didn't work.

Eventually, I practiced a little on my backhand and got to the point where I at least keep the ball in play. Because I learned in a hurry that if you were a right-handed player (I was and am), you get a lot of shots on your left side.

However, I never got very good at playing singles. Too much like work. But I entered a lot of singles tournaments. That's because I never wanted to miss a tourney. A friend recently told someone "Lou won a lot of singles tournaments."

"Lou never won a lot of singles tournaments!!" He was a lousy singles player. And besides, all his opponents were smarter.

But I hated to miss a tournament so I entered a bunch of singles events – and usually lost.

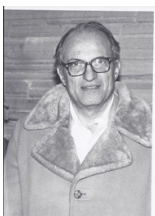
But DOUBLES!! That was a different story. There was a time in the early years when I kept a list of my partners and it reached 23 before too long. I never did figure out why I didn't have a partner very long.

But the faces kept changing. Makes one wonder now. Did they know something?

I played a lot of doubles over the nearly 47 years since I borrowed that paddle at the Flint YMCA ... and met a lot of wonderful people. The people! That's another thing. Not only do you get a chance to exercise and compete. But the other players and their loved ones are a special breed. Most of them know the game and recognize outstanding performance – whether it's by a friend or a foe. And cheer accordingly.

Another thing. Paddleball is a great stress reliever. I worked at The Flint Journal for 43 years. Talk about your pressure-cookers!! I don't know what I would have done without paddleball all those years but I can honestly say that it has been a very important and enjoyable part of my life.

I wish I had discovered paddleball sooner. I'm still playing at least twice a week. Which is great. But I find I have to go to bed quite a bit earlier when I do.



TOM BALLANTYNE: A
vital key to paddleball's
success

By LOU GIAMPETRONI

The recent death of Margaret (Mickey) Ballantyne reminded me of the efforts of her late husband, Tom, toward the success of indoor, four-wall paddleball.

There have been many persons over the years who have poured tremendous energy and work into success of the sport. But none more than Tom Ballantyne, who was almost a one-man gang in his desire to make paddleball as we know it a vibrant and colorful sport.

Ballantyne, of Flint, Mich., died in 2003 at the age of 78. He was one of the key figures in the 1974 reorganization of the National Paddleball Association and the man responsible for much of its success for more than a decade.

It was Ballantyne who took the shaky operation of the NPA, which was 12 years old at the time, and helped make it a strong group that put paddleball on the map.

He also made personal efforts to convince the Penn Athletic Co. to continue to produce the ball when it appeared it would be discontinued.

He was the architect of the plan for the NPA Board of Managers and was a member of the board in the mid-1970s. He was NPA president in 1974, 1975 and 1976.

Ballantyne, who was very competitive as a masters singles and doubles player, was the first recipient – in 1976 – of the Earl Risky Memorial Trophy. It is awarded in honor of the founder of the great sport of paddleball and given annually to the person who has contributed most to the sport.

Paddleball was Ballantyne's big love, along with golf. A businessman, Ballantyne put in countless hours to make paddleball the best it could be.

Of course, as we all know – it was either Tom's way or the highway. He definitely had his opinions. And he liked to give little lessons.

On one occasion, we were in a large classroom at the University of Michigan working to set up a tournament. He asked me why I had done something or other, and I said: "I just assumed it would be O.K."

He picked up a piece of chalk, walked to a blackboard and said: "Let me show you something."

And he went on to print A-S-S-U-M-E in large letters. Then he divided the word with two slashes -- one in front of the U and one after the U. "When you assume," he said, "you make an ASS out of U and ME." I never forgot that and I don't do too much assuming anymore.

I gave the eulogy at Tom's funeral and told the audience that paddleball requires a lot of running and exercise to help us keep in shape. "But the best part," I said, "is that we old farts still have an opportunity to COMPETE against each other. There's that sense of going into battle even though it's a fun thing. How many people can recapture the glory of their younger years in the arena? Well, paddleballers still can do that."

For all he did, players everywhere owe Tom a great debt.



Jim Owens

Inducted 2016

Charlie Brumfield (on the right) inducted Jim Owens into the NPA Hall of Fame on March 20, 2016, in Riverside, California

From 1992 to 2012, Jim Owens has claimed 8 National titles. He has also served on the NPA Board of Managers for 30 years and as President of the Board since 2012. Jim was the recipient of the Earl Risky award in 1989. He is the only player to be presented with the Sportsmanship Award two times (1985 and 2010).

A Listing of his eight national titles follows:

Three National Singles Championships

SENIORS (35+) 1992

Masters (45+) 1995 and 1998

Five National Doubles Championships

Masters (45+) 1997 (with Jim Sterken)

Seniors (35+) 2003 (with Jim Sterken)

Golden (55+) 2005 (with Jim Sterken)

Mixed 2000 (with Cindy Cook)

Mixed 2012 (with Judy Shirley)



Kelly Gelhaus

Inducted 2016

Todd Entrikin (on the left) inducted Kelly Gelhaus into the NPA Hall of Fame on March 18, 2016, in Riverside, California

From 2004 to 2013, Kelly Gelhaus claimed 8 National Open titles. From the moment Kelly came to game of paddleball, his skills on the court and his outgoing personality have made him shine. Kelly has brought paddleball to several cities and has proven himself a great ambassador of the sport.

A listing of his national titles follow:

Men's Open National Singles

2004, 2005, & 2007

Men's Open National Doubles

2004 & 2005 (with Steve Lerner)

2006, 2007, & 2013 (with Todd Entrikin)



STEVE TRENT

Inducted 2016

Todd Entrikin (on the right) inducted the late Steve Trent into the NPA Hall of Fame on March 20, 2016, in Riverside, California. Mike Trent, Steve's brother, accepted the award.

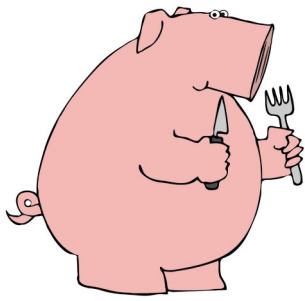
Steve was a founding member of the Paddleball Nation and was a key factor in the rise of paddleball on the West Coast. Steve was known for his lightening quick hands and his outstanding sportsmanship. He would still be winning nationals titles to this day if he had not been taken from us so soon.

A listing of his national titles follows

National Doubles Masters (45+) 2005 (with Andy Mitchell)

National Doubles "A" 2009 (with Chad Krager)

National Doubles Masters (45+) 2011 (with Andy Mitchell)



40th Annual Pig Roast and Human Sacrifice SATURDAY, AUGUST 20TH, KALAMAZOO MI

Who would have thought all those years ago when a local bunch of Kalamazoo players got together for some friendly, but competitive games of paddleball and to celebrate the graduation of one Mr. Mark “Pappy” Smith from WMU that a 40 year tradition would be born.

The Pig Roast and Human Sacrifice has been a great tradition in Kalamazoo MI bringing people from all over – Michigan, Illinois, Indiana & California for a fun day of intense paddleball followed by an evening of food, fun & drink. It started with play at WMU followed by dinner at “Chopper’s”. Over the years the venues have changed to the Club on Westnedge, the YMCA and for the last several years to BAC for the play. The Roast sites have gone from Hammer’s to “Legs” to “Big Joe’s” and now the VFW.

Each year an honoree is picked to be our sacrifice (and get their face on a great t-shirt). The only honoree without a t-shirt to commemorate his tourney is Mark Smith...but there are 39 other proud recipients’. A lot of thought and discussion goes into who will be each year’s honoree. There is not a specific set of criteria (as in winning records, etc) you just have to have been a part of the paddleball family.

The format has changed over the years from when it was an invitational to its current format of a grab-bag doubles. The grab-bag format has been in place for 20+ years and has resulted in some formidable match-ups. There have been final matches (where the format is one game, winner take all) that have been as entertaining and intense as anything you would see on a Sunday morning Nationals finals. Robert Stone even played with a torn bicep, resulting in a lot of head shaking from his doctor the following Monday. You have to wonder if they realize all they are going to get is some “pig iron” when it is all done.

Over the last several years the “party in the parking lot” hosted by Brad and Anne Ex has become a popular feature. With a lunch spread and beverages set up on the back of Brad’s pickup in the corner of the parking lot and lawn chairs spread around – it is a welcome break for players and spectators alike.

After the tourney the real fun begins at the VFW on Kilgore road. For the last 10 or so year they have been great hosts to us. They keep making improvements to their outdoor venue making it more comfortable every year. With the help of “Big Daddy”, Andy Kasalo and Otto Dinges spend the day slaving over a hot grill to provide delicious meat with a host of yummy side provided by players and guests. Again, Anne Ex works her magic to coordinate and set up the feast. And then it just becomes a great big “family reunion” of faces you’ve known forever and friends you have just met. There is eating and greeting and music and games going into the night. Oh, and we can not forget the highlight of the evening (drum roll, please)....the eating of the pig’s eyeball. This gourmet delight goes to the current honoree. This tradition started about 25 years ago and over the years we have pulled in past honorees to eat the other eyeball. Almost everyone sucks it up to chew it up. I have seen a little sleight of hand once where it may not have been ingested (I’m talking to you Louie G.)

We hope to make the 40TH Pig Roast and Human Sacrifice the best one ever. Even if you can’t be in the tourney come to watch, party in the parking lot, enjoy the Roast and most importantly catch up with this great group of friends I like to call my Paddleball Family!

Hope to see you all!

Lorri Brigham



This September marks the fifth year paddleball has been part of the 3 Wall Ball World Championships in Las Vegas. The National Paddleball Association is proud to be involved in this class event.

Where else can you see the highest quality handball, racquetball, and paddleball, side by side? And it is just a lot of fun. View this promotional video to get a taste: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=taAi2vsDfxM>

If you have played in past years, I look forward to seeing you Vegas again in September. If you have never played, I encourage you to give it a try. It is certainly a unique experience.




We are offering a full array of doubles divisions from Novice to Pro on 3 wall short wall courts (The side walls end at the short-line and there is no back wall.) as well as on 1 wall courts. The Pros will play for a total purse of \$1500: \$1000 split for the champions and \$500 split the runners-up.

For additional information and tournament sign-up, please view <http://www.r2sports.com/tourney/home.asp?TID=17087>


If you have a question, please email me or Lorri at npa.paddleball@gmail.com

Battle of the Borders: USA vs Mexico

3 Wall Short Paddleball (The side walls end at the short-line and there is no back wall.) will be featured July 31st in the Battle of the Borders. Information is available at <http://npa.paddleball.org/2015-2016-paddleball-tournaments/> Additional information and tournament sign-up: <http://www.r2sports.com/tourney/home.asp?TID=17452>



2016



BATTLE OF THE BORDERS

PADDLEBALL

KING OF THE COURT (DOUBLES)

Brought to you by GEARBOX

USA vs MEXICO

This event is part of the 2016 Battle of the Borders which also includes Racquetball, Pickleball and Handball. Two full days of fun, one location, four (4) great sports.








Date: Sunday, July 31, 2016

Starts at 8:30am: Lower Division (A/B/C)

Starts at 11:00am: Upper Division (Pro/Open/Elite)

HOST FACILITY: Woodland Park Middle School
1270 Rock Springs Road, San Marcos, CA. 92069

Tournament Director: Todd Entrikin & Jimmy Vequezo



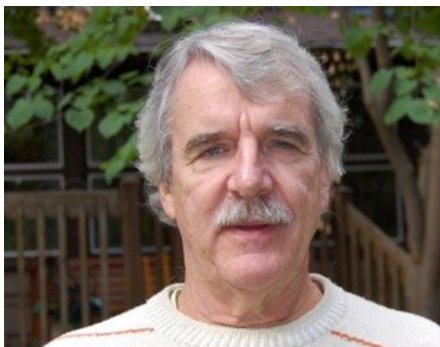
N.P.A. Tournament Results

Saginaw Doubles (Saginaw YMCA) (non-sanctioned)

- Open 1st Chad Krager & Scott Wittbrodt (Bay City)
2nd Mike Wisniewski (Bay City) & Ron Malecki (Midland)
3rd Robert Stone & Ted Wray (Jackson)
- A 1st Jim Cipperoni (South Lyon) & Andy Pappas (Detroit)
2nd Bill Jamrog & Pat O'Shea (Bay City)
- B 1st Michael Brennan (Saginaw) & Jim Price (Freeland)
2nd Bruce Schneider and Don Traxler (Midland)

Bean Smith (Bay City Y) (non-sanctioned)

- Open 1st Randy Wackerle & Chad Krager (Bay City)
2nd Joe Baldori (East Lansing) & Adam Koehler (Bay City)
- A 1st Eugene Rush (Ann Arbor) & Scott Wittbrodt (Bay City)
2nd Jim Swendris & Jim Richter (Ann Arbor)
- B 1st Pat O'Shea & Bill Jamrog (Bay City)
2nd Thomas Bodary & Eric Boks (Bay City)



THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

ROUND ROBINS?

Traditionally when there are four or five players or teams signed up for a division for an NPA tournament, a round robin bracket is used. When there are six players or teams, it has been a split round robin.

In a round robin, each player or team has a match with each of the other players or teams in the division. The five team round robin requires four matches for each player team and as such is difficult to schedule. Clearly, this is Lorri's, our veteran tournament director, least favorite bracket.

Who wins the division under the existing rules and procedures?

The player or team winning the most matches.

Two players/teams tied in number of matches won – the winner of the match between these two players/teams in round robin.

Three players/teams tied in number of matches won – the highest score after calculating the difference between the points scored and the points scored against in the matches between these three teams.

Players and fans are usually agreeable with the existing rule in cases (1) and (2). When there is a three-way tie in matches, there is typically confusion and complaints among players and fans.

An example of the calculations: Players A has a 2 win and 1 loss match record. His score with the other two players in the three-way tie: 21-18, 19-21, 21-14. Points scored: $21+19+21 = 61$ Points scored against $18+21+14 = 53$ The difference: $61-53 = +8$.

In a split round robin, the six players are divided into two groups of three. Each player or team plays a match with the other two teams in his or her group. The same rules as outlined above are used to determine the group winner. The group winners play a match for the championship. The second place player or teams in each group playoff for third.

Keeping it in perspective, it is rare for a three-way tie to occur but when it does, questions and complaints typically follow. Might this be solved by making sure players in round robins know the rule or do we need a rule change?

(continued on following page)

The Board of Managers has considered changing the round robin rules and procedures several times. Each time the decision has been to stay with the existing procedures and rules.

The Board will consider changes again this summer. There are three possible alternatives that I am aware of:

Possibility #1: Avoid round robins by consolidating divisions and use drop-down brackets to a greater degree. If for instance, there are five teams signed up for B and three for C, consolidate into one division with eight players in a straight draw bracket. Have the first round winners play for the B division title and the first round losers play for the C title.

No rule changes would be needed for this possibility.

Possibility #2: Always use a straight draw bracket regardless of the number of players, teams, or byes. For instance, if there are only four players or teams in the division, the two winners of the first set of matches would advance directly to the finals.

The rules for round robin could be deleted.

Possibility #3: Have a single-game round robin style play-off to determine who plays for the championship and who plays for third place. The two players or teams scoring the most total points advance to the final, which will be a best of two out of three games match. The two with the third and fourth most total points play off for third.

The rules for round robins would need to be rewritten.

Please inform NPA Board members if you wish to suggest another possibility or you wish to express an opinion in favor or against one or more of the three possibilities I have listed. If you wish to weigh-in directly with me or Lorri, please email us at npapaddleball@gmail.com

Jim Owens
NPA President