**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 an NPA sanctioned tournaments, Ektelon provided the balls.

Jim Owens

NPA President