

SSRA NEWSLETTER

March 2005



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2005 Seattle Open

160 participants from B.C., Oregon, Idaho, and all Seattle-area clubs took to the courts at the SACDT over the weekend of January 21-23, to contest the 2005 Seattle Open.

Tournament Director Ayub Khan described the event as “a huge success,” with a wild Saturday night party featuring good food and lots of dancing.

Ayub’s already planning a bigger and better 2006 tournament: “I’m trying to get 4 top 10 mens players to come.”

Results

Men’s A/Open: Lynn def. Anderson
Men’s A: Viljoen def. Khalighi
Men’s A 40: Grimes def. Metz
Men’s B: Wagner def. Roudzek
Con: Knight/Reeves
Men’s B 40: Truscott def. McGloin
Con.: Kelly
Men’s C: Jung def. Mitchell
Con: Wilson
Men’s D: Marcos def. Binford
Con: Aziz
Men’s Novice: Duchin def. Raynolds
Women’s A: Odinak def. Nelson
Con: Posy
Women’s B: Rajan def. Muench
Con: Kraft
Women’s C: Goodridge def. Griffin
Con: Ahlberg
Women’s D: Bott def. Wood
Con: Voermans
Women’s Novice: Regio def. Simmons

The SSRA Sweatshirts have landed! And they look great. Arrangements are being make for their distribution.

New Year’s Squash Tourney

The 8th Annual New Year’s Squash Tourney was held over the cold and dreary weekend of January 7-9, at the Columbia Athletic Club, Kirkland.

Those who dared test their post-holiday fitness experienced spirited matches and good cheer.

Special thanks to Mark Alger and his son Tyson, who traveled to the tournament from Alaska. Thanks also to Mark and Ronn McMahon for their Saturday evening exhibition match, before an appreciative gallery.

Results:

Men’s A: McMahon def. Alger
Cons: Langmaid def. Garg
Men’s B: Slater def. Libman
Cons: Heath def. Bhatia
Men’s C: Habib def. Holman
Cons: Antonio def. Kwan
Men’s D: Alger def. Urback
Cons: Olsen def. Baruch

Upcoming Regional Events

March 16-20, U.S National Championships
Harvard, MA

Entry closed

April 7-10, Seattle City Championships
Mark the dates; entry form to follow.

April 9, SSRA year-end party

April 22-24, Pro Club Spring Classic
Pro Club

Azam Khan 425 885-5566

May 13-15, Regional Junior Teams Tournament
Pro Club

Pro Club

Azam Khan 425 885-5566

Juniors, Juniors, Juniors, Juniors

My British Invasion

by Kisten Lange

Earlier this winter, I traveled to Great Britain with a group of American girls to compete in the Scottish and British Junior Opens. The courts were dark and dreary—definitely not the Pro Club! Despite the conditions, I played some very good squash.

The Scottish Junior Open was held in Edinburgh, and I played at Colington Castle. My first match was against a very nice South African girl, who I beat very quickly. Next, I played the Welsh #1, and once again I won easily. Then I played Neha Kumar, who I have been struggling to beat for a year, and lost 3-1. The loss dropped me into the 5-8 bracket, where I played a long, very tough, back-and-forth match against a New Zealand girl, which I won in 4. I breezed through my final match against a Canadian and finished the tournament 5th in the U17 division, the highest finish of any American girl.

I had a first round bye at the British Junior Open, opening against another South African girl, who I beat in 3. My next match, against French #1 Camille Serme, was a bit of a disappointment. I started strong, was playing very well, and then I hit a mental wall and just shut down (I lost). That night I played the oddest match of my life against Victoria Lust from England. I went from playing well to bad to well to bad. I was so nervous during the one hour match that I thought I might throw up on the court! I hung tough and won 9-7 in the 5th. Next, I played the New Zealand girl again and beat her very easily. I finished the tournament by

beating an Egyptian girl, in a very entertaining match. Overall, I came in 9th, which is a good showing, but definitely leaves room for improvement.

I returned from Great Britain more inspired than when I left and more prepared for what is to come. My success has guaranteed me a place on the U.S. Junior Women's Team, where I will represent the U.S. at the World Championships this summer in Belgium. I want to thank my parents for sending me on this trip, all the people who have played with me, and most importantly my coach Azam Khan, who, in my opinion is the best coach that I could have ever asked for. Thanks to all for supporting me!!!!!!

Princeton Junior Open

by Yarden Odinak

The Princeton tournament was amazing. Tournaments are always the best part of playing squash. The atmosphere is pretty intense, and you always see the most incredible matches. I usually feel very nervous and very excited before playing East Coast girls I haven't met in previous tournaments. So, when I enter the court I closely observe how the other player hits during warm up, and by the time I start playing I have calmed down. I love traveling in big groups, because it is always nice to have people cheering for you. We will have a group of at least 6 or 7 players from the West Coast at the next Junior Nationals.

Luke Bench Oregon U13 Champ

Last November, Luke and Reilley Bench (STC) traveled to the Oregon State Championships. Luke dominated the U13 competition by winning his 5 matches without losing a game and giving up only 6 points! (see *Travels with Vidya* on p. 4)

The 2004 British Open

by Steve Furneaux, SSRA Trustee & Librarian

As a boyhood fan of Robin Hood, I daydreamed of visiting Nottingham, and the 2005 British Open Championships, which I attended with fellow SSRA Trustee and Treasurer Tony Halstead, turned childhood dreams into reality. With its Victorian brick architecture, imposing castle, Galleries of Justice, and hopping Lace Market nightlife, Nottingham is a notable and historic venue.

For many decades the Open was the most prestigious squash event in the world. It was in this event that Mahmoud Karim took 10 and Hashim Khan 7 consecutive titles. Jahangir Khan dominated the 1980s. Today, the tournament still attracts top players from around the world.

The first good match we saw was Anthony Ricketts vs. John White in the quarterfinals. Ricketts prevailed 10-8 in the 5th, only to fall to Thierry Lincou in semis. The Men's 35+ final pitted Craig van der Wath and Guy Olby, in what was one of the "cleanest" matches I've seen for some time--hardly a let

called and exemplary conduct and etiquette. Lee Beachill made a determined effort vs. David Palmer in the men's semis, but to no avail. In the other semifinal, acrobatic Amr Shabana upset #2 seed Lincou (who appeared slightly injured) in very entertaining fashion.

The Ladies were grace personified on court. Of note was Vanessa Atkinson, who lost a 2-0 lead to the tenacious Rachael Grinham. Cassie Jackman played some deft shots all over court, but Natalie Grainger was covering everything and prevailed.

We missed the finals, but the two Aussies held their laurels.

Overall a great event, with a high standard of play and officiating, and a time to renew friendships, including the great ambassador for squash Sarah Fitz-Gerald.

Husky Squash Hits The Road

by Mike Bishop

Chilly Philly

The UW Huskies squash team spent the weekend of January 15-16 on its first road trip—to Philadelphia. Though we lost all three matches, the experience and camaraderie made the trip a success.

The Huskies played Amherst, George Washington, and Haverford.

Amherst was clearly in control from the spin of the racquet, with no Husky taking a game. Results against the George Washington Colonials were not much better, but we were more competitive, with #9 **Jae-Woo Ha** taking a game.

A somewhat disheartened Husky team arrived for Sunday's match with Haverford. #2 **Julian Wolfson** got the Huskies off to a terrific start with a victory. Down 4 matches to 1 after the first group, we needed to win all 4 second group matches for a team victory. We came

close, as #3 **Norman Wilson** and #1 **Saumil Gandhi** both won. The match of the day was #7 **Gaurav Mehta's** thrilling come from behind victory, with the whole team cheering him on.

West Coast Round Robin

The weekend of February 4-6 took the Husky squash team to the Bay Area for a round robin between UW, Cal, Stanford, and USC. All teams agreed this was the start of a new era: West Coast collegiate squash.

Stanford defeated Cal and USC. Washington defeated USC Saturday morning, and the afternoon saw UW's #1, **Saumil Gandhi**, defeat Stanford's #1 in a tense struggle. Despite good performances, the Dawgs did not have the depth to challenge the Cardinal, and Stanford won the overall competition.

Sunday's match with Cal proved easier

than anticipated, with the Huskies winning all but one match.

Huskies Win at Nationals

The UW squash team finished a successful season with a victory in the 5-man "emerging teams" division at the Intercollegiate National Championships at Harvard the weekend of Feb. 25-27.

Victories over USC and Kenyon College matched the Huskies against Notre Dame, with UW winning 4-1. Performances were outstanding up and down the line. Of special note were **Saumil Gandhi's** 5-game win over USC's #1, and a remarkable comeback victory by **Ritwik Kejriwal**, who rallied from 0-2 down (9-0, 9-0!) to win, staving off 3 match points along the way.

Congratulations to **Saumil Gandhi, Julian Wolfson, Norman Wilson, Ryan Antonio, and Ritwik Kejriwal.**

Farewell, Dick and Mary

The following recently arrived and the SSRA Newsletter e-mail box. (excerpted):

To: Newsletter Editor

We wanted to let our Seattle squash friends know that we have sold our home in Mercer Island and moved to Arizona [full time]... After forty years of heavy involvement with Seattle squash, it was a difficult decision to make, but we can now enjoy the sunny days in Arizona and avoid the rainy days of Seattle's winter. We will miss the camaraderie and friendly games of squash in Seattle, and we ...look forward to visiting Seattle periodically and renewing acquaintances.

There are several squash clubs in the Phoenix/Scottsdale area ...and I will continue to play as long as possible. Please... encourage all players to continue to enjoy squash, knowing it can still be done your 80s.

Sincerely,
Dick and Mary Daly

Dick Daly...A Remembrance

by Peter Langmaid

I'll never forget the first time I played squash against Dick Daly. It was a hard-ball tournament in Portland in the mid-1980s. I was a cocky, fast-rising player in my thirties, and Dick, already a legend, was somewhere in his fifties.

As a self-imagined hotshot A, I saw my match with Dick as a no-win situation: no glory in beating someone 25 years my senior; and if he beat me, it would be like losing to my father! My plan was to play a steady, conservative game and see what happened.

Dick entered the court, shook my hand perfunctorily, and began warming up as though I wasn't there. The match began and I marveled at Dick's ability to create opportunities for himself. Still, with my relative youth and fragile pride, I was controlling the match.

Late in the first game I hit a mediocre

rail that put me between Dick and the ball—a certain let. Rather than take the let, Dick slammed into me like an amphetamine-crazed linebacker and sent me sprawling. The referee granted a let, and Dick grumbled 'Get out of the way next time,' as he pushed by me and took up his position to replay the point.

It was at the moment of impact that I realized I was the only one worrying about appearances—Dick intended to kick my ass! I played the rest of the match as though the future of mankind depended on my winning, made wiser by the knowledge that a champion is as much a mind set as a skills set.

League Update

by Vafa Ghazi

The SSRA Squash League has been running full tilt since last October.

The semifinals for all divisions will be held on March 29th, 2005. In each division, the teams finishing #1 will play the #4 team, while the other semifinal match will be between the #2 and #3 teams. The top two teams will have home court advantage.

The finals will be held on Tuesday April 5th, 2005, at the Seattle Athletic Club in downtown Seattle. The matches will start at 7:30 p.m. and refreshments will be provided.

<u>Division 1</u>	<u>Pts</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>L</u>
Sylvanus	82	13	2
Roslander	79	11	4
Aitchison	76	11	4
Gittleman	76	11	4
Hamon	62	8	7
Prasad	56	6	9
Murphy	40	5	10
Janson	36	4	11
Sollecito	33	3	12
Jamieson	31	3	12

<u>Division 2A</u>	<u>Pts</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>L</u>
Jewsbury	83	14	0
Truscott	67	10	4
Crabb	64	8	6
Hunter	62	8	5
Fisk	61	8	6
Reibman	60	8	6
Kwan	56	7	7

<u>Division 2B</u>	<u>Pts</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>L</u>
Chandler	60	8	6
Bhatia	58	8	6
Bakalian	56	8	6
Cinnamond	41	4	9
Rattray	41	4	10
Feinberg	25	1	13
Vaswani	22	1	13

<u>Division 3</u>	<u>Pts</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>L</u>
Wong	83	12	1
Shaffer	61	9	4
Colin	54	9	4
Towler	52	7	5
Kilcup	47	5	8
Burridge	28	3	10
McBride	12	0	13

A Word From The Membership Director

by Kwan Law

As a volunteer serving the squash community, my aim is to make sure members are receiving their benefits and have access to resources the SSRA offers. The SSRA contacts members primarily through our mailing list, so please keep us informed of all address and contact information changes. To make changes, contact kwan_law@hotmail.com.

Your SSRA or SSRA/USSRA membership card accompanies this Newsletter. Please check your card and let me know if the information needs correcting.

There is still confusion regarding the difference between SSRA membership (our local organization) and USSRA membership (national organization). Both organizations work toward the same goal: attract more people to the game of squash. SSRA-only members (\$25) are eligible to play League, receive the SSRA Newsletter, and receive an annual Membership Directory. USSRA members are automatically SSRA mem-

bers with the added benefits of *Squash Magazine* (10/yr), eligibility to play in URRSA-sanctioned tournaments (including the National Championships), achieving a national ranking, and supporting the growth of squash nationwide. While we encourage everyone to join the USSRA, our statistics show that more than ¼ of our memberships are SSRA-

Travels with Vidya

by Vidya Rajan

My first year of international squash experience at the US and Scottish Junior Opens proved to be very enjoyable as well as memorable. At both tournaments, the atmosphere was excitingly competitive and the level of squash unbelievable. The large international turnout at both tournaments provided me with an opportunity to make new friends and observe different game styles. I was proud to finish 2nd overall at the US Open and 11th at the Scottish Open, in my first year of competitive squash tournaments.

A Letter From The President

The 2004 – 2005 squash season is now half over and the remaining months are going to be busy. League is reaching its climax with top teams battling for a place in the playoffs, and the Seattle City Championships, scheduled to coincide with the end-of-season party, is in planning for the weekend of April 8.

After losing two squash venues over the last few years, it is encouraging to have four new courts at the UW, and an active participation of players from the UW in this season's League.

Congratulations to **Kristen Lange** and her coach, **Azam Khan**, for Kristen's recent success in becoming the U.S. U17 champion—another feather in the cap for Seattle squash.

Another encouraging development is the announcement that Kevin Klipstein will be the new USSRA president. Kevin

spend time in Seattle and knows the community, so we are looking forward to developing stronger ties with the USSRA over the next few years.

The success of squash in Seattle is proportional to the participation of all players. The SSRA is always looking for ideas from the squash community for how the SSRA can improve and harmonize communication across the clubs and its many players. If you have any input, please contact any one of the Trustees or Board members.

Enjoy the rest of the season and mark your calendars for up-coming events.

Cheers,

John Tower

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