

SSRA NEWSLETTER

September 2005



SSRA Trustees

Tom Breen

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Juniors

Murio Regio

Seattle City Squash Leagues

Yes, it's that time of year again. Seattle City Squash Leagues begin play on **Tues., Oct 11.**

There are two minor changes to this year's program. First, **Steve Jamieson** will assume the role of "League Czar" from Vafa (thanks, Vafa!), and he will be assisted by **John Fisk** and **Bill Feinberg**. Second, the league fee will increase from \$180 to \$210 per team, but there will be a league T-shirt this year. Otherwise, the leagues will operate as they did last year; we will use the same league Web site for scoring, and the same rules will ap-

ply.

Now is a good time to contact your teammates and to make sure your SSRA or USSRA membership is current. Full details and registration forms will be sent by e-mail shortly. If you don't receive the e-mail, contact us at league@seattlesquash.com. Also, we are always looking for sponsors, so if you know anyone who would be interested, please let us know.

As always, squash leagues depend on the goodwill of the hosting clubs, so please let your club know how important league play is to you. Looking forward to a great season!

Annual General Meeting (AGM), Trustee Election

Due to scheduling conflicts, the SSRA AGM has been moved to **October 13.**

So now is your chance to become involved. You can nominate yourself or anyone else to become a Trustee. **All nominations must be submitted by Sept. 15.** A list of nominees will be posted on the SSRA Web site by **Sept 29.** Please take the time and e-mail your vote before the deadline, **Oct. 11.** The ballot results will be announced at the AGM. There can be a maximum of 15 trustees, and the term of tenure is 3 years. After the Trustees are elected, they in turn elect a President for the up-coming season. The Trus-

tees then appoint board officers.

Mark you Calendars!!

SSRA AGM:

Thursday, October 13th, 2005, 7:00 p.m.
College Club, 505 Madison, Seattle

Deadline for Trustee nominations:

September 15th, 2005

e-mail nominations to:

secretary@seattlesquash.com

Deadline for announcement of nominees:

September 29th, 2005.

See SSRA Web site for nominee list

Deadline for voting :

Tuesday October 11th, 2005

Looking forward to your attendance at the AGM, and your participation in the election of Trustees

Seven Good Reason to Play City League Squash

By Peter Langmaid

All the excuses I've heard for not playing in the SSRA City Leagues have one thing in common: ignorance. I've played City League since the hardball days, and despite the cold, rainy, and dark winter drives, I look forward to each new season with great anticipation. Here are a few reasons why.

#1. Competition: The nature of squash is competition—the harder you compete, the better the match and the more fun you have. Even if you just play for exercise, the more intense the competition, the better the exercise. City League squash heightens the level of competition for all players because your results affect not only yourself but your teammates, too. You'd be surprised how much harder it is to give up and throw in the towel with your teammates watching.

#2. Be part of a team: Everyday squash is an individual sport. City League squash is a team sport, where every match counts equally. It's fun to root for your teammates, encourage and counsel them between games, and congratulate or console them after a match.

#3. Play on different courts: Ever heard someone blame a tournament loss on the courts? Every club's courts are slightly different from your home courts: the lighting's brighter or dimmer, the walls are bouncier or deader, the floor's slicker or stickier, the ceiling's higher or lower, and it sounds

different when you hit the ball. To be successful, you need to adjust your game slightly to fit the court you're playing on. City League gives you the experience of playing on a variety of courts, which makes adjustments easier.

#4 Meet other players: Playing the same four people every week is like having boiled chicken for dinner every night: Boring! You become so familiar with each other's game that rallies seem like choreographed drills. City League challenges you with a different opponent every week, and your game expands and grows to meet the challenge.

#5. See other clubs: Whether it's the musty confines of the downtown Tacoma YMCA or the posh surroundings of the Pro Club (get you car detailed while you play), it's fun to visit other clubs in the area.

#6. Be a part of the community: How can we call ourselves a squash "community" if we never commune with each other? City League forces you beyond the walls of your own club to meet other squash players from other clubs. More than occasionally you'll meet someone who will become a regular opponent.

#7. A chance for socializing: Many City League participants are in it for the after match festivities—which normally include beer, snacks, match analysis, rules disputes, bragging, whining, politics, and lots and lots of gossip.

Racquets for Zambia

By Steve Furneaux

Earlier this year, while traveling in southern Africa to view wildlife, my wife and I met a Zambian gentleman named Chiba Chidadule. Chiba and his friends want to play squash on the dilapidated but playable courts in his hometown of Livingston. They can't, because they have no equipment and no money to buy equipment.

The SSRA recently approved funds to ship any racquets, balls, shoes, eye guards, etc. we can gather to Chiba and his friends. Please dig through your closets and leave your donations at the front

desk of your club for:

College Club—John Towler, Gordon Burridge

Pro Club—Steve Jamieson, Murio Regio

SACD—Peter Langmaid, Wendy Weeks, Bill Feinburg

WAC—John Frazier

Columbia AC/Seattle Tennis Club/Downtown

YMCA—Steve Furneaux

For a sense of present-day Zambia, see p. 100 of the Sept. National Geographic special issue, "Africa." It will make you realize that your generosity will be more than appreciated. Thank you.

Thoughts on Serving and Returning Serve

By Peter Langmaid

You don't win squash matches with spectacular winners or trick shots—the percentages will get you every time. Winning squash is a matter of positioning; working your opponent out of position so that an average, high-percentage shot will win a rally. To send an opponent on this journey to oblivion, you must control the action of each rally and put your opponent on the defensive. The best way to take control of a rally is to focus on keeping your opponent behind you in the court. No one ever won a squash match with his or her butt glued to the back wall!

One poor shot—a shot that puts you on your heels and allows your opponent to dictate shot selection—determines the outcome of a vast majority of squash rallies. Often that shot is either an ineffective serve or a weak return of serve—the rally's over before you ever get in it. Why, if the serve and return of serve are so important, don't we give them more thought and attention?

The Serve. Though you want to vary the pace and trajectory of your serves to avoid becoming predictable, the ideal serve is deep in the court and tight to the sidewall, giving your opponent limited return options (which are easy to read) and the claustrophobic feeling that they're swinging in a broom closet. The key to depth is trajectory. A lob serve that seems like it's dropping straight down from the ceiling is difficult for an opponent to attack because the ball's out

of reach until it's done its job of pinning the returner in the corner. Perfect sidewall tightness has the ball kissing the side wall at the same time your opponent's trying to hit it, therefore forcing him/her to scrape it off the wall, again limiting the return options. A useful rule of thumb to keep in mind when serving is to make all your serves hit the sidewall before reaching your opponent—it's simply harder to time a short-hop a rebound than a ball that reaches you directly.

The Service Return. As with serving, you should always vary your service returns to avoid predictability, but the objective of the service return is to get into the rally and negate the server's inherent advantage (i.e. they hit a ball that's stationary, you hit one that's moving). Service return outright winners feel good, but the number of times you'll hit the winner versus set your opponent up vastly favors the server. The most effective service return sends the server to the back wall, which allows you to get to the T and into position to take control of the rally.

So, an effective way to improve you overall game is to improve your serve and your service return. To keep it simple, always try and get the ball to the side wall when you serve, and focus on getting the ball to the back wall when you return serve.

AREA SQUASH CLUBS *(cont. from p.4)*

WASHINGTON ATH. CLUB (2– 21' & 1– 20' courts) P.O. Box 1709
Seattle, WA 98111
Darin Barr, dbarr@wac.net, 206/464-3073

DOWNTOWN YMCA (2– 20' courts)
999 Fourth Ave.
Seattle, WA 98104
Steve Furneaux, xcourtndrop@aol.com
206/382-5010

Professional Women's Squash comes to Bellevue!

At the time of this writing, the **Pacific Market International Women's Open** is about to start at the Pro Club, Bellevue, **Sept. 6-11**. Featuring the top women's professional players in the world, this promises to be an exciting event! For further details, please see our website at www.seattlesquash.com.

Sound Area Squash Clubs

BELLEVUE CLUB (2- 21' courts)
11200 S.E. 6th
Bellevue, WA 98004
425/637-4610

COLLEGE CLUB (2- 18.5' hardball courts)
505 Madison St.
Seattle, WA 98104
Peter Sparling, 206/622-0624

COLUMBIA ATH. CLUB (1- 20' court)
15906 Mill Creek Blvd.
Mill Creek, WA 98012
425/485-4040

HARBOR SQ. ATH. CLUB (2- 20' courts)
160 W. Dayton
Edmonds, WA 98020
Guy Schoonmaker, 425/778-3546

JUANITA BAY CLUB (3- 20' courts)
11450 98th Ave. N.E.
Kirkland, WA 98033
425/821-0882

LAKEWOOD YMCA (2- 20' courts)
9715 Lakewood Dr. S.W.
Tacoma, WA 98499
Clinton Scott, 253/584-9622

PRO SPORTS CLUB (8- 21' courts)
4455 148th Ave. N.E.
Bellevue, WA 98007
Azam Khan, Akhan@proclub.com, 425/885-5566

SEATTLE ATH. CLUB/ NORTHGATE (3- 20' courts)
333 N.E. 97th St.
Seattle, WA 98115
Bruce Vinsonhaler, 425/522-9400

SEATTLE ATH. CLUB/ DOWNTOWN (8- 21' courts)
2020 Western Ave.
Seattle, WA 98121
Ayub Khan, Shabana Khan, 206/443-1111

SEATTLE TENNIS CLUB (2- 21' courts)
922 McGlivra Blvd. E.
Seattle, WA 98112
Steve Furneaux, 206/324-3200

TACOMA CENTRAL YMCA (3- 20' courts)
1144 Market St.
Tacoma, WA 98402
Ronn McMahan, rmcman@ymcatacoma.org
253/597-6444

VASHON ATHLETIC CLUB (1- 21' court)
19120 Vashon Hwy. S.W.
Vashon, WA 98070
Gordon Burrige, burridge@webtv.net
206/463-5601
(continued on page 3)

Upcoming Local and Regional Events

September 16 - 18. Col. Bud Thompson Memorial Open
Pacific Athletic Club. Contact: Richard Elliott
(squash@pacclub.com): 650/593-4900 Ext. 238

October 14 - 16. US Masters
Decathlon Club. Contact: Jonathon Perry
(jperry@decathlon-club.com): 408/331-2941

Oct. 21-23. Pro Club Fall Classic.
Pro Club. Contact: Azam Khan 425/885-5566
(AKhan@proclub.com) for further details.

December 2 - 4, 2005 Peninsula Open
Pacific Athletic Club. Contact: Richard Elliott
(squash@pacclub.com): 650/593-4900 Ext. 238.