

SSRA NEWSLETTER

December 2006



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Did you know?

The first squash court in North America was built in New Hampshire, in 1884.

Message From The Incoming SSRA President

Hi SSRA Members!

For the past several years this message has come from John Towler. John recently stepped down as SSRA president (though he is still a trustee), and on behalf of the entire membership, I want to say "Thank You!" to John for his many years of dedicated service.

As your new SSRA President, I am excited about the future of squash in our region. We have a newly elected board, consisting of both new faces and veteran members. It's a great group of folks who are motivated to grow, support, and promote squash throughout the region.

Please welcome our newly elected board members and trustees (visit www.seattlesquash.com for a full list of trustees and their contact information):

- James Blair (SAC)—Competition
- Phil Chung (UW)
- Iqbal "Bali" Khan (Pro)—Junior Promotion
- Janis Rabuchin (JBAC)—Marketing
- Steve Rabuchin (JBAC)—President

Our short-term goal is to bring the squash community together—players, pros, clubs, USSRA, etc.—so we can grow the sport by working together effectively. As the squash season progresses, we hope to raise awareness of squash and increase the number of new players in the region. You can expect a renewed emphasis on current programs, which include: regularly scheduled sanctioned tournaments, league play, clinics, juniors opportunities, and special events. In addition, you will see a greater focus on the promotion of squash in the Seattle area.

We are looking hard at ways we can spend your SSRA dollars more effectively to support our goals. The past few years we have run a spending deficit, but we feel that with some budget adjustments and new revenue sources (a big thanks to our new sponsors!) we can re-direct spending on programs that will bring new players to the sport. With this in mind, I want to let all of you know that we are moving to an electronic newsletter format (saving over \$1,000 per year). This means that future newsletters will be sent to the e-mail address we have for you. PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS HAS CHANGED or if you would prefer continuing to receive the newsletter in the mail, by sending an e-mail to newsletter@seattlesquash.com.

As we move forward with our plans and continue to build relationships across the squash community, I encourage all of you to voice your opinions, concerns, and ideas by e-mailing the SSRA Board at info@seattlesquash.com. I promise we will listen.

Thanks,
Steve Rabuchin
SSRA President

Rely on Routine to Control Pace of Play

By Peter Langmaid

Squash players constantly remind themselves and advise each other to take control of the T—control the T and you control the match. Good advice, to be sure. An equally important, but less obvious, control element in a match is pace of play. If you dictate pace of play—that is, how quickly one point follows another—your chances of success increase.

A dramatic example of the importance of pace of play happened last season in a match between the UW and Stanford #1 players. In the first game, Stanford's #1 played like he had somewhere else to be. After winning a rally, he retrieved the ball quickly, waited impatiently in the service box, and served the moment the UW player turned around. Obviously flustered, the UW player lost the first game decisively. Between games, we coached our UW player to take more (but not excessive) time between rallies—to collect his thoughts and to prepare himself for the next rally. Following our advice, UW's #1 lost the next game narrowly and won the final three games for a thrilling 3-2 comeback win. By the middle of the third game, it was obvious the Stanford player was frustrated and distracted by his inability to force the action.

The time to work on your pace of play technique—so that it becomes a normal part of your game—is not in the middle of a match, but during practice. Generally speaking, the situations to speed up play and press the action are when you're on a roll, your opponent is angry or upset, or your opponent is winded or tired. Most players do this instinctively. The situations to slow play are the reverse: when

your opponent is on a roll; when you're angry or upset, or when you're winded or tired. This is not instinctive.

A foolproof way to stay within yourself and regulate pace of play (regardless of whether you're pressing the action or retarding it) is by developing a deliberate between-points routine in preparation for the next rally. If you're serving, think about the last two or three times you've served to the same side—the type of serve you hit and the type of return your opponent attempted. Then decide if it's time to change speed, direction, or trajectory. Don't serve until you're committed to what you're doing and aware of how your opponent might respond. If you're returning serve, review the last few exchanges on that side for tendencies (his/hers and yours), then decide how you'll respond to whatever's delivered (rail, crosscourt, drop, nick, lob, etc.) The serve itself may dictate what you *can* do, but you should always be aware of what you *want* to do. Good golfers are like good servers: they prepare for each shot the same way and don't execute until they're fully committed. Good baseball players are like good service return players: before the ball's put in play, they decide what they'll do in every possible situation. Develop a between-points routine that can be quickened or slowed depending on the circumstances and you'll never feel pressured again.

One further note: Get used to taking the full 90 seconds between games to rest, think about strategy, and relax. Too often, when we've just lost a game, we're anxious to resume play quickly. This can result in our continuing to play the game we just lost, not focusing on the game ahead.

2006 Washington State Open

The 2006 Washington State Open was held at the Seattle Athletic Club/Downtown over the weekend of Nov. 10-12. 123 players competed in eleven divisions. Participants came from Kamloops, BC, Vancouver (both BC and WA), Salem & Portland OR, Kennewick WA, and Germany! Thanks to the SSRA and the Khan family (Yusuf, Ayub, Shabana) for organizing and running the tournament, the SACD for hosting it, and The Affordable Company and Prism Kites for sponsorship and fantastic prizes. As always with the Khans involved, the hospitality alone was worth the entry fee, with time-of-day appropriate food in the mornings and afternoons, and gala dinner on Saturday night.

MEN:

A	McMahon d. Khan	3-0
A con.	Rangel d. DeSousa	3-1
A-40	Smith d. Metz	3-1

A-40 con.	Khalighi d. Bishop	3-0
B	Peterson d. Karlsson	3-2
B con.	Zilly d. Crocket	3-0
B-40	Stefan d. Zuckerman	3-2
B-40 con.	Halstead d. Garland	3-0
C	Higson d. Kratz	3-1
C con.	Crawford d. Binford	3-1
D	Snider d. Gylling	3-1
D con.	Gac d. Cok	3-0

LADIES:

A	Chou	round-robin
B	Khalighi d. McLaughlin	3-1
B con.	Khalighi d. Agel	3-0
C	Holman d. Sedky	3-1
C con.	Weeks d. Smith	3-0
D	Teegan	round-robin
Novice	Dunn	round-robin

HOWE CUP 2006—Oct. 20-22, Baltimore, MD

By Lulu Chou

It's the story that you've all been waiting for: How and what did the ladies of Seattle do at this year's Howe Cup? First, let's recognize the participants. B team: Laura Bachman, Lulu Chou, Anne Renee Van Der Vuurst De Vries, Bettina Muench and Jackie Lange. C team: Julie Santos, Brandi Conforth, Julie Agel, Bernie McLaughlin, and Mindy Cooper. The teams were assembled in late August and trained on a weekly basis with Yusuf Khan. We would all like to thank Yusuf for his time and encouragement during training.

Both teams had two matches on Friday, two on Saturday, and one on Sunday. I know, your squash butt aches just thinking about five matches in three days! Well, we were more than ready, and every member on both teams fought hard for every point.

The Results:

B Team (we placed 5th out of 8 teams):

Seattle 2-3 Washington DC
Seattle 0-5 Boston
Seattle 5-0 Philadelphia
Seattle 4-1 California
Seattle 3-2 New York

C Team (we placed 5th out of 9 teams):

Seattle 5-0 Washington DC
Seattle 4-0 Baltimore
Seattle 0-5 New Jersey
Seattle 0-5 Boston
Seattle 3-2 Philadelphia

Activities outside the squash courts that players enjoyed included the Duck Tour of Baltimore. Yes, it's just like the one in Seattle--a perfect way to see Baltimore in a few hours. Some of us went out to dinner on Thursday. To carbo load, we chose Italian food. We ended up picking a restaurant with mediocre food but priceless service. When Laura and Mindy ordered lasagna and spaghettis with meatballs, our waitress, Leslie, told them they wouldn't like it and to order some-

thing else!

The Outfits:

Of course we had matching outfits! This year, the official team uniform was moss green with black. We also had a stylish white warm-up shirt with a Tim Girvin design on the back.

Exhibition Match/Presentation on Friday:

We all enjoyed a Battle of the Sexes exhibition match between WISPA player Natalie Grainger and PSA player Wade Johnstone, with Natalie winning 9-8 in the fifth. After the match, a pleasant and unexpected surprise: Each member of the Seattle B and C teams received a Starbucks gift card for having submitted the earliest entry forms. What a nice gesture!

Saturday Night Party:

The event was held at the Kiss Café, in downtown Baltimore. Thanks to Anne Renee, the entire Seattle Howe Cup team was equipped with a rubber blinging ring that lights up like a state patrol headlight. The Seattle team, plus Kristen Lange, made an entrance to the party like no other. With our blinging rings and our tradition of being first ones on the dance floor, we did not disappoint. For more information, you need to ask the ladies that were present.

Everyone made it home safely and we have a few people to thank for their time and effort. Again, thanks to Yusuf Khan for training us. Thanks to Tim Girvin for designing the team logo for our t-shirts. Thanks to each member of 2006 Seattle Howe Cup teams for your enthusiasm, perseverance, sense of humor, and team spirit.

Howe Cup 2007 will be in Boston, and the Seattle team has already been requested to start the dancing. Mark your calendars for next October. There will be A, B, C, D and Doubles divisions. For more information, check out the official website at www.howecup.com



B Team (L-R): Bettina Muench, Lulu Chou, Anne Renee Van Der Vuurst De Vries, Jackie Lange, Laura Bachman



C Team (L-R): Julie Santos, Brandi Conforth, Bernie McLaughlin, Mindy Cooper, (not shown) Julie Agel.

Phil Smart Mercedes US Junior Open, Dec. 16-19

The biggest squash event of the year for juniors is coming to Seattle! The Phil Smart Mercedes 2006 Junior Open will be played Dec. 16-19 at the PRO Club in Bellevue (U19, U17) and at the Seattle Athletic Club/Downtown (U15, U13). Finals will be held at the PRO Club on Dec. 19. Many of our local juniors have been training all year for this event, and they are hoping for good results on their home courts.

This is what the event means to Yarden Odinak:

"Well, I'm really excited about the US Open! This will be a great opportunity to show the East Coasters our facilities and players! We've had some interesting questions asked and now, hopefully, some of those questions will be answered. One time I was on the East Coast and a mom of one of the girls asked "What kind of squash do you play on the West Coast?" Other questions follow the line of "Do

you fly all the way from Seattle?" and "Is Washington in Oregon?" Now, hopefully, they will realize that we play the same kind of squash! We also have a lot of international players coming in, and there will be about 300 juniors in both facilities. It will be nice to play on my own courts instead of on the East Coast courts. It will also be nice not to travel and to go home after my games instead of to the hotel. We really hope everyone enjoys their visit in Seattle, and I'm sure it will be a great tournament."

This is a rare opportunity to see some of the best juniors in the world compete and to watch the future of US squash in action. Don't miss the chance to root our local juniors to victory.

For more information on the event, contact Azam Khan at akhan@proclub.com or phone the PRO Club at 425/885-5566. A link to the official US Junior Open website can be found at www.seattlesquash.com.

To learn more about our generous sponsors, go to www.seattlesquash.com.

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Sponsor the SSRA

If you would like to advertise to our local squash community and help support the sport, the SSRA is actively looking for sponsors. Please e-mail marketing@seattlesquash.com if you or your company would like to donate or find out more about our sponsorship packages.



How To Contact Your SSRA

Have something to say? Don't keep it to yourself. The SSRA is *your* organization. Feedback and suggestions from the membership help direct our efforts to serve the squash community better. E-mail contact info:

Information: info@seattlesquash.com
Juniors: juniors@seattlesquash.com
League: league@seattlesquash.com
Newsletter: newsletter@seattlesquash.com
Website: webmaster@seattlesquash.com

The Nationals are coming to the

Northwest. The US Open Squash Championships for Age Groups, SL Green Closed, and Women's Closed are coming to Portland this spring. Mark your calendars for March 14-18 and get ready to play!

SSRA League News

The first round of league has come to an end, and we will plunge directly into the next round. Makeup matches for those cancelled due to snow on Nov. 28 have been scheduled for Dec. 12 and Jan. 2.

For the first time in league history, the SACD has fielded an all-juniors team (well, almost all juniors), and they are giving the 'old-timers' a run (emphasis on *run*) for their money!

I am pleased to announce we have some great sponsors this season. I would like to thank Speedminton®, Macrovision®, GLY Construction, Archstone, Black Knight, Grays, and Dunlop for their support. To learn more about these companies (including links to their websites), check out our Web site, www.seattlesquash.com.

Steve J., League Czar