

NPA

(INDOOR / FOUR-WALL)

National Paddleball Association

WWW.PADDLEBALL.ORG

NPA, 7642 Kingston, Portage, Mich. 49002

NEWSLETTER / SUMMER 2010-2011

Entrikin, Whiz each get 4th national doubles title

It took a while but Todd Entrikin and Mike Wisniewski each got their fourth NPA open national doubles championship.

Entrikin and Whiz won the 2011 crown on April 17 at the Sorrento Valley Racquet Club in San Diego.

Three teams had finished in a tie for first in round-robin competition with 3-1 records.

They had decided to complete play with a mini-playoff if there was a tie.

The other teams were Chad Krager-Dennis Negrete, the defending champions, and Andy Mitchell-Mike Czabala.

Krager-Negrete were given the top seed in the mini-playoff on the basis of points scored. So Entrikin-Wisniewski played Mitchell-Czabala.

"We beat Mitchell-Czabala, 21-11," Wisniewski said. Then they played Krager-Negrete and won, 21-12, to claim the title.

"Never look a gift horse in the mouth," said Whiz. "Todd and I took full advantage of the second opportunity and put them away before they had a chance to warm up."

Entrikin, of Riverside, CA, had won twice previously with Kelly Gelhaus and once with Mike Orr.



Champs Wisniewski (left) and Entrikin.

Whiz, of Bay City, MI, had won twice previously with Czabala and once with Krager.

Entrikin said he and Wisniewski "played great together. No real miss-communications. Chad and Dennis played a great finals by keeping the ball away from me most of the match so I could not get into a rhythm.

"The playoff -- I think Mike and Andy sat around for too long and didn't play as well as they had been due to that, and the same thing happened to Dennis and Chad."

-- LOU GIAMPETRONI

The paddleball situation

Chad Krager gave a brief rundown on the ball situation.

Briefly, he said:

-- Adjustments have been made to a second sample.

-- A third sample was set to be tested on June 5.

-- All indications show we're ahead of schedule as stated in the last newsletter, which I believe was balls by October/November (the start of next season).

-- Officially, we are sticking with the current time schedule.

-- Our goal is to deliver great news in the next newsletter or prior.



NATIONAL DOUBLES

CHAMPIONS,

PAGES 2 AND 3

.....

JIMMY COGGBURN

GETS THE

EARL RISKEY

TROPHY,

PAGE 4

Results 2011

National Doubles

Tournament

April 15-17
San Diego

OPEN: 1st, Mike Wisniewski, Bay City, MI and Todd Entrikin, Riverside, CA; 2nd, Chad Krager, Bay City, MI and Dennis Negrete, Schaumburg, IL; 3rd, Andy Mitchell, Kalamazoo, MI and Mike Czabala, Ventura, CA

MEN'S A: 1st, Brian Pineda, Huntington Beach, CA and Emmett Coe, San Diego; 2nd, Greg Badger and Jamie Lawson, both of San Diego; 3rd, Justin Ivers and Jimmy Cogburn, both of San Diego.
Consolation: Sonny Salazar of Adrian, MI and Doug Hartung, Jackson, MI

MEN'S B: 1st, Bryce Cooper and Mike Burgett, both of Riverside, CA; 2nd, Sam Choukri and Greg Fiori, both of San Diego; 3rd, Joe Sieminoski and John Fleisher, both of San Diego. **Consolation:** Sonny Salazar, Adrian, MI and Paul Sylvester, Kalamazoo, MI

MEN'S C: 1st, Stryder Thompkins and Gary Gonter, both of San Diego; 2nd, Ron Starkman, Henderson, NV and Keith McDaniel, San Diego

SENIORS: 1st, Chad Krager, Bay City, MI and Dennis Negrete, Schaumburg, IL; 2nd, Aaron Embry and Steve Trent, both of San Diego

MASTERS: 1st, Andy Mitchell, Kalamazoo, MI and Steve Trent, San Diego; 2nd, Paul Sylvester, Kalamazoo, MI and Doug Hartung, Jackson, MI; 3rd, Greg Swanson and Dan Trubovitz, both of San Diego

GOLDEN MASTERS: 1st, Charlie Brumfield, San Diego, and Bob (Bull) Sterken, Holland, MI; 2nd, Jim Owens, Ann Arbor, MI and Randy Wackerle, Bay City, MI; 3rd, Greg Childs and Stewart Stevenson, both of San Diego.

A THANK-YOU TO THE SPONSORS ...

By **TODD ENTRIKIN**

During the recent NATIONAL DOUBLES held in SAN DIEGO, it was an honor to have companies and individuals going out of their way to help support paddleball.

Without their support, our tournament would not have been as successful. On behalf of the NPA and fellow players, I would like to thank the following people:

-- Son from **ONESHOT** for donating raffle prizes and prizes to the champions. Thank you so much Son --your clothing line is matched by no other.

-- Jimbo from **prokennex** for donating some great raffle prizes. You are an incredible person, as soon as I told you I needed help, without hesitation you gave me more products than I could have asked for.

-- Joel from **gearbox** for also donating raffle prizes and being more than willing to go out of his way to help even though he is stretched thin from all the work he is doing promoting racquetball and gearbox all over the U.S.

-- Kris Kaskawal from **KK Racquetball** for giving gift certificates to all the winners. She was another person that when I called she was more than willing to support us.

-- Vince Carlone from **Liquid Nitro Energy Drink** for donating sunglasses and giving free samples of his energy drink to all the players. The drinks were enjoyed by many; I believe we ran out!

Once again I would like to thank all these great people for their support.

Without people and companies like this, we are not able to put on a tournament that everyone will remember and we would not be able to raise the money we need to help our sport grow.

Also a special thanks to Mike Augustin from 40by20.com for taking time out of his busy schedule and taking some amazing pictures of the doubles.

If anyone would like to purchase anything that we had at the tournament, you can go to the following web sites -- OneShotsports.com, ProKennex.com, Gearbox.com, nitrobeverages.com. For products from KK Racquetball, please e-mail Kris at randkkaskawal@msn.com.

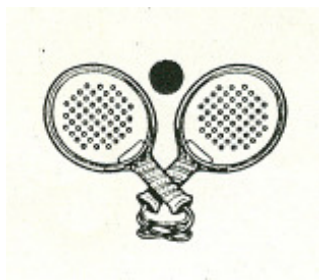
Pig Roast means fun time

Paddleballers, it's that time of year again: The Pig Roast and Human Sacrifice -- an excuse for a little PB and a lot of fun and food.

The 2010 fest is set for Saturday, June 11, at the Bronson Athletic Club in Kalamazoo, Mich., with the party set for later at the VFW Hall on Kilgore Road.

You can enter through the Web site at **www.paddleball.org** or call **(269) 779-6615**.

Players are asked to provide a dish to share at the roast.



2011 NPA National Doubles Champions



Todd Entrikin (left) and Mike Wisniewski
OPEN



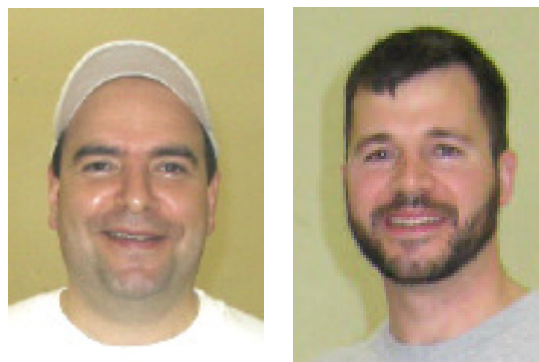
Emmett Coe (left) and Brian Pineda
MEN'S A



Bryce Cooper (left) and Mike Burgett
MEN'S B



Gary Gonter (left) and Stryder Thompkins
MEN'S C



Dennis Negrete (left) and Chad Krager
SENIORS



Andy Mitchell (left) and Steve Trent
MASTERS



Bob Sterken (left) and Charlie Brumfield
GOLDEN MASTERS

Jimmy Coggburn wins the Risky

By JAMIE LAWSON

This year's Earl Risky trophy for contributions to the sport of paddleball was presented to Jimmy Coggburn at the NPA National Doubles, a tournament Jimmy helped to promote and organize.



Lawson

Helping people play paddleball is part of Jimmy's job as General Manager of the Sorrento Valley Racquetball and Fitness Center, in San Diego, but Jimmy does an equal amount off the clock.

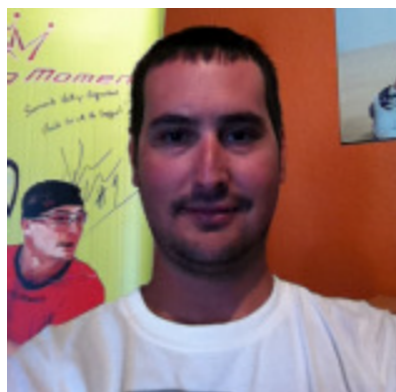
Jimmy lines up partners and opponents whether for the Wednesday morning shootout or for NPA National Doubles where players sometimes travel thousands of miles to play with partners they have never met.

He insures that new players have paddles and eye guards, and that experienced players have the paddles and eye guards that they need to be at their best.

He is the main distribution point in San Diego for Paddle Company and Pro Paddle paddles, and the conduit through which feedback makes its way from the players to the manufacturers.

Earl Risky's contributions to the sport began by watching tennis players practice their strokes on the handball courts. They seemed to enjoy themselves, and Risky appreciated the possibility of a court sport that could challenge athletes from other sports, particularly sports where swinging was involved.

Coggburn would have made a worthy pupil. Jimmy crossed over from baseball. He was a starting pitcher with a 92 mile per hour fastball at Ohlone Junior College in Fremont, California before moving up to San Diego State University



Jimmy
Coggburn

for the 2001 season.

SDSU is known for producing major league pitchers like [Stephen Strasburg](#), the Washington Nationals' star. An elbow injury put Jimmy on the bench midway through the season, but he found work in a gym, where he learned to play paddleball, and cultivate the sport with other former college athletes.

Like Risky, Jimmy is partially responsible for the ball we play with. Before there were paddleballs, Risky discovered that a suitable paddleball could be fashioned by soaking a tennis ball in gasoline to remove its distinctive fuzzy skin.

What was left was a faster, lighter rubber ball that played well well enough to make it an interesting game. Better balls came and went. Unfortunately, the Penn ball that we are accustomed to went before anything came to replace it.

But in the recent dearth of Penn paddleballs, Jimmy has parsimoniously managed a small cache of balls -- some them used castoffs not so different from gasoline-soaked tennis balls -- made precious by supply and demand. Jimmy releases them slowly, like seeds from a dandelion, keeping the classic game alive until the new ball arrives sometime later this year.

In the winter each year, Jimmy's attention shifts to the NPA Western Regionals and then to the Nationals. Some of what he does, like arranging hospitality, is easy to appreciate. Other things, like making sure that the courts are clean and the lights are bright, we may not notice because he got it right.

One of these unheralded chores is to package up the trophy and steward it back to the Mid-West. Next year, there will be another trophy, taller and more ornate, added to that chore -- the Earl Risky Trophy for contributions to the sport of paddleball.

Well-earned, Jimmy.

Scott Lawrence gets Sportsmanship award

By LOU GIAMPETRONI

The 2011 recipient of the National Paddleball Association Sportsmanship Trophy is Scott Lawrence.



Lawrence

It is one of the organization's two major awards and the oldest, having first been awarded in 1968.

It goes to the person "who most represents the American ideal of good sportsmanship under extreme competitive conditions."

And as every paddleballer knows, the conditions sometimes can get very extreme.

Lawrence, 56, of Grand Blanc, MI, has been playing PB for more than 30 years. He started at the Flint, MI YMCA and since has spread his wings to the Waterford (Mich.) Courts and the One-On-One Club in Ann Arbor, MI.

Even in his early years, he displayed sportsmanship qualities.

I remember so many times in pickup games where he would stop his shot if there was ANY, ANY possibility of hitting his opponent. And I told him that would hurt him down the road. It has.

If you watch him now, he does the same thing -- he takes no chances with the body of his foe.

As a matter of fact, he has done the same thing throughout his career.

Lawrence, who works for De Puy Industries (a subsidiary of Johnson & Johnson), almost at the outset could play with the big boys -- the top-level players. He was big, strong and quick.

But that reluctance to take any advantage -- even a fair one -- hurt him when he played against the better players.

Most top-level players, when they do have even that little edge, will take that opportunity and usually convert it into a point. And it doesn't take many of those to add up to a victory.

But Scott just never has played that way.

I have seen him in matches -- again against the big boys -- where he has been so close he can taste it. But he never changed his style. If it was too close for his comfort, he didn't take the shot.

Generally speaking, most players could qualify for the Sportsmanship Trophy. But Scott Lawrence definitely deserves it.



Phony presentation set up by Lawrence years ago.

There are a couple of stories behind the presentation of the NPA Sportsmanship Trophy for 2011 to Scott Lawrence.

Going back over the years, as a gag, I used to send Scott a Christmas card annually saying that the "NPA again is pleased to announce that you are not a candidate for the organization's Sportsmanship Trophy. (Signed) The Committee."

However, this photo appeared on Page 1 in the 2007-2008 Spring Newsletter. Apparently he conned NPA President Lou Hekhuis into posing for this picture as if he had received the Sportsmanship Trophy. The NPA launched a "probe" into the matter. But nothing came of it.

-- LOU GIAMPETRONI



IN THE EARLY DAYS, SCOTT ALSO FOUND TIME TO ENTERTAIN THE GUYS AT THE FLINT YMCA ...

Wackerle-Krager capture

Bean-Smith title in old YMCA

By O. J. Cunningham

BAY CITY, Mich. -- Bay City's Chad Krager, last year's NPA National Doubles Champion, teamed with Randy Wackerle to squeeze out first place in the final standings of the Open Division of the Bean-Smith Doubles Tournament on April 2, 2011.

Mike Wisniewski, last year's National Singles Champion, teamed with Bay City's Chad Schwall to claim 3rd place. Sandy DeGreif (Bay City) and Saginaw's Andrew Price earned 2nd place on points and wins in the round-robin play.

Wackerle, a 2001 inductee into the Bay County Sports Hall of Fame, has now claimed 45 doubles titles with 31 different partners. This is his second title with a former student.

The names Herb Bean and Fred Smith are well-known among veteran paddleballers at the Bay Area Family YMCA. Bean, a circus clown and acrobat, and Smith, a local businessman, were both long-time paddleball players from Bay City.

When Bean passed away unexpectedly during surgery, Fred Smith started a paddleball tournament in Herb Bean's honor. The following year, Smith also passed away unexpectedly and thus the Bean/Smith Tournament was born -- now in its 34th year.

Fourteen teams from around the State competed in the 34th annual tournament at the Bay Area Family YMCA.

This will be the last paddleball tournament held at this site. The 2012 tournament will be played at the new Dow Y.

Ron Harris and Rick Clewis from Ann Arbor defeated Bay City's Judy Pretzer and Ted Jevicks in the Class "B" final in a close tiebreaker.

Two Midland teams battled for the "C" title with Keith Thurlow and Gary Levandowski defeating Don Traxler and Todd Carr in two games.

Tournament Director Nancy Powers ran another smooth tournament.

Coca-Cola and Ideal Party Store were T-Shirt sponsors for the event.



This stairway has seen a lot of paddleballers' feet over the years -- it goes up to the viewing area.



The old Bay Area Family Y has been a real family Y and has hosted 34 Bean-Smiths, among others.



Missing at the new Bay City YMCA will be the cracks along the walls of two of the courts. A few years ago, a player posed for a photo of the ball he forced into the front-wall crack -- a pretty good shot but eventually ruled a court hinder.

Got a guy you can't beat? - - Read this

(Editor's Note -- These excerpts were taken from an article written by longtime paddleballer Don Traxler, of Midland, Mich., in the January 1988 edition of the Midland Paddleball Club newsletter. It is timeless and applies to any sporting competition. Players might be able to use the suggestions.)

Is there someone you just can't seem to beat?

Your abilities are similar or you may be somewhat better -- yet you can't beat this guy.

Most of us have "a guy I can't beat" in our life. Even tournament players.

The first question to ask yourself is: Is he beating you -- or beating the impersonator who shows up every time you play him (her)?

Do you prepare yourself to play your normal game, or do you do things differently?

On the day of your match, do you arrive early and hit extra shots? Do you stick with your mental and physical routines or get interested in your shot mechanics? Does your strategy change?

Beware of the tendency to take more risks when you play an arch-rival like this. You might think, "I've got to go for it on every shot. This guy is tough!"

By changing your preparation or altering your routine or strategy, you are practically forfeiting the match.

You will never know whether you can beat this opponent because the "real you" has never shown up and played him!

Contrast the way you handle yourself in a match with him to your attitude toward an opponent you always beat. What's different?

Sometimes "the guy you can't beat" is the guy everyone says he (she) can't beat. He is the club super star. The members have made a kind of god out of him and everyone trembles when they play him. That gives him the edge.

It's like the special treatment open division winners receive at tournaments.

Instead of riding his bandwagon, find out how good he really is. Keep track of his scores, the results of his matches. Watch him hit shots on the court. Are they all so perfect?

When you compete, remember, he's the one with the reputation, not you; so the pressure's on him. You have got nothing to lose. If you beat him, you are a giant killer.

Ask him to play. Get a regular game with him. What is it about his game you admire? What can you learn from him? It won't be long before playing against him will be easy and you will be winning your share of the matches.



TOM KEEL

The serve that humbled the Whiz

By LOU GIAMPETRONI

Before paddleball stars become stars, they have to take their lumps just like everyone else.

That's the case of Mike Wisniewski, the winningest open singles player in the history of the game.

Wisniewski, of Bay City, Mich., has won nine open national singles championships and four open national doubles titles.

But way back when, he had his troubles.

In checking over some old draw sheets, I discovered that Whiz lost three times in the Walter Taylor Tournament in Flint, Mich., in his early years.

In 1983, he lost to eventual champion Pat Milkovich. In 1984, he was defeated by Phil Conlin in the semifinals.

And in 1979, he lost to Flint's Tom Keel, 21-9, 21-8, in a first-round match.

Additionally, Keel topped the Whiz, 21-17, 21-6, in the 1978 State of Michigan Singles Tournament at the Sports Illustrated Court Club in Okemos, Mich.

I saw Wisniewski at the 2011 Midwest Doubles at the Michigan Athletic Club in E. Lansing, Mich., and I mentioned the two losses to Keel.

Wisniewski thought for a moment and said: "I could never beat that guy." Then he added -- rather quietly I thought -- "That serve."

Ah yes, we all had our share of Keel's serve over the years.

A right-hander, he would stand very close to the left wall and serve from the forehand side along the wall over the top of his head.

I mean, he got so good at it that the opponent could barely scrape it off the wall. And even if he did, he couldn't do anything with it.

One time, the serve helped me pull out a match. Nothing was going right so I thought about Keel and his vicious, nasty, crappy serve that he almost always glued to the left wall.

Amazingly, I threw enough of those vicious, nasty, crappy things to the left wall and I won the match. The other guy, who had been coasting along, was awe-struck.

Keel won the national seniors singles championship in 1982.

PADDLEBALL PROFILE



Creamer

It was “like father, like son” for Brandon Creamer when it came to paddleball. Creamer, 29, of E. Lansing, Mich., said:

“I hit my first paddleball two weeks before the Nationals in 2000.

“I was playing racquetball a little and saw my father (Charlie) playing paddleball and it looked much more fun.”

Brandon, a business development manager and compliance officer, said:

“I love the strategy to the game (paddleball) and the fast pace in the front court.

“I also love the players. I have never seen a bigger group of highly competitive, very nice people.”

In his first tournament, the 2000 National Doubles, he and his partner took second in Men’s C.

Among his titles are those in the Midwest Doubles Men’s A (2008, 2009, 2011) and the Men’s A in the 2010 National Doubles.

Suggestions for tournaments: “More players, more players!!! Also, even though we all seem to be a great group of people, I would like to see more enforcement of the rules without people thinking you are being a jerk/over-reacting.

“I would like to see all matches start ON TIME!!!”

**NPA
7642 Kingston
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