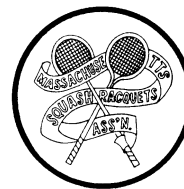


MSRANews



Massachusetts Squash Racquets Association Newsletter

President's Letter

While teaching my nine-year-old daughter Jessica to play squash recently, the inevitable question came up. No, not, "Why are you so out of breath, Dad," but rather, "Why do they call this sport squash?" The look on her face when I lamely responded, "You have to eat your vegetables to be allowed to play," told me I better do some research. Besides, how embarrassing that I've been playing this sport for over 20 years and don't even know where the name came from. Well, according to Wikipedia.org, squash is a derivation of the game of rackets (or racquets as we Americans call it). As the story goes, students at the Harrow School in London in the 19th Century started hitting a softer rubber ball against the walls while waiting for their turn on court. This "squashable" ball apparently led to the name of our now beloved sport. Who knew?

This first official squash court was built at the Harrow School in the 1860s. Some feel it was built by sub-dividing a rackets court into three squash courts to allow more students to gain access to the courts. Interesting, huh? I can't wait for my daughter to ask me why my shorts and shirt have a Harrow logo. This time I'll be ready.

As I write this, we're in the thick of squash season here in Massachusetts. If you're a squash player, there's no finer time of year. Our vibrant leagues are heading into the home stretch, with playoff qualifications on the line. In addition, the state tournaments are about to begin, with a division for everybody—woman's singles, open singles, age groups, skill levels, softball and hardball doubles. As has been our practice, all draws are free to MSRA members. It's a great way to meet new players and challenge yourself to see how far you can go. All singles draws culminate on April 12 at the Harvard Club; hardball doubles draws will once again be held in conjunction with the MSRA Annual Meeting on May 7 at the University Club. For fans of the softball doubles draw, the finals will be held at Concord-Acton on April 19. Take advantage of this great member benefit and join us for the finals nights.

I'm also pleased to announce we are again offering free member clinics so that you play your best during this important time of the season. Check the MSRA web site and look for an e-mail from us shortly announcing the date and location. Last year's clinics were a real success, and players of all abilities found them tremendously helpful.

Speaking of e-mails, you may have noticed we've revamped our e-mail communications and can now target the types of e-mails you most want to receive. When you get your next MSRA e-mail, please take a moment to edit your e-mail preferences so we make sure you only get the e-mails that are of the most interest to you.

On behalf of the hard-working volunteers on the MSRA board, best of luck in this exciting time of year. I look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events in the near future.

—Eric Godes, egodes@comcast.net

Gaultier Upsets Shabana for U.S. Open Title

This year's U.S. Open grew to be one of the PSA's Super Series events, drawing nine of the top ten pro squash players to Boston: #1 Amr Shabana of Egypt, #2 David Palmer of Australia, #3 Thierry Lincou of France, #4 Anthony Ricketts of Australia, #5 James Willstrop of England, #7 Gregory Gaultier of France, #8 Nick Matthew of England, #9 Lee Beachill of England, and #10 John White of Scotland. A total of 32 players started the tournament, but several upsets happened along the way: In the round of 16, current world junior champion and rising star Ramy Ashour of Egypt defeated fourth seed Ricketts, and Graham Ryding defeated fifth seed Willstrop when Willstrop retired. But Gaultier was responsible for two major upsets that got him to the final: He defeated countryman Lincou decisively in the quarters, and upset second seed David Palmer in the semifinals. Gaultier had earned his first major PSA title earlier in the fall at the Hungarian Open and was poised for his first Super Series win. But world #1 Amr Shabana, who defeated the up-and-coming Ashour in the semifinals, was in his way.

For the first year, the tournament was held at the newly renovated Back Bay Events Center in Boston. First on the agenda for the finals evening was the final "Best of Boston" match, where Dan Sharplin took on Preston Quick. The match went to four games before Sharplin asserted his worthiness to Gautake the title.

(continued on page 3)



L-R: Mike Parent (BRC), Jeanne Blasberg (USSRA), winner Greg Gaultier (France), Runner-up Amr Shabana (Egypt), Kevin Klipstein (USSRA), John Nimick (Event Engine)

No Repeat: Davidson defeats Fagan 2007

University Club Pro-Am Doubles

by Tom Poor, MSRA Junior Committee

Jamie Fagan was tantalizingly close. Winning last year for the first time, he and partner **Chris Spahr** lost the last two games of the four-game final, each by a razor-thin margin (15-14) to **Malcolm Davidson** and **Martin Heath** (Rochester), leaving Sandy Tierney as the only player to repeat as champion. The final was symbolic of the many close matches throughout the 2007 edition of the University Club Pro-Am Doubles held over the weekend of January 19–21. The Davidson-Heath duo's path to the finals was not easy. After **Doc Grossman** and **Mike Pirnak** (Toronto) in the opening round, they were taken to five in the quarters by Doug Lifford (Boston) and the ageless **Joel Kozol**. In the semis, they promptly dropped the first two games to **Dave Riccio** and **John Russell** (New York) before righting the ship to win the last three and set the stage for the final. Jamie and Chris had a slightly easier route, scoring four-game victories over **Jim Bildner** and **Jeff Mulligan** (New York), **Jay Hirshberg** and **Joe Pentland** (New York) and **Matthew Kozol** and **Viktor Berg** (Vancouver).



North Draw: Champions: Scott Butcher (NY) & Lenny Bernheimer;
Finalists: Jay Hirshberg & Joe Pentland (NY)

was seeded #1; Preston played with **John Russell** and was seeded #2. The final was a tight four games with Price and Gould capturing their first Boston title.

The North Draw in the Pro-Am was composed of teams that won their first match, but lost in the second round of the main draw. **Lenny Bernheimer** and **Scott Butcher** (New York) parlayed an early Sunday morning start to a four-game victory over Joel Kozol and Lifford, and then went to a five-game shootout with **Jay Hirshberg** and **Joe Pentland**. Lots of exchanges down the forehand wall between Lenny and Jay finally resulted in Lenny's favor. Jay and Joe had survived a four-game semifinal over **John Connolly** and **Chris Deratnay** (Toronto).

In the West Draw, featuring first-round losers, disgruntlement abounded as several of these teams had lost five-game struggles in the main draw. **Mat Sibble** and **Ben Gould** were one of these.

They began their quest for atonement with a four-game defeat of Grossman and Pirnak, then suffered the ignominy of losing the third game at -1 to rookie **Mark Baranski** and **Preston Quick** before rebounding to win the fourth game and match. In the other half, **Tom Poor** and **Mark Chaloner** (Grand Cayman) had also lost in five, then squeezed by **Marty Stocklan** and **Paul Price** in five, only to lose another five games to **Jim Bildner**, the only amateur to have played in every one of the 10 Pro-Am events, and **Jeff Mulligan**. In the final, Mat successfully nursed a sore foot long enough to win in four.

The South Draw was composed of West Draw quarterfinal losers. **Jon Ross** and **James Hewitt** (Toronto), last year's winner with Jamie, defeated Grossman-Pirnak to meet Stocklan-Price in the final. Marty and Paul had defeated fashion scion **Steve Wolfe**, decked out in orange shorts and a scarlet shirt, and **Chris Walker** (San Diego) in a three-game semifinal. It must have been painful for Chris' mum, visiting from England, to see her son lose in orange shorts as well. After dropping the first game of the final, Jon and James rebounded to win the next three and the title.

The finishing touches are now on the final draw memorializing the 2007 Pro-Am Doubles event in anticipation of its prominent display beside the doubles court. This year's success is another indication of the popularity of doubles at our Club, which in turn has spurred plans for construction of another doubles court at the Union Boat Club. *(More photos on page 11.)*



East Draw: Champions: Mac Davidson & Martin Heath
(Rochester); Finalists: Chris Spahr (Boston) & Jamie Fagan

Gaultier Wins the U.S. Open

(continued from page 1)

A crowd of over 1,000 gathered to watch the final between Shabana and Gaultier. The first game of the match started close, but a few surprising errors by Shabana put Gaultier up 6-3. Winning back the serve, Shabana grabbed a quick two, but Gaultier came back with a vengeance, going up 10-5, before putting Shabana out of his misery.

The second game found Gaultier up 6-3, before a stunning shot gave Shabana the point and serve. Another pair of winners by Shabana tied the game at 6-all, at which point Gaultier took control of the court and the game, zipping ahead to 9-6. An aerobic volley earned Gaultier a point, but an out call gave Shabana the point and what would be his first and only game of the night, 11-7.

In the third game, Shabana forced Gaultier to commit a couple of errors early, but the formidable Frenchman came back with two unanswered points to tie the game again at 3-3. A dubious let call had Gaultier just a bit peeved, but it appeared to be just the impetus he needed to grab a quick five points. At 9-4, Gaultier refused to relinquish control of the T, working Shabana like a punching bag to take the game 11-4 and a 2-1 lead in the match.

Gaultier scooted to an early 5-3 lead in the fourth game and then a down ball brought the score to 4-5. Shabana kept fighting, and the score went to 6-7. At 8-6, Gaultier was infuriated with a call by the judges to bring it within one, 8-7. A deadly shot by Shabana brought the game to 8-8, before two sweet points took the game to 10-8. Shabana squeezed out another point, before a tough no-let call gave Gaultier the win and match.

Commenting on his first Super Series victory, Gaultier thanked Amr for a great game and shared, "Despite the win, I was not satisfied with my play against David Palmer in the semifinals, but today I was relaxed and felt I played a good squash game." He also commented on the professionalism of the venue and the enthusiasm of the audience, noting in particular how much he enjoyed playing in Boston for the first time.

Gaultier won over \$10,000 in prize money, as well as a Tourneau Chronograph watch and a "key" to the Boston Racquet Club. These were fitting rewards for a man who beat the #1, 2, and 3 players in three consecutive matches!

Main tournament sponsors included the Boston Racquet Club, Dover Rug Company, Dunlop, IXIS Asset Management Advisors Group, Shipyard Brewery, Tourneau Watch, and WBUR. The United States Open Squash Championship title is owned by the United States Squash Racquets Association and licensed to Event Engine, Inc.

Ed. note: Special thanks to Colleen Turner for her major contributions to this article.

Rules of Squash

by Nat Lovell

Question: In my 4.0 matches, the following situation often arises, leading to disagreements about the let call. I say I should get a stroke—the pro players always do.

The clearing player throws up a high lob in mid-court. I stand my ground as he tries to clear and I ask for the let. I believe I should get a stroke because he will be in my way when the ball comes down and I hit it to the front wall. Am I right? What should the call be?

Answer: If the ball is too high to hit and the clearing player has not yet interfered with your effort to get to the ball when you ask for the let (you say you "stand your ground," implying you are motionless, waiting for the ball to drop to you), the correct call is No Let. Referees at the pro level often get this call wrong. The whole point of a high slow lob is to gain time to clear. He does not automatically lose the point if the ball is unhittable at the time the let is requested.

If you have questions about squash rules, contact MSRA board member Nat Lovell at nwlovell@yahoo.com.


www.SQUASHTALK.com



**Squash shoes and rackets.
All Squash DVDs in print!**

**Largest USA HiTec outlet
Prince shoes and racquets**

**www.squashtalk.com/videos
online or visit us by appointment at
6 Franklin Place, Acton MA
978-266-1300**

New England Junior Open

by Tom Poor, MSRA Junior Committee

The second edition of the New England Open took place November 10–12, 2006, and featured 143 players, including foreigners from San Salvador, Brazil and Canada. The tournament was tied to the U.S. Open, where qualifying and first-round matches at the Murr Center were played alongside the junior matches. It made for great playing and spectating for the juniors.

Each of the eight age divisions had three draws, ensuring each player at least three matches. A player losing his first match in the main draw went to the Consolation draw; the loser there went to the Plate. Hence, with 24 draws and the resulting 271 matches, there was plenty of action.

The **BU13** draw of 19 was led by **Dylan Cunningham**, a member of the large Cleveland contingent. He cruised through the draw without the loss of a game, defeating **C.J. Smith** from New York in the final. **Tripp Kaelin** won the Consolation and **Jack Blasberg**, a product of Sharon Bradey's Harvard Club program, won the Plate.

The **BU15** draw of 30 was the largest. **Pehlaaj Bajwa**, son of the Harvard coach, was the top seed and made it to the final, where he met Montreal's **John Lamont**, a frequent entrant in MSRA tournaments. John won in three, completing his tournament without the loss of a game. **Michael Lillie** won the Consolation and **Matt Ma** the Plate.

Juan Flores from San Salvador and Trinity-Pawling School has played often in our tournaments and has yet to lose. He didn't this weekend either, running through the 28-player **BU17** draw, defeating New York's **Jason Michas** in the final. **Patrick Cunningham**, Dylan's brother, took the Consolation and SquashBuster **Ronald German** took the Plate.

Another foreigner, Brazil's **Yuri Franca**, hardly broke a sweat in dominating the **BU19** without the loss of a game. Yuri is living in the Boston area this year before college. The draw was a full 16, including four Cleveland players. The Consolation was won by **William Morris** of New York and St. Paul's; the Plate went to **Dan Lesser**.

The Girls' draws were more thinly populated, with two round robins. In the **GU13**, **Hunter Sechrest** from New York was the best of seven without losing a game. Similarly in the **GU19**, **Margaret Chapman** from Short Hills, NJ bested the other six entrants with the loss of only one game.

The **GU15** draw of 22 was the largest and was book-ended by two seeds from the New York area: #1 **Julianne Chu** from Brooklyn Heights and #2 **Campbell Sechrest** from New York. They mowed everyone down on their way to the final, where Julianne won in three. **Kristin Scillia** from New Jersey won the Consolation, and **Ashley Dona** scored again for the SquashBusters by winning the Plate.

The most surprising draw of the tournament was the **GU17**. Julianne's sister **Elizabeth** was the #1 seed, but couldn't hold it, losing to Boston's and Milton's **Alli Rubin** in a four-game semifinal. In the bottom half, #3 seed **Sarah Loucks**, fresh from a field hockey game, was upset by **Corey Schafer**, who in turn marched on over second seed **Dori Rahbar** in the semis. Corey won the first two games in the finals, but couldn't hold on, as Alli won the last three. Sarah won the Consolation and **Caroline Palmer** the Plate.

This year's New England Open is the first of three major tournaments run by the MSRA. Ironically, the next two are the first two weekends in January—the Massachusetts Junior Open and the Frank Millet Championships, the latter a USSRA selection event limited to the top 32 ranked players in each division.



Mass Junior Open: GU19: Winner Samantha Buechner (Newport, RI),
Finalist Rhetta Nadas (Wellesley)



Mass Junior Open: BU15: Winner Julian Kirby (Dover), Finalist Liam
McClintock (Wellesley)

Massachusetts Junior Open

by Tom Poor, MSRA Junior Committee

On a weekend when temperatures were setting records for warmth in January, the 2007 Massachusetts Junior Open at Harvard's Murr Center set a new record with 240 entrants and 500 matches, all played in slightly less than 48 hours. Each of the eight age divisions had three draws, ensuring each player three matches. A player losing his first match in the main draw went to the Consolation draw; the loser there went to the Plate. With 24 draws and a blizzard of matches, there was plenty of action.

25 players entered the **GU13** draw, headlined by **Emily Kelly** from snowbound Denver and **Dana Rapisarda** from Brooklyn. **Kimran Bajwa**, the daughter of Harvard's coach, was a surprise semifinalist before Emily stopped her in three. Dana marched through the bottom half without losing a game. The final was a four-game tussle in Dana's favor. Kimran took third over **Charlotte Cabot**; **Mikaela Johnson** won the Consolation in five over **Lily Grant** and the SquashBuster's **Gloria Nwaoha** won the Plate.

The smallest draw of the tournament was the **GU15** with 23. The New York invasion continued with top seed **Julianne Chu**, second seed **Jesse Pacheco**, and **Kate Calihan** from Rochester. 12-year-old **Hunter Sechrest**, also from NYC, played in this division after dominating the GU13 in November's New England Open. She did well, falling to 4th seed **Serena Fagan** in the quarters, and then went on to win the Consolation. Serena in turn bowed to Julianne, while in the other semifinal, Kate lost the 5th game, 10-8, to Jesse, who plays for St. George's School in Newport, RI. That match seemed to take the starch out of Jesse, for she lost the final in three to Julianne. Once again, a SquashBuster took the plate with **Alicia Forde's** victory.

Stephanie Vogel from West Hartford was almost the story in the 30-player **GU17**. She upset #1 seed **Mariana Tellez** of St. George's in the quarters, squeezed by **Alli Rubin** in the semis and came up just a point or two short in the finals against **Taylor Booth** from New York. Taylor beat **Casey Cortes** in the other semifinal after Casey had pulled out a five-game win over **Corey Schafer**. Casey again went to five to take 3rd from Rubin. Corey had a busy time, going to the Consolation to beat **Sommer Carroll** in five, and then five again over **Sarah Loucks** before bowing in the final to **Eliza Calihan**. SquashBusters continued their domination of the Plates with **Judy Braga's** win.

The draw of 28 in the **GU19** was the largest for this age group in MSRA history. Many of the players in the upper age groups are students at area secondary schools. **Rhetta Nadas** plays #1 at Nobles and eased into the final with hardly a hitch. In the other half, St. George's #1 **Samantha Buechner** had an equally easy time. After dropping the first game, Samantha came back to take the next three and the title. Groton's **Morgan Smith** took 3rd over **Elena Laird**. **Courtney Bogle** from New York won the Consolation and **Monete Johnson**, another SquashBuster, won the Plate.

Again a visitor from New York prevailed in the **BU13**. **Guy Davidson** encountered little resistance in the 36-player draw, winning all his matches in three. **John Fulham** from Wellesley had no trouble either in reaching the final in this large draw for this age group. **Henry Bell** took 3rd over **Tripp Kaelin**. **Atticus Kelly** narrowly defeated **Ben Krant** from Williamstown in five in the main draw, then met him again in the Consolation final, this time winning in three. **Stephen Monrad** defeated SquashBuster **Jamie Ryans** in the Plate final.

As is often the case in junior events, the **BU15** draw of 39 was the largest. There were no New Yorkers amongst the seeds, but Montreal's **John Lamont** dispatched many local players before losing in the semis by top seed **Julian Kirby**. John won 3rd over **Sam Sokolsky-Tift** in four games. Meanwhile, **Liam McClintock**, 12 ½ years old, sliced through the lower half without losing a game. The final was a four-game struggle, with Julian emerging as the winner. Another **Bajwa**, **Pehlaaj**, won the Consolation over **Edward Columbia** and normally returned to the Plate when SquashBuster **Steven Vo** won four matches and the trophy.

Playing up an age group is not unusual as advanced juniors go for more competition and experience in a higher level. **Gary Power**, 14, from East Lyme, CT has done this often and again this weekend in the **BU17**. He's usually successful and was again, although he was severely tested in a four-game final by **Will Sullivan**. Rochester's **Alex Greaves-Tunnell** lost 3rd to Toronto's **Michael Badali**, both of whom had lost three-game semifinal matches. Groton's **Sam Clayman** defeated **Barrett Takesian** from Milton for the Consolation title, while two Brooks School teammates vied for the Plate, with **Brewster Lee** winning in three.

One fellow not attending a local school was **Yuri Franca**, a visitor from Brazil spending a year in Cambridge. 24 others in the **BU19** draw would have had more of a chance if he'd stayed home, for he cruised through the tournament without the loss of a game. He defeated **William Morris** of St. Paul's, who had not lost a game before the final. **Harry Smith** of Middlesex defeated Milton's **Andrew Bernard** for 3rd and **Jamie Wilson** won the Plate.

It was an intense weekend for players and committee members alike. The 13 courts at Harvard's Murr Center allow tournaments of this size to be held in one venue, which is much preferable for all. The growth of the Massachusetts Junior Open has been remarkable, and hopefully will not outgrow the courts at Harvard.



Mass Junior Open: Finalist John Fulham (Wellesley), Winner Guy Davidson (New York City)



SquashBusters at the Mass Junior Open

by Mike Lemaire

The Massachusetts Junior Open took place the weekend of January 5, and once again the tournament was overrun with SquashBusters players of all ages attempting to make their mark in this year's tournament. Braving the early mornings and long days, the SquashBusters teams had an eventful and successful tournament, and while no one was able to capture the championship in their age group, several SquashBusters players took home the plate in their respective divisions: **Gloria Nwaoha, Alicia Forde, Judy Braga, Monete Johnson, and Steven Vo.**

This tournament was especially exciting because the new 6th grade team, who has only been playing squash for two months, received their baptism by fire as they played in their first-ever competitive tournament. Each match was a tribute to the growth of the program, as the younger divisions were predominantly made up of SquashBusters kids. Matt Mulder, the 6th grade team's academic coach, was at the tournament every day and came away really impressed with what he saw. "We were really proud of the kids and the way they competed this weekend," said Mulder. "At first the kids were nervous because they were facing kids who had a lot more expe-



Down time between matches at the Mass Junior Open: SquashBusters sixth graders Brendy Velez, Christian Rodriguez, and Darwyn Nunez.



Warming up before their Mass Junior Open matches, SquashBusters players: L: Vanely Santos. Front row: Vanessa Anderson, Anna Dau, Devin Rogers, Jerome Miller. Back row: Amber Edwards, Maguida da Silva, Jeremy Fullerton, Darwyn Nunez, and Jerome Miller.

rience than them. But we only asked that they have a good attitude and try their hardest in their matches, and that was evident throughout the weekend."

However, the 6th graders were not the only age group from SquashBusters to have quite a few players in the draws. It was not uncommon at Harvard's Murr Center courts to see one of the SquashBusters kids playing a match with an extensive support group consisting of teammates, coaches, and friends who were on hand to support them throughout the weekend. One of the most exciting matches was Rodney Galvao's come-from-behind win over Brewster Lee. One of the most entertaining matches was Randy Coplin's four-game victory over teammate Bernie St. Vil.

It was great to watch the entire 6th grade team yell support for their teammates as two of them competed against one another. Along with that positive attitude, the SquashBusters program stresses sportsmanship in all aspects of the game and after the game, and after watching firsthand how the kids behaved themselves, the kids, the coaches, and anyone else who helped deserve credit for the

outstanding behavior displayed at the Mass Junior Open. In the end, the results aren't what really mattered in a tournament of this size, which attracted some of the top talent from across the country. What really matters was already stated by Mulder—attitude and effort—and throughout the weekend both of these characteristics were prominently displayed by the SquashBusters players; the program can chalk up another tournament in the success column.

Ed. Note: Thanks to Rana Suh, grant writer and communications coordinator at SquashBusters, for the photos.

Frank Millet Junior Championships

by Chris Smith, US Junior Men's Coach and MSRA Junior Committee Member

Recently, the amazing work of the MSRA Junior Committee caught the eye of the US Squash office, who approached the Committee with a request to run one of their four "Selection Events" this season. Most Local SRAs run one junior event a year, but the MSRA agreed to add another major event to its already packed calendar, bringing its total to four events. To run this event, the Junior Committee had to agree to do this event not even one week removed from running the Mass Junior Open.

After adding the event to the MSRA junior calendar, the committee sat down to figure out a name for the tournament. The committee agreed that the event name should represent squash in Massachusetts, which is full of sportsmanship, integrity, and love of the sport, while honoring someone who has given the sport so much. **Frank Millet's** name was the obvious choice, and so the Frank Millet Junior Championships was born.

After the Mass Junior Open became the largest junior squash tournament in the history of squash in our state, the MSRA Junior Committee quickly turned around and put on yet another huge event at the Murr Center January 13–15. US Squash's selection events have capped draws at 32 with the top 32 rated players who enter getting accepted into the draws. These events always draw the best competition from around the country. The best players get the necessary head-to-head results against the higher rated players. What truly makes these events a "selection" event is that each year, the U19 draws are worth points for selection to the US Junior Team—this year being a Junior Women's Worlds year. With points and a trip to Hong Kong this summer to compete in the World Junior Championships on the line, it was the GU19 that was the showcase draw of the event.

178 of the nation's best turned up in Cambridge to play in 8 divisions—the biggest draw being the Boys U13 with 31 players. Local squash star **Liam McClintock** was given the #1 seed due to his Railstation rating and lived up to his billing, fending off all his competitors to take the title. He took **Michael East** of Maryland in the finals. **TJ Dembinski** of Hamden, CT took 3rd place over **William Douglas** of Brooklyn, NY. Our own **Edward Columbia** took the consolation draw.

In the GU13 draw, **Claudio Regio** of Bellevue, WA took the title over **Katie Tutrone** of Baltimore, MD. **Maria Urbina** took 3rd over **Rachel Leizman**, and **Olivia Fiechter** took the consolation

The Boys U15 gave us more local success, as **Julian Kirby** upset #2 seed Dylan Murray in the semis, 3-2. Julian fell in the final 3-1 to **Gary Power** of East Lyme, CT. **Sam Conant** of Philly won the consolation.

The GU15 was **Amanda Sohby's** for the taking, a simple path to the championship, as she only lost one game all weekend. 2nd place went to Greenwich's **Hallie Dewey**, 3rd to **Amy Smedira** from Ohio, and the consolation went to Hallie's sister **Charlotte**.

In the BU17 draw, **Thomas Mattsson** from the Lawrenceville School in NJ came out with the title. He overcame **Danny Greenberg** from Philly in the finals 3-0. **Christopher Hanson** from Greenwich, CT took **Charlie Wagner** from Portland for 3rd place. **Stephen Harrington** of Philly took the consolation.

The GU17 draw gave Boston another chance to show its local talent off a little. **Casey Cortes**, the #5 seed, defeated #1 seed **Katherine Giovinazzo** from Staten Island 3-2 in the semis. Casey followed that match up with another 3-2 upset win over #2 seed **Sarah Mumanachit** from PA in the final. Giovinazzo took 3rd place while Boston's **Alli Rubin** took the consolation draw.

The BU19 draw provided some of the best squash in a MSRA tournament in some time. 3 of the 7 members from last summer's US Junior Men's team that competed in New Zealand at the World Championships were the 1, 2, and 3 seeds. **Chris Callis** and **Todd Harrity**, both of Philly, met in the final true to their seedings, with Chris taking a 3-2 win for the championship.

Boston's **Ryan Dowd** knocked out national team member **Reed Endresen** in the quarters before falling to Callis in the semifinals. DC's **Peter Sopher** won the consolation.

The GU19 showcase draw provided more amazing squash; they all brought out their best, as the nation's best junior women fought for national team spots. With points on the line, **Logan Greer** of Philly took a 3-1 win in the finals over **Olivia Blatchford**. Olivia, who is only 14, had just won the British Junior Open GU15 draw a couple weeks earlier. The two are clear favorites to make the Junior Women's National Team. **Julie Cerullo** of Brooklyn took 3rd place, and **Alexis Saunders** took the conso draw.

The event was another MSRA Junior Committee success; special thanks to the volunteers who made the event happen: **Libby McClintock**, **Bill Nimmo**, **Jim Sullivan**, **Barbara and Gary Rubin**, **Mike Loucks**, **Lenny Bernheimer**, and **Tom Poor**. This stellar crew proved that Boston knows how to put on amazing squash events. The USSRA asked us to do it again next year.

Outlasting everyone at the event was Mr. **Frank Millet** himself, who coached his Milton players throughout the tournament as well as absorbing every ounce of one of the best tournaments in the country.



Boston's Edward Columbia displays his consolation trophy from the Frank Millet championships.

Adult Leagues: Mid-Season Reports

Women's 3.5/4.0

by *Bry Roskoz, League Chair*

This has been a transition year for the women's 3.5/4.0 league. With slightly fewer women playing at the level and those who are concentrated at a few clubs, we are experimenting with mixed club-based/assigned teams, three-player teams and playing each week's matches all at the same club. While still working out the kinks, we have seen an increased match competitiveness and, just as importantly, more socializing!

With two months to go in the regular season, it's fairly certain to be a Maugus/Harvard Club vs. Concord-Acton play-offs. Maugus/Harvard Club has dominated the league this year with ex-pro-Badminton-player-married-to-squash-pro **Szilvi Szombati**, junior stand-out **Corey Schafer** and former Harvard varsity player **Ella Witcher**. Concord-Acton has been amazingly consistent with the year-in year-out "Fab Four" of **Kara Kardon**, **Margo Grossberg**, **Tina Wu** and **Naomi Bradshaw**. Any three of them make the other teams work hard for points. The University Club, the perennial favorite, was split into two teams this year and unfortunately a series of injuries and travel commitments have resulted in defaults that will put both teams out of the play-offs.

We look forward to a strong finish to the season!

Women's 2.5

by *Sarah Lemaire, League Chair*

The women's 2.5 league is down from 9 teams to 7 teams this season, with Tennis & Racquet dropping out and the Maugus Club only fielding one team. Preseason reports placed the Maugus team as the strongest team, and they currently lead the league, with a small lead over the always-strong team of SquashBusters volunteers and employees. Cambridge Racquet is a solid third-place team since Bernadette Dixon rejoined them, and Concord-Acton (with the largest roster) and BSC-Waltham will be duking it out in February for the fourth playoff spot. The Harvard Club has a strong #1 player in Dartmouth grad **Kaitlin Yaremchuk**, but they've struggled against strong opponents. The University Club has a great group of enthusiastic players, led by team captain **Lisa Macalester** and #1 **Beth Collins**.

In Grand Prix news, the first three tournaments were won by three different 2.5 women: last year's state champ **Jimena Velarde** won the Middlesex Bowl/Wheeler's Cup, but is now sidelined from competitive squash by her first pregnancy. Congratulations, Jimena! **Beth Collins** won her home club's tournament, the UClub Open, and Maugus's **Betsy Hargreaves** won the January Thaw. The current Grand Prix points leaders do not include any of those three; the top six point-getters are **Mary Ni** (who has played in all three tournaments!), **Bernadette Dixon**, **Dominique Farniaux-Dumas**, **Mo Ramage**, **Coleen Phillimore**, and **Maria Pelidis**.

As I write this, the league social is only two weeks away,

on Tuesday, February 6 at Cambridge Racquet and Fitness. Thanks to Cambridge captain **Maria Mayorga** for helping to organize this and to the MSRA for supporting it financially.

Remember to sign up online for the state tournament, to be held at BRC March 31–April 1.

50+

by *Sam Magruder, League Commish*

In the MSRA Senior Circuit, the six teams play each other three times to complete the regular season, followed by this year's mandated four-team playoff. There is a very tight battle for win, place and show at the top of the ladder and an equally close contest for the crucial fourth spot. Boston Racquet Club has led for the entire season as Captain **Mike MacDonald** usually sets his deep and talented lineup with just enough firepower to win. Only two of their victories were sweeps. They have recorded eight wins against two losses, one while visiting their cross-the-hill rival, Union Boat, and the other to the Harvard Club on their own courts. Their other two closest contests were 3-2 wins against Milton which always gives them a tough run as they start with significant leads in most games. Milton has managed two convincing wins over Concord-Acton and two 3-2 decisions over the Harvard Club, who they now lead by a single point for the last playoff position.

In the three top positions, Union Boat Club is clinging to a one point lead over a very competitive Maugus team, while trailing BRC, also by a single point. It stays close because UBC-Maugus split their two meetings, as did UBC-BRC. By a quirk of the schedule, however, Maugus has two more shots at BRC to close out the season.

There are only two undefeated players in the league this year. **Barclay Douglas** has maintained his pace from last year, although his latest outing was the closest, a five-gamer over **Chris Fox**. **Len Miller** has also stayed perfect on the year despite playing two matches right after intercontinental flights. **Martin Deale** is the league's iron man, playing every match and recording an impressive 8-2 record. **Mark Dickinson** is right behind him at 7-2. **John Hemenway**, who runs everything down, has only been bested once this year by **Chris Weber**, against six wins. **Mike Spatola**, playing all but one match for Milton, has quietly built a winning record at 5-4.

Open 5.5

by *Dave Adams, League Chair*

With a few weeks to go, the playoff picture is coming into focus! The T&R, behind stellar play at the top (three-time defending state champ, **Dan Sharplin**, and former WORLD #4 **Paul Johnson**) have established themselves as the team to beat. Will they put together their full lineup for the playoffs? Who can tell. Last year's champs, University Club II, and the resur-

(continued on page 9)

Adult Leagues: Mid-Season Reports (cont'd)

gent UBC teams are locked in a battle for the #2 and #3 spots, with the winner getting the important home court advantage in the first round of the playoffs. League newcomer **Preston Quick** has been the top flight #1 his team hoped he would be, but will his leadership overcome the depth of the UClub team? Not if **Pat Malloy** and his defending champs have anything to say about it. Rounding out the playoff hopefuls is MIT, whose depth and consistency have carried them through some tough matches. They will fight hard to stay in the playoff picture and try to avoid a first-round clash with the T&R juggernaut.

It's still possible for the U Club I and Harvard Club teams to catch MIT, but inconsistency has plagued both teams. Concord-Acton and the BRC have struggled to compete with the big boys, but have played solid matches against the rest of the teams. The SCLA and SquashBusters teams have struggled with the lack of a powerhouse #1, hurting both. The level of play in the league has hit a new high this year, and the playoffs will likely feature a US national champion, a New Zealand national champion, and a British national champion. Not too shabby...

Open 4.5

by Dan Reagan, League Chair

Five teams stood out as top performers in the first half: T&R, Union Boat, BSC-Allston, Concord-Acton, and U-Club. And of those, T&R and Union Boat are the elite. Bragging rights at the mid-season mark just barely went to T&R who, although tied with Union Boat in winning percentage, had a better win/loss record. These two teams continue to run neck-and-neck into the second half, and it may take the playoffs to settle who is best!

Solid teams were Maugus-2, MIT, BRC, and Maugus-1, who proved they could compete at a high level when their best players were all available. Three teams have had a tougher go at it mostly due to player availability and injuries: Harvard Club, Andover, and BSC-Waltham.

4.5 league has good dynamics. Match reports consistently indicate lots of good competition and sportsmanship, friendly atmosphere, and no reports so far of any "difficult" situations. We are lucky to have a terrific group of captains who show great leadership and stay on top of their admin duties!

Open 4.0

by Simon Graham, League Chair

Halfway through my first season as 4.0 chairperson, and I must say things are running smoothly, with 200 individual matches played and an outstandingly low default rate; my thanks to all of the players for making my life easy!

So far, the Boston Racquet Club team is racing away with the regular season, losing only one match point and four indi-

vidual matches to date. The three teams behind them are all very close, and most of the remaining teams are still capable of taking one of the four playoff places.

Open 3.5

by Merrill Martin, League Chair

Boston Racquet Club started out strong and has continued to lead the pack of 14 teams in this year's Open 3.5 league. **Reed Sussman** and **Naveen Cherukuri** are often leading this team to victories in the #1 and #2 spots. The Harvard Club is close on the heels of BRC—only 2 points away. Harvard has had a strong lead player in **Julia Moore**, who made short work of her match with this author in our one match earlier this season.

Milton Academy is right behind the Harvard Club, trailing by only 1 point. Milton's **Robert Lunkoto** has an amazing 11-0 record this season! A mere 3 points behind Milton is the HealthPoint (BSC Waltham) team.

Jon Hickok and **Stephen Cohen** are strong lead players for this team and they have some new players on the rise.

While this year we are going to a two-week playoff schedule, meaning that only the top 4 teams are in the playoffs, these four teams are by no means a shoo-in. Cambridge Racquet and Concord-Acton are tied at this writing and are both within striking distance of a playoff spot.

Open 2.5

by Carl Cummings, League Chair

In the Open 2.5 league, Boston Racquet Club has ridden some new, young legs to the top of the standings, while below them, a half-dozen teams of various chronological (but generally older) persuasions jockey for playoff positions. At the two-thirds mark of the season, BRC had a ten-point lead on second place, and perennial contender, Andover, but only eight points separated the six teams below BRC and, with only four playoff spots available this year, much would depend on the remaining head-to-head matches among those vying. The trick for BRC will be not to turn into the San Diego Chargers for the playoffs.

There is no "I" in "team," but there are individual players who have to win their matches and those who had done it the best (with at least seven matches) included **Dick Lammert** (8-1), **Andy Gossard** (9-1), **Simon Shelley** (8-1) and **Michael Belliveau** (6-1), all of the BRC; Andover's **Mark Attarian** (8-1) and **Stephen McKaughan** (7-2), Cambridge Racquet's **Andrew Wenrick** (7-1) and **Stefan McDonough** (7-2); **Carolyn Damp** (8-1) and **Phil Murphy** (7-3) of FoMaMA; and **Jeff Peo** (6-1) of T&R.



France's Greg Gaultier shows off his Tourneau Chronograph watch, which he received as the U.S. Open winner. (Photo by Steve Lines, SquashPics. Used with permission.)



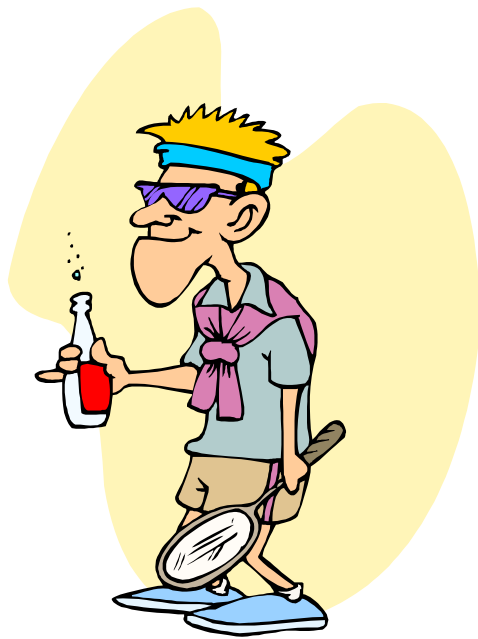
Mass Junior Open GU15 Plate winner Alicia Forde (L) with tournament chair, Tom Poor



Mass Junior Open GU19 Plate winner Monete Johnson (L) with tournament chair, Tom Poor



UClub Pro-Am Doubles South Draw: Finalists: Paul Price (Toronto) & Marty Stocklan;
Champions: Jon Ross & James Hewitt (Toronto)



UClub Pro-Am Doubles West Draw: Finalists: Jeff Mulligan (NY) & Jim Bildner;
Champions: Mat Sibble & Ben Gould (Sea Island, GA)

MSRANews Winter 2007

The MSRANews is published three times per year.

MSRA, P.O. Box 51611 Boston, MA 02205-1611

PRINTING AND DISTRIBUTION: PrintCentre, Inc.
4 Arlington Road, Needham, MA 02492

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE: David Adams, Carl Cummings, Eric Godes, Simon Graham, Mike Lemaire, Nat Lovell, Sam Magruder, Merrill Martin, Tom Poor, Dan Reagan, Bry Roskoz, Chris Smith, Rana Suh, Colleen Turner.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION may be obtained from P.O. Box 51611, Boston, MA 02205-1611, or membership@ma-squash.org, or www.ma-squash.org.

Comments or suggestions may be addressed to: Sarah Lemaire, Editor, MSRANews, slemaire@verizon.net.