



SoutheasternSquashRacquetsAssociation

November 2004

Hello SESRA:

I was told I would run out of things to report on a monthly basis, but this month proves the significant exception. There's a lot to talk about.

Atlanta Interclub:

First, we just finished the three-way interclub playoff at Concourse on Saturday, November 20 and as the Beatles guaranteed, the splendid time was had by all.



Last Men Standing: Sandy Draper and Chad Plumly completed the Atlanta InterClub competition on Nov. 20. A partial group of players and participants included (front row l to r) Ham Williams, Alladin Mitha, Frank Fabbri, Andre Maur, Diniar Alikham, Paul Fairleigh, (back row l to r) Captain Dave Bridges, Mack McCready, Craig McCready, Lee Evans, Sandy Draper, Rene Jongmans, Chad Plumly, Ashesh Choksi, John O'Donnell, Karen Levine, Captain Oscar Arenas, Mark Bertram, and John Gordon.

Thanks to Concourse, as well as Andre and Danielle Mauer for their support and organization, to pros Tom Rumpler and Alladin Mitha for putting their members behind the idea, and to captains Oscar Arenas and Dave Bridges for their hard work.

Here's what happened: 15 person club teams, each divided into three divisions (5.0+, 4.0+, and 3.0+) played off against each other for the overall Henry Cup trophy, as well as division honors. Winners were determined by total matches won rather than head-to-head competition.

Head to head, Windy Hill defeated Concourse 8-7 and both Windy Hill and Concourse defeated Piedmont Driving Club 13-2. The margin was equally narrow in total matches won, as Windy Hill took 21 of 45 matches, Concourse took 20 matches, and Piedmont took 4.

Coming from a much smaller player base, Piedmont's total results were particularly important at the 3.0 level. Against Concourse's Alan Patterson, Lee Evans went five games. At 8-6 in the fifth, Patterson offered a stroke and the match but Evans preferred to play it out and succumbed 10-8. Had he won the match, Piedmont would have beaten Concourse in the 3.0 division as subsequently John Gordon pulled out a five-game win over John O'Donnell and Ridley Hailey took Paul Fairleigh 3-0.

Overall, Concourse and Windy Hill matches were tied coming into the last two hours which made every game count, no matter the opponent. Piedmont pro Alladin Mitha called his team the Ralph Nader of the contest, tipping the results back and forth. Both Piedmont 3.0 wins over Concourse came in the last 90 minutes and denied the host club the tying match win.

The 5.0+ division was as close as it can get. Windy Hill's Chris Tham, Sujit Sharma, and Todd Knutson went 2-0 on the day, as did Concourse's Andre Maur and Rene Jongmans. Although Windy Hill defeated Concourse head to head by a 3-2 margin, total 5.0 matches were just one apart coming into the last contest of the day. Piedmont's Sandy Draper took Windy Hill last-minute injury replacement Chad Plumly 3-1, leaving Concourse and Windy Hill tied in matches won at the 5.0 level and Concourse edging ahead with one game more in their column.

In the 4.0s, Concourse was dominant with Jamie Jamison, Oscar Arenas, Tom Thompson, and Pradeep Jolly taking both matches. Windy Hill's Craig McCready took John Mahorner 3-0 to notch the only loss for Concourse, while Jolly held off Windy Hill's Bill Basnett in a critical five-game marathon late in the day.

Windy Hill's 3.0 team was equally dominant, with the only loss coming against Chris Mottley at the hands of Patterson, 3-1. Greg Sumners, Steve Odom, Mack McCready, and Ham Williams were unblemished. McCready, in particular, took the deciding Concourse-Windy Hill contest 3-0 against Karen Levine late in the afternoon.

The galleries were great, the players courteous, and the enthusiasm level was high. Just wait until next year! Full results are attached at the end of this piece.

Atlanta storms the British Open and Intercollegiates:

Next, part of the goal of SESRA is to pay attention to Atlanta's squash profile nationally and internationally. To that end, our own Michael Gough, who this spring won the U.S. National 65 title, traveled to the British Open in early November to represent the colonies.

As he left for his first match, expressing a typical international attitude toward U.S. squash, his mother said she hoped he would win a point. Instead, our man won his first match against John Daynes 3,0,0. He then played the second seed, Pat Kirton of Surrey, and went up 9-2, 9-2 before succumbing 2,0,2. Kirton went on to take the eventual winner, John Woodliffe, to five games. Michael's comment on his match: "he was a better squash player, but I was more physical. I started thinking I could actually win the damn thing! My message to the U.S. is that we can absolutely compete on this level."

An interesting sidelight is the attached op-ed article criticizing U.S. players for not making the trip to what is still considered the pinnacle of squash tournaments. Michael is said to be considering a chartered plane for Atlanta entrants next year, so let him know of your interest!

Also, on the college front, Atlanta's Michelle Quibell is ranked no. 1 among college women and her Yale team is also expected to take the intercollegiates. Michael Gilman's second year at Princeton has the Tigers ranked 4th and he is no. 22 among college squash players. Evan Burton's Franklin and Marshall team is slotted at 16th nationally at the outset.

100th Anniversary:

Finally, here are some quick pics from the 100th Centennial in New York. Although I can't identify everyone, you should all recognize the Rumplers and Eben Hardie.





News:

In addition to the British Open piece, I am attaching the press release announcing the unexpected resignation of USSRA Executive Director Palmer Page recently.

BALA CYNWYD, PENNSYLVANIA, NOVEMBER 12, 2004 - United States Squash Racquets Association Board Chairman Ken Stillman announced today that Palmer Page has resigned as the Association's Chief Executive Officer to pursue personal and professional goals.

Page, 54, took over the Association's top spot in September, 2003 and was the organization's first-ever CEO. Page brought with him a combination of professional business experience and long-standing commitment to all aspects of the sport. The Board credits Page with helping to create financial stability for the organization, rekindle a membership focus and run the highly successful first fundraising dinner - the Association's 100 th Anniversary and Hall of Fame Banquet. Page also was instrumental in developing long-term strategy and Internet solutions for members.

"When Palmer joined us, we anticipated dynamic change under his leadership, and we were not disappointed. Palmer's life-long passion for squash and his high level of professional training and experience helped us out of financial jeopardy and brought new energy to the organization," said Stillman. "We want to thank him for his leadership, for his commitment to excellence and for helping steer the organization in a new direction. We wish him the best in his new endeavors."

"It has been a privilege to guide the USSRA over the past year," said Page. "We had a lot of challenges, and we faced them head on. I am proud of what we accomplished, and I look forward to seeing the Association move toward further success."

The Association plans to hire a new CEO, and Mike Barnet, the Director of Operations, will assume the day-to-day duties in the interim. Stillman said, "We

believe we will be able to move quickly to name a new CEO. Though we are saddened to see Palmer move on, we also are excited about the possibilities ahead."

"Squash has been a lifelong community for me. I have truly enjoyed the great opportunity that the USSRA bestowed on me so I could work with others to identify and help initiate a strategy that I believe will propel squash forward. I look forward to the Olympics decision about squash shortly and hope to see the game of squash grow dramatically across all socioeconomic groups. I wish for the continued success of the USSRA," Page said in closing.

Prior to his post at the USSRA, Page had worked for thirty years at IBM, where he had leadership positions in strategy, sales management, pricing, credit, marketing, product development, and business practices. He played #1 for three years and was Captain of the University of Pennsylvania squash team, and he won the 1971 intercollegiate championships. He is a past chair of the Referee Committee of the USSRA and was inducted into the first class of the University of Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame.

Commentary on the British Open: [From SquashTalk]

Americans Missing in Action on the International Stage © 2004 SquashTalk.com
by Ron Beck (Ron Beck is the editor of SquashTalk and spent five years on the WPSA pro tour)

MOST FAMOUS EVENT

I don't care how much prize money John Nimick and Jon Beddington raise or don't raise, or whether the event is in Nottingham or central London, or whether the charismatic star Jonathon Power skips the event, the British Open is still in my mind the most important squash tournament in the world. More important than the World Open or the Commonwealth Games or any other event. It's the event that Hashim Khan won in startling fashion, as an unknown from Peshawar, and then retained six more times. It's the event that Nephew Mo Khan parlayed into an entire career in the USA. It's the event that Jahangir Khan dominated for a decade (he won 10 times!.) And on the women's side, the incomparable Heather McKay won SIXTEEN times while New Zealander Susan Devoy won EIGHT times. It's how those players careers are defined. It's THE event.

NATALIE AND LATASHA

So where are the Americans? They are missing in action.

The USA Women's National team exceeded everyone's expectations in finishing 8th in the world in Amsterdam this September. But that seems to have been an abbreviated flirtation with international competition.

In the entire men's and women's 32-person main draws and qualifying draws, there are two players under the American flag — the perennial WISPA competitors Natalie Grainger and Latasha Khan. And it's a bit of a stretch for America to take credit for Grainger's presence in Nottingham - she's only resided in the USA for a few short years. I do give Natalie my total respect and admiration for her commitment to American squash as demonstrated quite clearly last weekend by her entry in the Women's Howe Cup team competition in New York City, one weekend before a critical week for her in Nottingham. And in Latasha's case, she is of the Khan

clan. She bears the pride and tradition of that great squash family, which has driven her to excel at the game and to travel the world testing her form against the worlds best for a decade. Latasha, I have a lot of respect for your dedication, travels, and success on the world stage.

AVERSE TO THE TRANSATLANTIC FLIGHT

But where are the other American players? Where are Louisa Hall and Meredith Quick and Michelle Quibell? Where are Preston Quick and the other American men?

Well the fact is, that the American men are not ranked quite highly enough to make it into the British Open Qualifier; but the American women are in a totally different position. There were 13 first round women's pro qualifying matches [not played](#), either because of byes or no-shows. These were 13 available positions for the American Women.

Where are the women? Most of the American and Canadian women are entered in a \$6,000 minor tournament in [Florida next weekend](#). First of all, why is the American squash community staging a pro squash event on the British Open weekend? Second, why didn't the top American women make the trip to Nottingham? Why didn't the USSRA ask, cajole, and support the women in trying to qualify in Nottingham?

I posed the question to USSRA CEO Palmer Page. The question seemed to catch him by surprise. "We raised a lot of money at our Centennial dinner." He told me. "In the future we can maybe support some of these types of things."

I'm not sure money is the issue. Last time I checked, an advance ticket to the UK can be purchased for around \$250 dollars.

Frankly, I don't understand it. After years of dedication to improving their squash games, and reaching the top of the American squash pyramid, the American players seem largely satisfied with playing in local American "satellite events," the American championships, and working in local clubs. Wouldn't they want to prove themselves on a world stage? And we are not just talking about the British Open. There was not one single American player who entered last December's World Open.

It's not that they are leaving squash - many of them are working fulltime at squash clubs, or other similar roles. And yes, I admit that in many ways fully dedicating yourself to the training, single minded focus, and travel needed to compete on the PSA or WISPA stages can be thankless, and certainly not monetarily lucrative except for a very few top players. But it's like any endeavor. If you pursue it, pursue excellence. Go for the top.

A NEW GENERATION

Christopher Gordon, the American junior star who has been playing in pro events in the UK for the past year, and Julian Illingworth, the Yale star who appeared in some pro events across the globe this summer, may be the first young Americans of the present generation to break through the American squash insecurity and compete successfully on the world stage. They have that look in their eye, the bug to compete with the very best.

A MESSAGE

America's top players. I have a message for you. If you are going to take a position on the American National Team, and accept the US Squash community's resources in that role, then fulfil your end of the bargain and compete on the world stage in the world's most important squash events. All the American squash players below you on the "squash pyramid" are looking for the country's best to reach higher!

First Atlanta InterClub Results:

Head to Head:

- Windy Hill def. Concourse, 8-7
- Concourse def. Piedmont, 13-2
- Windy Hill def. Piedmont, 13-2

The Henry Cup (total matches won):

Team	Matches	Games
	Won	Won
Concourse	20	65
Windy Hill	21	70
Piedmont	4	17
5.0+		
Concourse	7	24
Windy Hill	7	23
Piedmont	1	3
4.0+		
Concourse	9	27
Windy Hill	5	19
Piedmont	1	5
3.0+		
Concourse	4	14
Windy Hill	9	28
Piedmont	2	9

Concourse vs. Piedmont Driving Club

November 20, 2004

Concourse 13; Piedmont 2

No.	Concourse Player Name	Games Won		PDC Player Name	Games Won	Match Won	Match Time
<u>Division 5.0+</u>							
1	Andre Maur	3	vs.	Allen Post	0	Con.	11.15
2	David Perry	3	vs.	Dallas Clement	0	Con.	9.45
3	Jason Cotton	3	vs.	Alladin Mitha	0	Con.	12.00
4	Daniel Unger	3	vs.	Hugh Hailey	0	Con.	3.45
5	Rene Jongmans	3	vs.	Sandy Draper	0	Con.	11.15
	Division Matches Won:	5		Division Matches Won:	0		
<u>Division 4.0+</u>							
6	Jamie Jamison	3	vs.	Trey Paris	1	Con.	3.00
7	John Mahorner	3	vs.	Rush Barrett	0	Con.	9.00
8	Oscar Arenas	3	vs.	Hunter Groton	0	Con.	12.45
9	Van Kassabian	3	vs.	Ian Henderson	0	Con.	5.15
10	Pradeep Jolly	3	vs.	Ben Jennings	0	Con.	9.00
	Division Matches Won:	5		Division Matches Won:	0		
<u>Division 3.0+</u>							
11	Alan Patterson	3	vs.	Lee Evans	2	Con.	12.45
12	John O'Donnell	2	vs.	John Gordon	3	Pied.	4.30
13	Paul Fairleigh	0	vs.	Ridley Hailey	3	Pied.	5.15
14	Karen Levine	3	vs.	Kelly Garges	0	Con.	10.30
15	Julia Lane	3	vs.	Tom Reynolds	0	Con.	10.30
	Division Matches Won:	3		Division Matches Won:	2		
	Team Matches Won:	13		Team Matches Won:	2		

Concourse vs. Windy Hill

November 20, 2004

Windy Hill 8; Concourse 7

No.	Concourse Player Name	Games Won		Windy Hill Player Name	Games Won	Match Time
<u>Division 5.0+</u>						
1	Andre Maur	3	vs.	Diniar Alikhan	1 Con.	5.15
2	David Perry	2	vs.	Chris Tham	3 W.H.	12.45
3	Jason Cotton	1	vs.	Sujit Sharma	3 W.H.	9.00
4	Daniel Unger	0	vs.	Todd Knutson	3 W.H.	9.45
5	Rene Jongmans	3	vs.	Michael Kilgallon	WD Con.	2.15
	Division Matches Won:	2		Division Matches Won:	3	
<u>Division 4.0+</u>						
6	Jamie Jamison	3	vs.	William Cloherty	1 Con.	12.00
7	John Mahorner	0	vs.	Craig McCreedy	3 W.H.	3.00
8	Oscar Arenas	3	vs.	Ashesh Choksi	0 Con.	3.45
9	Tom Thompson	3	vs.	Eric Granade	0 Con.	11.15
10	Pradeep Jolly	3	vs.	Bill Basnett	2 Con.	3.00
	Division Matches Won:	4		Division Matches Won:	1	
<u>Division 3.0+</u>						
11	Alan Patterson	3	vs.	Chris Mottley	1 Con.	9.45
12	John O'Donnell	0	vs.	Greg Sumners	3 W.H.	1.30
13	Paul Fairleigh	0	vs.	Steve Odom	3 W.H.	2.15
14	Karen Levine	0	vs.	Mack McCreedy	3 W.H.	4.30
15	Frank Fabbri	0	vs.	Ham Williams	3 W.H.	1.30
	Division Matches Won:	1		Division Matches Won:	4	
	Team Matches Won:	7		Team Matches Won:	8	

Piedmont Driving Club vs. Windy Hill

November 20, 2004

Windy Hill 13; Piedmont 2

No.	Windy Hill Player Name	Games Won		PDC Player Name	Games Won	Match Won	Match Time
<u>Division 5.0+</u>							
1	Diniar Alikhan	3	vs.	Allen Post	0	W.H.	2.15
2	Chris Tham	3	vs.	Dallas Clement	0	W.H.	3.45
3	Sujit Sharma	3	vs.	Alladin Mitha	WD	W.H.	3.00
4	Todd Knutson	3	vs.	Hugh Hailey	0	W.H.	12.45
5	Chad Plumly	1	vs.	Sandy Draper	3	Pied.	5.15
	Division Matches Won:	4		Division Matches Won:	1		
<u>Division 4.0+</u>							
6	William Cloherty	1	vs.	Trey Paris	3	Pied.	9.00
7	Craig McCready	3	vs.	Rush Barrett	1	W.H.	12.00
8	Ashesh Choksi	3	vs.	Hunter Groton	0	W.H.	9.45
9	Eric Granade	3	vs.	Ian Henderson	0	W.H.	2.15
10	Bill Basnett	3	vs.	Ben Jennings	0	W.H.	12.00
	Division Matches Won:	4		Division Matches Won:	1		
<u>Division 3.0+</u>							
11	Chris Mottley	3	vs.	Lee Evans	1	W.H.	3.45
12	Greg Sumners	3	vs.	John Gordon	0	W.H.	10.30
13	Steve Odom	3	vs.	Ridley Hailey	0	W.H.	11.15
14	Mack McCready	3	vs.	Kelly Garges	0	W.H.	1.30
15	Ham Williams	3	vs.	Tom Reynolds	0	W.H.	4.30
	Division Matches Won:	5		Division Matches Won:	0		
	Team Matches Won:	13		Team Matches Won:	2		

Hope this newsletter continues to be of interest. Let me know what you think.

Best,

Bob Burton