

Mass Squash News



Massachusetts Squash Newsletter

President's Letter

This is the most active time of the year for squash. The leagues are at the mid-point, several junior events occurred over the holidays, the high school and college seasons are underway, and the annual state skill level and age group tournaments are about to start. I hope you are getting out there to play!

In addition to bringing you the latest on the various squash fronts, this newsletter gives special attention to the many good things happening for junior squash in Massachusetts. We are particularly proud of these programs, which have shown substantial growth in both program offerings and members.

The 16-member, all-volunteer MA Squash Junior Committee, led by Tom Poor, is a driving force for much of this success. The Committee has run/will be running 8 sanctioned tournaments this season, several at the national level. A schedule of the tournaments this past/upcoming season on our website can give you an idea of how much high-level competitive squash is available to our juniors.

The Junior Committee also runs two free Junior League round robin programs, one for beginner-to-intermediate players, and one for high school players. The round robins are run on weekends at the Harvard Murr Center and Dana Hall Shipley Center courts respectively, and are frequently oversubscribed due to their popularity with both the players and their parents. Thanks to Azi Djazani and the Junior League volunteers for making this program such a great success.

We are fortunate to have KidSquash, a nonprofit, community-based junior program available to newcomers, and to those who would not otherwise have access, to learn how to play the game. In association with Harvard University, its coaching staff, and volunteers from the men and women squash teams, KidSquash provides this unique opportunity for kids between the ages of 8 to 17. Thanks to Satinder Bajwa, Tariq Mohammed, the KidSquash volunteers, and Harvard for making this possible.

And of course Boston is proud to have the nationally recognized SquashBusters based on Northeastern University campus, the first youth enrichment program of its kind. SquashBusters combines squash, academics, and community service for 110 participating students in middle and high school. This critically acclaimed program, now 14 years old, proudly boasts an 84% matriculation rate to four-year colleges for its students. The combination of squash with individualized student mentoring is a winning formula. The program has caught on: there are now SquashBusters programs serving over 600 students in 10 cities across the country. Thank you SquashBusters staff, volunteers, and board members for doing what you do!

Finally, MA Squash supported junior squash this year through teaching clinics. Our direct financial support during the US Pro Squash event at Cross Courts last September enabled 16 juniors to attend 3-hour pro teaching clinics with the tourney players - the likes of David Palmer, Shahier Razik, John White, and 5 other international level pros. A great success, we hope to do more of this in the future.

Early on, I was amazed at the tremendous investment being made in junior programs. The number of adult volunteers and the amount of time they commit is impressive. But when I volunteered to help with the Junior League programs myself, I really "got it." I saw kids learning how to play, learning the rules, learning sportsmanship, and experiencing the sheer fun of getting a serve in, having a long rally, or winning a game. And then I remembered how important squash has been to me over the years. I thought "Why not share that experience?" Exactly!

Read this issue and be amazed at the quality and success of junior programs in this state. Another reason why Massachusetts is such a great place for squash.

Dan Reagan
President, Massachusetts Squash

Dana Hall Junior Girls' Open

Nick Lloyd, Dana Hall coach

On the first weekend of December, the ground outside Dana Hall's Shipley Center was once again covered with snow. Inside, the Zammito Courts were busy with nearly 80 junior girls playing in our third annual junior tournament. The greatest growth this year was in the U17 division, which at 28 entries had 19 more than in 2008. Also a first was the inclusion of a U11 division, with 4 entries taking part in a classic round robin. With 22 participants from SquashBusters and a strong contingent of players from the interscholastic teams of Nobles, Milton, and Dana Hall, one might believe it was a decidedly local tournament. However, with players making the trip from Seattle, St. Louis, Brooklyn, Vermont, and New Jersey, this tournament is clearly growing in popularity outside of the greater Boston area.

With all five divisions playing the now standard PAR 11 style of play, the court schedule was slightly compressed when possible, accounting for slightly shorter matches. There were, however, a number of matches that went well past the 30, even 45-minute mark. An all-girls tournament has its advantages; aside from not having to worry about refereeing or being refereed by boys, the girls also enjoyed pink tournament shirts and beautifully made jewelry boxes as trophies.

In the GU 11 round robin, **Madeleine Chai** didn't drop a single game on her way to securing the champion's trophy with her victory over runner-up **Natasha Jones**. A tight battle for third place was won in four games by **Sara Keene** over **Sarah Goldstein**.

In the GU 13 division, 8 players made for a very clean draw beginning with the quarterfinals. All matches in this draw were won 3-0, though a few winning players had to fight hard to win some of their games 12-10. **Samantha Chai** beat **Anne Blasberg** in the final 11-8, 11-7, 11-5 to take home the championship trophy. **Madeleine Chai**, the winner of the GU11 draw, doubled up to play in the GU13. After losing 8-11, 7-11, 10-12 to **Anne Blasberg** in the semi, she worked hard to beat fourth place finisher **Gabriela Rodriguez** 11-1, 11-5, 11-4. The consolation draw was won by **Doria Chen** over **Annice Kim** 11-1, 11-5, 11-4.

Thirty - two girls in the GU 15 division made for another full draw. This meant that champion **Marina Hartnick** had to win 5 matches to take home her trophy. This is the second year in a row that Marina has taken home the trophy after winning the GU 13 last year and making it to the finals in 2007. Marina beat classmate **Becky Brownell** in the final 11-9, 11-7, 11-8. Top seed **Amanda Houser** from Brooklyn, NY breezed through her first three matches, giving up only 17 points in 9 games of play. After a very tough loss in the semis (8-11 in the fifth) to the eventual champion, Amanda had to face **Samantha Chai** in the 3/4 playoff. The timing was a challenge for both girls as Samantha had to hot court herself directly from winning the GU 13 division. Amanda had to wait patiently for that match to finish and once their match began who is to say that either girl didn't have an advantage over the other? A tough battle on tired legs saw Samantha win 12-10 in the fifth. **Lillie Simourian** won the Classic Plate, **Clarissa Reichblum** from Bennington, VT won the Consolation, and **Deanna Pettway** won the Plate Consolation prize.

Olivia Wherry from Brooklyn, NY lived up to her #1 seed in the GU 17 division. The only person to take a game off Olivia was **Madeline Fraser** (also from Brooklyn, NY) in the final. **Caroline Monrad** took home the third place prize after giving up the first two games in her match against **Meyha Sud**. In the Classic Plate, it was **Sofia Thierry** taking home fifth place over **Zoe Carey** in four games while **Caroline Sargent** (all the way from Seattle) won the Consolation bracket over **Madeleine Smith** in yet another grueling five game. **Alexandra Spiliakos** claimed a four victory in the Plate Consolation over newcomer **Sarah Allison**.

The GU 19 division had but six entries. After the round robin, it was SquashBusters' **Kadineyse Ramize** winning the championship match over **Anna Porter** in three games and **Natalie Hunter** taking home the third place prize.

On behalf of the Dana Hall School, I'd like to thank all of the players and their parents for coming to the Shipley Center for a great weekend of squash. Special thanks go to Tom Poor, Sophia Spiliakos, Kassie Teng, Libby McClintock and the entire Mass Junior Committee. I'd also like to thank Harrow Sports for supplying shirts and prizes and last, but not least, Cross Courts Squash and Fitness Center, for running the boys' side of the tournament.

About Massachusetts Squash

Massachusetts Squash ("MA Squash") exists to promote the game of squash in the state. Activities include coordinating fall/spring and summer leagues in the greater Boston area, running an annual statewide sanctioned multi-flight singles softball tournament, running annual softball and doubles tournaments, coordinating 8 annual sanctioned junior tournaments, coordinating two junior leagues of Sunday afternoon round robins for beginner and high school players, sponsorship and partnering with pro tournaments in the area, support for US Squash and its activities by promoting joint membership in the US/MA organizations, squash education via sponsorship or running of annual teaching/rules clinics, and squash communications via a website, 3 annual newsletters, an annual Yearbook, and by periodic emails to 1,200 members and 1,300 friends. Activities are coordinated entirely by volunteers: a 19-member board, a 16-member Junior Committee, and 82 volunteer league/event coordinators. Operations are supported by a small budget and huge enthusiasm for squash! Spread the word. . . and tell your friends to become members!

Dear Members of MA Squash,

The students and staff at SquashBusters would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your lifelong friendship. Much like the long-term, supportive friendship and mentorship we seek to offer to our SquashBuster students, you have been a consistent, supportive presence in our lives in thick and thin times. In fact, your former president, Molly Downer, was a key catalyst in the program's beginning. In March of 1995, Greg Zaff – SquashBusters' soon to be founder – sat down to lunch at Boston's Cottonwood Café with Molly, his long-time friend. Greg and Molly spent that lunch discussing his idea for a youth enrichment program for disadvantaged kids, featuring the sport of squash. Greg left that lunch with Molly and, at her urging, began writing down his ideas. The challenge of translating the concept for SquashBusters into an actual program took place over the next 18 months. From Zaff's initial drafts, he determined that the primary goal of SquashBusters was to use squash as a means for enriching the lives of disadvantaged kids. The M.S.R.A. donated 8% of the first program year's budget to launch SquashBusters in 1996.

MA Squash and SquashBusters have been intricately linked since its critical friendship was born in 1995. MA Squash supports scholarships to give SquashBuster students the opportunity to attend summer squash camps throughout New England, including SquashBusters own camps. This past year, in the midst of the fiscal crisis that forced SquashBusters to limit its own summer camp offerings, MA Squash came through with significantly increased support for SquashBusters summer squash camp scholarships. Several of our students attended the Nicol Champions Academy at The Hotchkiss School and the Ultimate Squash Camp at Yale thanks to increased support from MA Squash.

MA Squash supports far more than squash in the summer, though: you ensure that SquashBuster students are engaged in high-quality squash competition throughout the year by offering reduced tournament entrance fees to all our students. Again, in these economically uncertain times, your sponsorship did not decrease – in fact, it increased to the point where any SquashBuster student who wanted to could enter a MA Squash sanctioned tournament, no matter what he or she could pay.

Your financial support of SquashBusters is critical for the functioning of the program. Most important to us and our students, though, are the caring, committed people you send our way as volunteers. Along with our students, volunteers are the heart and soul of SquashBusters. They are the people who connect with our students on a consistent basis, week after week, supporting their learning and celebrating their accomplishments both on and off the court. MA Squash-SquashBuster volunteers make up two full MA Squash league teams this year. We thank you for your continued presence in the lives of our students and our staff. We simply could not do it without you.

We wish each and every one of you a successful 2010 squash season. Thank you for all that you do for us through MA Squash. Please come visit us in Roxbury any time. Our doors are always open to lifelong friends like you.

For more information, contact Kate Nimick, Program Director, at 617-373-7373 or k.nimick@squashbusters.org, or visit www.squashbusters.org.

Sincerely,
SquashBusters Staff and Students



From left to right - Hoai Tran SB '10, Audrey Guerrero SB '09 and Boston College '13, Yamiles Urena SB '14

Massachusetts Junior Open at Groton January 1-3, 2010

For the second year the Massachusetts Junior Open was played at Groton School with its superb facility of 12 courts around a central dais. This set-up was ideal for running the tournament smoothly, and the school itself, set in a lovely New England town, provided ample parking outside the Athletic Center which featured a large foyer to serve food, locker rooms and a very helpful staff. John Conner, Spanish teacher and father of three aspiring players, was a most gracious host and ever present. The tournament had ten age divisions with 180 entrants coming from as far away as Canada, Georgia, Washington, Florida and even Korea.

- GU 11** Champion: **Haley Scott** (Riverside, CT) Consolation: **William Pincince** (Wellesley, MA)
Finalist: **Madeleine Chai** (Norwell, MA) Plate: **Shay Wenglin** (Brookline, MA)
3rd Place: **Ellie Gozigian** (Boston, MA) **BU 13** Champion: **Timmy Brownell** (Belmont, MA)
Consolation: **Casey Kelly** (Hartford, CT) Finalist: **Carson Spahr** (Boston, MA)
Plate: **Caroline Spahr** (Boston, MA) 3rd Place: **Harrison Gill** (Darien, CT)
Classic Plate: **Reg Anderson** (Brookline, MA)
Consolation: **Jack Bell** (Wellesley Hills, MA)
Plate: **Parker Tonissi** (Chestnut Hill, MA)
- GU 13** Champion: **Samantha Chai** (Norwell, MA) Finalist: **Haley Scott** (Riverside, CT)
3rd Place: **Annie Blasberg** (Boston, MA) Consolation: **Bella Jones** (Rye, NY)
Plate: **Annika Ruben** (Newton Highlands, MA) **BU 15** Champion: **Atticus Kelly** (West Hartford, CT)
Finalist: **Jonathan Gill** (Darien, CT)
3rd Place: **Max Reed** (Lebanon, NH)
Classic Plate: **Tripp Kaelin** (Boston, MA)
Consolation: **Cody Cortes** (Cambridge, MA)
Plate: **Matthew Bell** (Wellesley, MA)
- GU 15** Champion: **Emily Jones** (Rye, NY) Finalist: **Addie Fulton** (Stratton Mountain, VT)
3rd Place: **Margaret O'Neill** (Rye, NY) Classic Plate: **Becky Brownell** (Belmont, MA)
Consolation: **Jillian Davey** (West Hartford, CT) Plate: **Devin Mullaney** (Boston, MA)
- GU 17** Champion: **Gabriella Garr** (New York, NY) Finalist: **Emily Jones** (Rye, NY)
3rd Place: **Ariel Posner** (Brookline, MA) Classic Plate: **Meyha Sud** (Morristown, NJ)
Consolation: **Ellie O'Neill** (Rye, NY) Plate: **Lily Grant** (Dedham, MA)
- GU 19** Champion: **Leslie Gill** (Darien, CT) Finalist: **Courtney Jones** (Holden, MA)
3rd Place: **Madeleine Gill** (Darien, CT) Consolation: **Ashley Brooks** (Roslindale, MA)
Plate: **Lily Grant** (Dedham, MA)
- BU 11** Champion: **Jonathan Lentz** (Philadelphia, PA) Finalist: **Dennis Jones** (Rye, NY)
3rd Place: **Nicholas Cummings** (Weston, MA) Classic Plate: **Deven Kanwal** (Boston, MA)
- BU 17** Champion: **Mathieu Diab** (Montreal, Quebec) Finalist: **Guy Davidson** (New York, NY)
3rd Place: **Michael LeBlanc** (West Hartford, CT) Classic Plate: **Walker Evans** (Greenwich, CT)
Consolation: **Alex Southmayd** (Naples, FL) Plate: **Peter Sammis** (Osterville, MA)
- BU 19** Champion: **Taylor Foehl** (Williamstown, MA) Finalist: **John Lamont** (Montreal, Quebec)
3rd Place: **Scott DeSantis** (Sudbury, MA) Classic Plate: **Kyul Rhee** (South Korea)
Consolation: **Trevor Truog** (Cambridge, MA) Plate: **Steve Cho** (Groton, MA)

The Massachusetts Junior Committee unanimously agreed the Groton venue was very successful and hope to repeat this year's success in 2011.

Tom Poor, for the Massachusetts Junior Committee

Massachusetts Junior Open at Groton January 1-3, 2010

(Continued from previous page)



Mass Squash Leagues – Mid-Season Update:

OPEN 4.5

Gerry Kirshner

Halfway through the season, exciting things have been happening in the 4.5 league! We've expanded to 12 teams this year, welcoming new teams from Milton Academy and SquashBusters. Milton Academy's arrival has shaken up the standings, as they've rocketed into 3rd place. Milton's strong performance coupled with the 4.5 league year-end playoffs being limited to the top 4 teams instead of the 6 team format we used last year is putting pressure on the teams that have gotten comfortable making the playoffs year after year. At the mid-way point, BSC Allston is edging out last year's winners, the U Club, for first place. Milton Academy is a few points behind the U Club and then there's a logjam at 4th, 5th, and 6th with Union Boat, Boston Racket, and Maugus all separated by a point and jockeying to stay in that coveted 4th place spot.

By the numbers - Concord Acton continues to get the most for their money, playing 132 games so far this year. Taking the honors for most points played so far this year is BRC with 2,478 - this is an average of 19 points per game! On the individual honor roll, BSC's **Ken Leng** is far and away the top honors recipient. Ken is a perfect 8-0 so far this season, all at #1. #2 for individual honors is BSC's **Dan Zelman** at 7-0 and #3 is BSC's **Shane Reti** at 5-0. Any wonder why BSC is tops in the league? For dedication to league play, in addition to Ken, we have four others who have played every week - UBC's **Mike McElroy**, Maugus **Mark Dickenson**, CASC's **David Phillimore** and MIT's **Najib Majaj**. These guys all deserve a round of applause for being there week in and week out. My thanks to all of you for being part of the 4.5 league!

OPEN 3.5

Merrill Martin, League Chair

The 3.5 League welcomes the YMCA in Marblehead and welcomes back the Harvard Club to the roster of participating teams.

Last year at this time, the top two teams were Cross Courts and the Boston Racquet Club. BRC is back in the top spot at mid season this year, but Cross Courts is way back in the middle of the pack; it's hard to stay on top when your top 5 players advance to the next skill levels. This year there are some fine players, several who have seen dramatic improvement in their game, and some worth mentioning that maintain a contagious enthusiasm.

TOP PLAYERS: **Brian Herrick**, a new member to BSC Waltham, recently moved to the Boston area from California

and has learned the hard lesson of how cold the ball can get sitting in your bag in your car during winter. Brian is enviably young and athletic with good strokes and an incredible ability to recover balls impossibly lost in corners. **Jim Lillie** is top on the Cross Courts ladder. Unfortunately side lined last year with vertigo, Jim has returned to the team with his skill for finding the nick on his drop shots.

MOST IMPROVED: **Matt Weinstein**, a Junior at the Newton Squash and Tennis Club shows improvement every week. **Marc Gottesman** has gone from playing in the 3 or 4 position on the BSC Waltham team to consistently playing in the #1 spot when **Brian Herrick** is home being a new father. Marc is a fairly new father himself leading us to wonder what exactly is going on in Waltham? **Jeff Ruberti** is playing his second season for BSC Waltham and is developing touch and strategy to augment inability to put the ball deep. So deep that his opponents were picking up the back wall return at the Tee. Power is good but Jeff's improvement comes from learning the power of touch and deception. **Chuck Plaisted** has a natural ability to cut off the ball if hit even slightly loose, but with extensive training with Cross Courts Pro, **Belkys Velez** (the most stunning Equadorian Pro in the Boston area) Chuck is taking his game to new levels (and having a great time in the process).

MOST ENTHUSIASTIC: You need to have players who's enthusiasm gets the rest of the team excited and motivated. While these players may not get the recognition they deserve on the court, they will in this mid-season review. **Steve Silverman** of Newton Squash & Tennis consistently delivers long tight matches is always smiling and never loses his cool. **Waqar Tajuddin** of BSC Waltham who could certainly be listed above with the "Most Improved" but his infectious positive attitude and weekly availability have made him a team asset.

OPEN 4.0

Rip Hastings, League Chair

Not a week has gone by in the 4.0 League without resorting to the tie-breaker rule, and for the season so far, 11 out of a total 48 team matches have gone to games or points. Still plenty of time for things to change, and as you read this, they probably have.

Three teams are at 6-2: BSC-Allston top the standings with 29 out of 40 possible points, followed by T&R with 26 and Harvard Club with 25 ... what a recovery for Harvard Club, having gone 0-15 for the season last year! This year's newcomers from Andover, at 5-3 with 21 points, round out the top four, but just barely. The next four teams are all within a point of 4th place: Concord-Acton have 20.5 points (they had an absolute tie with Cross Courts on December 17: at 2 matches, 8 games and 151 points each), and UClub A, UClub B and BRC each have 20

Mass Squash Leagues – Mid-Season Update

continued:

points. In 7th and 8th place, UClub B and BRC have posted losing records of 3-5, but they've each won more individual matches (17) than the next three higher-ranked teams (16) ... it's a little puzzling.

No one player is absolutely dominating the league, but a few do stand out: **Jesse Lane** for UClub B (5-0), **Justin Segalini** for T&R (7-1), **David Renninger** for BSC-Allston (7-1) and **Ben Quick** for BSC-Waltham (6-1), are consistently killing the competition at the #1 or #2 spot, and all hold ratings above 3.90. So far a total of 98 men, women and children have played 189/192 scheduled 4.0 League matches – all but three played PAR-11, with the longest game going 20-18. Well done everyone and thanks to all you captains for keeping it all humming along ...!

WOMEN'S 2.5

Sarah Lemaire

The Women's 2.5 league had a great first half. Perennial power Cambridge Racquet Club dominated the first half, with both the team and their #1 player **Rachel Meyers** going undefeated in the first six matches. **Sue Hill** and **Bernadette Dixon** are also undefeated, so it's easy to see how they've managed to sew up the top spot. Concord-Acton seems to have a strong hold on the #2 spot, followed closely by the Harvard Club, who is having a great year. BSC-Waltham rounded out the top four, but if they get their top four players all on court on the same night, they're almost unbeatable. I don't expect any of the other teams to knock these four teams out of playoff contention. The SquashBusters and University Club teams have struggled to cobble together winning nights.

The Tennis & Racquet Club team, led by captain **Christie Driscoll**, who does double duty on the SquashBusters Young Leadership Committee, is the most improved team this season. With the addition of **Mary Burr** and **Vicky West**, they have already improved upon their winless record of last year. We expect their youth, athleticism, and enthusiasm to make them contenders in the coming years.

The most improved player this year is **Mo Ramage**, who started off the year with a win over perennial top-5 player **Kerry Wellington**, and never looked back. Mo is the main reason Concord-Acton has cemented their spot at #2, but she does have support from **Catherine Kniker** (when she's in the country) and **Jennifer Moran**. **Phoebe Slanetz** of the Harvard Club has been very consistent, and Harvard's second-place position can be attributed to the addition of **Kim Whippy**, who at 6 feet, is tough to lob over. **Debbie Carr** and **Lucy Bradley** have won most of their matches for BSC-Waltham. **Becky Lingard**, formerly of The Maugus Club, gave the UClub team a lift this year, and with **Mary Ni** back to play in the new year, they will definitely improve. **Dominique Farinaux-Dumas'** SquashBusters team is usually a force to be reckoned with, but

while Leila and Dominique trade off the #1 spot, they haven't had the depth that other teams can field.

The league is looking forward to a squash-playing league social at Concord-Acton in late January. What happens in Concord, will definitely stay in Concord!

The 50+ Boston Racquet Club team again...

Sam Magruder, Past President

Captain **Michael MacDonald's** ever expanding roster of enthusiastic 50+ players has produced another lead for the BRC in the race for the senior championship of Massachusetts Squash. Starting with 18 players on the team roster, Michael is using some creative lineups in order to qualify his best players for the playoffs. A serious challenge is brewing in the northwest as Concord Acton has split the home/away series with BRC, winning the last match 3-1. Boston Racquet Club has only a percentage points lead with four weeks to play. The contest for the last two playoff positions is too close to call. Cross Courts and Maugus are currently tied at 25 point each, with the Union Boat Club lurking only one point behind. The Harvard Club and Milton are fighting to stay out of the league cellar and probably will not qualify for the post-season.

Ever-declining handicaps as they keep winning have not kept many BRC players from posting winner records, but very few matches league-wide result in sweeps. **Rip Hastings**, playing several times a day, sports a gaudy 5-1 record. He has been well supported by **Zip Boucher**, **Ken Weber** and **John Tittman** who have all contributed three wins. Captain **Kevin Hollister** of Concord Acton can field three players with the maximum -5 handicap, **Will Bigelow**, **Dave Phillimore** and **Roger Jones**, who among them have a dozen wins and only one loss. **Phil Brewer**, **Simon Graham** and **Ed Silbert** all have three or more wins and give the team great depth. Undefeated Captain **Larry Hargreaves** of Cross Courts leads another skilled bunch including the now-injured **John Connolly**, **David McGuire** and **Jim Lillie** with strong winning records. His challenge will be to qualify two skilled replacements for the playoffs. Maugus' Captain **Keith Munsell** consistently fields an excellent top three of **Mark Dickenson**, **Martin Deale** and **Nana Poku**. This group's combined record of 18-4 regularly offsets more frequent losses at the bottom of the ladder. Captain **Fred Eustis** is setting the example for the Union Boat Club with a 5-0 record. At the top of the UBC ladder, **Phil Laird**, **Archie McIntyre** and **Jon Smith** are having another good season, staying right in the thick of the playoff race. There are no highlights on the last two teams as the holder of the best record, **Jay Darby** of the Harvard Club, is batting .500. Despite their losing records, **Sue Kerr** and **Paul Stakutis** of Milton have worked over some highly ranked opponents and posted several good wins.

THE JUNIOR LEAGUE

The Junior League is a very successful program which provides young players an opportunity to play others outside their normal group and also provides a pathway for aspiring players to ease their way into the competitive squash scene. By encouraging healthy competition, it prepares players for school matches and tournaments, while fostering both friendship and good sportsmanship.

Established by the Mass Squash Junior Committee and chaired by Azi Djazani, the program is divided into two separate series based on both age and level of play. Sunday afternoon sessions held at Harvard University's Murr Center (Junior League@Murr) are geared towards beginner to intermediate players between the ages of seven and thirteen. These sessions are comprised of four to six round robins held on Sundays, from 2:00pm to 5:00pm. Each attracts 80 players who are assigned to one of five groups, or "pods", based on skill level. These pods are managed by Junior Committee volunteers and area coaches.

Three years ago, the Mass Squash Junior Committee added a new series of round robins at the Dana Hall School (Junior League@Dana Hall) for high school players who had outgrown the Murr Center and sought more challenging matches. The Dana Hall Shipley Center in Wellesley currently hosts four to five Sunday round robins, consistently attracting twenty players each session.

Future dates for these programs are:

Junior League@Dana Hall: February 28th, 2010.

Junior League@Murr: April 4th, 2010.

To participate, players need to sign up when the notice is e-mailed and to be current members of Mass/US Squash. Membership information is available on the Junior League website (www.msrajunior.org) and on the Mass Squash website (www.masssquash.org)

The Junior League would not be possible without the help of our volunteers, coaches, and parents. We are grateful for their time and dedication.

CROSS COURTS JUNIOR OPEN 2009

Dan Sharplin, Director of Squash Cross Courts

The Cross Courts Junior Boys Open was held at Cross Courts Squash & Fitness Center in Natick over the weekend of December 4th-6th 2009. 110 players from as far away as Atlanta, St Louis and Philadelphia showed up for a fun and competitive weekend of squash.

In the Boys U19 event, Cross Courts member and top seed, **Derek Chilvers**, justified his seeding by not dropping a game en route to the final where he fought off the spirited challenge of **Daniel Saleem** (Atlanta) 11/7, 11/2, 11/4. Saleem may have been a little leg heavy after outlasting #2 seed **Scott DeSantis** (Cross Courts) in their semi-final 5-game thriller.

Arhum Saleem (Atlanta) decided to play up an age bracket and compete in the U17 event. This was a justified decision as he cruised through the early rounds and faced **Jack Blasberg** (Boston) in the final. With a deadly short game, he proved too accurate for Blasberg on the day and took the title 11/6, 11/1, 11/3.

The U15 draw was huge with 43 players vying for the trophy. **Charlie Blasberg** (Boston) caused a minor upset by playing error free, solid squash to beat the top seeded **Sean Kenny** (Philadelphia) 11/7, 13/11, 11/6 in the final.

Seedings proved accurate in the U13 division as the top four seeds, all from Boston, faced off in the semi-finals. **Timmy Brownell** proved his class and showed some tremendous racket skills to defeat **Justin Curtis** in the final 11/6, 11/6, 11/8.

In his last U11 event, local Cross Courts player and #2 seed **Jack Bell** went out a winner by knocking off top-seeded **Patrick McElroy** (Boston) with a good display of fundamentals by both boys. Jack was just a little sharper on the day and took the match 11/9, 11/3, 11/3.

On behalf of Cross Courts I would like to thank Tom Poor and the MSRA Junior Committee for their organization and promotion of the event. A special thank you must go to Rich and Terri Schafer for having spent many hours setting up the draws and scheduling courts for the weekend.

We look forward to hosting everyone again for the Cross Courts Open 2010 edition!

THE ROBERT BANKER CUP

Written by Mat Sible and Sam Magruder

For the last three years, the Harvard Club of Boston has held a doubles tournament every September and October to kick off the fall squash season. The original purpose of the tournament was to introduce more players to the game of hardball doubles by pairing them with experienced players. Participants sign up individually. They are then ranked by skill level and paired by the tournament committee to achieve teams of roughly equal strength. The first two years were limited to Harvard Club members and produced draws of 20-22 teams. Last fall members of the Union Boat Club were invited to participate. This club has been studying whether to build a new court. Giving more UBC members a chance to play the game might generate more enthusiasm for the project to add another doubles venue in Boston. Players were guaranteed at least two matches since the first round losers automatically were entered in a consolation draw. The 2009 draw was expanded to 31 teams, with five rounds of self-scheduled matches, each to be played within a one week period. The threat of a coin toss to decide who advanced resulted in a number of matches played at dawn or late in the evening of the last day, but almost all the matches were actually played despite the difficulty of getting four busy people on the court at the same time each week. The finals were held on Saturday, November 7 before a large and enthusiastic crowd of players already vanquished by the finalists and their families. The winners of the Main Draw of the 2009 event were **Phoebe Slanetz** from the Harvard Club and **Roland LeMay** from the UBC who defeated **Nick Iselin** and **Patricia Wada** in a match won 15-14 in the fifth game. The Consolation Draw was won 3-1 by **Jay Bradner** and **Dan Rosenthal**, who defeated **Eitezaz Mahmood** and **Eric Bluman**.

The tournament is named for Robert Banker, a Harvard Club member, in honor of the many years of service Robert has devoted to Massachusetts squash, and particularly his leadership of the Harvard Club doubles squash program. Robert won the Harvard Club Doubles Tournament on several occasions, won the Massachusetts State B Doubles tournament in 1979 and is a devoted and still canny doubles player at age 72.

The Harvard Club has been very pleased to add this tournament to the annual Massachusetts tournament events. The Tournament Committee of Robert Banker, Mat Sible, Sam Magruder and Sharon Bradey hope to see many new participants in the future.

Caption to picture taken by Tournament Director Sharon Bradey:



The celebration after the Finals: L-R: Mat Sible, Robert Banker, Roland LeMay, Patricia Wada, Phoebe Slanetz, Sam Magruder, Nick Iselin.

Deerfield Junior Open November 21, 2009

Deerfield Academy hosted its second Open junior tournament in the new \$6.5 mil Dewey Squash Center. The Center has 10 beautiful ASB courts set in a spacious viewing area, framed by large picture windows overlooking a verdant lower level of playing fields and the Deerfield River. It is a remarkable venue.

Deerfield provided not only a wonderful squash facility but additional amenities including locker rooms, Gatorade and meals in the school dining room. Parents and players alike were able to get a taste of life at one of New England's premier preparatory schools.

94 entrants, larger than last year's 80, made up ten divisions. Given the number of entries, number of courts and the new PAR-11 scoring system, the Mass Jr. Committee for the second year was able to run the tournament in a single day, a decision welcomed by all. Matches were done by the early evening, allowing visitors ample time for return trips home.

Results were as follows:

GU11 (Round Robin)

Champion: **Maddie Chai** (Norwell, MA)

Finalist: **Ellie Gozigian** (Boston, MA)

GU13 Champion: **Samantha Chai** (Norwell, MA)

Finalist: **Eliza Dunham** (New Haven, CT)

Consolation Winner: **Charlotte Rand** (Williamstown, MA)

Plate Winner: **Lyle Prockop** (Groton, MA)

GU15 Champion: **Addie Fulton** (Stratton Mountain, VT)

Finalist: **Caroline Monrad** (Newton, MA)

Consolation Winner: **Rebecca Brownell** (Belmont, MA)

Plate Winner: **Fiona Ross** (Newton Centre, MA)

GU17 Champion: **Ariel Posner** (Brookline, MA)

Finalist: **Katherine Elliott-Moskwa** (Princeton, NJ)

Consolation Winner: **Sofia Thierry** (Cambridge, MA)

Plate Winner: **Alexandra Copp** (Greenwich, CT)

GU19 (Round Robin)

Champion: **Hallie Dewey** (Deerfield Academy)

Finalist: **Serena Fagan** (Middlesex School)

BU11 (Round Robin)

Champion: **Cole Koepfel** (Boston, MA)

Finalist: **Jack Roberts** (Wellesley, MA)

BU13 (Round Robin)

Champion: **Carson Spahr** (Boston, MA)

Finalist: **Reg Anderson** (Brookline, MA)

BU15 Champion: **William McBrian** (Dedham, MA)

Finalist: **Charlie Blasberg** (Boston, MA)

Consolation Winner: **Spencer Anton** (Winchester, MA)

Plate Winner: **Seve Elkin** (Andover, MA)

BU17 Champion: **James Reiss** (Fairfield, CT)

Finalist: **Michael LeBlanc** (West Hartford, CT)

Consolation Winner: **C.J. Smith** (Locust Valley, NY)

Plate Winner: **Hayden Dunham** (New Haven, CT)

BU19 Champion: **Conor McClintock** (Wellesley, MA)

Finalist: **Scott DeSantis** (Sudbury, MA)

Consolation Winner: **Max Kardon** (Weston, MA)

Plate Winner: **Cameron Rahbar** (Newton, MA)



SquashBusters National Urban Team Championships Update

Boston, January 16-18, 2010

SquashBusters for the second time in five years hosted the National Urban Team Championships over the recent MLK weekend. 265 participants from nine programs competed over three days at the Badger Rosen SquashBusters Center and Harvard's Murr Center. Both venues were packed with spirited teams, enthusiastic families and spectators, volunteers and school representatives. When not playing students had the opportunity to participate in college information sessions and to take in the sights of Boston. The tournament weekend concluded with the finals at SquashBusters and the MLK essay awards presentation and reading of the winning essay by our own **Zoe Russell**. SquashBusters teams conducted themselves admirably both on and off the court – of particular note – the BU 17/19 A Team did not lose a match during the entire tournament!

GU17/19 A Team 3rd Place, Main Draw
Kadeneysse Ramize - Jenny Huynh - Ida Bess Kirnon - Iva Beth
Kimon - Anairys Calderon

GU17/19 B Team Consolation Champions
Hoai Tran - Khalilah Jones, Amy Sanchez, Nicole Vila - Tyanne
Mendes

GU17/19 C Team 7th Place
Ebony Baptista - Jessica Greaves - Kilsy Soto - Ambar Guerrero -
Kiana Lara

GU15 A Team 3rd Place, Main Draw
Gloria Nwaoha - Savannah Bell - Katherine Christopher - Zoe Rus-
sell - Tenaya Bacon

GU15 B Team 7th Place
Deanna Pettway-Yamiles Urena-Losangela Baptista-Angelina
Miranda-Lisa Imafidon-Brianna Venus

BU17/19 A Team Main Draw Champions
Randy Coplin - Darryl Soto - Joel Gonzalez - Alex Depina - Tesfa
Hailu

BU17/19 B Team Consolation Champions
Kevin Baptista - Jermaine Maddrey - Darwyn Nunez - Robert Me-
dina - William Fernandez

BU15 A Team Main Draw Finalists
Humzah Mahmood-Ben Osajie-Edmilson Barbosa-Benny Sanquin-
tin-Lizandro Noguiera

BU15 B Team Consolation Draw Finalists
Raudy Perez - Darius Hollis-Carmon - Aaron Coss - Henry Santana
- Reggie Gay

BU15 C Team Quarter Finalists
Joshua Figueroa - Jerome Mitchell - Abel Hailu - Keven Depina -
Stephen Grace



BU19 Winners - SquashBusters BU19A Team - Joel Gonzalez, Tesfa Hailu, Alex Depina, Randy Coplin, Darryl Soto coached by Doug Lifford and Jenn Lillis



BU19 Consolation Winners - SquashBusters BU19B - Robert Medina, Darwyn Nunez, Kevin Baptista, Jermaine Maddrey, William Fernandez coached by Jenn Lillis

MA Squash supports Pro Clinics for Juniors

Through a direct grant, MA Squash arranged for 16 juniors to attend teaching clinics with the pros playing in the Cross Courts Invitational tournament last September. By doing this, MA Squash was able to support both junior squash directly, and the tournament indirectly, by ensuring additional income to the pros that weekend. Four slots were granted to SquashBuster students and 12 were granted to juniors from clubs that participate and support the fall/spring leagues. Chris Spahr, University Club of Boston pro and member of the junior committee, allocated the tickets out to the clubs in a random drawing. Clubs with juniors benefitting included: Tennis & Racquet, Union Boat Club, Concord Acton, Cross Courts, Harvard Club, U-Club, and Newton Squash & Tennis. All pros participating in the tourney helped with the clinics, so the juniors got top level instruction! All pros in the tourney gave lessons: David Palmer (Former World #1), John White (Former World #1), Baset Chaudhry (U.S. Collegiate National Champion), Liam Kenny (Ireland #1), Daniel Sharplin (Cross Courts Pro, former New Zealand Champion), Julian Illingworth (United States #1), Shahier Razik (Canada #1), and Preston Quick (UBC Pro and former U.S. National Champion). Included here are some photos from the clinics. Side note: John White is quite the entertaining teacher! His methods included having juniors who did not hit all the right shots occasionally drop down and do pushups! Painfully funny to watch from the stands, and it was fun for the kids too!



“Out with the old, in with the new!” 2010 University Club Pro-Am Doubles

Exactly one year ago, **Mac Davidson** lost a five game final by two points. Five days later, he had his old hip replaced with a new one and began a year of rehabilitation. Today, he returned to win a five game final and such is the difference a new joint can make. It wasn't easy. Mac and partner **Hamed Anvari** (New York) dropped the first two games of the final to **Ming Tsai & Yvain Badan** (Rye, NY) before squeezing out the third. Crosscourt exchanges between Mac and Ming were the menu of the match with the former making a few less errors in the end. Ming played in his first Pro-Am before family members and further endeared himself to all by hosting a group at his Blue Ginger restaurant on Saturday evening. He reached the final with a relatively small degree of stress, winning over **Joel Kozol & John Russell** (New York) in three, **Marty Stocklan & Viktor Berg** (Vancouver) in four and **John Hailer & Chris Walker** (Greenwich) in four. Mac and Yvain had much the same, winning over **Jim Hearty & Raj Nanda** (Rye) in four, **Court Chilton & Mark Chaloner** (Greenwich) in four and **Lenny Bernheimer & Matt Jenson** (San Francisco) in five.

The University Club Pro Doubles Championship and its sister tournament, the University Club Pro-Am Doubles Championship have become an important mid-January fixture on the ISDA Professional Doubles Tour. With 2 sponsors, 63 patrons and 16 amateur players providing financial support for the event, the professionals competed in both the Professional and Pro-Am tournaments for \$32,000 in prize money. A chance to see the top professionals in the world brought out sizeable galleries throughout the weekend. This year, the finals were again held on Sunday after brunch and provided a two hour, tremendous five game match between last year's champions **Damien Mudge** (New York) & **Viktor Berg** (Vancouver) vs. second seeded **Paul Price** (Toronto) & **Ben Gould** (New York). Down 2-1 in games and 6-2 in the fourth, Paul changed tactics and abandoned his error-prone shots in favor of hard cross courts, bringing Ben into more points. It worked as they won the last two games and their first title of the year after losing the first two events of the season to Damien & Viktor.

The North Draw in the Pro-Am was composed of teams that won their first match, but lost in the quarter-final round of the main draw. Fellow restaurateur **Dave Riccio & Clive Leach** (New York) pulled this one out with a magnificent five game final victory over the **Chilton-Chaloner** tandem. Leach was spectacular, covering much of the court and shouting encouragement for the ones Dave handled. Dave was also a big hit on Saturday evening as his Café Vittoria in the North End was host to many into the wee hours of the morning. Dave & Clive defeated the Stocklan-Berg pair in four in the semis while Court & Mark chalked up a rare three game victory over Jeff Rodman & James Hewitt (Toronto) in the same round.

Moving to the West Draw with some hurt feelings and sore muscles were losers of first round matches. **Steve Quigley**, one of four rookies in the field (Tsai, Rodman and Kanwal were the others), paired with last year's champion **Ben Gould** (New York) to win the fifth game, 15-14, over **Joel Kozol & Russell**. Joel is the oldest but among the most accurate players in the draw and was playing his eleventh Pro-Am event of the thirteen held. **Jamie Fagan & Greg Park** (Philadelphia) moved onward with a four game conquest of **Jim Bildner & Damien Mudge** (New York). Jamie is also playing with a new hip and joins Mac, Nimick and Poor as recently reconstructed warriors. **Matthew Kozol & Jonny Smith** (New York) dropped the first two games to Philip **Bullen & Willie Hosey** (Toronto), then inched back to win the last three, including the fourth game by a single point. **Amrit Kanwal & Preston Quick** (Boston) were the last to move forward with a four game decision over **Hearty & Nanda**. In the semis **Fagan & Park** won in four over **Quigley & Gould**; **Kanwal & Quick** took the second three game win of the tournament over **Kozol & Smith**. The final was a right wall battle between Jamie and Amrit resulting in another five game match in the latter's favor.

The South Draw was reserved for West Draw quarter-final losers. **Jim Bildner** is the only amateur to play in all thirteen of the Pro-Ams. Experience paid off as he and Mudge won a five game semi over **Joel Kozol & Russell**. In the other five game semi **Bullen & Hosey** triumphed over **Hearty & Nanda**. In yet another five game match Philip and Willie prevailed to win the Champions trophy for the South draw. With that five game final, every final match of the four draws went the distance.

This year's event was universally acclaimed the most successful of all with generous financial sponsorship, spirited play and full galleries supplemented by a delicious dinner Friday evening and brunch Sunday. This event increases the interest in doubles in general and in particular, afforded all the chance to see great athletes (the professionals!) in action. Doubles continues to grow at the University Club and Boston in general as another court has appeared at the new YMCA in Marblehead. And with any luck a new court at the Union Boat Club may some day appear.

Cross Courts Invitational Attracts Top Pros

The Cross Courts Invitational this past September included 8 National Champions from 7 countries. Tournament players shown here: Daniel Sharplin (Cross Courts Pro, former New Zealand Champion, and U.S. 35+ National Champion), Liam Kenny (Ireland #1), John White (Former World #1 and Former Scottish National Champion), David Palmer (Former World #1 and current Australia #1), Julian Illingworth (United States #1), Shahier Razik (Canada #1), Baset Chauhdry (2 time and reigning U.S. Collegiate National Champion), and Preston Quick (UBC Pro and 2 time U.S. National Champion).



Mass Squash Racquet Association is now on Facebook. You can find us with the link below:
<http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#/pages/Massachusetts-Jr-Squash/269318792348?ref=nf>

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NUSEA's Columbia Education Fund Opens More Educational Doors for Urban Squashers

The National Urban Squash and Education Association (NUSEA), in partnership with long-time supporters of Urban Squash, Stephen and Sarah Columbia, has established the Columbia Education Fund (CEF) with the purpose of strengthening and broadening the many educational opportunities already made available through NUSEA programs. In this first year, \$20,000 of support will be granted to member programs to help their students thrive in high school and college. The CEF received proposals from Urban Squash Programs in San Diego, Chicago, Philadelphia, New York City and Boston and provided grants in June to support the following educational initiatives:

Intensive summer college-preparatory programs at Brown and Cornell University for four highly-motivated StreetSquash (Harlem) high school students;

Tuition assistance and school book stipends for two CitySquash (Bronx) boys accepted to the Trinity-Pawling and the All Hallows School and a METROSquash (Chicago) boy accepted to the Hales Franciscan High School in Chicago;

Travel expense grants (between home and their respective colleges) for sisters from Squash Wise (Baltimore); and

Princeton Review SAT classes for 20 SquashBuster (Boston) college-bound high school students.

The Columbia Education Fund

The CEF was established after several conversations between NUSEA's Executive Director, Greg Zaff, and Stephen Columbia. Working from the premise that among the principal missions of the Urban Squash Programs is to broaden the horizons of their inner-city students, They both felt it important that opportunities which would enhance students' academic and social development should be exploited, notwithstanding the associated expense. Working together, Greg and Stephen created a template for Executive Directors of the various Urban Squash Programs to use in requesting funding grants for initiatives, of their creation, that would provide students with experiences that would improve their educational and social skills. The Columbia's then established the CEF to provide financial support to the most worthy proposals.

Meeting monthly, Greg and Stephen reviewed the grant requests to evaluate their merits, in particular the likelihood of benefit to the student(s) the initiative will affect, the ability to measure such success, the sustainability of the effort and the involvement of multiple stake-holders. They believe it is important to the success of their endeavors that each initiative has at least four stake-holders: the Urban Program; the parents of the student(s) affected; the high school or college the student(s) attends; and members of the community the Urban Program serves. Only with these other "investors" in place will the CEF contribute as a stake-holder in those plans deemed meritorious and sustainable. Each recipient Urban Program is required to report the benefits and successes of its initiative in order to promote an exchange of best practices and to uncover scalable programming.

"Sarah and I are delighted by the progress of this endeavor and are pleased to be working so closely with Greg Zaff. We will continue to provide the seed funding to establish the CEF and encourage its growth." —Stephen Columbia

The Scholastic Squash Development Fund

In an effort to encourage the development of middle school and high school squash programs through US Squash, the Columbia's have committed their financial support, at the level of the CEF, to the Scholastic Squash Development Fund. In an approach similar to the one with NUSEA described above, Stephen has been working with Dent Wilkens, Program Director, US Squash, to create an application process for interested schools and community groups to seek funding for the development of squash programs that will benefit their students. As with the CEF, those proposals with the greatest merit (i.e., those which will produce measurable benefit to the students participating, demonstrate multiple stake-holders' willingness to maintain their investments in the program, and be assured of sustainability) will receive grants up to \$1,000 to help make the initiative a reality.

"Our son Edward has a passion for the game of squash, and truly loves practicing and playing. We have seen his involvement with squash enhance his approach to many of his other endeavors and, quite frankly the reverse where his qualities have enriched the squash he plays. Although Edward is more than his squash, it is difficult to identify those characteristics he possesses that have not been influenced by his involvement in squash. Sarah and I are therefore delighted to contribute our resources to bringing squash to others and enriching the lives of those who have chosen squash as their passion. We encourage others to do the same by joining us in the above initiatives or by creating and supporting their own." —Stephen Columbia

Editor's note: There were some errors and omissions in an earlier version of this article as it ran in our Fall 2009 newsletter. Above is a corrected version.

MA Squash Address Policy

MA Squash does not release its members' postal or e-mail addresses to anyone.

Postal mailings by MA Squash, such as the MA Squash News and the Yearbook and Directory, are handled by a mailing service to whom we provide a file of addresses from which they generate labels. Occasionally, we are asked by others to have materials sent to some of our members, such as a squash camp brochure to be sent to juniors. If we think the material might be of interest to those members, we direct the sender to provide the material to be mailed to our mailing service and we provide the addresses separately. The sender does not have access to the addresses.

All e-mails to the membership are sent by Mass Squash. Although we may include items and events of interest to our members other than our own events, such as tournament information, we do not make our e-mail list available for anyone else to communicate directly with the membership.

If you do not currently receive our e-mails and would like to, you can use the box at the bottom of our web site home page, www.ma-squash.org, to join our e-mail list. You should also be sure that e-mail from us will clear any spam blocker, firewall or filter you may have. If you do receive our e-mails and would like to be removed from our list, just click on the SafeUnsubscribe link that is at the bottom of each e-mail. If you prefer, you can also be added to or removed from our list by sending a note to membership@ma-squash.org.