

The 17th edition of the IRF World Senior Racquetball Championships was held in Albuquerque, New Mexico USA August 30 through September 3, 2005. Over 240 players from twenty-two countries played in over 1000 matches over five days at three venues. Players in categories from 35+ through 85+, men and women, participated in twenty-six divisions, including mixed doubles for the first time. All players are guaranteed a minimum of seven matches per division, with each match consisting of three games to eleven points.

The World Seniors actually began in 1985, with the IRF stamping its sanction on the event in 1989. Since that year, the local organizing committee, with the encouragement of players, volunteers, organizations, and sponsors, has contributed a significant amount of its proceeds to its starship campaign; the International Racquetball Federation Development Fund. Monies raised have provided education, training, and programming assistance to players, coaches, and instructors in order to help enhance the growth of racquetball over five continents. With the unfortunate passing of Dr. Damian Jelso, an Albuquerque resident and stalwart on the WSRC committee since its inception, a Memorial Scholarship was announced at the awards banquet in his name. In front of 300 persons including his extended family members, \$1000 was pledged to the University of New Mexico Racquetball Team as the first recipient of the Scholarship. The WSRC also offers a Sportsmanship Award each year in the name of Al Wetherill. This year, the true 'international' flavor of the event shined as Dr. Arturo Macias from Chihuahua, Mexico won the award. Representatives from the IRT, WPRO, and USAR (David Negrete, David Watson, and Frank Taddonio) each shared some of their wisdom at the banquet microphone.

Racquetball arguably is absent from the media attention it seeks or deserves; yet, this year was remarkably different. Local newspapers and television stations jumped on the World Senior Racquetball bandwagon due to the presence of ESPN SportsCenter in town for three days. A host of vignettes on New Mexico was presented by ESPN as part of its 50/50 (Fifty states in fifty days) promotion this past summer. Lou Henson, Nancy Lopez, the Maloof Brothers, the Unser Family and others were included. The racquetball family included Bob McAdam, Ralph Waddington, Victor Sacco, and Lucy Zachrisson.

We look forward to 2006, with returning and first time World Senior players vying for individual and team positions under the new IRF Ranking System. Finally, we keep our fingers crossed that it will be televised next year.

Gary Mazaroff, Executive Director
World Senior Racquetball