

Huczek hammers way to racquetball title

Four years ago, up-and-coming racquetball star Jack Huczek visited Sun Prairie (Wis.) to play in the Lou Bradley Memorial Pro-Am, hosted by the Prairie Athletic Club (PAC). Back in 2003, Huczek defended his title with a victory over top player Rocky Carson. Fast forward to this past weekend and it's easy to see why Huczek has become the world's top-ranked player for more than a year now.

Huczek, the No. 1 player on the International Racquetball Tour (IRT), defeated Illinois native and 7th-ranked Ben Croft to win the 10th Annual Lou Bradley Memorial Pro-Am. The tournament, sponsored by Phil Sussek, Bruce Thompson, Sussek Machine and Maly Tile, raised more than \$800 for the Lou Bradley Scholarship Fund.

A Michigan native, Huczek claimed the \$2,500 first-place paycheck by rolling over Croft 11-3, 11-7, 11-6 in the final.

Putting on a stunning display of precision shot-making, superb anticipation and all-out hustle, Huczek decimated some very strong competition.

Huczek allowed less than nine total points in three-game wins over Milwaukee's Ben Blint, Iowa state champion Brad McCunniff and 9th-ranked IRT pro Jason Thoerner. Croft made a spirited effort in front of the crowd of about 150 people in the final, but couldn't dent Huczek's armor.

Thoerner dropped the first game, but came back to win three straight over Miami's Alejandro Herrera to advance to the quarterfinals. On the other side of the bracket, 8th-ranked Chris Crowther topped No. 14 Juan Herrera in three games but fell 9-11, 11-4, 11-9, 6-11, 12-10 to Croft in what was easily the best match of the tournament.

It was an all-Iowa final as Ryan Ratchford received a forfeit win over the ill Bryan Crosser to win the Open division, which was comprised of players from the pro draw who didn't advance to the quarterfinals. Crosser beat PAC players Tracy Chynoweth and Jamie Arnold to advance, while Ratchford stopped PAC's Paul Krueger and Milwaukee's Matt Stamborski to make the final.

Milwaukee's Jay Wollenberg and Dan Hodges teamed to win the Mens Open doubles draw, while McCunniff topped Wollenberg in a tiebreaker to win the Mens 35+Open division.

Bob Bruner made the trip up from Texas and took out PAC players Scott Willan, Pete Simon, Adam Reiersen and Brad Falvey to win mens AA draw, while Kim Whalen topped her sister Kelly to claim the \$200 check for winning Womens Open.

As usual, the Saturday night festivities started with the Pro Final at 8 p.m. and continued late into the night, making for several tough matches Sunday morning.

It was like an old-time racquetball tourney as matches ran from 1 p.m. to 1 a.m. on Friday; 7 a.m. until midnight Saturday and 7 a.m. until 6:30 p.m. Sunday.

Much thanks goes out to the primary sponsors (Phil Sussek, Bruce Thompson, Sussek Machine and Maly Tile) along with food sponsors Jimmy John's Subs and Pietro's Pizza. Thanks also to the tourney table staff who amazingly kept things pretty much on time (or close to it) all weekend and the players who were prepared to play; the staff at PAC's Lost Court, which was extremely busy late into the night both Friday and Saturday; and the traveling pro players who were consummate professionals all weekend.

This tourney seems to get bigger and better every year! We are considering starting the tournament on Thursday in 2008 and hope all the Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois, Texas and Wisconsin state players who made this such a fun tourney come back next year.

Look to the Wisconsin Racquetball Association web site, www.wiracquetball.org, some time in the next couple of weeks for photos from the weekend!

The draw featured 157 players in 22 divisions from nine different states – PAC's biggest tournament in more than 20 years. Six of the top 14 ranked players in the country participated. The results of the tournament are listed below.

Men's Pro: 1, Jack Huczek; 2, Ben Croft.

Men's Open: 1, Ryan Ratchford; 2, Bryan Crosser; Consolation, Dave Glusick (PAC).

Men's 35+Open: 1, Brad McCunniff; 2, Jay Wollenberg; Consolation, Ron Miller.

Men's AA: 1, Bob Bruner; 2, Brad Falvey (PAC); Consolation, Scott Willan (PAC).

Men's A: 1, Joshua Reid; 2, Jim Diener; Consolation, Jim Thomasson (PAC).

Men's B: 1, Dan Denniston (PAC); 2, Yacouba Traore; Consolation, Max Dalebroux.

Men's C: 1, Max Dalebroux; 2, Nick Uebelacker (PAC); Consolation, Taps Shah.

Men's D: 1, Keith Holmes (PAC); 2, Zach Holcomb (PAC); Consolation, Ryan Dalebroux (PAC).

Women's Open: 1, Kim Whalen; 2, Kelly Whalen; Consolation, Deb Evers.

Women's A: 1, Jesi Haak (PAC); 2, Evy Grace; Consolation, Rachel Olson (PAC).

Women's B: 1, Sandyha Callaci; 2, Mia Parisi.

Women's C: 1, Emily Wellman; 2, Rosie Anderson.

Juniors 1-bounce: 1, Michael Fredenberg (PAC); 2, Carter Simon (PAC); Consolation, Mason Beatty.

Juniors 2-bounce: 1, Alex Filter (PAC); 2, Kevin McCabe (PAC); Consolation, Steele Beatty.

Men's Open Doubles: 1, Jay Wollenberg/Dan Hodges; 2, Carl Evers/Matt Stamborski; Consolation, Jamie Arnold/Tracy Chynoweth (PAC).

Men's A Doubles: 1, Steve Salamone/Danny Salamone; 2, Jim Wollack/Jeff Hird (PAC); Consolation, Kevin Falvey/Tommy Troutman (PAC).

Men's B Doubles: 1, Alan Rutkowski/Jeff Rutkowski (PAC); 2, Jason Helmstadter/Pat Thering (PAC); Consolation, Jason Jensen/Dave Hilsheimer (PAC).

Men's C Doubles: 1, Jeff Funnell/Conner Funnell (PAC); 2, Daren Dudgeon/Rich Knudtson (PAC).

Women's Open Doubles: 1, Tina Schoewe/Tracie Studinski (PAC); 2, Kim Whalen/Kelly Whalen; Consolation, Jen Bezruczyk/Pam Larsen (PAC).

Women's A Doubles: 1, Evy Grace/Nancy Winter; 2, Joan Wick/Roz Gusinow.

Mixed Open Doubles: 1, Scott Kramer/Trish Beatty; 2, Juan Niaves/Jen Bezruczyk; Consolation, Colleen Maginn/Lee Kimball.

Mixed A Doubles: 1, Roger Erickson/Kathleen Johnson; 2, Gregg Breese/Angie Meyer (PAC); Consolation, Kristy Damm/Jeff Benson (PAC).

Mixed B Doubles: 1, Jason Helmstadter/Amy Miller (PAC); 2, Jason Pierner/Angela Williamson (PAC).