

HELLO MARYLAND WASHINGTON RACQUETBALL PLAYERS!!!

The MWRA would like to share with you some recent changes we have implemented in the hopes it will improve the participation and enjoyment for all our members. We also would like to take the time to thank everyone who has been a supporter of Maryland/Washington racquetball throughout the tournament season.

State Singles registration is online and we have a \$5.00 early registration discount, and are hoping this will encourage those of you who are bothered by the fee charged by the software company in order to sign up online, to sign up early and online. Some people checking out the website, have already discovered the discount and have signed up....THANK YOU! In order to receive the discount, if you are playing doubles, both partners must sign up. The software does not let us team partners up if both parties are not signed up. We have the ability to manually sign up players, but we really would like you to also verify the information online for accuracy so we can reach you if necessary. We have also had players try to sign up with partners who aren't aware they are playing which creates another set of issues.

This brings up another issue that needs to be addressed and that is individuals who sign up through telephone calls or emails rather than by paper application or online registration. Most of you who do that are fine, so this is not directed to those of you who sign up, show up, pay and play. This is directed to those of you who sign up, no show, don't pay, and generally create a problem with the draws. This can cause a division to not be able to be run at all, but at the very least we are scrambling at the last minute to redo draws or try and find replacement players. To try and put an end to this, we have instituted a new policy:

If you enter a tournament and don't pay and then do not show up for the event, you must pre-pay for the next event as well as the entry fee for the tournament you did not show up for. Obviously, sometimes there are extenuating circumstances, but at the very least respect your fellow players and call one of the tournament directors to let them know you are unable to play. There will also be a late fee for payments made at the door, as opposed to mailing, signing up online, or handing your entry fee to any of the board members prior to the event. We are a small state that really tries to give everything back to our players in the form of nice give-a-ways, trophies

and awards, hospitality, and nice facilities to host the events, so our cash flow is limited.

We are having a contest to select a state logo that will be a part of our tournament websites, applications and tournament shirts. As you have probably noticed, we've tried a few different things over the past few years, but nothing has stuck, so we are hoping there is a racquetball playing artist out there waiting to be discovered. There are no rules. Just submit your entry to the our email address mwra.com@mwrweb.com in either a JPEG, TIFF, or PDF file by the contest deadline which is the April 18, 2008. You will win entry to both the State Singles and State Doubles tournaments next season.

In an effort to try and boost attendance at all of our events, we are also instituting a new referral program. If you are responsible for getting a new player(s) to sign up and play in one of our MWRA events for the first time, we will take \$10.00 off the entry fee of the new participant(s) and you can play a second event for free. As always, we are interested in hearing from the players. If you haven't already done so, please take our survey online, email the board with any questions or concerns you might have, or grab us at the tournament and share your ideas for making your tournament experience more enjoyable. Our goal is to promote racquetball and help grow the sport. This is one reason the MWRA has one of the best Junior Racquetball programs around and host three junior only events through out the season which draw players from Wisconsin, Ohio, Delaware, Virginia and Pennsylvania.

One final note, although racquetball is a sport and is suppose to be fun, we acknowledge the competitive nature of the sport and for this reason we have referees for most of our events. Keep in mind, there are players of all skill levels and although we try to find skill appropriate referees, sometimes an issue may develop between one or both of the players and the referee. Should this occur, you may feel free to address your concern during the match by taking a timeout and seeking out the tournament director(s). One of us will watch the game and if we feel a referee needs to be replaced we will do so. If you don't let us know there is a problem, we can not fix it. As a rule, most racquetball players display good sportsmanship and are playing these tournaments because they love the game. When it is brought to our attention that someone is engaging in unsportsman-like conduct, we do address this with the individual and/ or a parent if applicable.