

Squash's popularity surprises organizers

By TONY PANACCI
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A few years ago several Georgetown men, led by Dr. Boyd Hoddinott, wanted to build a Racquet Club so they did a study to gauge if there was demand for one in this area.

"They were surprised at how much response they received," said Dave Steen, president of the Racquet Club. "By the time the club opened in January, 1975, there were approximately 100 members."

Recently an addition, which is approximately the same size as the original complex, was completed on the Armstrong Avenue site and today the club has more than 500 members.

Members of the club, who all own equal shares of it, saw that squash was becoming more and more popular and approved the addition in principal in the fall of 1977.

TWO NEW COURTS

The addition, which includes two international courts, women change rooms and a fitness room, meant that for the first time the club was able to admit women and youngsters as members.

"We are surprised at how well the women have taken to the sport," Steen said. "We have many women playing under the family plan and also five women registered as singles. They play as much as the men do."

The club now has two types of memberships: family and singles. A single member has to buy a \$500 share of the club and pay \$210 yearly dues. On the family membership plan a \$600 share has to be bought and the yearly dues are \$315.

"The fact that our fees at present tend to favor family memberships is a source of concern for the executive," Steen said. "We have set up a committee to study the situation and the fees may be altered in the future."

Steen said that the club is at full capacity. "We just cannot sell anymore memberships."

Although there does appear to be interest in the sport to justify another expansion, Steen said he doubts very much that it will take place soon.

"That last expansion just drained everybody... it was very hard work," Steen said. "I do not think that the members would be ready for another expansion for quite some time."

The president said that the great growth of squash over the past few years can mostly be attributed to the average Canadian's more awareness of physical fitness.

"Squash is a sport which works every part of the body and is also fast and competitive," said Steen. "It is a great way to get in shape."

MUST BE FIT

Squash is also a sport which dictates that its participants be in good shape before they step on the court.

Dr. Roy Shephard, M.D., Ph.D. and a professor at the University of Toronto, is one of Canada's most knowledgeable people when it comes to keeping fit. He says that many people suffer heart attacks on the squash court because they are not in proper shape before stepping on it.

"People who should not be on a squash court at all, start to play and get involved in the competitiveness of it," Dr. Shephard told The Herald. "Squash is a great sport for the cardio-vascular system and has many other benefits, but people tend to over extend themselves too much on the court."

Steen said no one has yet suffered a heart attack, of any degree, while competing at the Georgetown Club.

"We tell people who do not look like they are in proper shape to see their doctor before competing too heavily," he said. "We have 15 or so doctors as members here and they tend to keep an eye on things as well."

NOT ONLY FOR RICH

The president of the club said that the perception of squash as a sport mostly for the rich is a false one.

"We have members here from all walks of life," he said. Later in front of the ladder (ratings for the top squash player on down) Steen proved his point. He went down the 15 or so names on the ladder and listed their occupations represented were doctor, mayor, lawyer, teacher, principal, reporter, cleaning man, barber, insurance salesman and so on.

"I think the fees we charge are very reasonable when you consider the facilities which are available," Steen said. "The initial investment of buying a share is always going up. We have the lowest rates in southern Ontario."

'B' team is only winner

Only one of the three squash teams representing the Georgetown Racquet Club was able to come with a victory in action last week.

The "B" team beat the Hamilton Squash Club 3-2 in action here last Wednesday.

Al Kogon, playing in the number one position went into the evening's final match needing a win to give Georgetown victory.

Previous to Kogon's match Dave Steen and Rod Presswood had lost by 1-3 scores and Rod Eastwood and Norm Hertz were victors by the same scores.

Kogon won the crucial final match 3-1 and Georgetown had the win.

Only Bob Marchand was able to come up with a win in the "C" club's one match to four loss to Regency here on Thursday. Marchand won by a 3-1 score.

Sam Gilmer, and Ray Steele lost 1-3 and Alex Furness and Gary Thomas ended up on the short ends of 2-3 scores.

The "C" team lost two matches to three against Dixie in away action last Tuesday.

Barry Griffiths won by a 3-0 score and Ben Lindberg was a 3-2 winner. Erwin Schandmeier dropped a 2-3 match, Tom Kankainen was a 1-3 loser and Paul Duval was shutout 0-3.

TWO NEW COURTS

The pride and joy of the members of the club are the two new international courts.

The top court in the complex is the new international court with a gallery. The gallery is capable of seating 200 and holding 250. There were approximately 200 people in the gallery at the unofficial opening of the two new courts when singer-composer Dan Hill played Mrs. Dave Steen in an exhibition match.

Steen expects there will be more than 200 spectators in

the gallery late in April. Steen is hopeful he can sign two top international players to play an exhibition match here. The event will be part of the activities marking the official opening of the club's new facilities.

As previously mentioned the chances of more "indoor" renovations being done at the club in the next few years are remote. However, Steen said that the club's executive has plans in the works for the nine acres of land which surround the club.

"I don't even think the members realize how beautiful the land around the club is," said Steen.

"Most of the land is bounded by the Credit River."

TENNIS COURTS

Two tennis courts have already been constructed on the property and Steen said there are more short-range and long-range plans for the land.

Although there are no openings for new memberships (Family or single) available at present, Steen said a committee has been

formed to study court usage and whether it can be changed to accommodate more members.

"There are two formulas to study court usage," Steen said. "The American formula says there should be 100 people per court and the British one says 75 people per court... using either one we are way over."

The club has issued 107 family memberships and 83 single memberships. There are about 400 people on the family memberships. With the two new courts the club now has four.



(Herald photo)

... Al Kogon, one of the top ranked players at the Georgetown Racquet Club, slams one off the wall in a match against Dave

Steen. Steen, the club's president says squash's fantastic growth is mainly due to Canadian's more awareness of physical fitness.

Young bowlers heading west

The young bowlers from Georgetown Bowl have finished qualifying for the chance to compete for the national championship to be held in Vancouver this

spring. The elite of the bowling fraternity are singles champions and the six boys and girls to try for that honour are; Bantam Girl -

Julie McCorry, Bantam Boy - Brent Osatchuk, Junior Girl - Hope Hulme, Junior Boy - Stephen Turner, Senior Girl - Wendy Hay and the Senior Boy - Grant Richardson.

Also on the medal trail will be three teams of girls and three teams of boys.

Bantam Girls: Brenda Stone, Cherle McElroy, Debbie Watts, Karen Humphreys and Elizabeth Gibbs.

Bantam Boys: Kenneth Boyer, Anthony Larsen, Philip Hughes, David Hicks and Darren McCallum.

Junior Girls: Kelly McCorry, Jane Hicks, Debbie Lane, Carole Duguay and Shelley Sibbald.

Junior Boys: Bill Hay, Jerome Stone, Chas. Weatherall, Robbie Quinton and Philip Handy.

Senior Girls: Wendy Chaplin, Margaret Jessop, Janet Hicks, Julie Burns and Roberta Burke.

Senior Boys: Glen Collier, Kelvin Dafeo, Dwayne DeCoste, Paul Chaplin and Jeffrey Dafeo.

June Cook, Tillie Harvey are divisional winners

Daytime Ladies Powderpuff Doubles Championship -

June Cook and Tillie Harvey as winners in the district round on Jan. 14 went to the regional finals Feb. 4 in Guelph. Grand Prize is a 7 day vacation in the Bahamas.

Grant Richardson won a medal as member of Central Ontario reps in the Pepsi-Cola High School Champion-

ships as the team of boys came second.

Saturday February 10 the Canadian Legion Men's Division Zone finals are at Georgetown Bowl.

Colt 45 Classic Tournament - Qualifiers for zone round February 11 in Guelph are Freida Handy, Gwen Hooker, Gretta Stoddart, Vera Campbell, Helen Humphreys, Dave Campbell,

Colln Vernon, Joe Foster, George Balasko, Humphreys, Winston Campbell, Gerald English.

National Classified Championship's - last qualifying day is Sunday, February 11.

Y.B.C. Majors - Kevin Jepson on Sunday February 4 in league play bowled a 405 game. Combine with a 210 and 213 it gave him a triple of 828.