

## **Blast #1 IRF 38<sup>th</sup> World Senior Racquetball**

*R2sports.com August 29 to September 2, 2023*

Hello Everyone! We have some bittersweet news; at the same time *EXCITEMENT* is in the air. The 2023 edition of World Senior Racquetball will be moving to another city. While we have had offers to host it in various cities across the United States as well as abroad, the pulse is that it should retain its *New Mexico Flavor*. The new location is the *Original Meadow City, Las Vegas (NM)*.

Nestled in the mountains at 6500 feet in northern New Mexico, not far from the Colorado border, Las Vegas is a gem that many have yet to experience. Our *Racquetball Vacation* truly can be just that! Santa Fe, Taos, Pecos Wilderness, and Fort Union National Monument are close by. This city of 15,000 offers golf, fishing, hiking, fine dining, shopping, and *HISTORY*. Two Fred Harvey hotels (Castaneda and Plaza) are here. Five miles north in the village of Montezuma lies the Armand Hammer United World College, originally a 19<sup>th</sup> Century castle/lodge for railroad hierarchy. Its Johnson Recreation Center houses two international squash courts. Therapeutic hot springs have sat at the base of the campus for centuries. The Amtrak Southwest Chief operates daily to and from Las Vegas. At either end is Los Angeles and Chicago. Three hours on a scenic ride will transport you from Albuquerque to Las Vegas. The one-way drive is approximately 1 hour 40 minutes. Santa Fe rests in between.

Why the shift after thirty-seven years in Albuquerque? The best answer is that the New Mexico Sports & Wellness administration has changed its business plan; and, World Senior Racquetball is not part of the plan. We are moving onward! For those requiring assistance in getting from Albuquerque or Santa Fe to Las Vegas, we will arrange to pick you up. Rental cars are encouraged to provide opportunities to explore! Airlines arrive and depart from the Santa Fe Regional Airport along with the Albuquerque International Sunport. For those accessing private air travel, Las Vegas has an airport.

Along with the location and venue changes, another wholesale adjustment will be *rally scoring*. Reasons include: Using the IRF system, shortening length of matches, allowing players more matches, heightening energy during matches, and perhaps having a dearth of courts. Three years ago we adopted the Gearbox Black, the Official Racquetball of the IRF; and, now the IRT (Mens' Professional Tour). Preliminary/qualifying matches will continue with the three-game, eleven-point format. The difference is that games will be rally scoring. Playoff matches (when applicable) will be the best of three games, each to 11 points. A win by two format will be implemented to add excitement. Las Vegas has the attractive Montoya Recreation Center with four courts, each with back wall glass. The University has six courts. At this writing we cannot confirm the number that will be available. What is sure is that we have a captive population that has opened their arms and hearts to welcome us.

We encourage all to come have a *New Experience*. Las Vegas, New Mexico deserves this opportunity. It has risen from the depths of Covid, fire, and flooding. We can and will assist in bringing it back to its rightful place. You can help us make a difference.

Gary Mazaroff ([gmampro@gmail.com](mailto:gmampro@gmail.com)) Paula Sperling ([paula\\_sperling@yahoo.com](mailto:paula_sperling@yahoo.com))

### **Quote of the month**

**'travel light, be the light, spread the light' LL**