



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE MARCH 25, 2024

MALIBU, California, March 25, 2024 – **National Masters Racquetball Association** President Cindy Tilbury, today announced that, for the first time ever, the 2024 NMRA International Racquetball Championships will be a combined tournament with the **International Racquetball Federation** World Senior Racquetball Championships. The joint tournament will be held in Lombard (Chicago), Illinois at the famous Glass Court Racquet & Fitness Club, and the date of the event will be July 25-28, 2024. Gary Mazaroff of the IRF will be co-tournament director with Cindy Tilbury from the NMRA. Live streaming of selected matches will be offered on New Mexico Racquetball Facebook and National MastersRB Facebook page.

Both the NMRA and IRF are dedicated to providing social, competitive racquetball to senior and master racquetball players around the world.

[General background on international racquetball and specifically for 40+ -year-old players](#)

- Racquetball's World Team Championships will be held this year August 24-31 in San Antonio, Texas (USA). It is the first time staged in the USA since 1996 in Phoenix.
- Historically, countries from five continents have been represented.
- In addition to the World Championship menu under IRF, Racquetball has been part of the World Games (first time in 1981 in Santa Clara, CA USA); and next year will be included in Chengdu, China. Other countries having included racquetball in the World Games include England, Netherlands, Taiwan, and Colombia.

- Racquetball is also part of the Pan-Am Games; held every four years (last time in 2023 in Santiago, Chile).
- It is estimated that there are currently 5 million racquetball players worldwide.
- Over the past decade, there has been significant growth in the sport in the Western Hemisphere, especially in the countries of Bolivia, Guatemala, Mexico, and Costa Rica.

International Racquetball Federation 40th World Senior Racquetball Championship Background

- The inaugural year of the World Senior Racquetball Championships was 1985. There were 91 players registered.
- In 1991, there were 403 participants.
- Until this year, the tourney was in New Mexico.
- Singles, same-gender doubles, and mixed doubles are offered. Squash 57 (racquetball racquet/softer, larger ball offered on a squash court) is a recent addition.
- The International Racquetball Federation (IRF) includes World Seniors Racquetball Championships as one of its starship events; and is the single-most-important fundraiser for its 'Development Fund' over \$500,000 has been raised on behalf of this event since 1989.
- IRF events draw many Spanish-speaking players.
- Over 40 countries and all US States have been represented in this event.
- Gearbox Black is the official racquetball of the IRF. This ball will be used in the combined competition.

IRF website is here. www.internationalracquetball.com

National Masters Racquetball Association Events Background

- The NMRA started in New Castle, Pennsylvania, in 1971 when 11 racquetball friends got tired of traveling to tournaments and losing in the first round. They created a round-robin event as a small invitational.
- Now, in its 53rd year, the two tournaments per year are intentionally moved around the country to attract first-time NMRA players from local pockets of

racquetball enthusiasts, as well as to showcase private and corporate racquetball venues.

- Initially, only men's divisions were offered, then doubles and women's divisions were added in the 1980s.
- Pro Penn Green is the official racquetball of the NMRA.

NMRA website is here. www.nmra.info (See Tournaments tab for upcoming events.)

Gary Mazaroff stated that “the national and international tournament calendar was very full this year so it made sense to consider a merger of the two senior/master round-robin events into one big gathering.”

“Combining the two organizations’ events will add a greater international flavor for the National Masters players, and introduce IRF World Seniors players to a new area of the country. We are excited to merge the two tournaments to create a great event for our traveling tournament player. We will also look at continuing on this path into the future,” commented Cindy Tilbury, who has been the NMRA President and main tournament director for the past ten years.

Full information and registration links can be found here.

<https://www.r2sports.com/tourney/display/tourney.asp?TID=41788>

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Both the International Racquetball Federation and the National Masters Racquetball Association are non-profit 501c3 corporations. All donations are fully tax-deductible and greatly appreciated.

For more information on National Masters Racquetball, please contact Cindy Tilbury, NMRA President, at cindy.tilbury@att.net. Gary Mazaroff is the current Rules Commissioner, Tournament Director, and Livestream Coordinator for the IRF. His contact information is gmampro@gmail.com.