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Racquetball's Best Coming to Concord

Concord, CA – **The 2008 Concord Classic**, one of the largest professional/amateur racquetball tournaments ever held in California, will take place at the East Bay's premier health club, **The Big C Athletic Club in Concord**, on **April 10-13, 2008**. The Big C will also host the Junior Nationals in late June when more than 300 junior players from all over the United States compete.

More than 5.5 million Americans currently play racquetball – an increase of 13.5 percent annually according to the Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association – and the sport continues to increase in popularity since its heyday in the early 1980's. The International Racquetball Association (IRA) is recognized by the U.S. Olympic Committee as the American national racquetball governing body.

Sanctioned by the IRA, the 2008 Concord Classic is expected to attract more than 200 of the top amateur players (men and women) in the country competing in more than 20 divisions and **will feature top pros from the Classic Professional Racquetball Tour (CPRT)**, a professional tour featuring racquetball's strongest competitors 40 years and older. It is truly "stars of the past supporting the future of racquetball." Professionals competing in the Concord Classic include:

- **Cliff Swain** – Naples, Florida
 - 6-Time IRT #1 Ranking
 - 7-Time IRT Pro Nationals Champion
 - Pro Nationals Champion
 - 2-Time U.S. Open Champion
 - Winner of more than 100 professional events
 - Racquetball Hall of Famer and arguably the the greatest player in the history of the sport

- **Woody Clouse** - Denver, Colorado
 - #1 Ranked CPRT Player
 - 15th-ranked IRT Player
 - U.S. and Canadian National Titleholder
 - 3-Time World Seniors Champion
 - Team USA Pan Am Gold Medalist
 - Author of *Winning Racquetball*

- **Brett Harnett** – Las Vegas, Nevada
 - 1979 15&Under National Junior Champion
 - 1980 National Amateur Champion
 - 1981 Pro Rookie of the Year
 - 1984 Ektelon Professional National Champion
 - 1986 DP/Leach Professional National Champion
 - Perennial Top 4 Professional Ranking

- more -

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- **Gerry Price** – Danville, California
 - Former Top 5 Professional Ranking
 - 15-Time Olympic & World Firefighter Racquetball Champion
 - Local Racquetball Legend & All-Around Superstar

Tournament sponsors will play in a pre-tournament **Sponsor/Player DoublesPro-Am on Thursday, April 10, at 6 p.m.** highlighting many local-area celebrities and VIPs. The evening will be catered, and **the media is invited** to join in the refreshments and engage the pros in one-on-one interviews.

The host club for the 2008 Concord Classic, **The Big C Athletic Club is located at 1381 Galaxy Way** in Concord. It was founded in 1978 by the Bay Area's Ken Hofmann, former co-owner of the Oakland A's and the Seattle Seahawks. The club is now owned by the **Community Youth Center (CYC)**, a non-profit organization founded by Hofmann in 1995 to serve the athletic and academic needs of local area youth. The CYC currently serves more than 1,100 kids ages 3 to 18 by providing professional training in more 10 sports including boxing, wrestling, taekwondo, judo, gymnastics, rhythmic gymnastics, dance, cheerleading, sport specific conditioning and outdoor activities. Academics are also strongly emphasized through the CYC's academic excellence center.

The Concord Classic will introduce the sport of racquetball to the CYC and serve as a prelude to the upcoming **Junior Olympic National Championships** - also hosted by The Big C – in June. More than 300 junior players from all over the U.S. are expected to compete in Junior Nationals as a qualifier for the Junior World Championships. The CYC will begin a summer-long handball/racquetball camp for CYC youngsters following the Junior Nationals.

A portion of the Concord Classic proceeds will be donated to the USA National Racquetball Team (USAR) travel fund.

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