



Racquetball Association of Ireland

Founded 1979

Affiliated to the International Racquetball Federation and European Racquetball Federation

Website www.racquetball.ie

How to start a racquetball club and promote the sport of racquetball

So you are in a sports centre where there is a racquetball/handball court and where some people play racquetball already but there is nothing organised or no one co-ordinating racquetball activities.

So how is the best way to organise racquetball so that it more than just friends having a game on regular basis but not playing against anybody else? How is the best way to form a club and run competitions, coaching sessions and to add a sense of community and belonging to the sport?

If you play racquetball regularly in a sports centre against maybe one or two or more of your friends approach them and ask them if they would help you in starting a racquetball club. Even if they are not enthusiastic about the idea, do persevere and even with just one other person its possible to organise at least a competition.

How to form a club

So you have got a few people that will help you out. On your clubs notice board/Facebook page post a notice that forming a racquetball club is going to be undertaken. Ask people/players to express their interest in joining by getting them to sign their names & phone numbers on a sheet posted on the notice board. Once there is enough of names (5 or more) arrange a meeting at a set time and date and contact everyone.

The meeting should elect a Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and a PRO at minimum.

If your club is going to coach juniors then you must appoint a Children's Officer.

If numbers at the meeting are sufficient, in addition a three-person committee can be elected.

Next agree on some rules – all clubs in no matter what sport should have a constitution.

Agree to adopt the constitution. (support available in writing a constitution from Racquetball Ireland)

Set up membership system, each player who joins should fill in a membership form and agree to be bound by the rules of the club.

What to do next?

There will be two challenges once a club is formed, finance and how to run a tournament or competition. To support the club, there needs to be some finance in place.

The new club can charge a membership fee and to further raise funds, run a tournament or competition.

A tournament with 20 players paying an entry fee of 10€ per player will bring in 200€. If the club can get a local business to sponsor the prizes it will be able to put the whole amount collected in entry fees into the club.

What kind of Competition can be run in a club?

Lets stick to singles competitions for the time being.

One day or weekend tournament – this can be run in a single day or over two days depending on numbers. Competition can be a single knock-out where there is one winner and a runner-up and both receive prizes. Most clubs running this type of an event would also run a competition for 1st round losers who having lost there first match would go into a competition against the other 1st round losers in a new draw.

This type of competition could also be run over a number of weeks.

Round Robin Competition – Players are divided in groups of 3, 4 or 5 and each player in the group plays each other. Once all the matches are played the winners only or winners and runners-up go into a knock out draw.

Team League – Players are placed on teams of 3 or more depending on numbers entered. Players are selected on teams according to skill with best players at number 1, next best at number 2 and so forth. All the number ones play each other, all the number twos play each other and so forth. Once all matches are played the team with most points wins.

Time Competition – this type of competition is ideal for places where court time is not always available. Where matches are normally played to 2 games to 15 points and a tie breaker if necessary to 11 points games in a time competition can be restricted to a number of minutes e.g 20 minutes. An alarm is set for the required number of minutes and when the alarm goes off the player who is ahead is the winner. Any of the above competitions can be run this way.

Roles of Club Officers

Chairperson Key Tasks:

- Acts as a spokesperson for the club
- Provide direction and leadership
- Chair meetings
- Delegation of tasks
- Ensures the smooth running of the club/society

Skills Required: Organised, good delegator, good communicator, confident, Enthusiastic

Potential Attributes Gained: Teamwork, Marketing, Negotiation, Decision Making, Verbal & Written Communication Skills

Secretary Key Tasks:

- To take minutes at any meeting
- To collate all the names and contact information of all the members of the club
- To update any changes to the clubs constitution
- Communicate regularly with members

Skills Required: Methodical, organised and have a good understanding of club policy, good written skills for communicating

Potential Attributes Gained: Verbal & Written Communication Skills, Organisational skills, time management, IT skills

Treasurer Key Tasks:

- Maintain accounts of all income and expenditure
- To draw up the club's budget
- Organise fundraising events
- Collect membership fees
- Make a grant applications if necessary

Skills Required: Numerical competence, reliable and trustworthy

Potential Attributes Gained: Financial Management, Organisation,

Public Relations Officer Key Tasks:

- To market the clubs/societies activities and events
- To submit articles to local newspapers & radio
- Set up and maintain the club/society website and/or Facebook page
- Send weekly e-mails and facebook updates to members about events, fixtures, training etc
- Take photos and videos of club/society activities

Skills Required: Creative, a good communicator, Good written and verbal communication skills, good IT skills,

Potential Attributes Gained: : Verbal & Written Communication Skills, Organisational skills, time management, IT skills

Optional Committee Positions

Committee members assist the Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and PRO in their tasks

Joining the Racquetball Association of Ireland (RAI)

The Racquetball Association of Ireland promotes the sport of racquetball in Ireland. Joining the Association will gain benefits for your club. Members of your will be able to compete in all RAI sanctioned events, Provincial tournaments, Open tournaments, National championships, National junior championships and National overage championships. Clubs will have access to coaches and coaching clinics, advice on equipment, rules as well as free junior beginner kits. Considerable help and guidance is given to clubs who implement junior racquetball coaching for boys and girls. The Association has substantially reduced affiliation rates for new clubs.

On becoming a member of the RAI sample documents can be provided such as a sample Constitution, Rule Book, Draw sheets, Court Booking Sheets etc.

For you club to become a members of the RAI it is necessary to apply by completing an application form and send the appropriate remittance the Association. Each application goes before the Executive Committee of the RAI and once the application is approved by the Committee your club will be granted full membership of the Association.

A copy of the Rules & Regulation of the Association can be found on our website. Please note a club must have a minimum of 10 members to become affiliate to the RAI.

To contact the Racquetball Association of Ireland, email info@racquetball.ie