



NEW MILLENIUM AND 1-WALL (THEME 12)

(14/06/2021)

From the beginning of the new century, Quebec handball renews itself. On one side the 4-walls version of the sport reaches its adulthood with the recognition of its athletes in addition to engaging another generation of players. On the other side, Quebec players are experimenting with a new vision with the construction of 1-wall facilities that compensate for the disappearance of 4-wall courts. This 1-wall version gets popular from the start and new competitions are added to the regular 4-walls schedule. In fact, everywhere in the world, we can see this interest for 1-wall version. We reported in the previous theme the establishment of new courts in Japan, but we also find this type of courts in England, Spain, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and of course in Ireland. New-York is still the center of the world with its 2,000 courts.

QUEBEC HANDBALL – VERSION 2.0

To close the 20th century and begin the 21st, the induction of Quebecers into the Hall of Fame of the Canadian Handball Association (CHA) confirms the quality of this sport in the province. Indeed Kathleen Bédard (2007), Donald Côté (2008), Marcel Ponton (2009), Alain Pélissier (2012), Danny Bell (2014) and Diane Vallée (2019) are now part of this pantheon while our competitors continue to perform on the international scene. Danny Bell wins two world titles (2009 and 2015), Denis Gingras (2006) and Diane Vallée (2015) assert themselves with world victories in their respective categories while Jérôme Santerre with Vincent St-Amant emerge victorious in doubles at the USHA National Collegiate held in North Carolina (2014). We must remember that this same Santerre won the junior doubles at the Canadian Nationals (Calgary, 2008) with Mathieu Paquette. More results: <http://balleaumur.qc.ca/resultats-de-championnats/?lang=en>. Another sporting achievement: during the 2018-2019 season, Danny Bell challenges prejudices about age by becoming champion in the same season of the Men Open Singles category of these tournaments: Montréal Open, Albany Open and Canadian Championships. He is 58 years old...

In terms of competitions, new tournaments have been added to the calendar (see the tournaments section below): the Jacques Corneau Doubles organized by Bernard Pélissier, the 1-wall Honey Martin's (Joseph Berthiaume and Mike Griffin), the Montreal Open by Pierre Patenaude, the Classique Saint-Jean-Eudes (Donald Côté) and finally the Classique du PEPS, under the responsibility of Denis Gingras.

QUÉBEC 1-WALL

Note that even though the 4-wall tournaments are still popular, the rise of the 1-wall version is proving to be a breath of fresh air for the sport. With the disappearance of many 4-wall courts in the early 2000s and the costs associated with the construction of

new courts of this type, the 1-wall solution became the best avenue for the continuity of handball since it requires little investment in terms of installations and equipment. New names then appeared in the list of regular players and offered a very good level of play. Romain Froget, Frédéric Genest, Mattieu Ko, André Desbiens, Maxime Allard, Anthony Hudon and Jean-Philip Paradis are expressing their talent on the 1-wall courts.

In Montreal, the four 1-wall courts at Parc Leber (Pointe-Claire) become the summer center of attraction for players while the installation of 1-wall courts, created by Ray Lafrance, at John-F.-Kennedy High School, helps maintain interest during the winter season. The arrival of players of Basque origin contributes to the overall excitement.

In Quebec City, with the support of the Ecole Saint-Jean-Eudes General Manager, three 1-wall courts were installed in the gymnasium. Note that Édouard Malenfant already knew handball since he had worked previously at Ste-Anne-de-La-Pocatière College (Theme # 6). The support of the Director of students, Sébastien Villeneuve, and physical education teachers Pascal Chabot, Martin Hudon and Mathieu Sunderland, assisted by Donald Côté as mentor and founder of the Saint-Jean-Eudes handball club (BAM SJE), allows the integration of this sport in extracurricular activities and physical education courses. For her part, Caroline Dubord is continuing her development work at the Polyvalente Ste-Anne-de-Beaupré. The result of these initiatives is that not only are young people exposed to the game, but new talents are noticed in high level competitions. As an example, Samuel Richer and Guillaume Chouinard from Quebec, who started playing 1-wall and then developed their talent in 4-walls, are the first Quebecers to win titles at the prestigious USHA Junior 4-walls Championships in the United States in addition to winning junior trophies in Canada. Charles-Étienne Beaulieu and Olivier Larivière are also making their mark on the national scene.

Note that the USHA has been of great help to the junior development program by providing, year after year, the basic equipment for the game (balls, gloves and protective goggles). John Cammett has contributed to the program by providing the financial means for young people to participate in competitions abroad. As for Gilles Laflamme, he has assisted the BAM SJE Club from the start with his expertise in accounting. Caroline Marcotte and Jérôme Santerre are in charge of the club activities.

On the press side, Jean-François and Carl Tardif for Le Soleil, Amélie Deschênes for Le Journal de Québec and Stéphane Turcot on television gave visibility to handball during this period.

TOURNAMENTS AFTER 2000:

The Canadian championships are still popular and Bernard Pélissier was the driving force behind the organization of four of these championships (2007-2012-2014-2018) in the Montreal area.

New tournaments are boosting buy-in from old and new players. Among these, we find:

Honey Martin's: under the initiative of Joseph Berthiaume and Mike Griffin (international caliber boxing referee) this 1-wall tournament was created in 2012 on the grounds of Parc Leber in Pointe-St-Charles and the two promoters have managed to attract many players from Quebec, Canada and New York City. As champions of recent years, we

can cite the names of Danielle Daskalakis, Yolanda Monroe, Veronica Figueroa, Chris Benitez, Jack Safos, George Figueroa, Han-Ching-Lin.

Montreal Open Tournament: Launched by Pierre Patenaude, this tournament uses the old Quebec Open formula. Big names like Ryan Bowler, Danny Bell, Yvan Burgos, Jérôme Santerre, Vincent St-Amant, Louis Boivin, Norm Kelly, Ray Lafrance and Laurent Couture have been regular participants.

Jacques Corneau Doubles: created by Bernard Pélissier to pay tribute to the great champion that Jacques was, this tournament attracts the best Quebec teams. Jérôme Santerre, Vincent St-Amant, Danny Bell, Raphaël Santerre, Maxime Pélissier are members of quality teams.

In Quebec City, it is a big handball weekend with 2 tournaments presenting a 1-wall version (École **Saint-Jean-Eudes**) on Saturday and a 4-wall version (**PEPS at Laval University**) on Sunday which allows players to show their versatility. Under the direction of Donald Côté, on Saturday, and Denis Gingras, on Sunday, this weekend brings together players of all ages and all levels in these two classics.

This same Gingras is behind the installation of three outdoor 1-wall courts at the St-Nicolas Arena while Bernard Pélissier sets up 1-wall in Drummondville. There are also 4 new 1-wall courts in Brossard (Aréna Michel-Normandin 3105, blvd. de Rome).

Note that we now have on the BAMQ site a French version of all the handball rules offered in accordance with those of the USHA. Thanks to the invaluable collaboration of Sam Esser of the american association (USHA) and Donald Côté from Quebec City.

CANADIAN HANDBALL

Elsewhere in Canada, Rob Racochey, Wally Oprzedek, Ivan Elliott, Bill Mcgrath and Wayne Amminson continue the development of juniors already undertaken with 4-walls and supervise young people such as Michael Gaulton, Ivan and Alam Burgos, Alex Carew, Rory and Carter Racochey who participate in international tournaments. In the 2000s, a program based on Air Miles, set up by the CHA, financed trips for junior players to the Canadian Championships.

It should be mentioned that Canada is also showing good results among our seniors. The american association (USHA) having created the "Grand Masters" group to honor players who have won 10 or more titles in different age groups of USHA tournaments, named Merv Deckert (18 titles) and Peter Service (15 titles) in this elite, both of them having already been inducted to the Canadian Hall of Fame.

Bill McGrath confirms that one-wall handball in Alberta is alive and well. Following a long pause due to pandemic restrictions, players are eager to start a new season. Their opportunity to do so is due to the past efforts of a few hard-working individuals.

As so often was the case in past years, Stan Fisher led the way. Drawing on his organizational, lobbying and fund-raising skills, Stan secured support during the 1990's for the creation of outdoor one-wall courts in Sherwood Park. He was assisted in this project by Herb Martin

and Howard Strettle. All three men continue to provide leadership in the Alberta handball community for both four-wall and one-wall handball players.

Rob Rakochev is Calgary's counterpart to Stan Fisher. One-wall handball would not have a life in Calgary were it not for Rob. He took charge from the moment it was clear that indoor one-wall courts would be required for Calgary to host the 2015 World Handball Championship. Adrian Bussoli and Guy Martin provided support on the World Championship committee but continuously since 2015 Rob has been the driving force for one-wall in Calgary. Having successfully recruited his wife, Launie, and sons Rory, Carter and Jerome to the game, his recruitment efforts have not stopped. One might argue whether his weekly promotional notices should be considered literary gems, but these do contain some great fiction concerning their author's own matches.

Mention of the 2015 World Championship brings the play of pro competitors to mind. Several of them indicated that Calgary's courts were the fastest they have played on. Local players will not soon forget the experience of seeing "Timbo" Gonzales winning the Big Ball Men Singles final against Tywan Cook and watching Danielle Daskalakis slamming in Big Ball Singles and Doubles playing together with her Singles finalist, Sandra Ng. The Men Singles Small Ball final has shown the master of serves, Sean Lenning, winning over Victor Lopierre.

Bill McGrath (Alberta, 2021)

This is where the history of handball project ends.

Now it is up to the new breed and more experienced players to write on the walls the next pages of this unique sport.

Thank you to these who have supported us through the different themes which can be found by using this link:

<http://balleaumur.qc.ca/a-propos-de-balle-au-mur-quebec/histoire-de-la-balle-au-mur/?lang=en>

Keep on playing handball !

Donald Côté and Alain Pélissier, June 2021

Acknowledgments: Marie-Michèle Trudel, Kathleen Bédard, Brian Goto, USHA and the special collaborations of Bill McGrath, Richard Vandal, Dominique Desrochers.

PICTURES GALLERY



World 2009, Dan Armijo champion, Denis Gingras finalist, Men's 45 Singles



World 2009, Allison Roberts and Lee-Ann Martin champions, Lavonah Muloin-Madden and Lucie Gauthier finalists, Womens 40 Doubles



World 2009, Portland (Oregon), Donald Côté, Kiyoshi Hakuta, Héloïse Côté, Koji Matsumoto, Shigeru Nobeta, Kathleen Bédard, Chatten Hayes, John Dolan (Canada, USA, Japan)



Honey Martin's, Montréal (2014)



Héloïse Côté, Mike Griffin (Tournoi Honey Martin's 2014)



Joseph Berthiaume and Vincent St-Amant (Classique Saint-Jean-Eudes, April 2013)



Édouard Malenfant, Kathleen Bédard, Jérôme Santerre, Na Liu, Jurrell and Tyree Bastidas, Raphaël Santerre (May 2012)



The 1st handball cohort at l'École Saint-Jean-Eudes with some American champions: Jérémie Boulanger, Jérémie Duclos, Fayçal Zine-Eddine, Danilo Tubic, Jurrell Bastidas, Tyree Bastidas, Philippe Blanchette (May, 2012)



The Pélissier "clan" Pélissier (April 2014): Alain, Caroline Marcotte, Samuel Richer, François-Mathieu, Charles-Étienne Beaulieu, Julie-Catherine, Marie-Josée Duval, Étienne, Bernard, Maxime, Mathilde Riols and Auguste the next handball star (Missing Thomas-David and Julien).



Classique Saint-Jean-Eudes (April 2017)



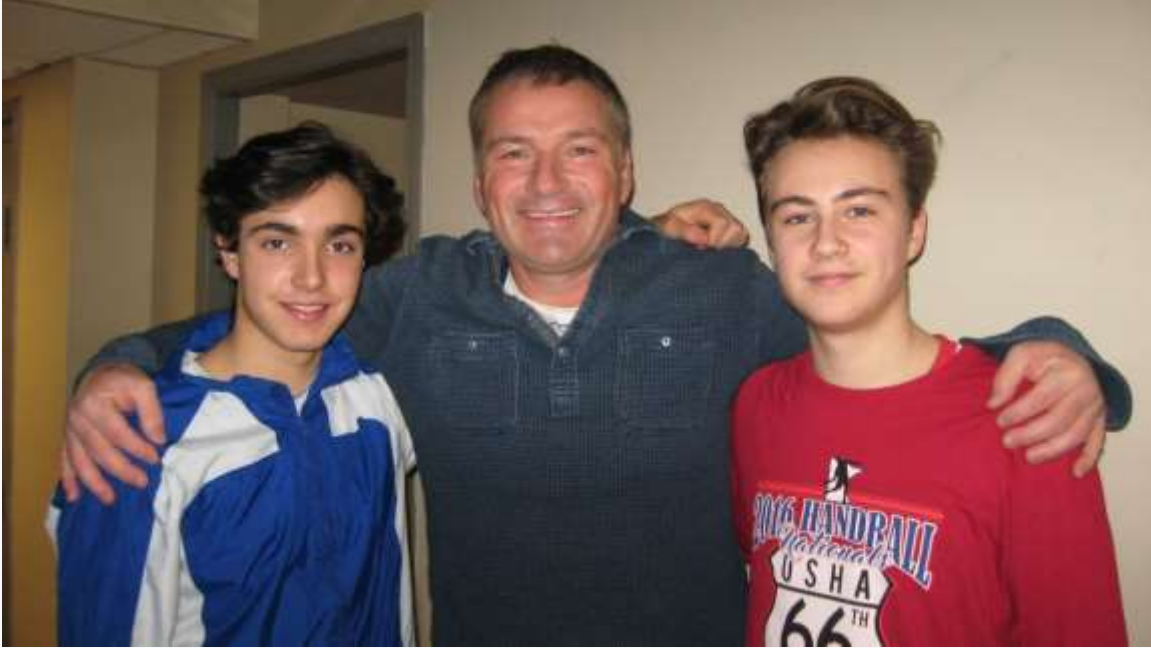
Samuel Richer (2017)



J. Bastidas, Finalist, D. Bell, Champion (Albany, 2019)



David Munson, Samuel Richer, Guillaume Chouinard, Olivier Larivière, Daniel Cordova (Burlington, Ontario, 2016).



Guillaume Chouinard, John Cammett, Samuel Richer (Montreal Open 2017)



Guillaume Chouinard, Michael Gaulton, Ivan Burgos, Fernando Burgos, Samuel Richer, Vern Roberts (2016, Tucson, Arizona)



Bernard Pélissier, Diane Vallée, Pierre Patenaude, Charles-Antoine Foy and Louis-Charles Morin Stéphane Mélançon, Maxime and Étienne Pélissier (2020)
(2017)

Jérôme Santerre and Bill Mehilos : <https://youtu.be/v5p6PA3iyEE>

USHA 1-wall final 2012, Timbo vs GiO: <https://youtu.be/bHViEPrxqTw>

RICHARD VANDAL - SOUVENIRS

I discovered handball at the St-Jean-Baptiste Center on Mont-Royal Street, in Montreal. I was 16 then and with some baseball teammates we find a place where we can train for free especially on rainy days. In addition to the gymnasium, there is a boxing ring and a handball court with non-regulatory dimensions. The manager of the place (ex-professional boxer) teaches me the basics of the sport. I used to play baseball and hockey at the time, and handball was used for my fitness. It wasn't until the age of 21 that I really started playing handball.

I wanted to train, I tell a police friend about it and he tells me about the Cultural and Sports Center located on Boulevard St-Joseph in Montreal and offers, in addition to the gymnasium, a swimming pool, a weight room, a handball court with regulatory dimensions. So I sign up and I become addicted to handball. We meet players such as Guy Lapointe and Claude Provost of the Montreal Canadians who play there during the hockey offseason, Pierre Desjardins, a Montreal Alouettes football player, George Cherry, ex-professional boxer as well as diver Donald Dion (who later became coach of Sylvie Bernier and Annie Pelletier, Olympic medalists). Bob Robitaille, a police officer, also goes to the club, because he practices diving and also plays handball. We almost always play doubles because the place is very busy and there is only one court. We sit down on the steps near the court and wait for our turn, which will come when the other four players finish their game. I played for about five years without competing.

It was Bob Robitaille who introduced me to competition by taking me to my first tournament, the Golden Horseshoe in Hamilton (won by Barry Leach) in 1972. It's ironic, because I won this tournament five years later against Brian Goto.

I am also very proud of our national glory Danny Bell. What an incredible career and what a personality. I am proud to have been beaten by him in a provincial championship when I was at the end of my career. I realized then that at such a young age (19) he was

set for a truly exceptional career. Along with Fred Lewis, Terry Muck, Gordy Pfeifer, John Sabo, Ken Ayube and Merv Deckert, he is one of the most formidable opponents I have ever faced.

In connection with the historical themes from Balle au mur Québec, I watched all the games available on video and it made me somewhat nostalgic. Thanks to the craftsmen for perpetuating the memories of this wonderful sport of handball.

DOMINIQUE DESROCHERS - SOUVENIRS

Right off the bat I have to tell you the truth: I was just a very marginal player who got a "killshot" once or twice a year.

I signed up for a handball lesson in 1974 at Cegep de Ste-Foy with a friend of mine. The discipline of computer science almost always picked from the bottom during registration week; then, all the sports courses were full and the choice that remained, slim. We thought, why not try this handball thing?

Our teacher was Roger Deslauriers, quite a character. At that time, racquetball was very popular and took up almost all the space. It was when Pierre Desruisseaux arrived and promoted it that handball gained momentum.

Then I joined the Du Vallon club with friends and we were playing in a low caliber league between us, just for fun. I liked the atmosphere of senior players like Jean Pesenti, Claude Pesant, Gilles Pelletier, Gerry Arbour and many others.

And there was also this rivalry between the Du Vallon and Lebourgneuf clubs! The polarization of these clubs offered great competition at every tournament. And what about these exciting duels at Lebourgneuf between these excellent players of the time: Pierre Desruisseaux, Éric Bédard, Danny Bell and Denis Gingras!

There was also a little league on Monday evening, led by Gilles Laflamme. We had a lot of fun even if Gilles was much stronger than the whole group. And always the same thing: we went there a lot more to fraternize than for more or less serious ball games but how much fun it was!

I realized then that most of the people in handball cared about people above all else, even for the low level players. Human being came in first place and I liked it a lot. Jean Pesenti has never ceased to describe handball as a big family and a large brotherhood. And that's what I saw at every tournament.

Dominique "Doum" Desrochers, June 2021

In his testimony, Dominique Desrochers relates to the family spirit that reigns within handball and as Brian Goto also writes so well “Amazing to look back and realize the number of family members that learned the game through a parent”.

In the Province of Quebec we have these families: Aubin, Barrière, Berthiaume, Bédard, Bell, Côté-Bédard, Couture, Couturier, Desruisseaux, Drouin, Gingras, Gosselin, Griffin, Hardy, Jaffry, Kelly, Labbé, Letarte, Marcil, Martineau, Mélanon, Morin, Pélissier, Pelletier, Ponton, Richer, Royer, Rioux, Saillant, Schaffer, Soucy.

In Canada : Amminson, Brown, Bargman, Beverly, Billig, Blatter, Bowler, Burgos, Carew, Cowie, Crothers, Cummings, Duerksen, Dugas, Elliott, England, Enns, Fisher, Fox, Friesen, Fromstein, Gawley, Gilmore, Hamel, Jennings, Kearney, Madden, McGrath, Motoz, O'Donnell, Oprzedek, Philips, Polgrabia, Pritchard, Pumphrey, Racochey, Rajczak, Ripplinger, Ross, Santha, Sargent, Service, Shearer, Snow, Stickles, Walsh, Weidinger, Wilson, Wyley.



Players from Quebec City in the 80s.

Thanks to all who have been with us in the past and to all who are still with us.