

Kris Odegard
Racquetball Canada Hall of Fame
Acceptance Remarks
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Good evening everyone. First off, I would like to formally thank Jan Hanson, Karla Drury, the Saskatchewan Racquetball Association and the numerous others who I know are in the room that helped with my induction tonight, as well as my induction into the Saskatoon Sports Hall of Fame last year. I can't tell you all how grateful I am for your support and for everything you all do for the sport of racquetball. I would also like to thank my family (including my girlfriend Melissa who is still learning what racquetball is), my coaches over the years, Rick Shmon, Linda Ellerington, Loren Prentice, Ron Brown and Evan Pritchard and Racquetball Canada for giving me this great honour.

I started playing racquetball almost 35 years ago based on the support of my family. My sister (who had her own successful junior and senior career) and I played at a nice little racquetball club called The Courtyard, approximately 2 blocks from the home we grew up in, in Saskatoon. Amazingly, there are numerous people in this room who were there with me when I first started, like Eric Urteaga, Ryan Powell, Rob Barclay, the Connell's (not just you Lee, I used to play against your mom before you and I practiced together) the Landeryou's (and yes I used to play squash with your dad as well) and so many more (show pictures if possible).

It is hard to sum up the last 35 years in a few sentences. In general, I can't believe how fast the time has gone and again how humbled I am to receive this honour. There are so many memories on road trips to tournaments, practicing until I felt I had finally gotten it right and the highs and lows of being injured and working my way back. The best I can do, is to acknowledge I feel that racquetball has given me MORE over this time period than what I put into it. Whether it is life-long friendships, my education, being able to compete in tournaments all over the world, shaping my perspectives on life and helping me to build confidence in myself both on and off the court. Racquetball has been and continues to be the basis for my life and I am so happy to share that with you all.

In closing, I want to again thank my family, everyone involved in the induction process, and everyone in this room and across the country that continues to help the sport of racquetball and truly make this a community like no other.

Thank you and good night.

Kris Odegard

