

# Glenn Carlson and Russ Mannino

## A match for charity...

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Almost 25 years has separated these two, but in January of 2011 they came together at The Cactus Salon Pro Stop in New York City to help support junior racquetball.

Glenn and Russ picked up exactly where they left off so many years ago, smack talking back and forth and eventually on the court battling each other to raise money for a great cause.

Glenn was a student of Russ's back in the early 80's and eventually hung around one of the 4 racquetball clubs Russ owned in Brooklyn and Staten Island so much that Russ gave him an ultimatum, either start earning money for the club or stop hanging out. Glenn decided to start earning money and Russ offered him the job as Club Pro of Narrows Fitness Center in Brooklyn. Every morning at Narrows started the same for these two with lots of smack talk on who was going to win today. Every day, sometimes two



and three times, these two would meet on the court with some type of match where they were on opposing sides. This went on every day for years and there were 100's of matches played between these two. If you wrote stories about the matches these two played, one could write enough books to fill a library. Some of the stories contained matches with great players like Sudsy Monchik, Jason Mannino, Ruben Gonzalez and Fran Davis who regularly joined in playing at Narrows. But one day Russ sold the club in Brooklyn and moved to California. Glenn continued teaching at the club, but in time also moved

out of state to Florida. Both continued to play and be involved in racquetball, but it wasn't until last year when Glenn logged onto [www.IRTNetwork.com](http://www.IRTNetwork.com) and heard Russ announcing Pro matches, that fate would bring them together.

While watching the IRT Network broadcasts of Pro matches, Glenn couldn't resist taking a few jabs at his old friend while he was commentating. Glenn would email John Scott at the IRT Network each week during the matches, and John would read Glenn's comments to Russ live on the air. Russ with his quick wit would jab back at Glenn, and this became a weekly occurrence, until one day Glenn challenged Russ to a match for charity. The challenge was that the loser would have to donate \$500 to help sponsor a junior to the 2011 Elite High Performance Camp. Russ quickly accepted and it was decided by both, what better venue to reunite than a Pro Stop in NYC.

The IRT Network quickly jumped onboard to help this great cause and offered to donate the first \$10 of all



new subscriptions to the network for both the weekend prior to the match and the weekend during the match. This resulted in well over \$500 being donated by the just the IRT Network. Along with the help of the IRT Network, many racquetball friends of Glenn and Russ stepped up and donated money to help.

The match was set for Saturday January 15, 2011 at 2:30pm and was broadcasted live on the IRT Network. The great Ruben Gonzalez and long time friend of both Glenn and Russ was recruited to referee the match. John Scott, owner of the IRT Network along with Mitch Williams and Ben Croft, both top IRT pro players, were commentating the match.

The match started out with rallies back and forth but Glenn quickly took control of the first match beating Russ easily 15-5. In the second game Russ regrouped and it was close for a while until Glenn took a 14-9 lead. It looked like it was curtains for the Legend "Rusty" Mannino until a few questionable calls from Ruben helped Russ win the game 15-14. There was a comment from Glenn before the tiebreaker that it was the first game he lost scoring 19 points in a 15 point game. The tie breaker passed quickly with Glenn beating Russ 11-6.

After the match these two long time friends shook hands, hugged and were overheard saying, "25 years later and, and we are together still doing the same thing we love, playing racquetball". The match was a great success with over \$3000 being raised to help juniors. The commentating was hailed as probably the most entertaining ever, and people were calling in to say they have never laughed so hard in their life. If you missed the match, you can find it at [www.IRTNetwork.com](http://www.IRTNetwork.com) in their IRT video library section. The IRT Network is the only place where you can watch live racquetball matches as it happens as well as play back pro matches from past tournaments in their IRT video library section.

Glenn and Russ are now looking for two deserving juniors to help give scholarships to the 2011 Elite High Performance Camp in Colorado Springs. If you are a junior or know of a junior that needs help, please go to [www.IRTNetwork.com](http://www.IRTNetwork.com) and download an application.

Finally, yes there are rumors of a rematch at the IRT Spring Break in Florida. Stay tuned to [www.IRTNetwork.com](http://www.IRTNetwork.com) for details.

