

Friends face off in wheelchair tennis singles final

Posted by **Kelly Hill** | **The Grand Rapids Press** July 26, 2009 22:45PM

GRAND RAPIDS -- In her first-ever competitive wheelchair tennis match four years ago, Jan Proctor of Delray Beach, Fla., faced Kentwood's Jocelyn Dettloff.

Sunday, she defeated Dettloff 6-1, 6-2 to capture her first singles title, winning the Midwest Wheelchair Tennis Championships at Orchard Hills Swim and Sports Club in Grand Rapids.

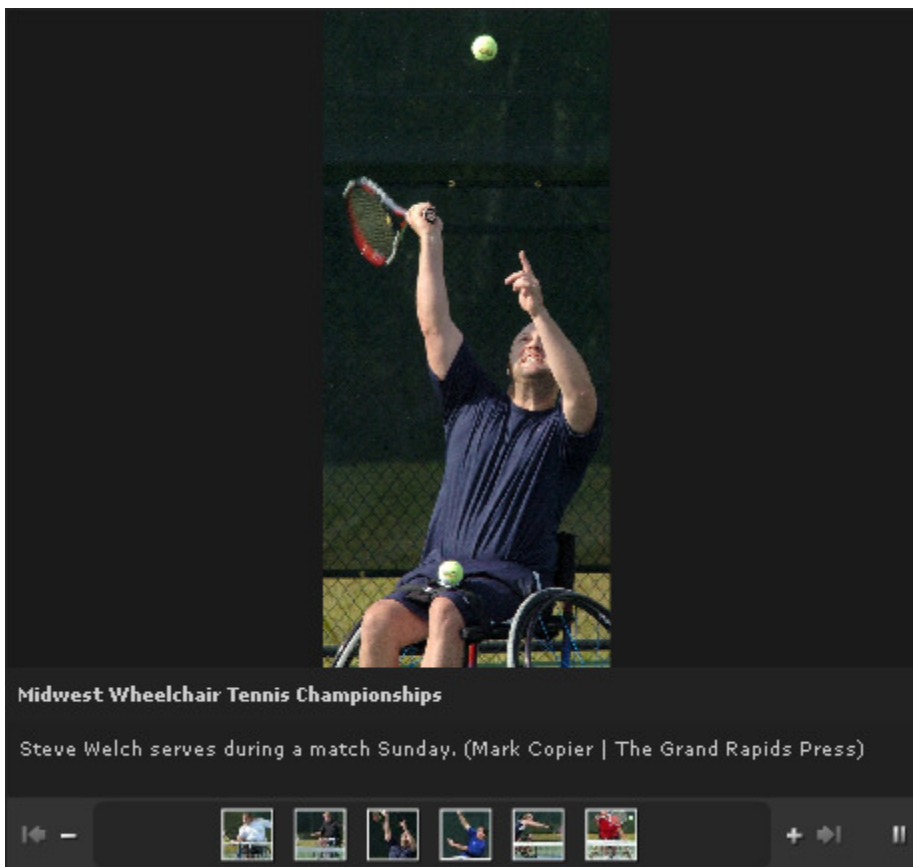
"I think it's cool that when I win my first singles championship, it was Jocelyn that I played in the finals. I feel like we started playing wheelchair tennis together," said Proctor, 56, who played competitive tennis for 22 years before being struck by a car and breaking her leg, then developing cancer in that leg.

Dettloff, 38, was playing in her first Midwest Championships final.

"I am thrilled that I made it this time," she said. "Jan is a very, very good player. She played stand-up tennis for a very long time, so she knows what to do with the ball. I knew it would be a big challenge playing her.

"I don't mind losing to her. I just keep telling myself that I made it to the finals."

Proctor and her doubles partner, Rockford's Valerie Wallace, won the women's open doubles championship Saturday afternoon by going 2-0 in round-robin competition.



The world's former No. 1 player, Stephen Welch of Bedford, Texas, defeated former French Paralympian Stephane Goudou 6-1, 6-1 to win the men's open singles championship.

Welch, 37, who was ranked No. 1 in 1994 and '99, is making a comeback to competitive wheelchair tennis after a five-year layoff.

"This is a wonderful tournament," Welch said. "People make a tournament and the culture here is excellent. The people are all kind and the tournament is well organized.

"I have been out of the game for a while, but I had played full-time for a living for more than a decade. Then I stopped playing, and recently I sold my interest in a medical supply business and this was my first tournament back. My game is no where near where it was, but I am going to play a few more tournaments and get in better shape."

Goudou, a 35-year-old from Orleans, France, won the Midwest Championship last year.

"He is very good, even though he doesn't play a lot," Goudou said of Welch. "I didn't play well. My serve was not good. I am disappointed not because I lost, but because I didn't play well."

Goudou and Welch teamed to win the men's open doubles championship, beating Russell Rodriguez of Nashville, Tenn., and Marsten Anderson of Yorba Linda, Calif., 7-6 (7-3), 6-3 in the title match.