

Dummie hooked for life

Dorge has drummed up support for squash around the world

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Winnipeg Sun

Truth be told, Mitch Dorge found the sport of squash by accident.

The 49-year-old Winnipegger and long-time drummer of the Crash Test Dummies is still playing nearly three decades later.

Funny thing is, he didn't really know anything about the sport until he was 23.

"I probably would have never discovered the game," said Dorge, who was playing in the 'A Vets' division of the 2010 Manitoba Open at the Winnipeg Squash Racquet Club before he was eliminated in the semifinal on Saturday.

"A friend of mine was having a birthday party and I don't really remember what the circumstances were, but I had to go into his closet and there were two old squash racquets in there. I had never seen a squash racquet before, I pulled it out and I said 'What is this, a spaghetti strainer?'"

That friend told him about squash and roughly six months later, Dorge found himself on the court for the first time.

"It didn't take long before I was kicking his butt," Dorge recalled. "Of all the sports I've played, squash is like chess because it's you against the other guy. I really got hooked."

Dorge continued to improve his craft and got himself to the point of being able to play in

the open division of a tournament at the Winnipeg Squash Racquet Club.

"I got crushed, but in all honesty, that was like making it to the NHL for me," said Dorge.

When the Dummies made it big and began touring worldwide, Dorge made an effort to find as many games in as many cities as he could.

He played in many exhibitions and was an advocate of getting more women involved in the sport.

'Bigger'

When the band went on tour, Dorge made sure to schedule as many matches as he could.

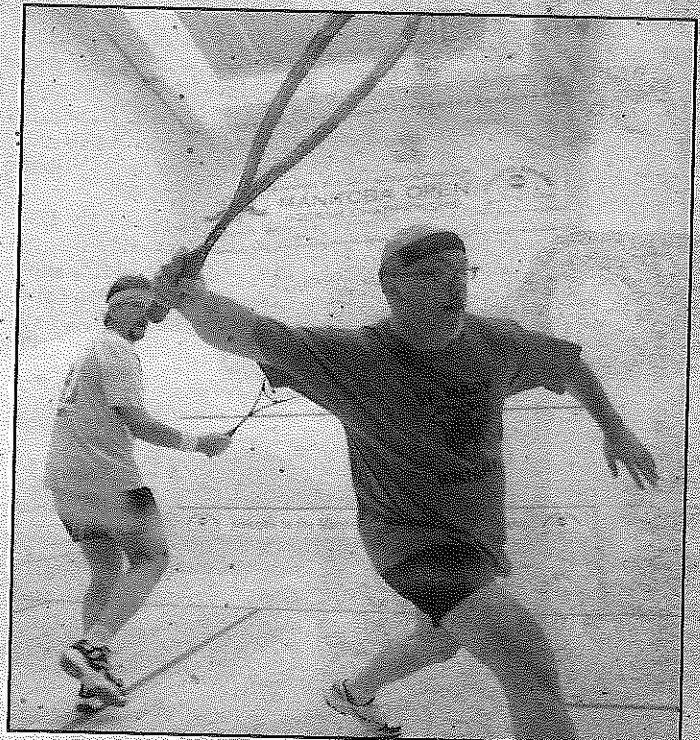
"That's when I realized the game was a lot bigger than I thought," said Dorge. "I had nothing better to do all day. To be able to be on the court is like drumming. I just love doing it. If I didn't have life obligations, I'd be here all day."

"It's just a great sport. A lot of guys come to play and they can be anything, doctors, janitors, writers and it's the skill on the court that reigns supreme."

It's not like Dorge had to go far to find a celebrity on court either.

One day he showed up at the Winnipeg Squash Racquet Club and found himself in a match with former Winnipeg Jets sniper Teemu Selanne.

"I'm not a big sports guy, but I saw this guy on court and asked if he wanted to have a hit," said Dorge. "We played for a while. I



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Dorge (right) faces Johan Jacobs at the Manitoba Open Saturday.

didn't know who he was and he didn't know who I was, but we became friends."

Dorge is still heavily involved in music — he's playing in up to six bands at various times and also has a recording studio in his home — but also does speaking engagements around the country, talking to students about making "responsible life choices."

"I'm touring Canada right now, I probably do about 150 schools a year," said Dorge, noting the Dummies were hoping to head out on a reunion tour this summer but it's been postponed for the time being. "It's not the anti-drug talk. You

know what, I have a very different approach.

"Essentially, I tell them I'm a happy guy and one of the reasons I'm happy is that I've always been able to do what I want to do. I've been drumming since I was six and I play squash. I want them to have the same opportunity I do."

"My message to the kids is to chase what you want, that is important to you. The rest of the stuff is kind of a waste of time."

The 2010 Manitoba Open squash championship wraps up Sunday, with the pro men's title match going at 2 p.m.

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