

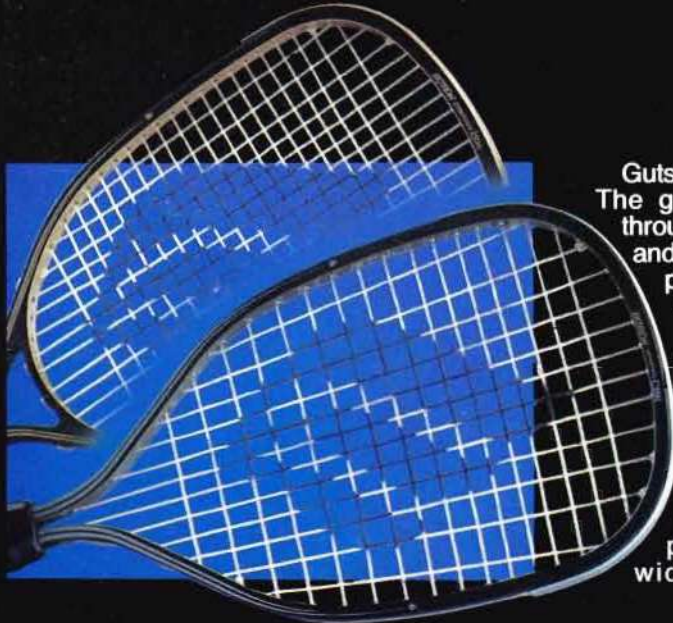
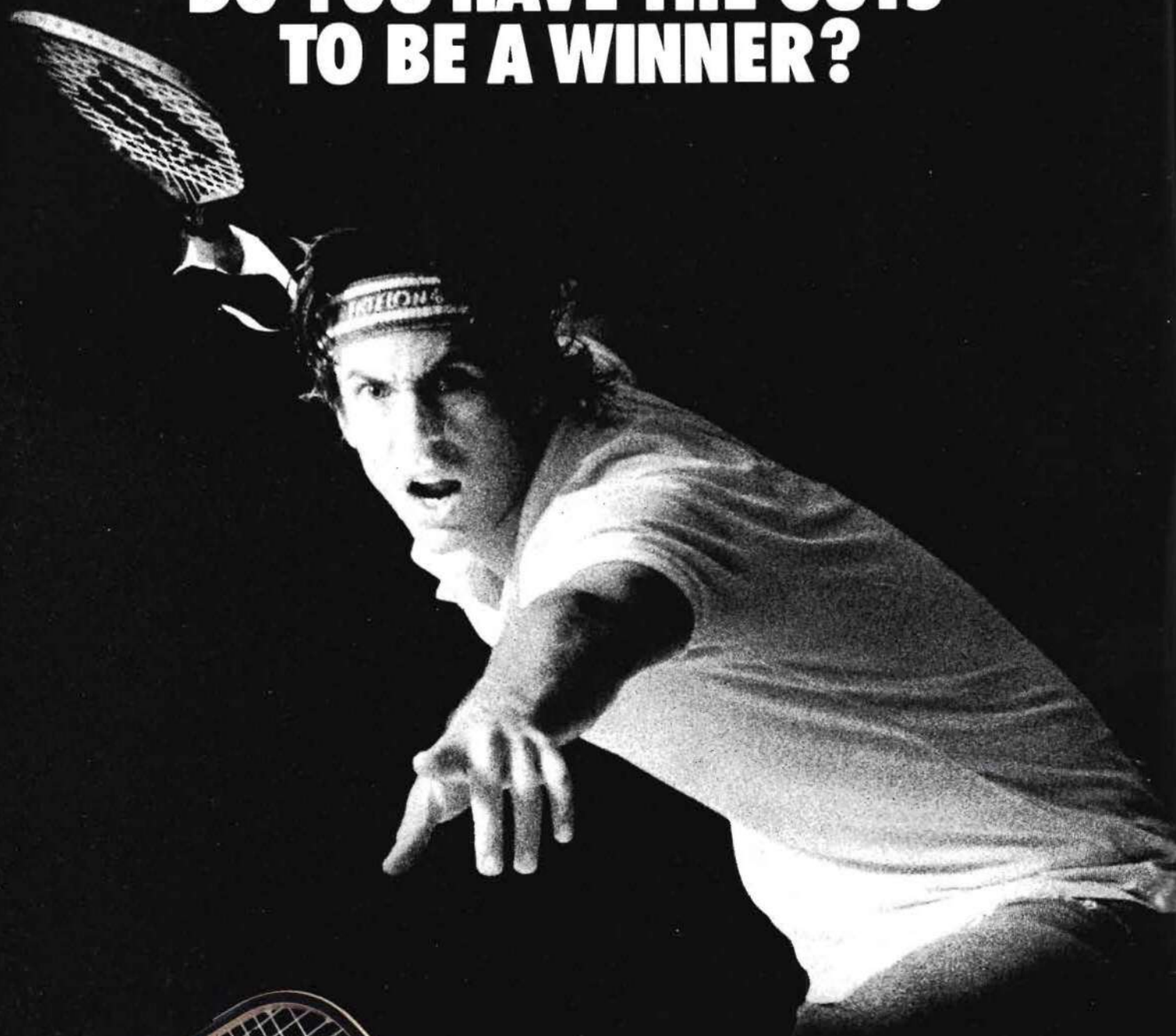
INTERNATIONAL

RACQUETBALL



MAY 1983

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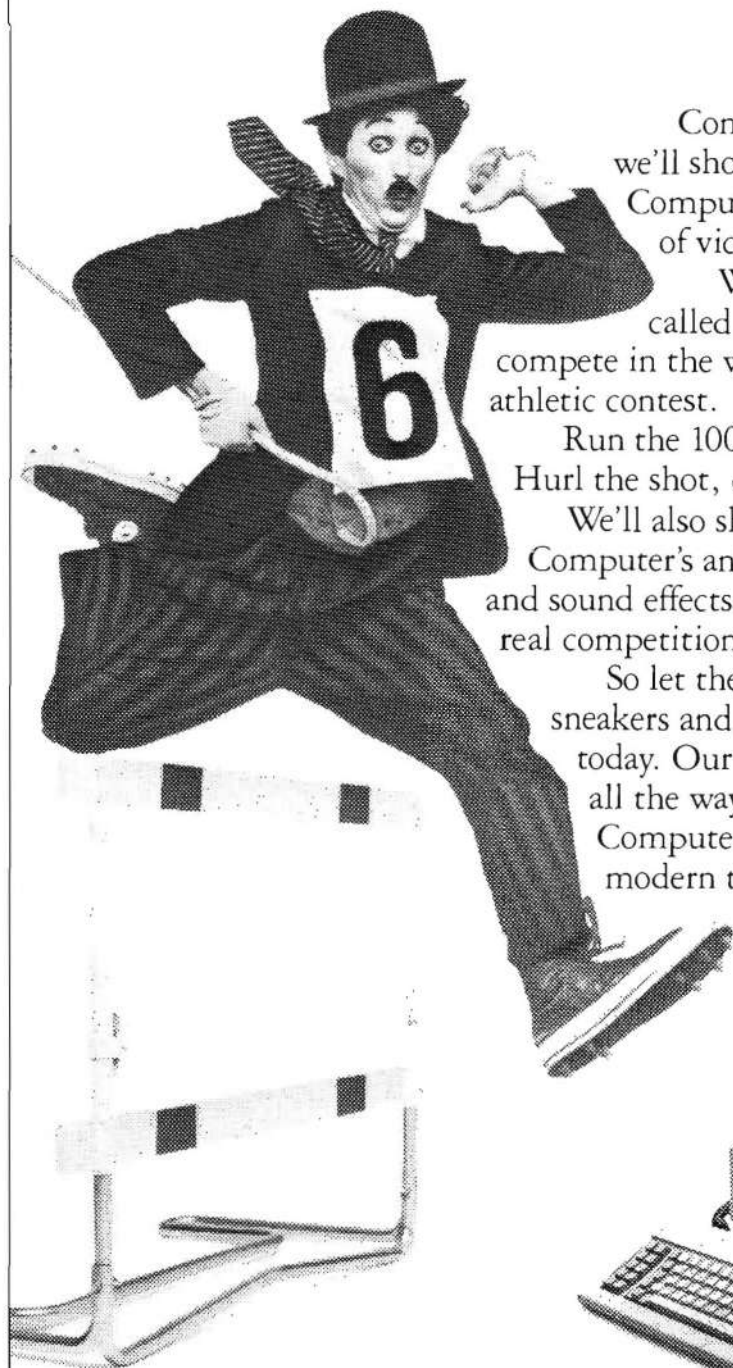


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Funny You Should Ask...

Standing in front of the glass exhibition court in Austin with my camera hanging idle between tournament matches I heard someone clear their throat and ask, "Who are you guys?" I looked at the gentleman, opened my mouth and said, "We're from a new magazine called International Racquetball." Now, that may seem like a fairly normal conversation to you, but to me it was the first time I had told anybody publicly that International Racquetball existed. Up until then it had been a blueprint in my mind, a call to an advertising agency, a devastating amount of work and a list of deadlines that never seemed to die. After I uttered that simple statement, International Racquetball was no longer just a pipe dream, it was a reality. That's what I get for opening my mouth.

To get us to shut our mouths is not quite as simple. We have a lot to say and we intend to say it though it might make us unpopular at times. But I learned a long time ago that if you hold strong opinions you make strong friends and strong enemies. There is nothing wrong with strong enemies, though; ask any one of the racquetball pros and they'll tell you a good opponent is worth his weight in gold. You can't improve unless you have someone to test yourself against. So if you disagree with what we do inside the pages of International Racquetball, let us know. It may help all of us. And, of course, if you like what we are doing, take International Racquetball down to the courts and show us around. We're the new kid on the block, as far as racquetball publications is concerned, and we intend to be the best, but we need as much feedback as we can get. Drop us a line.

Great. Now I've set myself up for a barrage of letters. That's O.K., but before all you critics put your pen to paper, I'd like to call your attention to a few things in this first issue that you might find worthy of comment. First, take note of the article by my good friend and editor, Drew Stoddard, entitled, "What's Wrong with Professional Racquetball?" I watched Drew struggle over this one for weeks collecting facts and figures, debating over if he should say this or if he should say that. The only advice I could give him after I read it through was that he should change his telephone number. Actually, it is a very important piece of writing you shouldn't skip.

Obviously, we have reserved a great deal of space for tournament coverage. That's as it should be. One of our top priorities, if not the top priority at Inter-

national Racquetball, is professional and nationally prominent pro-amateur tournament coverage. I attended my first pro tournament in Austin and I must say that there are racquetball players and there are racquetball pros. The Olympian feats that these men and women accomplish to win a professional match is spectacular. If you have never attended a pro tournament, look at our schedule of events to see if there is one near you. It's worth it.

Check out our interview with Bret Harnett. I had the pleasure of being present while he was interviewed, and in fact annoyed him greatly with my sad attempts at photography (notice how few good close-up shots there are). I liked him. I hope he enjoys our magazine. Also, don't forget to look at our new computerized ranking system. It may raise a few eyebrows and lower a few expectations, but, believe me, it is the fairest, most accurate system possible.

Oh, I almost forgot. If you've been "Splatted" on the racquetball court and have wondered, "How in the *\$@! did he do that?!", turn to our special instructional feature on the finer points of the "Splat" by pros John Egerman and Scott Hawkins. This is the first in a series of instructional articles by these two respected players whose arsenals must be equipped with the most current and advanced shots just to stay in the game against their formidable opponents. Good luck!

There you have it, our first issue. Write your comments to:

International Racquetball
Letters to the Editor
P.O. Box 11755
Salt Lake City, Utah 84147

Be sure to look out for your next issue of International Racquetball about the third week in May when we will start living up to our name "International" with the coverage of a major pro tourney in Toronto, Ontario. From what I hear through the grapevine, our neighbors to the north are going to give us quite a show. While I'm speaking on this "International" theme, it might be interesting to note that we can expect to see some major tournaments scheduled in Mexico next year as well as a possible stop in Japan where the sport has blossomed to amazing proportions in just a few years. Watch out for our competitive Japanese brothers! Additionally, Europe has made major strides in developing racquetball and in future issues we will explore what's happening overseas.



Jason Holloman
Publisher



Volume 1 Number 1

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MAY 1983



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RACQUETBALL

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WHY?

concentrating on professional racquetball. Nobody's interested in that anymore, he says. In fact, he asks, why do we even need professional racquetball at all?

I must admit I have a difficult time explaining the birth of International Racquetball to him, and others who have asked those questions. To be honest, I really don't even want to try. They are part of a faction within the sport that seems to delight in promoting the theory that racquetball is merely a dying fad—a decaying sport.

The fact that you are spending your time reading this column is probably evidence that you, like me, do not agree with that view. And since we are asking you to subscribe to our magazine, you deserve to have an answer to those questions.

I spent the better part of last year traveling with a good friend of mine, pro player John Egerman, helping him conduct his racquetball clinics and exhibitions in cities and towns all over the Northwest. For nearly seven months, we met, and taught, and talked with more racquetball players than I ever dreamed existed, in places as different as Seattle and Havre, Montana. It was one of the best experiences of my life. It was also one of the most educational.

What we gained from that sometimes exhausting tour was a perspective of the sport that would be difficult to get any other way. And what we learned was that the doomsayers are very wrong. Out where it really matters racquetball is alive, and well, and thriving. And those who can't see it are simply looking in the wrong place.

We saw people who are as excited about racquetball now, as we were when we started; the only difference is that now there are many more of them. We also found, somewhat to our surprise, that there exists at the club-player level, a profound interest in professional racquetball. Everywhere we went, and from the moment we arrived, John and I were besieged with questions about the pro game: "What's going on?", "Who's number one?", "What's happening with the tour?"

In an indirect way, my involvement with International Racquetball began with that experience. It exists because a group of us shares the common belief that there is a need, and that we have the resources that enable us to satisfy that need, and perhaps make a profit in the long run.

Let me explain what we perceive that need to be.

There is one characteristic of racquetball that makes it unique among the major participant sports of this country. Eventhough the sport has grown rapidly in participant numbers, it has done so in

small unconnected pockets. Most people who play racquetball do so at a private club. And those clubs have tended to operate like small, autonomous social groups, that have a great deal of strength in themselves but who communicate little with each other.

Ironically, this fragmented nature is responsible for both racquetball's greatest strength and its most serious weakness. As a sport it has become deeply entrenched in the American lifestyle, but from the beginning it has lacked any type of national focus; something to bring those small groups together. While millions are playing the game, no one knows what anyone else is doing. We believe professional racquetball can act as that focal point.

This system has worked magnificently in tennis. There are about 30 million active tennis players, most of whom will never meet each other. Yet when John McEnroe plays on television everyone watches. For a short period of time, tennis players in every part of the world are brought together, and are exposed to the current state-of-the-sport. One tennis industry expert put it best when he said, "Professional tournament tennis is the glue that holds the sport together."

We believe it's time for pro-racquetball to begin acting as glue. The purpose of International Racquetball is to provide the spotlight for both men's and women's professional racquetball, not because there's anything sacred about the pros themselves, but because it can bring us together. Unity will bring us recognition, and with it will come the capacity for growth.

Finally, I want to talk a little about our bias. If that sounds odd for a magazine editor to say, may I suggest that pure objectivity is a myth that is promoted by journalists who take themselves too seriously. The simplest of decisions at a magazine like this, such as what to print and what to cut because of the limited amount of space available, can't help but be influenced by how you feel about what you see, and what you write. So, eventhough it's our intention to remain as objective as we can, we want you to know where we stand.

We are pro growth. We believe that the sport's top priority should be to attract and retain new players, because as our ranks swell the quality of every area of the sport will improve: the clubs will be healthier; the equipment will be better; more money will be channeled into both professional and amateur levels of the sport. We believe that the quickest road to growth is visibility, and that visibility is best achieved with a healthy, open professional game.

That's why we're here. And we're glad you're with us.



Drew Stoddard
Editor

I have a friend, a racquetball player, who wants to know why; why I would become involved with, of all things, a racquetball magazine. After all, he says, most of them have gone broke, haven't they? He wants to know why, having made the decision to edit a racquetball magazine, I would then waste my time

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NEW TOURNAMENTS ANNOUNCED

Two new professional tournaments have been announced for the tail end of the men's 1982-83 tour season.

The Adelaide Club in Toronto, Ontario, will be the host site for the Molson Racquetball Classic, April 21-24. The \$15,000 tournament, which has been approved as a ranking event, will mark the first time in the history of professional racquetball that an official tour stop has been staged outside the continental United States.

According to tournament director Clive Caldwell, who is one of the world's top ranked squash players, the event is an open tournament and is expected to attract all of the top players in the game.

DP Leach has announced that the DP Leach National Championships, which according to rumors had been cancelled for this year, has been scheduled for June 14-19, at the beautiful Atlanta Sporting Club in Atlanta, Georgia. Although the amount of prize money for the event could not be confirmed at press time, sources have said it will be \$50,000. Although DP Leach and Catalina held similarly separate National Championships last year, many professional players had been informed that the two would be combined into a single event this year. Rumors to that effect were fueled when entry forms were distributed for the DP Leach/Catalina National Championships at the Charlie Club in Chicago, which will now apparently be staged under the Catalina name only.

HOGAN WINS TWO

Marty Hogan avenged a loss to Bret Harnett in Hawaii in January by winning the DP Leach/Catalina tour stops in Beaverton, Oregon, and Austin, Texas. In doing so, he surged into the lead in the Catalina rankings and likely guaranteed himself his sixth National Championship. Hogan beat Harnett in the finals at Beaverton, and ousted defending National Champion Dave Peck in Austin.

Gregg Peck, who is emerging as one of the tour's most consistent players, bolted into the number five position in both the Catalina rankings and the International Racquetball Computer Rankings. He thrilled the fans at his home club in Austin by upsetting third ranked Mike Yellen and advancing to the semifinals where he was beaten by his older brother Dave Peck.

Gerry Price of Castro Valley, California, proved that he deserves to play professional racquetball by upsetting Jerry Hilecher in Beaverton, and then defeating Rich Wagner in the final of the Crack Shooter Open in Cheyenne, Wyoming.

Price surged into the number seven position on the IR computer; an incredible feat considering he has only been able to play one event on the Catalina tour.

PANZERRI UPSETS ADAMS

In women's professional racquetball, Vicki Panzerri of Seattle, Washington, upset top ranked Lynn Adams twice; once in Fort Worth, where she lost to Heather McKay in the finals, and then in Tuscon where she defeated Shannon Wright for the title.

Heather McKay recovered from two earlier defeats and downed Adams in the finals of the WPRO tournament in Bangor, Maine.

Adams remains at the top of the WPRO rankings.

Following in the footsteps of tennis, the WPRO has begun experimenting with organized exhibitions of the top ranked women pros. In their first such event Lynn Adams came through to win a non-ranking, round-robin event held at the Sawmill Athletic Club in Columbus, Ohio, in early March.

NEW SCORING SYSTEM USED

The Women's Professional Racquetball Association has adopted a radical new scoring system for use in all WPRO events this year. Abandoning their 3-out-of-5-games to 11 point format, the WPRO's new system is the first used in professional racquetball that awards a point to the winner of every rally regardless of who is serving. A match is awarded to the first player to win three games to 21, with a tie breaker to 15 if needed. Each game must be won by two points.

According to Elaine Riley, International Racquetball's WPRO Editor, the system has been well received on the tour.

The new scoring system, which was first suggested in pro racquetball circles a few years ago, is thought by many to remove the large advantage from the server.

CATALINA DROPS OUT

Catalina Corporation has opted not to continue backing the men's professional racquetball tour in the future. In conjunction with Catalina's action, Charlie Drake, president of O.I. & D., has informed the Governing Board of Men's Professional Racquetball that his company will no longer be involved with an official "sanctioned" tour.

According to one industry official, the Board, which consists of representatives of the major racquetball equipment manufacturers, is now soliciting quotes from prospective sponsors and administrators to run next year's Men's Pro

Tour. Those presentations are expected to be made at the next Board meeting, now scheduled at the Ektelon Championships in Los Angeles in May.

One of those companies mentioned as possible tour-backers is International Management Group, who have administered the WPRO tour for the last three years. When contacted at their offices in Boston, an IMG spokesperson said, "It's something we're still looking at. We've not yet decided whether to make a proposal."

CANADIANS FORM TOUR

The Canadian Professional Racquetball Organization, which was established in 1980 as a professional players association, is currently involved in forming an official Canadian Pro Tour.

According to CPRO president Wesley Hadikin, "The immediate goal of CPRO is to confirm by May, eight to ten major tournament sites that would become national (international) tour events." Six major events have already been signed, according to Hadikin. How many of the stops would be open to international players has not yet been determined.

The CPRO schedule will be published by International Racquetball as soon as it is finalized.

COURT SPECIFICATIONS APPROVED

The Association of Racquet Sports Manufacturers and Suppliers (ARMS) has developed the industry's first court construction standard specification. The specification was officially approved by the ARMS membership on January 9, in Las Vegas, Nevada. The document includes standards for wall and floor systems, lighting, doors and glass viewing panels. According to Randy Stafford, ARMS specification chairman, "The standard specification represents a needed document for this industry."

HOGAN RECEIVES AWARD

Marty Hogan has been inducted into the Jewish Sports Hall of Fame and named Jewish Athlete of the Year for 1982. Hogan joined Howard Cosell, former San Diego Charger all-Pro Ron Mix and eight other well-known sports figures as this year's inductees into the Jewish Sports Hall of Fame, sponsored by the Maccabi Union USA.

"This is one of the biggest thrills of my life and I am most honored," said Hogan of the news. Known as the "Maccabee Award", the Jewish Athlete of the Year award has been given to top sports figures of the Jewish faith since 1974.

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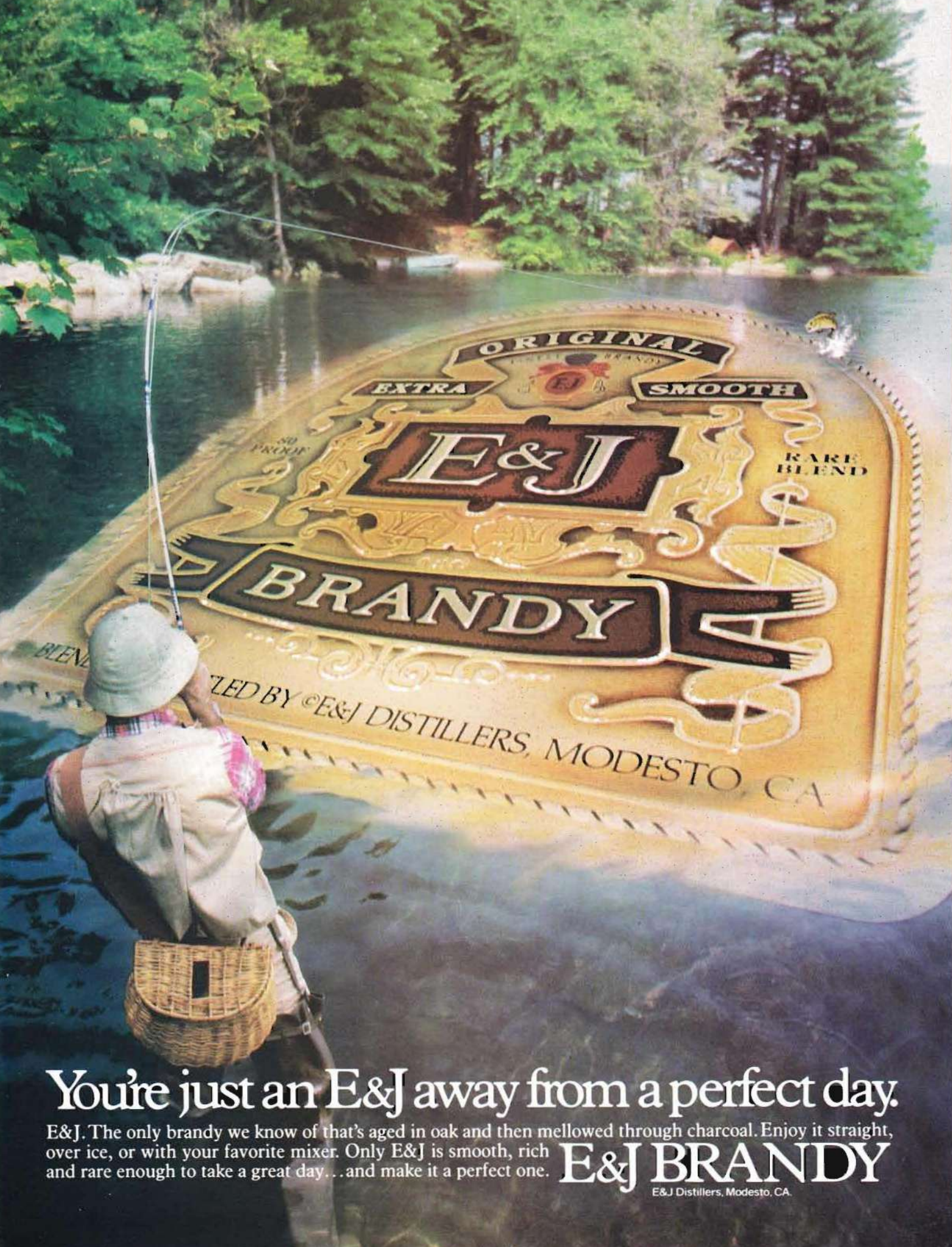
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BRET

Harnett

For the last year-and-a-half Bret Harnett has been taking professional racquetball by storm. At the age of 18 he is the third ranked player in the world. This year he has won two major tournaments; Schoeber's, where he beat Dave Peck and Honolulu where he beat both Hogan and Peck. He is a former National Junior Champion and National Amateur Champion.

We interviewed Brett in Austin, Texas, shortly after he had won his first round match.

IR-Tell us a little about how long you've been playing and what you did athletically before you started.

BH-I started playing when I was thirteen, so I've been playing about five-and-a-half years. I'll be nineteen on May 20. I used to play football, baseball, and softball. I've always been somewhat athletic.

My dad was one of the best racquetball players in town (Las Vegas), and so I

just picked up a racquet and started. It wasn't that I picked up the racquet and it suddenly flashed to me that that was what I was going to do. I'd only play maybe once a week, if that. Then I started to play tournaments. I won the Juniors and took second in the men's C, and I started really liking it. You know, you always like something if you're winning, even if it's a small local tournament.

IR—Did you win the National Junior Championships?

BH—Yes. I won the 15-and-under title the same year John Egerman won the 17-and-under title in Tempe, Arizona, in 1979.

IR—Did you go on and play the Juniors the next year?

BH—Yes I did. That next year I went on tour and played in the amateur division. I won the Men's Open at the Nationals but lost to Gregg Peck in the finals of the Juniors, in Indianapolis. I didn't play real well.

IR—Your big surge into the top rankings has just happened in the last 12-14 months?

BH—Yeah, it hasn't been a real long time. I got up to third for a while last year, and then Wagner took over third for a while. I finished the season and went into the nationals ranked third. So it's been about a year that I've been in the top four.

IR—Is there anything you can identify as having happened to put you into the top four?

BH—I was ranked about eleventh most of last season, and I was playing Hilecher and all the top guys because that was the draw. You know, I was being drawn out of the hat and I was drawing into the top guys rather than like now, being in the top four and having other guys draw into me. I really had nothing to lose. I knew I was better than those guys but I still wasn't expected to beat them. And when it's like that there isn't as much pressure.

Then I started winning and they started saying "Hey wait a minute, we can't have Harnett out here floating around," because I started beating some of them. In one tournament I beat (Dave) Peck and (Don) Thomas and made it to the finals. When they finally got the rankings out I was fourth, and ended up having a good year.

Staying there is tough. I was talking to someone today about how the first rounds are always the toughest. It doesn't matter who you're playing; they're always the toughest matches.

IR—You do have a tough time in the first round, don't you?

BH—In the first round you're always getting the cobwebs out, especially since in Las Vegas I have no one to play. So from tournament to tournament I don't have

the faintest idea about how I'm going to play.

IR—In fact, in Beaverton you had a very close match with Scott Hawkins.

BH—That was a very tough match. I was very fortunate that I woke up when I did and started playing well, because I would have been gone on a plane the next day if I hadn't. I was lucky I pulled it out.

IR—Many young players like yourself have blown into the top ranks early only to drop back because they couldn't repeat the performance. You have. After Hawaii many people were saying that it was a fluke; that you wouldn't be able to repeat it.

BH—I've had that problem for a long time. People have never really been on my side. But I've always been confident. Even when I was 15 and beat Ed Andrews in the National Amateurs. I didn't lose a single game in that tournament. The next year I did it again in L.A., on the glass court at King's.

I don't know. Maybe I have a style that makes it look like I can't do it consistently. But I seem to pull it out.

"I wouldn't want to be fifteen or sixteen years old looking for a tour right now."

IR—Marty Hogan has a lot of respect for you and your game. Why?

BH—Marty doesn't have too much respect for a lot of players. He's got respect for Peck, although he doesn't really like to admit it. He's not afraid to admit it about me because I've lifted his game up for him. You were there in Portland weren't you? I'm sure you've never seen him hustle so much in his life. I hit some good shots and he just hustled and played well. We all like playing well. I can possibly lose in the first round to someone I don't even know, but when I get in against Hogan it will be a knock down, drag out match. I play really well against Marty. If I get to Marty it will be a very good match.

IR—How do you feel about playing styles. Marty Hogan has said that he believes you're the first player who has been able to successfully adapt his playing style, and to be able to use that style successfully against him.

BH—That's true in the top five. There's no question that Peck and Yellen play a totally different game. Marty and I flail

... not really flail to where we don't know where the ball is going, but we hit the ball with much more velocity than either Yellen or Peck, regardless of who is winning or losing the match. I think if I were to try to place the ball like Yellen or Peck do, I would lose badly, because it's just not my game style.

IR—What's on your mind when you're out there? Are you just trying to generate offense on every single shot?

BH—The control is there. But the respect comes from my domination of the game. You have to dominate every point. If I serve and my opponent hits a ceiling ball, whatever shot I use for a return has got to have some muscle behind it. It doesn't have to roll out. If I shoot a passing shot, it has to be at a velocity that will throw him off balance. That's how you dominate it, by keeping the pressure on.

IR—Talk a little about your nearly total domination of Dave Peck. He's still the world's top ranked player, and yet you seem to have little trouble with him.

BH—That's where the different playing styles comes in. To tell you the truth, I think Dave would rather play Marty than play me. When I go in against Dave, it doesn't matter how many times I've beaten him, still my adrenaline's flowing because I know I could lose very easily. I think there was a point when he beat me two or three times in a row.

IR—You've beaten him four times in a row now, haven't you?

BH—Four in a row, yeah. The second one, though, we played in San Francisco at the Schoeber's tournament. I was down 10-8 in the tie-breaker and came back and beat him 11-10. That's not really very convincing, but I did pull it out. The next time, of course, was Hawaii, and no one was going to touch me in that tournament.

IR—Yes, you must like Hawaii. You certainly play well there.

BH—You don't think too much when you're over there about racquetball. In Hawaii there's all sorts of things to do. I like to come in about an hour before my match, get dressed, think a little about my match, and then get in and play. And that's exactly what I did in Hawaii.

IR—You've mentioned that you sometimes have a problem thinking too much?

BH—If you get too much time before a match or at a tournament, it's not really beneficial at all. What else are you going to do? You're sitting in front of the TV set and you're thinking to yourself, I have to do this or I have to do that, and all kinds of stuff. We're at the point in the pro's where it all has to come naturally anyway. You might change your strategy some but you don't honestly need to think about what you're going to go in there and do.

In a good match you do everything on

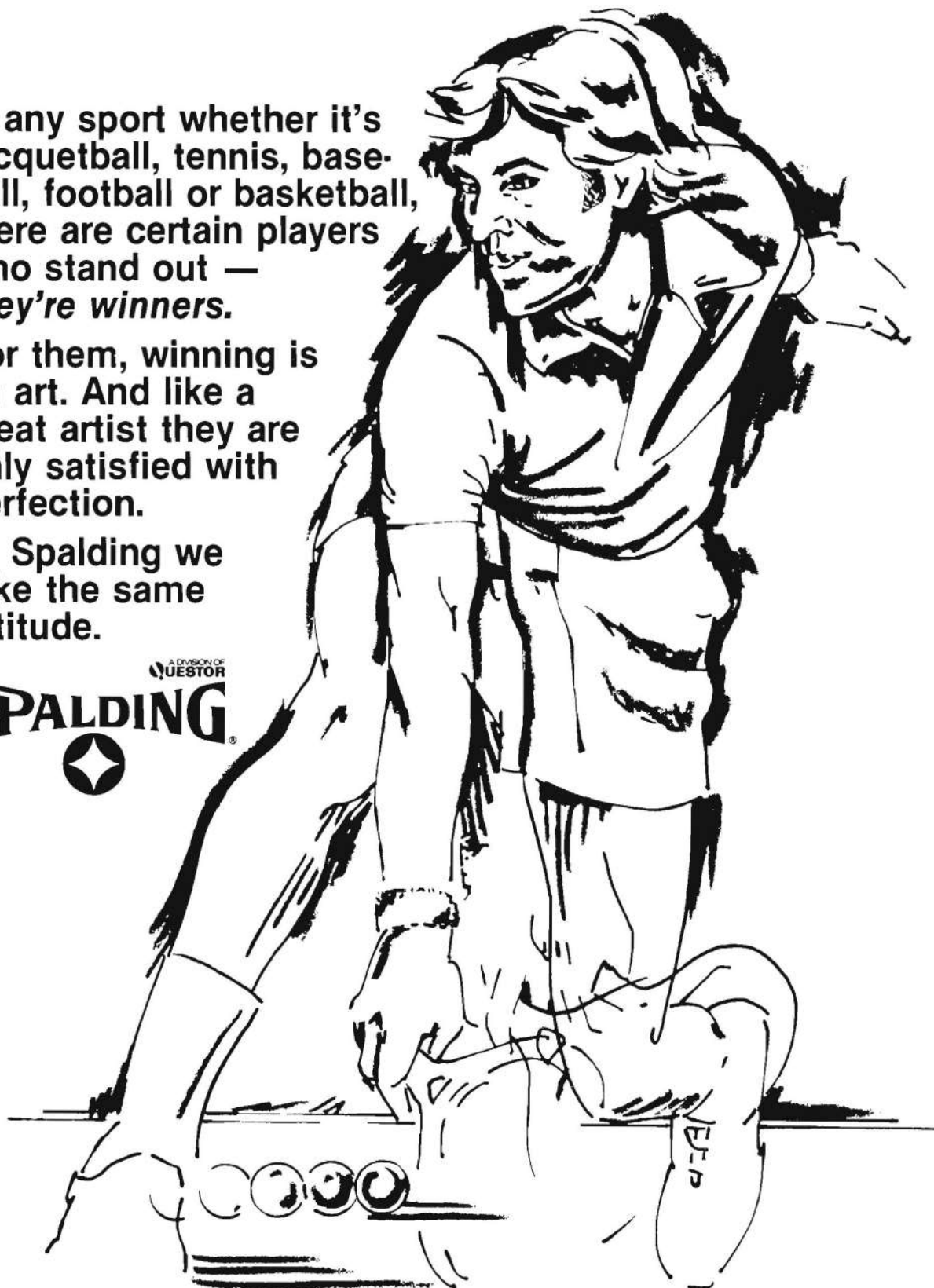
WINNERS . . .

In any sport whether it's racquetball, tennis, baseball, football or basketball, there are certain players who stand out — *they're winners.*

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instinct. When you start thinking about everything is when you start screwing up.

IR—What happened against Marty in Beaverton?

BH—The difference in that match was the ceiling balls. In Hawaii I didn't miss a ceiling ball the whole tournament. When I played Hogan and Peck, even when they would get an offensive shot I was just going back and flicking my wrist and without even thinking about it I was hitting a perfect ceiling ball back into the left corner.

In Beaverton, I hit some short ceiling balls and Marty just rolled them in with his forehand. He just stood open faced and hit them straight in. My ceiling balls weren't good enough and I ended up losing.

IR—What about your personal plans? How does racquetball relate to how you view your life over the next ten years, or so?

BH—Well right now I'm in a real slow spot as far as planning. I've decided I'll probably take a year off from school. I think I do want to go to college if the timing is right. I don't feel it's right now. I'm not ready to have my ranking drop because of school. Right now I just plan on making some money in racquetball and just playing it by ear.

IR—How do you feel about the tour now? And, as far as you know, what is going to happen next year?

BH—Professional racquetball has dropped a little because of the Catalina Tour. Catalina wanted a tour expressly with their clothes and they only wanted so many men. You know you could even call this thing we're doing right now an exhibition tour. I mean really it's an exhibition tour for Catalina clothes. No one, I don't think, knows what's going on next year. I know that there will be something. Someone will do something. I don't know if it will be open, closed or what. That was just a real shocker two years ago with Catalina. That was a hell of a shock. No one knew about that.

IR—How do you feel about the closed tour?

BH—I don't think it's good at all. I'm lucky that I'm in the position where I am right now. If you'll remember I'd just turned seventeen then, and just think if I would have lost in the first round; you've got to remember that I went to the semis in the Nationals and I had won the amateur Nationals plus I'd been a Junior National Champion so I was already doing well. Plus I got rookie-of-the-year, so they couldn't really neglect me in the tour. But if I'd had a couple of bad tournaments, I wouldn't be here right now.

I'd hate to be like that kid Ray Navarro. He's a damn tough player, but he doesn't really have any place to go. I wouldn't want to be fifteen or sixteen years old looking for a tour right now.

IR—What is your relationship with Charlie Drake?

BH—You know I've been independent for a long time, and I'm still independent right now. But it's getting to the point where I'm not getting any younger, and Charlie's always been pretty open to say "Hey, I'm around," and like a lot of people, he's been pretty interested in me. I went ahead and gave him the OK to send us a proposition for a sponsorship. It would be kind of the same thing he's got with Marty; you know, like a manager.

But any contract I sign with anyone like that will be a very open type of contract because I got locked into one bad contract before, when I was younger, and I just got out of it.

IR—How do you feel about the formation of a players' association?

BH—I do think it would be good for the players to have some say in what goes on. Right now the tour is "You go here, you go there" and if you say "Wait a minute, this doesn't sound right," they say "Hey, you don't have to show up." They say "Don't show up. Tell us a week in advance and we'll have you taken care of. Eggerman wants to play in this one, and he's an alternate. We'll have him play in this one," and things like that. So, really, we do whatever they say.

IR—Do you think that you can ever take over Hogan's position and dominate professional racquetball like he has?

BH—Marty had a lot better opportunity to do that than I did. He came in with a different game-style altogether, which threw everyone off right from the start. Then he had to beat Brumfield, who had a different game, and that was his toughest thing. Racquetball has gotten better in the last ten years. The quality of play has gotten better. There're more players. There're younger players. There're no different game styles now. Even Yellen and Peck have power. Power has just dominated the sport. The only difference is how much you use it and where you use it.

When Marty came up, he just took the whole game by storm. I don't think there will be anyone that does that. If anyone would have done that besides Marty, it would have been me. But it just won't ever happen again.

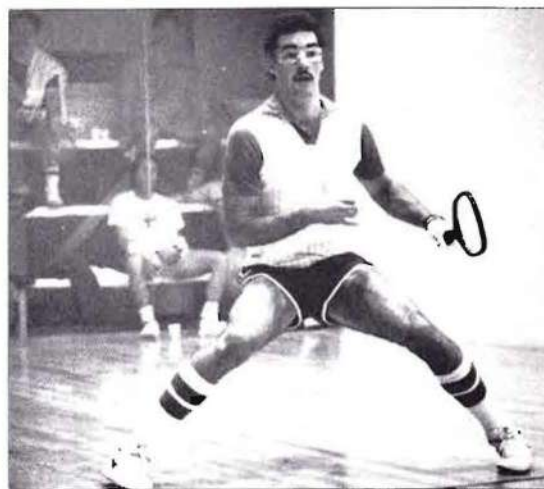
IR—Do you think you can be number one?

BH—I can be number one.

IR—Do you think Marty's on his way down?

BH—Don't underestimate Marty. He's in great shape. He's still young. I've beaten Marty, and I think that put the fear in him. But as far as beating Marty dominatively, I don't think anyone is going to do that for a while. Peck's beaten him. Yellen's beaten him and I've beaten him but no one has been able to consistently

Continued page 35



I first stepped through the tiny door of a racquetball court in 1967. The doors were smaller then. And, unlike the bright white courts of today, the walls were uneven, and had the yellowish hue of aged plaster. By the time I emerged from the court I was sore, sweaty, and hooked.

Like so many others I have known since, the fascination I experienced that day with this odd sport, and odd setting, grew into a personal obsession that lasted throughout my college years and has endured to this day.

I remember well the afternoons I spent with my friends, sitting in the hall, waiting for an opening on one of the precious few courts available. They too, had become enamored with racquetball. And as we sat we talked, and dreamed, unrealistically we supposed, of a time when millions would discover the secret

Current estimates place the number of racquetball players at anywhere from 10 to 18 million nationally. And the growth continues to be strong. A recent Nielsen survey showed racquetball grew last year by about 22%, placing it very high in relation to other competitive sports. Indeed, it now appears that the dream we once had of our little sport one day eclipsing tennis in participant numbers, may be achieved in this decade.

Professional racquetball, particularly men's professional racquetball, is quite another story. What just a few years ago appeared to be a promising, growing professional game, poised on the verge of national-scale visibility, has suddenly disintegrated to the point of near extinction. At this writing, it is very possible that no formal men's pro tour will exist after June of this year.

What happened?

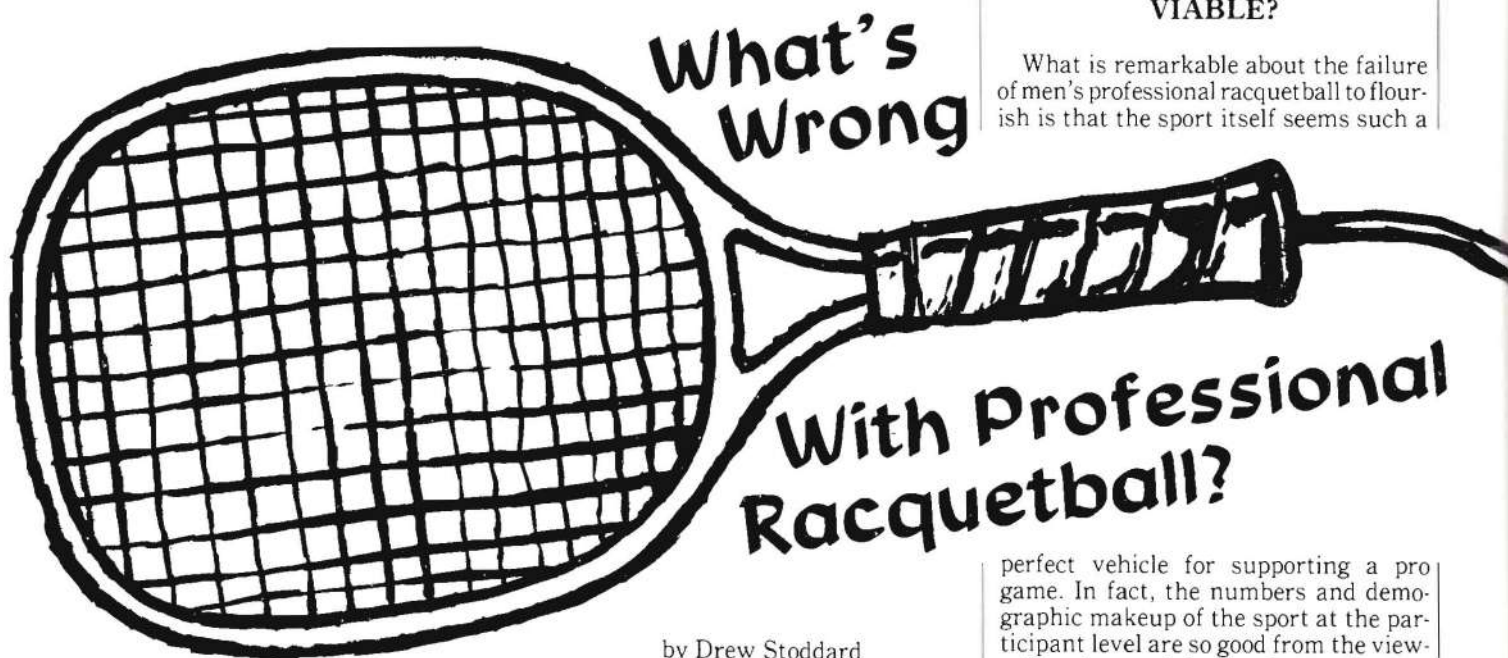
Ultimately, though, there is only one justification for the existence of professional sports. They exist because money is supplied by companies who wish to make themselves and their products visible to the public. In other words, advertising.

Pro sports are used for advertising because they allow companies to target audiences with extreme efficiency. It is one of the few possible ways to reach a large group of people, all of whom have certain common traits and who all happen to be looking in the same place at the same time. One need only count the beer commercials during a football broadcast to understand that concept.

Stated simply, any pro sport that fails to fulfill this purpose will die. So far, racquetball has failed.

IS PRO RACQUETBALL VIABLE?

What is remarkable about the failure of men's professional racquetball to flourish is that the sport itself seems such a



by Drew Stoddard

satisfaction of the pastime it seemed only we knew. We even dared to wonder if someday, someone would be good enough, lucky enough, to play this game for money; that there would actually be professional racquetball.

Then, one day, racquetball exploded. In the late Seventies the growth of racquetball in the United States was so strong that today, it would be difficult to find a single person who is not familiar with the sport at some level. The number of active players, though it has always been difficult to pinpoint exactly, surged from a few thousand to over ten million in a decade. And what makes that fact truly astonishing is that, because racquetball was a totally new sport, the huge increase in participants had to be matched, number for number, by an attendant creation of new facilities.

WHY PRO SPORTS EXIST

In order to understand what went wrong along the way in the development of men's pro racquetball, we first have to identify why the professional game exists in any sport.

If you direct that question to those who are involved in a particular sport you are likely to get a number of different answers. Understandably, perspective differs greatly among the many factions that must interact successfully for a pro sport to thrive. To the athlete, pro sports exist to showcase and compensate talent. To the spectator, they provide entertainment, and display the state-of-the-art in the sport; that is, they act as the research and development department, if you will. For the promoter, profit is made by bringing the two together, and so on.

perfect vehicle for supporting a pro game. In fact, the numbers and demographic makeup of the sport at the participant level are so good from the viewpoint of potential advertisers, that our having failed thus far to support a viable pro division seems in itself, a remarkable achievement.

If that last statement surprises you, consider the numbers. The racquetball playing public in an essentially untapped source of about 15 million people. 81% of them fall between the ages of 18-54, with 62% between 18-34. 78% of them earn \$15,000 or more annually, and 55% earn \$20,000 or more. 67% are single. 81% have at least a college degree. And 85% are either rural or suburban dwellers.

Present those demographics to your friendly ad executive and he may have a coronary. There may be no single group more ripe for tapping than the racquetball playing public. In fact, at least one major non-racquetball oriented corporation has designated the active racquetball player as the prime target for the

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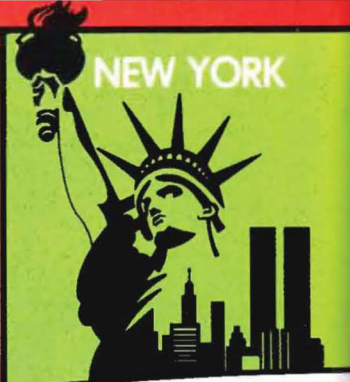
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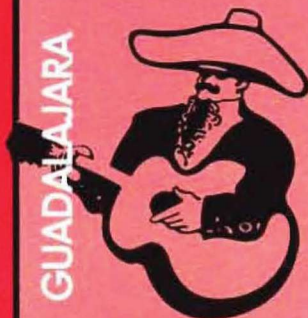
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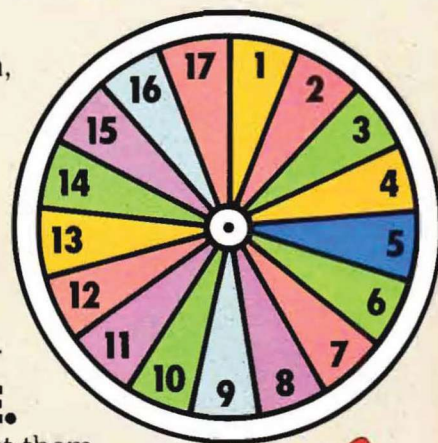
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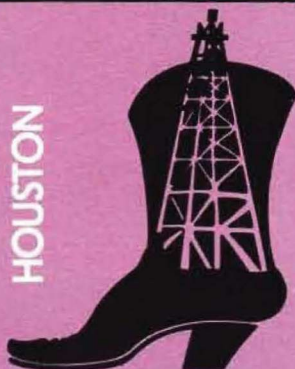
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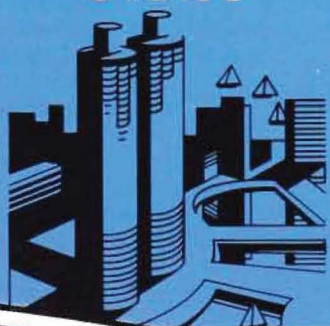


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DRAKE'S CONTRACT

Following is the text of the contract sent by Charlie Drake and O.I. & D. to the current Catalina professional players, on November 5, 1982. It is not known how many, if any, players signed the contract. The text is printed here in full and without comment.

"This letter is intended to set forth the understanding between you and Organization, Innovation & Design, Inc., a California corporation, with respect to your participation in major racquetball events. If the terms of this agreement are acceptable to you, please sign a copy where indicated below and return it to OI&D.

"During the term of this agreement and at your request, OI&D shall counsel and assist you in the negotiation of any agreement between you and any promoter of major racquetball events. For purposes of this agreement, major racquetball events shall be limited to events offering prize money in excess of \$10,000. OI&D shall be your exclusive representative in this regard and you agree not to participate in any major racquetball event without the written consent of OI&D.

"OI&D shall have the authority to commit you to participate in any major racquetball event. Any commitment by OI&D on your behalf shall provide that your participation shall not be required if two licensed physicians certify that participation by you would be injurious to your health. OI&D shall not commit you to participate in any racquetball event that requires the use of particular equipment or apparel.

"During the term of this agreement, you agree not to participate in any racquetball event held in the same market

area as a major racquetball event if the event is to be staged within 14 days immediately preceding or succeeding any such major event.

"Except as otherwise provided in this agreement, there are no restrictions upon your playing in racquetball events offering prize money of \$10,000 or less.

"OI&D presently contemplates that it will develop and stage professional racquetball events that will include an open field of players. If requested, you agree to participate in such events during the term of this agreement.

"The term of this agreement shall commence upon receipt by OI&D of a signed copy of this letter and shall continue through August 31, 1986. This agreement may be extended by OI&D for three one-year periods beyond August 31, 1986 provided OI&D notifies you of its intention to do so on or before the June 1st preceding the one-year period.

"This agreement shall take effect upon receipt of a signed copy of this letter at OI&D's offices at 9292 Chesapeake Drive, San Diego, California 92123.

"If any party brings any action or proceeding against the others to enforce, protect or establish any right or remedy under this Agreement, the prevailing party shall be entitled to recover reasonable attorneys fees and costs as may be awarded by the court. Arbitration is and action or proceeding for the purpose of this provision.

"This agreement shall be binding upon and inure to the benefit of each of us and our respective successors, assigns, heirs and personal representatives.

Sincerely yours,

O.I. & D., Inc.
Charles Drake, President

promotion of their product. In their own research they found that the one trait their potential buyers had in common, more than any other, was that they played racquetball. Unfortunately, they and others like them, have been unable to reach racquetball players as a group, because the sport has failed to set up the necessary lines of communication. Consequently, dollars that should be channeled into the sport, go unspent, or are used elsewhere.

Specifically, the Catalina Tour, and the NRC and Leach/Seamco tours of the past, have been unsuccessful in generating visibility for their respective sponsors, and what visibility has been achieved has been mired in politics and controversy.

Catalina has now opted not to be the

major sponsor of another tour, and professional racquetball has added another embarrassing chapter to its past.

WHO'S TO BLAME?

The survival of professional racquetball depends on the combined effort and harmonious interaction of three important groups: the promoters, the players and the communicators. The players provide the raw material, the talent; the promoter provides the vehicle for the display of that product through tournaments and exhibitions; and the communicators (media, advertising) make the product visible to as many as possible. The better each performs, the more money is supplied by sponsors wishing to reach the available viewers.

As with a three-legged table, each of these groups must operate independently, and be responsible for their particular task, while being careful never to undermine the stability of either of the other two. If any leg is damaged, though it may stand momentarily, the table will eventually fall. So far, within the sport of racquetball, not a single group has succeeded in doing its job.

THE PROMOTERS

As a group the promoters are usually the first to be attacked by the critics. As those who actually stage the events, they act as the liaison between the sponsors and the players, and presumably have as their interest the general growth of the sport. In principle, as the professional sport grows it achieves more visibility, receives more sponsor support, and hence becomes more profitable for the promoter.

There are many who feel professional racquetball has been continually stifled and stagnated by its own promoters. For the last two years the chief promoters have been Charlie Drake and his newly formed San Diego company, Organization, Innovation, and Design or O.I. & D. Drake, who is arguably the most powerful man in racquetball, came to that position largely through his former position as head of Leach Industries, and his long-standing relationship as agent for, and general promoter of, Marty Hogan. Backed by the major sponsorship of giant Catalina Clothing, Drake has operated a closed, invitational, pro-tour that has generated enough controversy to permeate the racquetball industry.

Catalina itself has been rocked by its association with pro racquetball.

"I am shocked at the negativism associated with our investment," said Ed Murphy, president of Catalina. "I'll tell you this, it's aggravating. Its taking too much of my time and doesn't mean that much to my business. The reason I employ O.I. & D. is so that I don't have to be involved with it. The truth is it's getting to be more trouble than its worth."

Drake seems to be set on a course that, if allowed to continue, would lead to the virtual monopolizing of professional racquetball. When he formed his tour in 1981 he invited twelve players to participate, a small portion of the thirty or so professional players who had been regularly entering pro tournaments. Oddly, the twelve that were chosen were not the twelve top ranked players at the time, and excluded at least two players who were ranked in the top ten.

In the past Charlie Drake has come to his own defense by saying that professional racquetball in general was not a closed sport.

"Look, we're not the only game in town," he said at the beginning of the tour. "There is over \$200,000 on additional prize money being distributed this season all over the nation and in Canada. That money is up for grabs. There are no restrictions. There's just as much opportunity for a youngster to play pro racquetball as ever. The Catalina Series is just an added attraction."

That statement is, at least partially, true. Independent pro tournaments are indeed held all over the country. And, as Drake has also stated, the sport cannot expect it to be his responsibility to provide a living for any racquetball player, simply because he happens to play well.

What makes his position difficult to defend, however, is that Drake required the original twelve to sign contracts stating that they would participate in no tournaments that were held in specific areas at specific times. While it was true that open tournaments were held separate from the Catalina series, seldom were the highest ranking pros there, and Marty Hogan was almost never there. It certainly appears that there has been some attempt on Drake's part to limit where and when the top players play.

Hogan himself has stated, "I don't play in any tournaments that don't affect my ranking." The ranking he refers to is, of course, the Catalina Tour ranking.

In addition there have been consistent rumors of demands for appearance fees before Hogan, or other top players, would participate in a specific tournament.

In November of 1982, with the Catalina tour well into its final phase, Drake once again attempted to sign individual players to contracts for the coming year(s). This time, however, the contracts they were asked to sign required that players give Drake complete control over which tournaments they could enter, not just for two years, but through the year 1989 (see inset).

In a bold stroke, Ektelon informed its players that the contract was unacceptable, and not to sign. Having five of Drake's twelve players under contract, including the number one and number three players (Peck, Yellen, Eggerman, Hawkins, Andrews), effectively gave Ektelon the power to veto Drake's plans for next year.

It appears to be Ektelon's position that their players will no longer participate in a closed tour.

This stalemate may well preclude the possibility of any formal tour being staged next year. The players remain divided. And there are those who believe a year without a tour would not be so bad.

"Maybe that's what it is going to take to clean the sport up," said one industry insider. "Maybe going a year without

making anything is what has to happen to make everyone clean up their act."

THE PLAYERS

If the promoters are guilty of stunting the growth of pro racquetball, it is the players themselves who must accept the responsibility for nearly killing it. Of the three groups, the players have failed the worst in fulfilling their responsibility to the pro game.

There seems no end to complaints by professional players about Charlie Drake's tour, and his seeming control over their careers. Yet, what is incredible is that the players are the only group of the three who could have, at almost any moment, singlehandedly resurrected the dying pro game. Their inability, or refusal, to unify and form a players' association is the untold tragedy of professional racquetball. And it is, more than any other single cause, responsible for the present state of the men's professional sport.

At least four major attempts have

"The refusal of the players to unify and form a players' association is the untold tragedy of professional racquetball."

been launched in the past few years to form an effective players' association. Each has failed, largely due to the resistance of the top ranked players. Whatever their reasons for resisting may be, their inability to speak with a single voice has put the men in a position where they can be easily manipulated by anyone who understands the simplest of political principles: divide and conquer.

"I blame the players for holding back the advancement of the sport," said former National Champion Dave Bledsoe in his bitter farewell to professional racquetball, "and for their failure to unify against the establishment."

"We would love to see a players' association," one leader in the industry said recently. "Without it, there will never be a productive tour."

One of the reasons that the formation of a players' association is so crucial at this stage in the sport is that, even though the potential market exists for sponsors, few of them are willing to risk their dollars without the assurance that the top players will participate in a given event. Other sports have proven that a

players' association is the only way to effectively guarantee that. In addition, an association is the only effective check against the special interest promoters who will always be present to take advantage of a good money making opportunity.

One of the best examples of how much a players' association can accomplish is the case of women's racquetball. While the men's game has floundered, the women's tour has flourished since the formation of the Women's Professional Racquetball Association, or WPRA.

Early in 1979, upset with what they believed was unfair treatment by the NRC (National Racquetball Club, once the governing body of pro racquetball), a handful of top ranked professional women players enlisted the help of a Las Vegas attorney, Dan Seaton, and formed the nucleus of what would become the WPRA, racquetball first players' association. After unifying the majority of the active women players, Seaton and the WPRA approached the NRC with their requests for improved prize money and visibility.

"The NRC folks appeared willing to work with us but they wanted a long term contract," Seaton was quoted as saying. "In my judgement, signing one would not be fair to the women." (Ironically, that contract was similar to the one recently presented to the men).

When Seaton rejected the offer, Bob Kendler (the late head of the NRC) and Charlie Drake (then president of Leach) presented the NRC proposal to the women as a group at the Chicago tour stop in September of 1979. The women unanimously voted down the NRC contract offering effectively ending, at least in the short term, women's professional racquetball.

"Most of the women weren't really happy," said Janell Marriott, the WPRA's first president. "But we had to stand up for our rights."

Starting from scratch the WPRA began to build a tour. In 1980 Marriott succeeded in organizing a circuit of five tournaments, totaling \$50,000 in prize money. In 1981 the numbers doubled; ten tournaments, \$100,000.

This year the women will stage at least 15 tournaments with over \$150,000 in prize money. Incredibly, in just 3 years the WPRA has built a professional racquetball tour approximately equal in prize money to that of the men, and has succeeded in doing it while keeping the sport open, and maintaining a remarkably positive image.

Although many factors have contributed to the success of the WPRA, ultimately its vitality must be traced back to the initial sacrifice of the top ranked women players. A number of them literally voted themselves out of a secure income, so the women's game could

achieve some type of long term growth.

Their vision was an obvious victory. And the implications of their success, along with those of similar examples in professional sports, stand like a scathing indictment of the top ranked men players who have so staunchly resisted the formation of a men's players' association.

THE COMMUNICATORS

It would seem to be common sense that the professional division of any sport does little good if the public is unaware it exists. And yet in racquetball, while much effort has gone into staging a professional tour, very little has been done to make that tour visible to the public.

A recent article published in *US Magazine* said of Marty Hogan, "... he's the most visible player in an almost invisible professional sport."

This situation has apparently come about through a combination of naivete and neglect, both on the part of the tour promoters and those who are actually in the business of communications; i.e. the sports' special interest magazines and newspapers.

It has been fashionable in the last few years for people in the racquetball industry to equate visibility with television coverage. Many would have us believe that unless and until racquetball becomes standard TV fare there is little hope for large scale visibility. Indeed, there are some who actually hold the position that television will, in the near future, somehow become infatuated with racquetball and that the new-found relationship will be the savior of the professional sport.

That view is not only unrealistic, it demonstrates a basic misunderstanding of how television has always operated.

That television generates massive visibility is beyond question. But, from a programming standpoint, the costs of television have always made it an unsuitable medium for creating demand where none exists. Primarily because of the requirements of the sponsors, television programming has virtually always been determined by how much demand exists, not how much it can create.

Any sport, such as racquetball, that has been unable to achieve reasonable visibility through even the simplest forms of media (magazines and newspapers) has little chance of achieving regular television exposure.

Consider the case of the monthly racquetball magazines. Over the past ten years there have been about a half dozen monthly publications devoted to the sport of racquetball, of which only a couple have survived. Of all these, the largest claimed circulation has reached

only about 100,000, and many believe even that number is optimistic.

It is incredible that in a sport that boasts 15 million active players, fewer than 1% regularly care to read anything about it.

In contrast, at least two of tennis' monthly publications have achieved circulation bases that approach one million.

Obviously, if professional racquetball cannot be made appealing to even the sports' own active participants we can hardly expect millions who are totally unfamiliar with it to suddenly become enthralled. Visibility has to start within our own ranks.

One reason for the relatively low visibility professional racquetball has achieved among the sports own participants is that the monthly publications have treated the pro game as a subject that is of little interest to their readers. Whether or not their assessment is correct, the magazines have, for the most part, spent little time reporting the pro game, concentrating instead on instruction and features about celebrities and local players.

There are many who feel that their relatively low circulation levels reflect a serious misjudgement of the playing public's interests. Indeed, it would seem that the tennis publications have built much of their circulation through their extensive coverage of professional tennis.

Some of the responsibility for this lack of visibility must again fall to the promoters. Those who have followed the pro tour(s) for the last few years are aware that even the sport's biggest events are staged with very little promotion. It is generally left to the host club to generate the local promotion, and because they are usually ill-equipped to do that, pro events are frequently staged with little or no local visibility.

Considering how little the sport has accomplished in setting up the lines of communication, it seems no wonder that prospective sponsors have been reluctant to support professional racquetball.

Stated simply, it is not enough to stage a professional tour. That tour must be made visible, and it must first be done within the ranks of racquetball's own active participants. Once we have accomplished that, television will be a logical medium for the showcasing of professional racquetball. And it will be TV that comes to us, instead of the other way around.

WILL IT SURVIVE?

Looking at the present stage of professional racquetball it would be easy to come to the conclusion that the patient is terminal. Actually, that is far from true. Professional racquetball will survive. It will survive because of the na-

ture of the sport of racquetball in general.

If any conclusion is to be drawn from a close examination of racquetball's first two decades it must be this: racquetball is a survivor. The sport has proved to be remarkably resilient. It has survived explosive growth followed by a severe industry shakeout; it has survived and expelled hordes of short-sighted profit takers; it has continued to grow despite a decaying professional game.

Like the adolescent who reaches adulthood after nearly destroying himself in his search for his own identity, racquetball seems poised on the verge of greatness. All of the ingredients are in place. Hundreds of young, talented players are ready to enter the professional game, when it is at last opened up. Sponsors await the opportunity to capitalize on the sport's marketing potential. First-rate facilities have been constructed in every part of the country, providing anyone the chance to view or participate.

And if the future of racquetball continues to parallel the development of other sports, such as tennis, the playing public will ultimately demand a progressive, open, professional sport.

Recently, one of the most knowledgeable people of the tennis industry said, "Professional tournament tennis is the glue that holds the sport together."

The sport of racquetball urgently needs that glue. What we must not lose sight of, is that it is within our grasp; that it is ours for the asking.

ONE FINAL THOUGHT

If you've been interested enough to read this far, you're probably part of a group that needs to consider one more thing; that a little of the responsibility for the failure of professional racquetball rests with each one of us. It's time we admitted that most of us who have been involved with racquetball, at any level, over the last decade have been guilty of, if nothing else, taking ourselves too seriously. We have pranced and paraded our sport like the new kid on the block we perceived ourselves to be, and we have been intolerant of anyone who has had the gall to suggest that racquetball did not interest them in the least. We have earned a reputation.

It is time that we all realized that the world does not need professional racquetball. It is, and always has been, the other way around.

If we can begin to act with some foresight, and encourage a little perspective within our own ranks, our little sport may yet surprise us all. Racquetball may yet assume its place as the shining star of American sports. We may yet find that what a few of us used to dream, only a few years ago, was not unrealistic after all.

WYOMING

CHEYENNE, Wyoming—Gerry Price proved that he is becoming a major force in professional racquetball by winning the Fourth Annual Crack Shooter Open at the Rocky Mountain Health Club in Cheyenne, Wyoming, March 3-6.

A strong pro division including Catalina touring pros Mike Yellen, Don Tho-



mas, Jerry Hilecher, and Rich Wagner, entered the tournament in hopes of taking home the \$3500 first prize, but that honor was reserved for 18-year-old Price, of Castro Valley, California.

Price had to weather a tough draw to advance to the finals where he upset Rich Wagner of Riverside, California, in three straight games, 11-4, 11-9, 11-6. His early round victories were scored at the expense of Ben Koltun, Mike Yellen and defending champion Doug Cohen.

"Wagner played tough," Said Price after the final, "just because we only went three games doesn't mean it wasn't a tough match. I had to fight for every point."

It was a great two days of racquetball for the young Price, who felt that his win over Yellen was the key to winning the tournament. "Mike's a great player," Price said, "and the win over him motivated me to play better. I just happened to be playing well against both Mike and Doug (Cohen) in the semis."

The win was the biggest pro victory in the year-and-a-half professional career for Price, and comes on the heels of an impressive showing at the DP Leach/Catalina stop last month in Beaverton, Oregon. In that tournament, Price qualified and then upset number five seed Jerry Hilecher in three games before bowing to Bret Harnett in the quarterfinals.

If Price had a difficult draw into the finals, Rich Wagner's could only be described as brutal. The scores tell the tale. He defeated Corey Brysman, 11-6, 10-11, 9-11, 11-2, 11-6; Don Thomas, 10-11, 11-4, 11-8, 9-11, 11-9; and Jerry Hilecher, 11-1, 6-11, 11-8, 4-11, 11-6; no less than 15 games in three matches. In the end, Wagner, still playing with a knee brace to protect and injury he suffered in last summer's Nationals, simply did not have enough left to turn back Price. He received \$1500 for his second place showing.

Weather played havoc with the tournament. After being greeted with spring-like weather when they arrived on Thursday, the pros had to brave the start of a heavy winter storm to play their first round matches.

The first upset occurred when Steve Lerner, of Santa Barbara, outlasted Catalina pro Scott Hawkins in five games, 2-11, 4-11, 11-7, 11-7, 11-3. Hawkins used his powerful drive serve to pull away in the first two games before Lerner seemed to finally adjust to the high altitude.

The tournament's number one seed, Mike Yellen, had trouble driving from Denver through the snowstorm, but experienced few problems on the court, eliminating Mat King of Powell, Wyoming, 11-2, 11-2, 11-1.

The storm continued to pound all day Saturday, accumulating more than 10 inches and causing a snow-emergency

in the city. During one quarterfinal match, in which Jerry Hilecher eventually defeated Steve Lerner, the lights were knocked out in the club for nearly 25 minutes.

The quarterfinals provided a number of close matches.

In the marathon match of the tournament, Rich Wagner eliminated Don Thomas, 10-11, 11-4, 11-8, 9-11, 11-9. Don was disappointed; "I really thought I was going to win this one. I've been playing well."

Doug Cohen came from behind, way behind, to oust John Egerman of Jackson, Wyoming, in five games. It seemed Egerman had the match won when he darted to a 10-1 lead in the fifth and final game, before Cohen came back and, aided by a controversial call, took the game and match.

The Yellen-Price match also involved controversy, with Yellen taking a 15 minute injury time out to protest the refereeing during the second game, while leading 7-1. A technical foul made the score 6-1, but when play resumed with a new referee, Price came on strong to take the game 11-9. Yellen won the third, 11-3, but Price finished the match in the fourth game, winning 11-10.

Despite the heavy snow, a large crowd gathered to watch the finals. Price took the court with an air of confidence; he had the appearance of the eager underdog, who had nothing to lose. Wagner looked like he had been drained by his earlier victories.

Price was able to generally dominate the more experienced Wagner. Strong serves and effective serve returns gave him commanding leads in the first and third games, and allowed him to save the second. In the end, Wagner was unable to stop the all around attack mounted by the young right-hander. Price emerged with the victory after three games; 11-4, 11-9, 11-6.

4TH ANNUAL CRACK SHOOTERS OPEN—CHEYENNE, WYOMING

ROUND OF 16:

Mike Yellen def. Mat King 11-2, 11-1; Gerry Price def. Ben Koltun 11-3, 5-11, 11-4, 9-11, 11-7; John Egerman def. Evan Terry 8-11, 4-11, 11-6, 11-0, 11-4; Doug Cohen def. Mike Romo 11-4, 11-3, 11-7; Don Thomas def. David Gross 11-8, 11-9, 11-4; Rich Wagner def. Corey Brysman 11-6, 10-11, 9-11, 11-2, 11-6; Steve Lerner def. Scott Hawkins 2-11, 4-11, 11-7, 11-7, 11-3; Jerry Hilecher def. Richard Grissom 11-3, 11-2, 11-2.

QUARTERFINAL ROUND:

Price def. Yellen 11-8, 1-9, 3-11, 11-10; Cohen def. Egerman 4-11, 4-11, 11-7, 11-4, 11-10; Wagner def. Thomas 10-11, 11-4, 11-8, 9-11, 11-9; Hilecher def. Lerner 6-11, 11-9, 11-6, 11-8.

SEMIFINAL ROUND:

Price def. Cohen 11-9, 11-9, 11-7; Wagner def. Hilecher 11-1, 6-11, 11-8, 4-11, 11-6.

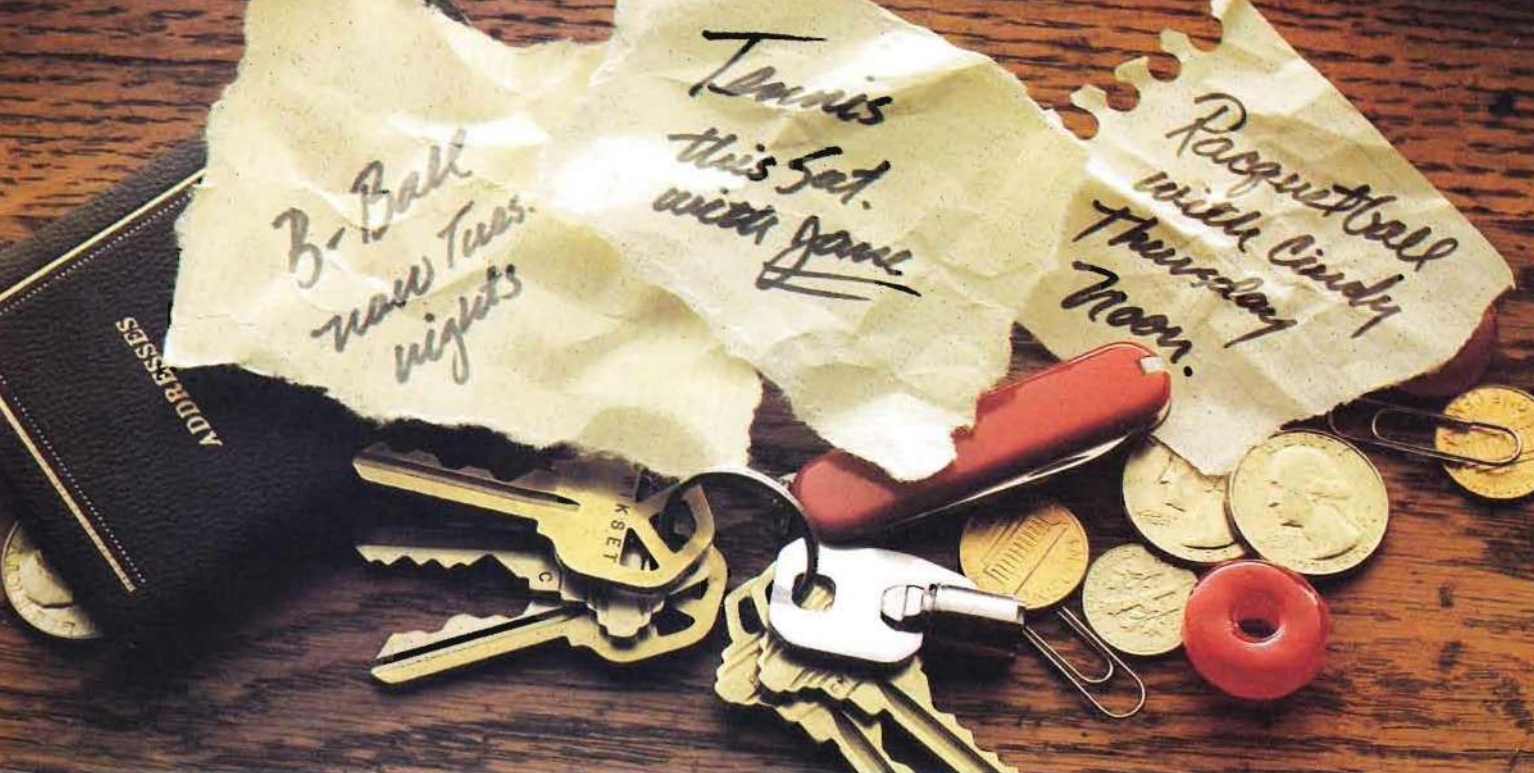
FINAL ROUND:

Price def. Wagner 11-4, 11-9, 11-6.

Total Purse

\$6,800

Gerry Price - proving he deserves to play



THE SHOE FOR FICKLE FEET.

Some feet are just impossible to satisfy.

You buy them shoes for tennis, and they start flirting with basketball. Or sneaking off at lunch for a quick game of racquetball.

It isn't fair. And if you're concerned they may get hurt, it isn't exactly cheap, either.

Or wasn't. Until we came out with the Challenge Court.

This shoe not only satisfies the most diverse, most demanding of appetites, it does so without compromise.

While originally designed for, and worn by, the top racquetball players in the country, the Challenge Court is now being enthusiastically run up and down the courts of the NBA by players the caliber of Norm Nixon.

In tennis, John McEnroe has found it sufficient to win the

Transamerica Open Championship, the Australian Indoor Championships, the Grand Prix Tournament in Tokyo, as well as the Davis Cup.

One of the things that makes the Challenge Court such an outstanding performance shoe is something we call the extended ankle collar.

It works on the principle of biofeedback. And it does its most important work when the foot is in the air, headed for a painful landing, by sensing trouble and alerting the muscles in the lower leg to take corrective action.

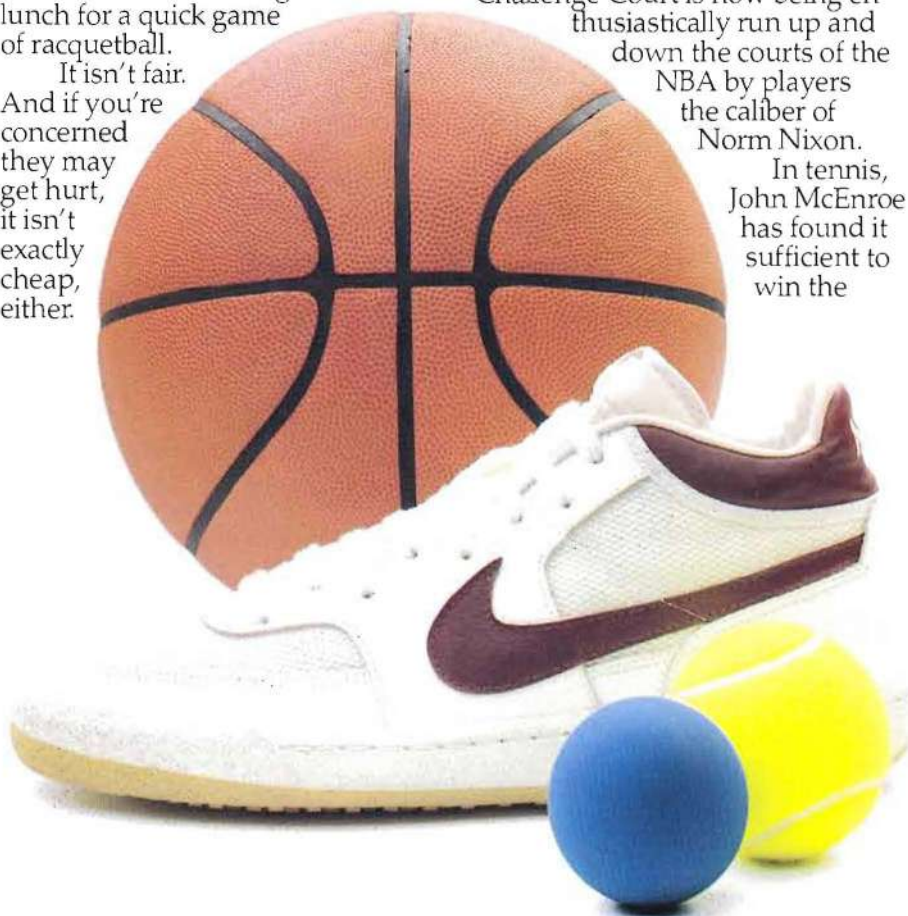
And because the padded collar is lined with Spenco®, the Challenge Court is one of the most comfortable shoes on any court.



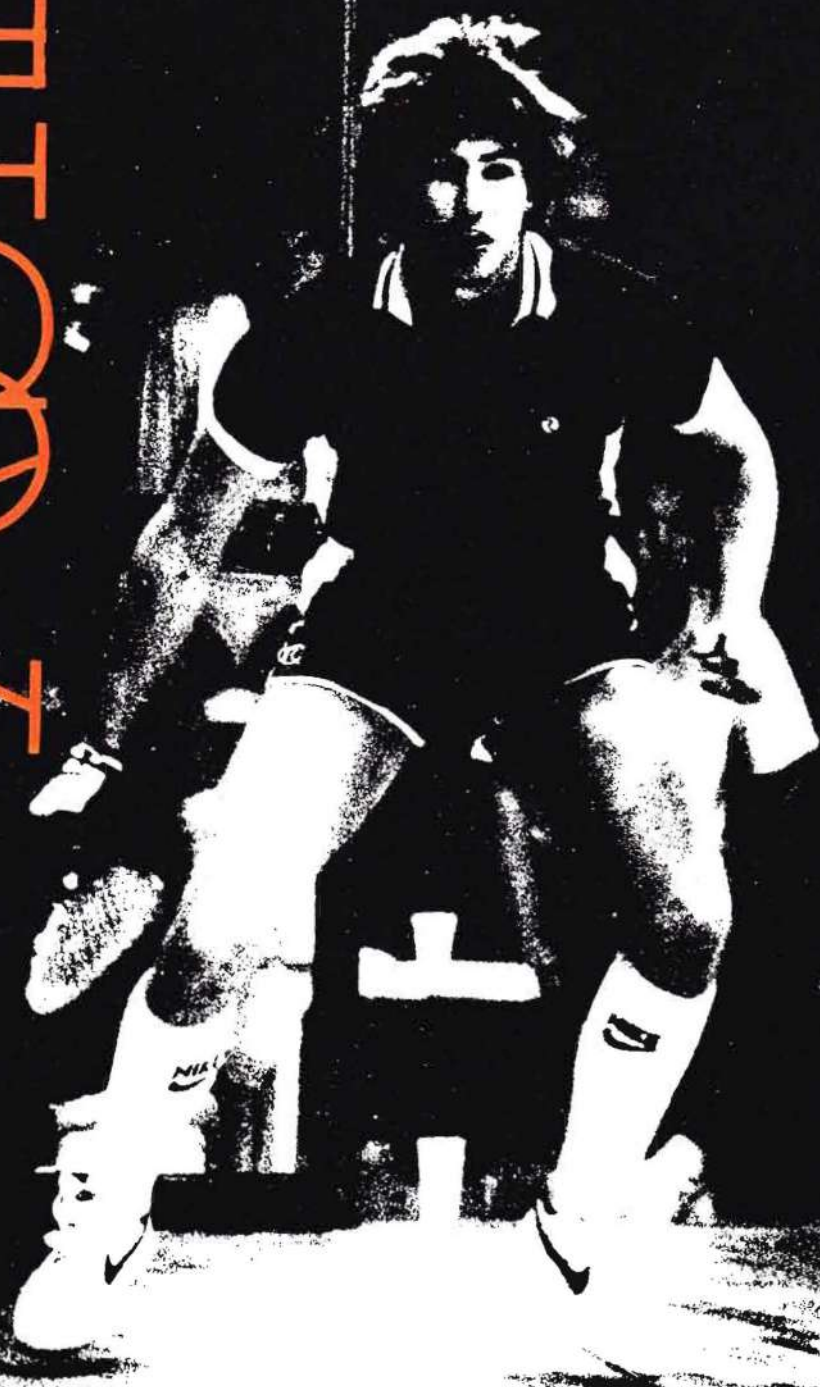
The bi-level hobnail cupsole provides excellent traction. And with a nylon mesh upper, the shoe is extremely lightweight. It even accepts custom orthotics.

So if you have a difficult time restricting your feet to a single sport, slip them into the Challenge Court. They'll be devoted.

NIKE
Beaverton, Oregon



ASTIN





It may have been Dave and Greg Peck's home court (photo left), but Marty Hogan made it two in a row.

AUSTIN, Texas—As Marty Hogan inched his way to the locker room after his semifinal match in Austin Texas, a young fan asked him if he was going to beat Dave Peck in the final.

"Like a yard dog," was his reply.

They were confident words.

Marty Hogan had reason to be confident. Just minutes before, to the utter amazement of both his opponent, Bret Harnett, and the crowd, Hogan had reached deep into whatever it is that makes him racquetball's greatest player and transformed a seemingly hopeless match into an astonishing victory.

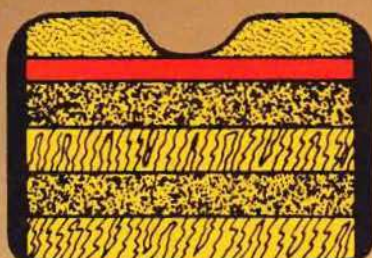
Hogan defeated Harnett in five games, 11-9, 10-11, 6-11, 11-4, 11-9. He then beat Peck in the final, 11-9, 11-8, 5-11, 11-4.

By winning the DP Leach/Catalina Classic VI at the Supreme Courts in Austin, Texas (March 17-20) Hogan left little doubt, either mathematically or in theory, that he is the world's best racquetball player.

From the standpoint of the Catalina rankings, Hogan now sports a 610-460 point lead over number two Peck. Even with the recent addition of one new ranking event in April (Toronto), Hogan's lead is practically insurmountable at this stage in the season. He has almost certainly regained his title as National Champion, a title he lost last year for the first time in six years, to Dave Peck.

The tournament in Austin, which had originally been designated as the last regular season stop, produced two significant upsets. Foremost, especially in the eyes of the partisan Texas crowd, was the surprise victory by hometown boy Gregg Peck over third-seeded Mike Yellen in their quarterfinal match, 11-8, 6-11, 11-9, 2-11, 11-10. Peck, who is a student at the University of Texas/Austin, and who was playing the tournament at his home club, gave the capacity audience what they had come to see. In one of the best, and closest matches of the tournament, Peck ousted Yellen for

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weight 245 grams.

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The Graphite 260 features an ingenious combination of maple, ash, bamboo and graphite laminates, resulting in a light yet powerful racquet. This handsomely designed racquet is shipped with an attractive cover that matches the brilliant three-color racquet frame. In addition to all of these outstanding features, the Graphite 260 also has a contour-molded bumper guard for added racquet protection.

The Graphite 260. The answer you've been looking for.

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his first time, and set the stage for a semifinal match in which he was defeated by his older brother Dave Peck.

In the other upset, qualifier Gary Merritt of Houston, Texas, blasted fifth-ranked Don Thomas in a lopsided match, 11-4, 11-5, 11-3. Merritt, who is one of the game's most unorthodox players, was eliminated by Dave Peck in the quarterfinals.

Merritt's victory over Thomas turned out to be crucial to Gregg Peck. Aided by his own victory over Yellen, the younger of the Peck brothers moved into the number five position in the Catalina rankings. And although he is well behind the top four, his lead over Thomas and Hilecher seems to assure him of ending the season with the highest ranking of his career. Few players on the tour deny that he has earned that position.

The real story in Austin, though, was the latest chapter in the Hogan-Harnett saga. The confrontation between the game's dominant player and his eighteen-year-old heir apparent has all the ingredients of the most important, as well as the most exciting, occurrence in professional racquetball since the emergence of Hogan himself.

Before the match, Bret Harnett talked about his rivalry with Marty Hogan.

"When I play him that speed comes out that I've never seen him use before. That makes him very tough."

"I really look forward to it (playing Hogan). I think I've put a new spark into Marty and he loves it, too. You like that intensity; the adrenaline flowing. It's great."

Indeed, they seem to have put a spark into each other. And the result is a new high in racquetball's highest level.

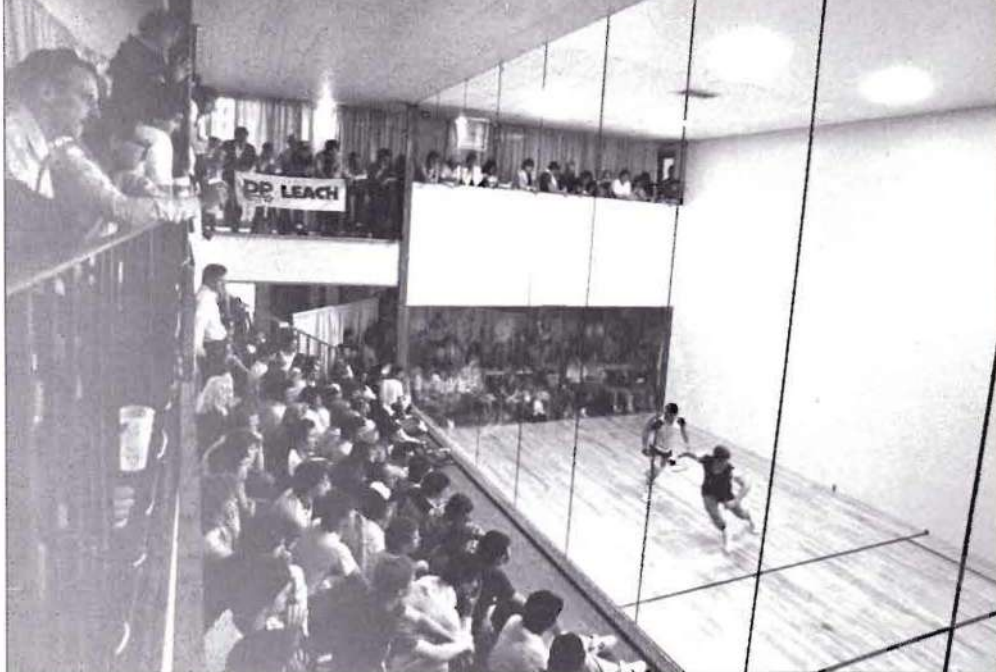
In their semifinal match, both players came out confident and firing from both sides. Harnett jumped to a quick lead only to see Hogan take the first game, 11-9. From that point it seemed to be Harnett's show. He won two straight games 11-10, 11-6, and then dropped the fourth to Hogan 4-11.

In the fifth and final game Harnett was invincible. Even Hogan was unable to stay with him as he racked up a commanding lead of 9-3. Marty seemed to be, as one fan said, "sucking air."

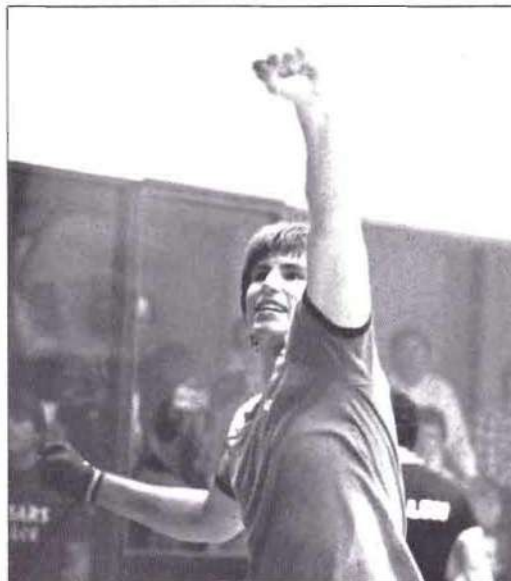
On sheer determination, and his great retrieving ability, Hogan scored three points before he stalled once again and gave the serve back to the young left-hander.

With the score 9-6 in Harnett's favor, the most furious rally of the match ensued; a long series of blasting and darting that ended with two spectacular diving gets at the front wall—a Hogan save and a Harnett rekill.

With both players sprawled on the floor, and the point apparently having been awarded to Harnett, Hogan made what seemed like a desperate appeal of



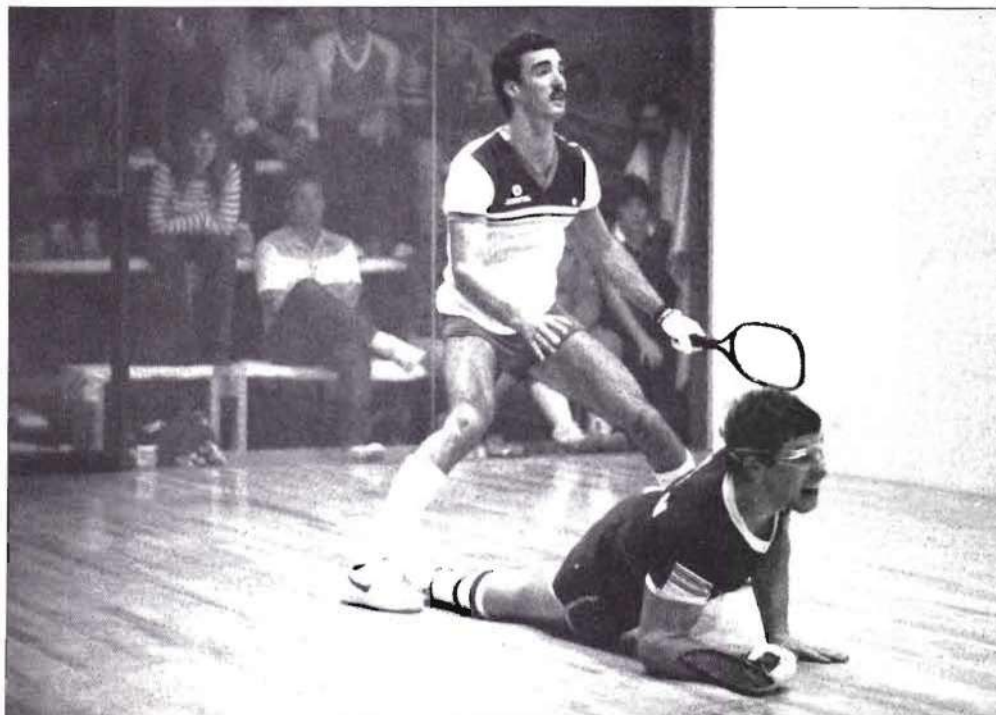
The crowd watches a close semifinal



Gregg Peck exults after Yellen upset



Dave Peck powers a backhand



Harnett has Hogan on the floor



"Nice try Dave"



Hogan's makes a desperate appeal . . . and gets the crucial point



Bret's final diving scoop, which referee Dan Bertolucci had called good. To Bertolucci's amazement, and almost everyone else in the crowd, the two linesmen overturned the call and awarded the rally to Hogan.

Harnett was stunned. Instead of serving for the match at 10-6, the side out gave Hogan the serve at 6-9.

Bret's intensity seemed to drop, just for a moment. Hogan sensed it, and drilled five straight points in a period of time that seemed like seconds. The final score was 11-9.

Hogan shook his head, and Harnett's hand, and walked off the court. Outside, he looked over at his friend Ben Koltun and smiling, said, "Routine."

Harnett stood silent in the court trying to somehow make sense of what had happened.

Actually, it made perfect sense. Marty Hogan had just taught him, and everyone else, a most eloquent lesson in what it takes to be a champion. After doing almost everything right, with the match seemingly won, Bret had made the most basic of mistakes. He let up—briefly, slightly. And after searching in vain for a weakness for nearly five games, Hogan saw the opening in Bret's defense and, like a great linebacker, barreled through.

"It was a bad call," Brett would say later, "but I shouldn't have let it bother me."

When one fan offered the consolation that there would be other chances, Bret said, "This was the match. I should have done it this time."

Strictly in terms of ranking, the loss was costly to Harnett. Had he beaten Hogan, and gone on to beat Dave Peck in the final (Harnett has beaten Peck four straight times), Harnett would have jumped to the number two spot, a mere 80 points behind number one Hogan.

Instead, he is now locked in a tie for third with Yellen, a position which could pit him against Hogan in the semifinals again in Toronto. And, playing from the number four slot is the only obstacle that prevents him from taking his rightful spot as the world's number two player.

As in Portland, the Hogan-Peck final fell far short of the excitement level of the semifinal round. Despite the strong, and often vocal, support for Peck from the crowd, he was unable to mount any effective offensive against Hogan, who by his own statement, was playing some of the best racquetball of his career.

Peck, who's game is built around capitalizing on his opponent's errors, was continually frustrated by Hogan's power and accuracy from every area of the court. It was, in the end, Peck who made the errors.

Marty's powerful drive serves to Peck's backhand corner seemed to neutralize everything the burly Texan tried. Peck's

ineffectiveness erupted in tirades against himself and the officials on a number of occasions.

When Peck scored the first two points in the fourth game, after winning the third, Hogan decided it was time to end the match. He tallied eight unanswered points, and after a few service trade-offs ended the match with a forehand kill. As with many Hogan matches, the final was never as close as the scores indicate: 11-9, 11-8, 5-11, 11-4.

After the match Peck addressed his local fans.

"Well folks, you couldn't pull me through. Marty just played too well. He just kept me off balance all the time."

"The last time I won in Texas I can't remember," said Hogan. "I've been playing really well the last couple of tournaments. I played really well to the right side. My forehand kept moving him (Peck) back and that was really the key."

Hogan reached the semifinal round by defeating Rich Wagner in the first round and John Egerman in the quarters. Egerman, who has been emerging from an early season slump, ousted fellow former Junior champ Scott Hawkins in the round of 16.

Dave Peck didn't lose a single game in his three pre-final rounds. He beat former touring pro Ben Koltun, of St. Louis, Gary Merritt, and his younger brother Gregg, all in straight three game matches.

The Supreme Courts proved a worthy club to host a pro stop. With back wall glass and right side wall glass, the exhibition court offered first class viewing to the capacity crowds that attended throughout the tournament.

THE DP LEACH/CATALINA CLASSIC VI—AUSTIN, TEXAS

FIRST ROUND:

Marty Hogan def. Rich Wagner, 11-6, 5-11, 10-11, 11-1; John Egerman def. Scott Hawkins, 7-11, 11-5, 11-4, 11-2; Jerry Hilecher def. Ray Navarro, 11-8, 3-11, 11-6, 11-7; Bret Harnett def. Bob Phillipi, 11-3, 5-11, 11-4, 11-5; Mike Yellen def. Craig McCoy, 11-4, 0-11, 10-11, 11-1, 11-1; Gregg Peck def. Doug Cohen, 11-6, 11-8, 11-2; Gary Merritt def. Don Thomas, 11-4, 11-5, 11-3; Dave Peck def. Ben Koltun, 11-3, 11-3, 11-5.

QUARTERFINAL ROUND:

Hogan def. Egerman, 11-8, 11-9, 11-7; Harnett def. Hilecher, 11-3, 11-9, 7-11, 11-0; Gregg Peck def. Yellen, 11-8, 6-11, 11-9, 2-11, 11-10; Dave Peck def. Gary Merritt, 11-9, 11-6, 11-2.

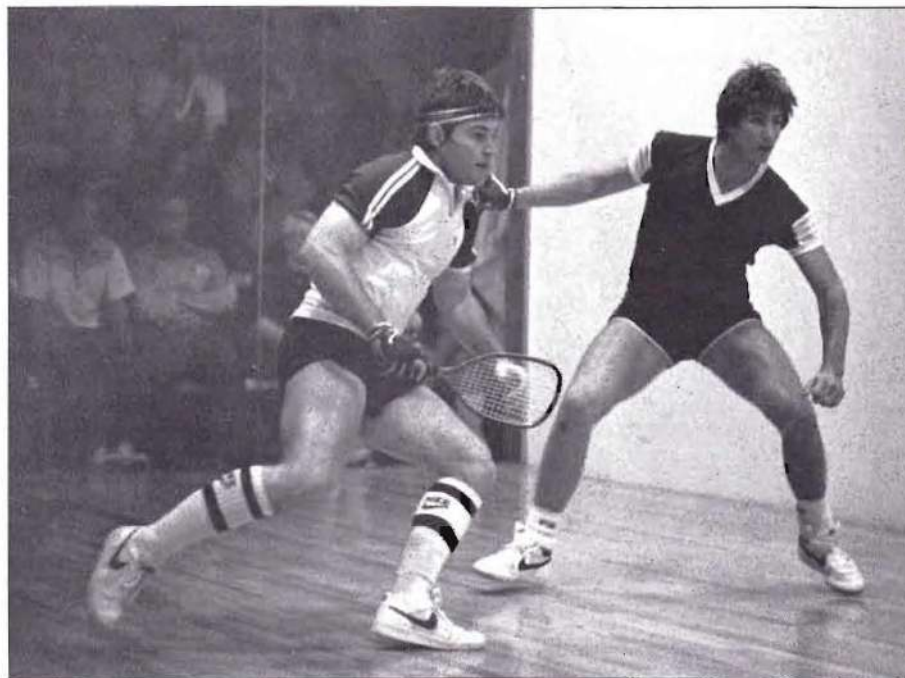
SEMIFINAL ROUND:

Hogan def. Harnett, 11-9, 10-11, 6-11, 11-4, 11-9; Dave Peck def. Gregg Peck 11-4, 11-2, 11-10.

FINAL ROUND:

Hogan def. Peck, 11-9, 11-8, 5-11, 11-4.

First Place	\$5,500
Second Place	\$3,500
Semifinalist	\$2,000
Quarterfinalist	\$1,250
Qualifer	\$ 500



1-Beaverton tournament director pretty Lynn Thompson
2-A pair of Pecks give their hometown a show
3-The Pecks in their first tour meeting in Beaverton
4-The Brett and Marty show is raising the game to new heights
5-Harnett and Beaverton club owner Wayne Westwood
6-Local television news crew covers Austin finals
7-Egerman powers from center court against Hawkins
8-Peck tries to keep a backhand away from a quick Harnett



BARNETT

BEAVERTON, Oregon—Still reeling from a stinging defeat at the hands of Bret Harnett in Hawaii, Marty Hogan silenced his critics by devastating the field and winning the fifth stop of the 1982-83 DP Leach/Catalina Pro Racquetball Series at the Griffith Park Athletic Club in Beaverton, Oregon, February 17-20. In doing so, Hogan very likely guaranteed himself this year's number one ranking and left little doubt in anyone's mind that he is still professional racquetball's premier player.

Although the victory in Beaverton was only Hogan's second title of the season, he has consistently been able to finish high enough to amass a point lead

that is virtually insurmountable this late in the year. With only two stops remaining before the National Championships in June, Hogan holds a comfortable 110 point lead over number two ranked Mike Yellen.

Hogan, playing some of the best racquetball of his career, won the tournament in convincing fashion, defeating racquetball's wunderkind Bret Harnett in a spectacular final, 9-11, 11-4, 11-4, 11-10.

Early in the final Harnett appeared to be on his way to repeating his victory at the Hawaiian Classic in January. Rolling to early leads of 6-0 and 9-2 in the first game, Harnett seemed in total control.

Coming from behind, however, has become Marty Hogan's trademark. With the extreme aggression that typifies his game, Hogan rifled seven straight, unanswered points to tie the first game at 9-9, before Harnett, aided by a questionable service call, squeaked the game out 11-9.

Hogan had the momentum, however. And everyone, including Harnett, seemed to sense it. Hogan enlisted his seldom needed, almost unbelievable speed to dispatch the young left-hander in the second and third games with relative ease, 11-4, 11-4.

The fourth and final game was the classic struggle the crowd had come to see. With both players at the top of their game the score inched up to an 8-8 tie where it stood for more than 15 minutes, with Hogan and Harnett exchanging sides 11 times. It was tied again at 9-9 when Harnett executed a perfect deep-court forehand pinch taking the lead 10-9.

Again they exchanged serves, this time eight times, before Hogan tied the game with a diving get. The final rally was furious, with both players diving and driving the ball with enormous power, before Hogan finally ended the match with a classic forehand kill.

Few who witnessed the match, or the two previous matches played by the game's premier power players, questioned that the Marty and Bret show is elevating the level of play in professional racquetball to new heights.

To reach the final, Hogan defeated the hometown favorite, qualifier Jeff Larson. Larson, a former National Junior Champion, gave the crowd what they wanted to see by cranking up his blistering forehand and taking the first game from Hogan, 11-5, and losing the final two games by only one point each, 11-10, 11-10.

Hogan had little trouble getting by Don Thomas in the quarterfinals and Mike Yellen in the semifinals to earn the spotlight against Harnett.

Bret, however, barely made it through the first round. Scott Hawkins from

Santa Clara, California, a tour regular who has seen his ranking hurt recently by injuries, threw Harnett completely off his game and quickly took the first two games of their round of 16 match, 11-5, 11-6. Harnett had to quickly compose himself to rescue the match by winning the last three games 11-1, 11-4, 11-8.

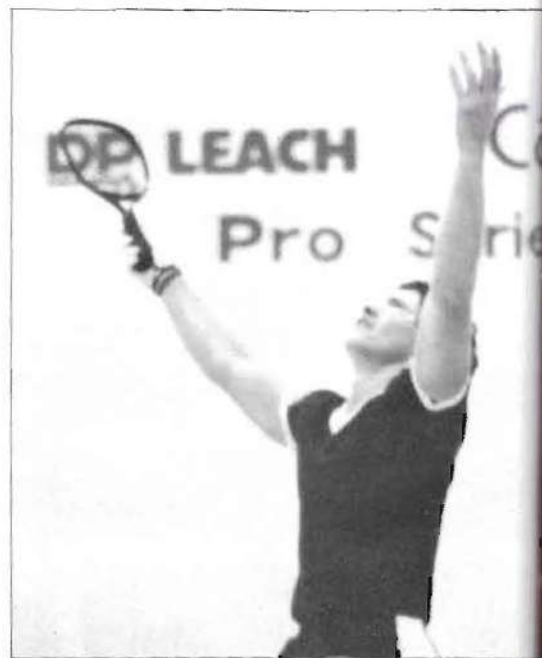
"I was lucky to get out of that one," said a relieved Harnett. "I've got to stop thinking so much about what I'm doing out there."

Harnett no sooner dispatched Hawkins when he had to face another hot first-round.

In the most stunning upset of the tournament, young Gerry Price of Castro Valley, California, one of the qualifiers from the Northwest Region, destroyed number five seed Jerry Hilecher, 11-6, 11-9, 11-9.

In the quarterfinals Price was unable to handle Bret Harnett's powerful of-

Marty Hogan regained his winning form . . .



. . . but Dave Peck couldn't get it right.





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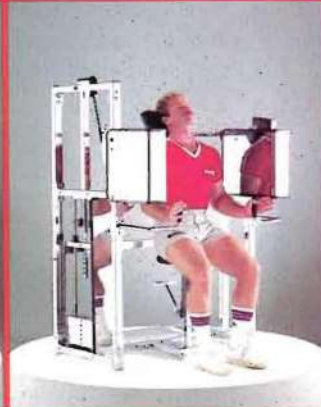
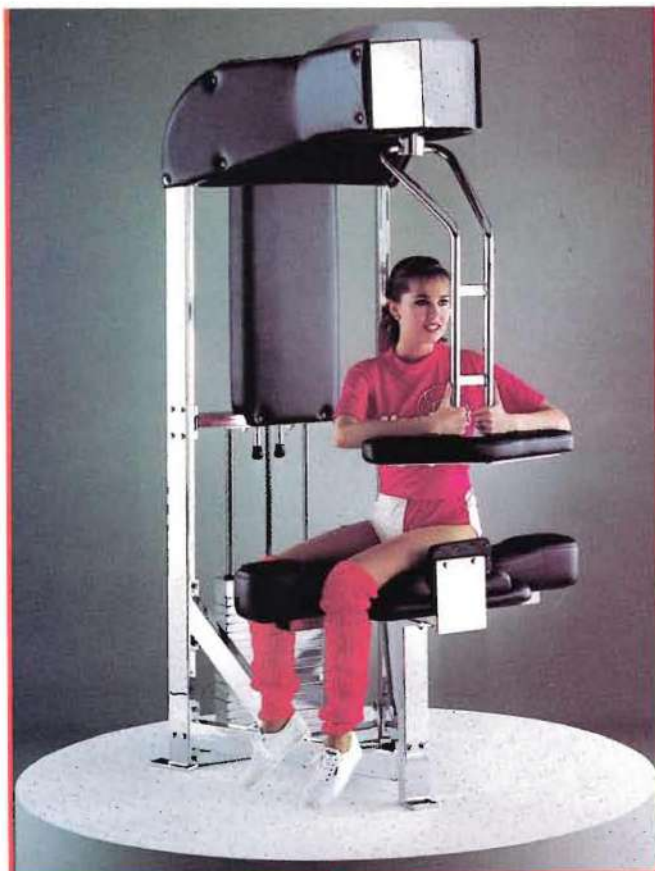
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fense. He succumbed quickly, 11-9, 11-8, 11-8. Price left little question, however, that he will be one of the rising stars of the game if and when the tour opens up.

Harnett's semifinal round found him once again pitted against defending National Champion Dave Peck. For the fourth straight time, Harnett handed Peck a shattering defeat, 11-5, 11-3, 10-11, 11-6. In doing so, Bret extended a domination over the usually invincible Texan that is reaching almost legendary proportions.

"I play well against Dave's game style," said Harnett. Obviously, he does.

In other tournament action, Gregg Peck outlasted Rich Wagner in the first round, 11-7, 7-11, 7-11, 11-8, 11-3, to set up a quarterfinal contest against his older brother Dave Peck. Incredibly, it was the first time the two have played each other in an official tour event. Gregg was no match for his brother as he fell in three quick games.

John Egberman of Jackson, Wyoming, emerged from a slump by ousting fellow Ektelon player Ed Andrews in the round-of-16, before falling to Mike Yellen in the quarters.

The Beaverton tournament, being staged for its second consecutive year by the Griffith Park Athletic Club, has become one of the favorite events for everyone involved with the Catalina Tour. Club owner Wayne Westwood, along with his tournament directors and sponsors, seem to always conduct a smooth and relaxed event in a club that is well suited for a pro-stop (if not for photographers).

THE DP LEACH/CATALINA PRO CLASSIC V— BEAVERTON, OREGON

FIRST ROUND:

Dave Peck def. Doug Cohen, 11-4, 11-6, 2-11, 11-3; Gregg Peck def. Rich Wagner, 11-7, 7-11, 7-11, 11-8, 11-3; Gerry Price def. Jerry Hilecher 11-6, 11-9, 11-9; Bret Harnett def. Scott Hawkins, 5-11, 6-11, 11-1, 11-4, 11-8; Mike Yellen def. Scott Oliver, 11-3, 11-1, 11-3; John Egberman def. Ed Andrews, 11-7, 11-4, 11-7; Don Thomas def. Kyle Kamalu, 10-11, 11-4, 11-6, 11-10; Marty Hogan def. Jeff Larson, 5-11, 11-5, 11-10, 11-10.

QUARTERFINAL ROUND:

Dave Peck def. Gregg Peck, 11-3, 11-2, 11-2; Bret Harnett def. Gerry Price, 11-9, 11-9, 11-8; Mike Yellen def. John Egberman, 11-7, 11-7, 11-6; Marty Hogan def. Don Thomas, 11-3, 11-9, 11-7.

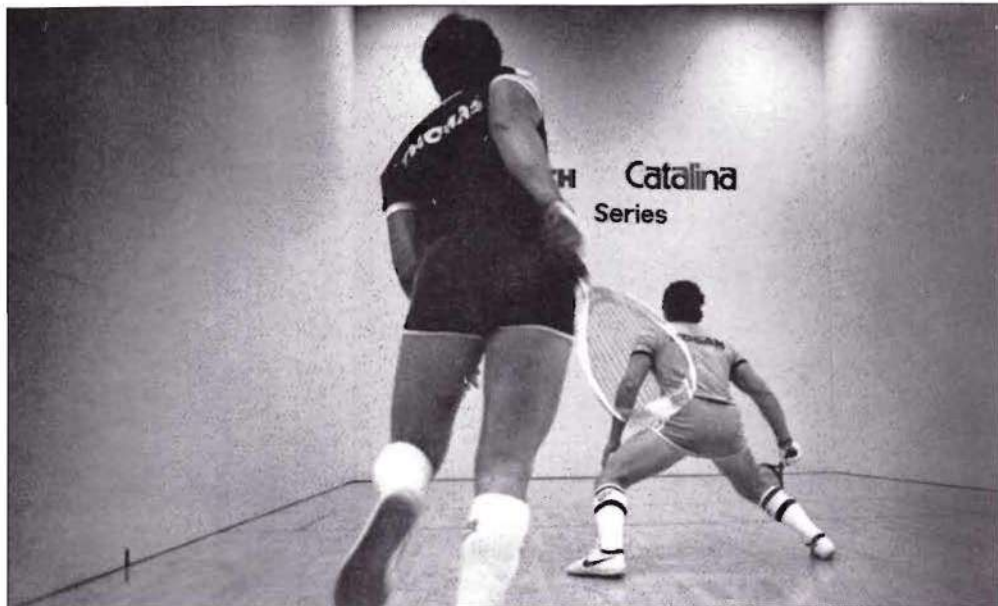
SEMIFINAL ROUND:

Marty Hogan def. Mike Yellen, 11-5, 9-11, 11-5, 11-3; Bret Harnett def. Dave Peck, 11-5, 11-3, 10-11, 11-6.

FINAL ROUND:

Marty Hogan def. Bret Harnett, 9-11, 11-4, 11-4, 11-10.

First Place	\$5,500
Second Place	\$3,500
Semifinalist	\$2,000
Quarterfinalist	\$1,250



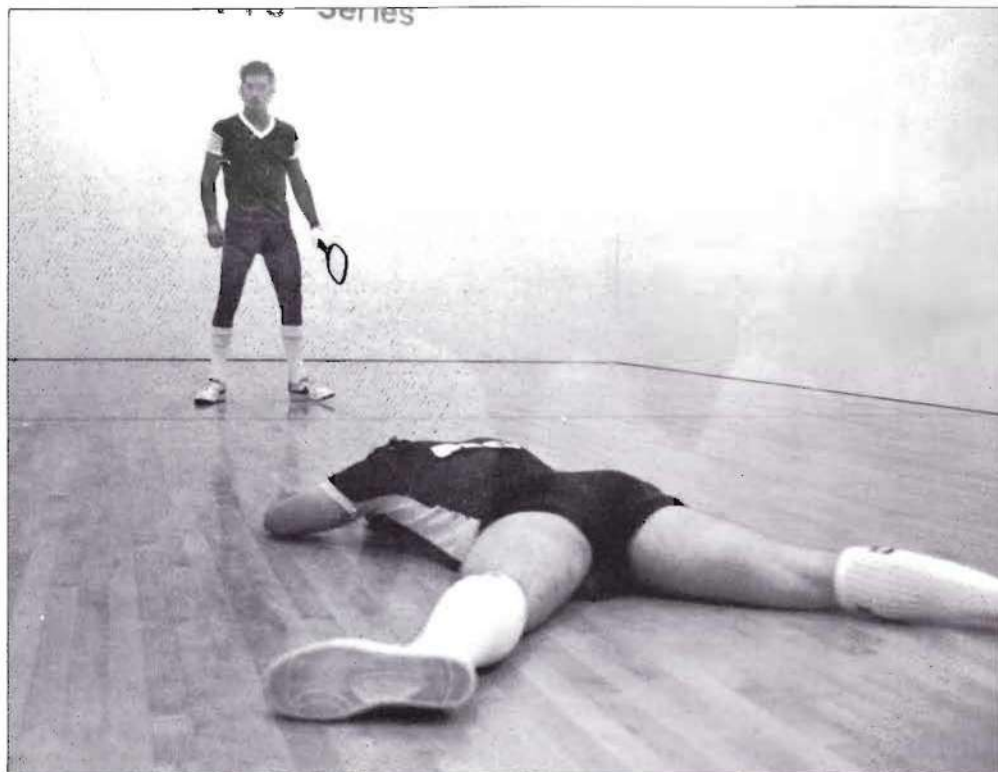
Don Thomas tries in vain to put Hogan away



Price shocked #5 Hilecher



Say goodnight Dave



Harnett over a frustrated Peck-for the fourth straight time

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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

BRET Continued from page 13

beat Marty, and no one will for another year or two.

Marty's still there. Especially when I play him, that speed comes out that I have never seen him use before. That makes him very tough. Marty has never had to move before. Now all of a sudden he has to move because I will beat him. I consider myself a very quick player and if he doesn't roll the ball I'm confident I can get it, and kill it, and I think he thinks the same thing of me.

IR-Is there anyone besides Marty that you have trouble with?

BH-Marty's my biggest challenge. I have so much fun playing Marty. And now I understand why he's had trouble staying number one. It is tough playing players you know that you can beat. I win matches in these tournaments just so I can play Marty and Dave. I really look forward to it. The tougher the match, as far as the caliber of play, the more fun I have.

IR-After your match in Beaverton, Marty paid you one of the finest compliments I've ever heard. He said you were probably one of the greatest sportsmen to ever play the game of racquetball. How did you feel when he said that?

BH-Yeah. Gosh. I don't know why but for some reason I've got a reputation for being very good on the court. I used to get very mad on the court, and then after I lost one tournament I said to myself, "Hey, you are just blowing a lot of hot air. You're not getting anywhere with this stuff." And I've just groomed my attitude to where I'm happy with it. I'm not stupid though. If I dive for a shot and I don't know myself if it's one or two bounces, I'm not the type that will just automatically call it against myself. But if a ball just skips in, a lot of times I do give it away. Sometimes I think I do that because you just look so stupid walking up there to serve, when you know the shot wasn't good. And you feel stupid.

IR-What are you going to do if you get to play Marty in this tournament (Austin)?

BH-I've got to get those drive serves down the line. I hit a couple of good ones today. And of course I have to have a good ceiling ball. I've got a disadvantage at this tournament already with the right side wall glass. They'll be hitting ceiling balls into that glass because I'm left handed.

IR-Thank you. Is there anything you'd like to add?

BH-Yeah. Put my address and phone numbr in there. I want to get some chicks out of this too. Yeah, if you like what you've heard here give me a call. I'll give you some playing tips.

MEN'S PROFESSIONAL RACQUETBALL SCHEDULE OF EVENTS • 1982-83 SEASON

DATE	LOCATION	PRIZE MONEY
APRIL 21-24	MOLSON RACQUETBALL CLASSIC THE ADELAIDE CLUB TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA OPEN	\$ 15,000
MAY 12-15	EKTELON CHAMPIONSHIPS THE SPORTS GALLERY ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA OPEN	\$ 21,500
MAY 30 - JUNE 5	CATALINA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS THE CHARLIE CLUB CHICAGO, ILLINOIS INVITATIONAL	\$ 40,000
JUNE 14-19	DP LEACH NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS ATLANTA SPORTING CLUB ATLANTA, GEORGIA OPEN	\$ 50,000

WOMEN'S PROFESSIONAL RACQUETBALL SCHEDULE OF EVENTS • 1982-83 SEASON

DATE	LOCATION	PRIZE MONEY
APRIL 14-17	SEATTLE, WASHINGTON	\$ 13,000
MAY 12-15	EKTELON CHAMPIONSHIPS ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA	\$ 18,700
MAY 23-26	NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS CHICAGO, ILLINOIS	\$ 12,000
JULY 8-10	MIDNIGHT SUN CLASSIC ANCHORAGE, ALASKA	\$ 6,000

NOTE: The entire schedule for the 1983-84 season will be published in the June issue of International Racquetball.

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FORT WORTH

FORT WORTH, Texas—Vicki Panzeri from Seattle, Washington, stormed through the \$20,000 Riverbend Classic by upsetting number one ranked Lynn Adams, number four ranked Terry Gilreath, and number five ranked Laura Martino. But two-time National Champion Heather McKay stopped her short in the final by winning 21-12, 18-21, 23-21, 24-22, before a capacity crowd at the Riverbend Athletic Club.

"I'm happy I made it to the finals," said Vicki with a smile. "When my knees started shaking in the first game while I was serving, I knew it was going to be difficult for me."

"Vicki has improved tremendously," remarked her victor, Heather McKay. "She played a passing game, one that I'm not used to playing in the finals."

"Throughout the entire tournament," stated Vicki, "I was concentrating on three things. The first was to hit simple shots; the second was to hit a soft, very controlled serve; and the third was to keep calm during the pressure of the game."

Her luck developed into skill in the second game as Panzeri settled down and began reeling off winners from both forehand and backhand. As in her match with Lynn Adams the day before, she dropped the first game, then came storming back in the second. Heather became confused and lost the second game 18-21.

"My game went to straight up and down in the second game which was not my strategy," commented McKay. "I thought that I was patient on the ceiling rallies, and I had to mix up my game a bit. Vicki was playing most of her matches on the backhand; I had to alter my shots to keep her from getting back into that style."

Throughout the third and fourth games, one of the contestants would be behind, and then come storming back. In the fourth game at 20-13, Vicki had game point. She then skipped a forehand off the back wall, and she could not recover.

"Did she have game point against me?" questioned McKay. "Well, I always felt confident in the match. I really never felt myself let up. With Lynn (Adams), well I do get shaken sometimes. When her killshot is on, then there is no way to beat her. Vicki needs a bit more experience in the finals. She played well, though."

In other tournament action, Caryn McKinney, WPRA amateur champion and Ektelon-Pony amateur champion, defeated number six seed Jennifer Harding in four games. Molly O'Brien, who is vying for the AMF Voit Rookie of the Year award, was given a second chance when Cindy Baxter withdrew after the qualifying rounds were played. Molly had lost a hard fought battle with Mary Dee in the qualifiers, 23-25, 21-18, 21-15, 21-23, 13-15, but won the lucky losers pool to take Cindy's place against Terri Gillreath. Brenda Young, from Las Cruces, New Mexico, stretched veteran Janell Marriott to a tie breaker, with Marriott winning, 24-22, 17-21, 17-21, 21-18, 15-9.

The tournament aired over local cable television in the Fort Worth area the day following the finals. Jim Carson, Buffy Filippell, and hometown girl Shannon Wright, did the commentating for the match.

RIVERBEND PRO CLASSIC— FORT WORTH, TEXAS

ROUND OF 16:

Lynn Adams def. Joyce Jackson, 21-16, 21-15, 21-9; Marci Greer def. Brenda Barrett, 21-19, 21-17, 21-13; Vicki Panzeri def. Terri Gilreath, 21-12, 21-12, 21-17; Laura Martino def. Martha McDonald, 21-13, 21-16, 19-21, 21-11; Caryn McKinney def. Bonnie Stoll, 21-14, 21-13, 21-15; Shannon Wright def. Gail Woods, 21-8, 21-13, 21-10; Peggy Gardner def. Fran Davis, 21-8, 21-17, 13-21, 9-21, 15-8; Heather McKay def. Janell Marriott, 21-13, 21-9, 21-13.



Vicki Panzeri

QUARTERFINAL ROUND:

Adams def. Greer, 18-21, 21-16, 21-16, 21-9; Panzeri def. Martino, 14-21, 21-12, 21-18, 21-8; Wright def. McKinney, 21-15, 21-15, 21-8; McKay def. Gardner, 21-6, 21-18, 21-9.

SEMIFINAL ROUND:

Panzeri def. Adams, 15-21, 21-15, 21-17, 9-21, 15-13; McKay def. Wright, 13-21, 21-18, 23-21, 23-21.

FINAL ROUND:

McKay def. Panzeri 21-12, 18-21, 23-21, 24-22.
Total Purse \$20,000

TUCSON

TUCSON, Arizona—For the second week in a row, unseeded Vicki Panzeri of Seattle, Washington, swept past number one seed Lynn Adams to gain the finals at the Tucson Athletic Club, February 25-27. Just one week earlier in Fort Worth, Texas, Panzeri bowed out to Heather McKay, a two-time National Champion, in the final. Panzeri prevailed in Tucson, however, defeating Shannon Wright of Las Vegas, Nevada, 21-17, 18-21, 21-6, 21-18.

Panzeri simply outlasted Wright in the finals, as they both played well. Neither one dominated the match, as the close scores indicate. Instead, Panzeri, with her newfound confidence, played a consistent, well-rounded game.

"Vicki dominated the front court," observed Linda Siau, club official and tournament participant. "She had a soft touch to her shots and was really on with the passing shots. Vicki made very few mistakes."

In an exciting first round match, Panzeri found herself facing Adams, who she defeated in the semifinals at Fort Worth only a week before. Loose, relaxed, and more sure of herself, Panzeri slid past Adams, 21-15, 16-21, 21-18, 21-10, sending Adams back home to Costa Mesa, California. She continued on to defeat Marci Greer and Terri Gilreath, the number four seed, in easier matches before advancing to the finals.

Wright also confronted a tough first round opponent in Stacey Fletcher, of Warren, Michigan. Wright overcame a two game deficit to win the match, 13-21, 22-24, 21-17, 21-15, 15-11. Wright gained the finals by defeating Caryn McKinney and Laura Martino, the number three seed.

The tournament demonstrated the high caliber of play that has become common in the Womens Professional Racquetball Association. New names seem to be crowding in on the once solid threesome of Lynn Adams, Heather McKay, and Shannon Wright.

BOB'S BIG BOY OPEN—TUCSON, ARIZONA

ROUND OF 16:

Vicki Panzeri def. Lynn Adams, 21-15, 16-21, 21-18, 21-10; Marci Greer def. Gail Woods, 21-9, 21-17, 21-8; Wojcik def. Pranka, 21-17, 21-18, 23-21; Terry Gilreath def. Jean Sauser, 17-21, 21-9, 21-15, 21-19; Laura Martino def. O'Brien, 21-10, 21-14, 21-9; Peggy Gardner def. Clifford, 21-15, 21-8, 21-17; Caryn McKinney def. Lynch, 21-4, 21-13, 21-13; Shannon Wright def. Stacey Fletcher, 13-21, 22-24, 21-17, 21-15, 15-11.

QUARTERFINAL ROUND:

Panzeri def. Greer, 21-19, 21-15, 21-12; Gilreath def. Wojcik, 21-19, 21-12, 21-9; Martino def. Gardner, 21-23, 24-22, 21-18, 21-14; Wright def. McKinney, 21-19, 21-16, 21-13.

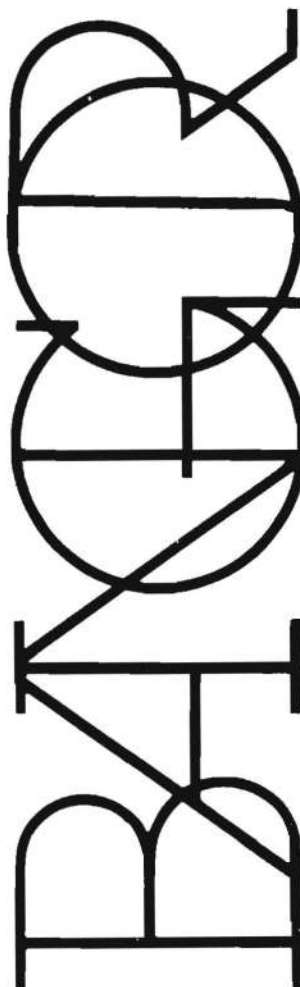
SEMIFINAL ROUND:

Panzeri def. Gilreath, 21-12, 21-15, 21-15; Wright def. Martino, 21-14, 21-15, 19-21, 21-9.

FINAL ROUND:

Panzeri def. Wright, 21-17, 18-21, 21-16, 21-18.
Total Purse \$6,000

Shannon Wright



Heather McKay (above) Lynn Adams (below)



night before really helped pump me up," observed McKay. "I felt confident about my game and geared up for the finals."

The players enjoyed the event in Bangor, and many stayed in private homes. Since the WPRA tournament was so well received, plans are already being made for another event next year.

Lynn Adams will have the opportunity to regain her winning form at the next stop in San Francisco, March 24-27.

LITE BER NEW ENGLAND CHAMPIONSHIPS—BANGOR, MAINE

ROUND OF 16:

Adams def. Paese, 21-6, 21-8, 21-10; McKinney def. Harding, 21-14, 21-19, 21-11; Jackson def. Davis, 21-15, 21-12, 21-7; Stoll def. Greer, 21-18, 21-13, 21-18; Gilreath def. Stupp, 15-21, 21-18, 21-16, 20-22, 15-13; Marriott def. Sauser, 21-10, 21-18, 21-17; Bullard def. Robert, 21-9, 21-17, 21-13; McKay def. Lynch, 21-10, 21-16, 21-10.

QUARTERFINAL ROUND:

Adams def. McKinney, 21-12, 21-6, 21-18; Jackson def. Stoll, 21-14, 21-12, 21-3; Gilreath def. Marriott, 22-20, 21-16, 21-15; McKay def. Bullard, 21-11, 21-15, 21-16.

SEMIFINAL ROUND:

Adams def. Jackson, 21-13, 21-9, 21-12; McKay def. Gilreath, 16-21, 21-8, 21-16, 20-22, 15-13.

FINAL ROUND:

McKay def. Adams, 25-23, 21-18, 22-20.
Total Purse \$6,500

BANGOR, Maine—In their first meeting this year, Heather McKay of Toronto, Ontario, defeated Californian Lynn Adams, 25-23, 21-18, 22-20, in the finals of the Lite Beer New England Championships at the Holiday Health and Racquet Club, March 10-13. Adams, who had been defeated twice earlier by Vicki Panzeri, hoped to regain her winning tendency in the absence of Panzeri at this tournament. Adams advanced with ease to the finals defeating Joyce Jackson of Norman, Oklahoma, in the semifinals.

McKay faced a tougher opponent in her semifinal match against Terry Gilreath of El Toro, California. The match reached a score of two games all with Gilreath leading 12-10 in the fifth game. McKay managed to regain her lead and won the match, 16-21, 21-8, 21-16, 20-22, 15-13.

In the exciting final match, Adams and McKay received ten standing ovations from the enthusiastic crowd. McKay used a lot of ceiling shots, aiming for Adams' backhand. Lynn failed to put away numerous shots in their long rallies.

"I think my challenging match against Gilreath in the semifinals the



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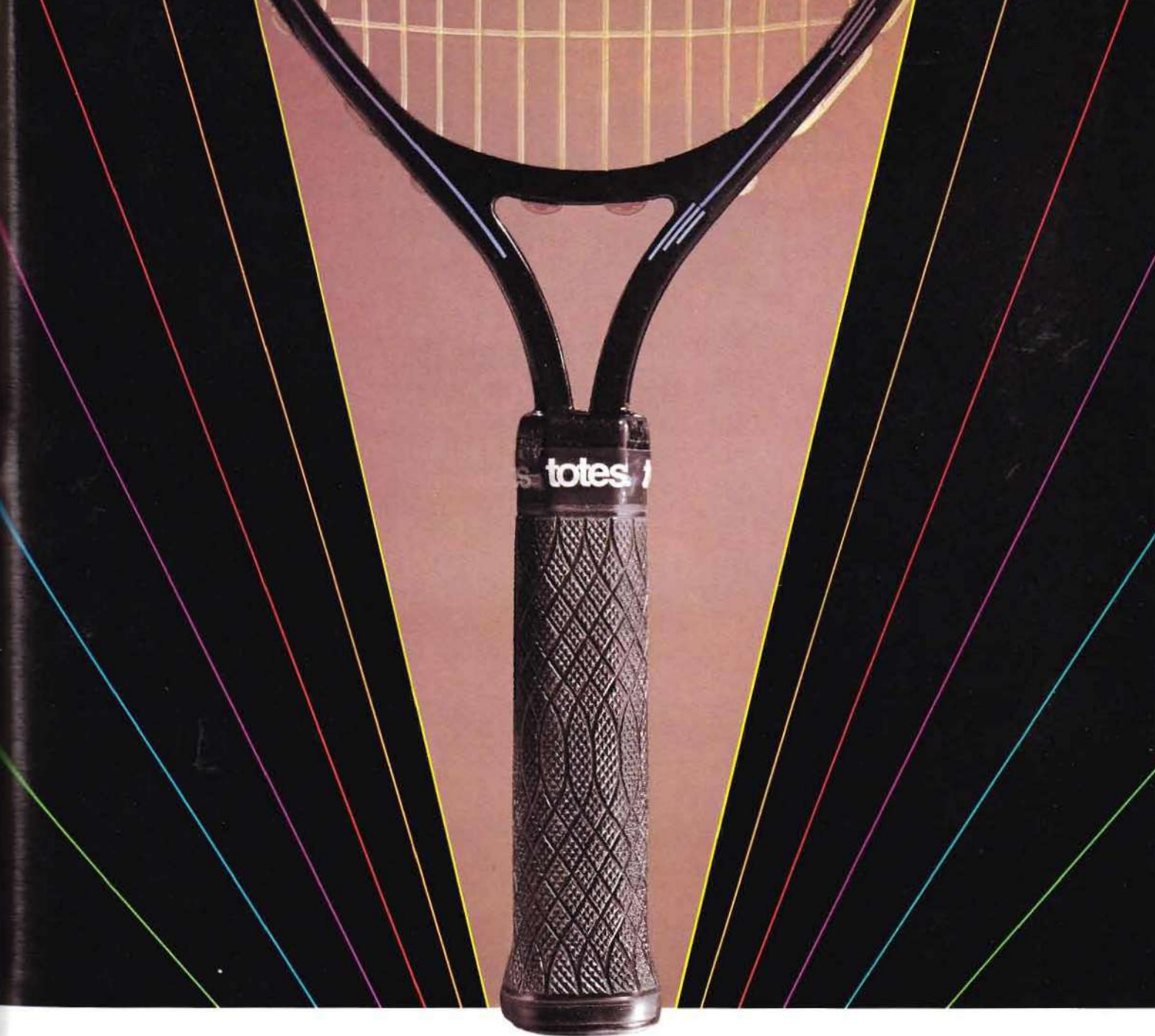
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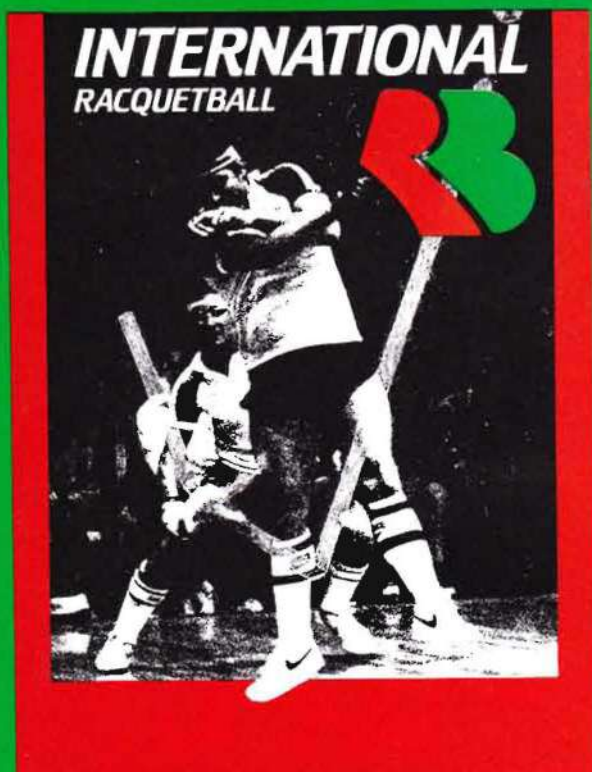
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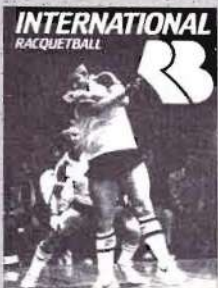
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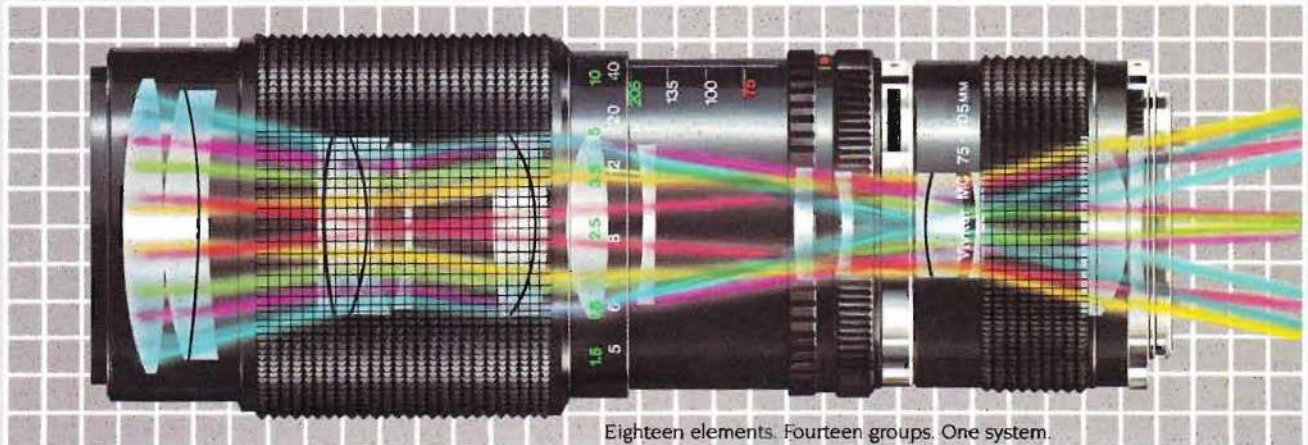
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The new 75-410mm System by Vivitar



The Splat!

by John Egerman and Scott Hawkins

Few shots in racquetball typify the professional game as much as the splat. The splat is one of the most spectacular, as well as one of the most effective shots available to the advanced player. It is one of those rare shots that, when hit effectively, can demoralize an opponent. It is also one of the most misunderstood shots in the game.

Most people become acquainted with the splat when they see their first professional tournament. Since it came into general use a few years ago, the splat has contributed greatly to the spectacular play at the professional level.

The credit for the invention of the splat probably belongs to Marty Hogan. A few years ago when the fast Seamco ball was used on the pro tour, Hogan began experimenting with a very hard, very deep pinch that reacted like no shot

anyone had ever seen. As other players began to discover what Hogan was doing, and began to adapt it into their own games, the splat became a much more commonly used shot, particularly among the young power players. Today, most professional players have some type of splat shot at their disposal, and a few have built the better part of their game around it.

Use of the splat, however, remains rare among club-level players for two reasons. First, it is very difficult to explain to someone how to hit a splat without actually showing them, and many club-level players simply never get a chance to see it. And second, more than any shot in the game, the splat requires a fair amount of upper body strength to execute; it must be hit hard.

The most critical component in the

execution of the splat is your court position. Whether you hit a forehand or backhand splat, your racquet head must be within 2 to 3 feet of one of the side walls when it contacts the ball. If you attempt a splat from anywhere further out than that, you probably will end up hitting a bad, wide-angle pinch that comes right through center court.

The splat is usually used at a point in the rally when you might normally choose a drive down the wall. Instead of driving the ball down the line, however, you hit it low, and hard, and angle it so that it intercepts the side wall about mid court. That means that you'll be hitting the side wall anywhere from around three to eight feet from your body. When the ball goes into the side wall at this angle, it does not rebound quickly off the wall like a pinch. Instead, it "rolls" down the wall picking up a great deal of inside spin (clockwise on the right wall, counterclockwise on the left) before it finally exits the side a few feet from the front. Although the splat resembles a pinch, when it reaches the front wall it rebounds much differently. The massive side spin that was created as it traveled down the side wall acts to propel it across the court, towards the opposite

side wall. Indeed, from the viewpoint of the player defending against it, the splat appears to travel almost parallel to the front wall.

The sidespin of the splat is also responsible for the unusual sound it makes. Unlike the pinch, the splat makes a very loud "crack" when it hits the front wall, as its spin fires it across the front of the court; hence the name splat. In fact, the easiest way to identify a splat is by its sound. Unfortunately, if you're trying to defend against it, by the time you hear the sound, it's too late.

Now let's look at when the splat is used.

According to basic racquetball strategy, when you're positioned deep in the court, near one of the side walls and your opponent is in front court, your first choice of shot selection should be to drive the ball down the wall you're closest to. The reason for this is that it takes your opponent out of center court and lets you in. After doing this three or four times, the defender will likely begin to lean toward the wall you're driving. As soon as he does that, you shoot either a cross-court drive, or a pinch if you are far enough away from the side wall. This is called keeping your opponent "honest."

Many matches are simply continuous variations of this one strategy. If you're not familiar with it, you're probably losing; learn it.

The problem with this strategy is that in some cases, particularly at the more advanced levels, it does not give you enough options. Specifically, when

you're up against a player who can consistently keep you deep and very close to the side wall you can get into serious trouble. Positioned close to the side you can't pinch. And if you're unable to consistently kill the ball from deep court, like most of us, you're restricted to either driving down the wall or hitting a marginal cross court, two shots against which he can defend simply by taking a couple of steps back. Once he does that, he is vulnerable to the splat.

To a player in center court, the path of the splat to the front wall appears very similar to that of a drive, or a pinch, and most players will move to defend against those shots. The splat, of course, travels the opposite direction once it hits the front wall. And, to a player who tries to defend from anywhere behind the service zone, a well hit splat can be devastating.

Primarily, then, the splat is used as an equalizer; it is used to keep your opponent honest. If a player knows you can successfully execute a splat from deep court, he is forced to keep close in the front court; a position that makes him much more vulnerable to the basic drive/cross-court strategy.

The danger of the splat, besides its unpredictability, lies in overuse. Because the sidespin propels it across the court (some players even think it accelerates), the splat hit by most players tends to stay up for just an instant. If the defender knows the splat is coming, and moves up very close to the front wall, the shot is not difficult to rekill. Players who rely too heavily on it tend to get them-

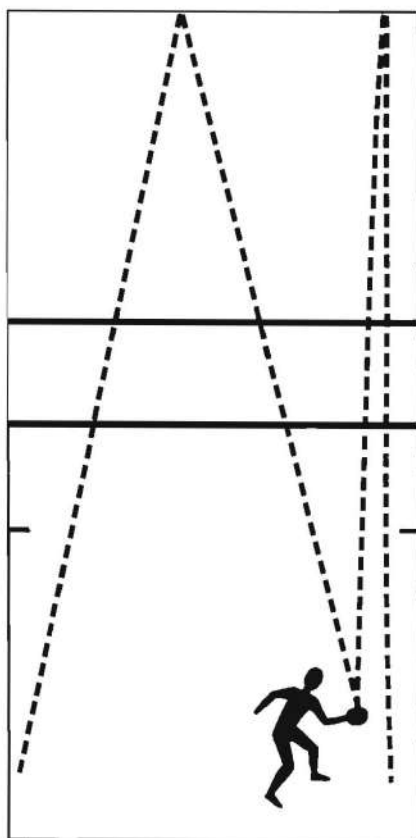
selves in trouble.

If you're having difficulty hitting the splat here's something that might help. Some players are able to compensate for their lack of strength by putting some extra spin on the ball with their racquet. (Remember, the key to the splat is in the spin). The natural stroke of nearly every player, whether forehand or backhand, puts an inside spin on the ball (for a right handed player it is clockwise for the forehand and counterclockwise for the backhand). Since that spin is the same as the spin needed for the splatting effect, the more cut you can put on the inside of the ball, the less work will be required by the side wall.

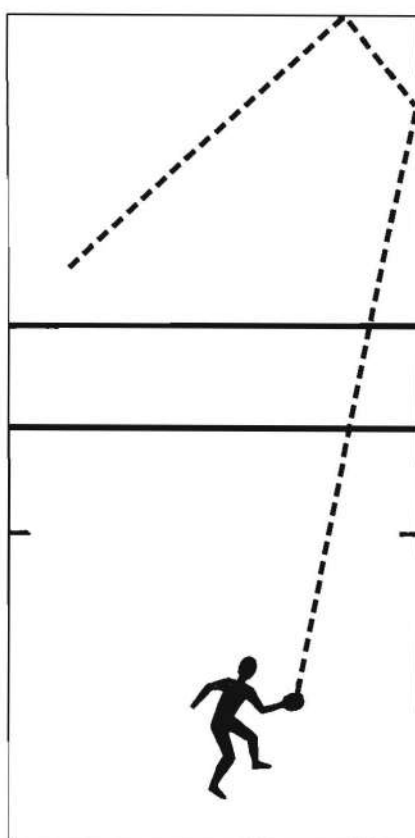
Be careful with this though. Like a baseball pitcher who throws screwballs, trying to put too much inside spin on a racquetball can be brutal on the arm. Most professional players, in fact, hit the splat very flat, with no side cut. Not only is it easier on the arm, but it's much easier to impart power to the ball with a flat contact.

Finally, if you've tried everything, and it still won't come, ask your local club pro to show you how it's hit. The splat is one of those shots that, more than anything, is hit by "feel." Once you've hit it once, it's easy to repeat.

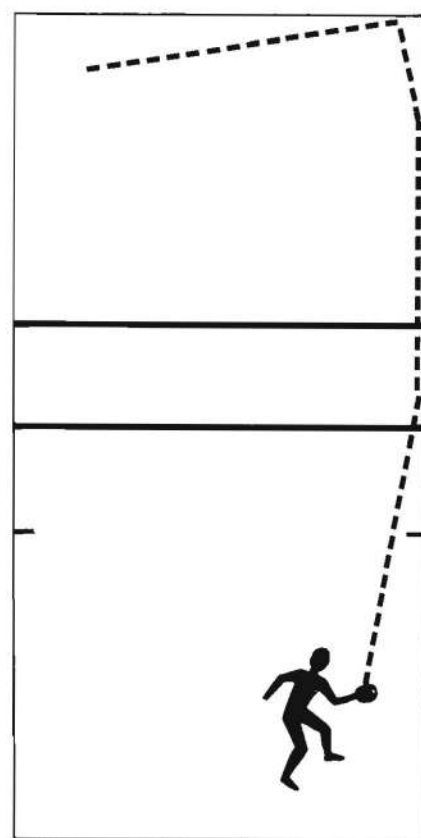
Like everything in racquetball, learning to hit the splat is going to take some work. But if you happen to be at the stage in your game where you need something new and effective (and interesting), taking the time can be worth it.



The Drive and Cross-Court

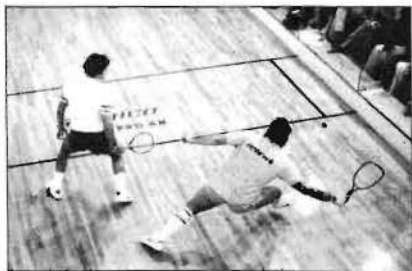


The Pinch



The Splat

The pro men's tournament coverage continues next issue with the results of the \$15,000 Molson Racquetball Classic in Toronto, Canada, and the \$40,000 Ektelon Championships in Los Angeles!



For the WPRA, there will be exciting news from two new stops in Seattle and San Francisco! These are professionally ranked events and who knows what could happen.



Find out what Marty Hogan has to say in a candid Q & A session. Also, confused on how a pro stop is run? Details on the toss of the coin and the draw from the hat coming up.



The pro tour...where do we go from here? Next issue includes the entire 1983-84 pro tour schedule! News is being made right this minute that may affect your pro career. Find out what's going on and what's coming down in the world of International Racquetball. Don't miss an issue!



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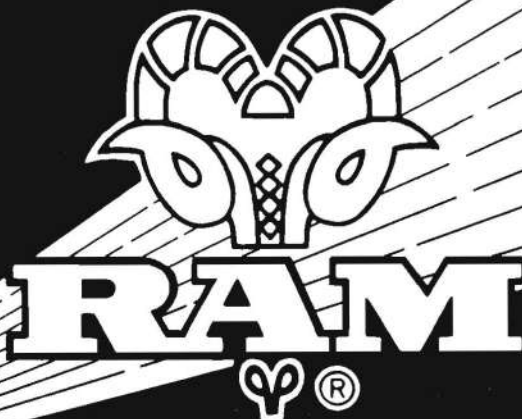


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Following are the current rankings for both men's and women's professional racquetball. The ranking listed for the women is that of the Women's Professional Racquetball Association (WPRA).

The Catalina men's tour rankings are for those players who have been invited to participate in Catalina events. The system is a point accumulation of all tournaments of the 1982-83 season held thus far. The rankings include the last stop in Austin.

The International Racquetball Computerized rankings are somewhat more complex. Because the current status of men's professional racquetball consists of a number of invitational

events, it has been necessary to create a system that measures performance and yet does not penalize a player who is not allowed to play in certain events. The IR system is a hybrid, computerized point averaging system that this month takes into account the performance of players over an eleven tournament schedule. The tournaments used as ranking events include all professional tournaments that distributed at least \$6000 in the men's division since September of 1982. Since the points awarded for performance in a specific tournament are weighted by the prize money distributed, both tournament location and money are listed here for the events used in the IR ranking: Stockton, California - September 1982 -

\$6000; Westminster, California - September 1982 - \$20,000; Burnsville, Minnesota - October 1982 - \$20,000; CBC Classic, Canada-October 1982 - \$20,000; New Haven, Connecticut - November 1982 - \$20,000; Schoeber's Pleasanton, California - December 1982 - \$15,000; Honolulu, Hawaii - January 1983 - \$20,000; Palm Desert, California - February 1983 - \$7,000; Beaverton, Oregon - February 1983 - \$20,000; Cheyenne, Wyoming - March 1983 - \$7,000; Austin, Texas - March 1983 - \$20,000.

A detailed description of the International Racquetball Computerized Ranking system can be found below.

IR COMPUTER RANKING			DP LEACH/CATALINA RANKING			WPRA WOMEN'S RANKING		
RANK	PLAYER	POINTS	RANK	PLAYER	POINTS	RANK	PLAYER	POINTS
1	Marty Hogan	165.71	1	Marty Hogan	610	1	Lynn Adams	588.92
2	Dave Peck	143.21	2	Dave Peck	460	2	Heather McKay	578.50
3	Bret Harnett	96.67	3T	Bret Harnett	430	3	Shannon Wright	403.13
4	Mike Yellen	88.44	3T	Mike Yellen	430	4	Laura Martino	237.75
5	Gregg Peck	53.33	5	Gregg Peck	300	5	Terri Gilreath	226.88
6	Jerry Hilecher	46.07	6	Don Thomas	260	6	Vicki Panzerri	209.88
7	Gerry Price	41.30	7	Jerry Hilecher	250	7	Peggy Gardner	151.25
8	Steve Lerner	40.90	8T	Ed Andrews	210	8	Marci Greer	146.50
9	Ed Andrews	36.11	8T	John Egerman	210	9	Caryn McKinney	122.50
10	Don Thomas	35.00	10	Doug Cohen	200	10	Jennifer Harding	109.50
11	John Egerman	31.78	11	Craig McCoy	170	11	Janell Marriott	102.50
12	Doug Cohen	31.44	12	Steve Strandemo	150	12	Barbara Maltby	85.00
13	Rich Wagner	30.71	13	Rich Wagner	140	13	Rita Hoff	79.16
14	Steve Strandemo	28.33	14	Scott Hawkins	120	14	Joyce Jackson	77.50
15	Craig McCoy	25.28	15	Reuben Gonzales	70	15	Fran Davis	73.88
16	Rueben Gonzales	20.00				16	Martha McDonald	70.00
17T	Scott Oliver	17.50				17	Bonnie Stoll	64.00
17T	Mark Martino	17.50				18	Stacey Fletcher	54.57
19	Scott Hawkins	17.43				19	Gail Woods	54.33
20	Corey Brysman	11.40				20	Diane Bullard	49.34
21	Jack Nolan	10.50				21	Heather Stupp	46.00
22T	Lindsay Meyers	10.00				22	Jean Sauser	42.71
22T	Wayne Bowes	10.00				23	Carol Pranka	37.67
22T	Gary Merritt	10.00				24	Peggy Steding	32.38
22T	Bob Greenfield	10.00						
26	Peter Britos	7.00						
27	Ben Koltun	5.40						

INTERNATIONAL RACQUETBALL COMPUTERIZED RANKING SYSTEM

The IR Computerized Ranking System for men's professional racquetball is a hybrid system which computes a performance factor that takes into account the number of tournaments in which a player has played, the number of tournaments in which the player could have played, how far the player has gone in the tournaments entered and how much money was paid into the men's division of each event. An individual's performance rating is determined by the following formula:

$$R = \frac{T}{A}$$

R = ranking (performance rating)
T = the computed total points of tournaments entered

A = the attendance factor

Calculating Points;

The points earned per tournament are calculated by using the following formula:

$$P = \frac{R \times M}{X}$$

P = points per tournament

R = round points

M = prize money factor

(1) Round Points - Points per round for all ranking events are as follows:

Finish	Point Value
First	95
Second	75
Semifinalist	50
Quarterfinalist	25
Round of 16	10

(2) Prize Money Factor - The prize money factor is .1 for each \$1,000 of prize money that is paid into the men's division, regardless of the prize money breakdown. For example, if a tournament has a total purse of \$8,000 the factor would be .8, for \$15,000 it would be 1.5, and so on.

For a specific tournament the points received are calculated by multiplying the round points by the Prize money factor. For example, if a player went to the semifinals of a \$7,000 tournament his round points would be 50, the prize money factor would be .7, so his effective tournament points would be 35. Obviously, if a tournament pays \$10,000 the factor is 1, so the points awarded are the same as the round points.

Once the points per tournament have been calculated the points for each event used in that particular month's rankings are added together for the total points of tournaments entered (T). The events used each month will be detailed at the beginning of the rankings.

Calculating the Attendance Factor;

Until the end of the 1982-83 season, the

attendance factor will be different for Catalina Tour players and non-Tour players. The reason for this is that non-Tour players should not be penalized for events which they cannot enter. Calculating the factors for each group is as follows:

(1) Catalina Players - The attendance factor for Tour players is either (a) the number of events actually entered, or (b) one less than the number of Catalina events used in that month's rankings, whichever is greater. The minimum attendance factor this month is 6.

(2) Non-Tour Players - The attendance factor for non-Tour players is the number of events a particular player could have entered. Since every player can qualify for one Catalina event this number is generally the number of open events used in that month's rankings plus one. The attendance factor this month is 5.

Special Note;

IR believes that this system is the fairest possible ranking system given the current fragmented status of the men's professional game. We are well aware that it is not completely fair in all cases, it is simply the best possible compromise. This system will be in effect through the end of the 1982-83 season. At that time, assuming the men's pro tour opens up to all players, a different system will be put into effect.



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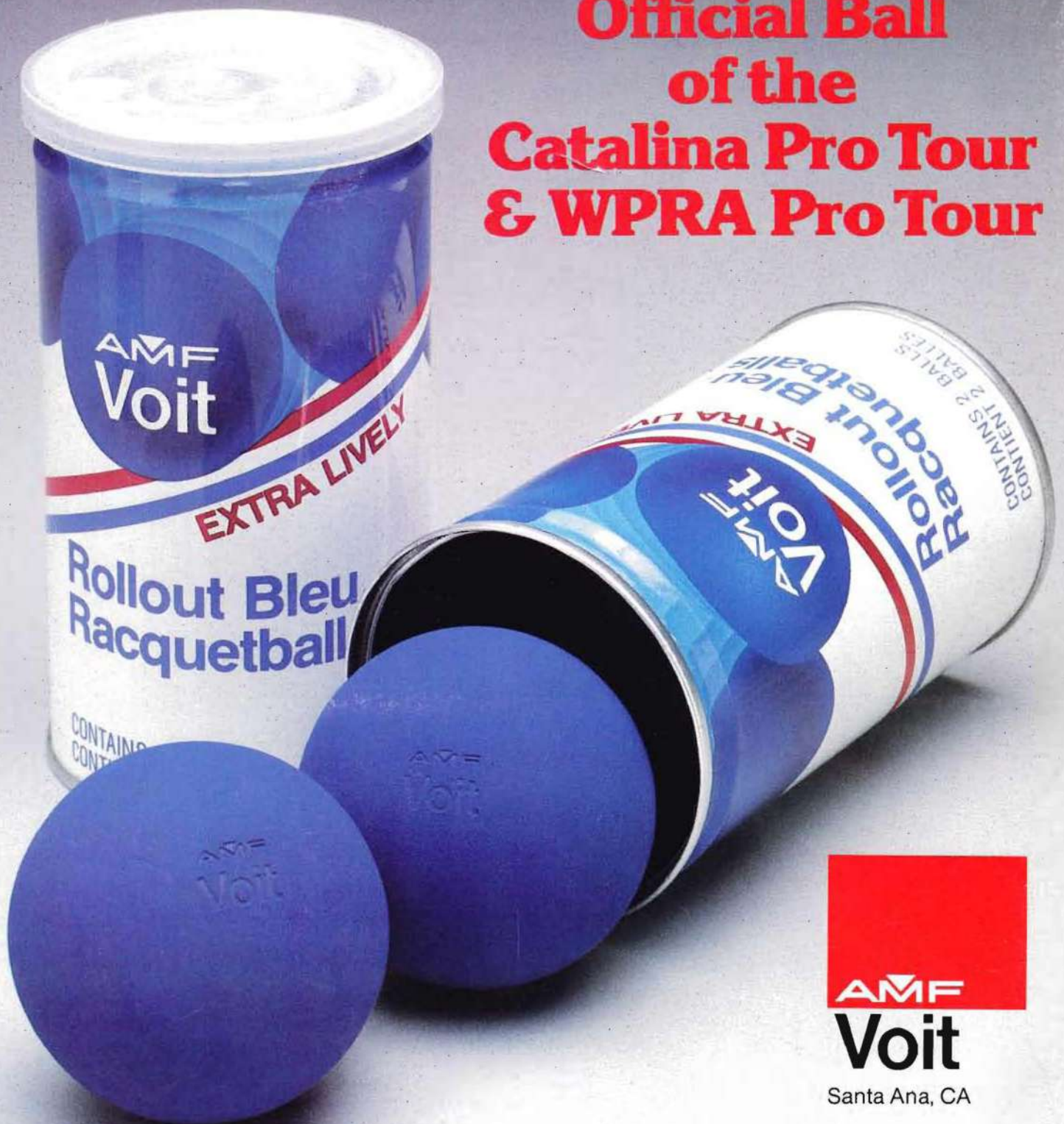
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