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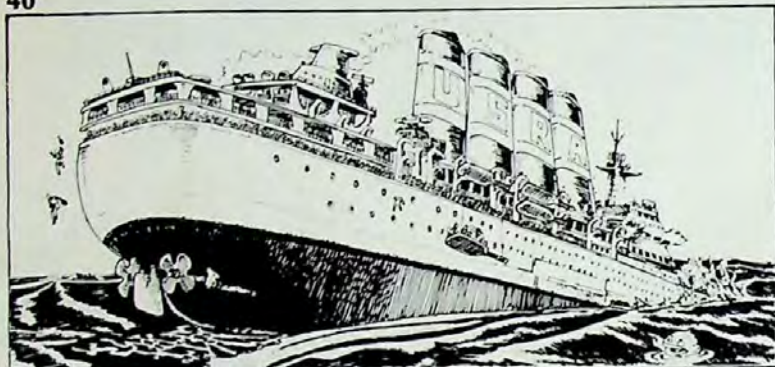


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RACQUETBALL

ILLUSTRATED

March 1981

Vol. 4, No. 3



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ADVERTISING OFFICES:

LOS ANGELES: 7011 Sunset Boulevard, Hollywood, California 90028 (213) 467-1300. Aly Spencer, Advertising Director.
NEW YORK: Vincent J. Lagana & Associates, 142 East 80th Street, New York, New York 10016 (212) 249-7071.

RACQUETBALL ILLUSTRATED is published monthly by CFW Enterprises, 7011 Sunset Boulevard, Hollywood, California 90028. Controlled Circulation is paid at Sparta, Illinois. Subscription rates in U.S.A. \$12.50 per year. Canada add \$2.00 per year for postage and all foreign countries add \$3.00 per year. Send subscription to *Racquetball Illustrated*, Subscription Dept., P.O. Box 261, Mt. Morris, Illinois 61054. For subscription services or information call (815) 734-4151.

(USPS 5508-050)

Postmaster send form 3579 to: CFW Enterprises, 7011 Sunset Boulevard, Hollywood, California 90028.

Controversy

There was once a magazine editor who told me that he hated working on his publication (it wasn't racquetball oriented) because he could never "tell it like it is."

He said he was constantly told to "play up the positive things" to the point of totally ignoring anything that could make the story appear even slightly negative. To him that also made the magazine unrealistic—a comic book, of sorts.

People may get the idea that because we are a specialty publication dedicated to one subject—racquetball—that we should automatically be the protector of that sport, the public relations vehicle for that sport, or just a plain, old mouthpiece for the sport. The trouble with that philosophy is that you end up fooling the public because when they do find out something has gone wrong—and you weren't there to tell them—they end up resenting you for lying.

We are not racquetball's public relations representative. We report the news—good or bad. A few people may not like us, but they respect us.

Racquetball Illustrated does not shy away from controversy. We report both sides of an issue, including the less flattering point of view. Sometimes it may take a bit longer for us to present the story to you but that is only because we wanted to make sure we had the proper facts and that we gave all sides a chance to respond.

In this issue, we have some controversial and semi-controversial articles.

One, titled "Is the USRA Ship Sinking?" is written by Len Ziehm of *The Chicago Sun Times* and deals with the disaffiliation of some state organizations with the United States Racquetball Association.

The article gives the viewpoints of several state representatives as well as a spokesman for the USRA. We don't expect the issue to end with this article. It will be an ongoing thing and could develop even further—one way or the other—later in the year.

We also have an article on the controversial "miracle drug" DMSO, which although not fully approved by the federal government, has been used by many athletes, including former Oakland Raider quarterback Daryle Lamonic; an article on racquetball in the prison system, which we think presents an accurate picture of the subject without over-glorifying it; a feature on Judy Thompson, who was involved with the women's pro tennis tour and its problems prior to becoming involved in the women's pro racquetball controversy. The similarities are worth reading about.

We also have two interesting instruction pieces on "strategy" and "impossible shots" and a short shot article on the upcoming suit involving Dr. Bud Muehleisen, the USRA and Seamco.

In all, an issue we think is well worth reading.

Ben Kalb

Ben Kalb



Scoring Changes

In your December issue you talked of good reasons for scoring format changes. Aside from all those reasons for changes in tournament systems, the game is in need of a change for strategic reasons.

The current system favors the offensive ("shooter") player to the point that it is possible for a player of this type (Hogan) to dominate the game with his awesome offense. Younger players now coming into the game are quick to see this. Hence, they develop the "serve and shoot" style.

In the current system, only the server has scoring potential. Low percentage/high risk shots are encouraged because mistakes only cost you the next serve, not the point. The defensive player has more to lose by playing risky, because mistakes cost him a point as well as the next serve.

The most balanced game, strategically, would be one where good shots win the rally, the serve, and a point. The receiver could then not only win the serve, but a point as well. Every good shot is greeted with a point, and every mistake gives a point away. I feel that it is very important that this factor be included in any format change in order to be a beneficial change.

All sports develop their strategy so as to reward skill and make mistakes costly. Golfers miss putts by fractions of an inch; football players miss touchdowns by inches; runners lose races by milliseconds. Yet in racquetball, it is conceivable that you could be serving in the World Championships at match point, double-fault, and still have a chance to win.

I say we need a change for strategic reasons. The cardiovascular benefits and excitement are still going to be there, but it will take time to adjust your thinking. I think once you begin to play the percentages, you will love the score-every-serve system.

Michael Keel
Director of Racquetball
Chancellors Club
Houston, Tex.

Review Of The Rules

My friends and I eagerly await each issue of *Racquetball Illustrated*. You might regard my request as quite dreary, but please note that in this area, your magazine is our only source of instruction.

Perhaps in a future issue, some space could be devoted to the beginning novice. A review of the rules, court demeanor, explanations of hinders, screens, etc., would be much appreciated.

Marilyn Plath
Batavia, N.Y.

Editor's Note: Our May issue will take you back to the basics. We will be running a 10-part instruction guide and a review of the rules.

Playing A Lefty

Timely article in your January issue on "How to Play A Lefty" by Craig McCoy.

I read the article a few days prior to playing in a local tournament, and I must say it helped me out.

The first two opponents I played were left-handed. I don't know if I can say that I won because of reading the article, but it must have helped me a little.

I ended up losing in the semifinals to the guy that eventually won the tournament. Now I want to know when you are going to give us an article on "How To Play A Righty."

Tom Draper
Portland, Ore.

Stretching

Thanks for the stretching article in your January issue.

I always read where people are recommending 10-15 minutes of stretching prior to playing but until now I have never seen exactly what exercises are best suited for racquetball.

Betty Wilson
Madison, Wisc.

State Of The Sport

Very interesting article in your January issue on "State of the Sport."

I notice how everybody seems to think that when racquetball makes it on television, it will be a monumental step for the growth of the sport. And they tell you various reasons why it hasn't been on television yet—speed of the game, scoring system, politics, lack of a national audience, etc.

I think they have all missed the boat. Racquetball needs to develop personalities. There are no unusual characters in the game, or if there are, nobody knows about them.

Racquetball also needs to be taken out of the club and put into the college arenas. Right now about the only people who watch a tournament are the other players and relatives. When it becomes a sport for the masses, then television will come begging for it. But until then, racquetball will need to do the begging.

Karen Crandall
Boston, Mass.

Instruction

Nice set of instruction articles in your December issue.

It was most pleasing to finally see an article on "B.B. Backwall" shots. I think that if anything has given me more trouble in a racquetball match, it is how to play one of those shots that rebound far off the back wall. Dave Peck's article answered my questions.

I also enjoyed the articles on "how the pros can/cannot help you" and "how to turn your game around."

Alicia Calvin
Syracuse, N.Y.

Voting System

I have always wondered who makes the decisions when a magazine selects its "athlete of the year."

I am always baffled by *Sports Illustrated's* selections, for example. They always seem motivated by someone's past history, as if to say, "Well, we blew it that year. But this will make up for it."

I also sometimes read another sports magazine, *Sport*, and more often than not they pick a basketball player, probably because their awards issue comes out during the heart of basketball season, and magazine sales will go up. And if not a basketball player, they would always select a baseball or football player. I wonder if they have ever heard of tennis or track and field?

I also read the tennis magazines often. Their selections are pretty cut and dried. It is usually the number-one player in a given season. But they still don't tell the readers how the selections were made or who made the selections.

Which brings us to *Racquetball Illustrated*. I'm glad one publication has given the vote to the subscribers.

Marvin Goldfarb
West Los Angeles, Calif.

Honest Assessment

I thoroughly enjoyed your article entitled "The State of the Sport" (January, 1981). Most publications dealing with a specific sport would not have the courage to print such an honest assessment. I applaud you.

Having been a consultant in the health and fitness industry for the past six years, you have only reiterated what I have felt and said countless times to my associates in the field and that is the simple fact that the future of the exercise and racquet sports industries is a merging of both into a total recreation industry (i.e., racquetball clubs building fitness facilities).

I only have one caution—look before you leap into a new fitness center, get credible and sound advice so that your new programs are truly scientifically and medically sound, not faddish.

Again, I complement you on your courage. Keep up the good work.

John H. Dietrich, President
American International Health Industries
New York, N.Y.

Photo Coverage

Outstanding story and photo coverage of the King's/Bank of Newport pro tournament.

As an amateur photographer, it was a pleasure to see the shots of Hogan, Peck, and Hilecher flying through the air as well as the great emotional shot of Hilecher after he beat Hogan.

Richard Balter
Pittsburgh, Pa.

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PLAYERS



(Above) Three-wall racquetball is a favorite hobby of actor Brian Stokes Mitchell, who plays the role of Jackpot Jackson on CBS' *Trapper John, M.D.* Mitchell also had a part in *Roots: The Next Generation*.



(Above right) Kelly Collins, younger sister of actress Bo Derek, took a tour of Chicago's Lakeshore Center Nautilus fitness room while on a modeling tour for Zena Jeans. With Collins (left) is Jeff Kaiser, manager of the club, and Zena Gilbert, designer of Zena Jeans.

(Right) Cathy Lee Crosby, co-host of the ABC television show *That's Incredible*, gets in a racquetball workout at The Sports Connection in Santa Monica, Calif.



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RACQUETBALL COUNTRY

By Ben Kalb

Welcome to Houston, racquetball fans. On the right, we have a brand-new club with 10 eel-lined racquetball courts, and on the left we have another new club with 11 courts of antelope-lined walls, and down the block we have another new club with 16 courts, half of which have alligator-skin front walls and elephant-skin side walls and the other half of which are lined with snakeskin. That's where Oiler coach Bum Phillips plays in his new lizard racquetball boots. Let's see now, that makes 21, 25, 27, 31, 35 clubs here or planned for here... at last count.

Whereas other cities—Los Angeles, San Diego, St. Louis, Chicago—may have reached their peak in racquetball facilities, the cities in the South and Southwest are on the verge of a construction boom. What recession? Investors are signing loan agreements with banks faster than an Earl Campbell touchdown run.

"Clubs are spurting up all over the place like oil," says Houstonian club pro Doug Lally.

"The growth of racquetball is like the growth of Houston itself," says Rich Paulson, general manager of Westchase Racquetball Club. "Houston is one of the fastest growing cities in the country. It's like a boomtown."

"Racquetball is growing here in typical Texas fashion," says Jon Ohlheiser of the soon-to-be-completed The Edge. "Fast and big."

A couple of years ago there were only two or three places to play racquetball. By the end of 1980, there were about 26, including a couple of YMCAs and a couple of courts at NASA Space Center, one of which is lined with a space mural. By the end of 1981, the list will include another six to 10 clubs.

"In the Yellow Pages a couple of years ago, you could barely find racquetball mentioned," says Brian Hickey, general manager of Clear Lake Racquetball Club. "Now you have lists and lists of them."

A racquetball map of Houston would show that most of the clubs are located on the west or the southwest side of town.

"Houston is expanding west faster than people can drive it," says Lally.

But West and Southwest Houston are not the only areas expanding. The whole city has experienced tremendous growth, mainly because of the influx of corporations and oil companies.

"The growth is phenomenal," says Mike Tanner, a sales rep for Dynacore health equipment, which is based in Houston. "It has gone hand in hand with corporate growth here."

Houston has grown so fast that some would say the city wasn't prepared for it.

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RACQUETBALL COUNTRY



Photo by Harry Butler

Above: The most expensive place in town to play is The Houstonian. Memberships cost \$10,000.

Opposite: View of the indoor ice skating rink in the middle of Houston's famous Galleria shopping mall.

Traffic jams on the freeways are worse than those in Los Angeles.

"A lot of people come to the club to play racquetball until rush hour is over," says Westchase's Paulson.

Houston has a unique atmosphere. People seem to go out of their way to have a good of time. It's not as fashion conscious as Dallas, preferring more of a casual, down-home, semi-rowdy, if you prefer, approach to life. Most of the discos are dead, having been taken over by country-western dance places. Oiler fans and their "Love Ya Blue" theme are the most enthusiastic in the National Football League, and "Love Ya Blue" souvenirs are among the most popular selling items in town. Houston also loves its Astros baseball team, especially when they are in contention for a pennant. "When the Astros were in the playoffs, this place was empty," says Ed Barziza, general manager of Courts, Etc.

Houston is also a relatively young town, a city filled with the *nouveau riche*. The money flows. People make a lot of money and they

spend a lot of money. "I'm from New York originally and money there seems to sit in people's cellars," says Lally. "Here it just moves."

The racquetball players in Houston are also on the move. National doubles champions Jeff Kwartler and Mark Malowitz play out of Houston as does Jim Austin and Jan Pasternak. Austin is part owner of The Edge, which will be located downtown. Pasternak, now off the pro tour, is still probably the best woman player in the city.

"You can probably put the top players in Houston up against those of any other city with the possible exception of some cities in California," says Barziza. "We have some top players but when you get down to, let's say, our tenth best player, the tenth best player in Los Angeles would probably crush him. There's more depth in cities such as San Diego, Los Angeles, Chicago, Memphis and St. Louis."

"There is a big gap between players who play in the top levels of play and the ones who play in the lower levels," says Mike Keel of the Chancellor's Club. "Only now is the gap being filled."

That "gap," says many people, is even wider in the women's divisions. "There aren't

that many women players, and the ones that are here, aren't that good," says Barziza. "Tennis is so strong here that all the good women athletes seem to have taken up tennis. But that will change in five to 10 years."

One of the reasons for the lack of depth in quality players is the late arrival of the sport to Houston. Major cities in the South and Southwest—New Orleans, Atlanta, Dallas, and Houston, for example—are just getting into high gear. Until recently, the nation's top players came from St. Louis, Memphis, San Diego or Los Angeles. Now you are liable to find a national champion coming out of anywhere, including Texas.

"Racquetball was slow to catch on because, like jogging, people were waiting to see if it would be a fad," says Fred Miranda, pro at the downtown Metropolitan Racquet Club.

"Until now, the racquetball rush has missed the Southwest," says Ohlheiser. "But it's beginning to come on really strong now. There are more exhibition courts now and more nationally-ranked players coming in. The locals get a chance to see the best."

The needs of the local player were the reasons the Southwest Racquetball Association was organized. It is made up of players

RACQUETBALL COUNTRY

from Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma and New Mexico, although people from Houston seem to be the impetus behind the organization. Austin is president, Ohlheiser is executive director and Barziza is on the board of directors.

"We are trying to fill the needs of the everyday racquetball player as opposed to the tournament player," says Barziza. "We think a void in this regard has been left by the USRA (United States Racquetball Association) and the AARA (American Amateur Racquetball Association)."

A tour of several Houston clubs explains, perhaps, why the emphasis is on the average local player as opposed to the tournament player. "Eighty percent of your players don't even care about tournaments," says Keel. The clubs are geared towards the recreation player. Not one club has a stadium court. Several have glass back walls but none presently has a three-wall glass exhibition court. The Edge, which is expected to open later this year, is planning a three-wall glass court but spectators will probably be limited to portable bleachers rather than permanent stadium-type seating.

"I think the typical Houston player is a once- or twice-a-weeker who plays recreationally to relieve the frustrations of driving on the freeway," says Barziza. "Most aren't into tournaments."

Courts, Etc. is unique in that it is located in the middle of a shopping center, near a supermarket and a boutique. "Great traffic flow," says Barziza. "I don't have to do much advertising. I get a lot of walk-in business."

Courts, Etc. sits in West Houston, but unlike most clubs in that part of the city, it appeals to a family crowd. "There is a lot of single-family housing here," says Barziza. "There is more permanence in the area. There are very few apartments."

Not too far away, however, is the Westchase Racquetball Club, located in singles-infested Southwest Houston. "We aren't very busy until 5 p.m. because 70 percent of our members are single, professional people," says Paulson.

Another club with a slightly different flavor to it is Clear Lake Racquetball Club, located in the southern outskirts of Houston, a stone's throw from the NASA Space Center, and one of the closest clubs to the urban cowboy hangout, Gilley's.

Clear Lake gets its members involved in activities besides racquetball and weight training. According to Hickey, the club had 77 of its members participate in a canoe trip down the Guadalupe River, and every so often they have country-western night in the club, which draws a packed house. Then, there is The Sports Page.

The Sports Page is a lounge-restaurant located on the second floor of the club. When not showing *Monday Night Football* or the World Series on the big television screen, the



Aerial view of the Houston Astrodome.

Sports Page offers first-run movies to its members for free. "Sometimes you can't find a seat in here," says Hickey. "We don't need to charge money. We make it off the sandwiches and beer."

Two of the classier clubs in Houston are Chancellor's located in the Southwest part of the city, and the downtown Metropolitan Racquet Club, known as The Met.

Chancellor has 20 tennis courts, 11 racquetball courts (with eight more on the drawing board) and one of the nicest swimming pools you'd ever want to splash around in. Membership in Chancellor's is \$1,750 plus \$52.50 a month. However, a racquetball fee (one is entitled to everything but tennis) is only \$150 plus \$40 a month. "Much to the chagrin of the tennis people, the interest in racquetball has passed up the interest in tennis," says Keel.

The Met seems to be the place where out-of-town celebrities come to play. Last year the celebrity guest roster included John Travolta, who came in twice while filming *Urban Cowboy*, Farrah Fawcett and Ryan O'Neal (seven times in one trip to Houston), Michael Landon, Eartha Kitt and Bill Cosby.

The Met is located on the sixth floor of a high rise, and is spread out over 3½ acres under one roof. The first five floors are parking. At present, the club has 14 tennis courts, eight racquetball courts and two squash courts, but because of the interest in racquetball, one tennis court and ball alley are being taken out to be replaced by five racquetball courts and one more squash court. The fee to join The Met is \$2,000 plus \$63 a month, but there is a racquetball membership (good for everything but tennis) at \$400 plus \$38 a month.

A fee of \$2,000 may seem like an awfully

great expense but it's nothing compared to the fee at the Houstonian. The Houstonian is one of the most exclusive clubs in the country. The brainchild of businessman Tom Fatjo, The Houstonian is more than just a fitness center. It is a 300-room hotel, including three dining facilities, and the American Productivity Center, a non-profit center which researches productivity. In the future, condominiums will also be added to the 18-acre area.

The cost of the project was estimated at \$39 million, which may be one reason why the initiation fee is \$10,000. Membership is limited to 1,000 people, who also must pay \$65 to \$80 per month dues.

The fitness center has eight racquetball courts in addition to the usual amenities. "People were picking on us at first because we have plaster walls instead of the panel systems," says Lally. "But we don't have the volume of players going through our courts like a regular club will have."

"We have some good high B players here but no real As. The interest in women players is growing."

Vice President George Bush is a member of the club, and others such as actor Larry Hagman, singer Dionne Warwick and former Dallas pro football star Roger Staubach have used the facilities.

With the abundance of the clubs in the Southwest section of Houston, the next city racquetball boom will be in the Northern part of the city, near Houston Intercontinental Airport. Former Los Angeles Ram Dave Elmdorf is building a club in this section which will soon be completed.

Elmdorf is one of the better athlete-players in town as is Houston Oiler center Carl Mauck and Houston Astro manager Bill Virdon. But actually several of the Oilers, Astros and pro basketball Rockets play racquetball in between visits to the local urban cowboy hangouts.

Houston has earned the reputation as the birthplace for the urban cowboy trend that is sweeping the country. But that stereotype may be stretching it.

"I know people like to identify the urban cowboy from Houston," says Rocky Bruno of the Westside Racquetball Club. "But I don't know if it's real or a put on for Friday night."

"Houston has both elements of cowboys," says Ohlheiser. "At a rodeo you can find someone in a \$2,000 suede outfit sitting next to a factory worker in a grubby shirt and jeans, and both of them get along fine with each other."

That cowboy camaraderie also extends to the racquetball club.

"In Houston, we like to refer to racquetball players as real people," says Keel. "One guy may own an oil company and the other guy may work in a factory, but when they get in there in their old, sweaty t-shirts, they are both the same."



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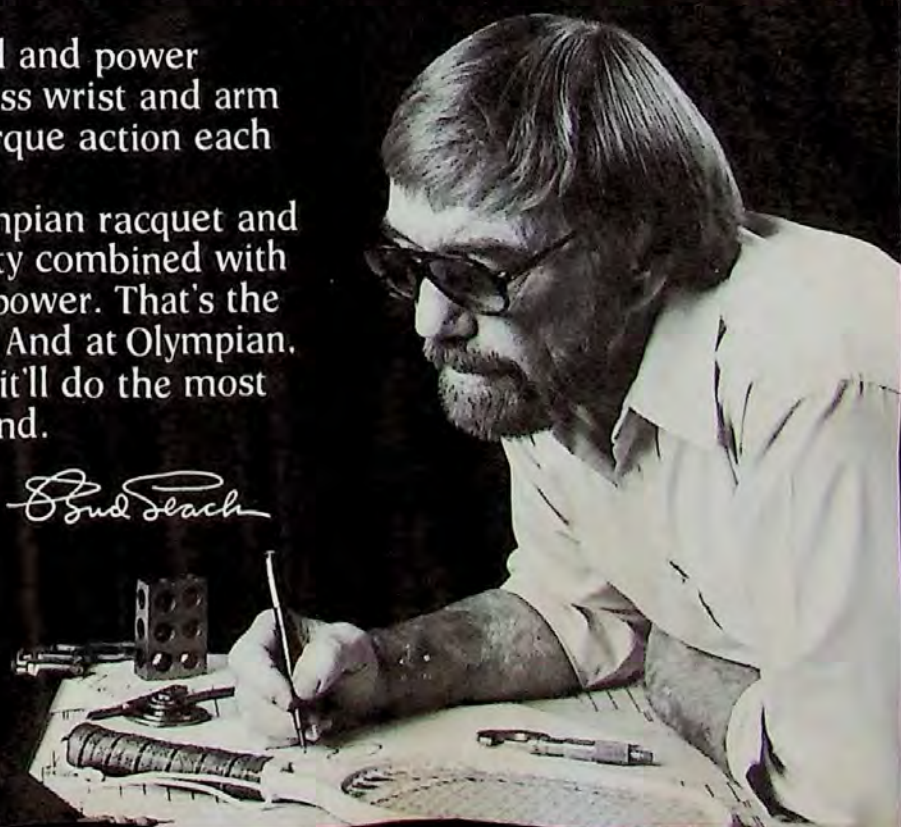


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FROM ONE TOUR TO ANOTHER

When Judy Thompson was on the Virginia Slims tennis tour, she was often mistaken for Billie Jean King. But those days are gone. Today, it's the WPGA tour, and similar growing pains.

By Lawrence Tabak

In September, 1973, before Judy Thompson had given up the Virginia Slims pro tennis tour for a career in racquetball, she was approached in a Houston locker room by a woman who demanded that she autograph a book about Billie Jean King.

"I'm not Billie Jean King," Thompson said. In a few days King was to face Bobby Riggs in the Astrodome and people were talking about little else.

"Of course," the woman said, "I know you're in a hurry but it'll only take a second."

Back in 1973, Judy Thompson wore wire-rimmed glasses and her medium length hair was styled like King's. What had at first been an amusing resemblance was turning into an annoyance. Carrying her rackets through airports, Thompson was getting tired of the hundreds of double takes and the dozens of autograph seekers.

Earlier in the year, while practicing on a court next to Billie Jean, Thompson had asked the tennis star if she were having problems being confused with Judy Thompson. Billie Jean King laughed and admitted that it had been "something of a problem." But no one obviously asked Billie Jean to sign Judy Thompson's name on a book or souvenir program, unlike that day in the Houston locker room.

"It can't possibly hurt you to sign this," the woman persisted. "I can't see why you're making such a big deal about it."

With a shrug of defeat Thompson took the pen and on the inside of the cover scrawled her version of a Billie Jean King autograph. The woman beamed and walked off.

A few days later about 37 million viewers watched Billie Jean's victory over Riggs, giving tennis—especially women's tennis—a needed shot in the arm.

From her home in Davenport, Ia. and on and off the Slims circuit since its inception in 1971, Thompson had watched this struggle for acceptance. Never more than a fringe player, Thompson had nevertheless sat in on

players' meetings with King, Margaret Court and Rosie Casals and listened to the long discussions over prize money, schedules, officiating, and sponsors.

Sound familiar?

"Really, the same things the Women's Professional Racquetball Association discusses," Thompson says.

When the women racquetball pros first organized the WPGA, Thompson was much more than a listener. As a player she won the 1978 national 35-and-over title as an amateur. Since then she has played in numerous professional tournaments and at one time was ranked in the top 15 by the WPGA. When the WPGA first formed in 1979, Thompson was elected vice president.

"Our complaints were almost identical to the ones that the women tennis pros were making around 1970," says Thompson. A more equal distribution of prize money, although neither of us were demanding equality of prize money initially. A say in how the tournaments were run, better publicity for the women and more time on the stadium courts instead of being pushed to the back courts. Really the same things. And like the women tennis players we got nowhere."

In September of 1970, the women tennis pros discovered that prize money at a major tournament in Los Angeles would give the men's winner \$12,500 and the women's winner \$1,500. Some of the top players threatened to boycott the tournament and eventually they asked Gladys Heldman, then the publisher of *World Tennis Magazine*, to negotiate for them. She could make no progress and, instead set up a separate tournament in Houston with a \$5,000 winner's purse and invited the top players to participate. The powers banned the women involved and, hence, an independent women's tour was born.

In racquetball, a similar move by the national organization, the NRC, provided the impetus for an independent tour.

After forming the WPGA and appointing a commissioner, the women were hoping they could negotiate their complaints with the NRC. But the WPGA had no more luck than the tennis players had had. The NRC wanted things done on its terms and the WPGA rejected them unanimously. Things were still up in the air when the first WPGA tournament was held in February, 1980 in New York.

"Most of the players were hoping that the NRC would continue to sponsor pro events for women," says Thompson. "The rumors of being dropped had a lot of players down, but

personally I wasn't feeling too bad. I figured a ban from the NRC would be a blessing in disguise. It would pull us together, and it did. I think it's important to remember that the NRC dropped us. It was not a boycott by the players. Now that we're on our own we're much better off."

Largely because of the backing of Phillip Morris, the Slims tennis tour was able to offer 14 stops in 1971 with a total purse of \$309,000. Many of the women were reluctant to flaunt the national organization by joining the circuit. Publicity was hard to come by and so were spectators. Chris Everet and Evonne Goolagong opted for the national organization's competing circuit and many experts predicted failure for the Slims tour. The experts were wrong.

As Thompson details the problems of the new WPGA tour, she hits many of the same difficulties.

"One of the biggest problems was in getting all the players behind us. The top player, the one getting the most publicity, was not a strong advocate for an independent circuit. Shannon Wright just isn't a Billie Jean King. She wasn't really interested in joining the WPGA until we actually had a tournament with prize money. Karin Walton began our first year as secretary-treasurer but resigned under what I think was the influence of Charlie Drake at Leach (her sponsor). Sarah Green decided she wanted to play in our first tournament but didn't want to join and give up the 15 percent of prize money that goes to the WPGA. Eventually she got a court injunction and we had to let her in.

"I had hoped that one of the top players would become a leader. It would have been great, for instance, to see Jennifer Harding, who so many of the players look up to, make a strong statement. But so far she's been in the background. Some of the players were at first more concerned about offending their sponsors than the future of the tour. I think we're getting over that."

Thompson recalls that the tennis circuit was not exactly an instant success either. Billie Jean King and the other players often had to sell their own tickets. They would spend hours going from radio stations to newspapers to television stations to get the local media to cover their tournaments. Such hard work will be necessary on the racquetball tour and that is beginning to be seen.

"Marci Greer is a great example," Thompson says. "She almost single-handedly put together a tour stop in (Escondido) California. She went out and got the sponsors, set up the

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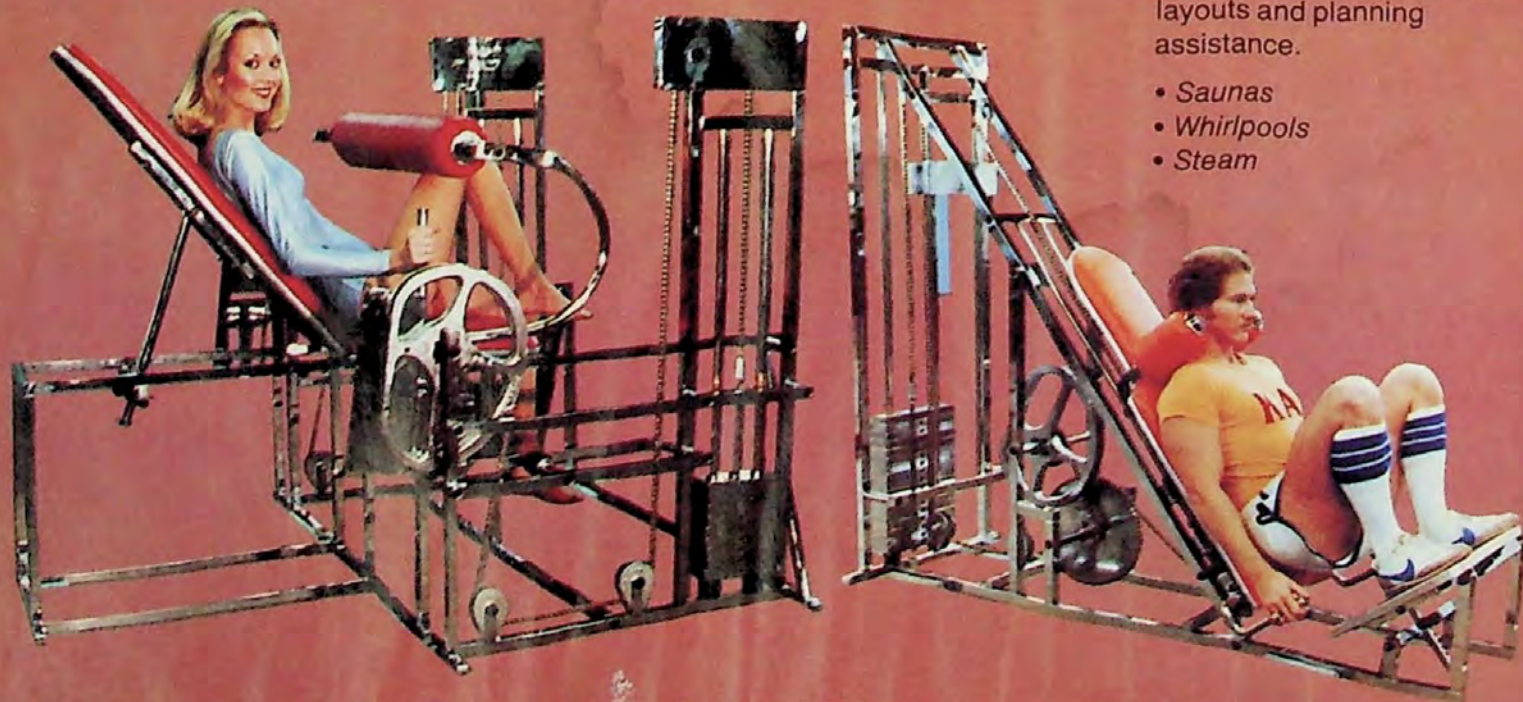
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FROM ONE TOUR TO ANOTHER



"The WPRA is working to insure that the players act more professionally," says Thompson.

publicity, ran the tournament, and even managed to do quite well in it. We need more players willing to put out that kind of effort."

Getting the players together is one problem. Convincing them to act professionally is another. Billie Jean, in her book, recalls how hard it was to get the players to think of themselves as professional athletes. She recalls with chagrin a young player who walked away from a scheduled interview after a few minutes because she had a date with a friend from college.

Thompson has seen similar problems. "One night during the tournaments we'll have a party where the players meet the sponsors. It's really a publicity thing, but we've had players who just don't show up," says Thompson. "The WPRA is working to insure that players act more professionally. We even set

up a dress code committee. Some of the players were wearing shorts that were too short, others liked to play without bras, a few would even wear dirty tennis shoes. We're trying to tell them that it's not a good idea to wear warm-ups all day, even into restaurants in the evenings. We don't want players showing up for interviews looking like slob. Mostly this sort of thing can be taken care of by a little ribbing from the other players. I think the players are cleaning up their acts."

Even with a united, professional group of players, a successful tour is not a certainty. There is no Phillip Morris or Avon waiting in the wings now for the WPRA. And while racquetball is catching America's fancy, its top players haven't. Whereas the Virginia Slims tennis tour filled a four-month slot in a year's schedule that included European and

Australian tournaments of great tradition, the racquetball pros must put together an entire year's schedule in the United States and the economic climate is not conducive to finding sponsors now. Tennis courts can be easily set up in any basketball arena, while even the largest racquetball stadiums couldn't hold a decent high school basketball crowd. It has been said that no sport is totally professional until the gate supports it. Still Thompson is optimistic.

"I think the women's game has great spectator appeal. We have longer rallies than the men and the ball is easier to see. Most of the people relate to our game better," she says.

When Thompson was on the Slims tour, even the finals often drew only 3,000 spectators. But the players stuck it out. By 1974 the tour was packing large basketball arenas, although Thompson was no longer playing competitive tennis.

"My husband and I used to go down to the Davenport YMCA to work out in the winters and we'd watch people playing racquetball. It looked like a good time so we picked up the rules from watching, got a couple of those big old wooden racquets that were the only kind available back then and started knocking the ball around."

Even though Thompson was still serious about tennis, racquetball soon became more than just a way to keep in shape. It was only natural that she began thinking of playing in a tournament.

"I figured I might as well start out at a big tournament, so I entered the highest division available at the regional championships in Minneapolis," she recalls. "I was a little stunned when I knocked off the first seed in the first round and I ended up playing into the finals."

"At about the same time a developer began constructing the first racquetball club in our area and I was asked if I'd be interested in getting in on the ground level. Now we have three clubs with twenty-three courts. Spending so much time around racquetball, my tennis game just sort of dissolved and I began playing racquetball year round."

But even with such an uncertain future, Thompson doesn't discourage young racquetball players from making a go at it. She wishes someone would have given her similar advice when she was on and off the tennis tour.

"I tell them they've got to go all out, play every tournament they possibly can and stick with it for at least three years. Then they'll really know if they can make it or not."

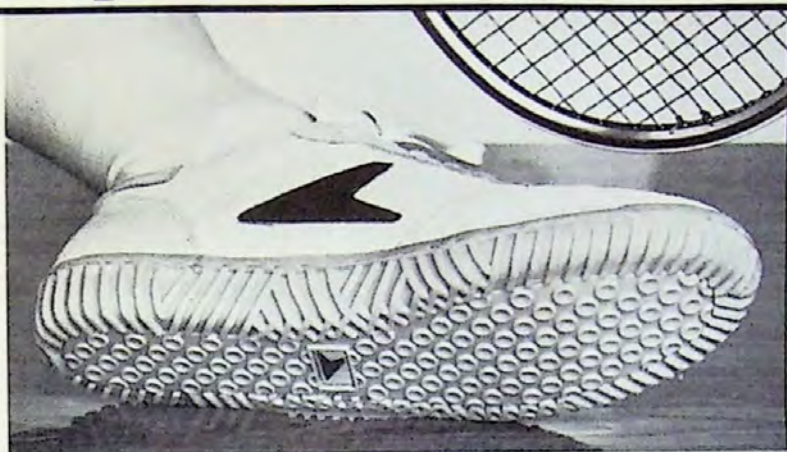
Whether right around the corner or light years away, Thompson sees the day when more than just the top few players will be making a living playing racquetball.

"I think TV coverage will make the big difference, and we need better courts and stadiums," she says. "There's talk of portable courts that can be set up in existing arenas and that's certainly a step in the right direction."

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A Monkey Off His Back

The racquetball court is one place actor Greg Evigan can be left alone without his chimp companion.

By Mathew Tekulsky

It is perhaps indicative of Greg Evigan's personality that when he walked out of the rear door of the racquetball courts at the Warner Center Racquet Club in Woodland Hills, Calif., and encountered some stark, cement steps facing the fence of a tennis court about 15 feet away, with just a narrow, paved walkway in between, Evigan sat down happily, kicked up his heels, and didn't seem to be bothered at all by the unorthodox arrangements for an interview.

Star of the television series *BJ and the Bear*, Evigan was participating this day in the Steve Garvey Celebrity Sports Classic, which raises funds for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. This was his first racquetball tournament, and so far he had lost his first three matches. The chimp wasn't there to cheer him on. Nevertheless, he stated gamely that he was "having a great time."

Evigan started playing racquetball last March while doing a country-rock television special on location in Virginia. One of the guys in his band (in which Evigan plays his own instruments and performs his own music) asked if he wanted to play racquetball. "I said, 'Yeah, I'll try it. I've never played,'" recalls Evigan, "so we went down and we hit it around and I really liked the game. I played it once that day, and as soon as I got back to LA., I got some guys together who had already played and we all started playing together."

During his summer hiatus, he was playing almost every day for two hours, but he started taking a couple of days off, "because you can't play as well. It's too much. You have to let your mind sit awhile." Still, he spent enough time on the court to develop quite rapidly into a pretty good racquetball player.

Part of the credit for this, surprisingly, is due to the game of pool, which Evigan plays. In fact, racquetball to him "felt like pool with a racquet. It's the same type of angles. It's shaped the same way as a pool table, except you have the ceilings. There are more angles on a racquetball court, but the ball does the same thing off the walls as it does off the banks of a pool table. It made me understand the angles right away. It's imprinted in my head what a ball does when it hits a wall and then hits another one."

Does this mean that if people went out and played pool, it might help them with their racquetball?

"If they knew how to play pool already, then they'd only have to learn one game," says Evigan. "If they had to go out and learn pool



Greg Evigan and his television partner on the NBC show *B.J. And The Bear*.

and then learn racquetball, they'd find that some of the angles in pool would work on simpler shots but, like the guy I just played, he's got the ceiling shots down where the ball stops in the middle of the floor and you're over there on the other side of the court waiting for the ball to come to you, and it's not coming."

For Evigan, playing pool made racquetball that much easier to learn. He used to play a little tennis, but he didn't like the game as much as racquetball. "It came more naturally than any sport that I've ever played before. I used to play baseball, but this I really like. It's going to take awhile, but it's good playing these guys in a tournament because they've been playing a long time. You learn a lot just from playing with somebody new like that."

"What I wanted to get out of today was to come here and get some tips playing with these guys, and watch how they play. I don't think about people watching, and I don't think about pressure in the game. I'm into the game, and that's why I came here—just to play it. I knew that the best I could hope for was getting some good games. That's what I was hoping for. Not to go out of here with a big trophy, or anything like that."

A Monkey Off His Back

Evigan wants to "keep playing and keep getting better" at racquetball, "and just practice my shots and come back again and play another one, whatever's next. I just want to keep playing. I like the game a lot."

Does he see himself playing tournaments, rather than just playing for recreation?

"Maybe. Maybe. I don't know. I've got to really work at it, and I see where I've got to go. I watched some of these guys play, so then I'll go practice, and next time. . ."

No doubt more valuable to him than a racquetball trophy, however, is the fact that he's starting his third season as BJ McKay, a trucker who, with his sidekick, a chimp (the Bear), "gets into different situations, being set up, helping people out—an adventure show on the road." Evigan adds that the show often deals with themes of social interest, such as the killing of wild horses, the hauling of deadly cargo (a bacterium that was killing people in a town), and trying to get rid of dumping sites. His goal: "Oh, you know, when the story's over, when the people walk away from the tube, they say, 'Oh yeah, we ought to do something about that problem. Somebody should stand up, and we all individually should take more interest in the things that are happening to us.' That's what I like to see. But the people at the network don't want to preach too much. They want it to be light, and fun, and all that. So I'm trying to keep it a little more serious and make the people pay attention more, instead of eating dinner and watching the show, you know what I mean? But it's a daily fight to keep it like that."

Evigan notes that the show has a new format this year.

"We've gone to L.A. and set up our own trucking business. A friend of mine was run over by a guy who was trying to get rid of him, so I came to help him out and get his trucking business back into shape. I get a lot of trouble from the police, so nobody will drive for me. Instead I find seven beautiful women to drive for me, and I interview them each individually (he chuckles lightly), and I hire them all. So it's BJ and the seven lady truckers (and the Bear, of course). The women will be seen throughout various episodes. I want to get back to the other formats though, so that we don't lose that, but this is the new set-up. I've got this business, and we're going to try to turn it into a competitive business with the businesses that already exist in L.A."

Meanwhile, Evigan says BJ will continue to be involved with "social interests."

"That's what we're trying for," says Evigan. But it's hard to get because of what the network wants to see and what they think people want to see."

During the interview, Evigan good-naturedly fended off autograph seekers (mostly young girls) who had discovered the secluded interview spot. He is somewhat of a teen idol, even though he is happily married. But what about Evigan's view of himself? Does he see himself as a trucker?

"I do when I'm working," he says. "I try to find out as much about what they do as I can. I never was a trucker before, ever. I've been a

professional actor for eleven years, so I just try to do my character, my part. You see a lot of truckers now. I don't want to go necessarily with their character. I want to be an individual. Maybe I wouldn't do what a lot of guys do."

Although he currently drives a Volkswagen, he has a trucking license because he drives a truck in the show. ("We just got new trucks for the new season.") And while he doesn't embody all of the elements of a trucker in his own personality ("Oh, no, no. Definitely not," he says, chuckling), he'd "like to think" that he has the trucker's qualities of being spontaneous and sincere in his way of life.

"I think it's true. I feel that way. You've got to be open with people. Otherwise, you'd be

Evigan hits a few around with Los Angeles Dodger star Steve Garvey at the Steve Garvey Celebrity Sports Classic for the benefit of Multiple Sclerosis at Warner Center in Woodland Hills, Calif.



B.S.ing them," says Evigan.

Conversely, he thinks that his own social consciousness exists in truckers too; that contrary to popular belief, truckers do have a social conscience.

"A lot of them do," he says. "I think their whole attitude is, 'We're out on the road, we've got a job to do,' and they like things to happen that are exciting. They like to run into trouble and get out of it smelling like a rose. I find that they really like to help people when they can. I mean, if there's somebody broken down on the road, you can bet that a trucker will stop and help them out before somebody else will, but some people think, 'They've probably got a gun,' or 'They'll shoot my head off or something.' But that's one thing I notice. They have a sensitivity towards people."

Despite his success as an actor, Evigan classifies himself as a musician first. He plays

the piano, drums, sax, and flute, among other instruments, and he writes his own music and sings as well. In the future, he would like his career to head towards making records.

"I want to spend most of my time in the studio," he states, "producing records and writing tunes, singing them, and playing them. I like being in the studio. That's where I like to be. Then feature films. I could do that. Then musicals. I'd like to see them come back."

As soon as he gets done with this year's episodes of *BJ and the Bear*, Evigan will start work on a "Movie of the Week" for which he's written a complete piece, a theme song that will be played throughout the show, including the end. "That's when it's most important," he says.

What kind of music does he write? Pop? Rock? Country?

"All of those. All different kinds. I don't write



Evigan's first love is music. He sings and plays several instruments.



just one way. I'll write with somebody else in mind. I'll write with Barbra Streisand in mind, or I'll write with Chopin in mind."

And what kind of song would he write for himself, that he would perform, say, on an LP or as a single?

"Rhythm and blues. Jazz-rock. That type of thing. I cross over into a lot of different things, but that's basically what I like to listen to."

But whatever he's doing in the future, it seems certain that Evigan will always find time for sports, including racquetball.

"You're dealing constantly with your mind and body, right? Your mind can work all the time, and it's a little easier in a lot of ways if you're willing to concentrate, but your body takes a little more work," says Evigan. "So I'm definitely going to keep playing this sport because I like it. It feels good. It feels natural. It keeps me feeling really good. And it keeps the weight down, too, for the show."

"I think it's important for people to have some sport, something to keep them active so that their body is healthy, so it can feed the mind with healthy blood. That's what keeps the mind working right."

And how about Bear? Did he want to say anything about the chimp besides the fact that he had no plans to take him on as a doubles partner?

"Ah, the chimp," says Evigan, "He's a good kid, man. He's just a great chimp. He's been working out good. His head's getting bigger, but his body's not."

RACQUETBALL BEHIND BARS

The sport is one of the most popular inside prison walls.

By Sandra Segal

The rough concrete wall resounds to the blows of the ball. A player, intent on making contact, swings, and the ball twangs against the sweet spot of the battered racquet. If you were watching the game, you might easily be so immersed in the skillful and determined use of a one-wall court as to forget for the moment the guards maintaining a grim surveillance in towers on top of the wall, or the correction officers patrolling the grounds. You could forget them, that is, until 8:30 p.m., when all inmates must return to their cell block after another day in prison.

The media have so often portrayed racquetball as the game of upwardly mobile young professionals that it is easy to forget how racquetball has penetrated all levels of society. Even within the walls of America's maximum security penitentiaries, racquetball is flourishing.

Prison officials do not like to release the names of the top athlete-prisoners to the public. However, each penitentiary has a staff of recreation specialists who are eager to discuss the programs they have developed. In addition to racquetball, these programs include an extremely wide range of sports such as baseball, basketball, weight lifting, boxing, ping pong, tennis, football, and soccer. "We try to provide a sports program in any area where the men express an interest," says Ed Crosley, recreation specialist at Atlanta State Prison, typifying the attitude of the prison recreation departments.

In most prisons, racquetball is a newcomer to the sports program, and there are serious handicaps to developing a viable racquetball program behind bars. The biggest disadvantage is the absence of four-wall courts. Russell Ross, recreation supervisor for the U.S. Penitentiary in Terre Haute, Ind., explains, "There will never be a four-wall court because of the security problems." Mike Ferretti, teacher of physical education and recreation at San Quentin outside San Francisco, says, "We do have some three-wall courts with a screen for the fourth wall. I've tried to get courts with a back wall of transparent plastic. But they built the three-wall courts with the idea of surveillance in mind."

Few prisons even have three-wall courts. Most racquetball courts started their existence as one-wall handball courts. Immer Snearly, head of the recreation department for Attica Correctional Facility in New York, describes the situation in his prison. "We have nine handball courts. Each cell block has a large concrete wall and there's a handball court on each side. Then there's one handball court in the gym. Racquetball can be played on all of these courts." At Leaven-

worth Penitentiary in Kansas, Ken Myers, recreation specialist, says, "We use the outer walls as handball courts—there are about 15 totally. Racquetball is played on the courts, but it's not as popular as handball. Only about 15 to 20 players out of the 800 inmates are racquetball players. If we had four-wall courts there might be a little more interest."

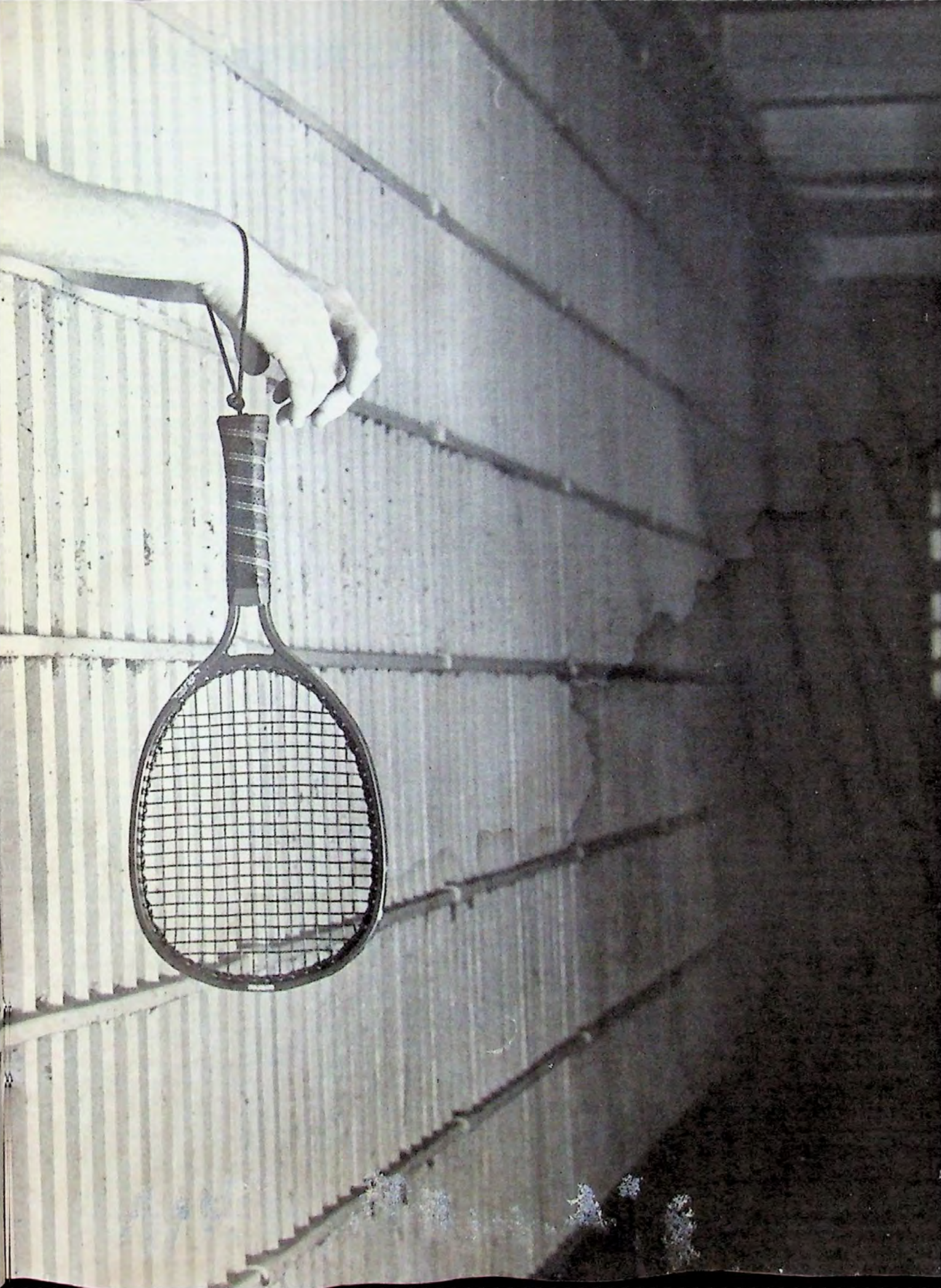
This court situation severely limits the skill levels which the inmates can attain. Ross says, "Out of ten hardcore players I might have two to four who could compete outside—but they don't have the advantage of four walls. We took four men from the farm camp (a minimum security facility outside the walls of the U.S. Penitentiary at Terre Haute) to a tournament in Terre Haute. They were demolished. They just weren't used to four walls."

Prisons also have a serious problem in providing racquets for the inmates, because of a restricted budget and because of the high deterioration rate of racquets. Attica's Snearly explains, "Originally we ordered 36 racquets. Now there's a cutback in the recreation budget, and we have to go back to handball. It's cheaper, as you only have to buy the ball. Inmates are harder on racquets than the average person. They get mad, and throw a racquet on the ground or smash it. The last of the racquets have disappeared, and I haven't been able to replace them."

Terre Haute's recreation director Ross agrees with Snearly's analysis, saying, "I provide racquetball balls, but no racquets. No one here is responsible enough. They take them out, steal them, and break them. If they want a racquet they have to purchase one through my office. The real racquetball players do buy them. In fact, they usually buy two so they can give one to someone to get a game going."

Myers says that this racquet problem causes many Leavenworth inmates to return to handball. "So many people use the racquets that they get destroyed. We have about 12 racquets of our own, and inmates can purchase their own. But because of the trouble involved in getting your own racquet or checking out a racquet—if one is available—most people prefer handball, where you just have to put the ball into your pocket."

Steve Scherer, recreation director of Rahway State Prison in New Jersey, has been trying to change the attitude of the inmates toward the equipment, and has met with some success. "We know that inmates are harder on all types of sports equipment, except for the experienced players," he says. "The prisoners in general are from low income backgrounds and are more violent. They may have the attitude, 'The prison bought it, let them take care of it.' But the prison here had the same attitude. There was never any discipline as far as the sports went, and they never



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made the prisoner responsible for his equipment. They used to spend tens of thousands of dollars on equipment, and then the players would break it up.

"Since I came here, I've made the men responsible for what they use. If they want to use the equipment they have to keep it in good shape and return it. Now the men police themselves."

Despite these equipment problems, racquetball has been played in prisons for years, and in many places it is starting to overtake handball. Attica introduced the game in 1977. "Some of the teachers were playing the game," Snerly says. "They suggested it would be a good activity, and we brought in 36 racquets. It went over very well, and became popular in the yard. Now they're playing more racquetball than handball."

At Rahway, interest in racquetball has had a steady growth rate. "Out of 1,100 inmates, about 110 to 200 are regular players," Scherer says. "They've been playing it here on and off for years. But since we bought racquets this year, we've been inundated with requests for them. That's unusual for the type of population we have here. It's 87 percent black, and they usually want handball." Why did Rahway buy racquets for the first time this year? "Oh, because I play," he admits.

Ferretti notes that at San Quentin, "They were already playing racquetball when I got here in 1974. Now we have maybe 60 or 70 players out of a population of 3,000. I know that the sport is popular enough so that racquetball equipment is bought statewide for all California prisons."

As with the country in general, the South and Midwest are beginning to adopt racquetball a little more slowly. At Terre Haute, there are about 50 to 75 inmates involved. Ross says, "Racquetball hit about one and one-half years ago. But there are still three times as many handball players." Ed Crosley says that in Atlanta State Prison, "We have 50 players out of a population of 1,000—that's about as many as there are tennis players. But baseball and basketball have by far the biggest programs."

The most striking example of the popularity of racquetball in the prison system is at the U.S. Penitentiary at MacNeil Island in Seattle, Wash. This prison is now closing, to be converted into a state institution. However, according to recreation director Thomas Fanning, interest in racquetball was at its peak in 1975, with 350 racquetball players out of a

population of 1,500. Last year, as inmates were beginning to be transferred in preparation for the prison's closing, there were still 250 players. "Although the prison has only 30 racquets now, in earlier years there were 250 racquets for the inmates," Fanning says. "It was the most popular game besides basketball."

The prison also had regular racquetball tournaments. "We had our own tourney at Thanksgiving," says Fanning. "We had singles and doubles competition, with at least 275 people participating." The prison also had a racquetball team, the captain of which is going to be released from prison this year. "He's an excellent player," says Fanning. "We gave him furlough privileges and he's played in tournaments in McCord, Seattle, and Spokane, Wash., and in Oregon. He's played about 50 games, and has lost about six. The first three times he went out it was hard to play with a ceiling and a back wall. But after about six games, he got used to them and began winning."

MacNeil is not the only prison to have racquetball tournaments. Attica has a tournament once a year; at Leavenworth, the recreation department tries to have at least one trophy tournament per year; and San Quentin has two tournaments a year. San Quentin also has a six-man racquetball team, and has organized games with non-inmates. Ferretti says, "Players from private clubs in the area, like Rancho Royal Club, will come in and play the men. The only rules are that the outsiders must be over 18 and no women can play." Ferretti says that many of his players are quite good. "It's hard to say what level they'd be in, but I know two of the guys are in the B range. One of my men beat a player who was ranked A in open tournaments."

Atlanta State Prison has tournaments on every holiday. "We have A and B leagues in singles and doubles competitions, with around 50 people participating," says Crosley. "Four of our players are excellent, and probably about 12 of them are above average."

Tournaments are particularly popular at Rahway. "We must have had 300 people at the last tournament," Scherer says. "And the skill level is very high. I have 40 to 50 hardcore players here who know every rule. If you try to call a line call, they'll recite you the actual rule from the rule book." Scherer says he frequently plays with the inmates. "I'm not supposed to, but I do anyway—can't get a good game otherwise."

There are a few restrictions on who can participate in the sports and on how much time is available to play. But as Fanning points out, one of the reasons the men can attain a reasonably good skill level under adverse conditions is that, "We have plenty of time to practice." At Attica, for example, the inmates can play in the yard until 8:30 p.m., when they have to return to their cell block. "The only restriction they have is if they've been placed in a key block because of a disciplinary action,"

"They used to steal the equipment. Now, if they want to use it, they have to return it."

Sneary explains: "The Adjustment Committee might decide to lock them in their cells for seven days, or take away recreation privileges. It depends on what the charges were. If they know the inmate is a racquetball player, they might take rec away from him for two weeks."

Myers explains that at Leavenworth the only restrictions on participation are the ones the inmates place upon themselves. "It's like grade school. There might be some social pressure to play, but some people have a fear of not succeeding." The amount of time available to the inmates for recreation depends on their jobs. "Everyone has a different job," he says. "If they have a daytime job they can play in the evening hours. If they have kitchen work, they have free time during the day. Everyone has at least three hours a day for leisure time. On the weekends, if they have no job, they have eight to ten hours to play."

At San Quentin, racquetball players must be in the "main-line population," that is, not locked up. The time available to play again depends on the job assignment. "The gym is open from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. People who want to play at a competition level, like our varsity racquetball team, can work out from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.," Ferretti says.

It may comfort racquetball enthusiasts to learn that they need not give up their favorite sport should they ever find themselves behind bars. In fact, many racquetball players go behind bars voluntarily—as the teachers and supervisors of physical education pro-

"We have plenty of time to practice."

grams. Fanning, Scherer, and Crosley play regularly; Ross says the Terre Haute staff has joined a local racquetball club in large numbers; and Ferretti says he played occasionally before 1974, but has been playing with much greater frequency and has improved his game since working with the prison system.

Why did these sports-oriented people make themselves part of prison life? Sneary was looking for a job. He had been teaching drivers education and physical education in Delmira, N.Y. He says, "People told me, 'They're dropping Drivers Ed, and you're going to be bumped.' So I took the civil service exam and got a job at the Delmira Correctional Facilities." From there, it was just a short hop to Attica.

Myers was looking for advancement. "I started as a corrections officer, and then moved into adult basic education for seven years," he says. "Finally I moved into recreation. Eventually I'd like to get into a higher position, like case management or unit management. There's a lot of movement in the prison bureaucracy. There are a lot of opportunities."

Scherer, who plays racquetball every day, had another reason for getting involved in the prison system. For him, it was more of a calling. "I grew up in Brooklyn where it's a tough kind of neighborhood. When I was 14 years old someone asked me what I wanted to do, and I said, 'I want to work in a prison.' Now Jewish kids never work in prisons, they become doctors or lawyers or something. But after I went to college and into the army, I went from job to job. Then I started working in Rahway as a corrections officer. One day I got a call, and they said they had an opening for recreation director. So here I am."

Despite the positive attitude of the recreation specialists to their jobs and to racquetball, many of them feel that racquetball will never become a favorite in the prison system because of the expenses involved. Scherer sums it up, "It's hard to budget for racquetball, and let's face it, despite my priorities at the prison, racquetball is low man on the totem pole. Football, basketball, and soccer all come first. If you can find the money you can supply the sport. Otherwise, you have to get by on what you have."



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Cartoon by Tony Saltzman

"IMPOSSIBLE SHOTS"

By Rita Hoff

I have titled this article "Impossible Shots" because that is about what they are. They are not planned. They really come more out of luck than skill and are, in effect, meant to surprise your opponent.

The shots are the "wallpaper shot," the overhead-backhand reverse pinch; the overhead pinch and two types of three-wall shots.

These shots are low percentage shots. They are attempts to demoralize your opponent. They will impress spectators if you hit them for winners but, on the other hand, you can look bad if they nose dive 15 feet from the front wall. These shots can be practiced but don't spend too much time on them because you probably won't use them often.

A "wallpaper shot" usually refers to a ball that comes off the front wall and clings close to the side wall.

In returning a wallpaper shot, it is best to make a defensive return to keep the ball in play. You are usually attempting this return from the back half of the court. Whether forehand or backhand, there is a good method in returning a wallpaper shot:

1. The racquet should be parallel to the side wall so that the side of the frame is touching the wall.

2. Make sure your racquet is in line with the flight of the ball, one to two feet behind the ball.

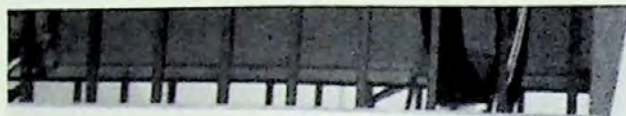
3. The point of contact should occur when the ball is at head or shoulder level. Face the side wall.

4. You use a scraping motion with the racquet frame against the wall. You try to "push" the ball to the front wall. This should not be a full swing because it is easy to bounce the racquet off the wall and miss the ball completely. Remember this is normally a defensive return.

Wallpaper shots often occur off ceiling balls and lob serves. Just keep in mind that you do not have much selection in returning them. You want to get the ball back to the front wall high enough so that your return will force the opponent to the back of the court.

The other three shots to be discussed are considered low percentage shots, very difficult to master but something to work on. They are usually hit from three-quarter court. Overheads off of short ceiling balls and the three-wall shot off of short ceiling balls, serves, or shots that handcuff you deep in the court are all low percentage. These shots are used when the opponent is lagging deep in the court, and hit with a soft touch to keep them from bounding out to mid court.

With the overhead backhand reverse pinch, your court position is usually in the left half of



One of the most "impossible shots" to hit is the wallpaper shot. Note how the side of the racquet frame is touching the side wall when hitting the ball.

Photos by Drew Stoddard



Another tough shot to hit and one even tougher for your opponent to defend against, is the overhead backhand reverse pinch. The ball is contacted at head level or higher.

the court, three-quarters distance from the front wall. Your body is facing the side wall and your body movement is identical to the movement of hitting a backhand ceiling ball.

1. Contact the ball at head level or higher off the front shoulder.

2. As you step into the ball and contact it, the racquet face is angled toward the right wall, drawing the head of the racquet down.

3. The ball is intended to hit the right wall about one to two feet from the front wall and one to two feet off the floor. The ball will then angle into the front wall and cross toward the left side of the court. Any pinch (side wall-front wall shot) is best when it hits low on the side wall and close to the side wall-front wall seam.

4. The follow-through should be across and down toward the right side of the body.

An overhead pinch is executed from three-quarter court and is often effective on short ceiling balls. As your opponent anticipates your ceiling return, surprise him or her with the overhead pinch. This shot is somewhat easier to hit from an angle; from the left side of the court to right corner, and vice versa. From center court you can go to either corner. But remember to hit side wall first, then front wall.

1. Decide to which corner you are hitting and position your body so that you are stepping toward the target area you intend to hit on the side wall.

2. The motion is the same as the overhead ceiling ball—or throwing a ball. Instead of hitting up toward the ceiling, you will be hitting downward to the corner.

3. The ball is contacted above the head, no lower than head level or you will hit the ball into the floor. The point of contact is also in the plane of the body. If you contact the ball too far in front of you (arm's length) you will often drive into the floor. If contacted behind your head, the ball will hit too high on the side wall.

4. Step into the ball as you hit and the arm again follows through across the body and down.

5. The target area to hit on the side wall is the same as in the overhead backhand reverse pinch. This shot, as the others mentioned, requires a soft touch, not a lot of power.

Three-wall return shots can be hit from two areas, either high as an overhead, or shoulder to knee level on a line drive. These shots, as opposed to the others mentioned, are hit with power. The overhead is hit with the forehand from three-quarter court; while the side three-wall return can be hit with either the forehand or backhand.

The idea is for both types of shots to be hit into the side wall to which you are closest, a



INSTRUCTION

few feet in front of where you are standing so that the ball will angle to the opposite side wall and then into the front wall, again ending up as a pinch.

The overhead three-wall shot from three-quarter court:

1. The motion is the same as an overhead ceiling ball. Step into the ball. The arm moves as if you were throwing a ball.

2. Point of contact is again head level or above the head with arm extended. The ball is contacted a bit in front of the body off the front shoulder.

3. Do not hit down on the ball. Hit it straight into the side wall three to six feet in front of where you are standing. The ball should hit the side wall five to 10 feet from the floor.

4. The ball should then contact the oppo-

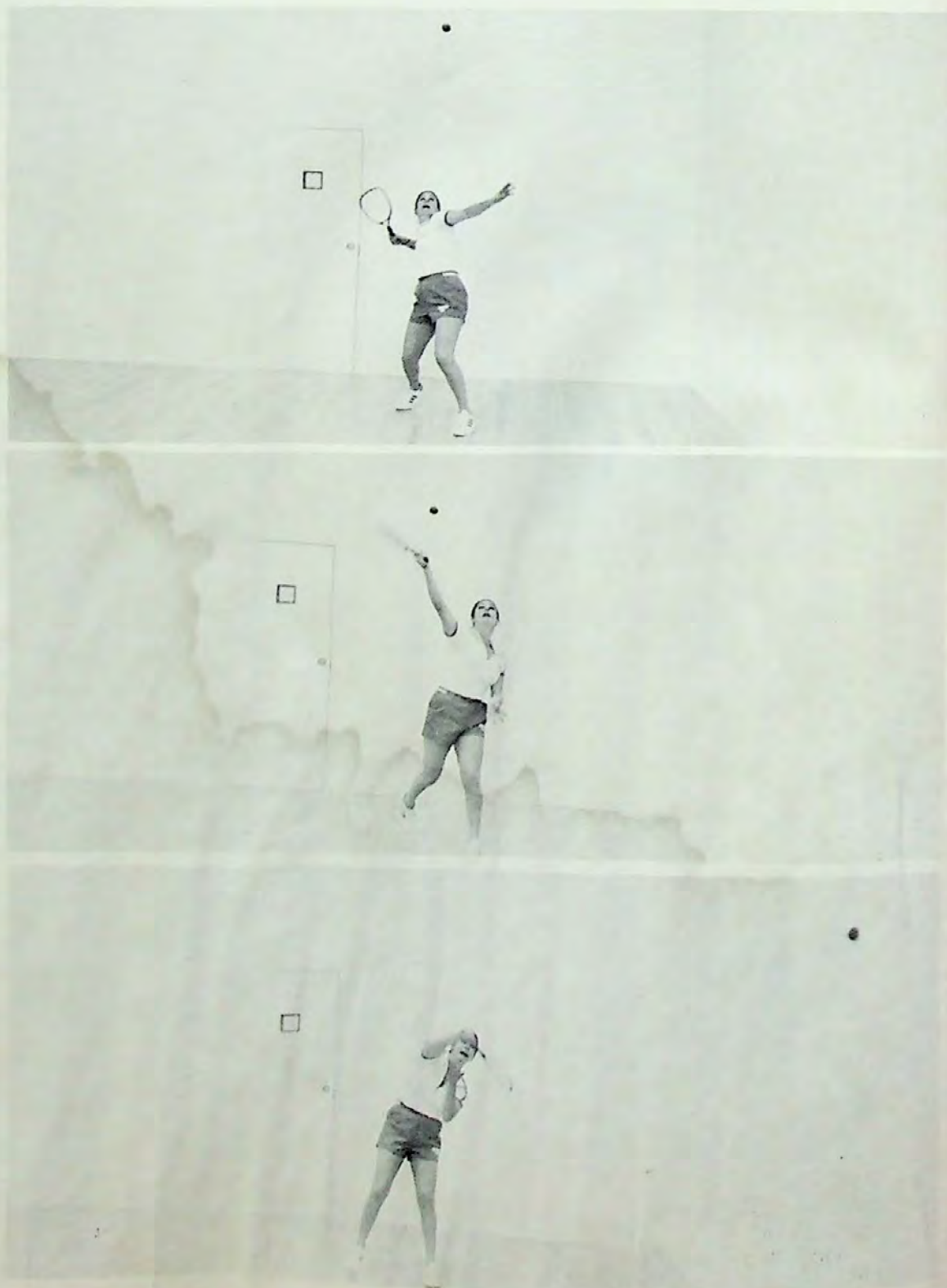
site side wall two to four feet from the floor and continue on to the front wall.

5. The heights the ball hits on the wall and the distances may vary according to your position on the court.

The side arm three-wall shot:

1. This shot takes the same path except you contact the ball with your racquet shoulder-to-knee high and strike it with a level

The overhead three-wall shot from three-quarter court is another tough shot for your opponent to defend against. The motion is basically the same as an overhead ceiling ball. You step into the ball with your arm moving as if you were throwing a baseball. Point of contact should be at head level with the arm extended. Do not hit down on the ball. Hit it straight into the side wall.





Similar to the overhead three-wall shot is the sidearm three-wall shot. This shot hits lower on the side wall.

swing, as if you were hitting a pass shot.

2. Body position should be sideways. Step toward the target on the side where you want the ball to hit (three to six feet in front of you).

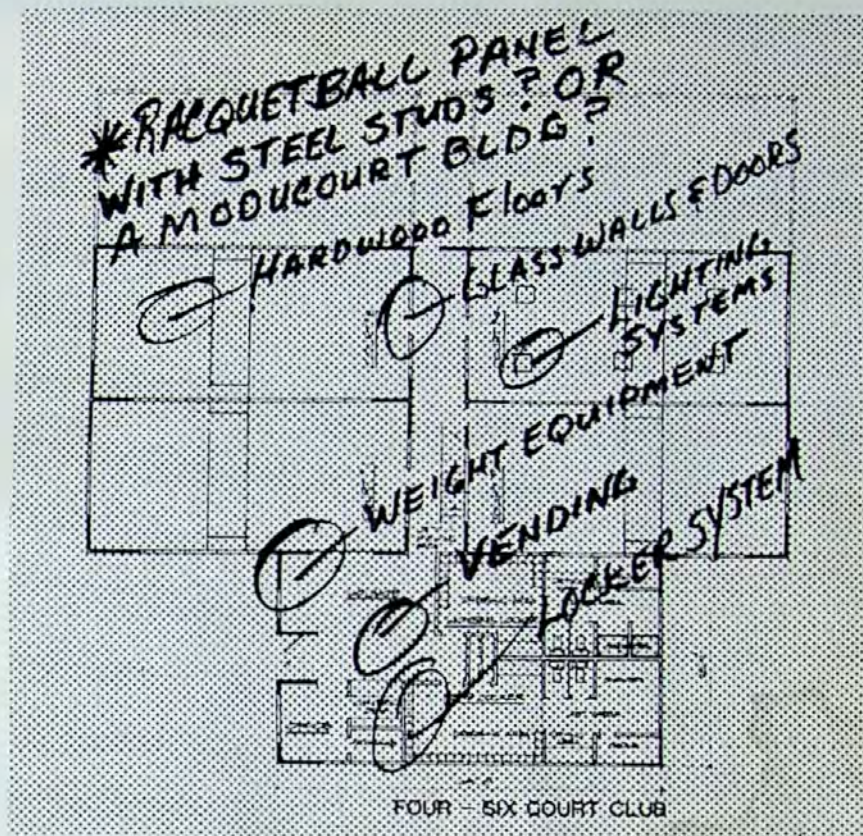
3. This shot hits lower on the side wall and must carry two more walls, so you will need to hit it hard.

4. After hitting the side wall you are closest to, the ball will continue to the opposite side wall and then to the front as a pinch. Heights and angles may vary according to court position.

5. This side arm three-wall shot is used as a return on serves or shots that come off the side wall and jam you in three-quarter court.

As mentioned, the above shots are for the advanced player. If they are a bit difficult to understand as described, get on a court and walk through them before you try executing them. The wallpaper return is a shot for all players to master.

When choosing to hit these shots, make sure you can afford to lose a point, since they are low percentage shots. But if you can learn to hit them and surprise your opponent when they are anticipating a different return, you will not only win a point, you will score a few points in aggravating and frustrating your opponent.



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CEILING SHOTS OFF THE BACK WALL

By Bonnie Stoll

Due to today's high bouncing and lively balls, the ceiling shot has become a dramatic ploy during play. When your opponent is in front of you, dominating center court, a ceiling shot is the most effective countermeasure to get him or her into a defensive position.

But not all ceiling shots put you on the defensive. If a ceiling shot is hit too hard, it can come off the back wall, giving you a chance to turn that defensive position into an offensive one—one that you can score on.

Normally, the best return of a "well hit" ceiling shot is another ceiling shot. The key words are "well hit." The ceiling shot should be hit with enough velocity to carry to the back wall on a bounce. So, in order for your ceiling shot to be "well hit," you must try to avoid hitting it harder than necessary.

If your opponent hits it too hard, you have a chance to take control of the rally. Whenever possible, try to let your opponent's ceiling shot go off the back wall. It is more or less a setup for you if you have your timing down properly.

Many times during a rally, you and your opponent will get into an exchange of ceiling shots. You must be patient. Do not rush. Try to hit a ceiling shot which is difficult for your opponent to return, usually to the backhand side.

Again, do not overpower the ball. The effectiveness of a ceiling shot is placement. If you can bounce the ball before it hits the back wall in a manner that allows it to fall almost perpendicular to the floor, it will be most difficult to return.

But if it is hit too hard, be prepared to be on the receiving end of a potential kill shot.

Hitting ceiling shots off the back wall is only a continuation of your forehand or backhand training. The ball comes off a little slower and a little closer to the back wall than normal back wall shots but in time you can learn to adjust.

When playing a ceiling shot, retreat in the direction of the ball. Ball judgment is the key to determining where it will rebound off the back wall. If you are in center court, back peddle to the ball. Do not turn around and run toward the rear wall.

Different altitudes can effect the bounce of a ball. A ceiling shot in Aspen or Denver reacts much differently than one hit in New York City. Before your match, practice ceiling shots to see how high they bounce, and how far back they will go with your normal swing.



One has to be careful not to hit ceiling shots too hard or they will come off the wall, giving the opponent a possible setup. Photos by Drew Stoddard

You do not want to get too close to the back wall as you are about to swing because you need to give yourself some swinging room. Then again, you don't want to get too far from the ball because the ball won't bounce out that far.

Positioning—especially with your feet—is the most important factor in making a successful return off a back wall ceiling shot.

As the ball rebounds from the back wall,

position yourself between the back wall and the ball. Face the side wall and try to hit the ball off your front foot between your ankle and knee.

As you can see from the pictures, I use a cross-over step when moving toward the back wall. Then I follow the ball off the wall and step into the shot.

It's not a hard shot to learn. But, like anything else, it becomes easier with practice.



Good judgment is the key to determining where to take the ball off the wall. Note how Bonnie Stoll uses a cross-over step to move toward the back wall, then follows the ball off the wall before stepping into the shot.



A forehand shot uses the same principles as the backhand. Note how Stoll is facing the side wall and hitting the ball off the front foot.

STRATEGY

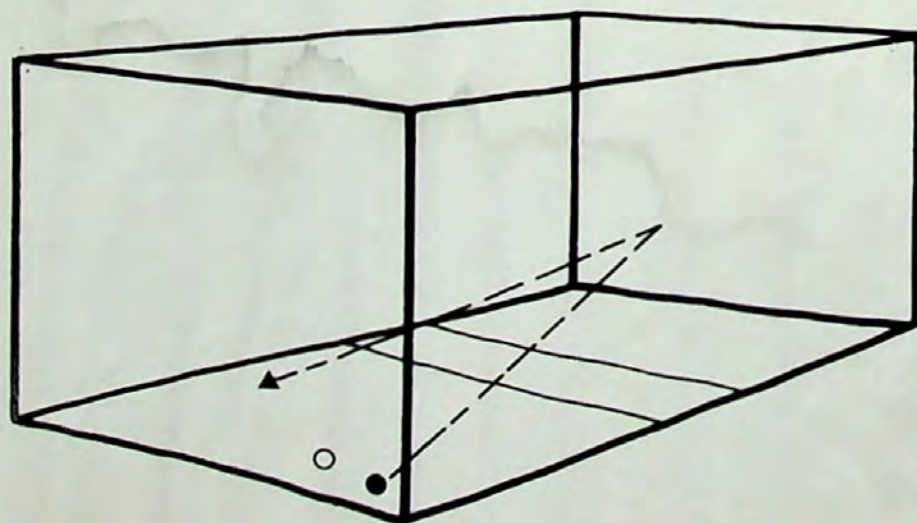
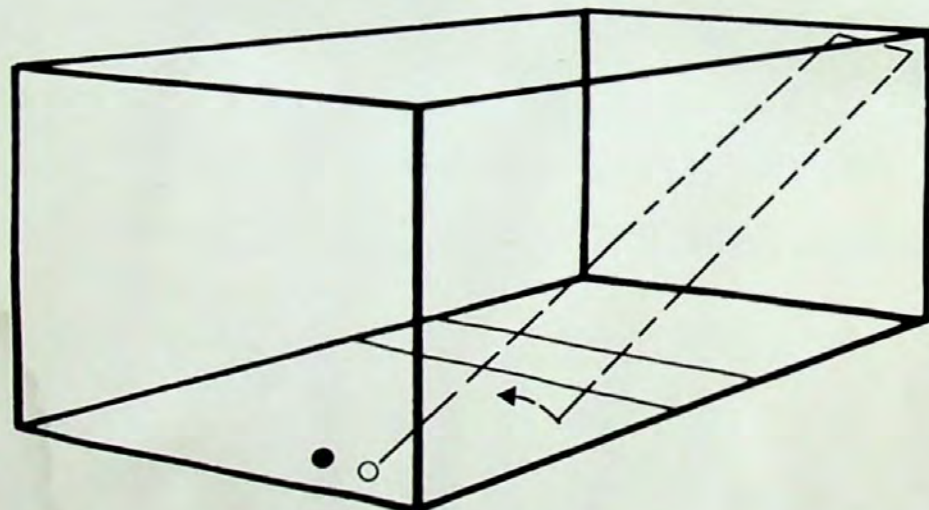
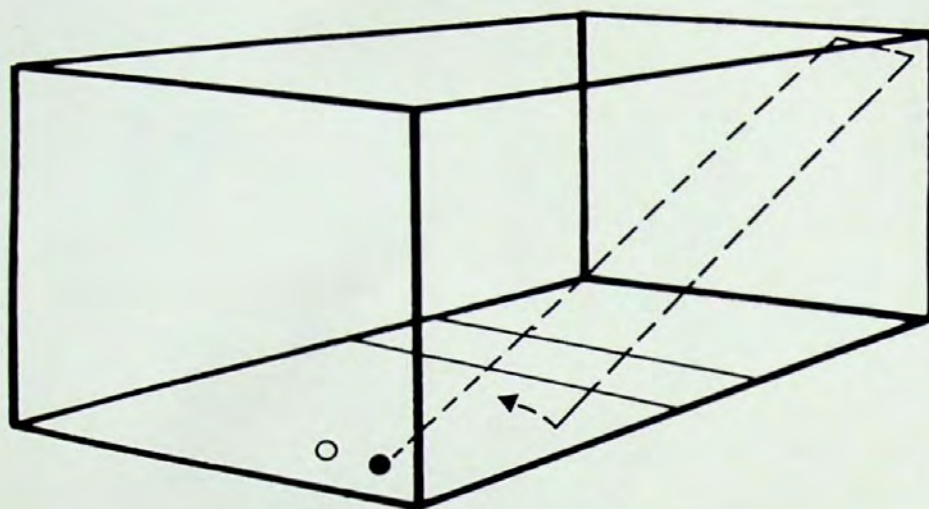
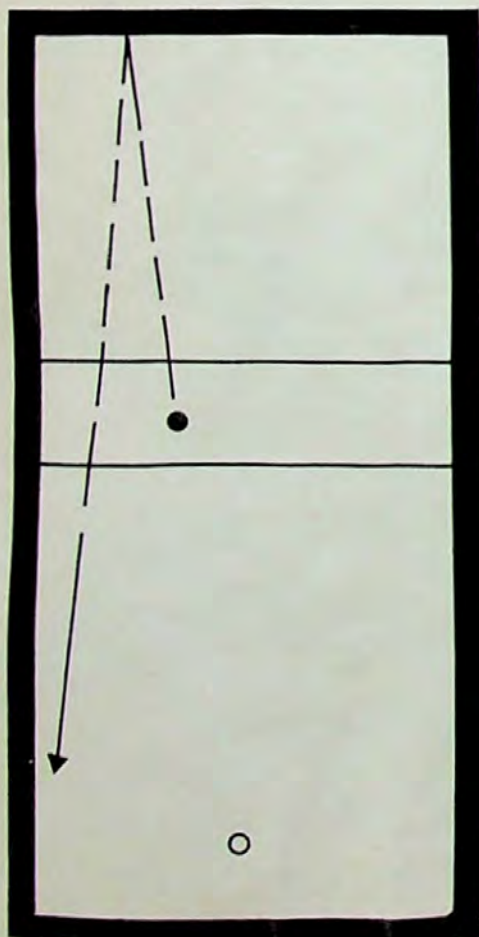
By Charles Garfinkel

1. You're playing an opponent who has a devastating forehand. His backhand is very weak. He constantly runs around his backhand and takes most of his shots on his forehand side. When he isn't rolling out forehands, he is consistently passing you. You have tried everything you can think of to hit the ball to his backhand side. Nothing seems to work. What can you do to force your opponent to take some backhands?

Answer: You should attempt to serve hard drive or z-serves to his backhand. Due to the nature of these serves, it will be difficult for the forehand fanatic to run around his backhand.

In rallies, you should hit three or four ceiling balls to the right side of the court. Ceiling balls are effective because they are difficult for most players to roll out.

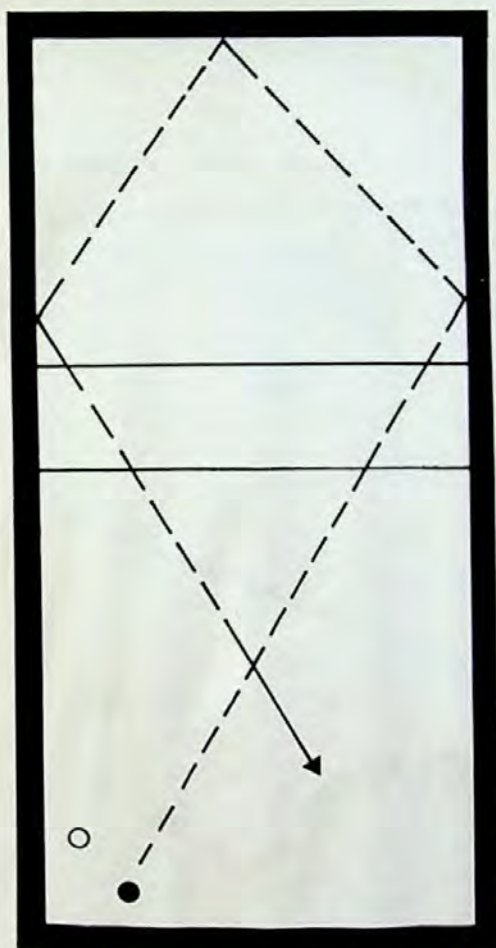
After three or four ceiling balls to the right side, you should then hit a hard overhand drive to the open backhand side of the court. Your opponent must take the shot on his backhand. This usually results in a weak return that you can put away.



Left: When playing an opponent with a tough forehand, always serve hard to the backhand side. You should also try to get him or her in a ceiling rally (above) and then end with a hard drive to the backhand corner.

2. You're playing an opponent who hits ceiling ball after ceiling ball and you find that after five or six ceiling ball exchanges, your ceiling ball falls short or ricochets off one of the walls. Your opponent is constantly getting setups from your weak ceiling balls and is putting your shots away. What can you do to get your opponent out of this frustrating pattern?

Answer: Effective shots against ceiling balls are overhead shots, around-the-wall balls and z-shots. Overhead shots will generate great pace and often force your opponent to return shots while he or she is off balance. Around-the-wall balls and z-shots change the pace of a rally. More importantly, they place your opponents in positions on the court which are foreign to them. This makes it very difficult for ceiling ball specialists to set up as they would like to.



To brake up a ceiling ball rally, try an around-the-wall shot.

3. You're playing an opponent who is quick on the court. When you have shots that appear to be plums in the front court, your opponent is right there. In attempting to win the point, you try to pass him or shoot the ball straight in, but your opponent frustrates you by getting to every shot. What can you do to win the point?

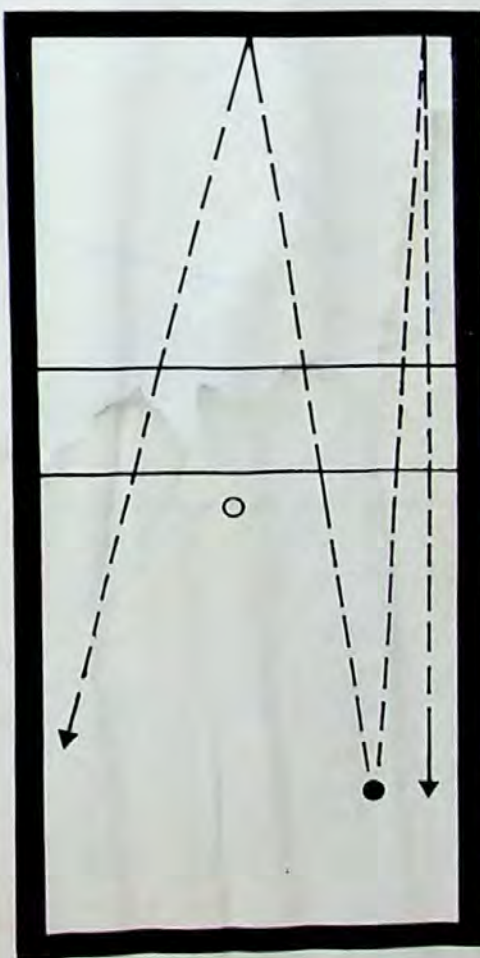
Answer: Naturally, a rollout will win the point against any player no matter how quick he is.

Against a player with tremendous speed, a wide variety of shots is greatly helpful. And, slowing the game down will help.

You should stay on the ceiling, hit an occasional lob, and serve slower serves such as the lob and slow z. When you have a chance to put it away, shoot the ball. However, be prepared to recover quickly if your fleet-footed opponent does make an incredible get.

Most speedy opponents get more satisfaction out of a great get, rather than a great put-away. Observe the difference closely. When a player makes a great get, he usually is merely putting the ball back into play. Therefore, your response is to hit another kill shot. You'll find that more and more shots will be rolling out. As for your fleet-footed opponent, he'll start looking slower and slower as he gets frustrated.

4. When squash champions Vic Niederhoffer and Heather McKay made the switch to racquetball, many experts thought they would be gobbled up by the pros. How wrong they were. Their strengths are an excellent passing game and a knowledge of front court strategy. How does one play against a converted squash player?



To defend against a player who constantly covers center court like a blanket, pass him down the line or crosscourt.

Answer: It may be surprising to learn that the answer is a simple one. Power! And more power! The so called "squash player" needs a great deal of time to get set to hit his pinpoint shots. By serving hard drives and z serves, you'll be forcing the squash player to react more quickly than he would like. You must use a "serve and shoot" game. Squash players also need time to adjust to the ceiling balls, since none are used in squash. Mix things up by going to the ceiling.

Driving the ball down the lines and hitting clean cross court passes are also advisable. By doing this, you won't be giving the squash player the opportunity to volley the ball from front court. Squash players like to cut the ball off and pinch rather than letting it go to the back wall.

5. Dr. Bud Muehleisen has one of the deadliest overhead kill shots and overhead drives in the country. Other players also use these shots with incredible accuracy. They look as if they're going to hit a ceiling ball. Suddenly, the ball is rolling out in the corner—sidewall, front wall. What can you do to react more quickly to these types of shots?

Answer: Overhead kills and drives are usually low-percentage shots. However, when used by experts such as Dr. Muehleisen, their percentage rises rapidly. By hitting ceiling balls that are deep to your opponent's backhand, you'll find that it is quite difficult for him to hit this type of shot.

Ceiling balls that fall short on the backhand side can be more readily anticipated, because your opponent must attempt an acute cross-court kill or drive. If you see that he's going for an overhead kill, move up immediately. If he is about to hit an overhead drive, move back.

The important point to remember is to keep your opponent deep in the backhand court. Chances are that you won't see too many overhead shots.

6. How many of us have played against the player who literally crushes every shot and serve that he hits? We're constantly off balance when he's serving because we can't adjust to his fast pace. If we do manage to return the serve, our return is so weak that the server is given an easy shot to put away.

When the rallies start, he constantly passes or shoots the ball with so much power that we're never set to hit the ball. What can we do to combat this player?

Answer: You should never serve a high lob or a high z-lob serve. You should attempt to force the power hitter to go the ceiling. During the rallies, try to keep the shots to the ceiling or hit around-the-wall balls. Be careful to keep your shots off the back wall. The slower you hit the ball, the more frustrated the power hitter becomes.

When the power hitter is serving, adjust your position on the court. Try moving forward

INSTRUCTION

or backwards. Attempt to return almost every serve to the ceiling. It doesn't matter whether you're serving, returning serve, or rallying. You must slow the ball down.

7. Nothing is more frustrating for a right-hander than to play a lefthander. Most of your shots are hit to the lefthander's forehand. Even the angle and spins of a lefthander's shots seem different. You're almost afraid to hit a backhand killshot because it might not roll out. If it doesn't, the lefthander has a setup on his forehand. What do you do?

Answer: To begin with, you must go into the match with a positive attitude. When you play righthanders, you occasionally serve to their forehands, and hit some killshots and ceiling balls crosscourt to their forehands. You even hit some backhand passing shots when playing against a righthander. You should think of doing the same thing when playing a lefthander. That is, hit some forehand passing shots to the lefthander's forehand side.

You should be serving and hitting more shots crosscourt than you usually do to get the ball on the lefthander's backhand. You will have to acclimate yourself to hit more of these types of shots.

If you follow this advice and are still having difficulty, you would be wise to do one or both of the following:

1. Play many lefthanders in practice.

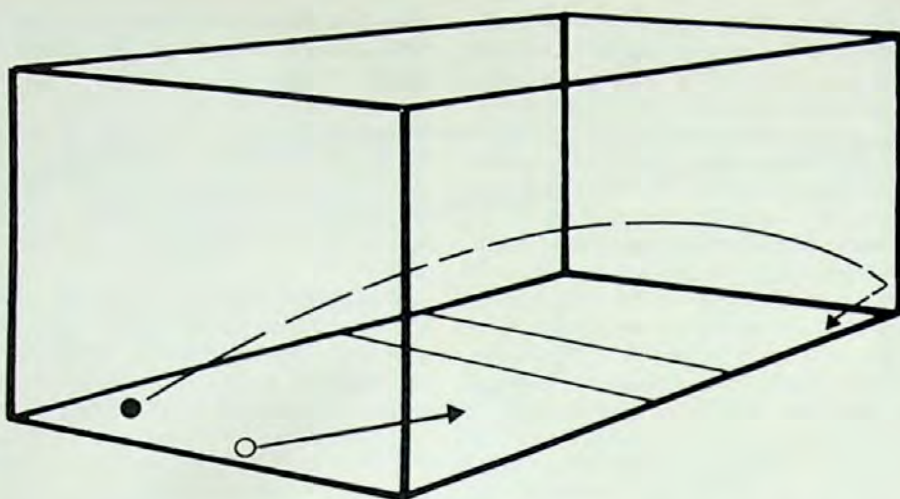
2. Play righthanders as if they were lefties. That means that you'll be hitting into their strength a great deal. However, if you can defeat a righthander by hitting to his strength, think what you'll do to the next lefthander that you play.

8. Many times you are passed by shots that can only be returned by hitting the shots into the back wall first. The ball then lazily floats to the front wall. Once the ball hits the front wall after ricocheting off the back wall, the smart player quickly takes the ball out of the air, and puts the ball away. There is no chance for you to recover as you are out of position. How can you protect yourself from losing the serve or point on this type of shot?

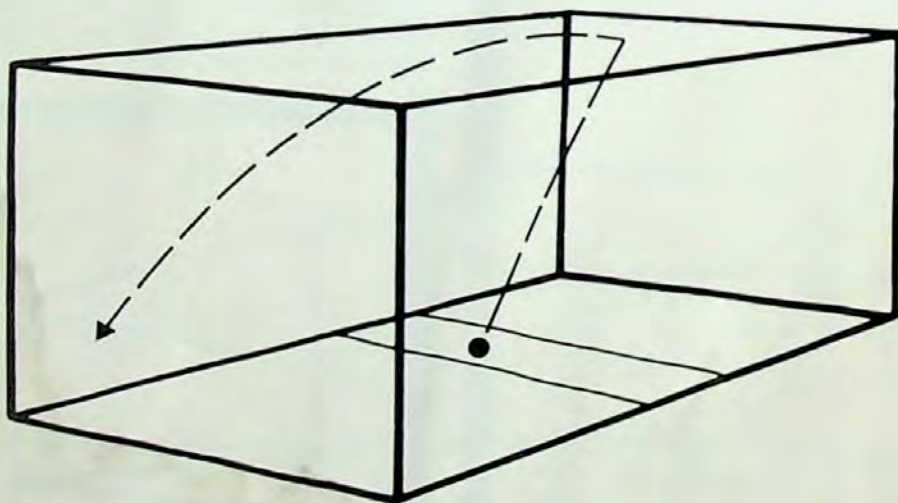
Answer: When the ball has passed you and you're forced to hit into the back wall first, you must hit the ball hard and high. It should be hit high enough on the back wall to ricochet to the ceiling. This type of return is almost impossible for your opponent to volley out of the air. It will also give you time to regroup and get ready for the next shot.

9. In a close match, you're playing against a player who constantly talks to you. He keeps reminding you of how well he is playing. He continually argues with the referee. He berates you when you make a good shot. He screams at the top of his lungs when he makes a good shot. What should you do?

Answer: Completely ignore everything that he says. If he were so confident that he could defeat you, he wouldn't have to resort to all of



Another way to break up a ceiling rally is to hit an overhead pinch into the corner. This is always tough for the opponent to run in to retrieve.



To combat the power hitter, give him a large dose of lob serves.

these tricks. Your silence should devastate him.

10. You're involved in a close doubles match. You and your partner won the first game 21-12. You're losing the second game 15-9. Your opponents are hitting every serve and shot to your partner who is definitely the weaker player. When you do get a shot, you either miss it, or mishit it, because you're out of the flow of the play. What can you do to get you and your doubles partner back into the match?

Answer: Regardless of the sides that you and your partner are playing, you must switch to a front and back formation. Your partner will cover the front court. You'll take the rest of the shots.

An opposing team will think twice before they hit most of their shots to the front court, especially when there is an opponent constantly there. You'll find yourself hitting a great many more shots and that you're controlling the play now.

GROWING UP AS A JUNIOR

By John Egerman

More than most pro racquetball players, I have special ties to the juniors program. At age 15, I was fortunate to be both the IRA National Men's Open Champion and the IRA 15-And-Under National Junior Champion.

Three years later, at 18, I see so much junior talent it's almost scary. I see players do things on the court I was never able to do. I see less and less fear on the faces of youth.

But still, as I or my Ektelon teammate Scott Hawkins, or any other junior-turned-pro must realize, there are significant physical and mental changes any junior must endure. It's called growing up as a player. And, if you understand the process, it can only improve

your professional stature.

Physically, the amateur-turned-pro adjustment has less to do with skills than with human nature. Some junior players have the same skills that I have. But where I—and other pros—win out is in conditioning and consistency.

To play in the pros you have to be in top-notch condition. You need upper body strength, leg quickness and flexibility. To achieve this, lifting weights is a must (but under a supervised program), as is skipping rope, running wind sprints, stretching and working out in endurance exercises such as swimming.

Construct a program and stay with it. I've found swimming—my sport before I began playing racquetball at 13—to provide the best stretching and endurance ratio. But



"As an amateur I never realized the importance the pros place on the serve."

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realize you have to become stronger and quicker.

You also have to be consistent. The margin for error in the pros is minimal. Pros will make their shot 90 percent of the time. Juniors average about 60 percent. To close that gap, a junior must spend time with practice and repetition, so that when a shot has to be hit—no matter whom you are playing—you don't think twice.

Which brings us to the mental part of growing as a junior.

I've been in awe many times on the court. Every junior goes through it. The only cure is really a simple one—to play against the top players. That way, you're exposed to their entire arsenal of shots and you're not surprised by anything.

My first year on tour I was sporadic. I would play well in some tournaments, then follow with a couple of weeks of poor play. I couldn't adjust to playing different people. Now I've learned to take each contest by itself—to learn even if I lose. It can only help in the future.

In conjunction with racquetball maturity is the understanding that the pros do play a slightly different game. Not better, just different.

For example, the pros play the winners. If they can generate an offensive move, they'll gamble. This happens more often than on the amateur level. Pros seem to be more creative, more gutsy.

As an amateur I never realized the importance pros place on the serve. They regard serving as a science—to generate offensive opportunities or an ace. To do this, more deception is used, more gambles are taken, again, more creativity used.

Another example might be the lob or junk serve. Amateur or top juniors won't feel confident in cutting it off on the short hop—to be offensive. But that's the way the pros do it. They want that advantage, even if they have to gamble to get it.

Another part of growing up as a player is understanding how important preparation is to winning; how important the right amount of sleep, training and diet are to your performance.

The way I figure it, if I go on a court nervous because I'm playing Mike Yellen or Dave Peck, at least I know I've taken precautions to be prepared by eating and training properly. Every junior must consider that.

For a junior player to excel in the pros I believe they have to pay a higher price than most high school athletes. You have to miss some of the social whirl, some of the team sports.

I did. My education in high school came in the classroom and in my travels around the country. Sometimes I look back and feel like I lost my childhood—I couldn't play team sports and party too much. But in the long run, I believe it will pay off.



SAVING SHOTS

By Lynn Adams

As we all know, the ideal strategic position for a racquetball player awaiting an opponent's shot is center court. That imaginary seven-foot circle just behind the short line gives us direct access to all critical points on the court simultaneously.

Playing center court saves steps. You can play the angles and eliminate unnecessary running and fatigue. By staying near center court your shots will have greater power as well as accuracy. And it beats playing the back wall hands down.

Playing center court does something else, however, which is very important in a game of shotmaking. It saves them. By saving shots, I mean cutting down on unlikely or unnecessary shots. These shots spell trouble, or worse, points for your opponents.

One way to save shots is to be in proper position. If you are serving, stand in the center of the service zone. From here, you

have the best angle to both back corners and the most serve options. Do not serve anything down the middle.

After serving, take a step or two back behind the short line and a step to the side in which you just served. That way, you're slightly off center.

You have now forced your opponent to the side of the court with the serve. You now have the best chance of covering a down-the-wall drive. To a certain extent, you're also cutting off the cross-court pass.

The next shot-saving technique is to angle your body so that you can "peek" and see which way your opponent is swinging. My Ektelon teammate Mike Yellen, though not very fast, has remarkable reflexes. One of the reasons for his reflexes is that he anticipates shots by "peeking" over his shoulder.

The key now is mobility. Don't plant yourself like a big oak and wait for the ball to shoot by. Size up the situation. If the person is plastering the ball off any number of walls, step back into center court, move your feet (softly,



almost a shuffle) and get to the right spot.

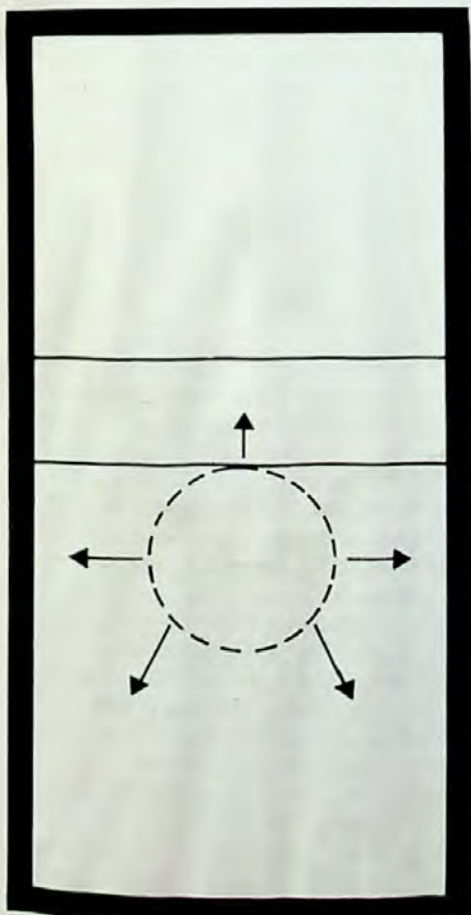
In kill shots, your job is tougher. You can't sit back. You can't wait around for the ball to stop. It is stopping.

Once you determine, with a glance, what the options are, mentally lean towards one. Now that sounds tough, but it's really not. Say you're center-court right, just behind the service line. Your opponent is back right, facing a forehand. Quickly, calculate. The ball is either going down the line or cross court.

What you do now is anticipate. Look for that kill, but don't expect it. If the ball does come back to your left, move your feet quickly, concentrate on eye-racquet contact and get the ball back in play.

The important thing is to know your capabilities, and those of your opponent. If you are unable to hit effective cross-court passes, save shots another way. Play to your strengths and away from your weaknesses. Hit shots that keep you in the geometric center. Don't try to overpower, when you can outthink.

You'll be surprised at how many shots you save.



Center court is the best place to anticipate where to pick up your opponent's shot.

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Is The USRA's Ship Sinking?



By Len Ziehm

It has not reached major proportions yet, but the United States Racquetball Association apparently has trouble within its ranks.

The USRA, based in Skokie, Ill., and competing with the American Amateur Racquetball Association of Memphis for control of the sport, has in the past few months been confronted by some disgruntled state associations.

First came the bolt from Michigan. The Michigan State Racquetball Association voted in September to disaffiliate from the USRA.

Michigan's chapter did not make its move quietly. "The USRA has nothing to offer," declared state chairman Dennis Wood. "I don't think the USRA will be around much longer."

"It's no longer interested in the amateur. Our state association has improved since we've broken from the USRA. Now we're bigger and stronger than ever."

Wood said that the Michigan chapter had 1,110 members when it bolted from the USRA and has 1,600 now.

Wood said that the USRA's \$12 annual membership has been reduced to \$3 to members of the now independent state association, and he reports that "We've gotten more people interested in tournaments without that membership fee (from the USRA) tacked on to the entry fee."

A requirement of USRA membership is that Seamco balls be used in all tournaments. Wood said that the Michigan association will

still use Seamco balls this year because "We made a better deal with Seamco than the USRA did for us."

He added, however, that the ball agreement is only for this year and that decisions will be made "on a yearly basis . . . next year may be different."

Despite such strong words, Wood is still listed as the USRA's Michigan state chairman.

According to Al Shetzer, who organized a similar revolt in Illinois, Wood told him that he was being retained by the USRA—despite the institution of the reduced membership fee—because of the independent agreement with Seamco.

The USRA did not take the revolt in Illinois so quietly, however. The Illinois State Racquetball Association was the first state chapter to affiliate with the USRA (in 1973) and had been one of the national body's strongest chapters. It made the break October 18.

The ISRA's membership voted 112-21 to drop its affiliation after its board had recommended such a measure by a resounding 19-1 margin. The ISRA, founded in 1971, is two years older than the USRA, so its move for independence was particularly significant. As was the case in Michigan, members of the independent ISRA now have only a \$3 membership fee. ISRA-sanctioned tournaments can now be conducted with balls other than Seamco's. Shetzer predicts the ISRA membership will climb "from 1,800 to 5,000 to 10,000 in the next six months."

The whole episode had been building in Illinois for some time, and the problems with

the state association were the same as in Michigan.

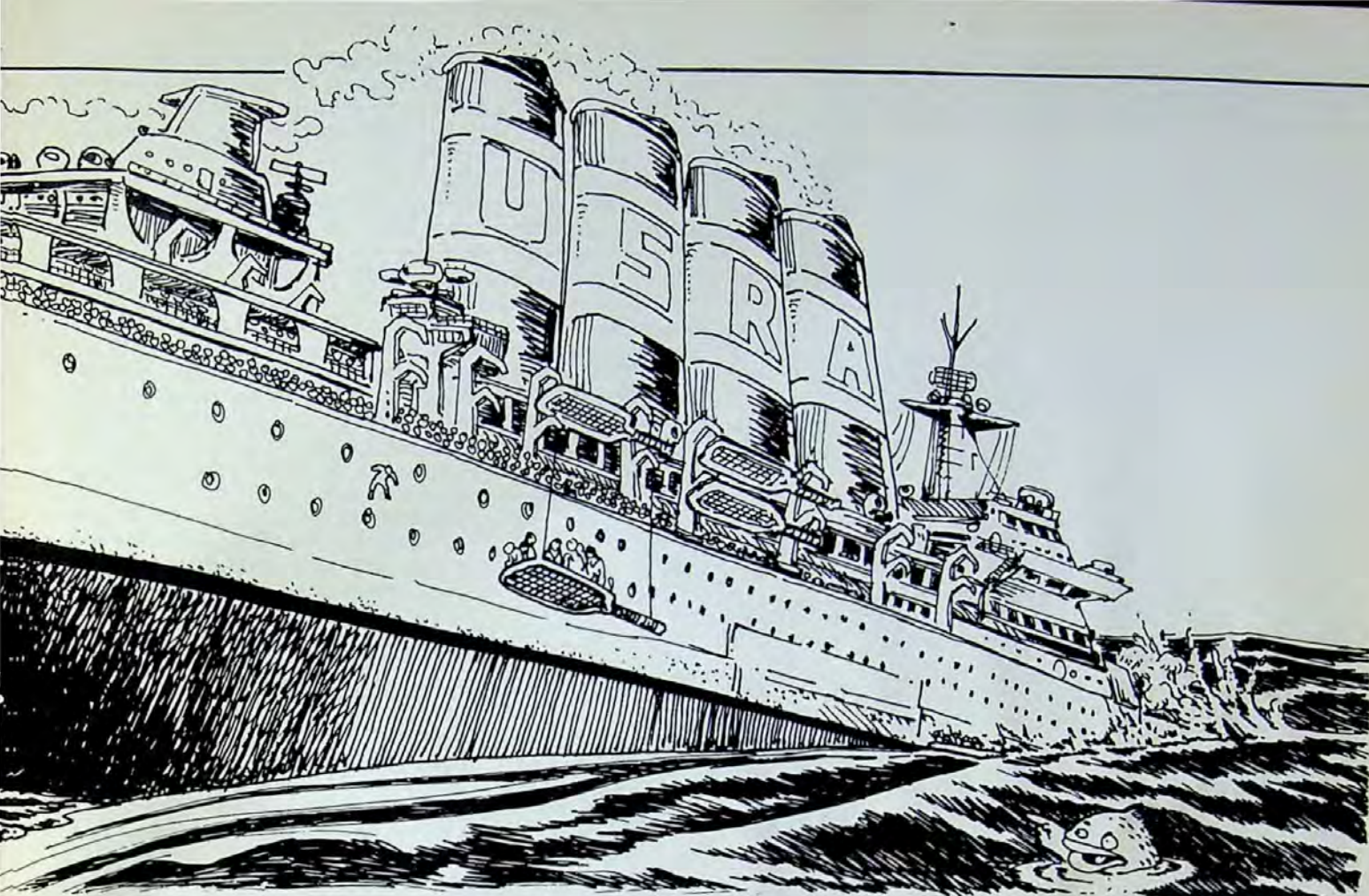
"We affiliated with the USRA for very good reasons," said Shetzer. "Now those reasons aren't there. By becoming independent we will enable our association to work with additional manufacturers to acquire support for our programs."

The original benefits of the USRA-ISRA affiliation for the state chapter included free shirts and balls for all sanctioned tournaments as well as rulebooks and scorecards.

"In recent years that money has been going basically for a subscription to a magazine," said Shetzer. "We no longer get any shirts. We do get some balls, but they're no longer all free. First we were cut to 12 dozen free ones per tournament and we could buy the rest at a good price. This year it's been cut to six dozen per tournament. And now we've even been unable to get rulebooks."

Shetzer said Vittert, Head, Penn and other racquetball equipment manufacturers can now help ISRA programs. "A lot of manufacturers have excellent products now. They have money and they want to participate in our programs. We'd be stupid if we froze out companies with quality products who want to support us," said Shetzer.

The only dissenter on the ISRA board was Dan Bertolucci, who happens to be the national director of the USRA. He sent a two-page letter to all ISRA members urging them to vote down the disaffiliation proposal while stating the case of the USRA. But he was unsuccessful in gaining much support from ISRA members.



"I see them making a profit from disaffiliating," said Bertolucci, referring to Shetzer, Phil Simborg and Tom Street, ISRA leaders who also conduct tournaments and put out a monthly racquetball newspaper. "Is that the real issue, or is our magazine the real issue? I admire all the plans that the ISRA hopes to achieve, but maybe they've missed the boat. Now all they want to do is promote for profit. We want people who want racquetball purely for racquetball's sake in our group."

Bertolucci said the reduction in balls for ISRA tournaments was due to "a function of these economic times." He also said that Illinois "basically has been the state to benefit the most from its affiliation with us."

In his letter he urged ISRA members to stick with the USRA because:

"The USRA establishes standards that allow you to compete against players all over the world.

"Membership entitles you to play in USRA tournaments.

"Each month you receive *National Racquetball*, with its four-color photos of pro and amateur play, its instruction from top pros, its features about celebrities and ordinary players and its guides to racquetball play. Subscription to other racquetball publications is considerably higher." (Editor's Note: Subscription to *Racquetball Illustrated* is \$12.50, subscription to *Racquetball* is \$15.00. *National Racquetball* is \$12.00 annually.)

"The USRA guarantees a new generation of players by running junior and college competitions with scholarship prizes.

"The USRA promotes racquetball by sup-

porting innovations like the white one-way glass and portable court that can give the sport increasing exposure.

"Your USRA membership supports your state organization. Two dollars of each \$12.00 annual membership goes back to Illinois."

He concluded his letter with a more impassioned appeal: "If you think a piece of the pie will filter to you then vote to disassociate. If you think the health of your association as well as your own conscience, and the health of our youth is more precious than the wealth of your wallet, vote against breaking up a winning team. A team incidentally that is recognized as America's finest racquetball combination. A team we put together. The good of the game has been the only consideration behind every decision... vote to remain part of the United States Racquetball Association—for your own good and the good of the game."

That appeal didn't work. After the resounding vote to disaffiliate, Bertolucci named Jim Stotz to replace Shetzer as the state chairman. Stotz is a veteran tournament organizer at the Aurora YMCA, which hosted a National Racquetball Club tour stop for several years.

Shetzer, however, sees the Michigan and Illinois revolts as the start of things to come.

"This is the start of a monumental change for racquetball at the national level," said Shetzer. "There is a grassroots uprising around the country against the current existing national organizations. Michigan has already done what we did, and Nebraska, New Jersey, Texas, California and Florida are in

the process of considering doing the same thing."

He has urged other state chapters to follow Michigan and Illinois in his racquetball newspaper and said he's had calls from "10-12 other state chairmen" asking for information on disaffiliation.

Despite what Shetzer said, California has no plans to drop its affiliation. "Why should I leave?" asks state chairman Scott Deeds. "If other people are not happy they have the right to split, but I'm very happy with the USRA."

Nebraska and New Jersey, on the other hand, are unhappy. According to Doug Clark, the New Jersey Racquetball Association has already broken off with the USRA. "There was a lack of response to the needs of the local players," said Clark. "Costs seem to be more and fewer people were joining." Although the NJRA has broken ties, Clark still remains the state USRA rep. "I try to represent them but not to pursue all their goals," he said.

Nebraska hasn't broken off yet but seems to be leaning in that direction. State chairman Tom Schuessler, in fact, has written to Bertolucci "to ask what the USRA is doing for us."

"We asked some very serious questions," said Schuessler, who sent out a survey to the chapter's 1,500 members.

"We want to know why we need a tie to any national body. We want more answers. The board is not entirely satisfied and we are considering going independent."



NUMBER ONE

In basketball, you are up against the legend of UCLA. In racquetball, don't mess with Memphis State.

By Brad Martin

There's so little Memphis State University's racquetball team hasn't accomplished that

it's hard to take coach Larry Liles seriously when he offers his version of a complaint.

"The biggest problem we've got its transportation," he says. "I've got a van with 100,000 miles on it that's been through six sets of tires. What we'd really like is for someone to give us two motor homes."

What the Tigers really need is some competition. Their women's team has won every national intercollegiate championship they've played since 1976. The one they didn't win is the one they didn't play in—the 1979 United

States Racquetball Association Intercollegiate. The men's squad has captured seven of the last eight national intercollegiate titles. They lost the 1976 International Racquetball Association (now AARA) title to Southern Illinois.

And the end of this trend is not yet in sight. "The depth we've got now is incredible," says John Dunlap, the IRA "A" division national singles champion in 1977 and 1978. Dunlap now is Memphis State's assistant coach.

"Back when I was playing, we only had six players. When we'd go to the nationals, we'd take everybody. Then when we got eight or 10 players, we thought that was a huge team. This year we've got 20 (men) and we cut ten or 12. The other teams are getting better, but we're still ahead."

Memphis State's depth is nullified to a degree by the intercollegiate team format, which calls for only four players. In last year's American Amateur Racquetball Association Intercollegiates, four almost wasn't enough. The Tigers claimed the title by a scant two points despite a "B" bracket singles championship from Blake Soule, a doubles championship from Dan Cohen and Mike Gora and a semifinal showing in the "A" bracket singles by Scott Schafer.

"When you win it the first time, you still want to win it again but nobody will be surprised if you don't," says Cohen, a junior from St. Louis. "But when you win it (AARA) four times in a row like we did, you're expected to keep winning. There was a lot of pressure here last year. It's like Marty Hogan on the pro tour. It's not news when he wins because he's ex-



pected to. But when he loses, everybody says it's only because he played terrible."

Memphis State didn't play poorly last year. Ironically, it was a past teammate who allowed a team from St. Cloud, Minn., to come so close to denying MSU its fourth consecutive AARA championship. Keith Dunlap—John's younger brother—won the AARA "A" bracket singles title in 1979 for MSU. Last year, however, he dropped off the team and moved to Houston, where he took a shot at the pro circuit. But Keith didn't accept any prize money, and therefore was eligible for the intercollegiate. Though he was the only player representing the University of Houston, his victory in the AARA "A" bracket singles enabled his team to finish third. St. Cloud finished second.

Liles says Dunlap will re-enroll at Memphis State in time for this spring's intercollegiate. And with Schafer, Soule, Cohen, and Gora already there, picking a team may be more difficult than winning two more titles.

"I wouldn't like to be in the coach's shoes this year," says Cohen, who won national titles in the "B" bracket singles in 1979.

Much the same situation may exist among the women next spring, too. Sharon Fanning placed third in both intercollegiate "A" bracket singles last year; Renee Trammell was second in the "B" bracket singles and Candi Gavin and Linda LeVene won the doubles title. Gavin's the only one who won't be back, but Liles thinks Old Dominion sophomore Trisha Tollison—a national runner-up in "A" bracket doubles last year—will transfer to MSU this spring. And he's got 11 more women to consider as well.

"It's going to be difficult," says Liles. "It's been hard before, but we've never had this much depth. Last year we entered two (men's) teams and we'll have to do it again. If we can only offer four spots with the depth we have, nobody's gonna want to come here."

That's not the case now. Eight of the 20 men are out-of-state students. And since Memphis State doesn't offer racquetball scholarships, they all foot their own bills. The USRA does provide some help by offering \$1,000 scholarships to each of its national champions plus \$1,000 to the winning teams in the men's and women's divisions. Gora, Cohen and LaVene earned stipends last year, and Fanning and Schafer were given the team prizes.

Though the USRA and the AARA provide the only team opportunities, the Tigers spend most of the school year traveling to tournaments in places such as Miami, Atlanta, New Orleans, St. Louis and Nashville.

To pay for it all, Memphis State is the host and beneficiary of two tournaments—the Jack Fulton Open and the Union Planters Open. Liles says each event raises about \$3,000 for the team. Plus, the MSU Recreation Fund provides \$2,000 a year. "We've got sponsors around town who help us with our travel expenses, and help us get lower motel rates," says Liles. "We come pretty close to covering it all."

It is the trips around the country that provide Memphis State with a chance to seek future players. They travel as a team—the



A view of Memphis State University

whole team if the trip isn't too long—and it is hard not to notice when they wear their uniforms and monogrammed sweatsuits.

"We went to the USRAs two years ago and we were the only team that had uniforms," says Gora. "It was funny. We couldn't even get a hello. Now there are other teams with uniforms, but the only reason we had them is because of the support we've gotten from the community."

It's the team's talent, not uniforms or sales pitches from Liles, which brings players from throughout the Southeast and Midwest, and even one from Canada.

"We don't try to sell anyone on the idea of coming here to play for us," says Liles. "We see a lot of players at various tournaments and we talk to anyone who's interested, but most of the time they contact us about coming here. The thing we have to do is make them

realize that they're the ones who'll have to pay.

"We've already got two players who want to come here next year. But I'd really like them to hold off for two years. We've just got too much depth."

Gora is one player for whom money and location meant little. He's from Mississauga, Ontario, Canada. He played some racquetball in high school, and applied to several schools in the United States, but the only one which showed any interest, Gora says, was Memphis State.

"The biggest thing as far as I was concerned was Larry," Gora said. "I came down here to look the school over, and he went out of his way for me. That made it easy to decide to come here."

The Tigers still claim the city of Memphis as their breeding ground, especially among the women. While only 12 of the 20 men are Memphians, all 14 of the women are natives.

"Most of the guys have played for two to five years before they come here," says John Dunlap. "What we can do is offer them a higher level of competition and some tournaments. Most of the girls never played until they picked it up as freshmen here."

The two notable exceptions are Fanning and Trammell, who started playing in high school and often work out with their male teammates just for the competition.

"We've each got goals in mind," says Trammell, "naturally to get better and better. Most of the other girls aren't as competitive as we

NUMBER ONE

"Any team that beats us, really has to be great."

are. For some of them, playing on the team helps fill their time."

It is with the men that Memphis State's coaches can do little more than watch. Even with newcomers to the sport, it doesn't take long before only competition can improve them.

"I came here to play tennis, and the first time I played racquetball I didn't like it all," recalls sophomore Jed Cowell of McMinnville, Tenn. "But I didn't make the tennis team. Nine months ago I took a class in racquetball and I decided to get on the team last year."

"It's not that hard to be a good player, especially after playing tennis. I'm still low on the ladder here, but you can progress so much faster."

Gora says, "Yeah, it's really hard for them to coach us. But where Larry does it well is in

conditioning and encouragement. He does give us pointers, but with players like Jed and Billy Hendricks, it's tough."

It's also been tough to get any recognition inside Memphis. Although the team has little problem getting assistance from their several sponsors, not even their fellow students comprehend the dominance they have achieved in the sport.

"I think they know we're here... but it's just racquetball," says Cohen. "It's not considered up there with football and basketball, I guess. Like, in our dorm they know us, but around campus no one knows us."

Cohen says he can't even remember seeing a story on the team in the campus newspaper. "Unless, you know, we call them with some results. Then they'll get that in."

None of the Tigers seem overly concerned with their lack of publicity. They just want to play.

"We all want to be so good in racquetball that you don't have to push anybody," says Cowell.

"Probably everybody on this team could play in the nationals for any other team in the country," says Danny Phillips, a freshman from Macon, Ga., who's been playing racquetball for five years.

Senior Dennis Fong, who joined the team this season, is a bit more vehement in his analysis:

"Just going by skill, any team that beats this one really has to be great," he says.

That could be a problem.



Photo by Brad Martin

Memphis State racquetball coach Larry Liles is tied up by his top men and women players: Back row: Dan Cohen, Mike Gora. Front row: Renee Trammell, Sharon Fanning.

A Vote For DMSO

Photos by Cynthia Farnsworth



By Daryl Farnsworth

Former Oakland Raiders quarterback Daryle Lamonica was given the nickname "Mad Bomber" by his teammates and opponents because of his knack for winning football games with long touchdown passes.

But despite Lamonica's many successes during his 14-year pro career he—like many professional athletes—was plagued with nagging injuries and pain.

How the former Notre Dame star treated some of his injuries and continued to compete week after week in the tough world of professional football was a subject Lamonica discussed in May, 1980 with a United States Senate committee chaired by Massachusetts Senator Edward Kennedy.

Lamonica told *Racquetball Illustrated* recently that he testified before the Senate panel that a "wonder drug" called Dimethyl Sulfoxide, or DMSO, helped reduce the pain and swelling of his injuries and made it possible for him and other Oakland players to compete when they were hurt.

"I know what pain is and I know what DMSO did for me," says Lamonica. "I think there is a great need for this miracle drug. I think it should be brought to the attention of the American people that DMSO has helped and done an awful lot for an awful lot of people."

Lamonica, who retired from professional football in 1975, now lives in Fresno, Calif., where he is in the insurance business.

To stay in shape, Lamonica says he plays racquetball several times a week at the Rain-tree Fitness Centers in Fresno and nearby Clovis.

Lamonica said he's met several racquetball players who use DMSO today for some of their injuries.

Former Oakland Raider quarterback Daryle Lamonica claims this "wonder drug" saved his football career and, hence, his racquetball career.

"I believe in DMSO 100 percent. It did amazing things to my body. DMSO is spooky but I never forgot it," Lamonica says.

DMSO has been around for more than a century. It was discovered by a Russian scientist in 1866, but it attracted little attention until the 1950s, when many industrial uses were found for it. Derived as a by-product when converting trees to paper, the clear liquid has been found useful as a solvent for a broad range of chemicals. It also is used for removing paint.

When scientists found that DMSO was able to penetrate the skin and other body tissues and be absorbed into the bloodstream, they began experimentation on its medicinal effects on humans.

One pioneer in experimenting with DMSO is Oregon surgeon Stanley Jacob of the University of the Oregon Health Sciences Center. Jacob began using DMSO in the early 1960s to treat sprained ankles and cases of arthritis.

Today, thousands of people have used DMSO as a therapeutic drug for the pain and swelling of arthritis, healing of burns, muscle strains, sprains, bruises and bacterial infections.

But even though thousands of people were getting relief from it, harmful side effects were detected on laboratory animals, so the Food and Drug Administration ordered a ban on clinical testing of DMSO.

The FDA cited reports from scientists of refractive changes in the eyes of the experimental animals treated with DMSO.

Other reported side effects of DMSO are a garlic or oyster-like taste in the mouth, possible skin rash, hives, headaches and nausea.

The FDA now, however, has eased its restriction on the use of DMSO to permit experiments in hard-to-treat illnesses such as bladder infections, skin and internal organs and rheumatoid arthritis.

FDA Commissioner Jere E. Goyan told a Senate committee on Health and Scientific Research that an important issue surrounding DMSO is the pressure by the drug's proponents to speed up approval versus the FDA's obligation to approve only drugs proven by scientific evidence to be safe and effective.

Lamonica said he heard rumors while he was in Washington, D.C. testifying before the Senate committee that the FDA isn't authorizing DMSO because it can be made too cheaply and the pharmaceutical companies can't make enough profit from it.

"If DMSO is approved by the FDA, it will replace many of the present pain killer drugs and ointments now on the market at higher prices," Lamonica says.

Lamonica's first contact with DMSO came in the early 1970s while playing football for the Raiders.

"I felt comfortable using DMSO even though it was something new," he said. "I had the top physicians and orthopedic surgeons administering it to me and I knew they wouldn't do anything they didn't feel was safe."

Lamonica says many of the injured Raider players used DMSO to treat their ailments. "The only side effect I had while using DMSO was the repulsive clam breath, but that was a

DMSO



"DMSO has a good history behind it and I'm a firm believer in it until they can prove it's dangerous."

small sacrifice to be able to compete."

Lamonica used DMSO on a sprained ankle, stretched knee ligament and a jammed thumb. "I jammed my thumb on my throwing hand in practice when it got caught in someone's face mask.

"My thumb was so swollen that I couldn't grip the football, so the team's doctor and trainer put some DMSO on the thumb. Right before my eyes the swelling went down in about ten minutes.

"The soreness was still there but I didn't have the pain and swelling. DMSO relieved the pain and swelling so much that I was able to throw the ball the next day and three days later I threw three touchdown passes to beat Kansas City. I know without a doubt that I wouldn't have been able to play if it hadn't been for DMSO."

Lamonica is not paid by anybody to endorse DMSO, but one no doubt gets the feeling he would make a good commercial spokesman for the product.

"DMSO has a good history behind it and that's why I'm a firm believer in it until they can prove it's dangerous. I think there is a big need for it in our country," he says. "I think it should be researched out. If DMSO does have merit then the general public should be made aware of it and a lot of people should get relief.

"DMSO won't repair torn ligaments, fractures or dislocated joints, but what it does do and what it did for me was to reduce the swelling with unbelievable results. I'm not medically qualified to say what DMSO can and can't do, but I know what pain is and I know what DMSO did for me."

Lamonica recently moved back to Fresno from Walnut Creek, Calif., where he had lived since he was traded to the Raiders from the Buffalo Bills.

"I grew up in the Fresno area and it's good to be back home," he says. Lamonica was raised on a farm in Clovis. When he was five years old, he became afflicted with polio and was bedridden for four months.

When he was 12 years old, his Clovis Little League All-Star team played in the Little League World Series in Williamsport. But even though baseball was his first love, he made his mark in football.

After graduating from Clovis High School in 1959, he went to Notre Dame and came under the watchful eyes of professional football scouts.

The Buffalo Bills signed Lamonica out of Notre Dame and in 1966 they traded him to Oakland.

In his first year with the Raiders he was named the American Football League's Player of the Year by *Sporting News*. It was an honor he gained again in 1969.

In 1975, Lamonica retired from professional football even though he had several offers from teams to become their backup quarterback.

"I was looking for a change in my life at that time and I went into the trucking business as



Lamonica hits a few around with former touring pro Jay Jones at Jones' Raintree Club in Fresno, Calif.

a part-owner of a trucking firm in Fresno," he says.

Since then he has been part-owner of a trucking firm in Alaska and now is in a Fresno insurance business specializing in insuring trucking businesses.

Lamonica has been married twice. His first wife lives in Minnesota where his 16-year-old son is the starting quarterback for his high school football team. Lamonica and his second wife, Mary, and their son, Brandon, 3, live in Fresno.

Lamonica now spends a lot of his free time hunting and fishing with his family in the Sierra Nevada mountains. "I'm an active person. I've started snow skiing and looking for things I can do with my family," he says. "And, of course, I play a lot of racquetball."

Lamonica is one of the regulars at the Raintree clubs. "I like my quickness and racquetball helps me work on it," he says. "In 30 minutes I can get a good, quick workout. It lets me really blow-out and perspire."

Lamonica feels that racquetball is not only good for improving speed and coordination,

but also has several advantages over other sports. "I originally started playing racquetball at Notre Dame because my coach wanted me to work on quickness. But then I found that it was great during the winter months, when there was too much snow on the ground to play any other games," he says. Although Lamonica had been a handball player, he soon discovered another advantage of racquetball. "It's the same quick game as handball, but doesn't cause finger injuries," he says. "My hands used to swell up after hard handball games. That's why I continued to play racquetball when I went to Buffalo."

Lamonica says he now plays as often as he can—two or three times a week—and has recently discovered another benefit of racquetball. He explains, "In just the past month I lost 12 pounds playing racquetball at Fresno." Since Lamonica admits he has to lose another 15 pounds, he will probably continue to be seen on racquetball courts quite often in the near future.



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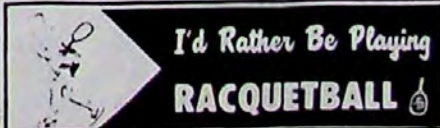
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Racquetball Five-O Framingham, Massachusetts



One of the more challenging aspects of Bernie Bonin's job as assistant manager of the Racquetball Five-O Club is to act as the referee in club tournaments. He explains, "People here are very competitive and highly strung. They love to compete and they love to win. The tournaments are hard fought and really get down to the nitty-gritty. We have a lot of tiebreakers. Players can get upset and they sometimes use certain unprintable words."

It's easy to see how a referee could become nervous in this sort of atmosphere. Bonin has one good solution to the problems which arise. He says, "I have to get involved in the conflicts. I'm asked to make the decisions, so I make it a point to always carry around a rule book."

Bonin has his rule book poised for action at the two open tournaments the club sponsors each year. The last open tournament drew 125 to 150 people from all over New England. The club also has three to four in-house tournaments per year, each of which draw 100 to 120 participants. The winners of the last in-house tourney were:

Men's As	John McGuigan
Men's Bs	Jim Panzera
Men's Cs	Scott Kirby
Men's Novice	Mike Carey
Men's Seniors	Charles Whitney
Women's Bs	Jan Wilson
Women's Cs	Diane Jones
Women's Novice	Diane Avery

The racquetball clubs around the area have to be almost as competitive as the players. "We're on the outskirts of Boston, and there are twelve court clubs in the area," Bonin says. "We have three court clubs within a five mile radius. Some clubs converted to racquetball from tennis. Luckily, there are enough racquetball players to keep all of us busy."

In addition to the tournaments, the club offers clinics, aerobics, gymnastics, and aerobic dance classes. The position of club pro is also filled by Bonin, who is a self-taught racquetball player. "I've learned from instruction books and magazines," he explains. "But I've been told by members here that I'm the best teacher they've had."

Kingsport Racquetball Club Kingsport, Tennessee

According to Tom Mohler, part owner and manager of the Kingsport Racquetball Club, the key to developing racquetball in this area is education and promotion. "This section of the state was just totally uneducated in racquetball," he says. "There are still people who don't know what the game's about." Kingsport is in the Tri-Cities region of Tennessee, which includes Johnson City and Bristol. "All other clubs are at least 90 to 100 miles away," Mohler says.

A serious racquetball player originally from Huntington Beach, Calif., Mohler explains that the lack of racquetball in Tennessee is what inspired him to build a new club. He says, "I'd gone to visit my parents who had moved here, and I brought all my racquetball gear. Then I found out there was no place to play. So I said, 'Why don't we build a club out here?'"

Mohler has developed a number of programs to promote the sport. After making numerous presentations to civic and business groups, he has convinced such businesses as the Tennessee Eastman Chemical Company, the largest employer in the area, to include racquetball in their company health and fitness programs. Currently, Mohler is working with an advertising agency to begin a much wider promotional program. "We're thinking of promoting to the outlying farm land and rural areas, maybe all the way to the coal fields of Kentucky and southwestern Virginia," he says.

The club's educational efforts are aided by a native racquetball celebrity, Davey Bledsoe, the 1977 National Champion. "Bledsoe was born and raised in Kingsport, and his parents still live here. He's given exhibitions at the club and when he's in town, he plays here," Mohler says. Bledsoe's brother, Jeff, also plays at the club. "He has improved his game more than anyone," Mohler remarks. "I imagine Davey gave him a little help."

As the club pro, Mohler is also active in teaching the sport and organizing tournaments. The club has three to four tournaments per year, both open and in-house events. "The skill level here is still not that high. Someone at the B level here is still probably a C player in a large metropolitan area," Mohler says. "But racquetball is growing here, and the players are still improving. There does seem to be a smaller percentage of players who are interested in playing competitively than, let's say, people from California, but they are friendlier here."

All-Pro Racquetball Club Arcadia, California

The racquetball players of the All-Pro Racquetball Club, nestled in the sleepy San Gabriel Valley, are inspired by a single dream, says John Hill, manager of the club: "We want to have a face-off with the players at the beach, and we want to win." All-Pro's traditional competitors are the many hard hitting racquetball players who line the court clubs near the Los Angeles and Santa Monica beaches. "Everyone here in the valley hears ample stories about how good the players are at the beach," Hill says. "Then they go play them, and they get beaten. We'd like to bring up the competition here, until we have class players. That's our inspiration for the future."

To reach the desired level of excellence, the club actively hosts tournaments for its players. Hill says, "We have in-house tournaments every two to three months and we get around 100 participants. Then we had a Muscular Dystrophy tournament last June that had 300 participants, and we're planning another Muscular Dystrophy benefit in the spring."

Arcadia All-Pro is also involved in a new San Gabriel Valley league, composed of four different clubs in the area. The 80 participants in the league are divided into men's A, B, and C and a general women's division. "We run a division at a different club every weekend. It's really beginning to inspire more competition," Hill says. He also admits proudly, "We do quite well in the leagues. In fact, we win most of the trophies."

Hill sees the club's potential for challenging the beach racquetball players as centering in the development of his three top male players. One of these players, Matt Waidelick, was a protégé of Charlie Brumfield. The other two are Mark Miller and Joe Blandino. "These three people are all on our A team. They're the best players we have," says Hill.

According to Hill, Marilyn Waidelick is the only woman player in the club who excels in racquetball. "Most of the women have only been playing a year and a half," says Marilyn, the club pro. "It takes more time than that before they get tournament tough."

Like Hill, Waidelick believes that the All-Pro club will someday be able to take on the beach players. But she is realistic. "In the past, it's always been the clubs of Los Angeles challenging San Diego clubs. I don't think we'll be ready for that type of challenge yet."

Arcadia All-Pro is partially owned by Phil Olsen, former professional football player for the Los Angeles Rams and Denver Broncos.

Wildwood Racquetball-Swim Club, Bettendorf, Iowa

There are two "unbeatable" players at the Wildwood Racquetball Club, says Gary Winthrow, the manager. One of these is the Iowa state seniors champ, Frank Low. The other, the state open champ, is Gary Winthrow himself. "I guess we're the best players here," Winthrow says.

Winthrow has tested this claim at club tourneys. "We have two big tournaments a year. At the last one, in August, we had 180 participants from four states—Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, and Minnesota." Did he win the tournament? "I hate to say it, but I did," Winthrow says apologetically, adding, "I guess if you're running the tournament you can set it up to win it." The club also has two or three smaller in-house tournaments per year, each of which draw about 100 entrants.

Although Wildwood was the first racquetball club in the Bettendorf area, opening its doors 3½ years ago, two other clubs also opened the same year. "That made it take longer to build up members, especially since we're in an area that has a population of only about 250,000 to 300,000 people," he says. To attract new members, the club offers three outdoor swimming pools, saunas, exercise equipment, and a particularly popular feature—free babysitting. "Babysitting definitely helps attract members—but I don't know if it's worth it," Winthrow says. "The club is more crowded because the parents stay longer in their courts. They say, 'Let someone else take care of the kids for a change.' But it does bring in players during the day, and that's good."

Winthrow says he has been striving to improve the skill level of Bettendorf racquetball. "The play is improving and the enthusiasm for tournaments is increasing. I have to turn away 50 to 75 people for our tournaments." Although the Iowa skill level still isn't as high as it was in his native Illinois, Winthrow thinks Iowa players have an advantage in attitude. "In Chicago they go to tournaments just to play. Here they go to make friends too."

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PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

With Ralph L. Gorrell, MD

Question: Most eye protectors I have seen prevent me from seeing as much as I can without them. Are they REALLY necessary?

Answer: Any apparatus that protects your eyes will cut down your field of vision a little. No, of course, you do not need to prevent injury to your eyes. You have two, so big deal if you lose one.

If you could study your eye and see how fragile it is, you would be sure to protect it. The eye is made up of two sections, each containing liquid, inside a tough, white sack. If either liquid is lost, there is danger of losing the eye entirely.

If the eye is bumped, the impact can rupture the sack or can detach the retina. The retina consists of delicate nerve branches spread around the back of the eye which are held in place by delicate strands of tissue. If the retina is injured, you are blind. If it is bumped loose, you are partially blind. If the retina is detached or separated from the back of the eye, it can be re-established only by delicate surgical approaches.

The lens, which is located between the two chambers, can be knocked out of position by a blow. Usually, this necessitates removal of the lens and the insertion of a plastic substitute lens, or the wearing of very thick "cataract" lenses.

Another problem with eye injuries: The front of the eye is made up of clear tissue that you look through, the cornea. When some particle gets into your eye, this "foreign body" irritates, inflames and hurts. It may lead to an eye infection. If injury or infection causes a scar on the cornea, you can not see as well through it. If there is excessive scarring or thickening, it must be removed surgically and replaced by a corneal transplant. Sounds frightening, doesn't it? Better wear those protective lenses.

Question: How do I keep my feet healthy?

Answer: To keep your skin healthy, wear cotton socks so that the sweat from the feet will be absorbed. Or you can wear thin, cotton stockings under heavy sweat socks.

Keep your feet dry by shaking talcum powder into your socks, between your toes and inside your racquetball shoes every time you wear them. Plain white, non-perfumed talcum powder is recommended since perfume may cause an allergic swelling of your feet.

Corn starch is often used to keep feet dry. The only objection is that corn starch is a food which encourages growth of a fungus between the toes. Talcum is ground from a rock;



no fungus or other infection can live on rock grindings. Also, corn starch will hold moisture if the skin is quite sweaty and not completely dry.

Protect your feet from injury by wearing cushioned shoes, especially if you are playing on concrete floors. If you have ever injured, bruised, fractured, cut, or burned your foot, you must protect that foot from re-injury.

If you suddenly feel pain on the big toe, foot or ankle, it may be due to gout. It may come on at any time, day or night, and it becomes severe within half an hour. See a doctor or go to an emergency room at once, because the diagnosis can best be made while the pain is localized. Once you have found out what is wrong, treatment is quick, painless and effective.

Normally, there is no need for artificial foot devices such as arch supports. The foot is a wonderful mechanism. If kept in good condition, it will serve you well without pain or weakness. Your arches will remain strong if you keep the muscles of the lower leg in good condition, strong, flexible and supportive.

Question: Sometimes I get tired of racquetball. What is wrong with me?

Answer: You are normal. Most people get tired or bored of any activity that is repeated often. Lay off a few days and you will come back strong.

If you do not, consider two other answers. You may think that you are fed up with racquetball but it may be that you are tired of the same, small group of players with whom

you always play.

Or, it may be because you have the delusion you are a better player than you actually are. If you are "tired" of the game, it may be that you are getting licked too often for your own peace of mind. Remember, you should be playing for the exercise.

Question: What can I do to relieve soreness in my arms and legs after playing a hard game?

Answer: Most players automatically apply heat to any painful area. But a more effective way to relieve pain is to apply something cold during the first 24 hours. A simple way to apply cold is with a plastic bag containing ice cubes.

There is a reason for using cold instead of heat the first day: Any injured or inflamed area swells. This is especially true of sprained ankles. So you have a double problem, pain from the original cause and the pain from the swelling. Cold tends to keep swelling down.

A simple method is to spray the injured area with ethyl chloride. This is a liquid which comes in a spray bottle. A very fine stream is sprayed on the sore spot. It results in instant coldness and relieves much of the pain. But be careful. Do not inhale ethyl chloride. It can be harmful. Use heat after the first day of soreness. But do not burn the skin. Do not keep heat on steadily for more than an hour, or the heat will cause some swelling, which is unnecessary.

You can apply heat for ten minutes and then apply something cold for two minutes, repeating the process for an hour. Warmth encourages more blood to flow into the area. This is a healing process. The cold stops the flow and cuts down on swelling.

Question: I really like racquetball but my stomach gets upset when I play the game hard. Why do I get indigestion?

Answer: No one knows what people mean when they complain of "acute indigestion," since there is no such scientific, medical term.

It has been known for centuries that the stomach is the "sounding board" of the emotions. If anything upsets you, you may feel it in your stomach. In racquetball, you may be playing the score or your opponent instead of playing for enjoyment. In football, you can get rid of the pressure by tackling or blocking harder, but in racquetball, it is frowned on to hit the other player with your racquet since the blood messes up the floor. Perhaps you should change your "playing attitude."

If your stomach bothers you, take two antacid pills as often as you want since they are the safest medicine you can take. They do not relax you as much as a can of beer. But beer, or any other form of alcohol, increases acid in your stomach.

Question: My wrist and elbow hurt when I hit a hard shot. What am I doing wrong?

Answer: Your coach can show you if you are using your arm incorrectly when hitting the ball. You may be playing tennis on the court instead of racquetball.

Pain in a joint may mean that you are overstretching or overstraining the joint, putting on a load that the joint is not built to take. Many cases of tennis or racquetball elbow are due to hitting backhand shots awkwardly.

Many players feel more comfortable with a support on the wrist or elbow. If you have soreness in a joint, such as the ankle or the wrist, try wearing an elastic support while you play. If it makes the joint feel stronger and takes out some of the soreness, wear it whenever you are on the court.

One disadvantage of any form of support is that the player gets mentally addicted to them, and is afraid to use his joint unless he is wearing the support. Eventually, the joint must be able to function in a normal manner, using its own ligaments and muscles for support.

Question: Sometimes, my back hurts after I play racquetball. How can I prevent this?

Answer: Lower back pain is due to poor physical conditioning. The ideal time to loosen up all your muscles and joints is when you first get up.

What keeps your back strong and painless is proper conditioning of the back muscles and the front (stomach) muscles.

A simple way to help your back muscles is to vary your daily routine. Get dressed tomorrow morning while you are lying down. You will find that you are using muscles in a different way and that you will feel more limber. Stand up, balance while you are putting on your shoes and socks. Never use the elevator for two or three floors. Instead, climb the stairs. Get up out of your chair for five minutes each hour to bend and twist or walk into another room. Stretch your arms and back in all directions.

Never play racquetball, or any other active sport, without first warming up all your muscles and joints. If you are younger than 12 years of age, this may not be necessary but even youngsters can overstretch joints and muscles.

Question: When I twist my ankle during racquetball play, it hurts and sometimes swells. Is this bad? Am I doing permanent injury to my ankle joint?

Answer: There is a simple way of telling. Buy a three-inch elastic bandage. Begin to wrap the ankle above the toes. Take a full turn around your foot, then half a turn more to "lock" the bandage. Continue to wrap higher and higher on the foot and over the ankle,

each layer overlapping the previous layer. It is usually best if the ankle bone is left out. This will not swell, anyway, so it does not need support. Anchor the top of the elastic bandage by pinning it to the next layer of bandage under it, or use the little clips that come in the box with the elastic bandage, to keep the top layer from slipping or unwrapping.

An elastic bandage gives with motion of the foot and ankle, so it does not hinder active play. If the ankle feels good while the bandage is on, wear it every time you play until the soreness goes away.

As a general rule, sore ankles do not need medical care. If there is any question of ligaments being torn at the ankle, an orthopedic surgeon should be consulted at once. Some ankle injuries may need to be supported by a plaster cast or a firm brace, or may even need to be operated on to prevent development of a permanently weakened ankle. Strange as it may seem, there can be a minor fracture (a hairline crack) across the fibula, the outside ankle bone, yet the person can still walk on it because the weight of the body is carried by the shin bone (tibia).

Medical note: X-rays do not show if ligaments are torn. Beware of a doctor glibly saying that the x-rays are okay.

The U.S. Air Force did a controlled study of fresh ankle sprains, using five different methods of treatment. They learned that the less the ankle was used, the weaker it became and the longer it took to return to normal use. Strapping (taping) an ankle joint for a few days gives support, and tends to ease up the pain. But never tape any joint by wrapping adhesive tape around it, or you will cut off circulation and make the foot or hand swell.

Question: My feet hurt after playing racquetball. Is this normal? Does it mean that I am getting arthritis in my feet?

Answer: It depends on what kind of floor you play on. A floor with resilience has less tendency to make your feet sore. For example, we notice the difference when we vary from cement to soft pine floors. The most traumatic surface to play on is cement. Slip in a soft insole for added cushion.

One easy way of taking the soreness or the tiredness out of your feet is to use alternating hot and cold water soaks. The medical term is "contrast bath," a fancy term for a very simple, free form of therapy.

Start by soaking both feet in warm water for three minutes. Then move both feet to a cold bucket and soak for 30 seconds to one minute. Return to the warm water and repeat the cycle of hot to cold, for ten minutes or more. It is amazing how much soreness such contrasting temperatures can take out of feet. This can also be done for soreness in hands and wrists.



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TOURNAMENTS

Kendler Classic



Photo by William Precht

Dave Peck hits one on his way to a victory over Marty Hogan in the Kendler Classic in Palatine, Ill. The win was worth \$4,500 to Peck.

By Tom Morrow

Don't talk to Dave Peck about Mike Yellen or Marty Hogan being the best professional racquetball players in the nation. He won't believe it.

Despite Yellen's new top seed ranking and Hogan's strong defense of his third straight national championship title, Peck, the 24-year-old El Paso native, defeated racquetball's top players to win the third annual \$15,000 Robert W. Kendler Classic in Palatine, Ill. The victory was worth \$4,500 to Peck.

For Peck it was sweet victory, especially after being dumped in the first round by 26th-ranked Gary Berberet in the previous tournament in Omaha.

For Hogan, it was the second time in as many tournament stops that he would be

felled by a Peck. Dave's brother Gregg, a high school senior in El Paso, eliminated Hogan in the quarterfinals of the Omaha tourney.

In quarterfinal play, Yellen defeated Doug Cohen of St. Louis for the chance to meet Peck, who had downed Lindsay Myers of Vancouver, B.C. Hogan knocked off Steve Strandemo of San Diego to face Jerry Hilecher, who easily defeated Don Thomas of Mesa, Arizona.

For football fans who are used to sitting less than three hours to watch a football game, five hours of racquetball must have seemed like posterior torture. But no one complained as the Hogan-Hilecher, Peck-Yellen matches gave spectators at the Charlie Club II two of the best matches of racquetball this season.

Hogan sought and received sweet revenge from his early-season defeat to long-time

playing rival, Hilecher. The first game of the Hogan-Hilecher match saw Hilecher, the number-three ranked player, jumping to a 6-2 advantage with an ace and two kill shots. Racquetball's all-time money winner added more points to Hilecher's column by skipping three shots.

Then it was Hogan's turn. The 22-year-old champ outscored Hilecher 15-2, and went on to win 21-12.

The score see-sawed in the second game until it was 11-9 Hilecher. Then Hilecher ran off another five unanswered points on Hogan to make it 15-9 before the champ began his run. Hogan outscored Hilecher 6-1, to trail by one, 16-15. Then came the duel. Rallies of 10 to 12 exchanges became the norm and it was only when the slightest mistake was made by one of the players that the other would take advantage.

Hogan had a 20-18 advantage but let three serves go by without a score, during which time Hilecher tied the game 20-20. Hilecher ended the 70-minute match with a kill shot, 21-20.

Hogan, who had played throughout with unusual calmness and determination, began in the tiebreaker looking as if to end the match as quickly as possible. But two Hogan serves produced no points. On Hilecher's second serve, Hogan skipped a return. Hogan quickly regained the offensive and drove a forehand kill shot into the front wall to make it 1-1.

Each player then traded serves seven times before any more points accumulated. Hogan finally got a kill for his second point and Hilecher quickly had his second point on a Hogan skip.

Hilecher led 3-2 but Hogan went on a nine-point scoring run with three passes, two kill shots, a right-corner pinch and a service winner to cap the match 11-3.

Peck, who turned 24 the day before the semifinal round, celebrated by outscoring the 20-year-old Yellen 9-3 in the first game. Peck scored two aces, three kills and two backhand right-corner pinch shots to get his jump on Yellen.

Yellen began his scoring thrust, outscoring Peck 6-2. With the score at 11-9, the two players began a see-saw battle, trading points on kill shots, corner pinches and defensive skips.

Peck led 16-13, but Yellen took the lead on six unanswered points. At 18-16, Peck made two beautifully delivered pinch shots in each front corner to tie the score 18-all. Each player lost a serve and then Yellen scored the final two points on a pinch and pass to take the first game, 21-18.

In the second game, it was 9 to negative 1 before Peck began to put points on his side. He lost the point on a technical when NRC referee Larry Lee called Peck for kicking the door after Yellen had scored his fourth

straight pass shot. (There is a \$50 fine for a technical.)

At 10-2, Peck began what had to be one of the phenomenal comebacks this season. Peck outscored Yellen 19-1 to take the second game 21-11.

Peck continued his scoring assault on Yellen by shutting him out 8-0 in the tiebreaker. It was as if Peck had been using the first game to warm-up. It was then Yellen's turn for a comeback. He ran off nine points with a series of kills, three aces and two pass shots. At 9-9, Peck slammed a sensational roll-out pinch shot in the frontwall right corner while running toward the rear wall. That gave him the serve.

Peck quickly scored on two corner pinch shots, giving him the match and match-up with Hogan in the final round.

In the first game, Peck jumped to an early 9-1 lead before Hogan could get anything on his ball. Then Hogan smashed a series of forehand kill shots that brought the score to 9-8. It went back and forth in the scoring until the score was 18-16 for Peck.

Peck ended the first game with three kill shots, 21-18.

In the second game, Peck again jumped to an early lead, 4-0, and had the crowd buzzing that Hogan would be finished in two. However, Hogan began a scoring run that went for 16 points.

With the score standing at Hogan 16-6, Peck began to show the crowd the come-from-behind play he had so brilliantly displayed the night before against Yellen.

With Hogan still ahead at 20-8, Peck slammed four unbelievable pinch shots, a pass and three kill shots to come within four points of the champ. Hogan finally ended the second game with one of his 140-plus mph

forehand kill shots into the front wall. Score: 21-16.

The tiebreaker was the closest of the three games with each player giving a better performance than he had in the previous two games. Hogan grabbed an early 3-0 lead before skipping two points. With the score at 5-3 for Peck, a rally with 18 exchanges took place that had the crowd in awe. Hogan finally grabbed the point with a beautiful right corner pinch roll-out that brought the audience to its feet applauding.

With the score tied at 6-6, Peck shot a right corner pinch with his forehand and then slammed a series of four backhand kill shots to take the match and the tournament honors.

"It was great," said Peck afterwards. "Marty's a great player. Just because I beat him today, doesn't mean he's any less the champion that he is."

Peck said he realized he had better take his game a little more seriously after being ousted in the first round in Omaha.

"I've done a lot of playing since Omaha," he said. "I wasn't prepared for that tournament mentally or physically. I had just come off a lot of clinics and I was out of shape. Gregg helped me a lot in preparing for the match with Marty."

Peck said he won this one for himself. "It's my birthday present."

Tanner/Coca Cola

After a three-tournament drought in which other players took home those \$4,500 championship checks, three-time National champion Marty Hogan finally got back in the winner's circle.

Hogan defeated Jerry Hilecher, 11-21, 21-7, 11-5, to win the \$15,000 William B. Tanner-

Coca Cola Classic at Memphis State University.

It marked the first tourney win for Hogan since the 1980 Nationals last June in Las Vegas. The three previous pro stops this season were won by Hilecher, Mike Yellen and Dave Peck.

In the quarterfinals, Hogan defeated hometown hero David Fleetwood, 21-11, 21-11, Yellen defeated Rich Wagner, 21-20, 21-15, Hilecher topped Lindsay Myers, 21-7, 21-20, and Peck defeated teenager Mike Levine, 21-10, 21-11.

Levine had made it to the quarters by upsetting Steve Strandemo in the first round, 21-19, 13-21, 11-10, and then defeating Scott Hawkins, 16-21, 21-18, 11-2.

There were also a couple of other first-round upsets with Keith Dunlap of Memphis defeating Doug Cohen, Fleetwood upsetting Don Thomas, and Gary Merritt of Houston defeating Gregg Peck.

In the semis, Hilecher destroyed Yellen, 21-15, 21-10, and Hogan nipped Peck, 21-16, 10-21, 11-10, in what one observer described as "the best match of the season."

In the tiebreaker, Peck served six times and Hogan five before a point was scored. Hogan led 1-0 on an ace but Peck took over at 3-1 on three kill shots. The two were knotted at 4-4 and 6-6 before Peck led 9-6.

Hogan cut it to 9-7 and Peck scored on a pinch to give him match point. For some reason, Peck then called time out, and that may have been the wrong strategy to use, considering Hogan was not calm after losing the tenth point. Hogan regained his composure, and slowly whittled the lead. Peck got the serve back at 10-8, 10-9 and 10-10 but couldn't put it away.

Hogan then scored the decider on a 39-

EKTELON-PERRIER REGIONALS

Feb. 5-8, Philadelphia, Omni Court Club and Fitness Center, 2451 Grant Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19114. Contact Ron Nabreski.

Feb. 6-8, Houston, Continental Racquetball, 14880 Bammel/No. Houston Road, Houston, TX 77014. Contact Marc Auerbach.

Feb. 11-14, Kansas City, Dales Courts, 11301 West 88th Street, Overland Park, KS 66214. Contact Pat Cocherl.

Feb. 12-15, Los Angeles/Orange County, Racquetball World & Aerobic Health Center, 1901 East First Street, Santa Ana, CA 92705. Contact Bobby Green.

Feb. 13-16, New York, Centre Court Racquetball Club, 40 Maple Avenue, Rockville Centre, NY 11570. Contact Frank Dolan.

Feb. 19-22, Denver, Denver Sporting Club, 5151 DTC Parkway, Englewood, CO 80111. Contact John Foust.

Feb. 20-22, Detroit, Racquet King Courts, 1630 Fort Street, Trenton, MI 48183. Contact Larry Jakinovich.

Feb. 20-22, Florida, Sportrooms of Coral Gables, 1500 Douglas Road, Coral Gables, FL 33134. Contact Carl Dean.

Feb 26-Mar. 1, Boston, Cambridge Racquetball Club, 215 First Street, Cambridge, MA 02142. Contact Debbie Salmon.

Mar. 5-8, Atlanta, The Racquethouse, 4951 Lower Roswell Road, Marietta, GA 30067. Contact Janet Marshall.

Mar. 5-8, Chicago, Glass Court Club, 830 East Roosevelt Road, Lombard, IL 60148. Contact Lynne Farmer.

Mar. 6-8, San Francisco, Telegraph Hill Club, 1850 Kearny Street, San Francisco, CA 94111. Contact Jeff Green.

Mar. 12-15, Baltimore, Security Court Club, 2076 Lord Baltimore Drive, Baltimore, MD 21207. Contact Tom Olson.

Mar. 12-15, Phoenix, Civic Center Racquetball Club, 7303 East Earl Drive, Scottsdale, AZ 85251. Contact Dave Braga.

Mar. 13-15, Ohio, Racqueteer Club, 501 Morrison Road, Columbus, OH 43230. Contact Ron Woolard.

Mar. 13-15, Minneapolis, Northern Racquetball Club, 1071 Highway 10, Minneapolis, MN 55432 and Northeast Racquetball Club, 5160 Central Avenue N.E., Columbia Heights, MN 55421. Contact Bruce Dahlmeier.

Finals: April, Los Angeles.

TOURNAMENTS

foot backhand pinch shot, setting up the finale with Hilecher.

Hogan lost the first game but easily controlled things in the second against Hilecher.

Hogan led 2-0 in the tiebreaker before Hilecher took over at 3-2. Hogan led 4-3 but Hilecher knotted it at 4-4. Hogan then burst out to a 10-4 lead. Hilecher scored another point before Hogan put away the title with another 39-foot backhand pinch shot.

Mentholatum Open

Kevin Williams defeated Bill Stevens, 21-16, 21-14, and Laura Martino defeated Hope Weisbach in the finals of the Mentholatum Open at the San Diego Tennis and Racquet Club in San Diego, Calif.

The tournament was part of a series of four—two in the West and two in the Southwest—that Mentholatum sponsored.

Bob Driscoll defeated Sal Concha, 21-12, 17-21, 11-6, and Lori Cox topped Sue Wilson, 21-19, 18-21, 11-8, for the B division titles, and Bud Muehleisen defeated Jay Streim, 21-11, 21-9, for the seniors crown.

In the Dallas, Tex. tournament at American Racquetball Club, Gary Brown defeated Carlos Nieves, 21-20, 21-13, and Susie Dugan beat Leslie Moughon, 21-8, 21-9, in the open divisions.

Steve Kuykendall and D. Palomino won the B divisions and L. Bernstein took top honors in the men's seniors.

At the O K Racquet Club in Oklahoma City, Dan Massari defeated Greg Sheffield, 21-16, 11-21, 11-4, and Leslie Hall took a 21-14, 12-21, 11-9, decision over Candy Overstake. B. Fleetwood defeated C. Rahlfs, 21-19, 20-21, 11-8, in the men's B finals.

At the Bellevue Athletic Club in Bellevue, Wash., Mike Hoonan won the men's open by defeating Leff Lowery, 21-9, 19-21, 11-7.

Etc.

● WPRA Schedule: Feb. 12-15, Chicago; Feb. 26-Mar. 1, Seattle; Mar. 12-15, Albany, N.Y.; Mar. 26-30, Toronto (tentative); April 2-5, Warwick, R.I.; April 23-26, Fishkill, N.Y.; Late April or early May, Los Angeles; May (Nationals), Chicago.

● NRC Schedule: Feb. 18-22, Houston; Mar. 18-22, Miami (Tournament of Champions); May 6-10, St. Louis.

● Doug Clark defeated Ray Capitanelli in the men's finals and Karen Borga won the women's division in the New Jersey State Championships at Hopewell Valley Racquetball Club.

● The International Athletic Club of Denver and Titch Publishing Co., publishers of *Colorado Woman* and *Colorado Business*, are putting on a \$10,000 Swingers '81 "amateur" tournament in April.

● Bruce Radford defeated Jon Woodard, 21-19, 18-21, 11-7, and Cindy Moore defeated Pat Nishi, 21-5, 21-9, in the open divisions of the Turkey Ball at Center Courts in Los Angeles. Other division winners included Chuck Garabedian and Kathy Gartrell (B), Danny Trager and Mae Chin (C), Gary Guilette (seniors), Lee Pretner (masters) and Kevin Watson, Mark Silva and John DeSantis (juniors).

● Gary Berberet defeated Tim Berberet, 21-18, 21-20, in the Octoberfest tournament at the LaMirada (Calif.) Athletic Club. Steve Ivers and C. Hillman won the B divisions.

● Wayne Treloggen defeated Glenn Gottlieb, 21-15, 21-10, to win the men's A division of the Holiday Tournament at the Sports Connection in Santa Monica, Calif. Kathy Gartrell defeated Marilyn Wun in the advanced women division. Other winners were Barry Sibbald (B), Shaun McConnell (C), D. Oliver (men's novice), Robynne Modiano (women's novice), B.J. Jenkins-Linda Moss (mixed doubles), B.J. Jenkins-Doug Anderson (doubles), Salvador Madrigal (seniors).

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COLLEGE COURTS

University of California at San Diego

The University of California at San Diego (UCSD), located in one of California's major centers of racquetball enthusiasm, does not have a single racquetball court. However, this hasn't stopped the hardcore racquetball players on campus from organizing a racquetball club and an intercollegiate team. Marty Brenner, team coach and officer of the club, explains, "We get a group rate at a local club and then reserve a time block two times a week. Then we carpool to the club." This arrangement attracted 70 to 80 members last year, and 40 players have joined the club so far this year.

According to Brenner, the club has an informal structure and consists mostly of people who want to get together to find a game. "Since most of the officers of the club are members of the team, we have to watch out that we don't make it too competitive," Brenner says. "We always take a vote to find out what the club members want to do. They like it informal."

The intercollegiate team, however, is highly competitive, and team members have organized competitions with colleges such as the University of San Diego, United States International University, San Diego State, Point Loma Community College, and Cal State Fullerton. "This year we're going to try to arrange matches with UC Irvine and Long Beach State as well," Brenner says.

The team would also like to play against UCLA and the University of Southern California, but there's a problem in getting funding for travel expenses. "We apply for funding and the intercollegiate office tries to get it for us, but they have to fight for it, and we get less money every year. We always end up paying for court time and gas ourselves," Brenner says.

The team usually consists of six men and six women, but this year the team could only recruit four interested women players. According to Brenner, most of the team players are Bs and Cs, although there are a few A players such as Tim Gilligan and George Shapiro. The UCSD team does fairly well in intercollegiate competition. "We had a practice match with Fullerton last quarter and we wiped them out," Brenner says. "In the past, we always did well until we played San Diego State. They always blow us away. They have people who play in tournaments all the time—real hardcore racquetball players."

Brenner hopes that the racquetball program will expand at the school. "Four courts have been approved by a student

referendum, and they should be built by 1983. Our chances for funding next year will be looking up if I can get the intercollegiate program off the ground. The attitude at college athletic departments is that they don't want a new team because it costs extra money. But this should change in the next few years for racquetball."

Ohio State University

"Racquetball is probably the most popular individual sport on campus," says Bruce Maurer, assistant director of university recreation and intramural sports. "Last year we had 1,500 people compete in intramural tournaments and we had to turn people away from every tourney. We run a men's and women's singles tournament every quarter, a doubles tournament in the summer, and co-recreational tournaments on weekends."

The winners of the A divisions in the fall quarter's tournament were John Heintschel and Linda Reamsnyder.

Ohio State, located in Columbus, has 20 regulation courts and six nonregulation courts, all of which are in constant use. "We begin taking reservations at 6:00 p.m. for the next day, and by 6:30 or 6:45 p.m. all available spots are reserved," Maurer says. Despite the high usage of the courts, the campus has no plans to expand further. "If we had 60 to 100 courts they would still be full all the time," Maurer says. "There's a phenomenal cost in building racquetball courts, and we have the philosophy that no matter how many new courts you build, you would still have to turn away the same number of people."

This philosophy stems from the observation that racquetball interest at Ohio State shows no signs of decreasing. "The sport started becoming popular in 1974, when we had a racquetball tournament on the six old courts. Then we opened a new building with 20 courts in 1977. I guess we can't really tell if growth is increasing, because we can't number the people we turn away, but we do know racquetball is maintaining its high peak of popularity," Maurer says.

In addition to a huge intramural program, Ohio State also has a popular racquetball club, which had 83 members last year. The club includes John Heintschel, the winner of the intramural tournament, Steve Koehl, whom Maurer classes as one of the best players on campus, and other top Ohio State players such as Gary Cox, Scott Herron, Jeff Gordon, and Brian Ford.

According to Cox, president of the club, the club's most important activity has

been the attempts at organizing Big Ten racquetball. Last year, when the club brought together 35 people representing four schools, Ohio State was the overall winner with Purdue a close second.

Cox says they are planning another, much larger tournament for March, which should have players representing all 14 schools. "We're just in our infancy now—last year was the first time anyone attempted a Big Ten tournament—but with sponsorship we should be able to make racquetball a Big Ten sport."

Bryant College

Bryant College, a small private college of 6,000 students located in Smithfield, R.I., has just taken a major step in developing their already impressive sports program: They have just opened up their first five racquetball courts. Charlie Mandeville, athletic trainer and gym manager, explains how the decision was made. "Sports are very big here. We have 16 major varsity sports, 120 softball teams, and 93 intramural basketball teams. Our main gym had five basketball courts, and with the 93 teams those courts were busy until 3:00 a.m. everyday. It was affecting our students' school work. So we decided to build another multipurpose center with three more courts." When the college decided to build the center, the planners realized they had room for other activities as well. "It was between racquetball courts and squash courts," Mandeville says, "and we took a survey with our kids. A lot more kids wanted racquetball, so we decided to go with five courts."

According to Mandeville, one of the reasons for the student interest is that racquetball has become very popular in Rhode Island. "Racquetball has really boomed here. A lot of tennis facilities that popped up everywhere when tennis was popular are now converting to racquetball," he says.

In setting up the program, Mandeville will have the help of one of the new racquetball facilities in the area, Winsocket Court Club in Winsocket, R.I. Mike McKee, the club pro, will be teaching classes and developing instructional programs.

In the future, Bryant plans to set up an intramural program and sponsor tournaments. Mandeville expects as large numbers of racquetball competitors as they have for the other 16 varsity sports. Eventually they plan to expand to intercollegiate competition. "I know Providence College has a racquetball team but I guess we won't be challenging them for at least another year," Mandeville says wistfully.

FASHION RAC



It was an afternoon of cutthroat competition at the All-Pro Athletic Club in Arcadia, Calif., with all the participants wearing outfits from Roland Actionwear.

Tim Culbertson, Glenn Monday and Rico Camacho were the players. Delma Araya served as the one-woman cheering section.



Glen enters the club in Roland's peach and gray windbreaker jacket made of 100 percent woven cotton sateen. **\$60.** Cotton slicker pants are **\$42.** Tim is wearing a charcoal top with peach velour stripe made of 100 percent cotton slicker. Comes with full zipper and pockets. **\$62.** Rico prefers the khaki top with yellow velour inserts. Comes with side pockets. **\$60.** Matching pants are made of 100 percent cotton slicker. **\$42.**



On the court, Tim does his serving in a peach 100 percent cotton shirt with white rib insert. **\$24.50.** Shorts are made of 100 percent cotton pique stitch. Comes with side pockets and draw string. **\$28.** Glenn has on a peach velour top made of 80 percent cotton and 20 percent polyester. Comes with zip or snap front. **\$69.** Gray cotton slicker pants are **\$42.**



While Rico sticks with his khaki and yellow outfit, Glenn decides to try on a charcoal warmup suit made of 100 percent cotton slicker. Comes with pockets. Top **\$62.50,** pants **\$42.** Tim changes into Roland's peach velour warmup made of 80 percent cotton and 20 percent polyester. Matching outfit retails for **\$120.**



Rico watches the action in a gray full zip windbreaker baseball jacket made of 100 percent cotton slicker. Comes with side pockets. **\$62.50.** Matching pants, **\$42.** Delma looks sharp in Roland's yellow uni-sex outfit. The top, made of 60 percent polyester and 40 percent cotton, retails for **\$27.50.** The pants are made of 100 percent cotton sweatcloth. **\$42.**

Fashion directed by Aly Spencer
Photography by David M. King
Racquets courtesy of Olymplan
Shoes by Lotto
Bags courtesy of Leach
Racquetball cans courtesy of K.D. Sports

Short Shots

Moon Shot



Photo by Harry Butler

The closest racquetball has ever come to the moon is when women's body building champion Rachel McLish took a tour of NASA Space Center in Houston and brought along her racquet to take aim at a replica of the moon.

"I always knew my ceiling shots were out of this world," said McLish.

Joining Rachel on the tour was Lloyd Lambert, Sr., founder of Dynacam Manufacturing Co., which is based in Houston.

The Big Suit

People concerned with the racquetball industry are anxiously awaiting the outcome of Dr. Bud Muehleisen's suit against the United States Racquetball Association and its arm, the National Racquetball Club.

The trial is set for June in federal court in San Diego. Point West, a racquetball manufacturing company for whom Muehleisen was a consultant, and Muehleisen are asking for a judgment "in excess of a million dollars."

Muehleisen and Point West actually filed the suit in February, 1978 against the USRA, NRC, Dart Industries (then the owners of Seamco), Colgate-Palmolive, Leach Industries, the William B. Tanner Co., and I-Pro.

The suit challenged several things, which added up to, says Muehleisen's attorney Bob Vallandigham, "an alleged anti-trust conspiracy."

Muehleisen is challenging the USRA/NRC "official ball rule" allowing only Seamco balls to be used in their events, and also the policy of *National Racquetball* magazine to turn away advertising for racquetballs manufactured by companies other than Seamco.

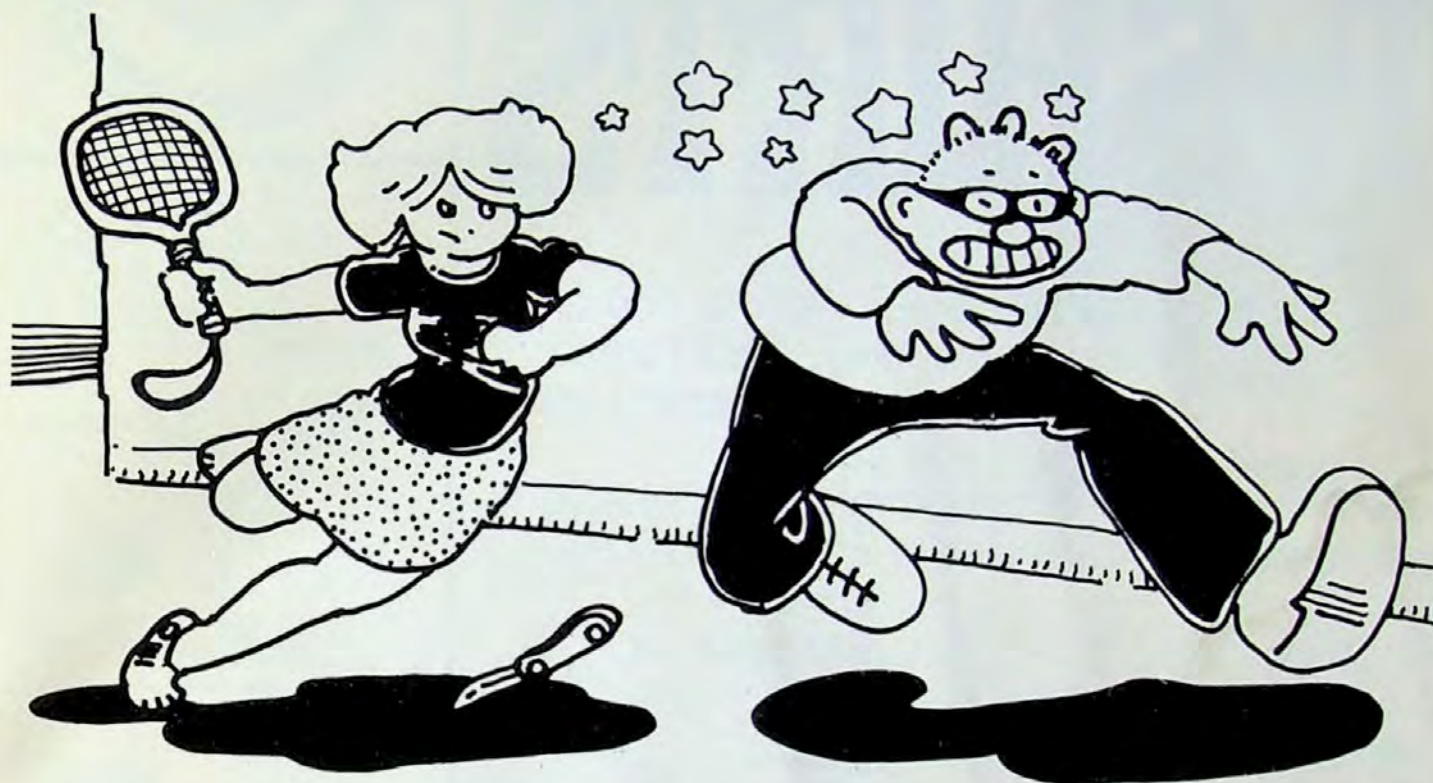
Muehleisen also challenged the "shirt rule" (not in effect any longer) which stated that the players had to wear tournament shirts with sponsors' names rather than any shirt they wanted. This rule obviously violated certain players' contracts, which stated that the player had to wear a shirt from the racquet company which sponsored him or her.

Most of the defendants in the suit have settled with Muehleisen and Point West out of court. The William Tanner Co., an advertising agency out of Memphis, Tenn., agreed to pay \$37,500 early in 1980. Tanner was the former president of the International Racquetball Association and its arm, I-Pro. Colgate/Leach settled with Muehleisen and Point West for \$100,000 last summer.

That leaves the USRA, NRC and Dart Industries (Seamco) for the June court battle. There is no talk of an out-of-court settlement at this point, although that still remains a possibility. "We are prepared to take it to trial," says Vallandigham.



How to Prevent A Robbery



Store owners have used guns, burglar alarms, martial arts training and even dogs to ward off potential robberies. Now, it can go on record that a racquetball racquet has been successfully used to the same end.

Betty Ovington, who owns Sports World sporting goods store in Eureka, Calif., was confronted one day by a knife-toting male robber.

"I had just opened," she recalled. "I was aware that somebody had come in

the store and I turned around to face him. He was standing about five feet from me with a knife pointing at me. I was really not afraid because everything happened so fast.

"All I was trying to do was protect my shop. I first went at him without anything. Then I thought, 'Hey, lady, you better grab something,' so I grabbed a racquetball racquet.

"I hit him three times. In between, I'm hitting the wall and yelling for help. When

he started to flee, I just kept on going after him with the racquet."

Police never caught the would-be robber but, at least, no money was taken.

"I don't think a person knows how to react until it happens to you," said Ovington. "It was an unpleasant experience. I don't wish to do it again."

And the racquet? It was a Head Professional, prompting one customer to say to Ovington, "That's using your Head."

Celebrity Board

Three-time national racquetball champion Marty Hogan, designer Diane Von Furstenberg and Joe Sobek, founder of the game of racquetball, are among the personalities who have been named to the board of advisors for Grand Central Racquetball Club in New York City.

"We have invited recognized personalities from business, entertainment, and sports to serve on the board," said Steven Gordon, president. "We want the board to reflect the types of members for whom the club is being built."

Other board members include Dr.

Russell Warren, director of Sports Medicine Service in New York; Eva Auchincloss, executive director of Women's Sports Foundation; John DeLorean, chairman of the board of DeLorean Motor Company; Dick Schaap, ABC sports commentator; Joseph Papp, Broadway producer, and Diana Nyad, marathon swimmer and women's racquetball pro.

The club, which will have five racquetball courts and a complete fitness facility, is under construction in Grand Central Station.

Shorter Shots

The National Society to Prevent Blindness has formed a Sports Eye Safety Advisory Committee to develop eye protection guidelines for racquet sports players. Chuck Leve, executive director of the National Court Clubs Association, has been named to the committee...

David R. Grant has been named president of Penn Athletic Products Company...

The latest WPRA rankings: 1. Heather McKay 2. Shannon Wright 3. Marci Greer 4. Lynn Adams 5. Bonnie Stoll 6. Martha McDonald and Karin Walton-Trent (tie) 8. Janell Marriott 9. Fran Davis and Linda Prefontaine (tie)...

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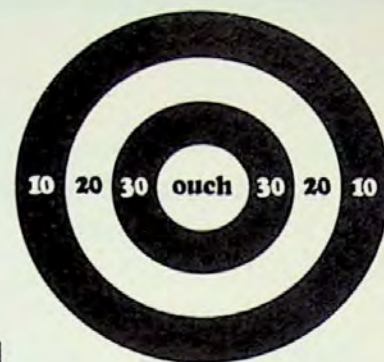
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OFF THE WALL



"Ceiling shots are murder at this place."

Cartoon by Tom Giulivo

THE NEXT SHOT...

Our April issue offers this for your reading pleasure:

APRIL FOOLS SECTION

This satirical section returns by popular demand.

PAY FOR PLAY

Is this a threat to the private court club?

GREG PECK

A feature on Dave Peck's kid brother.

COMMON ERRORS

Former National champ Shannon Wright can cure them.

TORONTO

This beautiful city is very racquetball conscious.

Plus:

Results of the pro stop from Honolulu, instruction from some of the country's top pros and a cover story on an interesting television personality.

They have names like Fantome. Polynesia. Flying Cloud. Yankee Clipper. And each is a legend. Great schooners where Onassis' partied, where Vanderbilt entertained millionaires and the Duke of Westminster greeted royalty. Legendary times, ships and parties. If your soul and body are ready to become a part of a legend, sail away with us to the exotic Caribbean. True life adventure with golden tanned bodies. Bowl on deserted beaches on moonlit palm fringed islands. Sailing, skindiving, beach partying, picnicking in forgotten coves, and discovering hidden volcanoes.

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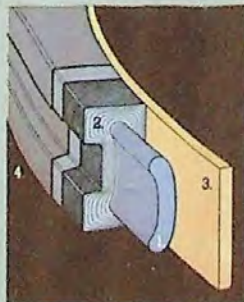
Point One: Unique Construction. Ektelon craftsmen hand-lay laminations of continuous fiberglass fibers around a continuous graphite fiber core. Using precise variations in the proportions, positions, and relative angles of these two materials, Ektelon fine-tunes every millimeter of the racquet frame ... making it flexible where it should be flexible, stiffer where it should be stiffer, and lighter where it needs to be lighter.

Point Two: Power. Ektelon's carefully controlled use of stiffer, lighter graphite fibers gives the 250G tremendous snap at impact with the ball.

Point Three: Control. Ektelon's unique use of tough, heavier fiberglass fibers provides exceptional flexibility and control, while adding strength.

Point Four: Durability. Utilizing a torque tube design (the fiberglass completely encases the graphite), Ektelon minimizes racquet face distortion and maximizes durability. Like all Ektelon racquets, the Composite 250G features a full two-year racquet frame and ninety-day string warranty.

Point Five: Winning Points. The popularity of the 250G among knowledgeable players points to just one thing: performance. Its innovative features add up to surer passes, harder kills, fewer skips, more points game after game and match after match. And that's the whole point of a racquetball racquet.



1. Continuous graphite fibers.
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