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JULY, 1980

# RACQUETBALL TODAY

## National Champs Crowned



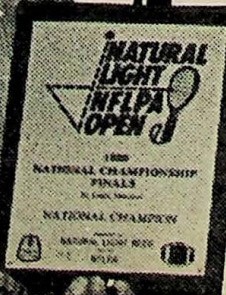
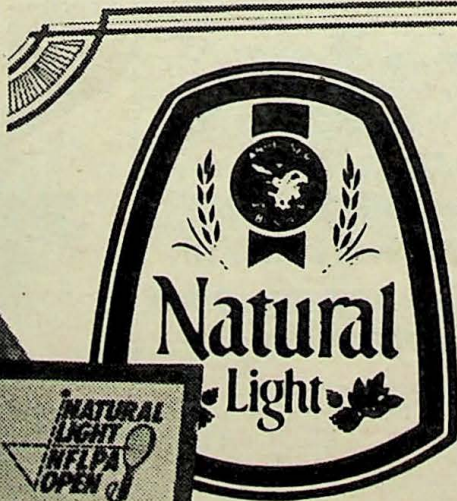
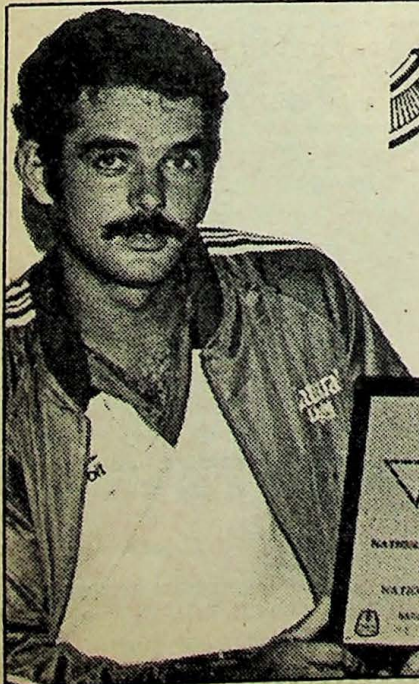
Heather McKay

Story on Page 5



Marty Hogan

Story on Page 3



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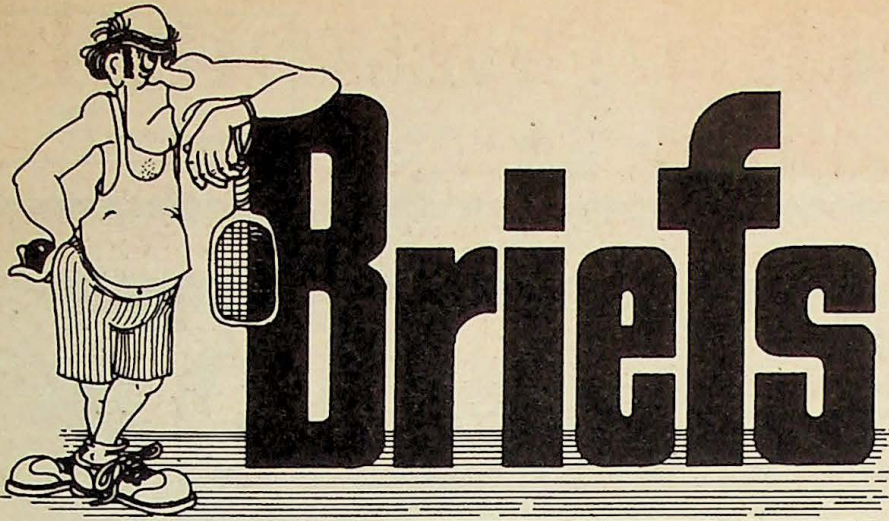
DOLLARS

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June 15 1980

Dallas Cowboy Placekicker Rafael Septien Wins NFL Players Title — Story on Page 7



**Connie Peterson Joins AMF Head**

Connie Peterson, a member of the WPRA and highly-ranked racquetball pro, has been named to the Head Racquetball Advisory Staff. Connie is presently assistant manager and pro at Courtsports II in Eugene, Oregon, and will continue in that capacity and in her competitions on the pro tour.

**Dyna Bee strengthens grip**

Racquetballers who want the competitive edge might benefit from a product called the DYNA BEE. It is a hand-held gyro exerciser that is capable of spinning up to 8,000 rpm's to exercise those important grip, wrist and forearm muscles. Studies indicate that the limiting factor in achieving maximum grip strength is the ability of the thumb to oppose the force of the fingers. A few minutes of exercising with this instrument will strengthen the muscles related to grip strength. For further information or to order, write to Adonis Company, 21012 Avenue Amapola, El Toro, Calif. 92630.

**HEALTH DEPT. — Muscle Cramps**

Here are four tips that should help you prevent muscle cramps caused by strenuous activity:

1. Do plenty of stretching exercises before and after playing.
2. Spend an adequate amount of time warming up before starting.
3. Replace lost electrolytes and potassium by eating bananas and drinking tomato juice (products like Gatorade and Thirst Quencher are also good).
4. Do not push yourself beyond reasonable limits.

**Is Racquetball your "racket," or does it just make a racket?**

According to the American Heritage Dictionary (and other leading dictionaries), the four-walled sport of pass and kill shots may be spelled with either a "qu" or a "k." The reason "qu" is most commonly used is to keep the sport from being identified with the more negative connota-

*(Continued on Page 14)*

**We Get Letters . . .**

Dear RACQUETBALL TODAY,

I would like to comment on an article in the February issue which was written by Diane Gabrisko. It was an article about all our friends who stare at the front wall. The article was STRAIGHT TO THE POINT, but was also so funny that it got many of my racquetball students laughing, even though I was reading it to them FOR THEIR BENEFIT. Good job Diane.

Could you please send me another copy of this article, I lost mine.

I thoroughly enjoy your paper. Keep up the good work.

**Judy Sands  
Racquetball Teacher  
Tinley Park, Ill.**

win, stated that Yellen would be the toughest competition, and said to watch out for Peck and Hilecher. Since Hogan beat Yellen in the finals, and Peck and Hilecher were the other two semi-finalists, you are to be congratulated on your skill and knowledge of the game. The entire article was excellent.

**Len Carrerra  
Salt Lake City**

Dear RACQUETBALL TODAY,

I really enjoy a little humor now and then. Would you tone it down, please.

**Art Carroll  
Atlanta**

Dear RACQUETBALL TODAY,

I hate cutthroat, but I've got a problem. My friend and I have permanent court time every Tuesday and Thursday night at 8:00, and another good friend just always seems to be there. All the other courts are full, and he's more than willing to pay his share of court costs, so we really don't know how to keep him out of the game in a nice way. What would you suggest?

**L.R.**

Dear L.R.,

What do you think we are, Ann Landers?

**Ed.**

*ED: We thought the article was a classic, too, and on occasion we will reprint that article and other classics as well.*

Dear Phil,

I enjoyed your interview with Shannon Wright. If you'd have beaten her, would you have put "Simborg beats Wright" across the front page?

**R. Lyons**

Dear Rich,

If I could beat Shannon Wright I wouldn't be wasting my time writing articles about racquetball.

**PS**

Dear RACQUETBALL TODAY,

Your racquetball puzzle (in the June issue) was fun. After finding 64 of the 65 words and names, and staying awake two nights, I came to the conclusion that there was no "bounce." Dirty trick!

**Laura Myers**

*ED: Balls bounce. Gymnasts bounce. Checks bounce . . . and you can no doubt think of some other things that bounce. Puzzles aren't supposed to have a bounce! You're right though; our mistake . . . sorry.*

**Rick Flood  
Chicago Heights, Ill.**

Dear RACQUETBALL TODAY,

In your preview of the Nationals in your June (1980) issue, you picked Hogan to

Dear Mr. Flood,

We couldn't agree with you more. Phil says he was misquoted and has nothing but the highest respect and admiration for handball players. He says he even respects your game even though the ball moves so slowly and people look so silly when they swing.

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Janell Marriott has been re-elected to serve a second year as President of the WPRA (Women's Professional Racquetball Association) at the Nationals last month.

Look for Janell's column, exclusively in RACQUETBALL TODAY, "WPRA NEWS," beginning in our August issue.

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# Hogan No. 1 at the Nationals

By HARVI MILLER

History repeated itself as Marty Hogan captured his third consecutive National Championship along with the \$30,000 First Prize, the largest single prize in racquetball history. Hogan completely dominated Mike Yellen in the finals, winning 21-16, 21-12.

Hogan was never pressed to a tie-breaker at the Las Vegas Sporting House, and this helped greatly in his final match as Yellen seemed to exhibit some fatigue after having to win tie-breakers over Dave Peck and Bruce Christensen in the previous two rounds. This was the sixth time this season that Yellen and Hogan have met, with Yellen winning the previous two times, and losing by one point in the tie-breaker the time before that. But Hogan admitted that he "never worked harder" to prepare for a tournament, and it showed!

In the bottom bracket, it was the No. 2 seed, Yellen, against the No. 3 seed, Dave Peck, meeting each other for the third time this year for "the rubber match." Yellen took the first game easily, only to lose the second 20-21. Yellen served first in the tie-breaker and quickly had a 6-0 lead; timeout Peck. Some great, close play resumed, but Yellen pushed to a 9-0 lead, timeout Peck. When play resumed, Peck quickly got upset with an obviously bad call, tossed a ball at a linesman and was awarded a technical. The final score ended up 11 to -1, the first time anyone ever won a tie-breaker in NRC history by more than 11 points!

AS FOR THE rest of the pro play, the big story was Bruce Christensen. Bruce started out by upsetting No. 7 seed Charlie Brumfield in the first round (11-8 in the tie-breaker), then completely dominated

Play on the amateur side of the tournament was fast and furious, with excellent players traveling from all over the country to compete. The Men's Open was won by No. 1 seed, 15-year-old Las Vegas local, Brett Harnett, who totally demolished Ed Andrews (Bonita, Cal.) in the finals. In the Women's Open, Dallasite Susie Dugan had little problem with San Diego's Peggy Gardner in that final. Results of the rest of the amateur events are as follows:

Men's Veteran (30): Pate Wright (Dallas) over Joe Wirkus (Madison, Wis.), 21-8, 21-18.  
Men's Senior (35): Jay Jones (Sherman Oaks, Cal.) over Bill Condratow (Vancouver), 21-7, 21-17.

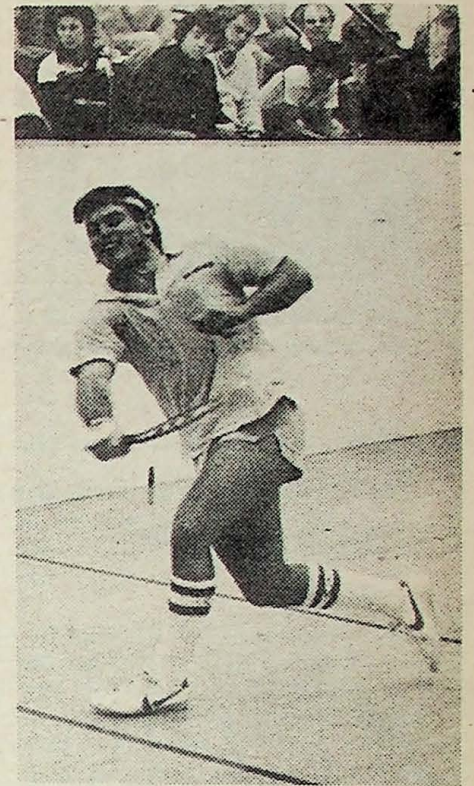
MEN'S VETERAN Senior (40): Charlie Garfinkel (Buffalo, N.Y.) over Bob Peterson (Boise), 21-12, 21-15.  
Men's Masters (45): Bud Muehleisen (San Diego) over Pat Colombo (Scarsdale, N.Y.), 19-21, 21-9, 11-1.  
Men's Veteran Masters (50): Bill Tanner (Memphis) over Bill Dabney (Piedmont, Cal.), 21-11, 17-21, 11-0.  
Men's Golden Masters (55): Kal Galdstone (Glendale, Cal.) over Floyd Svenson (Orinda, Cal.), 21-18, 21-19.

MEN'S OPEN Doubles: K. Garrigus/K. Fleming (Phoenix) over Steve Trent/Steve Wright (San Diego), 21-16, 21-19.  
Men's Veteran Open Doubles: Mike Romano/Gary Lusk (Chula Vista, Cal.) over Pete Wright/K. Taylor (Dallas), 21-9, 21-10.  
Men's Senior Doubles: Olsen/Beckman (Grand Island, Neb.) over Jerry Conine/Dan Fearing (Rialto, Cal.), 21-14, 21-15.  
Men's Masters Doubles: Bud Muehleisen/S. Karp (San Diego) over Mooney/Leyden (Colorado Springs, Colo.), 11-21, 21-20, 11-10.

MEN'S GOLDEN Masters Doubles: B. Morrow/L. Skelton (California) over Scott Deeds/Carl Loveday (San Diego).  
Women's Veteran Single: Camille McCarthy (Indianapolis) over Trish Morpheu (Athens, Ohio), 14-21, 21-4, 11-3.  
Women's Senior Singles: Sue Carow (Chicago) over Bette Weed (San Diego), 21-7, 21-3.  
Women's Open Doubles: Peggy Gardner/C. Pool (San Marcos, Cal.) over Stacey Fletcher/Irene Ackerman (Warren, Mich.), 21-6, 21-4.

UNFORTUNATELY THE tournament was marred by several negative elements which had an adverse effect on the majority of the players. With the WPRA holding its own Nationals in Chicago, there was an obvious lack of quality women participants (in the amateur as well as the pro division). The front wall glass had a marked effect on the quality of play, and, as always, the question of truly independent, qualified referees came into play as I witnessed many displays of poor sportsmanship which were obviously brought on by poor reffing.

The club itself, was a beautiful facility, but they did a poor job of "hosting" rather than "holding" the tournament. Lockers were restricted and held for members only; hospitality was poor and additional snacks were sold for outrageous prices; courts were sold to members during the tournament; spectators were required to pay \$10 per day to watch the amateur matches . . . tickets for the 250-seat stadium court were priced in the \$200-each range. The cry of "Remember Tempe"



Dave Peck

was often heard, in reference to the fantastic job of hosting last year's nationals at the Arizona Athletic Club in Tempe.

The selection of Las Vegas as a site for the tournament was highly questionable, in my opinion . . . with so many other spectacular events to compete with throughout the city (Cher, Tony Orlando, Diana Ross, big shows and gambling), it seems of little surprise that the tournament held little interest for anyone in that town except for the players.

Tournament headquarters, the Tropicanna, was four miles away from the tournament, and even with the two shuttle buses provided, the inconvenience was obvious. The NRC/USRA proclaim the Nationals to be the "highlight" of their season. If this is so, the next Nationals (and all major events) should be entrusted to people who know how to handle such an event in a way that fosters the spirit and importance of the event.

On the positive side, hats off to Bob Keenan and Jim Stotz of the USRA for their total dedication and never-ending efforts to keep the amateur side of the tournament intact. Both of these gentlemen were available throughout the week to handle any problems. Compliments to their respective staff members as well.

## I Dreamed I Beat Hogan

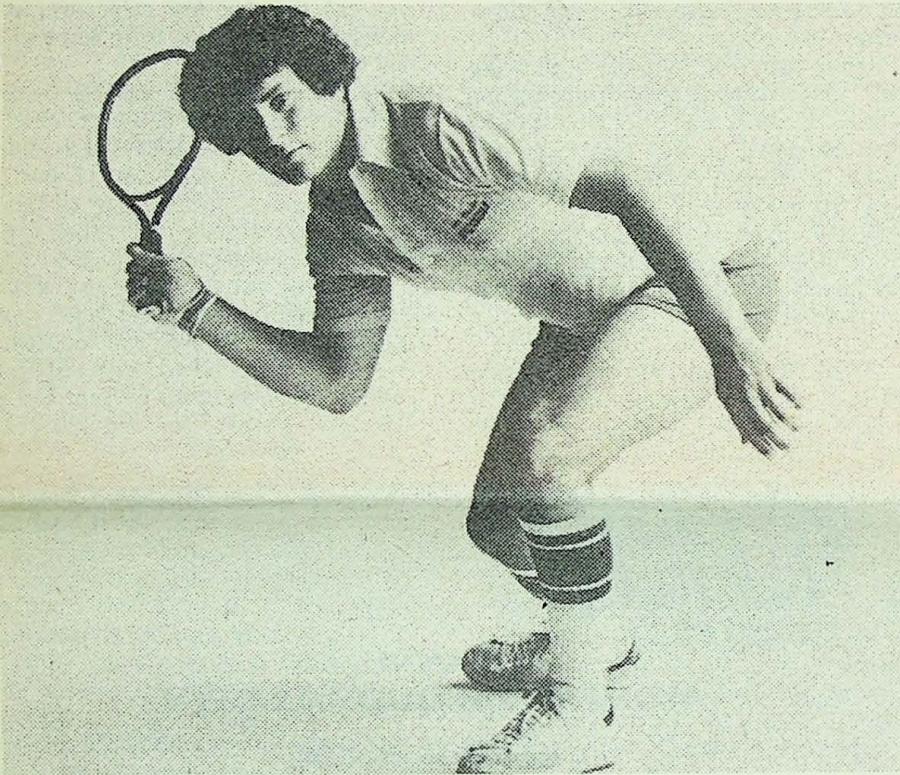
By PHIL SIMBORG

I dreamed I beat Marty Hogan. It was easy! I just did everything my friends in the gallery told me to do. I concentrated. I "kept my eye on the ball," "followed through with the shots," and I "killed the ball" whenever I had a setup. On my serves, I went for, and usually hit the crack. On my service returns I maneuvered poor Marty out of center court with perfect ceiling shots; waited for him to make a mistake, then hit perfect pinch shots . . . every time, almost. He gave me a pretty good game, but he never really had a chance, because even when I was well ahead I didn't let up. Then I woke up.

The funny thing is, if I could do all the things my friends advise me to do when I'm playing a match, I really could beat Marty Hogan! Come to think of it, everyone could beat Hogan if they'd just listen better to their friends in the gallery and then execute. What those "Sunday after-

noon quarterbacks" don't realize is two very important factors: 1) In addition to the student, there is also an opponent down in the court who is also trying to hit kill shots and get the ball before it bounces a second time, and 2) if the student were capable of following the coach's advice, he certainly wouldn't need him for a coach! (If he needed a coach at all.)

So next time you're up there rooting for your friend, remember, it's fine to cheer and urge him/her on, and tell him not to let up, and to watch the ball, etc. etc. But when the game's over and they lose, don't hit them with "Why didn't you listen to me?" or "How come you didn't kill the ball like I told you to?" Don't take it so personal. It's not because they don't respect you as a coach. It's not because they're just stubborn and won't take advice. It's because they know if they do all those things they won't have you for a coach anymore, and they'll miss you!



Yellen lost to Hogan in the finals.

The seeding worked to perfection as the top four players reached the semi's. Hogan had little trouble with No. 4 seed Jerry Hilecher in the first game winning 21-7, and was winning 18-8 when Jerry started playing some very smart racquetball, slowing the game down and taking advantage of an obvious let down in concentration on the part of "the superstar," and Hogan had to hustle to eek out a 21-20 victory and the match.

the Canadian National Champ, Lindsay Myers, in one of the most dazzling displays of serving I have ever witnessed. He then met Yellen in the quarter's, losing the first game 20-21, then getting hot and taking the second game 21-6, and, at that point many thought he might just go on and take the whole tournament. But Yellen's experience won out as he took the tie-breaker, 11-8, in a game that could have easily gone either way.

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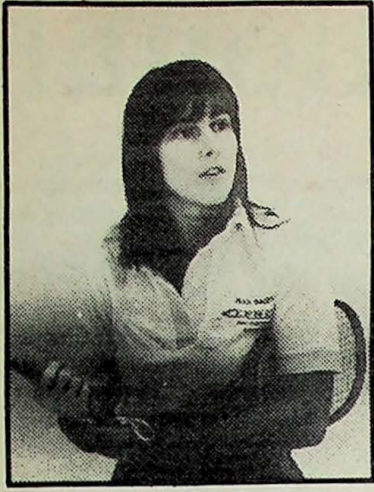
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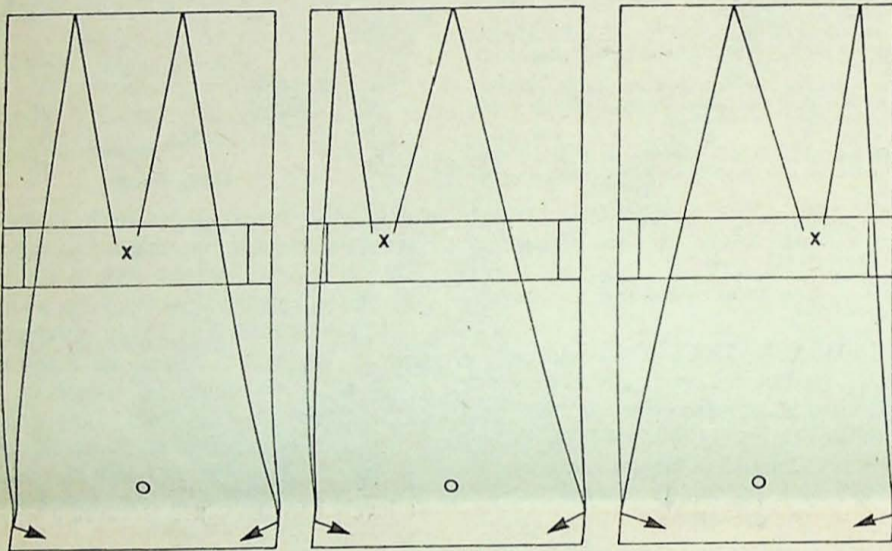


# Strategy

By JEAN SAUSER

*Editor's Note: Jean Sauser, the sixth ranked women's racquetball pro, and photographer Arthur Shay, are the co-authors of "Racquetball Strategy," a book devoted to those racquetball players who are absolutely determined to get better and better. With permission of the author and publisher, RACQUETBALL TODAY will reprint portions of that book.*

Situation: You've won the first serve. The coin has been tossed and you've won the right to serve first. What should your first serve be?



Diagrams 1, 2 and 3. The drive serve.

**Strategy: Serve offensively.**

You are at a tremendous advantage because serving in racquetball has evolved from simply putting the ball in play to a point-making device. With today's light, whippy racquets and live balls your serving strategy should be offensive.

There are two basic offensive serves in racquetball, the drive serve and the Z serve. Both serves, when executed well, can force a weak return right away or no return for an ace. By driving the ball low and hard to your opponent's weaker side you can establish control of the match right away. You are more likely to make quick points with driving offensive serves.

**The drive serve.**

If you have watched your opponent warm up or know which side is weaker start by attacking that weak side with a hard, driving serve. Drive serves to either side of the court can be executed successfully from three areas in the serve zone. (Diagrams 1, 2 and 3)

Unless you have a favorite spot for drive serves to either side of the court, it is generally best to start from the center

of the service zone and hit to your opponent's weaker side. This strategy gives you control of center court quicker after your serve.

**The Z serve.**

Another variation of the aggressive, offensive first serve is to hit a low, driving Z serve to your opponent's weaker side. Z serves are generally served from an off-center court position so that you are not hit by your own shot standing in center. (Diagrams 4 and 5)

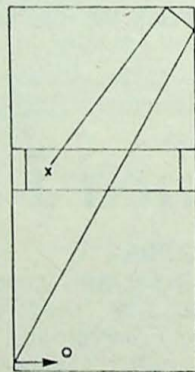


Diagram 4. The Z serve to opponent's backhand (for righthand receivers).

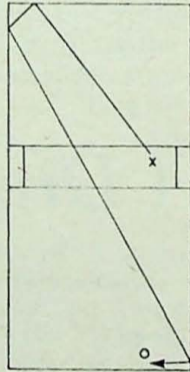


Diagram 5. The Z serve to opponent's forehand.

# I Blew It . . .

By TOM GROBMISI

"What," I said to my friends as I sat dripping my guts out on the floor outside the court, "what could possibly be worse than losing the tiebreaker 11-10 after being ahead 10-2 and missing three easy set-ups off the back wall?"

"It's better than a nail in the foot," came the first retort. Thank you, I've had a nail in the foot as a matter of fact. It happened just a couple of years ago so I remember it well. It hurt bad for about half a minute, and after that it just itched alot for about three days. During the next week, every time I took a step I felt a little twinge. I'll take the nail in the foot anytime. I even laugh a little about it because it happened at 2 a.m. in the basement when I was sneaking a snack out of the freezer. I'd been bragging to my family about my willpower on my latest (unsuccessful) diet, and it was, I guess, kind of a funny sight when my family found me hobbling around the basement at 2 a.m., screaming, holding my foot in one hand and a Sarah Lee cheesecake (with strawberries) in the other.

"Better than a kick in the head." Big deal. I played sandlot football, and getting kicked in the head was considered a lucky break compared to what they were aiming for! It doesn't come close to losing 11-10; especially after winning the first game 21-7, and being ahead in the second 19-12 and then blowing that one. You can just kick me in the head for the fun of it, compared to that.

I CHOKED. I gave up. The adrenelin just wouldn't flow. Now all that's left is to sit here and try to figure out how it happened and try to figure out how I'm ever

going to be able to look myself in the mirror again.

"Could have been worse," an old friend yelled over. I looked up; thought about it for a moment, and asked, "How?" "Could have happened to me!" was his cute attempt at cheering me up.

"It's not whether you win or lose," piped in another, "it's how you played the.... Say, you really didn't play very well. What happened to your kill shot, anyway?" Thanks, friends. I know you're just trying to cheer me up, but I just have to learn to live with it myself.

"Don't feel bad" added another well-wisher, "I know how you feel — it happens to all of us." "Has it ever happened to you?" I responded. "Have you ever blown a match that bad in front of all those people?" "Well...now that you mention it, I guess I haven't. Come to think of it, I don't think I ever saw anyone choke that bad!"

THANKS. REALLY. I know you're all trying to cheer me up, but there's nothing you can say that will help. Just let me wallow in my self pity for a while and enjoy my misery.

"At least you don't have to referee," came the final insult-to-injury. THERE'S NOTHING LEFT TO REFEREE after the finals, dummy. Why can't I just fade away like an old soldier? Why do I have to sit here and take the humiliation of being subjected to well-meaning well-wishers? I grabbed my sweaty gloves and shirts and towels and started for the locker room as I heard the call over the loudspeaker: "Tom Grobmisi, please report to the tournament desk and pick up your 2nd place trophy." Thanks, but I'd rather have a . . . you name it.



## 5TH ANNUAL WOMEN'S RACQUETBALL OPEN

JULY 25, 26, 27, 1980

**FOR:** All amateur women racquetball players

**PRIMARY LOCATION:** Northbrook Court House, 1901 Raymond Drive, Northbrook, Illinois 60062 (312) 498-3626

**TOURNAMENT DIRECTORS:** Jim Verhaeghe, Manager and Head Pro, Northbrook Court House  
Karen Peterson, Activities Coordinator, Northbrook Court House  
Lynne Farmer, Activities and Programs Coordinator, Metro Club

**TOURNAMENT INFORMATION:**

- USRA rules will apply
- Singles only: eight divisions
- Consolation bracket: all divisions — must sign up
- One entry per person
- Winners must referee the following match on their court
- Minimum of eight entries to hold division
- Official ball: Voit Rollout Bleu

**DIVISIONS OF PLAY:**

- Open
- A
- B
- C
- D
- Novice
- Senior (35 and up)
- Senior C (35 and up)

**DATES AND TIMES:** July 25, 26, 27, 1980  
Times will be posted at the club by July 23rd. Please call (498-3626) for your starting time. Be prepared to play at 6:00 PM, Friday.

**ENTRY FEE:** \$17 per person. Checks payable to Metro Club.

**DEADLINE:** Monday, July 21st, 6:00 PM.

**AWARDS:** Silver plated bowls for 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 1st place consolation provided by C. D. Peacock. All participants receive t-shirt. Refreshments and hospitality provided by Fiddler's Restaurant.



C.D. Peacock



### 5TH ANNUAL WOMEN'S RACQUETBALL OPEN

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Home \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: Work \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete. Check one:  
SKILL LEVEL. EIGHT DIVISIONS  
Open \_\_\_\_\_ C \_\_\_\_\_  
A \_\_\_\_\_ D \_\_\_\_\_ Senior \_\_\_\_\_ S \_\_\_\_\_ L \_\_\_\_\_  
B \_\_\_\_\_ Novice \_\_\_\_\_ Senior C \_\_\_\_\_ M \_\_\_\_\_ XL \_\_\_\_\_

In consideration of the acceptance of my entry, I hereby, for myself, my heirs, executors and administrators, waive, release and forever discharge any and all claims for damages which I may have or which may hereafter accrue to me against the tournament managers and management of Metro Club, AMF Voit, Bata Shoes, C. D. Peacock, or Fiddler's Restaurant.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Please state any tournament results from the past 12 months on the reverse side.

# John's

the original frozen pizza.  
Nutrition never tasted so good.

# Heather McKay 'Squashes' Opponents

By DIANE GABRISKO

Shannon Wright proudly wore shirts with the symbol "NC 5" throughout the Nationals, signifying her five previous national titles (two IRA singles, two NRC singles, and one NRC doubles title). Shannon will be able to continue wearing those shirts at least for a while, as former



Barb Allweiss makes it into qualifying at Nationals.

squash champion, 38-year-old Heather McKay beat Shannon in the finals, 21-18, 21-10.

The two had met on two previous occasions, with Shannon winning the first encounter in the tie-breaker, and Heather winning easily in the finals of the previous WPROA tournament in Fishkill, N.Y., at the end of May. It had been said that Heather was not truly "a racquetball player," as she had not yet mastered all the shots — in particular she lacked a great killshot. But that's not what she showed us at this year's Nationals in Bloomingdale, Illinois! Her killshot was ominous! She clearly has, in my opinion, the best backhand side wall/front wall pinch-kill in the game (and I don't mean to take anything away from her other shots, either).

On their way to the finals, neither Shannon nor Heather dropped a single game. Heather gave up an average of seven and a half points per game and Shannon gave up an average of eight points per game to their opponents in the 21 point games.

NO. 4 SEED Lynn Adams also had a great tournament with easy wins over Vicki Panzeri, Cheryl Ambler and Marci Greer — then she met Heather McKay in the semi's and lost, 21-2, 21-18.

On the other side of the bracket there were some real surprises, as Linda Pre-

fontaine upset No. 2 seed Sarah Green in the second round by scores of 20-21, 21-12, 11-7. In the meantime, a qualifier, Peggy Gardner, upset Rita Hoff (No. 7 seed) in the first round, took care of Joyce Jackson, then in the quarter's went down to Linda Prefontaine in the tie-breaker. Linda went down to Shannon, then lost the playoff for third/fourth to Lynn Adams.

In other matches worthy of note, Bonnie Stoll proved her wins at Fishkill were not flukes as she took care of Peggy Steding and Elaine Lee easily before going down to defeat at the hands of Heather McKay, and defending champ Karin Walton completely dominated Janell Marriott (No. 6 seed) in the 16's to win the right to meet Shannon Wright. Though Shannon beat Karin, 21-10, 21-14, the game was closer



Lynn Adams

than the score indicated as she made Shannon fight for every point and there were a lot of sideouts.

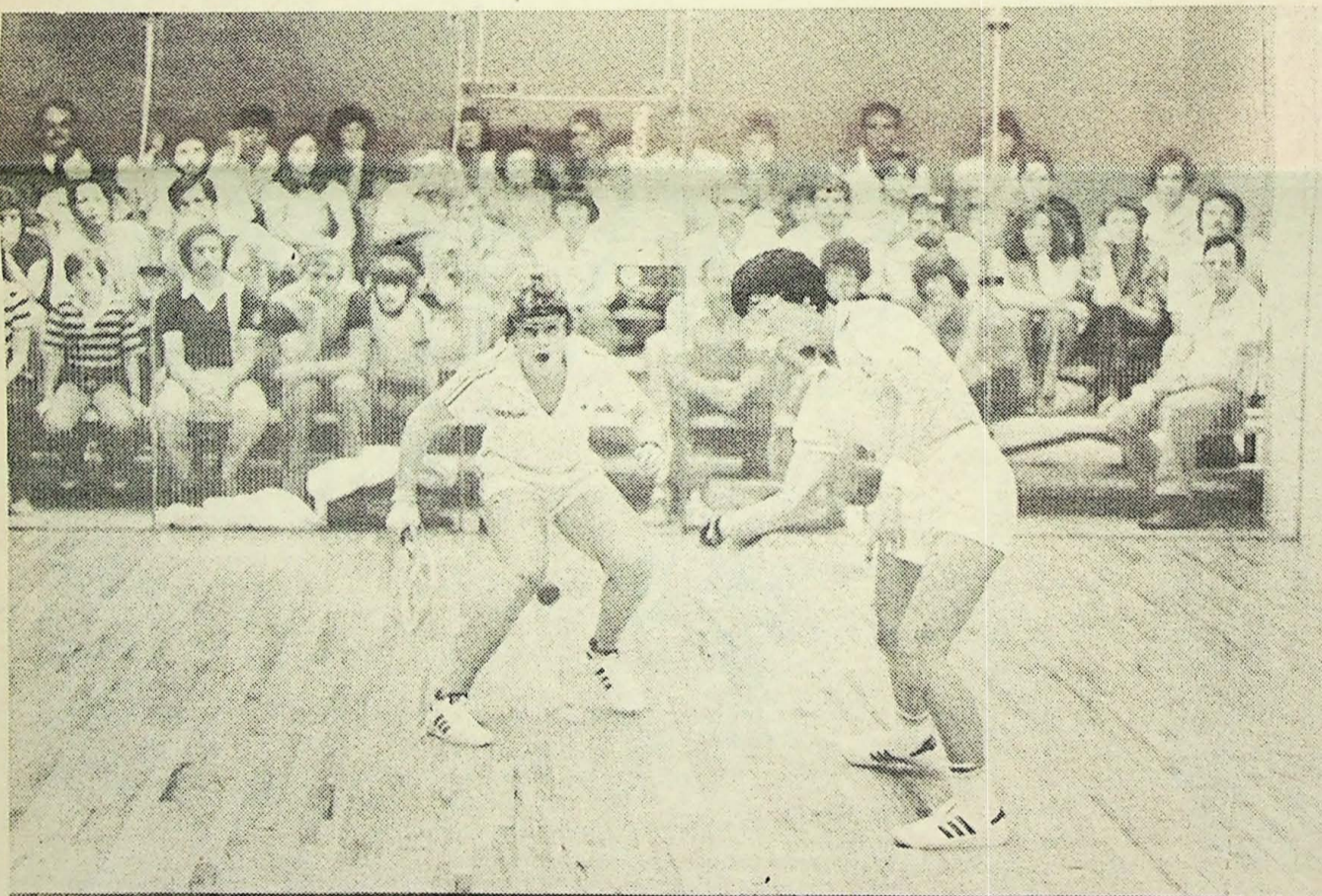
The pro qualifiers were Dee Lewis, Jean Oeschger, Barb Allweiss, Melanie Taylor, Kippi Bishop, Peggy Gardner, Laura Martino and Peggy Woods.

IN THE OTHER divisions in the all-woman's tournament, Laura Martino took the Women's Open crown, defeating Barb Tenneson in the finals, 21-18, 21-12. It was Charfauros over Robert in Women's A; Kelly Swanson over Judy Spedl in B; Karen Edwards over Dianne O'Roarke in C; Rita Green over Barb Urban in D; Helen Graziano over Lucy Bajma in Novice; Camille McCarthy won the Seniors in three games over Sue Carow. The Open Doubles crown was taken in a tough three-game finals by Barb Faulkenberry and Gail Ferguson over Becky Callahan and Julie Selm. B Doubles was won by Gay Kenna and Sharon McGregor, beating Connie Arvia and Celeste Brychek, also in a close three-game match.


As the tournament was held at the beautiful, complete facility of Killshot, Ltd., which features outdoor three-wall courts as well as indoor courts, the tournament also featured a three-wall championship which was won by Diane Greene over Vicki Panzeri in a hard-fought three game final.

The tournament was beautifully run by Sue Sulli and her staff, with Geoff Peters in charge of tournament control, Clyde Senters in charge of refereeing and rules, and many other fine assistants. Included in the price of the entry fee was a ticket to a lovely banquet which featured a special presentation to Janell Marriott for her contributions to the furthering of Women's Professional racquetball. Peggy Steding was also given an award for her all-time contribution to the sport, which will hereafter be named the "Steding Cup." At the WPROA meeting, the current officers were re-elected for one year: Janell Marriott, president; Rita Hoff, vice-president; Peggy Steding, secretary/treasurer. Elected as Board Members were Heather McKay, Lynn Adams and Marci Greer.

Gary Danno, president of Prime Time Promotions, Inc., put the first WPROA Nationals together, and it received excellent coverage on TV and in the papers, and was truly a pleasure to attend. Dan Seaton, commissioner of the WPROA delegated authority carefully, and completely, to various personnel, and they all did a great job. It's obvious to most of us that the women truly "have their act together" and all that is needed now is the sponsors to come forward with the money for more, and bigger tournaments. There was a lot of volunteer help from Chicago people, particularly in the area of refereeing, and this, too, helped the tournament go smoothly. But to me, the high quality of sportsmanship displayed by both the pro and amateur participants is what made the tournament.



New Women's Racquetball National Champion and top international squash player Heather McKay, 38, (foreground) Las Vegas in the All Sport Pro/Am Classic held at All Sport Fitness and Racquetball Club, Fishkill, New York, May 30-June 1. (Photo by Donn Esmonde)



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# TOURNAMENT NEWS

## Septien Leads Way in Natural Light NFLPA Championships

By PHIL SIMBORG

Thanks to the sponsorship of Anheuser Busch's Natural Light, members of the NFL's Players Association were given a chance to prove their skill (and earn big money) on the racquetball court. A series of five regional tournaments were held around the country (Chicago, L.A., Miami, Boston and Dallas) with three representatives from each team competing. The two top players from each regional went on to the finals held in St. Louis at the Town and Country Racquet Club June 3-15.

Dallas Cowboy place kicker Rafael Septien defeated Seattle Seahawk's defensive halfback in the finals and took the \$8,000 prize, winning 15-13, 15-6. In the semifinals, Rafael was pressed to his only tiebreaker by Buddy Hardeman (Washington Redskins), winning 13-15, 15-5, 11-1. Prior to that, Septien had little trouble with Tim Mazzetti (Atlanta Falcons), Willie Buchanan (San Diego Chargers), Stu Voigt (Minnesota Vikings) and Randy Dean (New York Giants) in the double-elimination-to-the-finals format.

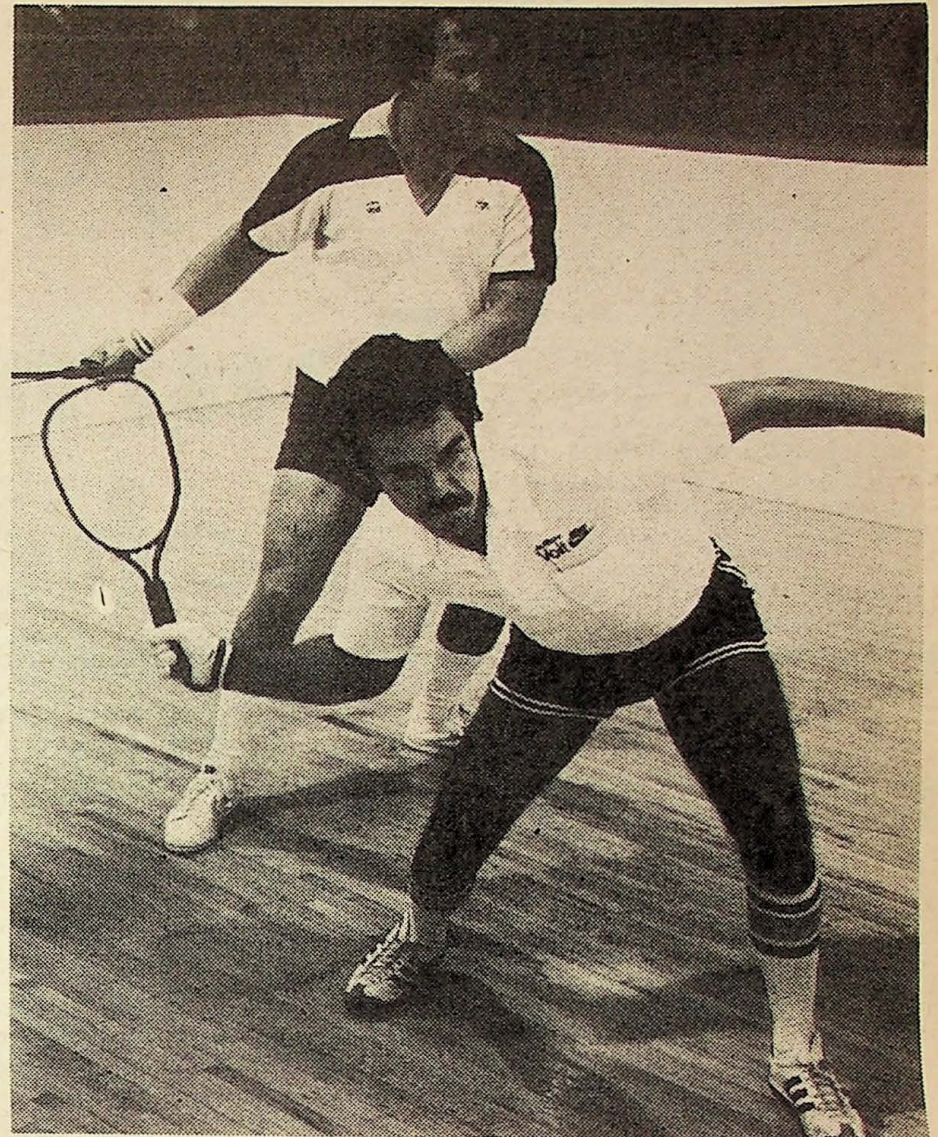
Dave Brown did not drop a single game on his road to the finals, beating Joe DeLamielleure (Buffalo Bills), Curley Culp (Houston Oilers), Buddy Hardeman (Washington Redskins), Matt Blair (Minnesota Vikings), and, in the semi's, Randy Dean (Giants).

AS A RESULT of the combined scores

of Matt Blair and Stu Voigt, the Minnesota Vikings took the team award. Dave Brown received \$4,000 for his second place victory.

Those of us who witnessed the pro matches were quite surprised in many ways. While we expected to see big, strong, highly-competitive athletes, we were also treated to a lot of truly skillful racquetball . . . not, of course, comparable to professional racquetball players, but the better football players could, in my opinion, give the better amateurs at the state levels a tough game.

S/S/S Promotions was responsible for the running of three of the five regionals, and I personally ran the one in Chicago, and I must say that I think racquetball players could learn a lot watching the football players. I NEVER SAW A SINGLE PLAYER GIVE UP, no matter how badly he was getting beaten! These super jocks went for everything . . . shots that seemed somehow beyond them . . . and sometimes they got them. In spite of all their tremendous competitiveness, the sportsmanship displayed by the players was generally excellent. This, combined with their surprisingly high skill on the court, made the total event an extremely enjoyable one. Natural Light plans to run a similar event next year, and I urge you not to miss it if you have the chance to participate in the amateur division or come as a spectator.



**FOREHAND SMASH** — Rafael Septien, the sure footed kicker of the Dallas Cowboys, is shown preparing to deliver one of his powerful forehand shots to Stu Voigt of the Minnesota Vikings during round robin matches in the Natural Light/NFL Players Association Racquetball Championships held June 13-15 in St. Louis. Septien disposed of Voigt, 15-8, 15-2, and didn't lose a game for the remainder of the tournament, capturing the \$8,000 first place money.

## McKay Dominates Fishkill Tournament

By Bob Schmendrick

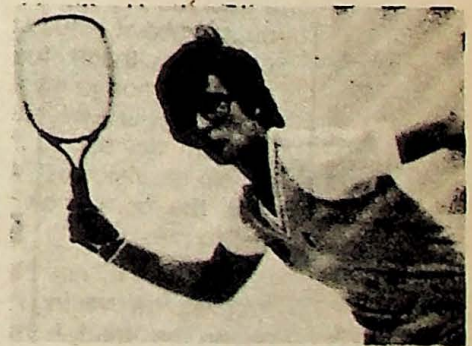
Heather McKay has definitely arrived. She arrived at the WPA's ProStop in Fishkill, New York, the weekend of May 29th as the No. 4 seed, and took the event without losing a game; without giving up more than 16 points in any of the 21-point games, and by beating racquetball's female giant of the sport Shannon Wright in the finals, 21-10, 21-7. On her way to the finals, she polished off a surprising Bonnie Stoll in the semi's; Janell Marriott in the quarter's; Hope Weisbach in the 16's, and Debbie Drury in the 32's.

The No. 1 seed in the tournament, Sarah Green, was upset in the 16's by Elaine Lee, who in turn got upset by Bonnie Stoll.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the bracket, Shannon Wright breezed through Marci Greer in the semi's; Martha McDonald in the quarter's; Fran Davis in the 16's, and Jackie Adler in the 32's. The No. 3 seed, Lynn Adams was upset in the 16's by Vicki Panzeri who in turn got beat by Marci Greer.

Greer and Stoll played off for third and fourth using the new, experimental system of best of seven games to seven points, which Greer won handily.

In the amateur divisions: Stacey Fletcher (Warren, Mich.) beat Melanie Taylor (Montclair, N.J.) in the Women's Open finals, 17-21, 21-13, 11-7. And, Charles

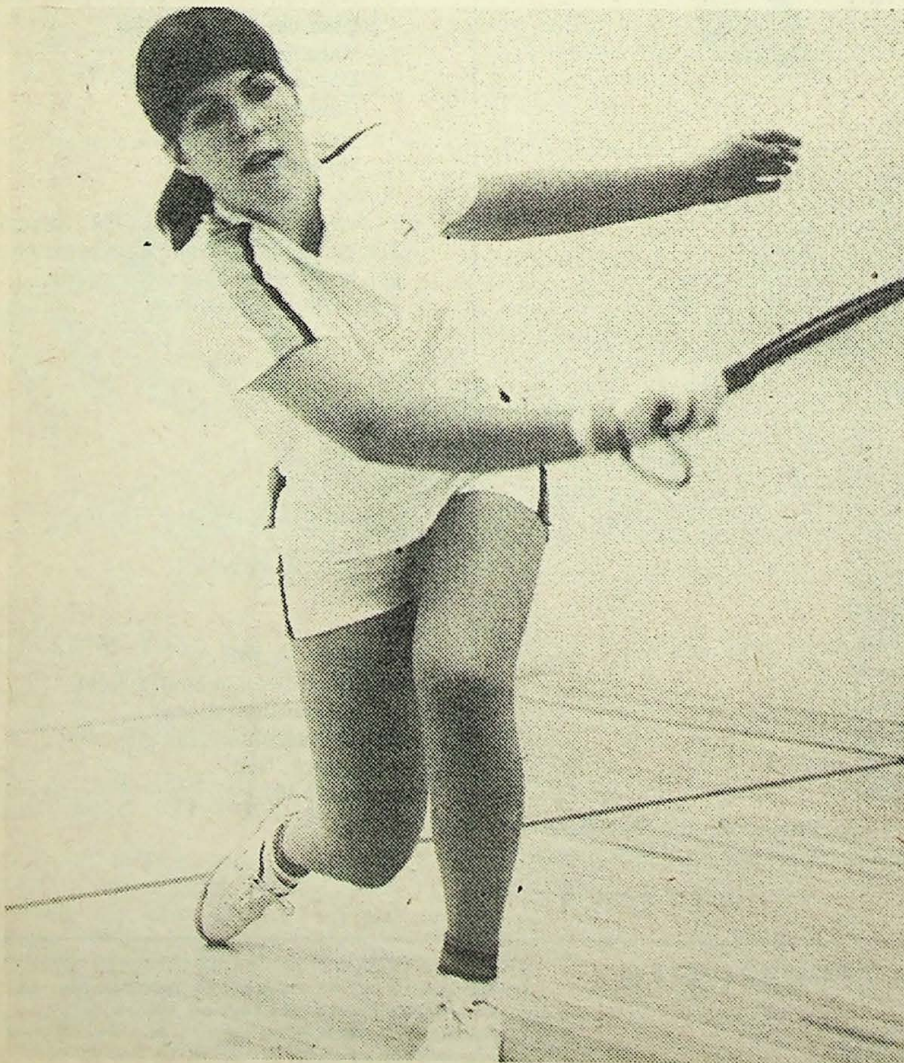


Heather McKay

Horton Jr. (Portchester, N.Y.) defeated Robert McKinney (Danbury, Conn.) in the Men's Open finals, 11-21, 21-9, 11-4.

Other amateur winners were: Men's Seniors: Dan Seaton (Las Vegas...WPA Commissioner); Men's B: John Peterson (Ossining, N.Y.); Men's C: Richard Greenberg (Orange, N.J.); Men's Novice: Bobby Kanter (New Paltz, N.Y.); Women's B: Maureen Kane (Valley Stream, N.Y.); Women's C: Marilyn Badillo (Brooklyn, N.Y.); Women's Novice: Linda Stern (Melville, N.J.); Junior, 17 & Under: John DeGroodt (Pleasant Valley, N.Y.), and Junior, 13 & Under: Jay Trembly Jr. (Menands, N.Y.).

This is the second time Shannon and Heather had met; the first time, a month earlier at the Ektelon/Perrier, where Heather lost to Shannon in the tiebreaker.



**UP AND COMING:** 15-year-old Stacey Fletcher of Warren, Mich., took the Women's Open title at the 1980 All Sport Pro/Am Classic at All Sport Fitness and Racquetball Club, Fishkill, N.Y. (May 30-June 1). Stacey's ranked 31 on the WPA pro tour. (Photo by George Urciuoli)

# RACQUETBALL TODAY

## 1980

# Tournament Schedule

## Big Winner

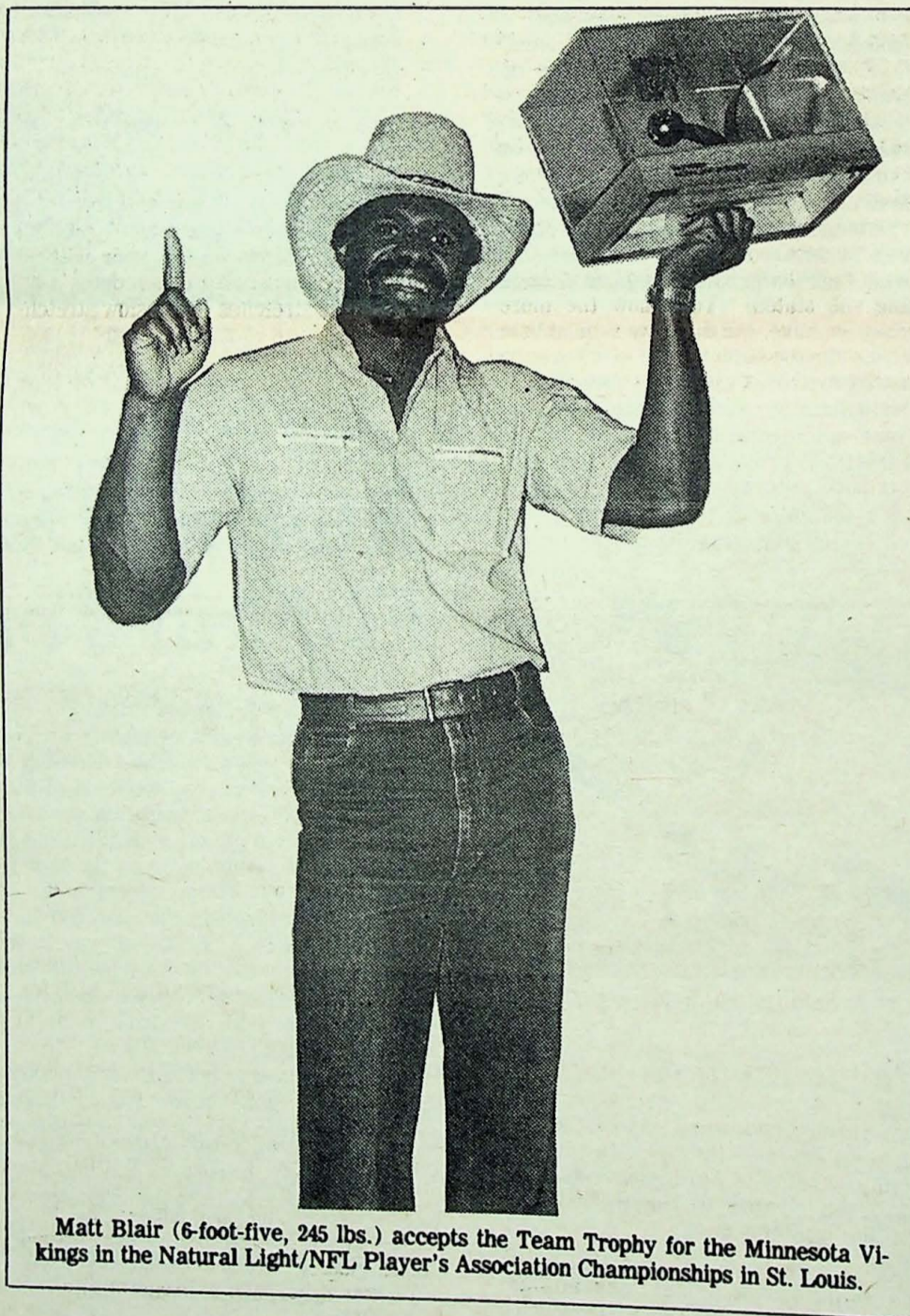
• July 17, 18, 19 & 20, 1980  
 USRA Junior Regionals  
 Sponsored by: Seamco/Leach  
 Site: Sport's Core  
 Lincoln, Nebraska  
 Contact: Dick Kincaid  
 402-475-5686

July 25, 26 & 27, 1980  
 5th Annual Women's Open  
 Site: Northbrook Court House  
 Contact: Jim VerHaeghe  
 312-498-3626

• August 11-16, 1980  
 USRA Junior Nationals  
 Sponsored by: Seamco/Leach  
 Site: Court Club  
 Indianapolis, Indiana  
 Contact: USRA  
 312-673-4000

• August 22, 23 & 24, 1980  
 S & S Insurance Agency Open  
 Site: To be announced  
 Contact: S/S/S Promotions  
 312-371-2555

\* Denotes ISRA Sanctioned Tournament.  
 To add tournaments or to get up to date  
 information, contact Jim Harper - (312)  
 875-7045.



Matt Blair (6-foot-five, 245 lbs.) accepts the Team Trophy for the Minnesota Vikings in the Natural Light/NFL Player's Association Championships in St. Louis.

August 15, 16 & 17, 1980  
 11th Annual Masters  
 Invitational Doubles  
 Site: Supreme Court  
 555 Odana Road  
 Madison, Wisconsin  
 Contact: Joe Wirkus  
 608-274-5080

September 5, 6, & 7, 1980  
 Natural Light Open  
 Davison Racquet Club  
 Davison, Michigan  
 Contact: Jim Hiser  
 313-653-9602

\* Denotes MRA or USRA Sanctioned  
 Tournaments. To add tournaments or to  
 get up to date information, contact Jim  
 Easterling - 313-352-8004.

### ELSEWHERE

July 10 - 13, 1980  
 NRC Hawaiian Sports Week  
 Pro/Am Invitational  
 Site: Honolulu, Hawaii  
 Contact: NRC  
 312-673-400

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# The Dawn of a New Era — Hopefully

By BOB GURA

A sense of nervous anticipation flowed throughout the corridors of Killshot Ltd. at noon on the 19th of June. The racquetball club, located in suburban Bloomington, Illinois, was about to play host to the first annual Women's Professional Racquetball Championship. Over the course of the next three days, climaxing on Sunday the 22nd, the best female racquetballers in the nation would compete for the national title. At the same time the Women's Professional Racquetball Association, under the leadership of Commissioner Dan Seaton would do its best to make a name in the racquetball world. Ever since an earlier split with the National Racquetball Club, who runs the men's tour, the women had been pointing for this moment. Although the purse was much smaller than the men's, the level of dedication and perseverance was every bit as great if not more.

As the time moved closer to 3:30 p.m. qualifying rounds for pros tabbed below No. 24, a palpable change began to sweep through the facility. It appeared apprehension had given way to certainty, as if now that it was happening, everything would workout. The top professionals had come en masse to take care of the talent end. When the competition ended Heather McKay would defeat Shannon Wright for the crown, while the likes of Karin Walton, Janell Marriot, Lynn Adams and Sarah Green stood by.

The feel of confidence in the women's racquetball movement was borne out in pre-tourney conversation with two top pros, Marci Greer and Bonnie Stoll. Chatting, while annihilating each others forces in a tabletop space invaders game, they gave evidence of their belief.

WHEN THEY SPOKE of the import the first tourney would have on the future of the women's tour, both were ready with answers. "It's great, but it's just the be-

ginning," replied Stoll forcefully. "Yea, it is just a beginning," echoed Greer, emphatically shaking a curly head of hair.

Dressed in a warm up suit (Stoll) and tee shirt and jogging pants (Greer), neither seemed the picture of a strident advocate of women's sports. Both were trim and attractive, with Stoll appearing a bit more assertive. Greer, possessed of an infectious giggle, looked the image of a woman without a care in the world. That scenario promptly changed when it came to talk of purses and prize money.

The issue hinged around the WPRA's policy of distributing prize money among the top 32 participants. Marci felt "It's OK the way the money is distributed right now because the low player has to have money to come." Tossing her head back she leaned over the table (the space invaders were no longer in sight) and said, "We've got to get our sport going." She paused a second then added, "But, a little farther on down the line you should have to win, before you can win money." She reinforced this view with the assertion that future television coverage will depend "On how much money the first place winner receives. Not how much the 32's receive."

For her part, Bonnie is a bit more lenient regarding the purse system. Like Greer, she feels "I think right now we have to pay everybody if we want people to be here. It's (the divided purse) a big come on. A player might say, 'Hey, I can win a hundred dollars. I'm going there.'" Placing an elbow forcibly on the gaming table she stated, "You know the more money we have, the more we'll be able to pay. So maybe someday we'll always be able to pay through the 32's or maybe the 64's."

TURNING THE TALK towards play on court both pros were united in the view that a female Marty Hogan-type cham-

(Continued on Page 11)



SHANNON WRIGHT

QUESTION: How do you stay in shape?

ANSWER: That's an interesting question as I've given that subject a lot of study and thought over the years, and just recently I've changed my whole attitude on the subject. I used to do a lot of running, muscle building exercises, and even lifted some weights. Then, about two years ago I realized that I had very little flexibility . . . when I was younger I did gymnastics, but two years ago I couldn't even put my hands on the floor without bending my knees! So I began doing a lot of yoga-type stretches — the slow stretches where you use your body weight to loosen your muscles. And, of course, I continued running and lifting weights. All that, combined with practicing in the court, took up a good three to five hours a day.

Then about two months ago I went down to Nautilus Sports Medical Industries and worked with the director of research, Ellington Darden, and he put me

# The Wright Answer

Editor's note: RACQUETBALL TODAY IS PROUD TO ANNOUNCE the addition of Ms. Shannon Wright as an exclusive columnist for this paper. Ms. Wright, who has virtually dominated women's professional racquetball for the past four years, travels around the country giving racquetball clinics and exhibitions, playing in tournaments, and representing Wilson Sporting Goods Company and Triple-S Promotions. Ms. Wright will answer personal and professional questions submitted by our readers and our staff. Please address your questions to Ms. Wright, c/o RACQUETBALL TODAY.

on a program on their machines. Using the machines I'm now able to strengthen my muscles, without losing flexibility, and I get a terrific cardiovascular workout as well, and it takes just 30 minutes threetimes a week! In the two months I've been on the program, I've increased upper body strength over 33 per cent and I'm actually more flexible than when I started.

In addition, I spend a good hour to hour and a half getting a good workout, and practice, in the court. That's important, because as you gain strength it does throw your timing off, and the only way to get the timing back is by repetitive hitting of the ball.

I think strength is the main thing racquetball players are forgetting right now . . . particularly the women. In the old days you had to be careful about getting stronger because it was thought you lost flexibility and control . . . but if you do it right, that doesn't have to happen at all.

**MRA**  
MICHIGAN STATE RACQUETBALL ASSOCIATION NEWS  
RACQUETBALL NEWS FROM THROUGHOUT MICHIGAN

2808 S. Deerfield, Lansing, Michigan 48910

## Racquetball Awards

Besides crowning champions in fourteen classes at this year's state championships in April, Michigan players voted awards to Stacey Fletcher and Jim Easterling.

Along with the Women's Open title she captured for the second straight year, Stacey was voted the "Sportsmanship Trophy" by her fellow players.

The "Contributational Trophy," also given annually to the individual contributing most to racquetball in Michigan, went to Jim Easterling.

Stacey and Jim will keep their trophies for the upcoming year, relinquishing them at next year's State Singles tournament.

## Notice to MRA members: Special Meeting

The Board of Directors of the MRA (Michigan Racquetball Association) has called a special meeting of the members of the association. The purpose of this meeting will be to adopt a new constitution and by-laws.

The meeting will be held August 5, 1980, 7:30 p.m. at the Oak Park Athletic Club, 900 Long boulevard, Lansing, Michigan.

Copies of the proposed constitution and by-laws will be available for inspection preceding the meeting.

# MICHIGAN CLUB GUIDE

**SPORTS ILLUSTRATED COURT CLUB No. 1:** 2111 Golfside Road, Ypsilanti, MI. (313) 434-2111. 10 courts, Nautilus fitness center, free nursery, saunas, lounge, racquetball instruction, pro shop and much more!

**FLINT RACQUETBALL AND FITNESS CENTER:** G-3237 Beecher Road, Flint, MI. (313) 733-3000. 10 regulation courts (1 glass), 2 saunas, co-ed whirlpool, fully-equipped pro shop, leagues, lessons and parties. Aerobic Dance classes. Group discounts available. Manager: Bruce Guin. Program director: Terry Graham.

**SPORTS ILLUSTRATED COURT CLUB No.7:** 2717 Schust Road, Saginaw, MI. (517) 790-0150. 15 regulation courts, Swedish sauna, whirlpool, free nursery from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Friday, Universal fitness center with jogging area, and pro shop.

**SPORTS ILLUSTRATED COURT CLUB No. 12:** 42140 Van Dyke, Sterling Heights, MI

(313) 254-1012. 8 regulation courts, 2 saunas, 2 whirlpools, 1 badminton court. Special women's programs, free nursery, men's and women's traveling leagues. Aerobic dance classes. 2 professional instructors (APRO). Manager: Kathleen Zale. Program director: Debbie Fultz.

**IMPERIAL COURT CLUB:** 2200 Green Road, Ann Arbor, Mich. (313) 665-6333. Eight regulation courts, one glass back wall. Universal exercise equipment, sauna, free nursery, aerobic fitness classes. Racquetball Pro: Doug Sheperdigian.

I know what athletes need to stay or get into shape, and racquetball is just about the best game for the greatest number of people.

Yogi Berra

# PSYCHING

By MARILYN STERLING



Robert Louis Stevenson once said, "Quiet minds cannot be perplexed or frightened, but go on in fortune or misfortune at their own private pace, like a clock in a thunderstorm."

Neat thought eh? Want to know how to

be like a clock in a thunderstorm on the racquetball court? I have two easy exercises that you can use. The first one is designed to keep you ticking even though "the jerk" is threatening to overwind you. The second one is just good for everything! Both will help free up the energy you've got tied up in anger or tension so that you can channel it into your game once again.

If you're in between games, you can do these in the locker room, but they are simple enough that you can do them outside the court during a time out. Please don't be deceived by their simplicity, you really have to try them to see how effective they are.

**EXERCISE ONE:** Learning to dissolve anger by giving in to it.

- Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths. Now, picture the person or incident that has occurred that has you all stirred up. Give a word or name to the person or incident and say it in your head. Visualize the problem.

- As you repeat the word or name and

visualize the problem, focus your attention on the tension that is building in various areas of your body (usually neck, shoulders, back, stomach).

- Bring your attention to one of these areas of tension while continuing to say the name. Now, tighten the muscles in that area. Hold them tight, tighter...now relax.

- Continue visualizing the cause of your anger and move on to another area of tension. Tighten and relax the various tense muscles at your own rhythm.

- Continue, until saying the word or name that angered you produces no more tension inside you and you are free and relaxed again.

**GENERAL TENSION** that we feel before a match or during a game can be relieved by trying the following:

**Exercise Two: Stretching and Shaking.**

- Stand up and take two or three deep breathes.

- Shake your shoulders. Shake off all your tension and worry, feel it fall away. Loosen up your neck. Look up to the ceil-

ing and shake your head back and forth.

- Reach for the ceiling. Stretch first your right arm, reach as high as you can...hold it. Now, stretch with your left arm...hold it. Now, stretch with both arms, as tall as you can...hold it...hold it. Relax.

- Bring your arms down and drop your chin to your chest. Swing your limp arms. Shake them. Feel the tension drain off as you exhale deeply.

- Now stretch for the ceiling again. Up...up...up...and hold it.

- O.K. now, down and relax.

- Bend and reach for the floor. Don't strain but go as far as you can easily. Bounce around a little bit.

**STRETCH AND** bend until you feel loose and easy. Now you're ready to play with a free relaxed body. You can be in the "here and now" ready to really WATCH THAT BALL!

There is an ancient Chinese proverb which says, "If you cannot find it in yourself, where will you get for it? Hmmmm.... Be at peace friends...."

## Racquetball Study Brings Surprising Results

By DR. THOMAS GROBMISI

In an effort to gain more information on the sociological effects of playing racquetball, Dr. Tom Grobmisi selected a typical racquetball club and conducted a series of surveys over a number of weeks.

The first week, the doctor, asked the players if they felt better physically since they started playing racquetball. Sixty-eight per cent said YES. Fifteen per cent said NO. Eleven per cent said they didn't notice any difference. Six per cent said they felt worse.

The next week he asked the players if they felt better emotionally. Fifty-six per cent said YES. Twenty-one per cent said NO. Fifteen per cent said they felt worse. Eight per cent told Grobmisi to mind his own business.

**THE NEXT WEEK** he asked the players if they slept better since taking up the sport. Thirty-five per cent said YES. Forty-eight per cent said NO. Seventeen per cent either refused to answer or told the doctor it was none of his business.

## No Elephants, Please

By PHIL SIMBORG

There are no elephants allowed in the court during a match. It's a hinder. I checked. Both the USRA and AARA rules cover this. If an elephant enters the court, the referee should immediately call a hinder and stop play. If one of the players intentionally brings an elephant into the court, it's an avoidable hinder. The ref may also issue a technical for unsportsmanlike behavior. If the player continues to bring the elephant into the court, the referee may forfeit the match (never the game).

Players have the right to ask the ref if they can bring their elephant into the court. You do have the right to question the rules, or the interpretation of the rule. If a player does not believe the referee is properly interpreting the rules, he has the right to ask for clarification from an official.

The tournament director (or his designee) has the right to overrule the referee on a matter of rule interpretation or application. He may even overrule the rule book! If he wants to, the tournament direc-

tor can allow elephants in the court. (I'm surprised it hasn't happened yet . . . I've seen just as ridiculous things happen at tournaments!) He can do this! It's in the book. There is no appeal. No "higher court."

Anyway, the point I'm trying to make is this: at any "properly run" tournament, the player on the court **does not** have to live with an absurd situation. *He has recourse.* He does **not** have to play a match with an elephant on the court; he does **not** have to play against someone who is guilty of flagrant footfaults; he does **not** have to play with someone who hits obvious screen serves — just because he landed a ref who doesn't understand the rules. The player should simply, and politely, ask for a ruling, or interpretation from a tournament official.

While Dr. Grobmisi admits it is difficult to draw very definite conclusions from such a limited and abruptly-concluded study, the doctor was able to discern some "trends" while studying his notes in the hospital. For whatever they're worth, here are the doctor's conclusions:

I'm tired of hearing players who complained **after the match** that they "would have won if only the ref knew how to call ....." As we tell participants at our tournaments, "Don't get mad . . . get help!" (By the way, at our tournaments we currently do not allow elephants.)

Then the doctor asked the players if they had made many new friends as a result of playing racquetball. Twenty-one per cent said YES. Thirty-five per cent said NO. Eight per cent said they had lost friends as a result of racquetball. Thirty-six per cent either refused to answer; told the doctor to mind his own business; asked to be left alone, or made other abusive remarks.

The next week the persistent doctor asked the players if they felt an increased sense of sexuality since taking up racquetball. Four per cent said YES. Forty-two per cent said NO. Fifty-two per cent either refused to answer or made lewd remarks. The other two per cent physically attacked the dedicated researcher.

1. **RACQUETBALL** players are generally not very tolerant when it comes to answering questions. This was particularly upsetting to the doctor who took "extra pains" to wait until the hour was almost over anyway before entering the court to ask the questions, and was careful to wait until the rally ended.

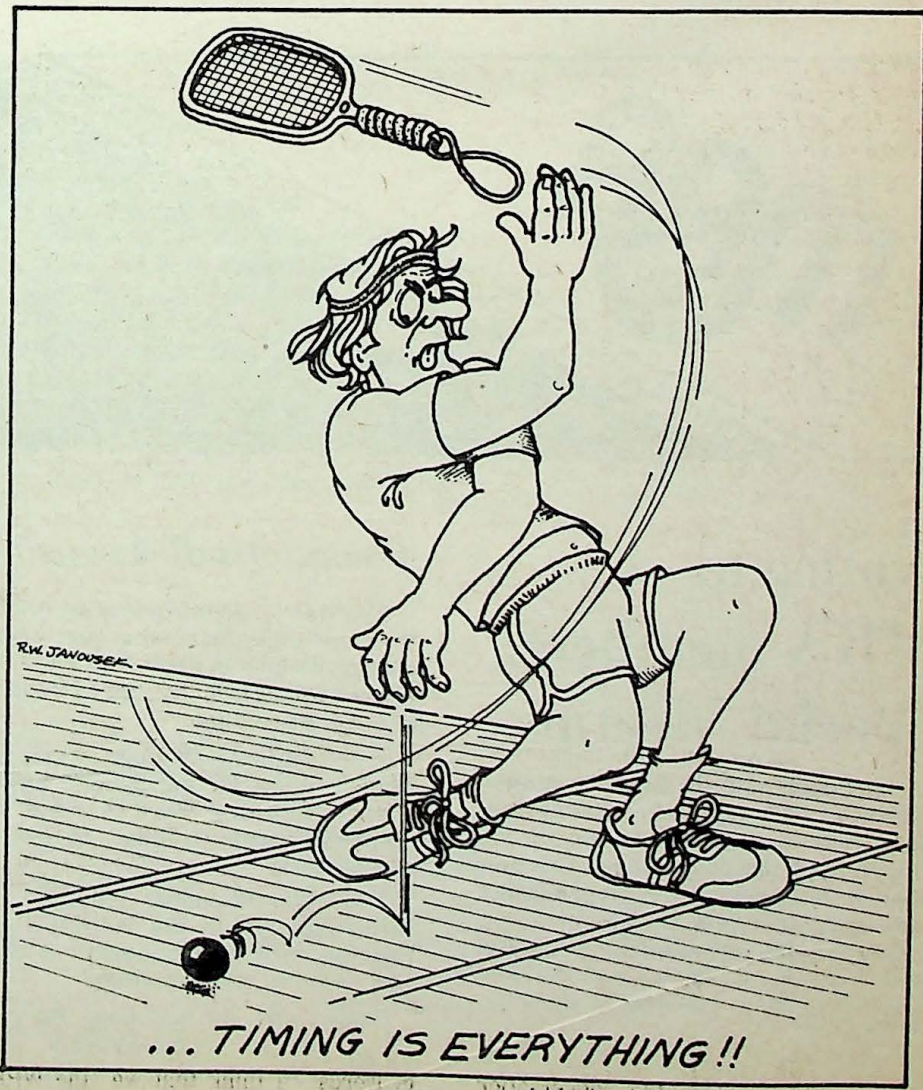
2. In the doctor's own words: "It's easier to get a straight answer from a hyper-

active 2-year-old with a speech impediment during a hurricane" than from your typical racquetball player.

3. The sport of racquetball itself is dying fast. During the few short weeks of the survey the doctor discerned a dramatic decline in the court occupancy at the club (which has since gone into bankruptcy).

4. The surgical removal of a racquet can be a painful and expensive experience.

## THE FUN • DAMENTALS OF RACQUETBALL by R.W. JANOUSEK



# Sportsman of the Month

In an effort to encourage and reward good sportsmanship, RACQUETBALL TODAY is pleased to announce a new feature: Sportsman of the Month. Each month we will feature a person selected for his/her high sportsmanship demonstrated in and around the racquetball court. The winner will be selected from letters sent in by readers. If you know of someone deserving of recognition for demonstrating good sportsmanship, send us a note about it (a picture, if available, would also be good).

Though we generally feature amateur players in this column, we would be remiss if we did not, at some point, honor the foremost sportsman in the game — Mr. Marty Hogan. We don't think it's a coincidence that the game's best player is also the game's most honest and fair player. When Marty walks into the court, he concentrates on hitting the ball well, playing the game well, and WINNING. He does not waste any of his precious "mental energy" trying to find ways to

blame the ref for his mistakes, or trying to intimidate the ref or his opponent. When the ref makes a bad call in favor of Marty, he immediately corrects the ref and gives his opponent the rally or takes the play over; and when the ref blows a call against Marty, he doesn't get upset or throw a tantrum...he'll either give the ref a big grin or make a simple quick comment to put the ref on notice or give his opponent a chance to speak up. If Marty doesn't call a double bounce on himself, YOU KNOW HE GOT IT. He's a pleasure to ref, he's a pleasure to watch, and he truly deserves to be honored and recognized not only for his playing ability, but for his high degree of sportsmanship.

## Playing Tips

By TOM GROBMISI

Grobmisi playing tip No. 1: The smaller the door, the more you should duck.

Grobmisi playing tip No. 2: You don't need eyeguards any more than you need eyes.

Grobmisi playing tip No. 3: Never insult an alligator until you've crossed the river; never criticize the ref until after the match.

Grobmisi playing tip No. 4: Just concentrate on scoring points; the rest comes naturally.

Grobmisi playing tip No. 5: It's easy to have a backhand that's as good as your forehand — just ease up on your forehand.

Grobmisi playing tip No. 6: Hitting a ceiling shot is an effective way to insure you won't accidentally kill the ball.

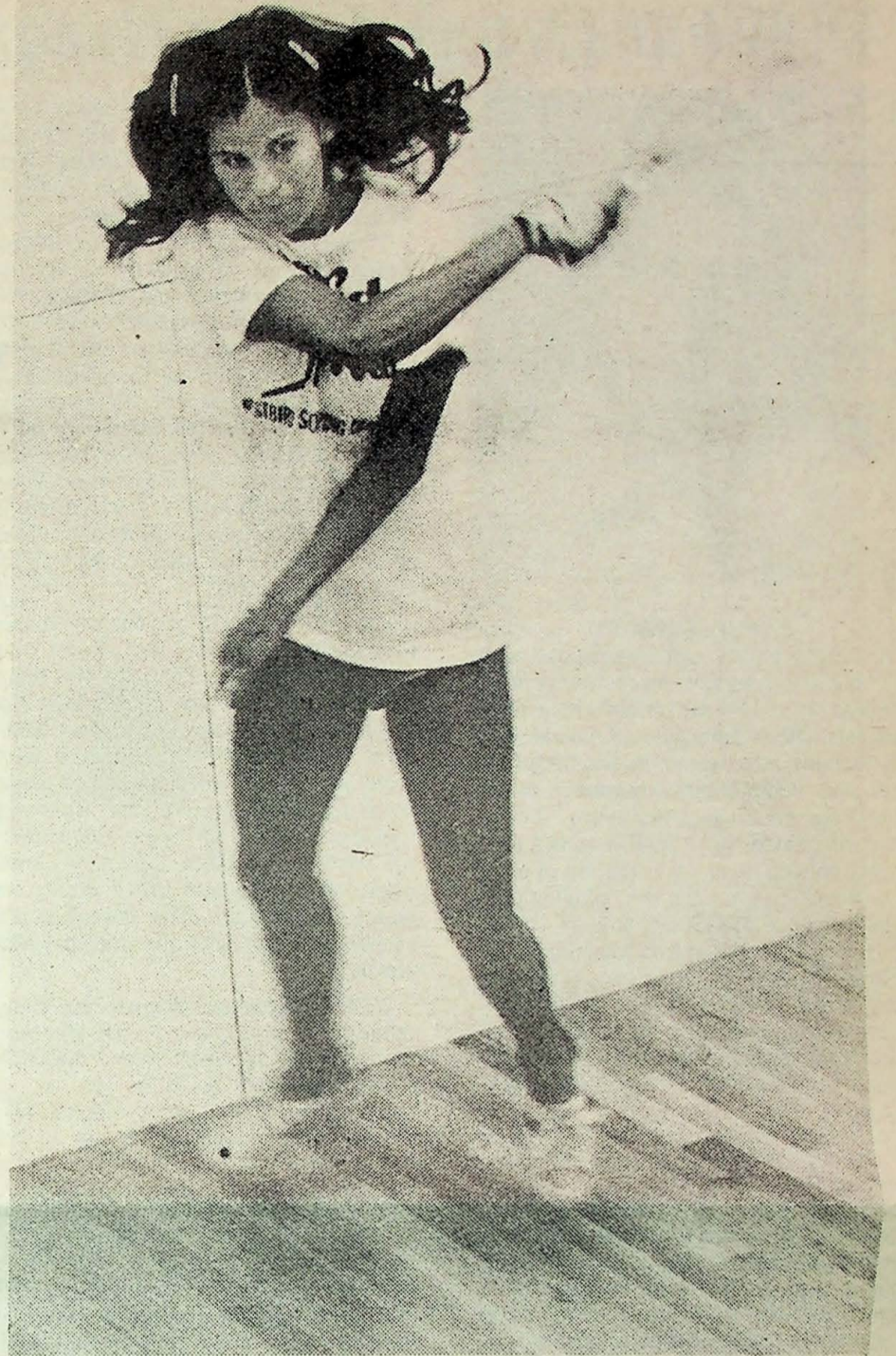
Grobmisi playing tip No. 7: The shortest distance between two points is an avoidable hinder.

Grobmisi playing tip No. 8: Never play with anyone called "Killer." Never allow anyone your opponent calls "dear" to be

(Continued on Page 15)



Marty Hogan



Tom Jones of Miami, Florida, captures the concentration of this racquetball player as her blurring racquet returns this shot. The player is Kathy Cook, who works in the physical therapy department of South Miami Hospital.

# The Dawn of a New Era — Hopefully

(Continued from Page 9)

pion would be great for the game. "That person (a player who could dominate the tour) will have to win a couple of national titles and be a little flamboyant on court," said Greer. "She'll have to have a certain style, power racquetball maybe. Or else, perhaps be like Evonne Goolagong in tennis, so graceful you say you love to watch her play."

Stoll agreed believing any player who created excitement would be a plus. "Anything helps," said Bonnie, "good publicity, bad publicity, at the beginning (of the WPRA's tour)."

Anxious to speak about the often slight coverage accorded the ladies by the media, Greer was a bit cynical. "It's who you know, or who's going to cover a tournament that's important."

"The reason we got fantastic coverage in New York (at a recent ladies stop) was that the guy that was there loved women's racquetball and wanted to promote it." She went on adding, "I hope our sponsors and PR people got the right people coming in here." A glance towards the lobby revealed a host of press-type people scribbling away and a set of bright lights being installed in the lounge where we conversed.

SEEING THE LIGHTS (used for a magazine interview flash) the conversation

turned to coverage on the small screen, a topic on which Bonnie had a specific opinion. "It's a lot easier for people to understand the women's game of racquetball. They can identify with the ladies game and follow the ball. So, I think the networks realize that, and women will be on TV before the men." For Greer the subject was clear cut. "When television finds out we're having \$100,000 of prize money (for the top finishers) they'll say 'we're going to cover that.' Right now they'd see us having \$50,000 in prize money and we'd be giving the other \$50,000 to the other 32."

Both agreed the ladies game is still years removed from wide scale recognition and acceptance. "The furthest I think it'll take will be about 10 years. That's the longest," said Marci. She paused for a while and then emphasized, "We're talking about when everyone knows about racquetball — in junior high and in foreign countries." Bonnie feels 10 years "is a good estimate." She continued, "In college it's now a lot easier to know about racquetball because so many schools are building courts. Players start reading publications and that's how they get to know the people better who are involved in racquetball." There was silence for a few seconds, then Bonnie let loose a burst of words. "I think that we (the WPRA)

are recognized right now in the racquetball world. What we need to do is get recognition outside the racquetball world, and that's going to take a little bit of time."

The fact that few women pros had been featured in the sort of advertisements that hype both racquetball and a sponsor's product didn't faze either lady. "That's just an agent thing," said Greer. She added that when the sport starts to soar in popularity endorsements will come as a matter of course.

Stoll returned to the question of recognition adding "As far as getting involved to the extent of where a little kid wants to buy a racquetball racquet instead of or along with a baseball glove it's going to take a good 8-10 year."

THE TWO WERE asked about efforts to aid in the development of the tour that had been tendered by organizations such as Triple-S Promotions, the publishers of RACQUETBALL TODAY. Operating along with the WPRA, the organizers would promote the ladies tour at various sites, taking care that all aspects of tourney life would be well-regulated. Greer spoke first, saying, "I think that's proof right there that people want to get involved. They must know there must be money in it (the ladies tour)." Bonnie spoke next, adding such a body could help

the tour but commenting that "Everyone (players, promoters, court owners and the like) are into it for the money." While she admitted all involved loved the game itself, she seemed equally certain the lure of the greenbacks was of no small concern.

Commenting further on the Triple-S idea Bonnie added "You also have to think where that happened — in Illinois. And Illinois happens to be a very big racquetball state. Hopefully it'll be catching and catch on in a lot more states."

Returning to the topic that brought all concerned to Killshot Ltd., Greer reflected on participating without the presence of the men's tour. "I miss the men," she said. "But if it's for the good of the women to break away I'm all for it." Stoll chimed in "The women have an excellent group." To which Marci smiled and said most emphatically "The women have a bond together."

As she made the pronouncement the crowd in the Killshot had grown quite large, and the lesser known pros were nervously readying for the qualifying process. The top professionals on the other hand seemed more relaxed and secure in their abilities. Maybe that's what having a bond is all about. Or maybe they realized they're part of a talent pool for a product that shouldn't miss with the public.

## What Determines a Racquetball Pro?



By PHIL SIMBORG

I walked into a local racquetball club recently and was introduced to "the pro." He was about 16-years-old, had been playing racquetball for about six months, had no training whatsoever in teaching, and had only rudimentary knowledge of the game. He was clearly not "a pro," but, at best, an "instructor." Well, who is a pro? In my opinion there are two kinds of pros: the "teaching pro" and the "playing pro" who is usually just called, simply, "pro."

To be a teaching pro, in my opinion, requires a degree of experience, expertise and proven ability as a teacher. Further, there is an organization called APRO that tests and accredits instructors, and those people are also entitled to be called teaching pros.

As for the playing pro, that's a tough one. I doubt if there are more than six men and women that truly make enough money on the pro tour to really make a living at it; even Marty Hogan and Shannon Wright make much more off the court than on. But, for the sake of definition, I believe a pro to be anyone who regularly competes in professional tournaments.

NOW WE GET into the problem of deciding who is an amateur, as opposed to who is a pro. Before doing this, it is necessary to determine why we need a distinction. We need to differentiate between the true pro and the true amateur so that

there will be a place for top level amateurs to compete for prizes and awards and not have to buck professionals. (This particularly affects the Open, Veteran Open and Senior divisions of play.)

It's easy to eliminate people like Hogan, Yellen, McKay, Wright, etc. from the amateur tournaments, but it starts getting tough when you go further down the line. The AARA says anyone who accepts prize money for playing is a pro. There are several things wrong with that policy. How long are they considered to be a pro . . . forever? What about someone like Chicago's Jim Cooke who won a Chevrolet, or Brett Harnett who won a trip to Hawaii? Should they be allowed to continue as amateur while other's who won \$50 are considered pros?

The USRA says that anyone who makes over \$1,000 on the NRC tour cannot compete as an amateur. That, too, has many faults. Now there are other places for players to make money besides the NRC; aside from the WPRA (women's tour) there are several independent and invitational money events. Further, the designation of an arbitrary dollar amount does not solve the problem. Like most areas where the AARA and USRA differ, one goes to far and the other doesn't go far enough, and they both miss the boat completely!

If one tries to apply the principle of designating as pros those people who earn their livelihood in and around the court, through playing, teaching, etc., we go much too far. There are literally hundreds of players around the country who work at racquetball clubs, play every day, and go to many of the major tournaments in the hopes of qualifying on the pro circuit. If we cut these people off from amateur competition, we give them virtually no place to improve and practice their skills (except during the qualifying rounds of the pro/stops). These players, while generally far superior to the non-full-time racquetball players that come to local tournaments, cannot truly compete on the level of the regular tour pros, and until they have shown their ability to play on the pro level, should be allowed to play as amateurs (whether they've won a car, a

trip, or a total of over \$1,000 in various smaller tournaments around the country).

I OFFER, therefore, my solution as to who should be allowed to play as an amateur, in the hopes that it will be adopted by both the USRA and AARA, along with other national and independent and state racquetball associations that control amateur events:

*A player may not compete in amateur divisions of a racquetball tournament for a period of 12 months from the second time he has qualified (into the round of 32) for a professional tournament, or for 12 months from anytime he/she has reached the second round (16s) of such a tournament. (For definition purposes, a professional tournament is any tournament run or approved by the NRC, WPRA, NARP, or which offers a total prize money in excess of \$5,000 for a single division.)*

When a player like Bruce Christensen gets hot, as he did at the Nationals by beating Brumfield, Myers, and taking Yellen to a tiebreaker, he's proven his abilities as a pro and is no longer entitled to compete with those of us who play in tournaments to test our skills against other amateurs. Other players around the country, like Bob Deuster, Steve Sulli, Ed Andrews, John Klearman, and many others who consistently try to break into the pros but can't quite do it . . . they're entitled to keep on trying but still be able to keep their games sharp against true amateurs. To protect against the occasional "lucky break" of an easy draw in the qualifying, the rule makes them get to the second round, or qualify twice, before being banned from amateur play.

Further, for those people who quit the tour, for financial reasons, skill reasons or otherwise, if, after a year, we do not let them compete as amateurs, they have absolutely no place to practice or test their skills, and that would be an unfortunate loss to the racquetball community.

I urge you to contact your associations and ask them to adopt this ruling. Since the various factions in the racquetball community cannot come to reasonable agreement on various rules and policies, maybe we, the public, can come to agreement and influence the associations.

## Racquetball for the Unfit

By TOM GROBMISI

One of the best attributes of racquetball is the ANYBODY CAN PLAY. But if you're not in good shape, you can hurt yourself pretty bad. Following are *The Grobmisi Eight* rules of playing when you're not in shape that, if followed carefully, will allow you to play the game without endangering your physical well-being.

1. Don't enter tournaments, ladder-board competition, or other highly-competitive contests until you are in shape.

2. Do stretching exercises for at least 15 minutes before and after playing.

3. WARM UP for at least 10 minutes in the court before you start a game. Start out hitting easy ceiling shots and gradually work up to hitting hard shots.

4. During the game, take as much time as possible between rallies. (If you don't want your opponent to know your stalling intentionally, you can use up time checking the ball, wiping the floor with a towel, or talking about a particular rule . . . for more ideas, watch the pros).

5. Take at least 10 minutes between games. (You can easily find excuses to stall here: phone calls, wet gloves, etc.)

6. Instead of playing to 21 or 15, play "the Grobmisi short game" which is to 3.

7. Don't play too often. (Two or three times a year should be adequate).

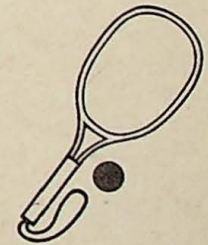
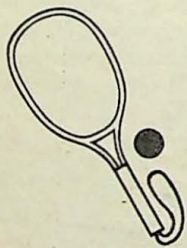
8. Never play anyone better than you! This will not only reduce your odds of over-taxing yourself, it will make the game much more fun to play.

## Chicago South Suburban League

In a playoff between the Tinley Park Racquetball Club and the Evergreen Bath and Tennis Club, Tinley Park took the league championship by a score of 67-30.

Palos Club won the Men's division, Olympian Court Club won the Women's trophy, and Tinley took the handball honors.

# ILLINOIS CLUB GUIDE



**THE RIGHT CLUB:** 2330 N. Hammond Drive, Schaumburg, IL. 397-3300. 8 racquetball courts featuring 4 new glass backwall courts, complete Nautilus-aerobics fitness center with supervised programs and exercise classes; 5 tennis courts featuring indirect lighting providing the highest ceiling in Chicago; cocktail lounge with viewing gallery; attended nursery, whirlpools, saunas, traveling teams, instructional and advanced leagues, sanctioned tournaments, match arranging, social events and parties

**RIVIERA 400 HEALTH CLUB:** 400 East Randolph (Lake Shore Drive), Chicago. Climate controlled racquetball/handball courts, non-glare lighting and gallery viewing. NO COURT FEES. Landmark geodesic dome, swimming pool and whirlpool. Double tier sundeck with attended juicer and private cabanas-chaise lounges available. Separate men and women's health clubs carpeted and attended. Saunas, steam room (men's), Roman Spa whirlpool (women's), Universal gym, weightlifting, sunrooms. Professional massage and facial (appointment). Towels, soaps, and toiletries complimentary. Pro Shop, lessons, programs, laundry service. Executive Health Fitness Program, fitness classes, T.V. lounge. For individual or corporate memberships to this plush Spa call (312) 527-2525. Director: Gale Landers.

**PRO RACQUETBALL AND FITNESS CENTER:** 1055 Lake Avenue, Woodstock, IL. (815) 338-8222. 8 climate controlled racquetball/handball courts. Fully carpeted locker rooms including saunas and whirlpools. Nautilus fitness center for extensive exercise programs. Spacious lounge with championship court viewing. A place for everyone to see.

**SUPREME COURT:** One Virginia Road, Crystal Lake, IL. (815) 455-3330. 10 air-conditioned racquetball courts, saunas, whirlpools, carpeted locker rooms, attended nursery, fully equipped pro shop. Manager/Pro: John Isaacson.

**OAK LAWN RACQUET CLUB:** 10444 South Central Avenue, Oak Lawn, IL. 499-3626. 5 racquetball/handball courts, 8 tennis courts, saunas, whirlpools, exercise room, carpeted locker rooms, attended nursery, T.V. lounge.

**KILLSHOT, LTD:** 321 Edgewater Drive, Bloomingdale, IL. 893-9575. 15 climate controlled racquetball/handball courts, fully carpeted locker rooms, large co-ed whirlpool, separate saunas, and massage rooms, extensive exercise room, fully equipped pro shop, attended nursery, spacious lounge with viewing gallery. Horseshoe-shaped bar with 2 way fireplace. Private and group lessons. General Manager/Head Pro: Don Jenkins. Manager/Pro: Sue Sullivan.

**CHARLIE CLUB:** 2701 Black Road, Joliet, IL. (815) 729-4503. Open 24 hours, 7 days. Restaurant and Disco (open to the public). 8 racquetball/handball courts, 2 indoor tennis courts with special "Sport Sod". Fully equipped men's and women's exercise rooms with Nautilus, Universal and Paramount equipment. Indoor swimming pool and jogging track, one kilometer outdoor parcours; locker rooms include saunas, steam rooms, massage, showers, and private Swedish massage. Supervised nursery. Members over 18 years, Corporate memberships available.

**SILVER LAKE COUNTRY CLUB:** 147th Street and 82nd Avenue, Orland Park, IL. 349-6947. 9 racquetball/handball courts (1 glass walled court for viewing), saunas, free attended nursery, exercise rooms, full length lockers, extensive bar and lounge. Private and group lessons available.

**FOREST VIEW RACQUET CLUB:** 800 East Falcon Drive, Arlington Heights, IL. 640-2574. 8 air-conditioned racquetball/handball courts, 6 indoor tennis courts, 6 outdoor tennis courts. Separate saunas and whirlpools, men's and women's locker rooms, attended nursery. Manager/head

pro: Jeff Wilke. Racquetball pros: Georgia Maskalunas, Scott Thurber.

**TINLEY PARK RACQUETBALL CLUB:** 17500 Duval Drive, Tinley Park, IL. 532-7900. Open 7 days, 6 a.m. to 12 a.m. 15 regulation racquetball/handball courts with unique use of glass for uninterrupted playing and viewing. Luxurious health facilities including saunas, steam bath, whirlpools. Universal exercise areas. Free attended nursery. Pro shop, racquet rental, complete lessons program. Temperature controlled for comfortable year-round play. Home of the plush Prime Time Lounge. Managed by Five Stars International Enterprises, Inc.

### THE RACQUET HOUSES

1. O'HARE RACQUET HOUSE: 951 East Touhy Ave., Des Plaines, IL. 296-6144. Club Pro: Shirley Scheithe.
2. THORNDALE RACQUET HOUSE: 1220 Mark St., Bensenville, IL. 595-2020. Club Pro: Colleen Shields.
3. HILLSIDE RACQUET HOUSE: 4401 W. Roosevelt Road, Hillside, IL. 449-2255. Club Pro: Crystal Durdil
4. HARLEM IRVING RACQUET HOUSE: 4203 North Harlem, Norridge, IL. 457-2040. Club Pro: Sam Rizzio.
5. ELMHURST RACQUET HOUSE: 233 West Grand Avenue, Bensenville, IL. 595-5060. Club Pro: Rose Magliano.

All clubs have racquetball/handball on 8 regulation courts. Carpeted locker rooms, saunas, whirlpools, steamrooms, exercise facilities, free attended nursery, pro shop, racquet rental, group and private lessons, instructional and non-instructional leagues. Open 7 days a week. Director of all club operations: Carol Armstrong. Program Director/Public Relations: Mary Lou Burny

### SPAULDING RACQUETBALL CLUBS:

1. 2699 Skokie Valley Road, Highland Park, Ill. 60035, 433-600.
2. 2175 Commercial Avenue, Northbrook, Ill. 60062, 498-9890.
3. 220 West North Avenue, Chicago, Ill. 60610, 943-2266.

All clubs have 12 air-conditioned racquetball/handball courts, carpeted locker rooms, saunas, whirlpools, free attended nursery, pro shop, racquet rentals, group and private lessons, leagues, programs and parties. Open 7 days a week.

**TREBORSHIRE HEALTH & RACQUET CLUB:** 195th Street and Glenwood Road, Glenwood, Ill. 60425. 754-8400. Four racquetball, 7 tennis regulation courts. Whirlpool, sauna, complete bar and health facilities under construction. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC, NO GUEST FEES OR MEMBERSHIP FEES THROUGH SEPTEMBER, 1980. LOWEST COURT RATES IN THE AREA. Charter memberships now available. Tennis and Racquetball Pros. Tom Karras and Frank Johnson, your new owner/manager/racquetball pros.

**CONTINENTAL CLUB:** 1701 Golf Road, Rolling Meadows, Ill. 981-7777. Ten racquetball/handball courts, two squash courts, indoor swimming pool and whirlpool, indoor running track. Nautilus equipment, basketball, volleyball, Judo, Karate, golf driving. Separate Paramount equipment workout rooms for men and women. Carpeted locker rooms for men and women with sauna, steam, sun rooms. Color TV in lounges, towels & toiletries, massages. Free attended nursery, pro shop, group and private lessons available. Open 7 days a week. This club is built in conjunction with restaurants, Deli, shops and three twelve story office towers. Individual and Corporate memberships available; Charter membership available until June 1; call Debbie Engle, Director of Membership, 312-981-7777. General Manager: Norb Duba.

**CHALET SPORTS CORE:** 8300 South Wolf Road, Willow Springs, IL. 246-4030. Conveniently located 1 mile from the Tri-State and Stevenson expressways. 22 racquetball/handball courts, indoor swimming pool, indoor running track, exercise room, saunas, whirlpools, steamroom, sunroom, free attended nursery, pro shop, cocktail lounge and disco.

# 'The Easy Way' — Doubles Strategy and Play

By CHARLES GARFINKEL

*Editor's note: Charles Garfinkel, author of "Racquetball the Easy Way," covers various aspects of the game in his book. Portions from the book are reprinted with permission of Charles Garfinkel and Atheneum/SMI, New York, 1979.*

Before you attempt to play doubles, make sure you are reasonably skillful in singles. In singles, you only need to know where your opponent is. In doubles, you must know where your partner and the two players on the opposing team are at all times. Doing so will result in your having good court-position and being better prepared to hit your shots.

In playing doubles, there are a few basic rules that will help you greatly. They are:

1. Scoring is the same as in singles.
2. **BE SURE** to give your opponents a clear view of the ball at all times.
3. Don't crowd your opponents when they are hitting the ball.
4. When your partner or either of your opponents is hitting the ball, try to watch him as he starts his swing. You will have a much better idea of where the ball is going.
5. Always encourage your partner.
6. **DON'T SAY**, "I'm sorry" — your partner knows you didn't miss the ball on purpose.
7. Choose a partner who you enjoy playing with. This will make the game much more fun.

Doubles teams play either side-by-side or up-and-back in the court. The better formation for most situations is to play side-by-side, with each player taking responsibility for shots hit on his own side.

Imagine a line running down the middle of the court, dividing the court in half. Each shot on the right side of the imaginary line would be taken by the player who is playing the right of the line. Each shot on the left side would be taken by the player who plays to the left of the line.

**WHICH PLAYER** should play which side? If one player is left-handed and his

partner is right-handed, the choices are easy. The right-hander should play the right side and the left-hander should play the left side. In this way, any shots that are hit anywhere on the court, including hard down-the-line shots, could be taken on a forehand of the righty-lefty combination. A good righty-lefty team is hard to beat.

But most teams usually feature two right-handers. In these cases, the better backhand player should play the left side. He will be able to handle the shots that go to the backhand-side down the left sidewall. He would also be able to take most of the shots that come down the middle of the court, as they are on his forehand. The right-side player would be able to handle most of the shots that are along the right sidewall.

When one player is much better than his partner, he should definitely play the left side. This is because most of the play in racquetball tends to go to that side. Each team strives to keep the ball in the deep left corner, and it takes good skill to shoot from that position.

### General Strategy and Play.

Before you begin your doubles match, you and your partner should decide who is going to serve first, who will take shots that are down the middle, and the types of shots that will help you win against the team you are playing. By settling all this beforehand, both of you will be much better prepared mentally to play the match. You will find yourself in the correct position most of the time, instead of running all over the court not knowing exactly what your role is.

The team that wins the toss should elect to serve first and so get some points on the board. The first server up continues serving until his side loses serve. Next time his side regains the serve, he and his partner alternate on serve until the side loses serve.

The server's partner must stand in one of the two small boxes between the service and short lines. He cannot move past the short line until the ball has passed the short line in the air. He is better off standing in the box on the side that he plays. In that way, he can move straight back a

foot or two into position.

**IN DOUBLES**, you should constantly be hitting drive serves and Z-serves. Since there are four players on the court, the receiving team's area in which to return the ball is much smaller than in singles. If they have to hit a ball that is coming very fast or is bouncing crazily off the sidewalls or back wall, they can become very frustrated.

You should try to keep all serves out of the middle of the court. They should be hit deep into the far corners in the back of the court. You can also serve the Z-serves so that they hit deep off the back sidewalls. You can also try serving just over the short line, but this is a risky serve if it is not hit just right.

On the second serve, it is better to hit medium or slow Z-serves than lobs. You will still be forcing the receiving team to hit a good service return. Be careful that you do not double-fault.

The serving team tries to control the center of the court, as in singles. Always try to stay in front of your opponents. If you are serving well, the receiving team will always be scrambling from a defensive position, as you will have the center blocked. In doubles, the weaker player can sometimes be played to at will. The serving team can hit all of its serves and shots to the weaker player and thus practically keep his partner out of the play altogether.

**THE SERVING** team should think strictly offensively, using as many kill shots, sidewall pinch shots, and passing shots as possible. Only if the servers are in trouble should they go to the ceiling ball or Z-ball. Drop shots and volleys can be especially effective if both opponents are in deep backcourt and you are far up in the front court.

When either partner on the serving team is hitting a shot from backcourt, his partner should move up toward the front court on his own side. If his partner's shot is returned, he will be better able to return a shot that is hit in the area from the short line to the front wall.

There will be other times when you wind up on your partner's side of the court because of a mixup in positioning. Do not panic. Make your shot and then switch back to your normal side.

### The Receiving Team.

Both players on the receiving team should have their game plan formulated as to return of serve. They should have patience and play defensively until they get an opportunity to put the ball away or pass their opponents.

When receiving serve, both left-court and right-court players should be about 3-4 feet from the back wall and about five feet from the sidewall.

When returning serve in doubles, you should try everything in your power to return the ball to the ceiling. You are trying to move the serving team out of center court and assume that position yourselves.

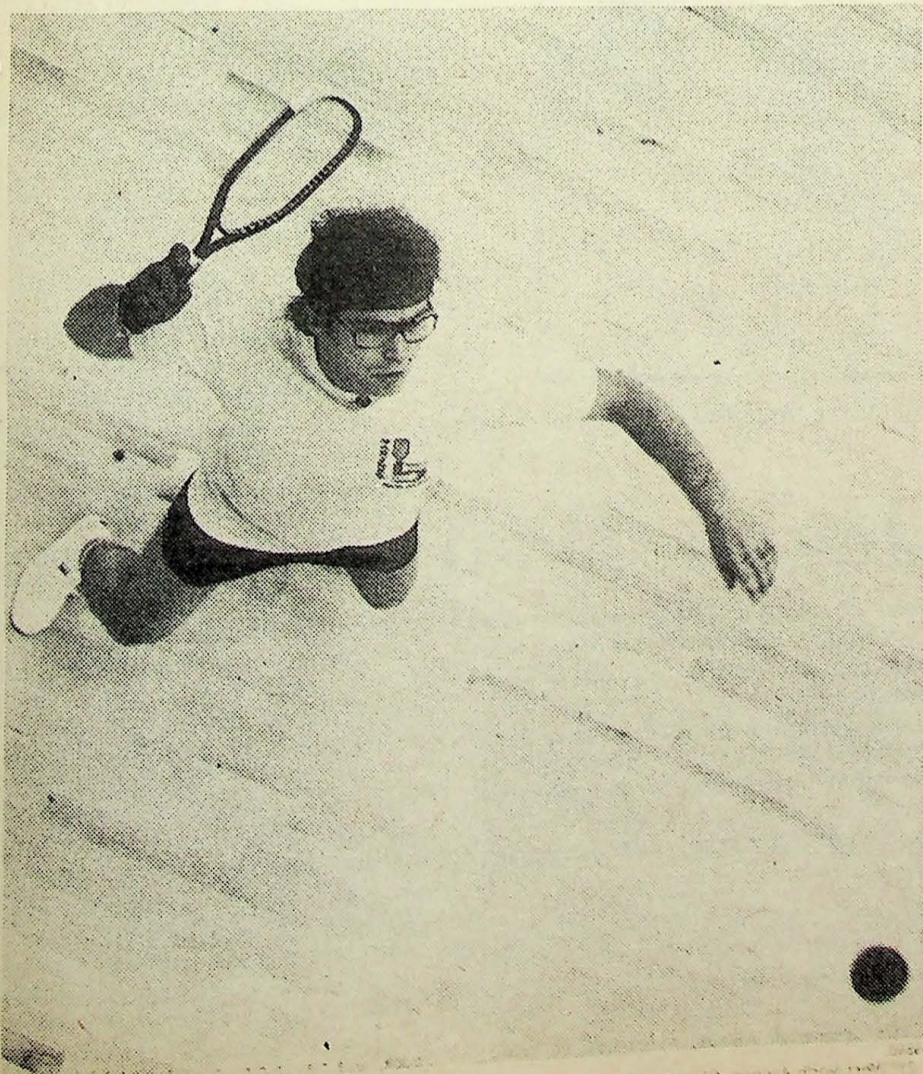
**IF YOU TRY** to shoot the ball for a winner and hit it a shade too high off the front wall, you will be giving the serving team an easy set-up, as they are already in front court. If you try to pass and the ball is hit too high off the front wall, it will rebound off the back wall, giving the serving team an easy shot to hit.

You must try to hit the ceiling ball in such a way as to keep the shots off the back wall and sidewalls.

Try to keep in mind at all times when you are receiving serve and on defense, that if you win the rally, you get the server out of serve. If you lose the rally, you lose the point.

### Summary of Main Points in Doubles.

1. Decide which players will play which side.
2. Have a game plan ready.
3. Concentrate very hard when you are serving.
4. Play offensively when serving.
5. Play defensively when returning serve.
6. On defense, don't shoot until you have a chance to do so.



Runners-up in Racquetball Today's Photo Contest

Left:

Greg Mitchell, in B singles play, prepares to return to the ceiling in a match at the AMF/Voit-Liberty Bell tournament at the Supreme Court, Mariner Square in Alameda, Cal. Photo submitted by Greg Leong, Oakland, Cal.

Above:

Entitled "Jack Newman Saves A Leg." Photo submitted by Bill Precht, Lombard, Ill.

RACQUETBALL TODAY congratulates our photo contest winner, Mary Thomas of Chicago. Our judges believed that Mary's photo entry captured the intensity of the game and displayed excellent composition. Mary will receive \$100 for her winning entry. Prizes will be awarded to other contest pictures that appear in this paper.



Entitled "THE BRUM," the photo was taken at the Aurora Pro Stop and pictures Charlie Brumfield (left) and his opponent, Don Webb. Photo submitted by Mary R. Thomas, Chicago, Ill.

## Briefs

(Continued from Page 2)

tions of racket, which can also mean:

1. a clamor, uproar
2. a business that obtains money through fraud and extortion
3. an illegal or dishonest practice

Which spelling do you think best describes the sport?

On the subject of semantics . . .

There are many new words being coined to describe aspects of racquetball . . . and here's a few examples:

**Kendler:** v. To lead, take control (He *kendlered* his team to victory.)

**Brum:** n. A ploy, or "psyche" to put your opponent off guard. (Playing the first six points left-handed was an obvious attempt to *brum* his opponent.)

**Hilech:** n. The act of hitting the ball on the second or third bounce while your father yells, "Great shot!" from the audience.

Who invented Racquetball?

Most historians credit Joe Sobek as the creator of the sport by cutting off a tennis racquet and playing handball with it. research editor Tom Grobmisi believes he has found an earlier version played in 12th century China using the head of a chicken and flattened-out chopsticks. While the object of the game remains somewhat unclear, an interesting by-product was that after the game, the participants enjoyed a tasty bowl of soup. According to Grobmisi, "the game, of course, was much simpler then, as they didn't use linesmen."

Players apathetic . . .

It has long been obvious that most players simply don't care who runs the volunteer racquetball associations or how they are run. In an effort to stir up more interest, ISRA President Al Shetzer called a meeting of racquetball enthusiasts around the country to take part in a panel discussion on player apathy. Unfortunately, no one showed up for the meeting. When asked about the poor turnout, Shetzer replied, "I don't care."

What If —

From Grobmisi:

Would people from 3-Mile Island need to warmup?

Would Linda Lovelace choke?

Would Zeus be a thor loser?

Would Jack be nimble in the court?

Could Little Miss Muffet get out of the way?

Would Julia Childs relish victory?

Would she roll out every shot?

Would Emily Post know how to serve?

Would Spiderman make fly kills?

Would Xavaria turn pro?

Would Nixon be resigned to losing?

Would Helen Keller need a handicap?

Would Al Capone like his new racquet?

Would Michaelangelo hit ceiling shots?

Would F. Lee Bailey appeal every call?

## Northern Players Are 'Missing the Boat' in Summer

By RALPH MOIL

In the northern part of our country, summer means a *tremendous* reduction in racquetball activity . . . one need only glance at the tournament schedule, or call your favorite court club to see that they have plenty of empty courts (even during prime time at many places).

But this is *not* the case in the southern part of the country. In places like Miami, San Diego, and other cities where the weather is excellent for outdoor activities all year long, the players continue to play indoor, four-wall racquetball consistently for 12 months.

And it's not because the players there take the weather for granted, or because they don't have outdoor courts to play on . . . it's because they have realized, given a choice, *you simply can not beat the fun and excitement* of playing indoor, four-wall racquetball *no matter how nice the weather!* Tennis and golf simply do not provide the exercise we racquetball players are used to, and while running is great exercise, it hardly replaces the thrill of a good killshot for most of us.

It's my opinion that northern athletes have simply been conditioned, over the years, to get outside as much as possible

when the weather's warm because, until the advent of the modern, air conditioned court club, there *wasn't a viable alternative*. More and more players are beginning to realize the necessity of keeping in shape and keeping their game sharp over the summer, as well as the fact that they simply cannot enjoy life as much without at least an occasional game of racquetball.

I guess what I'm trying to say is that the northern players that give up their favorite pastime when the sun shines are missing out on a lot of good fun and exercise, and I think that as time goes by, and

racquetball truly "comes of age," this will change, and racquetball will *truly* be a year-round activity. Many players are beginning to come around, and I've noticed, personally, that there's more summertime activity (in the Chicago area) now than there was a couple of years ago, and soon I expect to see a lot more tournaments and other events taking place during the summer months as a result. I think it's good for the sport and good for the players (not to mention the club owners!) and wish to encourage all you Yankees not to forget that 20-by-20-by-40 box just because of a little sunshine and warm water.

# Court Talk

## Take It From the Greek

Most racquetball players are aware their beloved sport is still in its infancy. The game was founded only 30 years ago by a Greenwich, Connecticut squash teacher named Joe Sobek and the first major tournament was not held until 1969.

So, it could come as a surprise that the philosopher Aristotle was devoting thought to the game way back when. Speaking out in several of his works circa 350 B.C., the wise old Greek informed today's practitioners about many of the sport's intricacies.

Some wags may wonder of course if he was so smart why didn't he write *Aristotle's Guide to Racquetball*? The answer is simple. Living in an age where success was earned by hard work the Big A would never have wanted today's players to come by the news easily. Part of true learning, believed the ancients, is the search for knowledge. Hence, Aristotle concealed the gems of guidance within his works that have become famous in their own right. Or perhaps, he couldn't get an agent to handle the paperback rights. In any case, when Aristotle talks racquetball it can't hurt to listen.

**ON THE TOPIC** of players who have connected on their first rollout and lust for more he says in the *Nicomachean Ethics* that, "One swallow does not a summer make."

On competitors anxious to develop fitness without devoting sufficient practice to the basics, turn again to the *Ethics*. "It is possible to fail in many ways ... while to succeed is possible only in one way." By this the sage relates little value can be found in an erratic kill, too wide a pinch shot, or a ceiling ball lacking depth. It's

far better, he thus alludes, to develop a strong backhand and forehand through practice, and then look elsewhere. He goes on to add, "to miss the mark is easy, to hit it difficult," which simply means practice, practice, practice makes perfect, perfect, perfect.

On the noting that a wary, albeit slow moving veteran often can beat a younger, faster opponent, he is direct. In *Diogenes Laertius* the thinker states that "Education is the best provision for old age." Or, there's no sense in beating yourself, let the other guy burn himself out. This style of play is often accomplished by oldsters willing to let racquet-wielding young turks let fly with salvos of kill shots. Standing sedately in proper center court position the "old men" (and women) are content to hit dump shots and passes in front of and past the ever moving opposition.

On the reality that eventually even the most skilled players lose some of the magic and have to retool their game, the Greek is blunt. The answer is found in the *Physics* wherein Book Four reveals, "Time wastes things away, and all things grow old through time." Never one to call it quits the pundit implies that veterans ought to readjust their game. When the day comes the kill shot is no longer consistent they should think pass when possible. If it becomes too hard to pass cross court consider pinching wide if the likelihood exists.

**TURNING TO THE** concept of sportsmanship, Aristotle speaks of gifted players whose attitudes are less than refreshing. "Without friends," he says in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, "no one would choose to live, though he had all other goods."



Bob Gura

The import of this statement should be clear to anyone who's ever humiliated an opponent on court and wondered why he or she wasn't invited to share a drink afterward.

Aristotle also touched on the need to play the very best one can regardless of the frustration. Once more in the *Ethics* he says, "If happiness is activity in accordance with excellence it is reasonable that it should be in accordance with the highest excellence." Although the message was delivered centuries ago it still makes good sense today. This quote is especially applicable to newcomers who quickly discover how easy it is to play racquetball at a passable level.

The old philosopher is saying you might enjoy the sport a whole lot more if you take the time to practice and strive for the best. It may sound corny, but it makes sense. Why not take it from Aristotle and try just a little harder next time out? After all, the Greek's not exactly a rookie when it comes to the advice department.

## Playing Tips

(Continued from Page 11)

your referee.

**Grobmisi playing tip No. 9:** Racquetball seems to turn every winner into a coach.

**Grobmisi playing tip No. 10:** Don't be too upset with yourself if you lose — it's only half your fault.

**Grobmisi playing tip No. 11:** If you worry too much about your strokes and spend too much time on the court practicing, you just might become a winner.

**Grobmisi playing tip No. 12:** If you're playing a cheater, beat her!

**Grobmisi playing tip No. 13:** Relax, the only difference between a tournament match and a regular match is that one is for fun, and the other shows what kind of a person you really are.

**Grobmisi playing tip No. 14:** Stay away from sugar; she's mine.

**Grobmisi playing tip No. 15:** It's great playing with kids; they're fun to beat and easy to cheat.

**Grobmisi playing tip No. 16:** Never hit a ceiling shot when you can hit a pass shot. Never hit a pass shot when you can hit a kill shot. Never turn down a forfeit.

**Grobmisi playing tip No. 17:** How to play like Marty Hogan — Move your feet, fast. Hit the ball, hard.

**Grobmisi playing tip No. 18:** How to play like the pros — Stomp your right foot. Stomp your left foot. Appeal.

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The above puzzle contains the racquetball names and terms listed below. See if you can find them all; circle them, and send the puzzle to us with your name and address. You'll go into a drawing for some nice prizes.

Ace, Adams, Award, Bledsoe, Bolan, Bounce, Championship, Draw, Game, Green, Greer, Grobmisi, Harding, Head, Hit, Hogan, IRA, Kendlar, Koltun, Lee, Mackie, Mariott, NARP, NRC, Peck, Peterson, Pro, Racquetball, Seamco, Seed, Serot, Shannon, Shoot, Spaulding, Splat, Sportsmanship, Steding, Stoll, Thomas, Time, Tournament, Voit, Wagner, Wall, Walton, Wirkus, WPRA, Wright, Yellen, Zeitman

Congratulations to last month's puzzle winners. We drew the winners out of a hat from the puzzles sent in. The following people will receive a new can of Seamco 600 racquetballs and a shirt: John Belair, Thousand Oaks, California; Mary Bottano, Conulack, New York; Sherry Brumard, North Chicago, Illinois; Russ Larabee, Bristol, Wisconsin, and Ellen Kay Wenger, Washington, Illinois.

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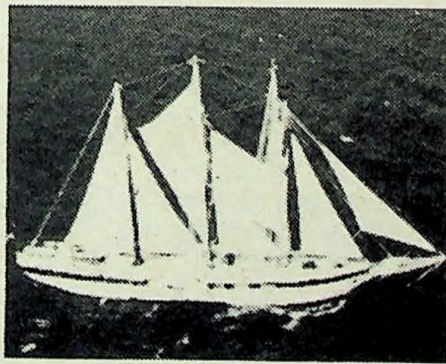
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