



ILLINOIS STATE RACQUETBALL ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

Vol. 11 No. 5
September/
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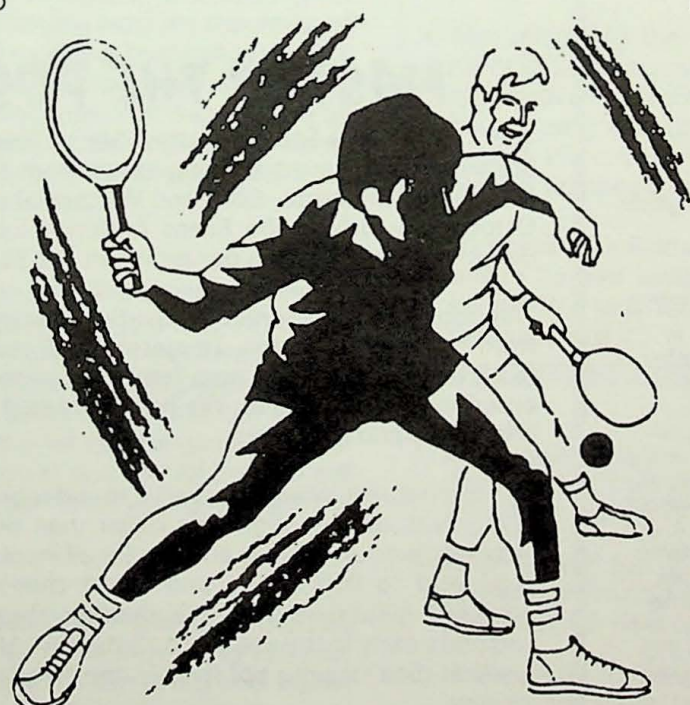


DOUBLES TO PEORIA!

The weekend of December 2nd through the 4th promises to be one of the most exciting in Illinois racquetball history as the State Doubles Championships moves to The Landmark Racquet and Health Club in Peoria for an unprecedented three days of competition! At their August meeting, the Board of Directors voted to award this year's event to an ISRA facility outside the Chicago metropolitan area for the first time. The Landmark Racquet and Health Club is located in Peoria -- approximately two and a half hours south of Chicago via Interstates 55 and 74. Club Racquetball

Director Sue Malone extended a welcome to all Illinois players to come down and enjoy the hospitality of the Peoria area. "I think that the Chicago area players will be pleasantly surprised at the total package we are able to offer to both players and their families for this event," said Malone. "Our complex includes eight championship racquetball courts, full health club amenities including sauna, whirlpool, and steam, and a complete complement of gymnasiums, fitness equipment and programs for all age groups. We're encouraging players to bring the non-playing

members of the family along because we offer a 50-lane bowling center, ten movie theaters, an OTB parlor, restaurants, etc. -- right in the building! In addition, we have a shopping center and additional restaurants within walking distance, and the hotel is just five minutes away! We're hoping that ISRA players will make a weekend of it and visit the Par-A-Dice Casino and many other sights in the Peoria area! We welcome each player to bring a guest with them who will have full use of the Landmark facilities for the entire weekend!"



The decision to award this year's event to Peoria was a result of the ISRA's solicitation of bids from racquetball and health clubs from all over Illinois to host the State Singles and Doubles Championships. The ISRA Board has voted that all future State Championships will be the subject of competitive bidding to ensure that we bring you, the player, the best possible event! If you would like to learn more about the 1996-1997 process, please contact Bill Roberts at (708) 299-6750.

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From the Short Line

On July 1st, I assumed the ISRA presidency upon Bill Piggott's resignation. Few of you probably realize the amount of effort that Bill has put into the organization over the past several years. He has been the editor, publisher, and chief writer for one of racquetball's best newsletters. The time required to handle all of the various aspects of the ISRA newsletter is enormous -- and we, the players in Illinois, have been the beneficiaries of timely, worthwhile information and promotion of our sport! In addition, the thankless job of leading a volunteer Board of Directors has fallen on his broad shoulders, since Brian Stuertz defected to California over a year ago. The President is required to accomplish a lot of work with a working Board who are bound together solely by their desire to give something back to a sport we all enjoy. Bill was a past winner of the Distinguished Service Award for his contributions to Illinois racquetball over the years -- an honor well-deserved. We will miss his tireless effort, carbon copies of correspondence and ceaseless faxes to keep the Board updated. I hope his golf score improves as a result of the extra time available, and we hope to see him at some of the tournaments this fall to demonstrate the backhand that he claims garnered him a state championship (that my records don't show) in the past.

We're looking forward to this season with excitement! The re-opening of the Bloomingdale Sports Complex and many upgrades to Woodfield and The Glass Court are signs that racquetball continues to bounce back. We'll see a full schedule of sanctioned events -- and this year, for the first time in recent memory, we'll hold the State Doubles Championships outside of the Chicagoland area! For those of you who haven't been to Peoria -- forget the jokes -- it's a great weekend getaway (after all, who in your office will believe you?). We drove down last weekend and it was less than two and a half hours door-to-door from the Glass Court (and Laurel broke no speed limits). We think you'll be pleasantly surprised by the hospitality, the facility, and the level of competition from some new players. Join us!

Lastly, we're always looking for players excited about racquetball who want to get involved. Give me a call at (312) 935-9685 if you want to learn more about how you can help.

Geoff

MASTER THE POSSIBILITIES

The 11th Annual Seniors/Masters Series Tournament to be held in Illinois is drawing near. Players typically come from five surrounding states (Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin) as well as Illinois to compete on October 13-15th at the Edens Athletic Club in Chicago (312-286-6700) to determine who's tops in our region in the 35+ to 70+ division.

The good word has spread across the country since we have had participants from Delaware, Georgia, Tennessee and now Arizona. Entries weren't even ready yet and Mary Beke from Tempe, AZ joined the growing number of women entering the tournament. We have increased every year for the last three and hope the trend continues.

The tournament includes a special round robin format of two games to eleven points with division flights no larger than ten players. This lends itself to an increased amount of play and fun for all involved. No referees; just honest, fair play! Add to that bagels and cream cheese, donuts, coffee and juice for breakfast, giant six-foot club sandwiches, chips and drinks for lunch, and a beer and pizza party in the evening on Saturday. Afterwards, groups of people head towards their favorite hot spots in the "city" for a chance to socialize.

We hope you can join us and share in the fun and festivities. There will certainly be some great racquetball as well as great friends.

Rich Clay, Tournament Director

THE STRINGIN' MACHINE

Here it is almost tournament time again. This also means "tune up" time for your racquet. Racquets have been left in closets, auto trunks, and other exotic places while the golf clubs were being used.

HOW OFTEN SHOULD I RESTRING MY RACQUET?

This is the question I'm asked more than any other question. Here are five tips to help your answer this question:

1. Loss of POP -- Resiliency of the strings is lost with heavy use. Your string bed should feel crisp and give a crisp sound on impact.
2. FRAYING -- This is the easiest to spot. The string bed looks frayed and fuzzy at the spots where the mains and crosses meet. In short, the strings look like they need a hair cut. This means that your strings are on their way to popping.
3. Loss of CONTROL -- As the strings lose tension, they tend to trampoline the ball and you lose control.
4. NOTCHING - Another visible sign of needing your racquet restrung is when the intersection of the mains and the crosses have a distinct notch. The cause of this is the movement of the mains and the crosses against each other.
5. FREQUENCY -- The big question again. HOW OFTEN TO RESTRING? The rule of thumb is, if you play three times a week, you should restring at least three times a year. Check those grommets and replace them when they are cracked, worn out, or the bumper guard is broken. This can save you premature string breakage.

CHOOSING A STRINGER:

Look for a stringer who is knowledgeable in Racquetball. Some large sporting goods stores have a stringer who is learning his profession on your racquets. His stringing machine should be of the professional quality type. Small machines tend not to support the frames and cause damage. Records should be kept to make sure you get consistency in your string jobs. You want to have all your racquets play the same. Remember, damage to your frame by a stringer voids your warranty, and this includes stringing poundages which are not recommended.

STRING:

Strings are available in numerous gauges. The larger the number, the thinner the string. For example, 19-gauge is micro thin, and 15-gauge is thicker and durable. Putting an inexpensive thick string in today's light, stiffer and technically advanced racquets doesn't make sense. Strings are being made that can absorb shock, give more power, and help your control game. Thinner gauge string can give you more power and control but you will sacrifice durability. Have your stringer match your game with the right string.

CONCLUSION:

That \$200.00 frame is only as good as the string in it. To maximize your game, try to have it strung with the best string you can. Finally, HEAT and COLD are deadly for the string and frame. Don't leave it in your auto all day and then play with it.

SHOOT TO KILL AND SEE YOU AT THE STRINGIN' MACHINE...

Gene, Gene, the Stringin' Machine

WHAT'S THE CALL?

1. If player A attempts to return the serve by hitting it back into the back wall, but instead hits the ball out of the court:
 - a) Player B wins the rally.
 - B) The rally should be replayed as a result of the hinder.
2. The server hits the second serve which is good, but just as it hits the back wall and before the receiver can hit it, the ball breaks. What is the call?
 - A) Second Serve
 - B) First Serve
 - C) Sideout
3. If player A serves the ball while player B is holding her racquet over her head, then:
 - A) Player A should get to reserve the ball but make sure she checks the receiver before serving.
 - B) Player A should get the point.
 - C) Player B should warn Player A that her racquet is up and wait.

ANSWERS BELOW

INDIVIDUAL INSIGHTS

- Congratulations to Tom Utterback and good luck to Barb Aul who will be tying the knot on September 15th!
- Goodbye and good luck to Judy Sands and Bob Van Zeyl who have relocated to the Cleveland Area.
- Also relocating this fall are Marla Cusano and Kerry Spix who are moving to Los Vegas in search of improved mixed doubles competition! They have already announced that they plan to compete in Phoenix at the National Doubles -- so plan to see them there.
- He's back!! Eric Reiman has returned from Florida where he had temporarily relocated this past spring. We look forward to seeing him at fall tournaments!

Answers:

- 1 - A: Any ball that leaves the court without touching the front wall first results in loss of rally for the person who hit it. Rule 4.14 (f) (2).
- 2 - A: A broken ball is a deadball serve and does not cancel a previous fault serve. Therefore, it is still a second serve. Rule 4.9 (c).
- 3 - A: The server should always check the receiver before serving. The server may raise their racquet as long as the server has not started their service motion, or hasn't already checked the receiver. In club play, the server would probably serve again, with no penalty, but should be advised of the rule. Rule 4.5 (b).

ISRA TRAVEL LEAGUE

The ISRA Travel League will be starting the week of October 2, and run through the end of March. The Travel League consists of teams from private clubs, YMCAs and Park Districts from the Chicagoland area. The league entry fee is \$125.00 per team. (Please note: Clubs that have more than three teams will pay \$100.00 for the fourth team and any additional entries.) All Travel team players are required to be members of the Illinois State Racquetball Association. Membership is \$20.00 per year and must be paid at the time the league entry fee is due.

Divisions of play are as follows:

Men's Open/A	Tuesday at 8 p.m. or later
Men's B	Wednesday at 8 p.m. or later
Men's C	Thursday at 8 p.m. or later
Men's D	Monday at 8 p.m. or later
Women's Open/A	Monday at 8 p.m. or later
Women's Open/A	Wednesday at 10 a.m.
Women's B	Tuesday at 1 p.m.
Women's B & Below	Thursday at 8 p.m. or later
Women's C	Thursday at 1 p.m.
Mixed Open/A	Wednesday at 8 p.m. or later



Clubs that played in the league last year will receive an application package in August. There will be an organizational meeting on September 6 at 7:00 p.m. It will be held at the Glass Court, 830 E. Roosevelt Rd., Lombard. For more information or a League application package, please call Lori Kaiser at 708-837-9172. ALL LEAGUE APPLICATIONS AND FEES ARE DUE NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 18, 1995.

SPEED KILLS.



There are two ways to play racquetball. Fast and way too fast.
We recommend you play the latter way. Or die trying.

PENN NAMED OFFICIAL BALL OF THE ISRA!

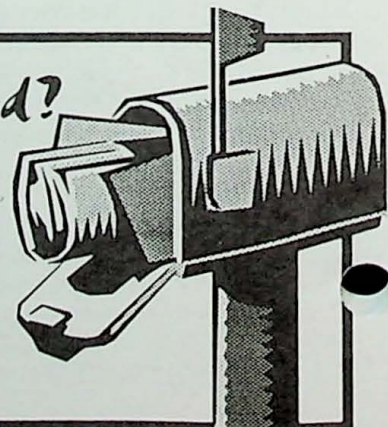
The ISRA Board of Directors voted unanimously at their August meeting to name PENN the official ball of the Illinois State Racquetball Association. The Penn Ultra Blue ball will be used at the ISRA State Singles, Doubles and Junior Championships during the 1995-1996 season. Sanctioned tournaments may continue to use any AARA approved racquetball -- but the ball must be specified on the entry blank. Bill Roberts, the ISRA Marketing Director, commented: "We're glad to be officially associated with Penn this season. We had been working through the national AARA in the past and feel that we have developed a close working relationship with all of the fine people at Penn."

For more information on Penn Racquet Sports, contact Charlie Bachman at (708) 776-7366.

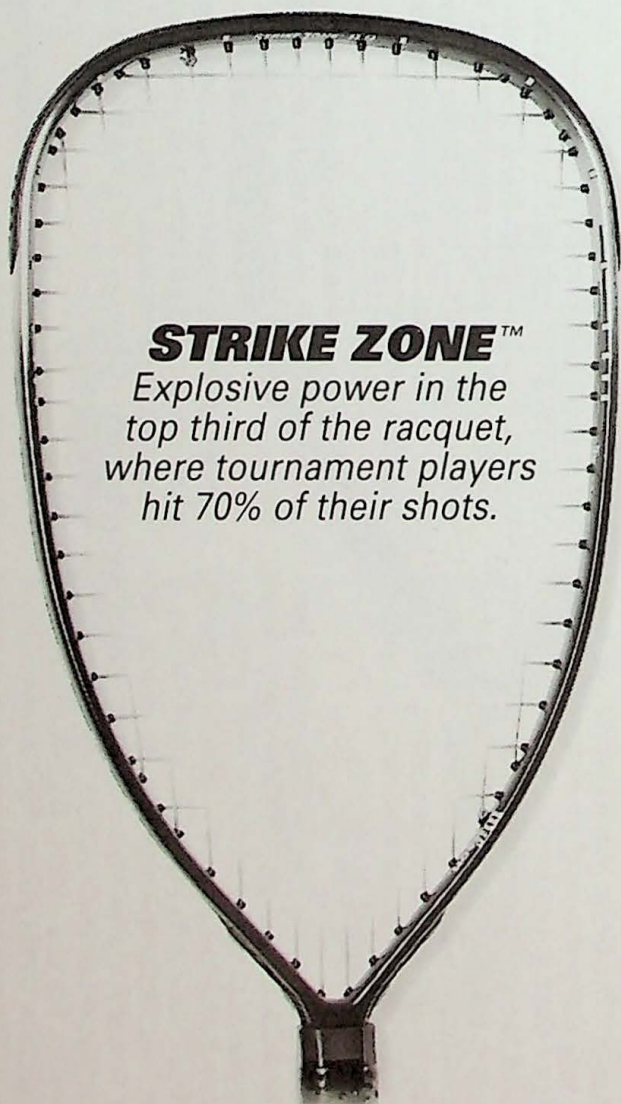
Have You Moved?

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Scott Burmeister?



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PLOYS

by Andrea Schwartz

True Story* -- Ten-ten in a tie-breaker in one of the men's finals matches at the State Doubles tournament. A player steps into his opponent's offensive set-up. No hinder is called. The rally is re-played. Side out. The player's ace serve wins the match. Afterward, a woman from the gallery tells the player it looked, well, like he stepped into his opponent's shot intentionally. "It's all part of the game," he says.

All part of the game, maybe, but a part with which few of us would agree. What our spectator saw was a rare form of game psychology. The player, quick to pick up on incompetencies, started leveling comments at the referee. "No wonder you dress yourself funny, you can't even see. You wouldn't recognize the flat face of a racquet if it tried to kiss you."

When the player's opponent needed the point hinder he didn't get it. The match the spectator believed she witnessed was different from the one the player ended up winning. The match he won was called "Intimidating the Referee."

A few summers ago I attended the Olympic Training Center Camp in Colorado Springs when Caryn McKinney was an instructor. Earlier in the year Caryn had achieved the #1 ranking on the women's pro tour. Caryn shared her success secrets graciously, drawing this group of mostly adults close to the edge of their chairs. But who would have thought her story would set off more controversy than a double bounce call in an men's Open match?

The pro had sought help from then former national coach Stu Hastings. The two watched videos and made an adjustment to her court positioning. but it was what came next that divided the group over "The Great Moral Debate" on court honesty. Hasting suggested the next time she got on the court she bring more than a racquet and her wicked shot selection. She needed to use aggressive psychological tactics. She'd balked, arguing she'd succeeded thus far on a solid work ethic; no deceptions, please. But a funny thing happened no her way to the number on seeding. Without revealing her tactics, McKinney admitted having bought into Stu's "win through intimidation" philosophy.

"Yes and no," says seven-time national champion Lynn Adams, when asked if she shared Hasting's ideology. "When you start out your goal is to win. As I matured as a player I wanted to win more in the 'pure sense.' I know it probably sounds bad when you hear a pro talking like this. There were a couple of times I influenced a match with words and gestures, but felt uncomfortable with it and backed off. Adams, seemed to defend titles successfully, no matter what philosophy she picked. For the record, one of McKinney's ruses was casting spells with fairy dust. "She'd tell me I was shooting perfectly, just to distract me," says Adams. Heather

McKay, the Down Under squash legend-turned national champion, used to work the referee. "She would have these impossible shots, and say I got in the way."

Can a true professional lose over a few bad calls? "Oh yes, I have," says Adams, though not for reasons you might think. She lost because she let a few non-calls affect her.

Psych-out tactics are not all that popular among women playing professionally. Only the top players used them effectively. "You have to reach a pretty high level before you can even think about these things," says Adams.

Of course, this doesn't mean lower mortals can't be bothered in tournaments by trash talkers or players who don't move, we think, intentionally. There's the middle-aged woman who plays up north in travel league. She curses herself and screams at the referee. And the downtown lawyer who covers his skips with a fist in the

air and a big Marv Albert YESS!!! We know who you are; the locker room is abuzz as soon as you leave. But it's your cheap behavior that seems to mold opinion over whether this psychology stuff is legit in the first place.

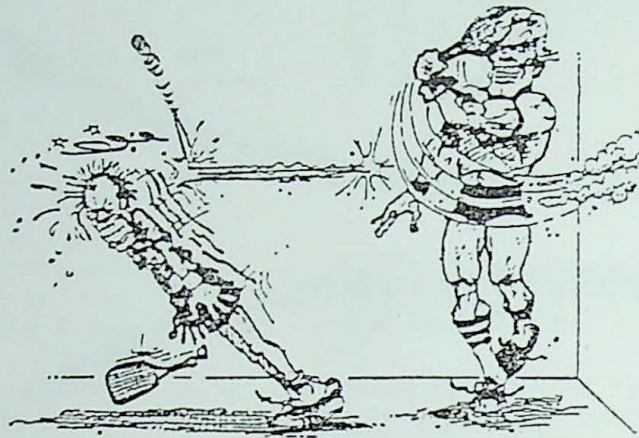
A master of game psychology in a pure sense applies the squeeze lightly. Like fairy dust, he or she sprays comments and actions carefully and evenly, dismantling the building blocks of your psyche like so many weaknesses in your game. You have to be savvy to even know you're a victim.

One of the compelling nuances of racquetball is that two or four players occupy the same space. The increased distraction creates opportunities for learning to deal with emotion in the first place. But, like team sports, this open possibilities for pushing bodily limits. In team sports this happens all the time and can be accepted practice. In the NFL, an offensive player's use of his hands to hold without getting caught is considered part of the art of blocking. In the NBA, zone defenses are illegal. An NBA player survey posing the question, "Which team has the best 'zone' defense," drew the response: "They all do."

Name calling, ref bashing, blocking the way like a five-car accident on the freeway: When do all these efforts to bug your opponent become cheating?

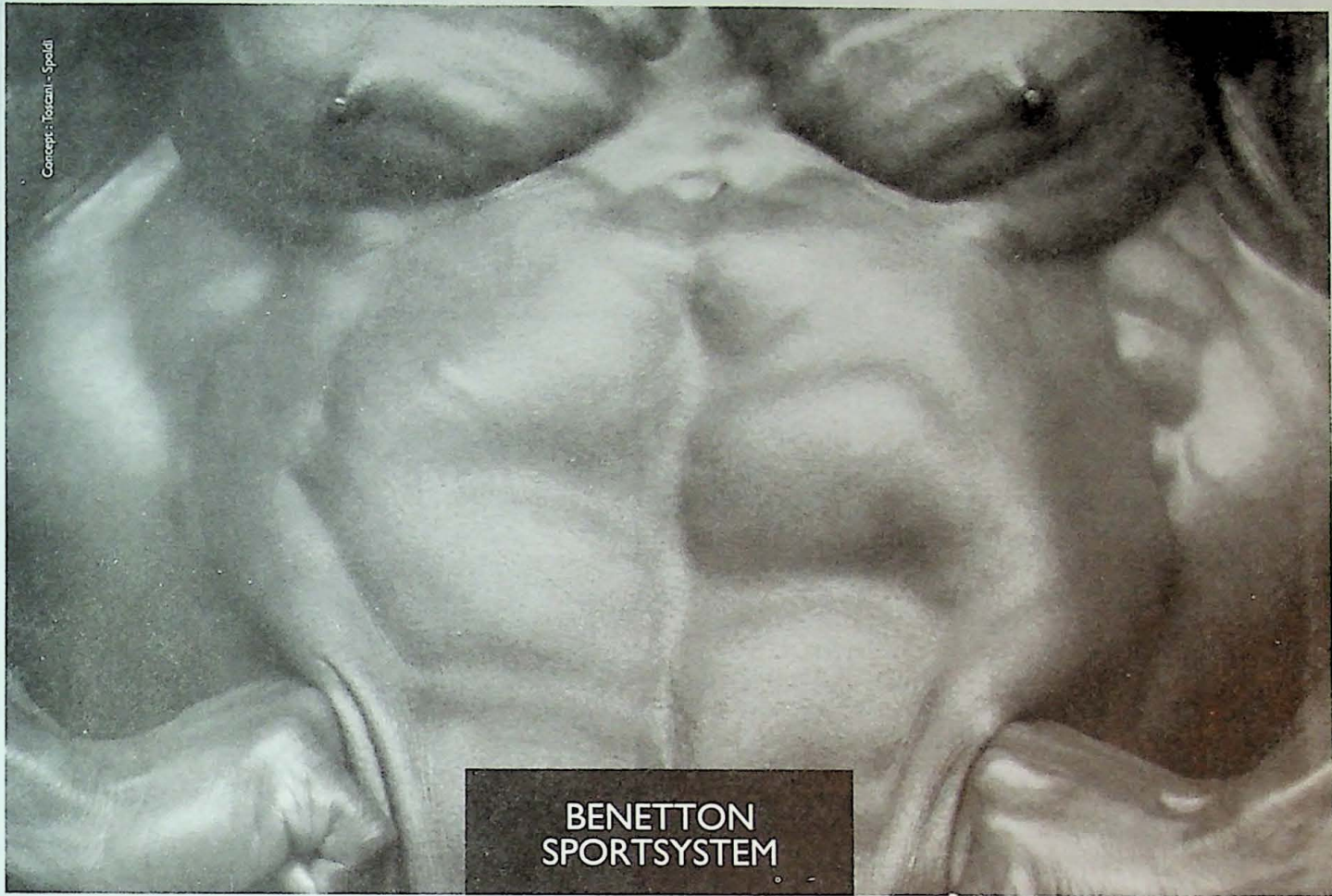
Ten-ten in the tie-breaker. Your opponent steps into your plum set-up. "I'd go home and plot ways to crush him the very next time we met," says Adams. "I'd do it without emotion, of course. That's the trick; render it useless so it doesn't work."

* Only a few of the facts have been changed to protect the unprosecuted guilty.



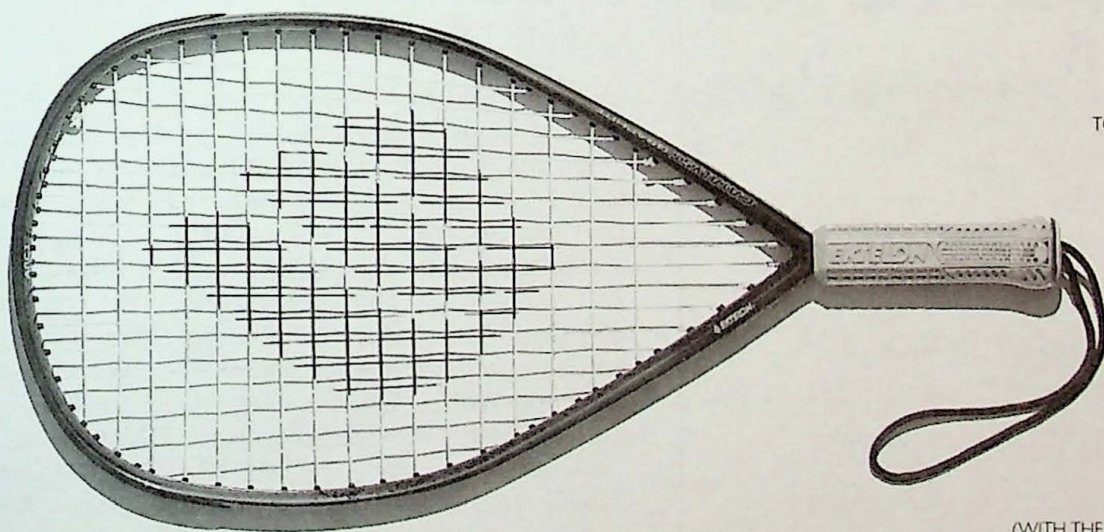
The Kill Shot!

Concept: Torzani - Spaldini



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RACQUETBALL IN THE 2000 OLYMPIC GAMES???

Maybe not exactly, but it's a definite possibility based on the recent goodwill tour by an American racquetball delegation in August, 1995. Four men and four women athletes, including Cheryl Gudinas, will be on a three-week whirlwind tour of Japan, Guam, Korea and Australia, performing exhibitions and giving clinics to assist the racquetball federations in each of their host countries.

The culmination of the trip will be the USA athletes competing in the Australia Open, with an audience to include the Australian Organizing Committee for the 2000 Summer

Olympic Games, also to be held in Sydney. Perhaps in an upcoming issue, we'll hear all about the Australian experience from a first-hand perspective! Keep your fingers crossed (for racquetball's sake). More news later!



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ISRA BOARD CHANGES

We welcome John Thorson to the Governing Board of Directors, and Pamela Grace and T.J. Ferro to the Auxiliary Board.

If you are interested in being a part of the excitement that IS Illinois Racquetball, please contact Geoff Peters (312) 935-9685 or Laurel Davis (708) 325-6410.

BE AN ISRA PREFERRED VENDOR!

- Access to Sanctioned Tournaments
- ISRA Recommendation
- Support Racquetball

For further information, contact Bill Roberts at (708) 299-6750.

TOURNAMENT RESULTS

2nd ANNUAL SUMMERFEST OPEN
Glass Court Swim & Fitness

MEN'S OPEN (9): 1-Eugene Coyle, 2-Greg Hasty II, Semis-Steve MacInnis/Greg Hasty. MEN'S A (17): 1-Greg Hasty II, 2-Bob Dunlap, Semis-Wayne Buturusis/Mark Mattos. MEN'S B (17): 1-Derek Huff, 2-John Matarrese, Semis-Dan Peterson/Kurt Manke. MEN'S C (17): 1-Larry Cotton, 2-Dan Kizior, Semis-Paul Kolmos/Eric Reimen. MEN'S D (9): 1-Ron Villalobos, 2-Corey Martin, Semis-Bob Morrison/Pat Henning. MEN'S 40+ (7): 1-Steve MacInnis, 2-Greg Hasty II, Semis-Eugene Bartkiewicz/Steve Donarski. WOMEN'S OPEN (5): 1-Liz Molitor, 2-Brenda White, 3-Rhonda Ferconcio. WOMEN'S A (4): 1-Carrie Jaskier, 2-Andrea Schwartz. WOMEN'S B/C (5): 1-Mary Crawford, Pam Grace. WOMEN'S D (4): 1-Elaine Spear, 2-Pam Santella; MEN'S OPEN/A DOUBLES (10): 1-A. Spaeth/W. Buturusis, 2-S. Moskwa/B. Dunlap, Semis-Hawkins/Hawkins, D. Junis/W. Cole. MEN'S B/C DOUBLES (11): 1-R. Orr/S. Hannon, 2-T. Gruenwald/D. Kizior, Semis-D. Huff/K. Mankle, Martinez/Martinez. WOMEN'S DOUBLES (5): 1-Williams/Calvi, 2-Pope/Jaskier, 3-Handel/Velizaris. MIXED OPEN/A DOUBLES (10): 1-R. Ferconio/D. Halverson, 2-M. Girup/D. Young, Semis-M. Cusano/K. Spix, J. Smith/D. Carter. MIXED B DOUBLES (4): 1-Shanahan/Fleck, 2-Pope/Pope.

FINAL I.R.T RANKINGS

1994 - 1995

1- Cliff Swain, Massachusetts	2929
2- Andy Roberts, Tennessee	2577
3- Tim Doyle, New York	1927
4- Mike Guidry, Texas	1897
5- Drew Kachtik, Texas	1760
6- Mike Ray, South Carolina	1729
7- Aaron Katz, Texas	1532
8- Sudsy Monchik, New York	1277
9- John Ellis, California	1106
10- Woody Clouse, California	1070
11- Louis Vogel, New Mexico	750
12- Brian Rankin, Missouri	713
13- Adam Karp, California	623
14- Dan Fowler, Maryland	571
15- Eric Muller, Kansas	530
16- Kelly Gelhaus, California	522
17- Tony Jelso, California	446
18- Todd O'Neil, Texas	441
19- Mike Engel, Maryland	411
20- Mike Ceresia, Canada	329

The International Racquetball Tour voted to remove Ruben Gonzalez from the rankings following his season-ending injury (Gonzalez was ranked #8 at that time).

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