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Winter 1994

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TAKE CONTROL

KILLSHOT

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Cover: Tim Doyle photographed by Charlie Palek

He came up through the juniors as one of the most impressive youngsters around. He captured two amateur national singles titles, and six national doubles titles. Now number five on the pro tour, he is feared and respected by every touring pro. He's very fast and very determined. He rips shots at the speed of light. He's Tim Doyle. **Page 26 Doyle?! by Marvin Quertermous.**



The TransCoastal International Racquetball Tour saw tremendous action early in the season as the pros played five tournaments in three countries in less than three months. Here is some of the best of the action captured in blazing color and clever commentary. **Page 17 Around the World in 80 Days (more or less).**

Each year, industry manufacturers unveil a tempting array of high-tech essentials and just darn cool stuff. This year is no exception. Check out all the goodies available this season. **Page 42 The Third Annual KILLSHOT Buying Guide**



SPEED KILLS.



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

SHORT SERVES

They want Lynn

Lynn Adams, the best known name in women's racquetball, has joined the training staff of America's Most Wanted Racquetball. Adams was a six-time National Champion and is the author of *Racquetball Today*, an instructional manual. She lives in suburban Chicago with her husband Rich Clay and their new daughter Kristen.

"Them special effects is fantastic!"

So here we are staring catatonic into the magic picture talking box and what should happen? David Letterman, that celeb of celebs, that icon of late nite icons, that hip purveyor of top ten lists and jousting of show biz megastars splats racquetball right into the mainstream.



Seems as though ol' Dave graced the cover of *Racquetball Illustrated* (no longer in publication) a few years back and managed to work it into a spoof of magazines.

That explains the photo of smilin' Dave. So why run two? How could we pass up a chance to run a shot of Ellen Barkin? "Come with me, my love, to the sea..."

Alan Singer/CBS



Hall of Pain

If there were any question about the velocity of Tim Sweeney's returns, the issue has been settled. SMSU's Bruce Erikson displays a reminder of his match with Sweeney at an SMSU tournament this past November. Wonder if they were playing with a baseball?

Tim Armstrong

Norm Blum's Passing Shots

Refreshing

With a bevy of talk shows on the national scene, the topic "Divorced Couples Who Are Still Friends" will probably be an upcoming segment. Talk show producers should have been at the National Doubles Championship earlier this year.

Lynn Adams-Clay, racquetball's greatest player of all time, was playing mixed doubles in two divisions. She competed in the open division with former husband Jim Carson and with current husband Rick Clay in the age group competition. Carson even handled baby sitting duties while Lynn played with her husband. "I've been in the divorce business for almost 20 years and I can't recall a story like that," says one veteran lawyer. "That type of relationship after a divorce is maturity at its best."

Different Vane

Now back to the real world. At a recent tournament, all players on ten courts wasted a timeout at the same time. A player was accepting an energy drink from his

girl friend and receiving a little neck massage when his wife walked into the club. It was a live soap opera and the tournament became 15 minutes behind schedule as players listened to the saga.

National Publicity

Racquetball received a big dose of national publicity when Jeff Conine and his new bride, the former Cindy Doyle, were featured in *Sports Illustrated*. Conine, a Florida Marlins standout, was an up and coming racquetballer and probably could be in the top five if he competed today. The weekly sports magazine ran a photo which took almost three hours to shoot. Conine, who had Marty Hogan posters on his wall when growing up, told *SI* that he might play in a couple of pro tournaments.

Potpourri

No new update on the Swain- Hogan Challenge Match...Tournaments in Florida are averaging about 100 players per event...Consensus is that players prefer having paid referees rather than forcing winners or losers to ref the next match... I still think clubs should copy tennis and have more no-frill one day tournaments. With more players becoming parents it's

... and returns

"How can it be a hinder? He was trying to hit a ceiling ball and hit me in the butt."

-- Andy Roberts

"Just look at the size of your butt."

-- Tim Doyle



next to impossible to get away the entire weekend...When a player walks on the court with a Head Master and a pair of Foot Joy shoes, it's hard to believe him when he tells you how good he's been playing

What it Takes to be #1

By Cliff Swain

Unfortunately for some and fortunately for others there is no set formula to follow to becoming the best. It is not an exact science and there are some obvious things and some not so obvious things that are required to reach the ultimate goal of being number one.

There is a list of common words that are generally used when winning a game, succeeding in business or becoming Number 1 is being discussed. Words that come up are discipline, consistency, determination and sacrifice, all of which are essential in achieving the ultimate goal. There are some things, in my opinion, that truly separate the best from the rest. They are hustle, relentlessness, fearlessness, and playing with heart. One of my favorites is scrappy, the art of winning a point or a match simply by diving, sprinting or crawling, doing whatever it takes to win without regard for your body or pain.

Mental toughness, probably the most important aspect of all is also, above all else, the most difficult to master. Entire books have been written on the subject. Individuals or teams who finally learn this skill when combined with physical talent and love of competition will consistently put themselves within striking distance of number 1 and often achieve it.

The only thing tougher than becoming number 1 is staying there. The more you win and prove to be the best, the more everyone wants to knock you off. Mike Tyson said "When people come to fight the heavyweight champ of the world they automatically become better fighters." I have found this to also be true in racquetball. The greatest see this as yet another challenge to rise to the occasion.

Vince Lombardi said, "Winning is not a sometime thing; it is an all the time thing. You don't win once in a while; you don't do things right once in a while; you do them right all the time. Winning is a habit. Unfortunately, so is losing." This is something I will never forget!



No Way -- Ray Can't Play

By Mike Ray



I have spent the last seventeen years playing, promoting, and teaching racquetball. I have worked hard, spending hours daily, every day to stay in shape to compete. I have sacrificed parties, proms, graduations, weddings, reunions, vacations, and a lot of general family time. I have traveled up to 20 hours by car (one way), 10 hours by plane, and spent thousands of dollars in gas, tickets, hotels, mechanics, and entry fees to get to the next tournament. I have endured jammed fingers, sprained wrists, ankles, neck, and back. I have had hip pointers, strained and pulled muscles, torn knee cartilage, slipped disks, and the "usual" 170 m.p.h. blast to the calf.

I would do it all again (except for that one party and knee thing) because I love racquetball and feel blessed that I can make a living at it. But I did not play pro racquetball in its heyday when other professionals took advantage of their situations and left someone else to clean up. Creating a positive image for racquetball and being an ambassador of the sport has always been my concern.

What's your point, Mike? Well, as far back as 1984 I have run into: "Mike, we don't want you to play because you will win; Mike, no one will enter our tournament if you enter." All of these tournaments awarded substantial prize money.

I have tried to enter charity events with the intent of donating some of anything I might win to the charity. Often I bring along promotional items or new products to auction off for the event (since I have the capability as a top ranked player with very supportive sponsors).

I have lost many more tournaments than I have won. Racquetball competition is always fierce. That is one of attractions for me. Now, more than ever, it is foolish to think that any one person will always win! To be refused entry to a tournament is very discouraging. Many professional players who have faced this same bias do not even play anymore.

Are the "amateurs" that don't want me in these events not accepting the money? Until racquetball is treated like any other sport in the world, and supposed "amateurs" do not play for money, I'll soon answer yet another phone call with, "Mike, we would love to have you play, but..."

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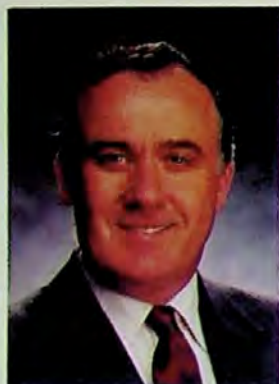
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Don't Rule It Out Altogether

Why is it that the more you try to simplify things the more confusing they become?

A magazine that is produced five times a year is a concept that really puts people in a quandary. Well, it's not a quarterly because that would only be four issues and it isn't a bimonthly because that would be six issues. To make a confusing situation even more confusing some issues have two months on the cover and one issue has a season.

Subscribers are confused because they aren't really sure when they are supposed to be getting magazines and newsstand buyers are confused because they really aren't sure when to go to the

bookstore and wait patiently by the counter for the clerk to shelve the magazine.

So, beginning with this issue there will no longer be month designations on the cover or the pages. There will continue to be five issues per year -- four during the heavier racquetball playing season and one in the summer. The difference will be the cover designation. This is the Winter issue, available in December and good until February. The Spring issue will be available in February and continue until April. The Summer issue will be available in April and continue until June. The Special Instructional Issue will be available in

July and good until September. The Fall issue will be available in October and good till the holidays.

Simple, huh? Darned right. Will that effect your subscription? Absolutely not. Will that change the cover price? Nope. Will I be able to play the violin after the operation? Did Lee Harvey Oswald actually pull the trigger? Why do they have artificial turf on baseball fields?

Mind boggling isn't it?

Anyway, after this slight adjustment, we really don't plan to change anything else in the near future. But don't rule it out altogether.

-- S.Q.



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Living with those aching muscles

Crampin'

Your Style

By Richard Honaker, M.D., P.A.

Muscle cramps are common problems in athletes, especially those who either participate very vigorously in sports or those who do not stay in good shape between sports activities. Muscle cramps often occur in the calf and can prevent further sports activities until improved.

The calf muscle is primarily formed from the gastrocnemius muscle. A smaller soleus muscle is present in the calf also. These muscles act during contraction to pull the foot downward and to pull the lower leg backward. The blood supply to the muscles comes from the arteries which furnish nutrients and oxygen. The veins drain blood from the calf, carrying products of metabolism back to the central part of the body for excretion. Lactic acid is an important by-product of muscle contraction and exertion. This particular chemical may build up during overuse of muscles and may cause pain and muscle cramping. These cramps occur when the muscles go into powerful, sustained contractions.

A normal muscle contraction is influenced by the concentration of various chemicals such as potassium, calcium, and lactic acid, both inside and outside the muscle cells. Poor blood flow may result in a buildup of these chemicals or alterations in their concentration, thereby resulting in muscle cramps. Fluid loss, dehydration, inadequate conditioning, over exertion, fatigue, and poor stretching may also predispose to muscle cramps. There is usually no significant danger or permanent

“Muscle cramps are common problems in athletes, especially those who either participate very vigorously in sports or those who do not stay in good shape between sports activities.”

damage from this cramping. It does, however, signify certain imbalances which need to be corrected and prevented.

Treatment should begin with adequate stretching prior to exercise. You may stretch your calf muscles by standing with your heels against the wall and then touching your toes. Heel and toe walking also will help to limber up the posterior calf muscles as will pulling the toes upward to stretch the calf muscles. Adequate fluid intake is most important. This keeps blood flow and blood volume at the necessary level to feed the muscles and wash away the by-product chemicals of metabolism. This can effectively prevent cramping. Water is the best solution to drink, although Gatorade® is very good because of its scientifically determined balance of chemicals and electrolytes. Drinking small amounts of fluid frequently is better than

large amounts infrequently. An adequate potassium intake may also help. Potassium is found primarily in cantaloupes, grapefruits, tomatoes, and bananas. Orange juice also has a generous supply. The important portion of potassium is the total body amount of potassium which is influenced by our daily intake. It is less affected by intake immediately before or during exercise. This is why eating a banana during exercise and activity will not be of much benefit. Also, salt tablets which have traditionally been given during workouts have no scientific basis for benefit. They may, in fact, be harmful as they draw water into the intestines and stomach, thereby increasing your dehydration slightly. Once a cramp has occurred, you must rest and gently stretch the involved muscle. The application of ice is most often beneficial; however, some people do better with heat. Gentle massage may also be beneficial.

Individuals who have recurrent, persistent, and debilitating muscle cramps must be evaluated for the presence of other diseases such as glandular disorders, circulatory problems, diabetes, neuritis, and other diseases of the muscles and nerves. Individuals on medications such as diuretics for hypertension are particularly prone to muscle cramps and these medicines may need to be adjusted.

The primary prevention techniques for this problem are adequate conditioning and adequate fluid intake. “Playing through” a cramp is not advised.

L etters

Unhappy Camper

You need to get your act together and get the magazine priorities straight. I just received the September-October issue which makes it about six weeks late in terms of average magazine delivery time. I wonder what the clubs that advertised tournaments on page 37 think about that?

In going through the magazine, I found 12 (twelve) pages of exceptionally boring write-ups about tournaments, 9 (nine) pages of overblown statistics about standings and a plethora of ads supposedly balanced by one medical page on rotator cuff, a half a page on nutrition, 2 letters and 5 (five) measly paragraphs on instruction.

I think you are misreading the wants of the average racquetball player. Most of the ones I come in contact with in this area (I play a lot of tournaments) seem far more interested in nutrition, medical help for sports injuries related to racquetball and most importantly, ways to improve their game. I very seldom hear any talk amongst the top open players (much less the A, B, C, & D players) regarding who won what tournament in the pros and who's number one (or two or three, etc.)

Perhaps it would behoove you to encourage your staff to do a little grass roots investigation about how your subscribers and potential subscribers think you're doing. It may hurt to find out how many think it's mostly garbage but maybe it will enhance the future of your magazine. At the rate you're going you may not last another year, if that long.

I suspect that you will avoid printing this letter like the plague since it outlines problems that I'm sure others have complained about. The accompanying flak when others start to respond in like manner would probably put you're [sic] entire company into a deep funk from which you might never recover.

F. Owens
New Orleans, LA

Ah, Fritz, I bet you didn't even like the color of the type on the cover.

Ditto

I was very disappointed in the Sept/Oct 1993 issue. After waiting for what seemed like 6 months the issue had only one short (less than one page) instructional article out of 49 pages.

I am buying the magazine in order to improve my game. Please provide more tips, instruction, and strategy articles.
G. Souden
Arlington Heights, IL

Check out the tips in the special Target Training section of this issue. It is a feature you will be seeing more of in the months to come. Also look for more of Gregg Peck Basics, a new strategy feature by Mike Ray, a reappearance of Steve Strandemo instructionals, and lots more from America's Most Wanted and other top instructors across the country.

Wow. Did we goof or what?

In the September/October issue we mistakenly identified the second place finishers in the Men's and Women's Open Divisions of the U.S. Amateur Nationals.

In Men's Open play, Michael Bronfeld finished second instead of Tim Sweeney who lost in the Semifinals.

In Women's Open play, Malia Bailey took second instead of Robin Levine who lost in the Semifinals.

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Winning Racquetball



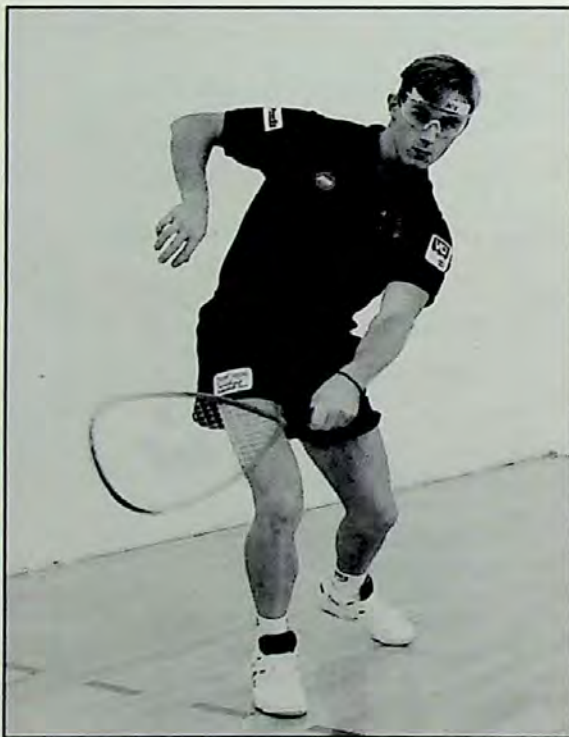
The Art of Attacking Your Opponent

By Woody Clouse

Attacking your opponent is definitely an art form. Too often, the idea of the attack conjures up images of ruthlessly aggressive competitors that will win at any cost and try to kill every ball. Executed correctly, the attack is the blending of strategy with physical ability to out-play your opponent. With some insight, a little planning, and some diligent practice, you may begin painting masterpieces while your opponents are still finger painting.

To minimize on-court outbursts and to eliminate the eternal question, "How could I ever lose to that person?" Let's first dispense with the myth that you must roll-out every ball - at Mach 5. Nobody wins by going for the super-sonic flat roll on every dive, every overhead, every deep court set up. Sorry all you big shooters out there, harder is not always better. One problem is that the harder you swing, the tougher it is to control the ball.

The more you try to roll out, the more you are going to skip. It's that simple. Seventy percent of all racquetball matches are lost by one competitor, not won by the other. That means to win every match all you have to do is hit the front wall one more time than your opponent, and you win. Keep in mind that this can only happen when you play within your capabilities. Sound simple? Good, it



is.

The proper definition of attacking your opponent in racquetball is simply to hit every shot with an offensive mind set that will exploit your opponent's weaknesses and feed your strengths. To see the vast differences of how this is accom-

plished, let's look at the differences in the game styles of some very visible players. The animal references I use for these types of players will fit most of the opponents you encounter at the club or tournament level as well.

The Poisonous Spiders

For instance, Mike Ray and Jack Newman will attack opponents like deadly spiders. They are very patient and very tactical while hitting lob serves and lots of ceiling balls. Players like this wait patiently for the slightest mistake, then WHAM! They strike, leaving their opponents shaking their heads, wondering how they got caught in a web of wits. Believe me when I tell you Jack and Mike are thinking offense and attack when they are hitting pinpoint angles and ceilings. Don't let their casual court demeanor fool you, their poison is deadly.

The Raging Bulls

Now let's look at powerhouse players like Tim Doyle and Egan Inoue. These guys attack like raging bulls. They're going through whatever gets in their way with raw power. They will hit one drive serve after another and blast balls until their arms fall off. So, if you aren't ready

for this onslaught you better book an early flight home. There is no mistake about the mind set of these guys. "Hi, nice to meet you, now I'm going to blow you away. Nothing personal, of course." You know how they will be gunning for you, you just don't have much you can do about it.

The Deadly Snakes

The last game style is one of organized confusion. You might even call it a hybrid of the other styles. These guys are the snakes that carry the venom of a cobra and the power of a python. Although the players themselves know what they're doing, the opponent running in circles isn't always as fortunate. Players such as Andy Roberts and Cliff Swain will lob serve you, then ace you, hit a good ceiling ball, then shoot and roll the next one. Constant pressure is evident from the confused look on their opponent's faces who realize defeat is inevitable. The only question remaining is how can a match end so fast? Since this type of player is the master of both the more traditional styles, they can switch approaches just when you start catching on, often in the middle of a rally.

Tips For Attacking Your Opponent

Know your limits This simply means to recognize your strengths and understand your weaknesses. When this is done you will have the dos and don'ts of your capabilities, allowing you to feed your strengths. Often, you must take risks in leaving behind what is safe to hit better and better shots, but you should always clearly know when to do this, and when to use the shots that are the bread and butter of your game. It is the bread and butter shots that build consistently and should make up much more of your play and practice time.

Be disciplined with your shot selection. The two biggies are (1) hit each shot giving you center court and thus a chance to win the rally and (2) don't shoot balls when you are off balance and out of position.

Go to the ceiling to move your opponent so you can get center court where you are in a good position for the next shot. Contrary to popular belief, ceiling balls are not just for defense, they move your opponent to your advantage in the life size chess match you are playing on the court. Do it with offensive intentions! This will increase your intensity, ball awareness, opponent awareness, and racquet preparation.

Know your opponent's weaknesses and how you are going to take advantage of them. Look for shots kicking off the back wall from raging bulls. Look for ceiling balls that fall short or angles that come off badly from poisonous spiders. Keep the deadly snakes off balance where they are more controllable.

Remember that Rome wasn't built in a day, so results might not be instantaneous. Develop your own style of attack, and practice it tirelessly. Be ready to take control, adjust systematically to keep the advantage, play your strengths and win!

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Tearing Down the Walls



By Larry Heflin, USTPA Pro 1

After looking at the five walls of basic development in a previous issue (**KILL-SHOT** #10, Summer 1993), it seemed the next step should be to put the system to work by applying it to real situations and game styles. The system is simply a way of categorizing stages of development in terms of walls that can impede progress. The idea is that understanding, insight, and practice in each of these five areas are all necessary to progress in racquetball or any competitive sport. The five areas or walls are: Basic Fundamentals, Patience & Consistency, Styles & Strategies, Weapons, and Mental Toughness.

Understanding racquetball in terms of these walls can help in two ways. First, the knowledge of how far you have climbed on each wall will show you what to address to improve. Second, assessing your opponent's position on each of these walls gives tremendous insight into how to play a given match to win.

When we look at various combinations of strengths and weaknesses in terms of these walls, suddenly some strikingly familiar stereotypes appear. The names were a lot of fun to pin on since each one conjures up images of someone I have known and played over the years. There are many possible combinations, especially if you take into consideration even minute differences in progress toward climbing each wall.

If you play these characters, don't ever give them a break. If you are one of these characters, you'd better get busy!

The Dinker

The dinker's fundamental techniques are poor but he has developed the patience of "Job" and the consistency to go with it. He definitely has a style, although I'm not sure it fits into one of my two main categories. This player can be difficult on his opponent's "off days" since his consistency allows him to play the same - day in, day out. However, because he bypassed his fundamental wall, he has been unable to develop any weapons and therefore can only wait for his opponents to beat themselves. What few weapons he feels he has are seldom fundamentally sound and are usually ripped apart by someone who really knows what he's doing. When this player runs up against another player who has climbed all the walls, more than likely, he will lose.

This guy must go back to work on his basics if he is to improve. Time is very important here since the longer the dinker plays like this, the more difficult it may be to acquire a sound grasp of the fundamentals. Only after the dinker climbs high on the basic fundamentals wall can he really start to do much with real weapons, legitimate styles and strategies, or mental toughness.

Weaknesses

- poor fundamentals
- can't improve without major changes
- few practical weapons
- rarely controls play

Strengths

- very patient, very consistent

If this is you . . .

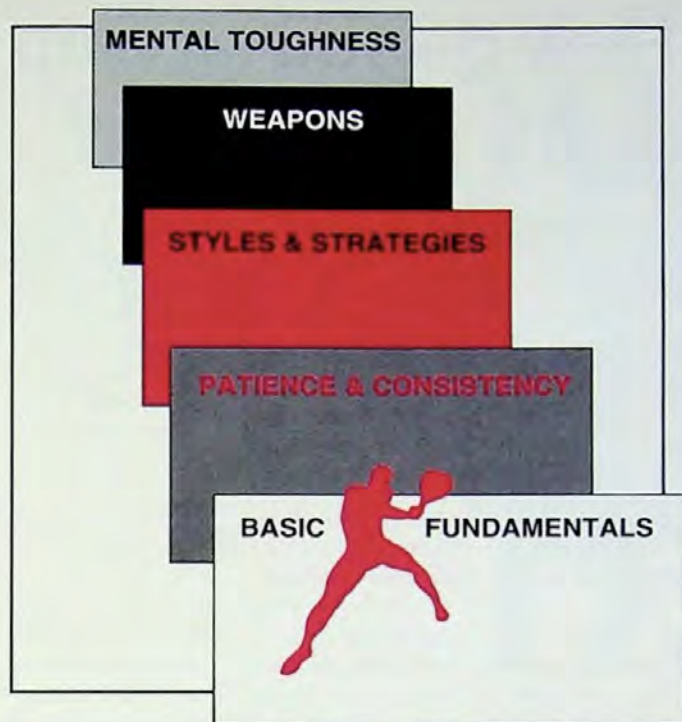
Work on basics! Practice [1] basic strokes (forehand, backhand, drive, ceiling,) and their components (grip, racquet prep, stroke mechanics, follow through, etc.) [2] footwork, [3] movement and positioning, and [4] shot selection (down-the-line, cross court, pinch, ceiling, etc.). Seek out books and videos for the correct techniques. Work with local instructors or club pros. Invest the time and money for good racquetball clinics and camps. As you build the base from which to work, begin real work on styles & strategies, weapons, and mental toughness.

If this is your opponent. . .

He is waiting to get in a rally-ending dink, or for you to "mess up". Don't allow either. Concentrate on your own patience and consistency to avoid beating yourself. Force him to play organized rallies that keep him from confusing things or setting up for some bizarre shot. Consistency with a good command of the basics will often beat him without even using any fancy weapons.

The Killer

The killer has great fundamentals, and many weapons (which he tries to show off as much as possible). Most of the time this



player has completely ignored the consistency wall and has gone up the strategy wall only a short distance. He has spent a lot of time working on all his weapons but can't quite figure out why his shots work in practice but not in matches. This player generally has a hard time recognizing that his problem is consistency. Once he comes to terms with this, improvement will start immediately.

Weaknesses

- often "jumps the gun" missing would-be set-ups
- allows lots of escapes from his intense onslaught

Strengths

- good technique
- when his shots are on, he's awesome
- killer instinct

If this is you...

Play more and more consistent players and match their consistency. Watch a match of similarly skilled players and notice how often winners don't have to be perfect kills. Analyze players of all levels to determine what it takes to win a given match. Chart a match via the Steve Strandemo system (**KILLSHOT** #9, March/April 1993). Try professional instructors, clinics and camps to improve

court position so that you have more set ups to utilize your weapons.

If this is your opponent.

Pressure him to keep him from properly setting up, causing skips and balls left up. Know your basics and have your weapons ready so you can capitalize upon the opportunities the killer's inconsistencies bring.

Mr. Nice Guy

This guy appears to have it all: great looking strokes, consistency, good feel for strategy, and at least one or two weapons. When you casually watch him play, you swear that he is winning his match. However, when he comes off the court he has lost yet another match. As you watch his matches more closely you will discover that while he is winning a lot of rallies, he wins the ones for side-outs, not for points. Inevitably he seems to skip his kill attempts, or double fault short, or play a serve that would have been long. He is the kind of guy who will call his own shot "down" even before his opponent can make the call. Clearly the only missing ingredient in his game is mental toughness or what we used to call "killer instinct". He lacks the concentration to effectively control the rally.

While I would never advocate the abandonment of good sportsmanship, there is something vital to the game in the passion to win. We have seen no better pro matches than the Hogan - Brumfield days when the will to win meant stopping at nothing and treachery and physical harm were never out of the question. Without a thirst for victory, improvement would be meaningless and reading an instructional article would be a waste of time.

Weaknesses

- unable to put all of his talents together for the win

Strengths

- sound fundamentals
- very smooth and patient
- smart choices during rallies
- impressive weapons

If this is you...

It's time to start some confidence building with a good series of goals and challenges. Develop big but reasonable expectations. These are skills that can usually be improved through study. Try some books on mental toughness and sports psyching. Learn when you lose because your opponent played a better match, and when you lose because you missed opportunities. Try working with a coach.

If this is your opponent...

Focus on your own consistency. Be fit and ready to capitalize upon opportunities of which you will find plenty. Never give an even break.

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Nov 93



Tim Doyle, #5, TransCoastal International Racquetball Tour, former Amateur National Champion

I sum up players by their weaknesses. I always look first at how they return serve, since my serve is so important to my game. Next I look for weaknesses in footwork, court positioning, etc. When I think of a certain player, I want to immediately think of all the things about him I can attack. If you are not careful you can pay so much attention to his game style that you let him set the pace. Look first for what you need first, the smartest things to play against him.

I used to keep note cards on my potential opponents. I would watch them play, then later, if I faced them in tournaments, I would go back to the cards to see what to attack. I still do that in my head today.

Lynn Adams, Six Time Women's Professional Racquetball Association National Champion

I watch how the player moves. Does he like to set up for his shots, or does he want to hit shots while on the move. Often quicker players hit well while moving, while slower players like to be stationary for a better shot. If you are up against the player that stays put to set up for shots, try to keep him moving. Especially keep him moving up and back in the court. Use lots of pinches to move him up then passes to move him back. Be careful of ceiling balls since they may end up as good set-ups for this player. If you play someone that likes to hit the ball on the move, you will probably find that he has good anticipation and often starts quickly toward your most likely shot. I like to hit the ball to where this player starts, so that his early movement is away from the ball. If you have a set up with this player on one side of the court, he will often anticipate your hitting to the opposite side. Try hitting it back to where he starts, so that his change in direction prevents him from shooting the ball. Keep this player confused, so that his movements can't be efficient, allowing him his "moving set-up". Use ceiling balls and lobs that make this player stand and wait for the ball.

Question: How do you size-up an opponent's game style?

Jim Winterton, Coach, World Champion U.S. National Racquetball Team

I start by watching a player's serves to see what tempo he likes. Most players are one tempo players. They play up tempo (power) or a slower tempo (control). Only the very best players can play well at both tempos. Sometimes in coaching, you may work with an athlete that is amazing in one style, and know that he needs to work with the other style to beat a given opponent. If you are not careful, you can damage a great player in his own right trying to make him do everything well.

After the tempo a player likes, I size him up by his coverage tendencies. If he plays up, he's a puncher, play him with down-the-lines and wide angle crosses. If he plays deep, he's a counter puncher, play him with pinches and low boards.

Mary Lyons, Racquetball Teaching Pro, Racquetpower, Jacksonville, Florida, P.A.R.I. Instructor

I sum up opponents' game styles in my head as players that are patient vs. players that force shots. Usually power players are the forcers while control players are the patient ones. The patient ones play high percentages, and will wait until they get a good set before shooting the ball. They will go to the ceiling or other defensive shots to maneuver their opponents as much as necessary until they get the set. Forcers will shoot the ball as much as possible, often going for an offensive shot on a low percentage opportunity. They are the short hoppers, aggressive at all times.

I'm basically a patient player. Forcers play right into my trap. I would always rather play the percentages against the aggressive types. I let them set the pace, but get them to hit what I want them to. If I find myself up against another patient player, I become the forcer. I play more aggressively against these players.

Drew Kachtik, # 4, TransCoastal International Racquetball Tour, Former Professional National Champion

When I label a player's game style, I put more emphasis on his weaknesses. When I watch a player that I'm going to play, I notice how hard he hits, but I notice

more about his court position. I'm looking for weaknesses, so I want to know where he has trouble so I can hit balls to that area. Specifically, I pay special attention to common problem areas like shots off the back wall, backhands, etc. I look for how the guy he's playing gets in winners. I also want to know what he does well to stay away from.

Larry Lyles, Coach, Fifteen time World Champion Memphis State University Racquetball Team

Power is a huge factor today. After that I look for foot speed, and how that translates into court coverage. Always being on the attack seems vital in today's game. Power can certainly be countered with placement and coverage, but the days of playing for precision to let your opponent beat himself are all but gone. In fact, all my students know that if they go to the ceiling more than a couple of times in a row, they are likely to get burned. With today's equipment and level of competition, the margin for error on a defensive shot is extremely low. The successful control game today is more like that of Jack Newman. It relies on control, but is deadly aggressive. Newman has the precision and the confidence to use control as a deadly weapon. Roberts, Ray, Swain, and other top pros go about it differently, but all constantly attack. Even if you play a control game, you have to be aggressive on the attack.

Allen Golombek, P.A.R.I. Instructor, U.S.R.S.A. Stringer, Certified Referee

I think of game styles by what mistakes a player makes. I look for weaknesses such as movement, stroke mechanics, court positioning, etc. Often I can pick simple mistakes such as poor concentration on the ball. This lack of concentration can mean problems with movement and court coverage, as well as with swing mechanics. I also watch for footwork, especially with the rear leg. Whatever the weaknesses I see, I want to capitalize on them. Once you find these weaknesses, hit to them in deep court where all of his problems will be magnified.

Around the World in 80 Days (more or less)

New Orleans
Elmwood Summer Cooler
Swain Heats Up Summer Cooler
By Aaron Katz

One of the premiere fitness and sports medicine centers in the U.S., New Orleans' Elmwood Fitness Center has become an industry model for its progressive programs and state of the art innovations. The prevailing thinking is that since the facility offers racquetball, the best players in the world should be an annual part of the racquetball program. In this light, the pros of the IRT become a temporary part of the Elmwood team each year making sure that the racquetball at Elmwood is as state-of-the-art as the rehab., gymnastics, and strength & conditioning programs are. To the pros, it is a perfect showcase for all-out war.

The 32's gave southern spectators an opportunity to see some very promising young talent drop into the draw from the qualifiers. The best effort of the round came from Mike Engle, who put up a good four game battle before falling to a more experienced Todd O'Neil. Tour regular Dave Sable went up in flames in a frustrating battle with Mike Guidry that turned

into a verbal war with referee Jason Krickorian. Sable, a very talented but controversial figure on the IRT earned that rare distinction of drawing a technical that left him with a -1 score at the end of the third and final game.

Guidry, the youngest player on the tour, took out the #5 seed Drew Kachtik in the tournament's first upset. New Orleans, Kachtik's home away from home, always seems particularly important since parents and friends are courtside for the event. Kachtik got off to a 2 games to 0 lead when Guidry, as he had done several times in the past, delivered a series of diving

Cliff Swain and Mike Guidry in the quarters at the Elmwood Fitness Center.



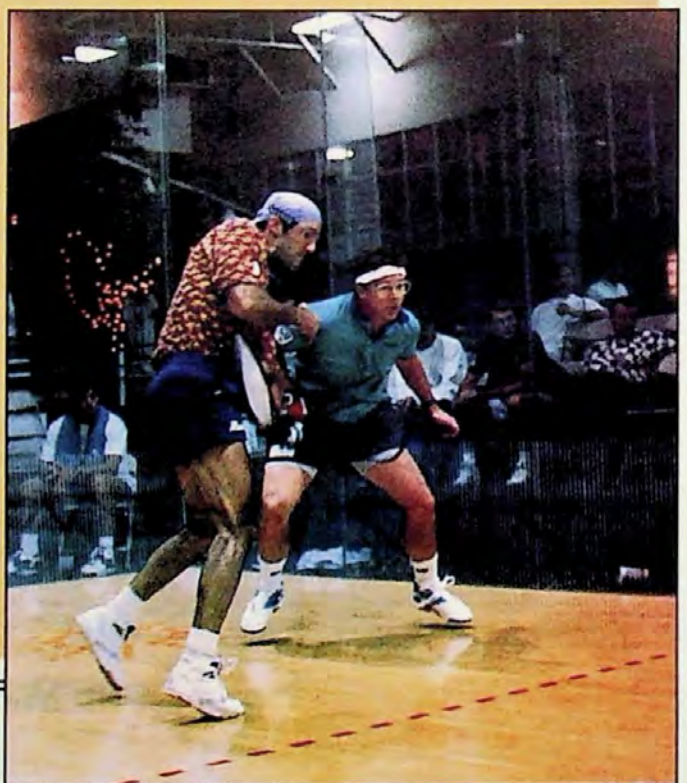
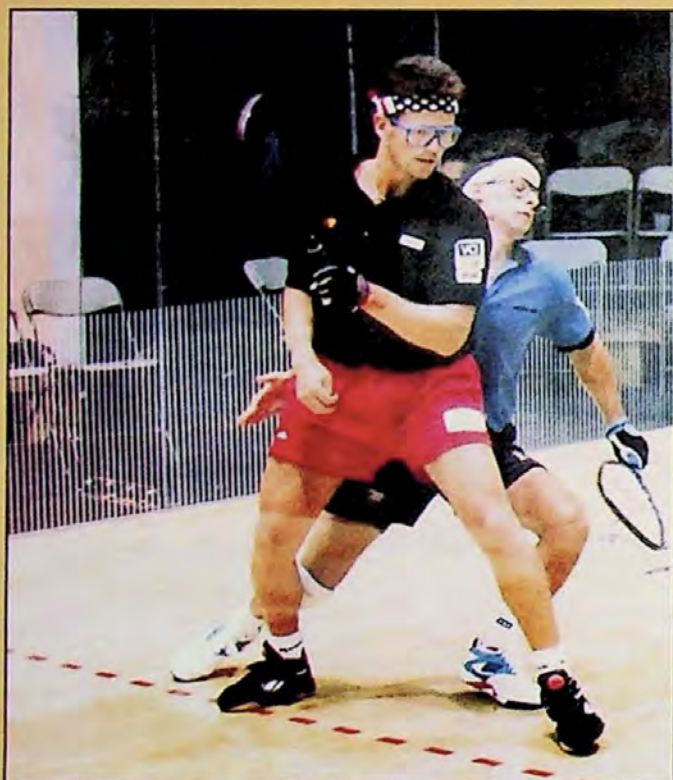
Paul Sancya



Paul Sancya

Right: Two views of the Andy Roberts, Bret Harnett matchup in New Orleans.

Below: Swain body checks Guidry.



New Orleans' Elmwood Fitness Center Division of Ochsner Medical Center

The IRT plays in a very diverse array of court facilities. Each host facility is unique in many respects. When the tour played in New Orleans this year, it became clear that something was particularly unique about the Elmwood Fitness Center.

The goal of director Ken Kachtik and staff is to provide the absolute best possible equipment, personnel, and programs in every single area of the facility. The result is a fitness center that offers every type of equipment and trainer under the sun. The sports medicine - rehab center is an arm of the famous Ochsner Medical Center. The Kidsports and Teen Fitness programs are the brainchild of award winning teacher and strength and fitness coach Jesse Barksdale. The gymnastics team receives instruction from former Soviet Olympic coaches. The aquatics program boasts Olympic medalist Ashley Tappin as one of its participants.

The yearly appearance, then, of the IRT on Elmwood's racquetball courts seems only natural in a club where it is the norm to provide the best of everything. The thinking behind the annual event is that the racquetball program should offer the best, and that means bringing in the IRT. At a time when many clubs have witnessed a drop in racquetball participation, Elmwood keeps its players motivated by offering a regular dose of in-your-face professional racquetball.

SEMIS

Harnett d. Gonzalez

11-5, 11-6, 11-4

Swain d. Ray

11-4, 11-0, 11-9

Cliff Swain

11-2, 11-5, 10-12, 11-5

Bret Harnett

QUARTERS

Harnett d. Roberts

11-9, 8-11, 9-11, 11-2, 11-2

Gonzalez d. Doyle

1-11, 11-9, 6-11, 13-11, 11-9

Ray d. Newman

8-11, 11-7, 4-11, 11-7, 11-8

Swain d. Guidry

11-7, 11-3, 11-3

SIXTEENS

Roberts d. Ellis

11-7, 11-2, 4-11, 9-11, 11-8

Harnett d. Johnson

11-3, 11-2, 7-11, 11-7

Doyle d. O'Neil

11-4, 11-2, 3-11, 8-11, 11-5

Gonzalez d. McKinney

11-8, 11-3, 5-11, 11-5

Ray d. Reiff

9-11, 6-11, 12-10, 11-1, 11-8

Newman d. Katz

11-1, 11-5, 6-11, 11-6

Guidry d. Kachik

8-11, 10-12, 11-2, 11-7, 11-5

Swain d. Clouse

1-11, 11-6, 11-8, 8-11, 11-2

New Orleans

rekills. Playing Guidry is often similar to playing a ball machine, since no matter what anyone hits against him, balls keep coming back. The difference is that with Guidry, they often come back unreturnable. The sixteens proceeded without further incident as the other top seven seeds advanced to the quarters.

The quarters usually offer the best racquetball on the tour as the players have already advanced past the pressure cooker of the early rounds and have zeroed in on their title quests. The first quarter between Tim Doyle and Ruben Gonzalez was evidence of this as these two went toe to toe for 5 games. Leading 8-6 in the breaker, Doyle took an injury time-out with an upset stomach that he would not be able to overcome. (Rumor around the locker room was that he had found too much Cajun cuisine.)

Jack Newman and Mike Ray provided a control player's delight. Ray sought revenge from The TransCoastal Grand Nationals, while Newman tried to maintain a big winning streak. Once again the match

ably still recovering from his marathon win over national amateur champ John Ellis the previous evening. After taking a two games to one lead, Andy was never in the last two games as Harnett advanced decisively to his first semifinal in several tournaments.

Swain quickly dispatched of Guidry in three in the last quarterfinal, frustrating the young Texan with his deceptive left handed serves. This one left their career match count at 6 - 0 Swain.

The semifinals and finals produced only blowouts. Swain dominated Ray with a rare victory in three straight over the former national champ. Harnett never let Gonzalez into their brief match by using his characteristic array of flat rolls.

Harnett and Swain, the two hardest hitting left-handers present arguably one of the best match-ups ever in the pro game. Swain stole the show by giving one of the best displays of power racquetball ever seen. Even after an impressive Harnett comeback from 4 - 10 to win 12 - 10 in the third, Swain regained control to close it out in the fourth.

went down to the wire with Ray putting on his Houdini act and escaping in the tie-breaker after trailing 8-4. Ray had already escaped four match points in the round of 16 against Memphis State's Scott Reiff.

Recognized for years as one of the greats, Bret Harnett, took the court against one of the tour's most consistent players, Andy Roberts. Harnett's periodic absences from touring and his changes of sponsorship over the last several years have made both his appearances and his play somewhat unpredictable. However, when Harnett is on, he is still one of the most explosive players on the tour. His 110% effort on every point in this match seemed to wear out Roberts. Roberts was presum-

San Luis Potosi Club Deportivo Potosino South of the Border By Mark Henry

The IRT's first visit south of the border produced quite a stir for Mexico's racquetball community with the inaugural event in San Luis Potosi. Top IRT pros were greeted with lots of celebration and media attention. Consistently producing one of the top national teams in international amateur play, Mexico is no stranger to great racquetball. However no one could have anticipated the level of excitement and intensity of the pros upon expanding the international boundaries of the tour. In fact it was difficult to tell who was the most pumped, the pros playing their first Mexican tour stop, or the Mexican qualifiers entering their first pro event.

In addition to some very respectable efforts from the Mexican participants, the early rounds saw a few different faces advance into the quarters. Tour rookie Engle found himself in his first IRT quarter. O'Neil also made an appearance in the

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quarters here, though by no means his first. John Ellis' trip to the quarters here seems to be a sign of the times for the up and coming Californian.

Engle, having the misfortune of playing his first quarterfinal against #1 seed Swain quickly learned why Swain is at the top. The latest chapter in the Kachtik - Gonzalez rivalry ended in an unusual three games with Kachtik hitting shot after unbelievable shot. O'Neil managed one of the biggest upsets of the season as he not only eliminated a surprised Ray, but did it in three short games. Ellis continued to look impressive as he dispatched Doyle in similar style.

It seems Ellis had far more difficulty with the lesser-known O'Neil in the semis than he had with either of the top guns he had faced in the quarters. In one of the most exciting matches of the event, the Ellis - O'Neil war went down to the wire at 12 - 10 Ellis in the breaker.

Still enraged over his lightening-fast demise at the hands of Swain at the VCI event in Atlanta last season, Kachtik came into the semis with his eye on revenge. He would have to settle for a good battle and a near miss as Swain pulled away in the breaker for a trip to yet another final.

As is often the case, Swain suffered a first game loss in the final with little notice, then came back to take control of the next three for the win. Take your pick for the headline story: San Luis Potosi had put together a first class event for its first tour stop, Swain continues his reign as undisputed king of the IRT, or Ellis has the goods and should shake up the pro ranks nicely over the course of the coming season. At any rate it was a history-making event!

Stockton

Stockton Pro Am

Swain Wins Oldest Continuing Stop

By Aaron Katz

Stockton's Westlane Racquet Club holds the oldest continuing stop on the professional circuit. This tournament



Cliff Swain and John Ellis battled to the finals in San Luis Potosi, Mexico with Swain coming out on top.

Guidry proved to be too much as he dispatched Gonzalez in four games.

Guidry continued his run as he seems determined to break into the upper echelon of the IRT with a gutsy five game win over Roberts. In a match that featured some tremendous shot making by Roberts and unbelievable retrieving by Guidry, Guidry advanced to his second career semi-final.

Woody Clouse, finding himself in the quarters following a pair of one-sided three game rounds, played some of the best ball of his career. While Clouse

offered the 400+ participants and hundreds of spectators some additional intrigue as it marked the return of Egan Inoue to the tour. In addition, Stockton brought about a disappearing act by Harnett (conspicuous by his absence since he had taken second place earlier in New Orleans), and Dave Johnson (injured in a bike wreck the day before the tournament).

Inoue looked like he was back and better than ever as he jumped off to a 2-0 lead on Ray in the sixteens, but Ray's methodical style brought him back to win the next three. Guidry produced the only upset of the round once again as he defeated Gonzalez. One cannot help but see the similarities between these two as their explosive, quick, parallel-to-the-ground styles are a spectator's joy. However, on this day the younger

Cliff Swain

12-14, 11-8, 11-5, 11-6

John Ellis

SEMIS

Swain d. Kachtik

11-2, 9-11, 11-5, 5-11, 11-7

Ellis d. O'Neil

11-9, 2-11, 5-11, 12-10, 12-10

QUARTERS

Swain d. Engle

11-5, 11-5, 11-2

Kachtik d. Gonzalez

11-8, 11-7, 11-5

O'Neil d. Ray

11-8, 11-1, 11-2

Ellis d. Doyle

11-1, 11-6, 0-11, 11-5

SIXTEENS

Swain d. J. Martinez

11-5, 11-5, 11-2

Engle d. Alvarez

11-4, 11-1, 11-8

Kachtik d. Garcia

11-5, 11-0, 11-0

Gonzalez d. F. Vasilakos

11-6, 11-3, 11-2

Ray d. R. Martinez

11-3, 11-1, 11-1

O'Neil d. Bremer

11-3, 11-2, 11-1

Ellis d. P. Vasilakos

11-2, 11-7, 11-7

Doyle d. Lara

11-5, 10-12, 11-6, 11-6

San Luis Potosi

SEMIS

Swain d. Clouse
12-10, 7-11, 11-5, 5-11, 11-9
Doyle d. Guidry
11-1, 11-9, 10-12, 11-9

Cliff Swain

8-11, 12-10, 11-7, 11-4
Tim Doyle

QUARTERS

Swain d. Kachtik
11-2, 5-11, 11-5, 7-11, 11-3
Clouse d. Ray
11-8, 11-3, 11-6
Doyle d. Newman
4-11, 12-10, 9-11, 12-10, 11-8
Guidry d. Roberts
11-6, 7-11, 11-9, 7-11, 11-4

SIXTEENS

Swain d. Ellis
11-7, 11-6, 10-12, 11-0
Kachtik d. Evans
9-11, 11-8, 11-6, 11-7
Clouse d. Graham
11-2, 11-5, 11-6
Ray d. Inoue
15-17, 4-11, 11-6, 11-6, 11-6
Doyle d. Ceresia
3-11, 11-1, 11-9, 4-11, 12-10
Newman d. O'Neil
11-4, 11-5, 11-5
Guidry d. Gonzalez
8-11, 11-2, 12-10, 11-5
Roberts d. Sweeney
7-11, 11-5, 11-7, 13-11

Stockton

had been building momentum, most everyone in Stockton expected Ray's unbearable consistency and flawless forehand to stop him cold. On a streak that produced some amazing shots including more than his share of flat rolls, Clouse frustrated Ray with a win in three straight.

Doyle's hard work both on and off the court was starting to show as he advanced to the semifinals with a tough five game win over Newman. Doyle has identified some weaknesses and has diligently worked on them over the past year to develop a better all around game. Always gifted with tremendous power, Doyle seems determined to iron out his few weaknesses with the help of some of the best trainers in pro sports.

The last quarterfinal produced some of the most intense racquetball as Swain went at it with Kachtik for five brutal games. Kachtik is one of the few players that can match Swain's intensity on the court. In Stockton he was unable to match Swain's play as Swain increased his undefeated streak over Kachtik as well as the entire state of Texas. (For history buffs Swain began his dominance over the Lone Star State with a victory over Gregg Peck

in the 1985 Ektelon National finals.)

The semifinals featured three of four left-handers for the second consecutive event. Doyle put an end to Guidry's first attempt at a final with a closely contested four game match. Clouse continued to play inspired ball as he also sought the first finals appearance of his career. With an 8-4 lead in the breaker it looked like Clouse was there until some inopportune skips. Clutch serves by Swain just when he needed them advanced him to yet another final.

Swain continued his winning ways as he defeated the scrappy Doyle. These are the two heaviest hit-

ters in the game today and there were plenty of fireworks but Swain had a little too much as he increased his stranglehold on the #1 ranking early in the 1993-94 season.

Montreal

VCI Challenge Series

Forget NAFTA, IRT Goes North

By Aaron Katz

The IRT solidified the "I" in its title as the players headed north of the border to Club 230, located in a suburb of Montreal. Encountering the second language barrier of this early season, the pros persisted through their own lack of communication skills in French and a confusing monetary rate of exchange to play what is quickly becoming a favorite tour stop and one of the six big opportunities at the VCI Challenge Cup.

The trend of the top eight advancing to the quarters was once again prevalent. This is a disturbing trend as the tremendous growth of the tour has not seemed to bring out a commensurate increase in younger talent. Here, there were a few good prospects for future stars from among Canada's best young amateur players.

The quarters featured some great

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Right: Doyle made it to the finals in Stockton but couldn't get past Ray in Chicago. Below: Kachtik got past Gonzalez and went on to win.



rivalries and tremendous intensity. Kachtik, who switched back to the Strobe the day before the tournament had Ektelon contemplating whether to bring it back as he returned to the form of his National Title year in 1991 and defeated Roberts in four hotly contested games. Dan Obremski, mired in a year long slump put up a brief battle against Ray but was met with disappointment as Ray advanced to the semifinals with a workman-like performance.

Doyle raced off to a 2-0 games lead against Gonzalez that had many fans marking this one over. However, Gonzalez has made his career on victories when none gave him a chance. He mounted his comeback with a slice serve to Doyle's forehand. Gonzalez used that serve for three consecutive game victories to send Doyle home confused to say the least.

The last quarter between Swain and Guidry provided some great racquetball for the first two games as the two south-paws split 11-8. However the younger Guidry was unable to sustain the high level of play as Swain quickly disposed of him in games three and four to advance to

the semis.

In the semis, Ray, earned the nickname "cardiac kid", by winning three tightly contested games 13-11, 12-10, and 11-9, as Kachtik uncharacteristically let 10-3 and 10-6, leads slip away in the first two games. Next, while Swain was shooting for his fourth consecutive event victory (if someone can remember the last time a pro won three straight - not to mention three straight in three different countries - write in and let us know), Gonzalez surprised everyone by digging in and gutting out the match in what this author will remember as one of the most remarkable comebacks ever.

The finals provided

Mike Ray

8-11, 12-10, 11-7, 11-4

Ruben Gonzalez

SEMIS

Gonzalez d. Swain

2-11, 7-11, 11-6, 11-6, 11-6

Ray d. Kachtik

12-10, 12-10, 11-9

QUARTERS

Swain d. Guidry

8-11, 11-8, 11-4, 11-2

Gonzalez d. Doyle

8-11, 6-11, 11-1, 11-6, 11-9

Ray d. Obremski

5-11, 11-7, 11-5, 11-8

Kachtik d. Roberts

3-11, 11-9, 11-7, 11-9

SIXTEENS

Swain d. Engle

11-6, 11-7, 11-4

Guidry d. Clouse

11-6, 3-11, 11-5, 11-9

Doyle d. Inoue

11-9, 10-12, 11-7

Gonzalez d. O'Neil

11-2, 11-7, 2-11, 9-11, 11-9

Ray d. Ceresia

11-5, 0-11, 2-11, 11-0, 11-7

Obremski d. Newman

4-11, 11-7, 11-4, 11-6

Kachtik d. Katz

11-6, 11-2, 11-5

Roberts d. Ellis

13-11, 11-4, 11-7

Montreal

few fireworks as Ray dominated his sometimes doubles partner for his first tour victory since March, and an early stake in the coveted VCI Challenge Cup.

Chicago
Woodfield Halloween Classic
Kachtik Haunts the Tour
By Ralph Kusche

It seems that the snow that has fallen on Chicago the past three years for the Woodfield Halloween Classic still surprises players as much each year as the outcome of the tournament. This year's draw in the windy city saw some top qualifying talent from the northern U.S. as well as the current national amateur champ Ellis, former champ Chris Cole, and 30+ champ Jimmy Lowe.

In a particularly impressive comeback, qualifier Jason Thoerner went to a fifth game against the #5 seed Kachtik after losing the first two. The bewildered Kachtik regained composure for the win. Other five-gamers in the opening round included Cole over Roger Harripersad, Johnson over Brian Rankin, and a bitter psychological struggle with last year's Canadian national champ Mike Ceresia over Dan Fowler.

In the all-important sixteens, Katz strategic style effectively countered Doyle's serve-and-shoot game through five great games before Doyle conquered in the fifth. The always-vocal Clouse ignited in the course of the ultra-close confrontation with Guidry in a verbal show of strength that worked the crowd to perfection. Clouse saw two opportunities to serve for the match in game five before Guidry coolly served out the match.

The quarters produced one of this sea-

son's biggest upsets as #8 Guidry beat Swain in five. Featuring two of the fastest players on the tour, the unbelievable became routine by game five with diving gets such as Swain's six foot through the air full lunge for a back wall save that left even seasoned spectators stunned. At 9-8, Guidry went for the backhand overhead front corner kill that Cliff thought skipped. With the call in his favor, Guidry went for broke to grab the next point and garner the biggest win of his young career.

Also in the quarters, Kachtik captured the next battle in his ongoing war with Gonzalez with a surprisingly easy three game win. Against Ray, Doyle blasted a streak of ace serves that was the stuff of which nightmares are made. Roberts dispatched Newman in three games that were uncharacteristically quick, especially in Newman's home club.

Against Guidry, Kachtik served virtually all hard Z's to the backhand that often brought back easy set-ups for put-aways. While Guidry again displayed his incredible speed with several spectacular gets,

Kachtik never let him ride the momentum from his win against Swain. Neither Roberts or Doyle was willing to relinquish center court without a struggle in their blood feud. Doyle took an early lead in game five before Roberts ran seven points to get to 9-3. A brief Doyle comeback attempt that included one service ace and a broken ball was the only interruption for Roberts as he continued blasting for the win.

The final was smart and fast as both Kachtik and Roberts continually changed their service games to counter punch the other. With Roberts up 3-0 in the fifth, Kachtik thought a Roberts' backhand splat had skipped. The call going in Roberts' favor, Kachtik seemed to jump another intensity level. He threw caution to the wind to crank his best backhands of the day. At 4-7, Kachtik made diving gets on the next two points while rolling out the ball on opposite side wall cracks for 6-7. In the next point, Kachtik didn't have to dive but found the crack again on his way to 9-7. Trading only one more side out and one more point, Kachtik closed the match at 11-8.

Drew Kachtik

8-11, 11-8, 4-11, 11-8, 11-8
Andy Roberts

SEMIS

Kachtik d. Guidry

11-4, 11-8, 12-10

Roberts d. Doyle

11-4, 5-11, 11-2, 9-11, 11-6

QUARTERS

Guidry d. Swain

8-11, 11-8, 1-11, 11-6, 11-8

Kachtik d. Gonzalez

11-8, 11-2, 11-3

Doyle d. Ray

11-2, 6-11, 11-0, 7-11, 11-2

Roberts d. Newman

11-9, 11-4, 11-7

SIXTEENS

Swain d. Ellis

11-0, 11-4, 11-3

Guidry d. Clouse

11-8, 11-3, 7-11, 3-11, 13-11

Kachtik d. Humphrey

11-4, 11-4, 11-7

Gonzalez d. Cole

11-6, 11-8, 11-8

Ray d. Ceresia

11-6, 11-1, 11-4

Doyle d. Katz

8-11, 11-4, 11-5, 4-11, 11-4

Newman d. Johnson

11-9, 11-9, 11-5

Roberts d. Sweeney

11-6, 11-5, 11-7

Chicago

Deliverin' the Doughnuts



Swain 11, Ray 0 New Orleans semis

Swain 11, Ellis 0 Stockton 16's

Ceresia 11, Ray 0 Montreal 16's

Doyle 11, Ray 0 Chicago quarters

Ellis 11, Doyle 0 San Luis Potosi quarters

Ray 11, Ceresia 0 Montreal 16's

Swain 11, Ellis 0 Chicago 16's

VCI Spreadsheet

IRT

1. Cliff Swain (2)
Braintree, Massachusetts
2. Andy Roberts (1)
Memphis, Tennessee
3. Mike Ray (3)
Hilton Head, South Carolina
4. Drew Kachtik (7)
Dallas, Texas
5. Tim Doyle (5)
Huntington Beach, California
6. Ruben Gonzalez (4)
Staten Island, New York
7. Jack Newman (6)
Hoffman Estates, Illinois
8. Bret Harnett (10)
Las Vegas, Nevada
9. Mike Guidry (10)
Dallas, Texas
10. Dave Johnson (8)
Huntington Beach, California
11. Woody Clouse
Jacksonville, Florida
12. Dan Obremski (12)
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
13. Aaron Katz (11)
Dallas, Texas
14. Egan Inoue (15)
Honolulu, Hawaii
15. Mike Ceresia (16)
Montreal, Quebec, Canada
16. Todd O'Neil (14)
Dallas, Texas

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2. Marci Drexler (2)
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3. Malia Bailey (3)
Norfolk, Virginia
4. Jacqueline Paraiso-Gibson (4)
San Diego, California
5. Lynne Coburn (5)
Baltimore, Maryland
6. Kaye Kuhfeld (6)
Indianapolis, Indiana
- 7T. Toni Bevelock (7T)
Santa Ana, California
- 7T. Molly O'Brien (7T)
Souderton, Pennsylvania
9. Chris Evon (9)
San Diego, California
10. Caryn McKinney (10)
Atlanta, Georgia
11. Ellen Crawford (11)
Minoa, New York
12. Robin Levine (12)
Sacramento, California
13. Laura Fenton (13)
Lincoln, Nebraska
14. Cheryl Gudinas (14)
Lisle, Illinois
15. Robin Whitmire (15)
Atlanta, Georgia
16. Cindy Doyle (16)
Omaha, Nebraska

VCI Challenge Cup Series

- 1T. Cliff Swain
- 1T. Mike Ray
- 3. Andy Roberts
- 4. Ruben Gonzalez
- 5T. Drew Kachtik
- 5T. Tim Doyle
- 7. Dan Obremski
- 8T. Mike Guidry
- 8T. Woody Clouse

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 - 2. Bob Gravelyn
 - 3. Jay Schwartz
 - 4. Johnny Hennen
 - 5. Ray Huss

- 1. Agatha Falso
- 2. Linda Miller
- 3. Bev Powell
- 4T. June Riggs
- 4T. Kendra Tutsch
- 4T. Betty Gililand

Racquetball Canada

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 - 3. Mike Ceresia
 - 4. Haydn Jones
 - 5. Doug McQuarrie
-
- 1. Carol McPetridge
 - 2. Sue McTaggart
 - 3. Josee Grandmaitre
 - 4. Vicki (Brown) Shanks
 - 5. Linda Ellerington

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 - 2. David Hamilton
 - 3. Ed Davidson
 - 4. Dave Eagle
 - 5. Tom Travers
-
- 1. Elaine Hooghe
 - 2. Amy Kilbane
 - 3. Gerri Stoffregen
 - 4. Kerri Stoffregen
 - 5. Cindy Grace
-
- Mens 30+
- 1. Kelvin Vantrease
 - 2. Dave Eagle
 - 3. Tom Travers
 - 4. Dave Kovanda
 - 5. Steve Lerner
-
- Womens A
- 1. Elaine Thompson
 - 2. Allison Thomas
 - 3. Susan Kallman
 - 4. Regina Hannon
 - 5. Tara Hessert

The featured state in the next issue
of VCI Spreadsheet will be
Ohio



Doyle?!

By Marvin Quertermous
Managing Editor

Photos by Charlie Palek

Looking up from his pad scribbled with orders, a young man waiting tables was surprised to encounter the familiar face of a high school classmate sitting patiently at one of his tables. "Doyle?!?" was the waiter's shocked exclamation. Now this may not seem so unusual except that the restaurant involved was in the Chicago suburb of Hoffman Estates, the pair had been classmates several years before in Buffalo, New York, and the individual sitting patiently awaiting his food was indeed Tim Doyle of Portland Oregon.

Doyle, oblivious to the discrepancy in time and space, was genuinely pleased to stumble upon an old friend and offered only a simple "Oh, hey

man". The pair chatted happily for some time about other old friends and the subtleties of growing up in Buffalo, but at no time did Doyle even remotely acknowledge the unlikelihood of the encounter. By the time they had finished talking, the rest of the group at the table had accepted the situation just as matter-of-factly as Doyle had.

You are quite justified now in asking what this "small world" story about a chance encounter has to do with racquetball. The answer is that this story helps us understand just why Doyle is one of the five best players in the world today. The key is in his reaction. The guy cannot be surprised. He's calm. He's confident. His quiet good nature and boyish grin belie the fact that he can rip a racquetball with the

power of a raging freight train. But most importantly, nothing rattles him.

If there was ever a kid destined to be a racquetball pro, Doyle is it. The recipient of more than his share of natural speed and strength, Doyle came of age in a true racquetball family. Around the age of eight, he started playing racquetball at the club his parents owned. The household produced not only a future IRT star, but also his sister Cindy, who would go on to play on the national team, win the intercollegiate, and play successfully on the women's pro tour.

Something of a seasoned veteran by the teenage years when many players discover the game, Doyle's ability had been evident very early. By the middle of the 1980's, he would capture the fourteen & under and the sixteen & under national titles. Doyle immediately caught the attention of the racquetball community with his athletic talent, his dedication to improvement, and his quiet confidence at such an early age.

On the court, Doyle's weapons include lightning reflexes, an uncanny court sense, and a serve that reaches about a gazillion miles per hour. He comes into every match genuinely believing that he will win, and usually does. But nothing, I mean nothing, takes him by surprise.

Doyle's coolness is not for lack of passion. His play is clever and spirited. In fact, one particularly bad day at the 1991 Stockton pro stop saw Doyle go up in a fiery blaze of emotion that enthralled fans and earned him on-court fines well into the triple digits.

Doyle's perfectly-timed snide remarks and quick comebacks cut opponents to the





Above: Doyle as member of US amateur team. Top right Making a point in a pro match with Cliff Swain. Right: Getting some pointers from team coach Jim Winterton at the 1991 amateur Nationals. Bottom right: Warming up.



bone. The ESPN broadcast of the VCI Championships last summer captured him calmly "last wording" Andy Roberts. This is an especially difficult task since Roberts is as quick on the draw in a battle of wits as he is on the court. Doyle, however, doesn't shy away from confrontation.

"It's natural that Andy and I became such rivals," remarks Doyle. "Andy came up through the junior ranks like I did, we match-up pretty well in a lot of areas, and we've been going at each other a long time."

Four years Doyle's senior, Roberts was to be Doyle's doubles partner on the U.S. national team for international amateur competition, in 1991, the year the IRT pros withdrew from all amateur play. Until that year, players could keep their amateur status and still play the pro tour by turning over pro winnings to a special trust fund to hold until they relinquished their amateur status. Before the decision to pull out of amateur competition, Doyle captured 6

national doubles titles, and two national singles championships.

The transition to the pro tour came easily for Doyle. 1990 was his second season on the IRT. It was also the year the pros went to the one serve rule. With the two serve opportunity leaving too much margin for error, players like Egan Inoue and Cliff Swain were blasting ace after ace (or at least a serve that brought about an extremely weak return)- even on second serve! The pros





Left: Discussing a difference of opinion in a match with Dan Obremski. **Opposite:** Against Mike Ray at the Woodfield Racquet Club, Chicago.

adopted the one serve rule to help bring back the purest element of racquetball, the rally. At the second event of the season, the Chelsea's Pro-Am in Salem, Oregon, the pros experimented with a quadrant-serve rule similar to squash. While the tournament went well, quadrant serving in racquetball was a bit too bizarre. Doyle

was one of the best rising stars, relying heavily upon his ballistic serves. Rather than complain about the experimental rule, he just kept blasting to win the event. The established tour players couldn't handle his serve, even when they knew where it was going to hit.

Since that time, Doyle has claimed

another event victory at the Woodfield Halloween Classic in Chicago in 1991, and numerous pro final appearances. He was shut out last season from any pro stop victories by the big four: Cliff Swain, Andy Roberts, Mike Ray, and Ruben Gonzalez.

When asked how he will retaliate, Doyle comes alive. "I'm working harder than ever before with some of the best trainers in professional sports," he asserts with enthusiasm. "I've been working with Scott Phelps on speed and quickness training, and with Stephen Schaffer on strength training. These guys are famous in elite sports circles for their work with NFL and major league baseball players. I'm getting noticeably stronger and faster, and for me that's the best motivation there is. I look forward to training, it's serious, but it's not like work, it's what I want to be doing, like a great hobby."

While the bigger pro sports interested Doyle (Larry Bird and Magic Johnson



HAND.

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being the closest thing he has to heroes), his emphasis has always been racquetball. "I played high school basketball," Doyle remembers, "But racquetball was always more important to me. That's why I've trained so hard over the years."

Doyle's past training efforts have included endless drills at home in Buffalo, top notch training and coaching as one of the nation's most talented juniors, and moving to Columbus, Ohio during college years to train with Doug and Dave Ganim and to compete in that state's famous Coors Light Series. Later, to keep learning and growing, Doyle moved to the breeding ground of pro racquetball, Southern California. Over the years of training, he has adopted one simple aim, do whatever it takes to improve.

So where does that leave Doyle in 1993? Currently, Doyle sits at number five on the pro tour after a recent second place behind Cliff Swain in Stockton, California. He hits one of the hardest serves ever witnessed. He reacts instantly to any attack an opponent might attempt because he is never, ever surprised. He is bad news for anyone facing him in a pro draw. He sees



himself playing (and winning) on the pro tour for some time.

"I'm twenty-four now. When you look at the guys at the top, Andy and Mike are closer to thirty, and Ruben just keeps going well past forty," observes Doyle. "Guidry is the only one really younger than me. I think that says something about the time it takes to mature and progress in the

game. You may be in great shape when you're younger, but the maturity in this sport makes a big difference."

Maturity Doyle has. His calm confidence combined with his dedication to training are key ingredients that will keep him at the forefront of professional racquetball for the foreseeable future. Doyle is here to stay. Is it any surprise?



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Bashamichi Classic

Photos by
Teruhiko
Okimine



Egan Inoue traveled to the source of the sun where 800 players from all over Japan were competing at Yokohama's Bashamichi Sporting House in the 11th Annual Bashamichi Classic Racquetball Tournament. Inoue and his brother Enson (currently ranked #1 in Japan) teamed up to defeat the current Japan National Doubles Champions, Soichi Sakai and Tsuyoshi Hagiwara.

In singles play Enson Inoue was defeated in the semis by #2 ranked Junichi Yoshida. Egan Inoue defeated Yoshida in the final 11-9, 11-3 after coming from a 0-6 deficit in game one.

Top: Egan Inoue and Junichi Yoshida in the finals.

Center and bottom: Three-wall glass and ample viewing make Bashamichi Sporting House ideal for an 800+ player tournament.



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HEAD *to* HEAD



Jack Newman vs. Bret Harnett

Final count for '92-'93 season: Harnett 4, Newman 2

New Orleans
August 1992
Harnett d. Newman
12-10, 11-1, 11-4

Chicago
October 1992
Harnett d. Newman
11-3, 11-7, 11-6

Riverside
November 1992
Newman d. Harnett
5-11, 11-9, 8-11, 11-8, 11-4

Las Vegas
March 1993
Harnett d. Newman
11-5, 11-5, 11-3

Memphis
March 1993
Harnett d. Newman
11-8, 9-11, 11-1, 11-2

Seattle
May 1993
Newman d. Harnett
11-4, 5-11, 11-9, 11-5

With contrasting styles, these two seasoned veterans have eliminated one another from pro stops since the mid 80's, and still produce one of the most exciting match-ups today.

Newman

- former amateur national and intercollegiate champion
- one of the game's most respected instructors
- plays a clever control game style, with plenty of power
- master of the unreturnable pinch
- always thinking

Harnett

- often credited as being one of the game's all-time greats
- awesome reach allows few passes
- intimidating physical presence
- king of the low boards
- simply crushes the ball

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Fibromyalgia is a painful and confusing syndrome that attacks between 13 and 18 million Americans (90% of which are women). With the disease, microscopic tearing of muscle tissue causes chronic pain and victims are often unable to perform even simple day to day tasks. There is no known cause or cure for Fibromyalgia.

The IRT supports Fibromyalgia research. For more information about this debilitating disease write:

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Salem OR 97308

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Penn.

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3. Mike Guidry
4. Woody Clouse
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4. Drew Kachtik
5. Aaron Katz
6. Mike Ray

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2. Andy Roberts
3. Jack Newman
4. Mike Ray
5. Drew Kachtik
6. Mike Guidry
7. Dave Johnson



Head Anatom Bonus Pool

1. Mike Ray
2. Mike Guidry
3. Woody Clouse
4. Bret Harnett
5. Dave Johnson
6. Dan Obremski

The "I" is for International

The TransCoastal International Racquetball Tour expanded the international portion of its title with the recent pro tour stop in Mexico at the Club Deportivo Potosino in San Luis Potosi. The warm reception and extensive television coverage of the event (three hours live coverage per day on host Channel 13) indicated that Mexico was eager to see the pros play. Finalists Cliff Swain and John Ellis found themselves all over the area newspapers. Because of the dedication of Moreles Reyes and Luis Araiza, the event was an overwhelming success. IRT players sharpened their foreign language and currency skills as they anticipate several more opportunities to play in Mexico, as well as in Europe and Japan over the coming months.



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Winnipeg, Canada

Tralee International Racquetball
Tournament (Irish Open)
February 18-20, 1994
Tralee, Ireland

Pittsburgh Pro/Am Racquetball
Tournament
February 18-20, 1994
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

International

WHEELCHAIR RACQUETBALL

Torneo De Las Americas Racquetball
March 26-April 2, 1994
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Stoke Mandeville Wheelchair Games
July 27-29, 1994
Aylesbury, England

World Racquetball Championships
August 13-20, 1994
San Luis Potosi, Mexico

For information on these tournaments or Wheelchair
Racquetball in general, contact David Hinton, c/o
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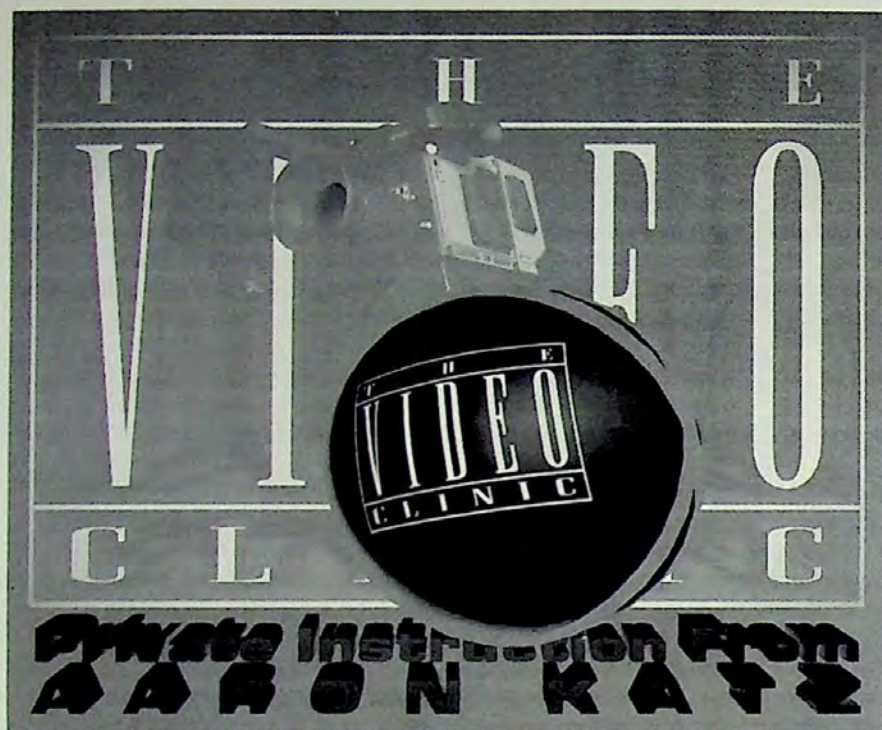
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New Racquetball Series in the East

Former WPRA executive director Molly O'Brien has announced a new event series for all player levels for the Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, New Jersey area. The Ektelon Championship Racquetball Series began in late October 1993 and continues through May 1994 at some of the finest court clubs of the Northeast.

Ektelon prize incentives awarded both for participation in the series and for success in the competitive divisions are the focal point of the event series. Many of the events in the series will feature clinics by top pros.

With at least twelve events remaining to be played of the original fifteen events scheduled, plenty of opportunities remain to get in on the fun and rack up bonus points toward shirts, gloves, bags, shoes and even racquets. Early events in the series have been huge successes.

Joining O'Brien Sports Marketing and Ektelon in the unique event series is long-time racquetball supporter Diet Pepsi. Penn provides the official ball. For additional information, O'Brien may be reached at (215) 723-7356.



Oregon Racquetball Association holds 11th Annual Timberhill Open

Top players of the Pacific Northwest gathered recently for the third event of the Oregon Racquetball Association's R.C. Cola / Ektelon Tour. Tournament director Rob Durbin teamed with tour sponsors, plus Pizza Hut, Togo Eatery, and TCBY to present one of the area's finest tournaments. Division winners included: Brad Poppino, Dan Pischke, Jaimy Huber, Fred Pietrazak, Justin Cortrell, Todd Washington, Pete Dunlop, Jim Trujillo, Bob Smith, Chad Cherry, Ted Winn, Kevin Frasnelle, Randy Reeves, Mike Halblieb, Rob Durbin, Erin Frost, Carol Knapp, Kim Jenkins, Sheila Younger, Mary Jensen, Lisa Pauley, and Toni Gregorie.

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Burnsville, MN	Jan. 8 - 9	Newman/Roberts	Woodbridge, NJ	Mar. 26 - 27	Newman/Gonzalez
Portland, OR	Jan. 15 - 16	Newman/Gonzalez	Colma, CA	Apr. 9 - 10	Newman/Adams
Atlanta, GA	Feb. 12 - 13	Gonzalez/Roberts	Houston, TX	Apr. 9 - 10	Gonzalez/Roberts
Norfolk, VA	Feb. 12 - 13	Newman/Adams	Ann Arbor, MI	Apr. 23 - 24	Newman/Gonzalez
Denver, CO	Feb. 26 - 27	Newman/Roberts	Manchester, N.H.	Apr. 30 - May 1	Newman/Roberts

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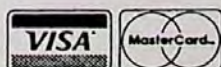
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Shot Selection 101:

Play the Ball Before Playing Your Opponent

By Jack Newman

One of the biggest areas of interest for my students is how to improve shot selection. After having watched and watched these students try to master playing their opponents, it occurred to me that most of them were unaware of how to play the ball. Before anyone can master the strategies of rallying, he must first have a solid understanding of what he can and can't do with the ball from a given position. While we could spend hours on the advantages and disadvantages of going for different shots at different times, I have tried to identify some of the most basic considerations that must be made in every player's head well before trying to out shoot or maneuver an opponent.

You may have seen Mike Ray shoot an overhead into a flat roll or Andy Roberts blast a perfect low pinch from an off-balance lunge but these are extreme cases. Unless you have five or six hours to practice these every day, it makes more sense to make the most of the opportunities you have by making smart choices. Why risk a skip to hit a kill when you can't properly set up, and a clean pass will have the same result? Realizing which shots are practical from where you must hit the ball is a vital skill. Learning the zone system as the basis for your choices will allow you to make better choices during those split second rally opportunities. Doing this will give you a better idea of your choices to beat your opponent. Believe it or not, even pros like Ray and Roberts consider this before making their final shot choice.

Zone 1

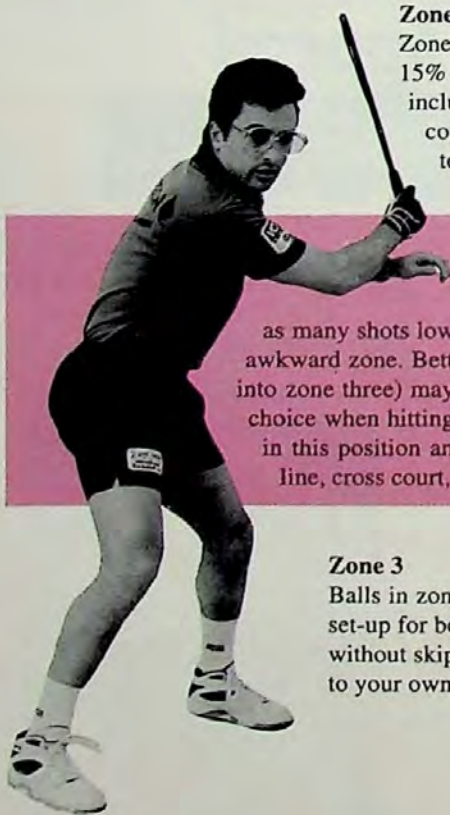
Zone one is made up of the balls you hit above your shoulder. Typically, these shots make up about 15% of all the shots in a match. When thinking zone one, think defense. Correct shots from this zone include ceiling balls, around-the-worlds, and Z's. The goal here is to move your opponent into deep court so that you can control center court. Patience is the key for these shots as you never want them to kick out or drop too soon to become set ups for your opponent.

Zone 2

This is roughly your batting strike zone - from thigh to shoulder. In a good rally you will be forced to hit as many as 70% of your shots from here. Most players learn early to try to take as many shots low for kills as possible (or high for defensive shots as a second choice) and to stay out of this more awkward zone. Better court positioning (not committing too far forward) and more patience (letting more shots drop into zone three) may help lower this percentage somewhat, but in reality, we can never avoid it completely. The best choice when hitting from this zone is usually the pass. Still an offensive shot, the pass brings on less pressure while in this position and should decrease skips as compared to kill attempts on balls at this height. A good down-the-line, cross court, or angle pass should either end the rally or set up a better situation for hitting a winner.

Zone 3

Balls in zone three are those we hit below thigh level. These are the plums since they allow the best possible set-up for both accuracy and power. Your goal with these golden opportunities is to hit clean kills and pinches without skipping them or leaving them up too high. Practice to consistently put these away, then pay attention to your own footwork and patience during a rally to convert more zone two balls to zone three balls.



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KILLSHOT BUYER'S *Annual* GUIDE



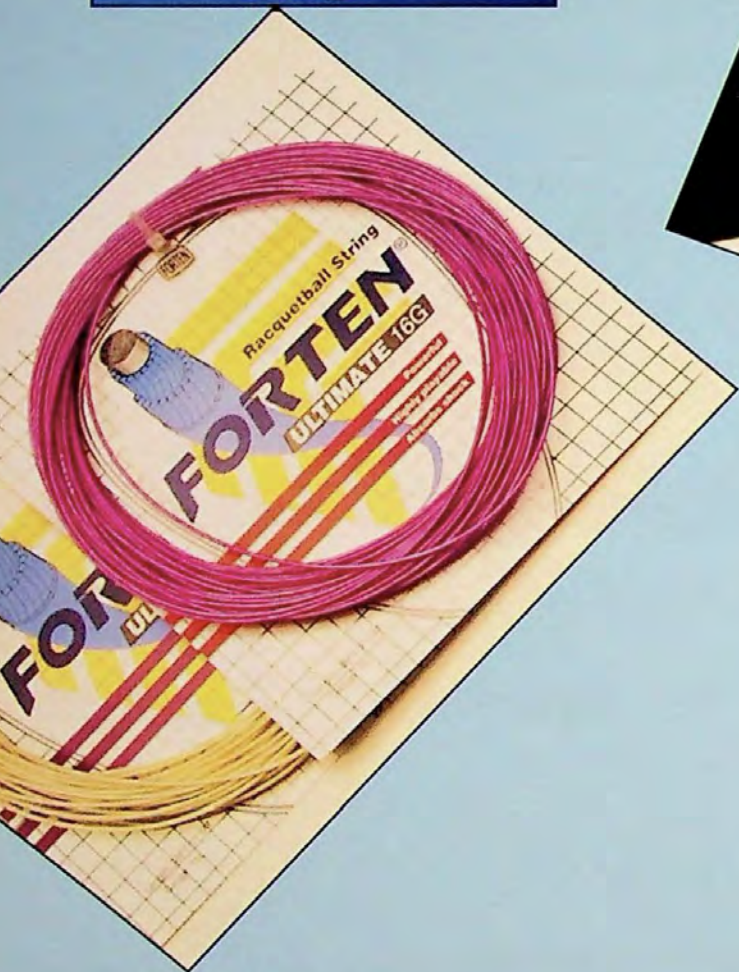
Clockwise from upper right: Sport Lavit Dry Grip to improve that iron grip; Gexco grips in a multitude of colors for a non slip racquet; better than a 175 m.p.h. drive serve is driving the Volkswagen Cabriolet; Spalding's new ThunderHeat gives you power and control you never thought possible.





Clockwise from right: Penn gloves, the official IRT glove; Action Eyes eyeguards, (and they're functional too); the Gexco ball saver; Head produces the official shoes of the IRT; Ashaway Superkill II string for that extra snap in your return.





Clockwise from right: Ektelon eyeguards take your game into the future; Penn Cooler Pak and Penn Court Bags, stuff to go with the official ball of the whole world; Forten Ultimate Racquetball string for the perfect kill; Neumann Tackified Glove creates a grip that won't quit.



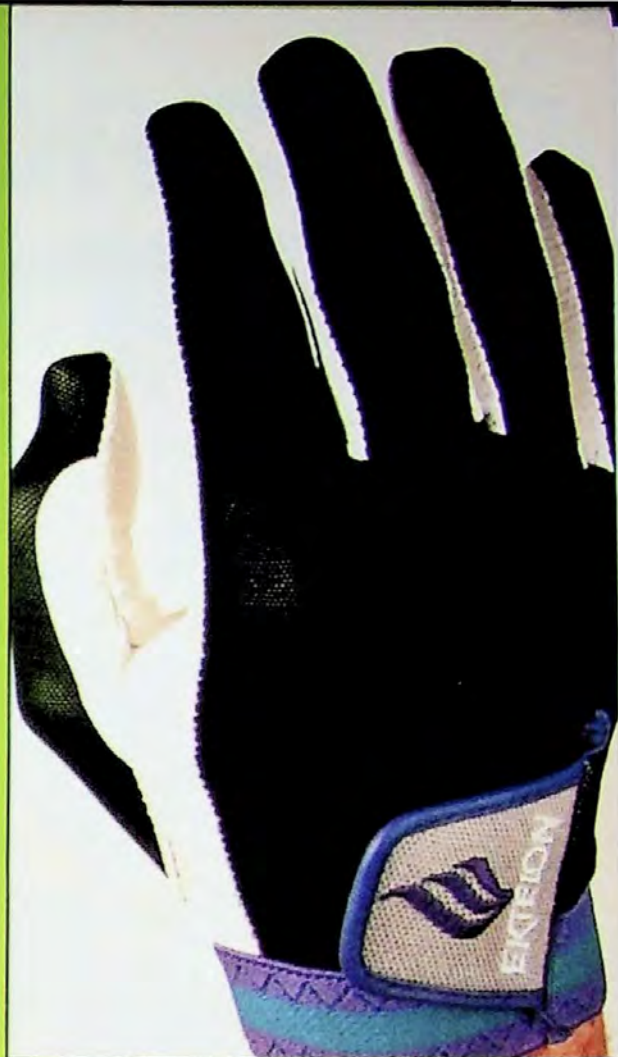
Above: Three top racquets from E-FORCE, Weapon, Terminator, and Real Deal; Below: some pretty classy tee's from First Coast Promotions.





Clockwise from top: Leader eyeguards for perfect protection; Wristlancer keeps your racquet where it belongs; nothing like a little pure gold from First Coast Promotions; Wilson's explosive line, Hammer 2.7, Hammer 4.0, and SPS 5.5





Clockwise from top left: Ektelon's Allusion the top of the Litening Series, Ektelon's new Digitec glove; Forten bag and cap for takin' it to the courts.

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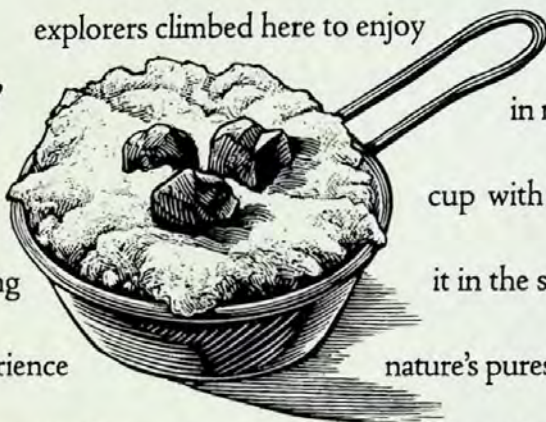


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