

National Racquetball®

Vol. 7 No. 3
March, 1979
\$1.50

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On the cover . . .

Charlie Brumfield has dissected racquetball in front of dozens of microphones, but never before in a magazine series. The four time National champ begins his exclusive National Racquetball stories with some revolutionary views on the serve.

—Photo by Arthur Shay

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President and Publisher • Robert W. Kendler
National Director and Editor • Charles S. Leve
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Managing Editor • Carol Brusslan . . . West Coast Editor • Nick Longhurst
Circulation Manager • Kip Fancher . . . Circulation Administrator • Jack Kendler
Photographic Consultant • Arthur Shay

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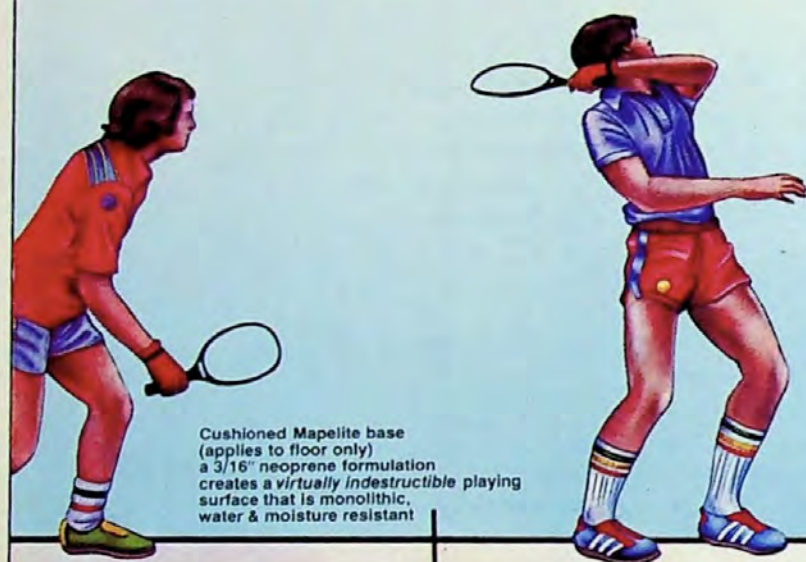
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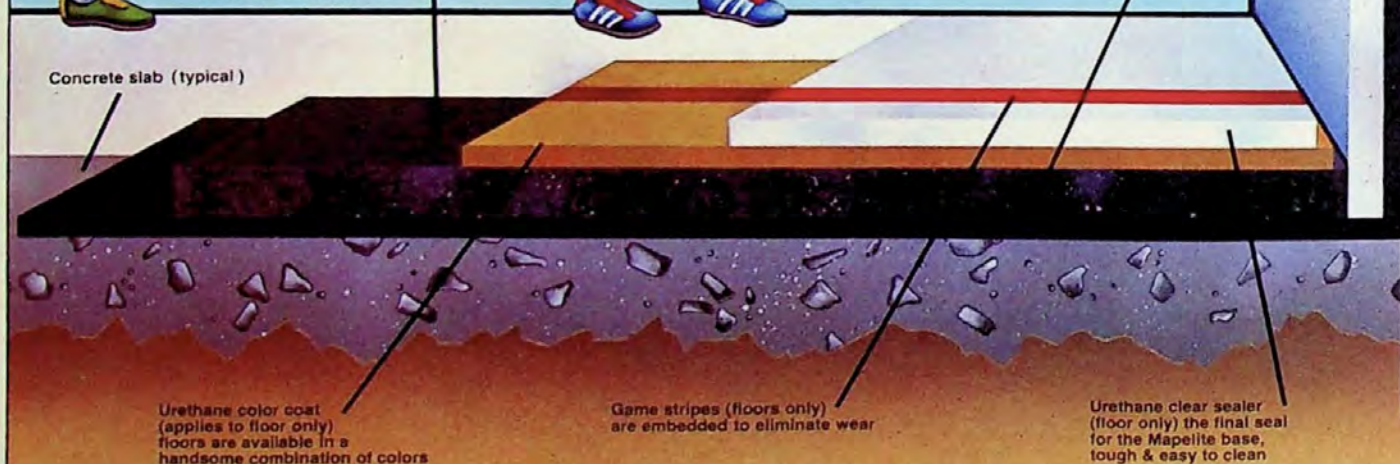
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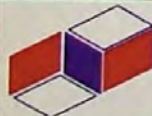
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Face to Face

Rarely do I get as excited about a program as I have about the USRA State Chairmen's Convention. Having just returned from our first annual such Convention I can't think of enough accolades for the event.

Jointly sponsored by Seamco, Leach, Zahn Data Service and the USRA the Convention was a huge success in many different ways.

First and foremost, it gave USRA staff people a chance to meet each of the state chairmen and discuss with them the purposes, goals, problems and solutions facing racquetball today.

In a structured forum, an all day seminar of round table discussions, 47 of the 50 chairmen, along with most of my colleagues at USRA headquarters, met face to face to iron out difficulties, discuss policy and generally delve into the state of the game and how to better promote it.

The organizational job done by Terry Fancher along with Chuck and Lois Blabolil from TRIP Travel Services made the entire weekend in Las Vegas run as smooth as a DC-10.

All state chairmen received full round trip airfare from their home city to Las Vegas, three days and two nights at the Desert Inn Hotel and Country Club, virtually all meals free, Wilson/Bata shoes and tickets to the Coors All Pro Racquetball Championships being held the same weekend.

Some people have shaken their heads and asked how we could afford to do so much for these people. So much? Why our state chairmen deserve even more! This convention, which admittedly was a combination of work and R & R, was the least we could do!

Sometimes people tend to forget that every one of our state people are *volunteers*. They receive no salary, no expenses, no special benefits. They work on behalf of the USRA and on behalf of racquetball, because they love our sport and want to contribute to its promotion.

We at the USRA are happy to be able to contribute dollars to each of their treasuries by diverting \$2 of every \$12 subscription/membership, but it's not nearly enough. That's where our sponsors come in.

Through a generous free ball (with quantity restrictions) offer from Seamco for all sanctioned tournaments, and an equally generous official shirt arrangement through Leach Industries, plus newly planned clinic and appearance programs, the state associations are able to offset many costs they would otherwise incur. The result is to use their limited funds to further promote racquetball on the grass roots level.

The weekend began with a cocktail and introductory part Friday night at the Desert Inn as chairman met other chairman, officials and a few top pros, who stopped in from their stint at the Coors All Pro event. The racquetball conversations abounded.



Saturday morning an 8 o'clock breakfast was followed by a 9 o'clock seminar and round table discussions that served as the meat and potatoes of the weekend. It was during this time that USRA personnel went over policies and concepts with the chairman, who in return gave the input and feedback. The benefits from this segment of the Convention were so great that they are immeasurable.

Later in the afternoon the sponsors made their presentations and discussed the reasons for their support and what was new in the way of official products.

Saturday night a banquet at the Desert Inn was highlighted by a speech by USRA president Bob Kendler as the food and beverages flowed once again.

Finally Sunday morning there was another breakfast for those who could manage to make it, and by Sunday afternoon most were on their way to home or other sites.

As for our staff — well the Chicago blizzard forced us to spend a couple of extra days and nights in Las Vegas, since we were unable to get home. I didn't hear any complaints. ●



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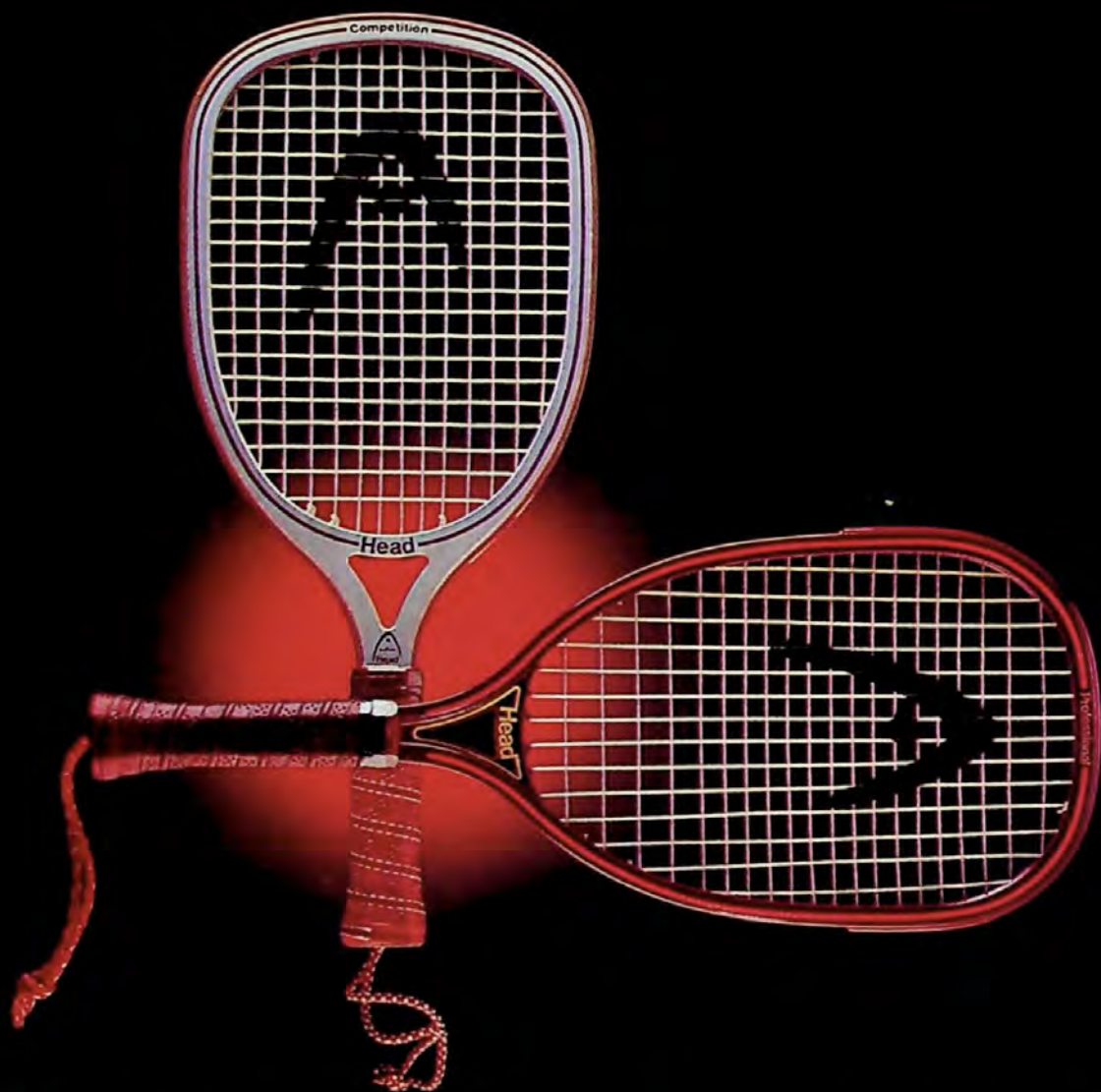
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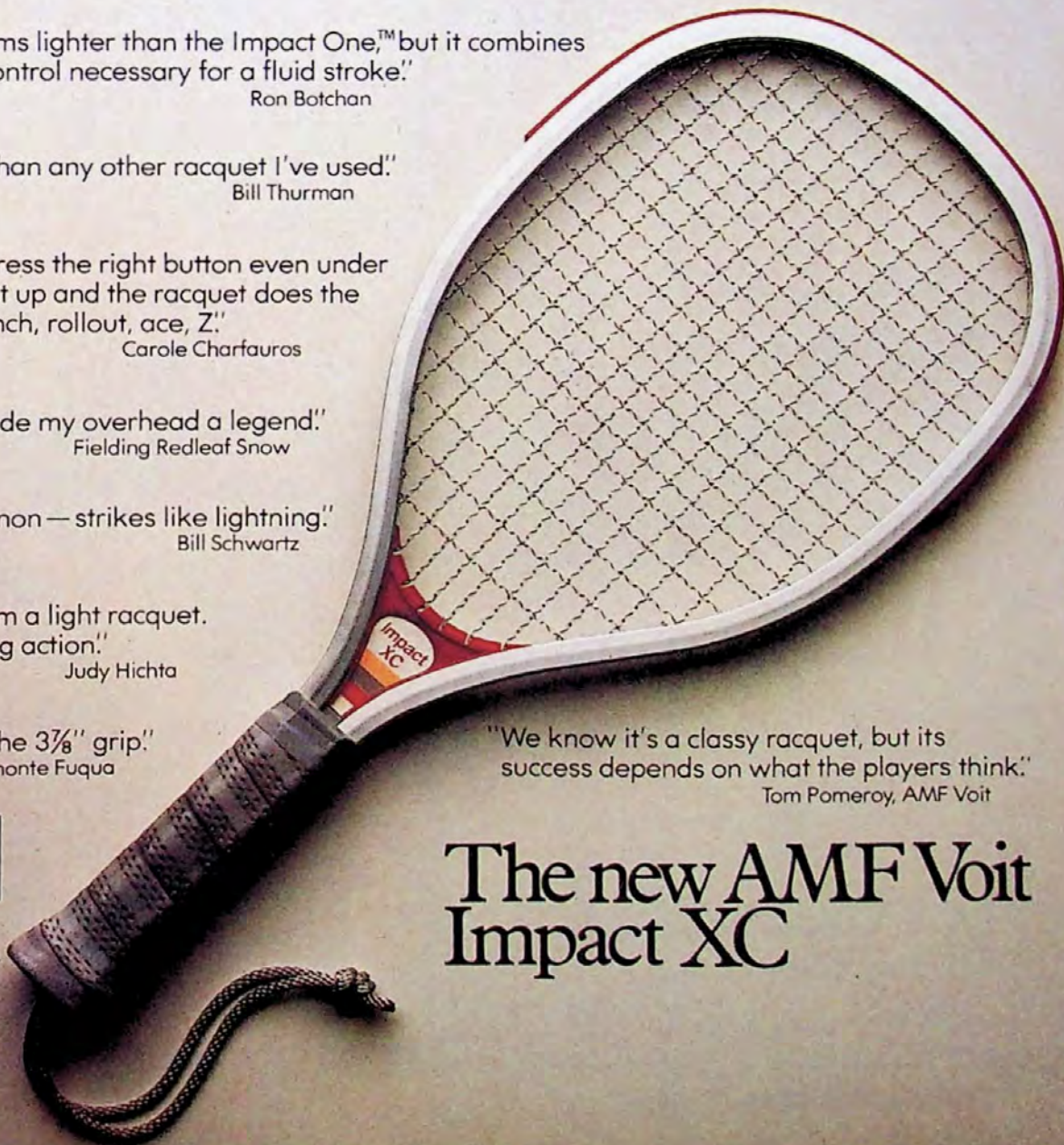
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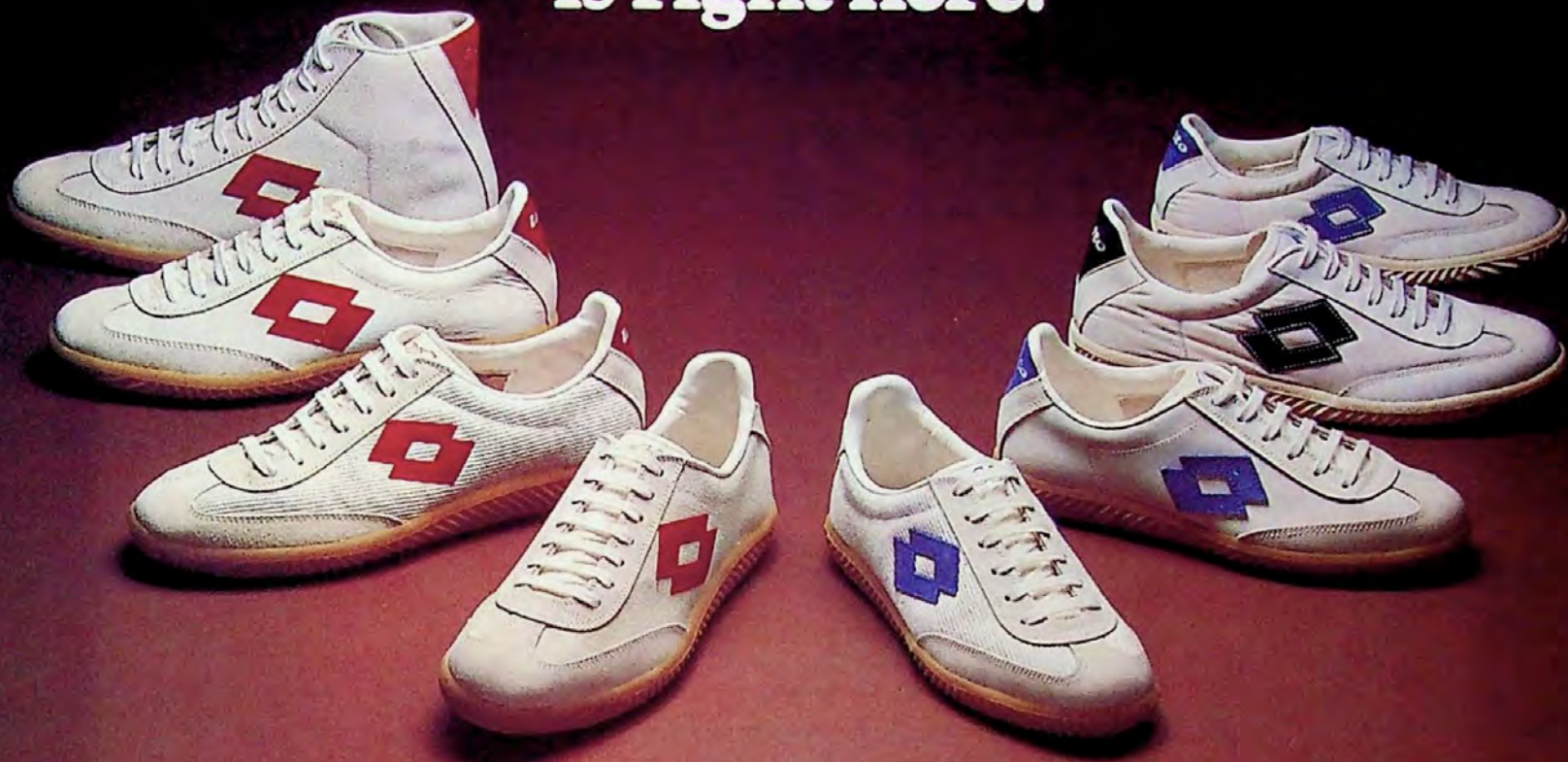
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Inside the Master's Mind

by Charlie Brumfield

The Need for Service Rule Changes.....

With this comprehensive and thoughtful group of stories on the serve Charlie Brumfield, four time National champion, begins an exclusive series for *National Racquetball*. Brumfield has the rare ability to break down into the words the theory and techniques that make him an on court winner. *National Racquetball* Editor Chuck Leve met with Brumfield in Las Vegas during the All Pro finals to help put together this first of the master's instructional articles.

Ten years ago in a galaxy far, far away, the serve was *the* most important shot in racquetball. It was not, however, synonymous with racquetball.

The serves in that era were the basic serves that are still in use today, most copied from the effective serves used in handball, paddleball and squash, our predecessors. (Examples of these would be the drive, the Z, the garbage and the lob).

If you were to hit an ineffective serve you were in danger of having it killed outright, or at the very least you would probably lose center court position (remember that?) and would be running your tail off for the rest of the rally — which would usually be long and/or exciting.

My point? The serve was important; but it was not completely dominant. A player with a medium grade serve (such as Connors in tennis) was not automatically eliminated from

contention for the number one spot in any particular tournament. In fact one of racquetball's early selling points which helped in its initial growth was the fact that the serve was *not* that important, that a player could offset his opponent's big serve with other important factors, i.e., court savvy, guts, determination, conditioning, ground strokes, court coverage.

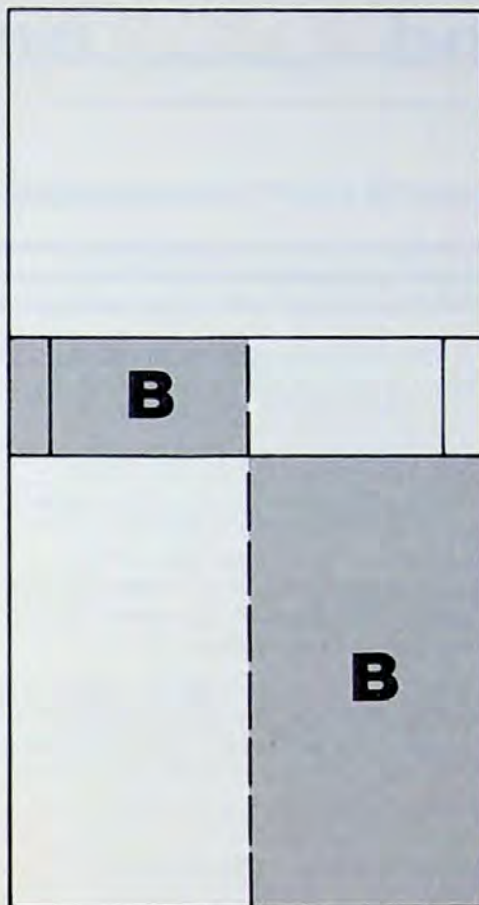
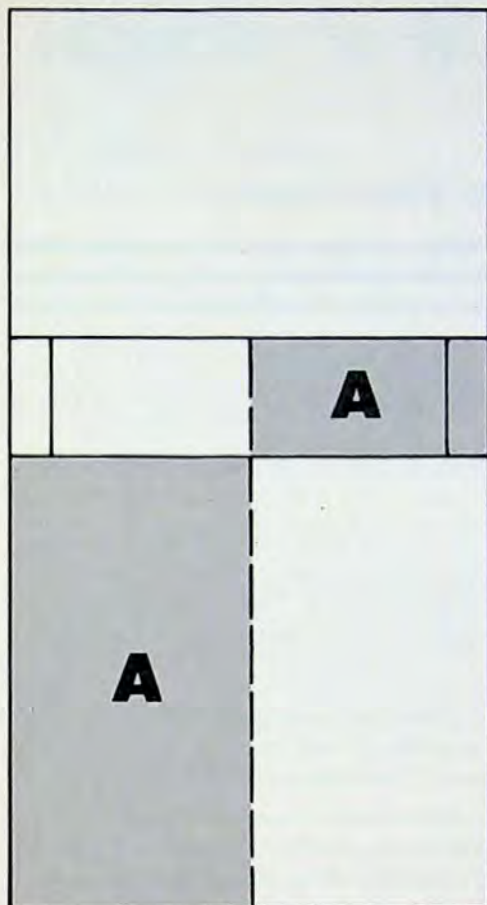
Ten years ago a situation existed in tennis which was very much like today's racquetball situation. The serve was *ultra* dominant. But the fans put a stop to that by reduced attendance — forcing the governing bodies to introduce slower surfaces which helped bring into balance the strong serve and the strong serve return.

I believe that racquetball should not and must not repeat a historical mistake of such a recent date. The serve must not be allowed to completely dominate the sport and here are my reasons:

1. Racquetball's tremendous mushrooming popularity has been predicated on two factors: (a) its great exercise and (b) the ease with which the beginner or average athlete can *keep the ball in play* (rally). Take away the rally and you take away the heartbeat of the game. And today's modern service techniques certainly do curtail the rally with much of its health benefits and just plain fun.
2. Spectators no longer have a discernable pattern of play to enjoy. It's all over so quickly on most points that it's impossible to carry on more than one sentence conversations on what has just happened!
3. Television cannot see the sport too well right now. It can see bodies move around the court but it certainly cannot detect whether a serve was one inch over the line or one inch short. I doubt that television would ever make a firm and continuing commitment to cover Marty Hogan or Jerry Hilecher



The Quadrant Rule: The server must serve from either Zone A to Zone A or from Zone B to Zone B.



practicing their serve. Television would, I believe, commit to the exciting and well conceived plans and actions of vigorous racquetball rallies.

In addition to these problems, which appear to be generic to the existence of a *dominant serve*, other problems manifest themselves repeatedly on the pro tour, and they point, I think, to a need to refine the service rules,

(A) The shadow serve. The continued shadow (hinder) serve is a call that forces the referee to play God from a position in which it is difficult, if not impossible, to accurately see the play. The referee, in his chair 20-30 feet away, off to one side, through glass, looking down the muzzle of a 142 mph blast, partially screened, off the walking serve down the opposite line — no way can be make an accurate call! No way!

(B) Constant time outs. Since virtually every pro goes for an ace on every first serve, there is a plethora of short or 3-wall serves which cause continuous breaks in the continuity of play. What could be more boring than a short serve 80 percent of the time?

(C) Appeals. Since the server is often aiming for a spot near the short line or the deep corner, there are an abundance of near misses, creating many appeals and the subsequent delays of game resulting from appeal, linesmen opinions, explanation and sometimes player argument.

(D) Eliminating the opportunity to get the ball in play. The ace serve has rung the death knell of the meaningful offense within the rally as it completely and unmercifully outstrips the defense.

There are several rule change proposals which I believe should be examined and tested by the governing bodies — not to change the nature of racquetball, but rather to *restore* it.

(1) Eliminate the second serve. The main benefit would be to maintain a continuity of play. In addition it would theoretically dampen the voracious nature of the pro service game because the player would tend to be more conservative and less “*ace at any cost*” oriented if he faces an automatic side out upon infraction.

Many people feel, I am aware, that such a rule would reverse the problem because the *serve return* would then become dominant. I don't agree. What it would cause is a demise of the mindless flailer, and return thinking, serve selection and precise execution to their well-deserved place. (By the way — this rule works perfectly well in table tennis.)

(2) Quadrant Rule. This rule, which is used in tennis and squash would eliminate the whole issue of a *shadow serve*. In addition since it reduces the area that the returner must cover, it gives a fair chance to the serve returner (not to mention television) to see and return the ball.

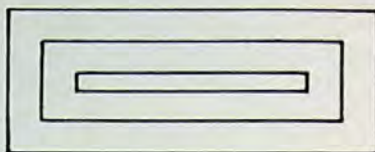
(3) Above the Line. The painting of a line on the front wall, above which the serve must hit, is used in squash to eliminate the lack of rally that a low drive serve causes. It has some merit.

Again I realize that some will try to argue that if one or more of these rule change proposals were enacted, that defense will dominate the sport. Yet these people forget that racquetball is intrinsically *the* most offensive of all the racquet sports. There is no net to hit over, no tin. There are no sidelines to flirt with.

The kill shot is here to stay, and I am a believer that you must be able to kill to win. But for the game's sake, let's not make *serve* and kill the only way to play!

Inside the Master's Mind

by Charlie Brumfield



The Philosophy of Serving:

The serve as a weapon and how to add these weapons to your arsenal.

Given that we are dealing with the current rules and the present pace of modern racquetball — how should one go about making the most of the serve as a weapon?

The first step is to develop an awareness of what can be done on the serve. The best and most satisfying way to discover this is to step on the court by yourself with half a dozen balls, and turn your imagination loose.

Hit from every part of the service zone to different parts on the front wall. You may develop your own secret weapon that no one else has ever seen. This method is the best because it gives you a true appreciation of what the ball will do under every conceivable situation. Once noted, you then can, through repetition, make your racquet and body do whatever is necessary to repeat the desired shot.

A second method is to have someone more experienced or knowledgeable take you down on the court and show you some new ideas. This is okay as long as that's not the end of it. His or her information should only act as germinating seed from which your own ingenuity grows into innovations that fit your physical and mental makeup.

There is and always should be a personal adaptation of new ideas so that it makes sense to your concept of your game.

A third method is by observation and I don't mean just the pros. As a matter of fact I've probably learned more watching B and C players who have had little or no formal instruction because they have no preconceived notions of how (for instance) a drive serve has to be executed or how you must step into your Z. These players have *created* their own serve and some are really brutal.

It helps shake some of the smugness out of me when I realize that a beginner has learned something about the game that I didn't think of, even though I've been studying day and night for 15 years! At any rate I'm not alone plagiarizing and adapting their creations and neither are you.

All right. Once you've got a pretty fair idea how the ball can be moved, the next step is selecting a group of serves to make *peculiarly* your own. It is impossible to learn all the serves, since there are an infinite number of angles and paces. Yet I feel that the basic error is not trying to serve too many, but rather being satisfied with only two or three variations. Almost all players from pros down to basic beginners have fallen into that trap.

It is my firm belief that any diligent player of C caliber or higher could come to grips with 15 or 20 varieties of serves, motions and zone positions. This may seem a bit intimidating, but remember that during the serve you are in complete control of the shot and can use up to 10 seconds to execute.

I will be the first to recommend that during the rally, when you have milliseconds to react, most players are better off sticking to one or two bread and butter shots from key positions.

The serve, though, is a different animal. You always have 10, and sometimes as many as 20, seconds to figure out your serve — not the one-twentieth of a second as during play.

I think any discussion of service variety ignores the "*one best way*" concept — and rightly so. This is an assumption that must be discarded in this or any other educational attempt because the belief in "*one best way*" discourages individual creativity and when all is said and done, you have to do things *your way*, because you know no others.

It is probably true that there is one particular method of service that would prove the most effective against a *particular* opponent at a particular moment of time, but it might not (*will* not is more accurate) be applicable in the next moment, let alone against a different opponent with different strengths and weaknesses of today's foe.

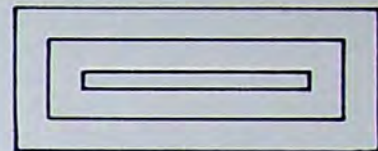
So sit back, and relax. Let me take you down the road of 25 serves which I know you can master. They're not meant to be the ultimate answer, but rather they should serve to whet your curiosity and help you explore uncharted regions on your own.

As we go on, I'll show you a list of common serve return weaknesses and which of our serves will be most effective against each of these weaknesses.

Good luck!

Inside the Master's Mind

by Charlie Brumfield



The Serve Today: 25 Ways to Add Points to Your Score

To be truly effective as a server it is imperative that you be able to beat the returner at his strength, normally his forehand. If you can accomplish this goal, you will force your opponent into a situation where he will be unable to compensate for his weaker side.

Therefore many of the serves which are outlined in this article are specifically designed to be bold in the sense of being a serve to the forehand of the receiver. The more practice you put in on serves to the forehand, the more checks you'll eventually be able to put in the weak return column.

All of the serves discussed in this article are further designed to take advantage of the philosophy of

racquetball today, i.e., that the serve is dominant. Therefore all are designed to achieve ace or near-ace results.

Z's and the Short Zone

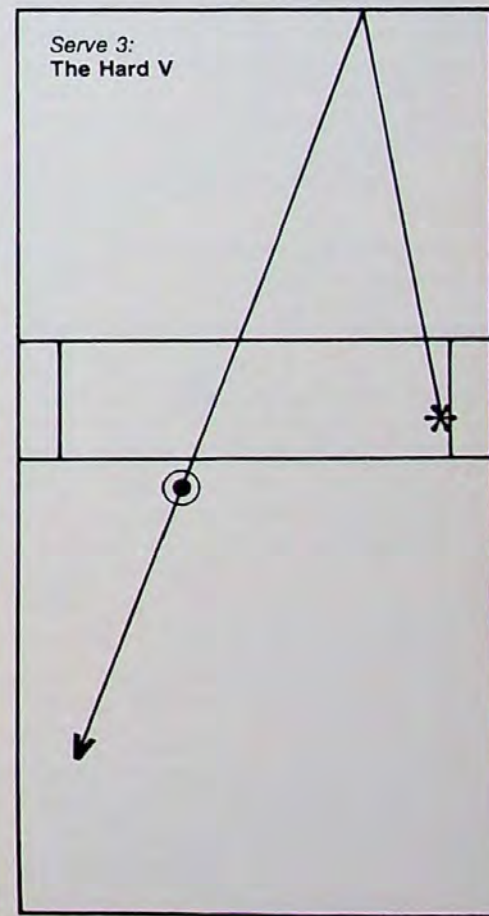
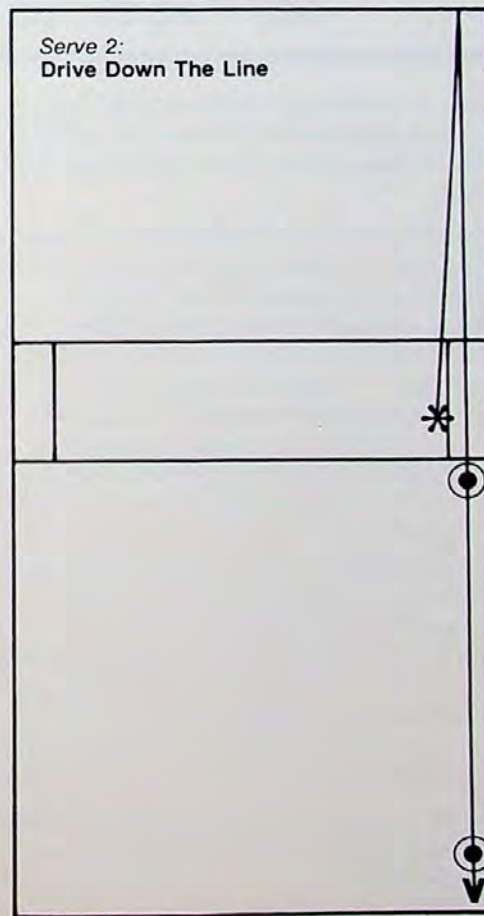
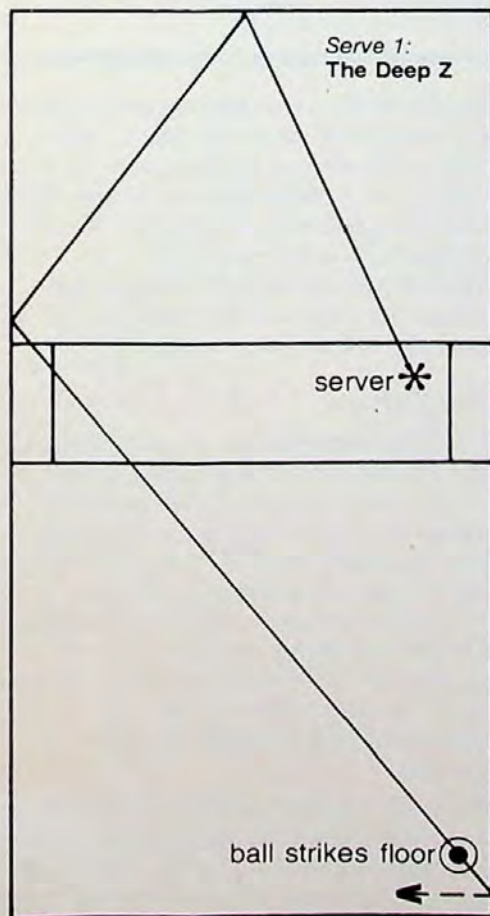
An unwritten rule in serving is *never give the receiver two chances at the same ball*. The serve should be designed to allow the minimum number of hitting zones for the receiver.

The first serve (*Serve 1*) is the **Deep Z**. The Z serves are those which hit front wall, side wall and floor before hitting a third wall (either another side wall or back wall). The **Deep Z** is sometimes referred to as the "Snap Z" by advanced players, with the "snap" referring to the quick movement of the

wrist as the server comes through the hitting zone. This snap results in greater velocity and deception, making the pace and direction of the serve difficult to "read" by the receiver.

The **Deep Z** should be served from about two foot lengths from the side wall, with your left foot forward. The serve will travel front wall-side wall and hit the floor in deep right court, with the spin derived from the surfaces struck keeping the shot off the back wall.

The **Deep Z** is a good starting point because two other effective serves can be used from basically the same starting position. They are (*Serve 2*) the **Drive Down The Line** and (*Serve 3*) the **Hard V**.



Both the **Drive Down The Line** and the **Hard V** take advantage of the **Short Zone**, the area just behind the short line, which is one of the most neglected service areas in the game. If hit with zip and even a minimum of deception (set up by your **Deep Z**) you will cause pandemonium in your opponent, particularly if he's one who set up in the extreme deep court for service return.

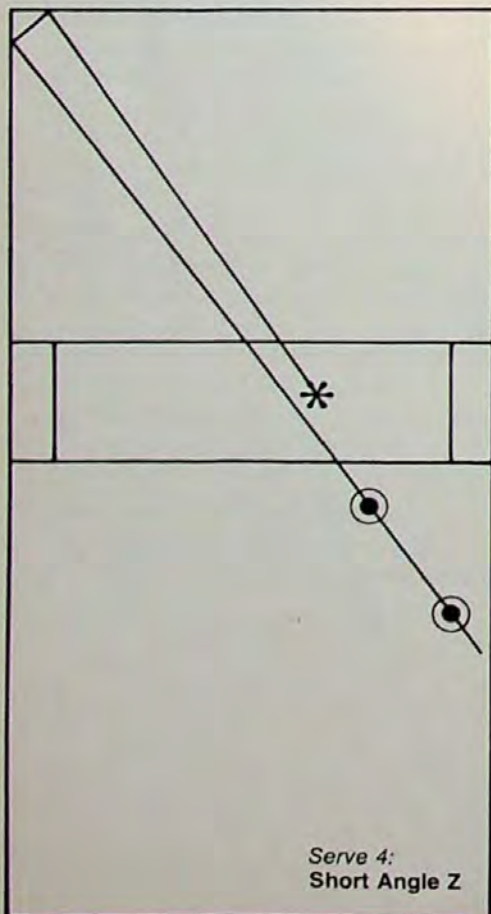
The **Drive Down The Line** will be hit off the same motion as the **Deep Z** with the only difference being the angle of the racquet as you come through the hitting area. It should be struck with near maximum force so that the deception can work to its ultimate.

If well hit this serve can freeze your opponent so that his reaction time will be cut enough to allow the ball to bounce twice for your ace. Another side advantage is that this serve is also a near screen, putting the server in a can't miss situation.

The **Hard V** comes off the same motion but goes the other way and is particularly effective if you've been able to get your opponent concerned about all those forehand serves. This



"Take away the rally and you take away the heartbeat of the game."



one is a drive to his backhand, but aimed again for the short zone, with the ball in the air the minimum amount of time.

Serving the short zone may be a new concept to many readers, since most previous dissertations on **Z** serves have indicated that a *deep court* rebound is the desired conclusion. However I have learned that the weakest area from which to return serve is this *short zone*, forcing the receiver to strike the ball while moving forward, which eliminates virtually all of his power.

Another serve which takes advantage of this philosophy is (Serve 4) the **Short Angle Z**. Technically this is really not a **Z** because it is designed to hit the floor twice before reaching the third wall. However the path traveled by the ball is identical with the **Deep Z** and the stroke is the same.

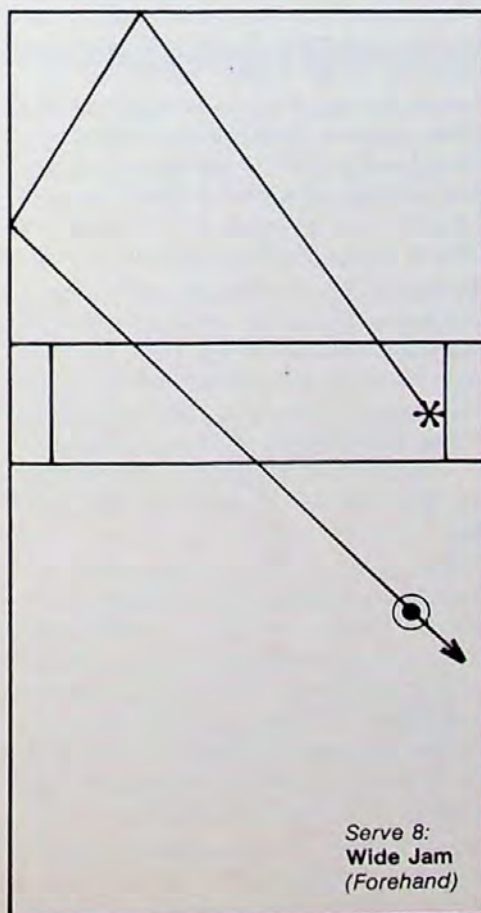
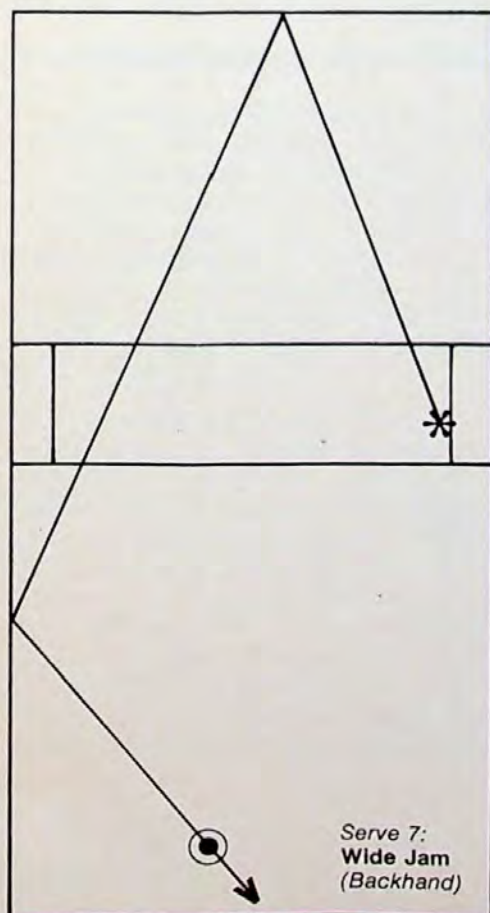
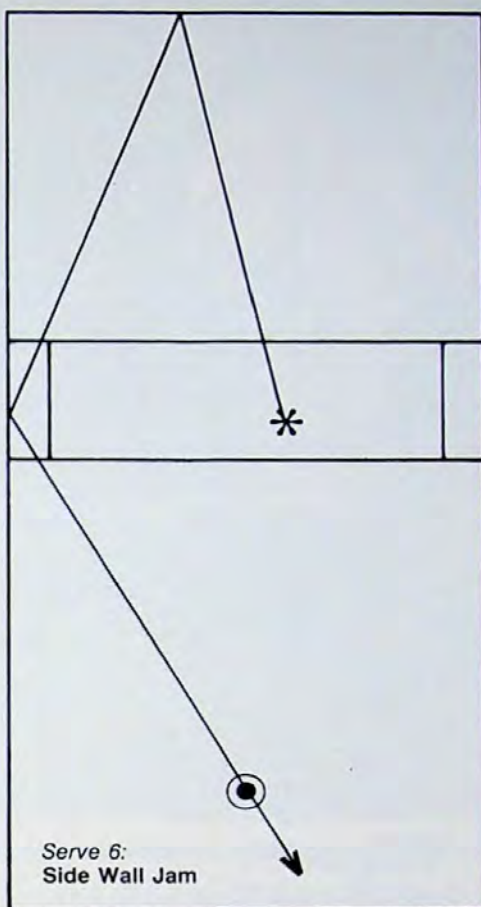
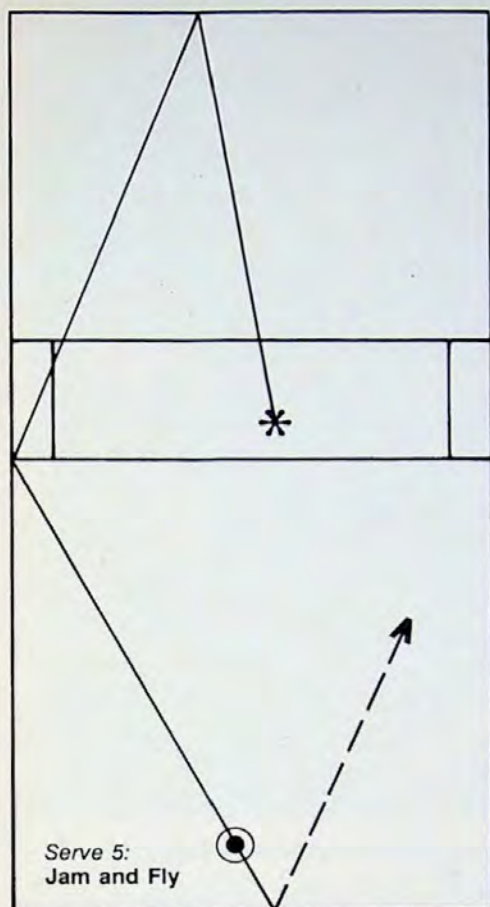
What is different is the trajectory. This **Short Angle Z** will strike front wall-side wall (hit low and hard) and hit the floor just behind the short line.

As with all the *short zone* serves ideally this serve will give you one of three results: a) an ace or near ace; b) a screen, or c) a short serve. Therefore if overcompensation is going to be a problem, you are better off overcompensating on the short side (second serve coming) than on the long side (back wall set up).

Jam Serves

The **Jam Serves** are an outgrowth of adventures with mis-hit attempts at crack serves, where the cracks are missed and the result is a serve directly into the center of the court. Although most texts will warn against this occurrence, the truth is that such serves can be extremely effective. These serves, which are purposely struck so as to rebound directly into the receiver's body, are called **Jam Serves**.

(Serve 5) the **Jam and Fly** is one of my favorites because it has the ability to tie a receiver in knots. It should be hit with maximum power about three feet high



on the side wall right at the short line. The rebound will take the ball nearly to the back wall, but that's okay, we want it to hit the back wall. The reason is that the velocity and combination of surfaces will cause the ball to rebound off the back wall and fly rapidly back to the center of the court.

It causes the receiver to spin very rapidly and chase down the flying portion of the **Jam and Fly**. Otherwise he'll have to take the ball off the difficult short hop, making any offensive return on his part more prayer than fact.

Additionally the **Jam and Fly** tends to look like a real pumpkin of a serve to the receiver, lulling him into that peaceful state of mind.

Caution: Do not use this serve against former handball players! These people are used to spinning around to take balls with their forehand (strong hand in handball) and they won't be surprised, nor confused.

A corollary to the **Jam and Fly** is (Serve 6) the **Side Wall Jam**. It is more basic than the **Jam and Fly**, but its foundation in theory is well documented. One of the most successful shots in badminton is the sharp bird to the right shoulder. This tends to handcuff the power player (and anyone else for that matter) because the ball penetrates *inside* the zone of power. The same shot, for the same reason, is effective in racquetball.

Serve the **Side Wall Jam** from the center of the service zone (as with the **Jam and Fly**). The ball will strike front wall-side wall and rebound *behind* the server, directly at the receiver. This will create surprise (a serve directly at him) and hesitation (it might be a near-screen) and should result in a weak return because the choice of return cannot be made fast enough by most receivers to handle the **Side Wall Jam** properly.

Both the **Jam and Fly** and **Side Wall Jam** can be hit to either side of the court, thus making service from the center of the service zone the optimum position.

Good variations of the **Jam** are (Serves 7 and 8) the **Wide Jams**. A tip to remember on the wider versions of the **Jam** is to make sure you serve these

serves inside your opponent's forehand power zone. If you make a mistake, be sure to make it to the backhand side.

(Serve 7) is a good example of the **Wide Jam** to the backhand side and (Serve 8) an example of the **Wide Jam** to the forehand side. In both cases the receiver will most likely not be able to accomplish the necessary footwork to get his entire body into the return, thereby minimizing his power.

Note that the **Wide Jams** are served from closer to the side wall, about the same position as the **Z** and **short zone** serves.

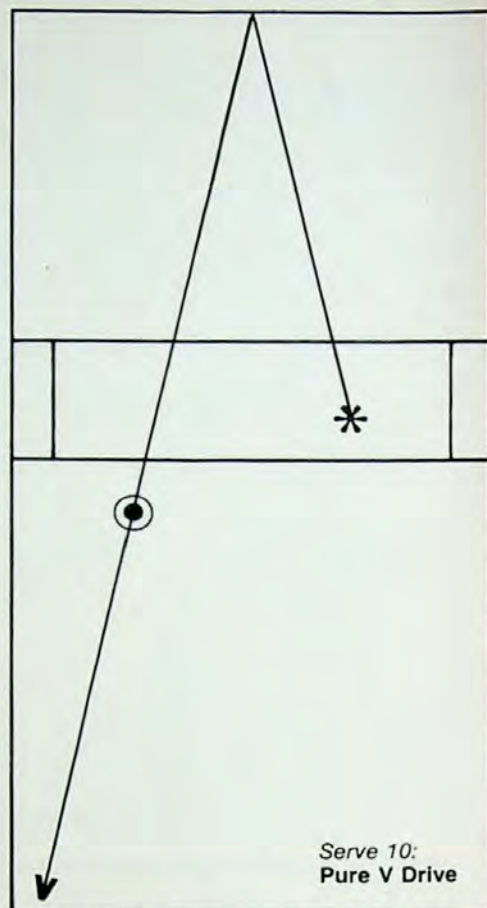
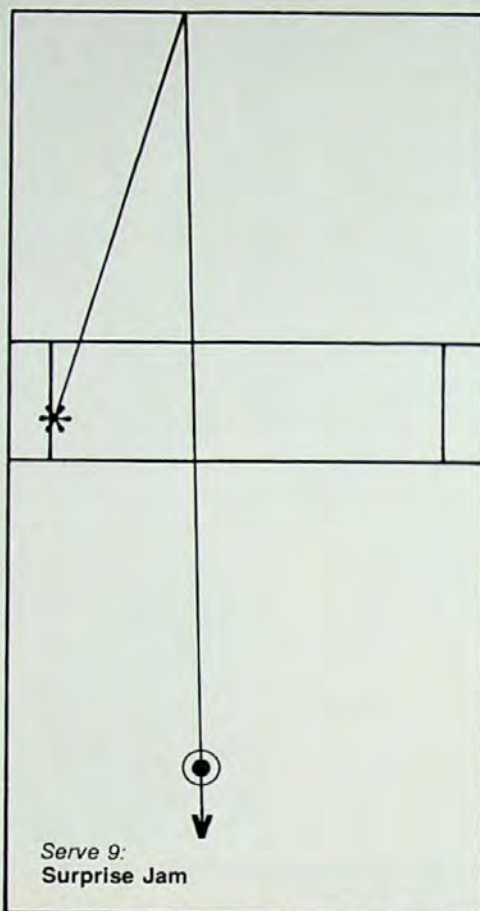
The final **Jam Serve** is the boldest of all (Serve 9), the **Surprise Jam**, and I do mean surprise! Although I've never seen this serve used purposely, I believe it will work as a change of pace.

It's simple enough, just blast the ball right at your opponent with zero finesse. Most receivers figure the serve directly at them is the last to come and you'll probably catch him off balance. Make sure to handcuff him with the power and be sure he's not expecting it. If allowed to take this ball off the back wall, he'll have a clear path down the right line. Remember the name of the serve: **Surprise Jam** and I do mean surprise!

Traditional Serves

There is a reason that I have waited until this point to discuss the **Traditional Serves**. The reason is that most of them are just not all that effective in today's version of racquetball. They are the evolution of the original serves light years ago, and judging by their appearance it is obvious that little to none has been their advancement. My point: the game has changed but the serves have not.

Take (Serve 10) for example the **Pure V Drive**, the staple of power servers across the land. It is true that when phenomenal athletes such as Marty Hogan or Jerry Hilecher wind up and blast the **Pure V Drive** toward anybody's backhand — that a good portion of the time the result will be a weak return or ace. But for the rest of us, us mortals who are not blessed with 142 mph shots, this serve, unless aided by a shadow, can be beaten.

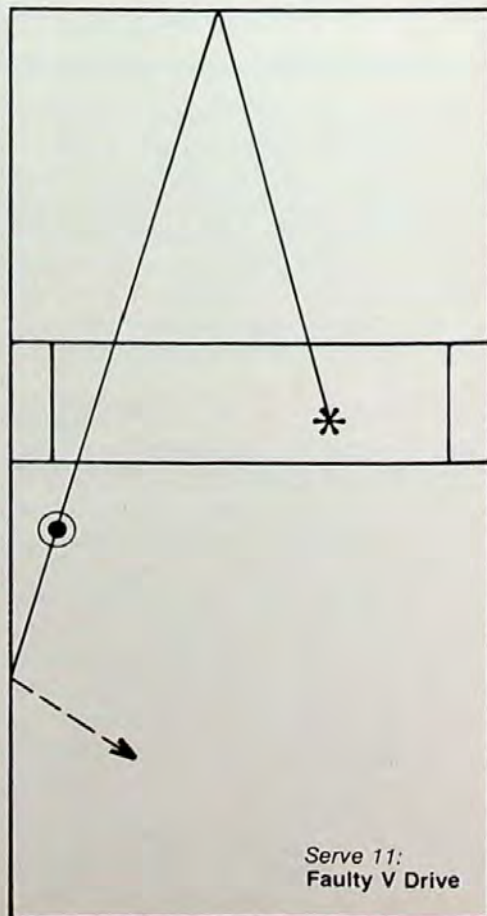


The reason it can be beaten is because of three reasons. First most players in trying to attain power sacrifice accuracy, resulting in an abundance of short serves. Even top professionals have trouble getting this serve over the line enough to make it effective, with only Hogan, Hilecher and one or two others consistently accurate.

Secondly it is subject to being served too high, especially after a series of shorts. Anything struck over two feet high on the front wall will carry off the back wall when struck with maximum force. The result is a clear contradiction of our opening statement, *never give the receiver two chances at the same ball*.

Third, again under the reasoning of sacrificing accuracy for power, the **Pure V Drive** can hit in *no-man's land*, too wide but not wide enough. What occurs is (Serve 11) which you should *not* practice. This is a faulty **Pure V Drive** and after striking the front wall, floor and left side wall, will pop out and sit up for the perfect set up!

One footnote: if this serve is even wider, it then becomes effective as either a **Side Wall Jam** or an **Angle Crack** (coming later).





"The shadow serve . . . causes the referee to play God."

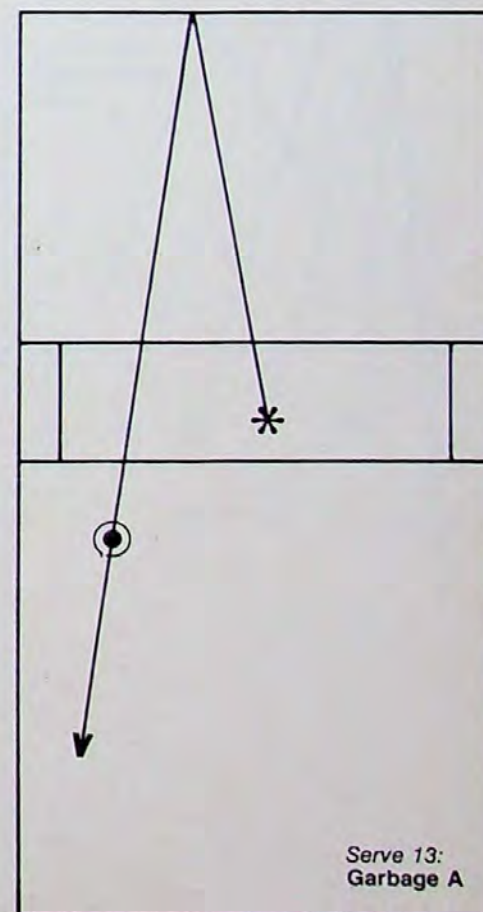
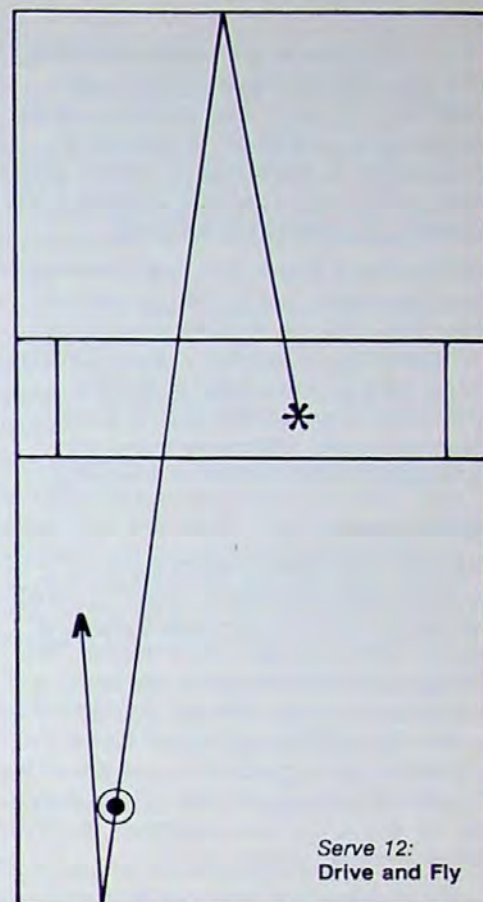
A relative to both the **Pure V Drive** of traditional nature and the **Jam and Fly** of the new breed is (Serve 12) the **Drive and Fly**. This is another serve that you sometimes see by accident as a **Pure V Drive** is mis-hit (that sacrificing for power), and the result is off the back wall so fast that it rebounds to the *short zone* before the receiver can catch up to it.

If this serve can be used in an intelligent and deliberate part of your repertoire it can be devastating. The **Drive and Fly** is struck with maximum velocity about two and one-half feet high on the front wall so that it lands near the back wall and flies back toward front court. The only hazard is the side wall, so be sure the **Drive and Fly** does *not* hit the side wall, for if it does, the flight of the ball will be slowed enough to make it a **Drive and Set-Up**.

What usually occurs after the short attempt at a **Pure V Drive** is (Serve 13) the **Garbage** serve. The **Garbage** is frequently used as the second serve by the pros and top amateurs. The main reason for its effectiveness is that it requires the receiver to hit the ball from *height*, i.e., chest or shoulder height, thereby again diminishing power on the part of the receiver.

Of course the **Garbage** will rarely give you an ace or near-ace, since it is designed to allow a return. The properly hit **Garbage** does not touch the back or side walls and is always over waist high to the receiver. For variation you might hit it with your backhand.

The key to the **Garbage**, of course, is speed, or lack of it. The **Garbage** must be hit at a maximum of three-quarters speed and preferably at nearer to half-speed. (Serve 14) is a variation of the **Garbage**, with more emphasis on down the line.



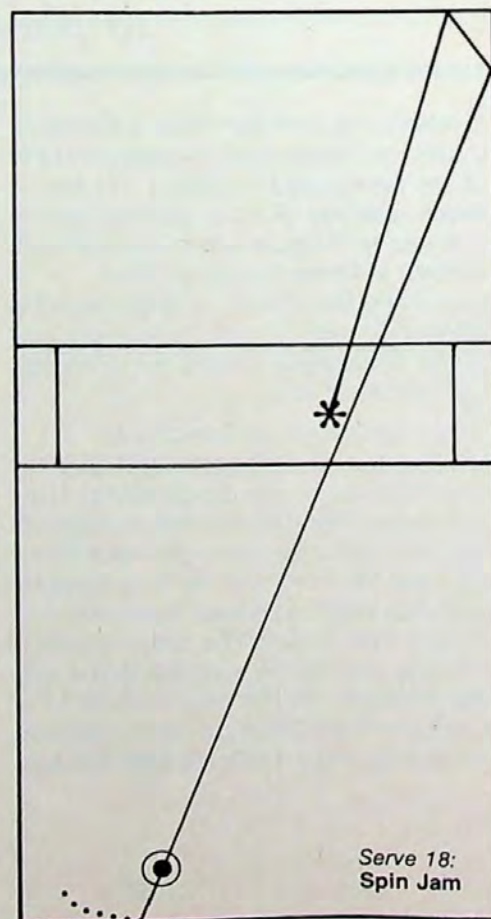
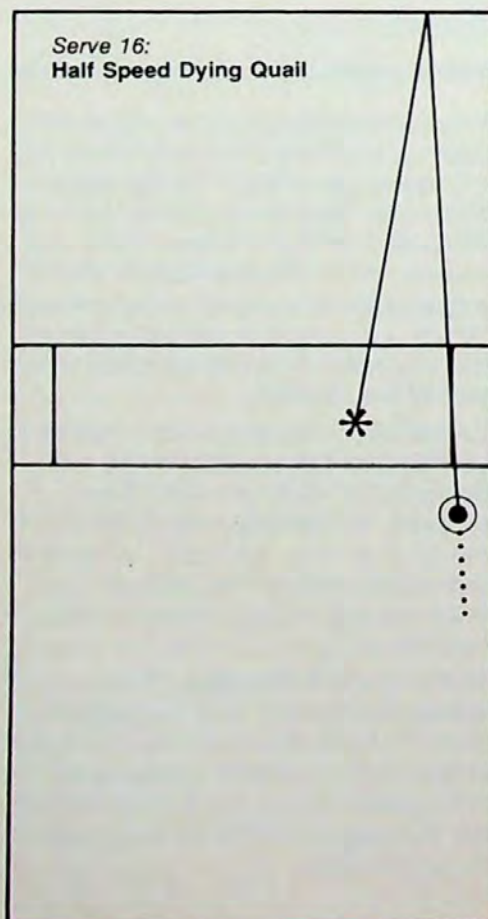
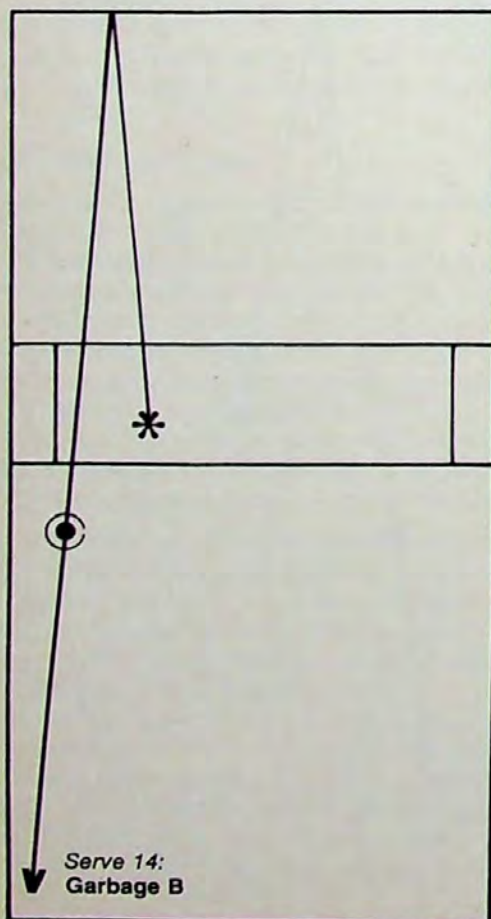
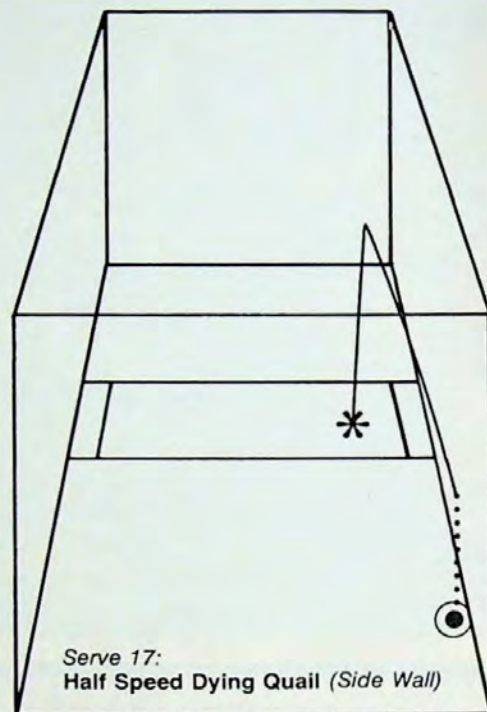
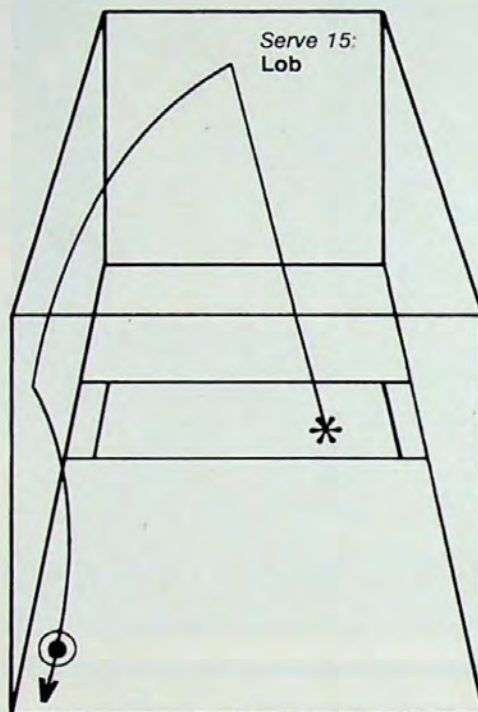
From a bygone era comes (Serve 15) the **Lob**, which 10 years ago was probably the most used serve in a good server's bag. Well hit, it was near impossible to intercept in mid-air and after catching the side wall it would die coming in behind the receiver.

With today's faster ball, the lob is not used as often, but it still can be an effective change of pace weapon. To compensate for the ball speed, the lob must contact the upper side wall shallower than yesteryear and will have primarily defensive value as opposed to any offensive meaning.

Spin Serves

Another intimidating word in racquetball instruction is "*spin*." One of the early myths in our sport was that you couldn't put spin on the ball. The reason that was a widely believed concept is that the server couldn't make the racquetball "*hop*" like a handball player could. The reason it is a myth is because spin *can* be applied, not as viciously as in handball, but effectively nevertheless.

Probably the best spin serve is a



relative to the **Garbage**, which I have coined (*Serve 16*) the **Half-Speed Dying Quail**. This serve is hit with combination backspin and side spin (sort of a three-quarters spin like a pitcher's curve ball). It should be served so that it just clears the short line and you'll find it will take a short, quailly hop and die.

The resulting rush and lunge to retrieve by the receiver should be a sight of abundant joy to the server.

Caution: If you're going to let it hit the side wall (*Serve 17*) be sure it hits the side wall *first*, for if it hits the floor and then the side wall, you've got the makings of an absolute plum for the receiver.

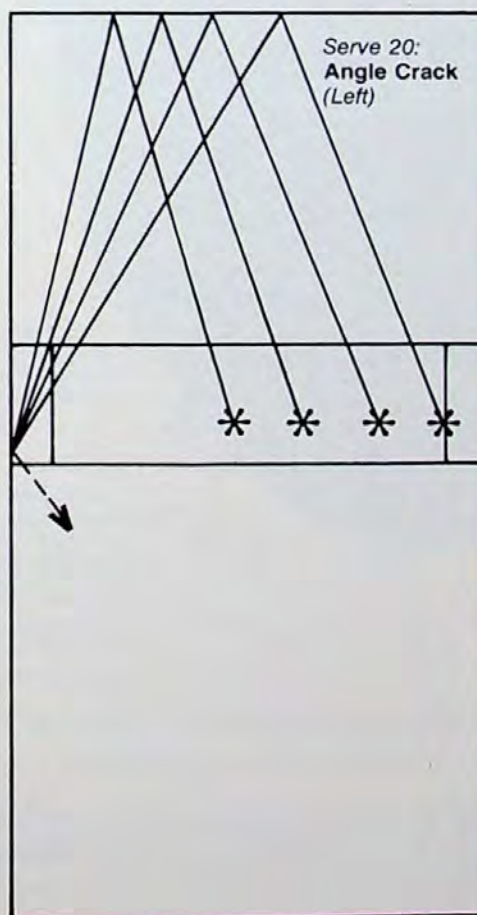
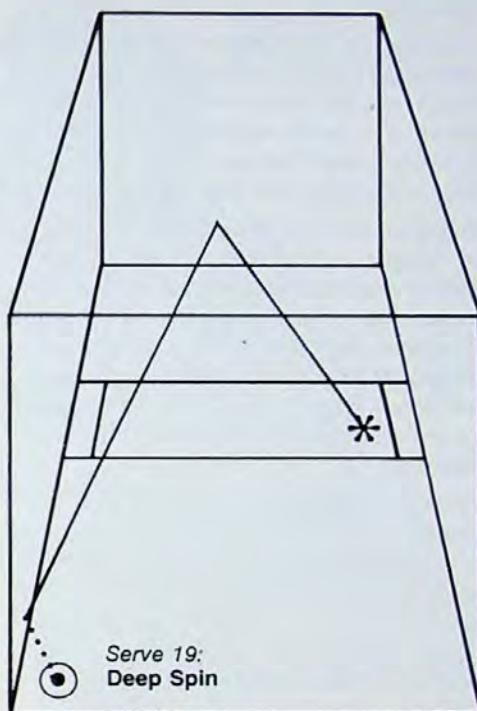
Another spin serve (*Serve 18*) is the **Spin Jam**, originally a doubles serve used effectively by former national doubles champion Dave (D.C.) Charlson. D.C. would use the **Spin Jam** to confuse righty/lefty teams by having the serve hit the back wall in the middle of the court. The spin would then take over and cause pandemonium.

The **Spin Jam** is an effective singles serve as well, and the spin can be applied across your body or reverse, whichever you want. I suggest all players experiment with spin. Determine what it can or can't do for you and incorporate the cans into your game.

A rarely used spin serve is (*Serve 19*) the **Deep Spin**. The only top player I've ever seen use this serve effectively is Jay Jones, who beat me with it a couple of years ago. The **Deep Spin** is hit with extreme underspin (practice this one a lot before attempting it in competition) and aimed directly at the crack at about three-quarters court.

The reaction of the ball is an unknown quantity to server as well as receiver, since the ball will react differently depending if it hits the side wall first or the floor and then the side wall.

If it hits the floor first and then the side wall, the ball will balloon up very high into the receiver's chest. If the ball strikes the side wall first and then the floor, it tends to die near the crack.



Crack Serves

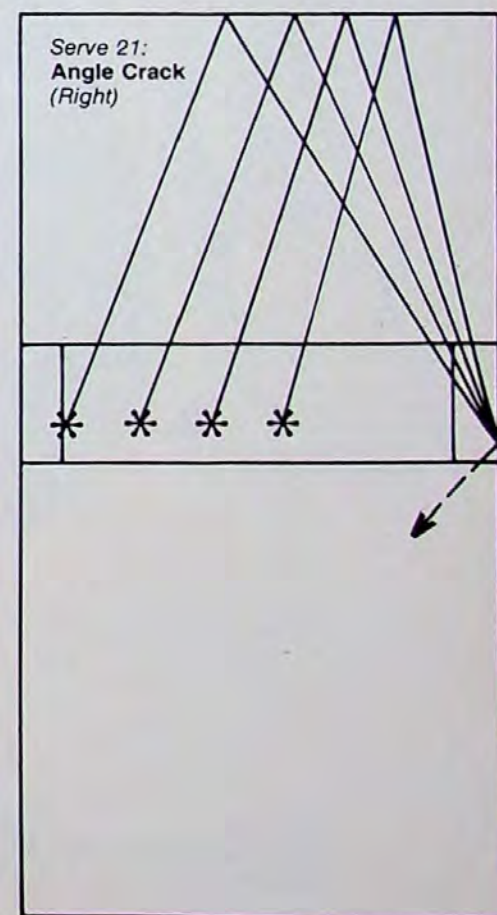
That brings us to the most difficult offensive serves, but the ones with the greatest reward — the **crack serves**. Never in the game will the server be more dangerous than when attempting a **crack serve**, for when successful, it is a point.

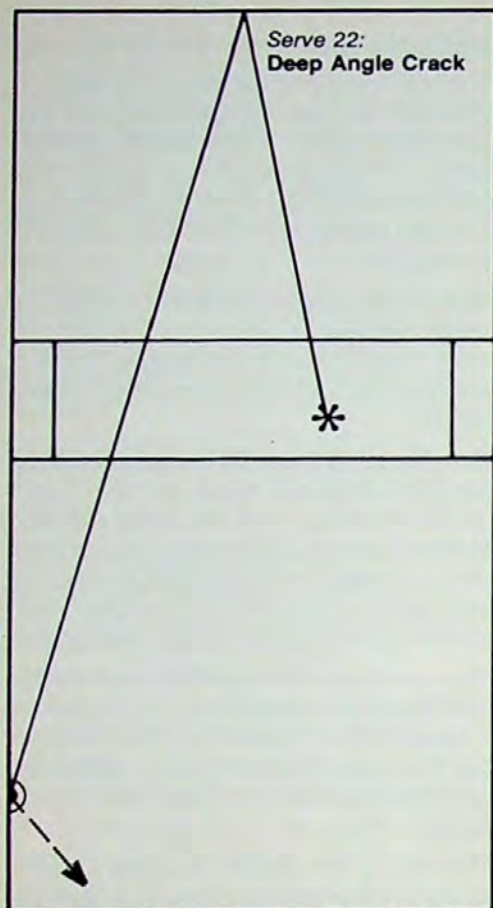
One of the marvelous things about **crack serves** is that you can attempt them from virtually every part of the service zone, all with the same mental picture.

The (*Serves 20 and 21*) **Angle Cracks** are the traditional crack serves. The point of contact with the ball on the server's part must be very low with the point of contact with the side wall being only about one or two inches high and about a foot in front of the short line.

The reason this is one of my favorites is that the odds are with you. If you serve it shorter than expected, it's a short serve. If you serve it slightly longer than expected, it's still a highly effective shot.

The key is the angle. As long as the target on the side wall is the same, only





the angle of rebound off the side wall (if you don't get the absolute crack) will differ. And as can be seen in the diagrams, the **Angle Crack** is good from either side and to either side of the court.

The (Serve 22) **Deep Angle Crack** is designed to get behind your opponent low in the air and crack out in deep court. It is quite wicked to return, whether or not it absolutely cracks. The key is keeping the ball low.

We should all remember that the land of cracks is treacherous ground. It's rather like going for a bull's-eye every time, and for that reason we should examine the potential hazards. This is wise strategy in any phase of the sport, for none of us is able to hit 100 percent of our shots exactly where we want them.

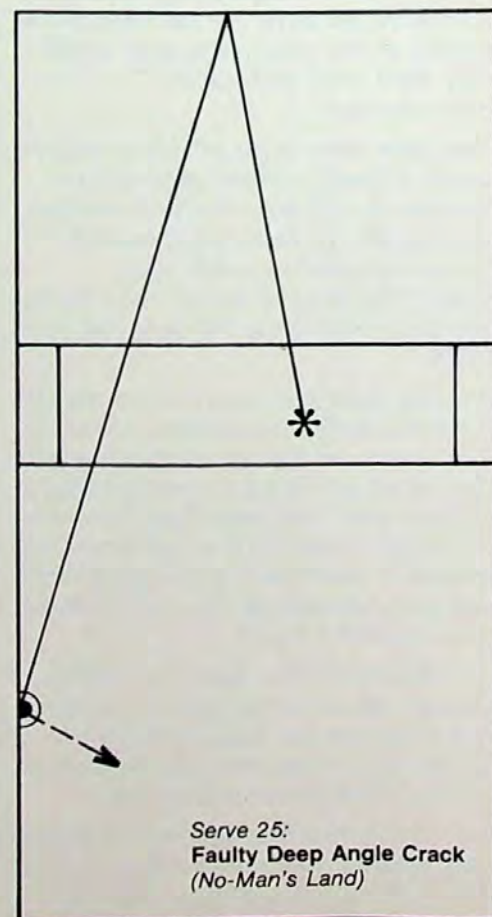
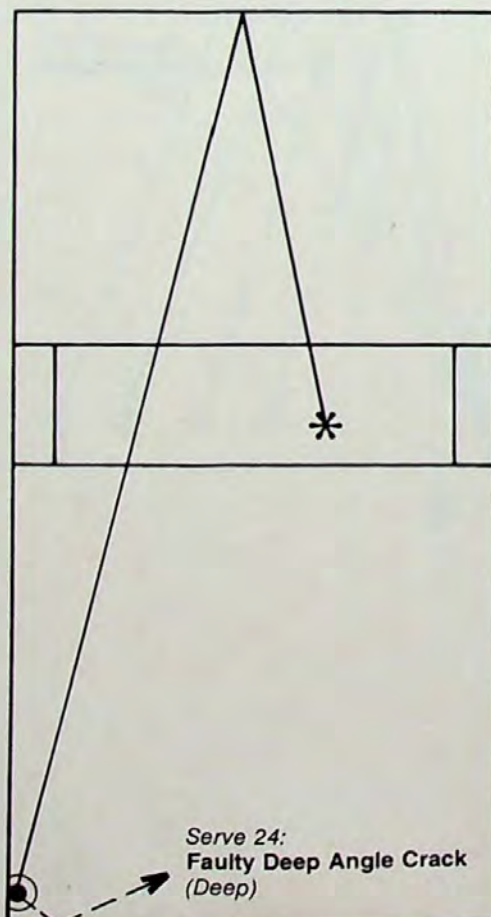
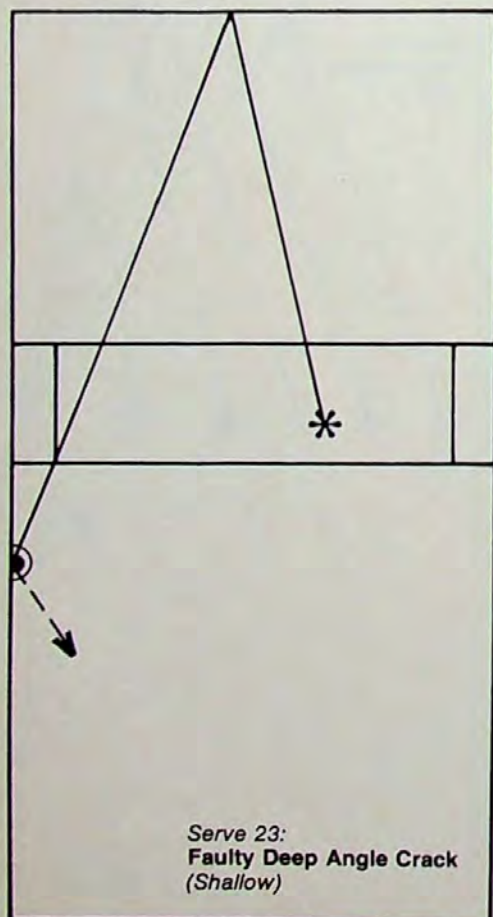
There is a certain margin of error in **Deep Angle Crack** serves and (Serve 23) is an allowable error. This is hitting shallow to the crack and the result is a *short zone* serve which, as we have seen, can be effective. Not to worry if you miss the crack shallow.

If you miss the crack deep (Serve 24) your serve will either be long or will still come around behind your opponent, and unless he's an ex-handballer, this will still be a tough serve to return effectively.

Thus the only thing to worry about is (Serve 25) the faulty crack attempt which is neither shallow or deep, but rather falls in *no-man's land*. This shot will pop up and right into the power zone for the all-time set up on the part of the receiver.

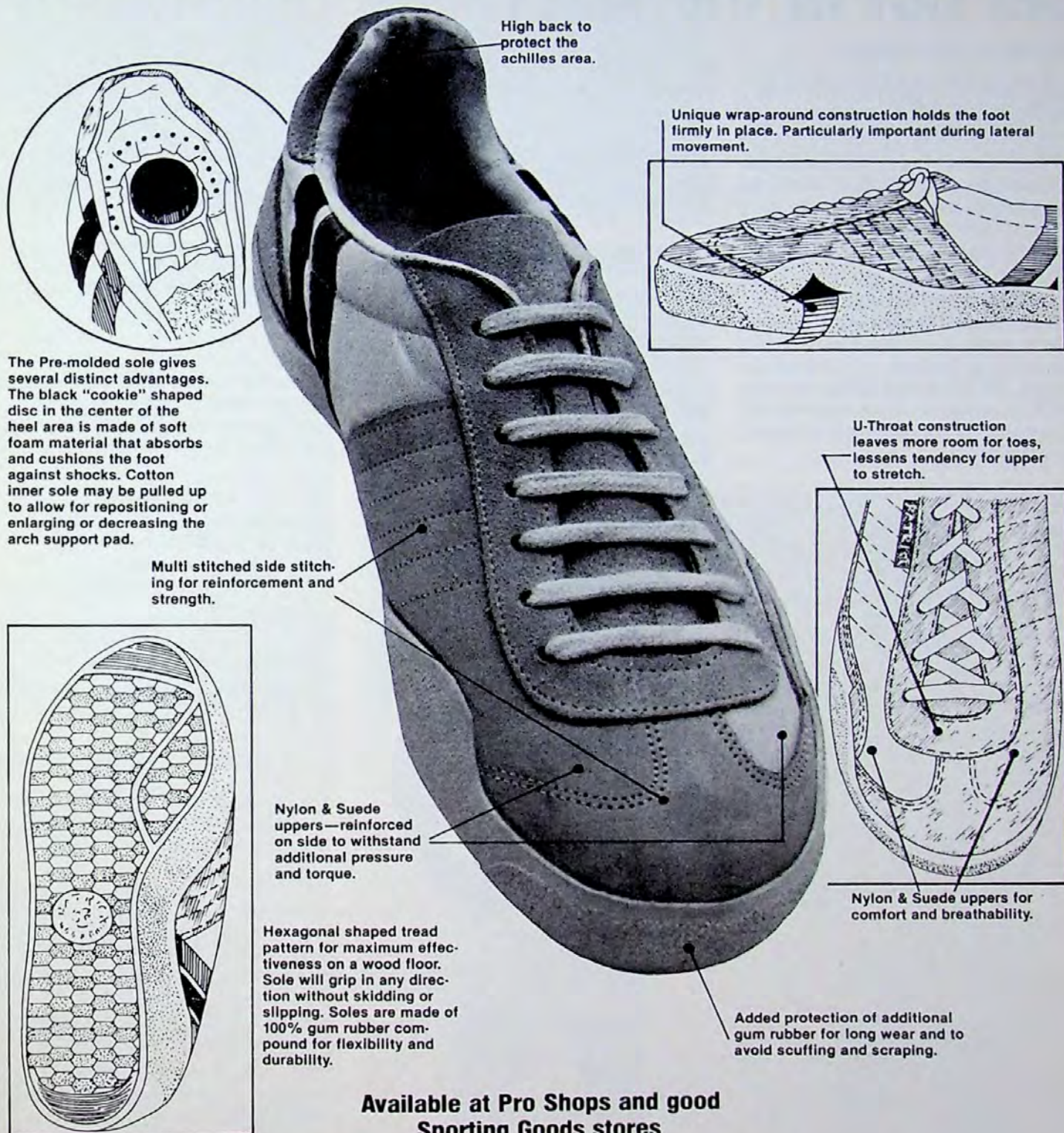
Most power players feel the crack attempts are worth the risk. As long as you're careful, the results can add 8-10 points to your game almost overnight. ●

Next Month:
Serving techniques
Serving to weakness
Second serves



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For a Better Game — Get out of the way!

by Steve Strandemo

A good game of racquetball should proceed at the same tempo as a good game of basketball: fast and hard. The crowd loves it, and the players love it.

But sometimes a basketball game will start to drag, because a referee is blowing his whistle every 20 seconds, and there is an endless parade to the free-throw line.

Most of the fouls in basketball are called as a result of the rules of position being broken: a moving screen, an illegal pick, going over a guy's back, charging. And the rules get broken for one of two reasons: either someone is not playing fair, or someone doesn't know the rules.

The same circumstances apply to racquetball, and produce the same results: a slow game, hindered (literally) by penalties, and no fun at all. Most of the problem stems not from a desire to cheat, but from an uncertainty about a very important rule.

Of course we're talking about the avoidable hinder.

The rule book defines "avoidable hinder" thusly: "*A hinder or interference, not necessarily intentional, which clearly hampers the continuance of a rally; results in loss of serve or point in tournament play.*"

In weekend play it can also result in the loss of friends.

More simply put the rule means: "Get the hell out of the way." You cannot stand between your opponent and the front wall, and you cannot get in the way of his swing. If you do, you lose all the way around. You may get hit by the ball, or his racquet, or both, and you will lose the serve or the point. Do it consistently, and you'll lose the opponent, too. He'll stop calling you for a game.

Remember the rule; the interference needn't be intentional. Most avoidable hinders are not called on cheaters, they're called on players who just don't get out of the way, whether from lack of know how or proper practice.

The avoidable hinder relates to position, and of course position is the name of the game. When you are practicing position, you also, automatically, are practicing the avoidance of the avoidable hinder.

The best way to approach it, then, is to think of the lack of hinders as the presence of good, solid position.

For example, if your opponent is going to hit a shot from the back court near the right wall, your best position will be to his left and three to four feet behind the service line, toward the middle of the court but shading to the right. You want to be assertive in assuming your position, but also reasonable.

Open Lanes

If you are in the proper position, you leave all his lanes open, as you are supposed to. He can go down the line, can use the right corner for the variety of pinch shots, or he can go cross court. Meanwhile you are in the best position to get a high percentage of his shots.

If you take a position a little farther to the right, as in Photos 1-5, you'll block his cross court angle, and, of course, if you stand directly in front of him you block the down-the-line. If you cut off his cross court shot and he hits up the



Matt Matthews is Steve Strandemo's opponent in these photos.

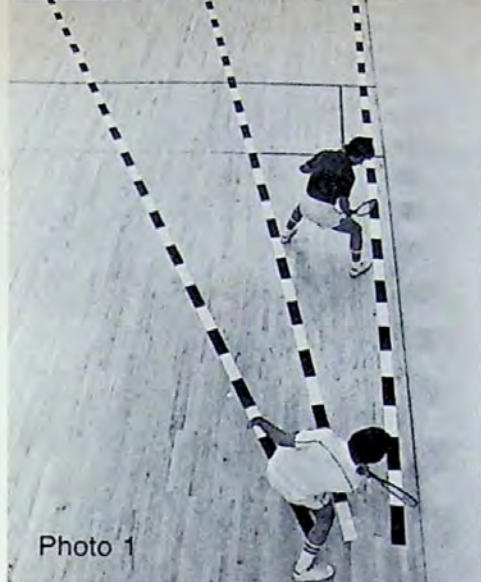


Photo 1

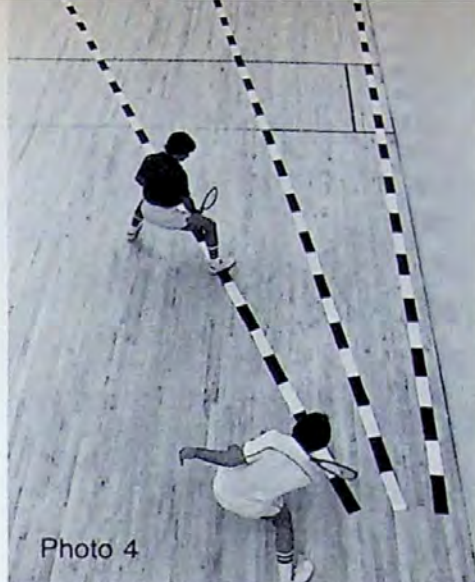


Photo 4



Photo 2

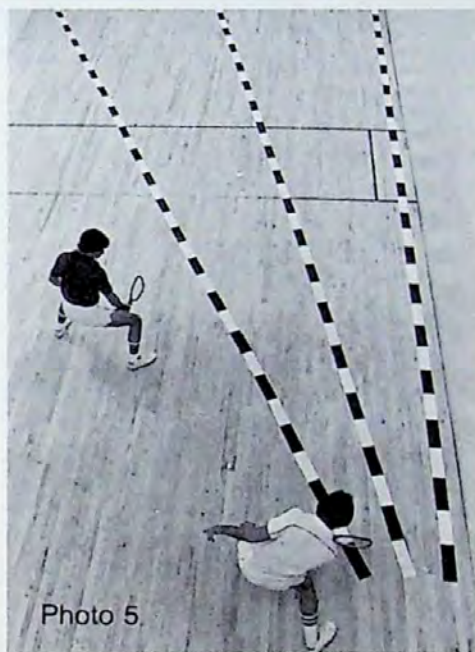


Photo 5

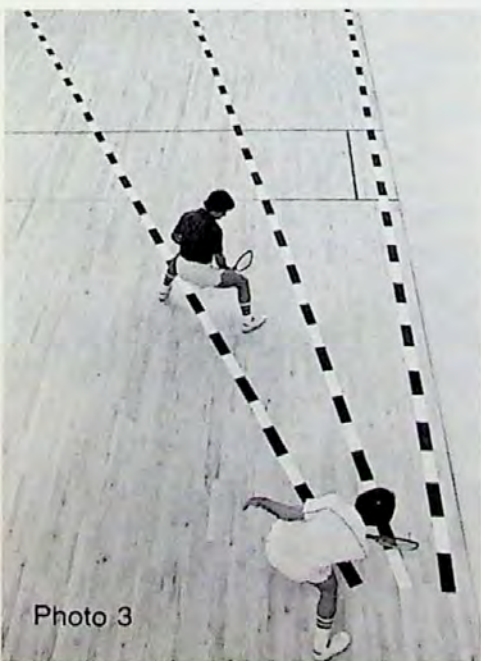


Photo 3

Photos 1-5. The key to assuming the proper position when your opponent hits from near the wall is to be aggressive, but reasonable. In photo 1 the defender is being unreasonable, blocking both the down-the-line shot and the cross court, and he will be called for an avoidable hinder. His position in photo 2 also is illegal, but this is one of the more poorly interpreted rules in racquetball. He is giving the hitter the shot down the line, but he is blocking the cross court angle, and that is illegal. The best legal position is shown in photo 3; the defender is being assertive, since he does not have to give his opponent a shot to the opposite corner. But he has left open the down-the-line, and the crosscourt, while maintaining a good position to cover a high percentage of his opponent's shots. In photo 4 the defender is shading too far left, so he can't cover a shot down the right wall. Photo 5 shows him so far out of the play that he couldn't possibly reach even a mediocre shot down the line.

line, an avoidable hinder probably won't be called. But if he goes ahead with the cross court, and rips it into the back of your thigh, then, of course, the avoidable hinder will be called, in tournament play. In after-work play, mere ill will is the result, and isn't that fun?

Many of the difficulties with the avoidable hinder occur in the middle of the court (Photos 6 and 7). All players know how important it is to control the center of the court, and as they struggle for this position, they often wind up in each other's hip pockets. Many shots are blocked in the tangle, and many swings interfered with.

Many times it's a judgment call; the referee must decide whether the player had the opportunity to make a full and proper swing. A player called for an avoidable hinder might argue that he couldn't possibly get out of the way, but the referee is in a good position to see if

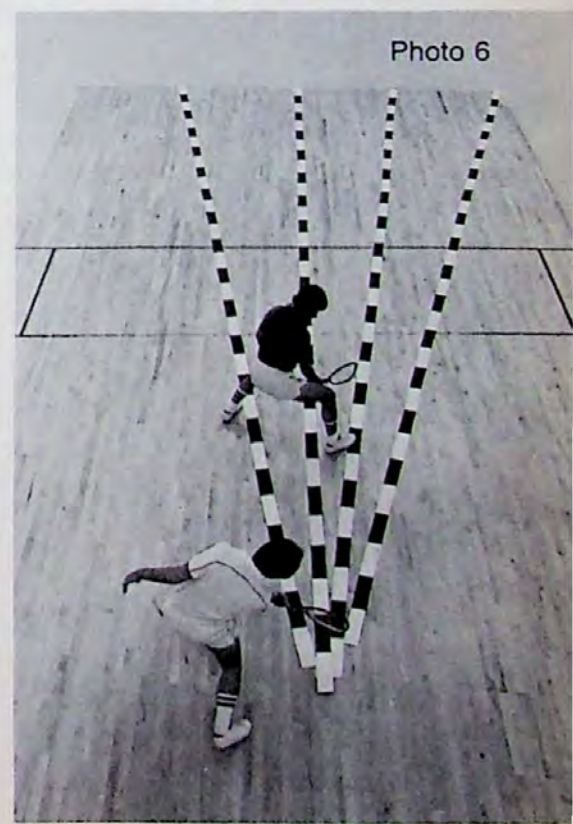


Photo 6

a player is moving too slowly. If, in his opinion, you're moving too slowly, he'll call an avoidable hinder.

The best strategy is: don't get hit with the racquet. It's your fault if you get hit, and it hurts in more ways than one. You can get out of the way however slow you think you are. It's amazing how quickly people move when they see they are about to be hit by something.

As for the jam up in the middle of the court, you just have to play within a framework of mutual respect, or it'll be nothing but chaos out there. You have to *pull* your opponent out of the middle of the court with good shotmaking. You can't *push* him out bodily.

If you serve from the middle of the court, you must drop back diagonally to one side or the other, to a good position, so you give your opponent behind you a clear shot at the front wall.

Everyone should know that. But even

with the serve, the agreement breaks down, because of confusion or lack of awareness of the avoidable hinder rule. This has not all been the fault of the players.

For a long time, in tournament play, the referees called very few avoidable hinders. But without that discipline, it got to be a war out there, just like an NBA game that gets out of hand. The ref has to keep control in a physical game like this.

As racquetball became more sophisticated, its leaders began to recognize the need to "*clean up*" the play, and the referees started to call more avoidable hinders.

Wild Kids

Of course that didn't solve the problem overnight. It's like letting kids run wild in the classroom for a couple of weeks, and then the teacher says suddenly, "*You can't do that any more.*" Well you know what the kids are going to say: "*Ha! We did it before, and nothing happened, and we're gonna do it some more.*"

So it has taken awhile for this new awareness of the avoidable hinder to spread. You'll still hear questions at clinics from people who think some forms of shot blocking are legal. But in most parts of the country people have become used to the rule, and have found how much fun an unhindered game can be. They agree that the quality of play improves immensely.

Photos 6 & 7. Many avoidable hinders occur in the middle of the court, where both players are struggling to maintain control of that area. In photo 6 the defender, by standing directly in front of the hitter, is committing an obvious avoidable hinder, because he is blocking the hitter's shots: a pass down the right wall, a shot straight at the front wall or a cross court pass. The defender's legal position, photo 7, opens up all these lanes while keeping him near enough to field a high percentage of his opponent's shots.

Photo 8



In recreational play, or in practice, there won't be a referee to call hinders, but that doesn't mean they should be ignored.

It doesn't pay, in the long run, to get avoidable hinders called on you in a tournament because you didn't call them on yourself in practice. You should always practice playing the proper position, as a matter of basic strategy, and as we said, it also will keep you out of avoidable hinder trouble.

Watching the ball is at least 75 percent of maintaining good position on the court.

Keeping an eye on the ball requires some movement, naturally, but your stance always should remain relatively open with relation to the front wall (Photos 8-11).

You can move more quickly from that position with just a couple of short, quick steps or one long stride, to field a shot to either your forehand or backhand side. But if you turn completely around, facing the opponent more than the front wall, you may get jammed up trying to spin 180 degrees in a fraction of a second.

Your stance does not have to be completely open. If it is, you may have trouble covering a shot down the left wall. The best position is a quartering

Photo 7

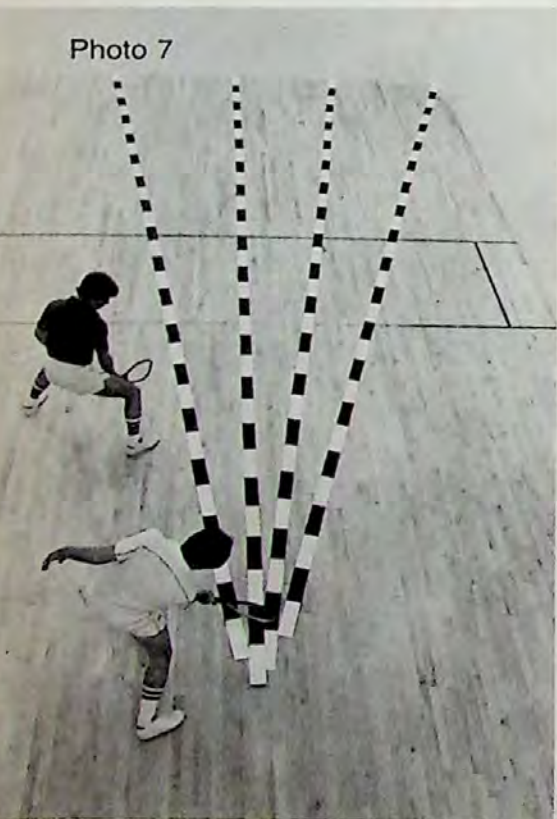




Photo 9



Photo 10



Photo 11

Photos 8-11. Proper stance is important in watching the ball, and therefore maintaining good and legal position. In photo 8 the player's stance is almost completely open to the front wall, which is all right but is not the best position to cover a shot coming down the left wall. Photo 9 is the best one, with the trailing foot a foot or so behind the lead one. Note the width of the stance, and the bent knees, ready to move. The sideways stance, photo 10, is acceptable, though perhaps rotated too much; it's a complete spin-around to get a shot hit cross court to the forehand. The stance in photo 11 is bad; the player is so turned around he'll have trouble covering any shot hit with decent velocity.

one, with the trailing foot a foot or so behind the leading one, your body pivoting at the waist. If you turn completely sideways, at a 90 degree angle to the front wall, you're in good position to take shots to that side, but you are rotated a little too far to move easily to any crosscourt shots.

Watching the ball also allows you to "read" your opponent's shots. If you watch the ball, you also are watching your opponent, and pretty soon you can begin to anticipate the shots he prefers to try from various parts of the court. That makes it much easier to cover the hitting zones that he is likely to use. If he always hits right up the lane when he's near the wall, then you can, from your proper position near the middle of the court, "feel" in that direction and cover the shot.

At the same time you are staying away from avoidable hinder trouble you are opening up the game, and both of you are having a good time. The biggest kick in racquetball is beating your opponent with good shots, not by standing in his way. ●

To learn about hinders from a referee's point of view see Dan Bertolucci's *What's the Call?* Ask an Expert in this instructional section.

APRO Teaches . . . Lessons for Two Beginners

Reprinted from *Contemporary Racquetball* with permission of Contemporary Books, Inc., Chicago. Copyright © 1978 by Chuck Sheftel and Arthur Shay.

Chuck Sheftel, president of the American Professional Racquetball Organization for teaching professionals, and Arthur Shay, sports journalist and photographer, have created *Contemporary Racquetball* for beginners who want to learn on their own. The book's series of one hour lessons also provides excellent review for players who've had some lessons and for teachers who want to use Sheftel's techniques with their own students.

Third Lesson

1. Warm up before entering court (5 minutes)
2. Review briefly the technique of taking shots off the back wall (take a few angle shots for a refresher) (5 minutes)
3. Explanation and practice of the lob and drive serves (8 minutes)
4. Short discussion of doubles and cutthroat and positioning for doubles and cutthroat (6 minutes)
5. Drills
 - a. Lobbing on the serve and for back-wall shots (8 minutes)
 - b. Serve the drive (7 minutes)
 - c. Point and serve, with return (8 minutes)
6. Play (10 minutes)
7. Wrap-up (3 minutes)

Warm-up

Warm up before entering court if possible. Jog in place, do stretches and the racquet-down-the-back stretch with left hand tugging the racquet away from the right hand. Add 10 sit ups.

Review

Alternate with your partner at hitting or throwing the ball to the rear wall at various angles, then hitting the ball to the front wall. After each of you has successfully accomplished this, try hitting the same shot to the left corner and then the right corner of the front court, waist high or lower. If you prove proficient at this, add a little power with your cocked wrist.

The lob serve and the drive serve

The lob serve is deceptively simple. The player just stands in the service zone and hits a relatively easy shot. Characteristically this shot hits high off the front wall, then bounces back a few feet past the short line near the left wall, right to the opponent's backhand. The opponent generally will have to move towards the wall to make a return and often he or she will try to clobber the slow moving ball and bobble it in the attempt.



Good eye and racquet coordination is shown in this excellent stroke. The ball is hit well out in front of the body. This is what the good student's swing should resemble.



To serve this ball to the left start serving a little to the right of center. To make it go right, stand a little left of center.

Most pros use the lob as a second serve after missing with an ace — an unreturnable serve — on the first serve.

A good lob should not go too deep into the court because it could easily bounce, hit the back wall, and come up for an easy kill shot by your opponent.

At this stage of your development, you should use the lob as a good sure way of getting the ball across the short line to your opponent. The more of a power hitter your opponent is, the more frustrating to him or her will a nice puny lob be.

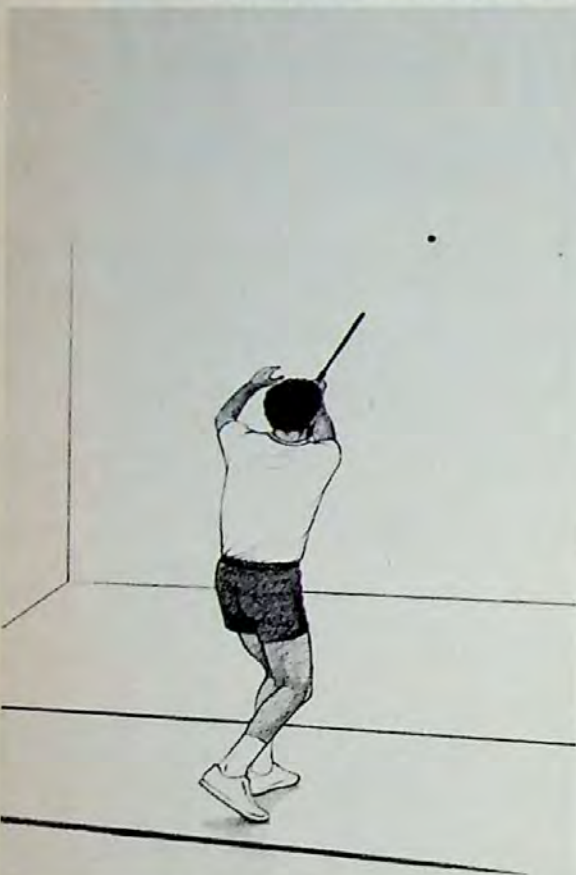
As you advance, you will learn to use the lob as a nice change of pace after you notice a certain tenseness or tightness in your opponent, who was expecting you to powder the ball.

The drive serve is a low forehand, hit solidly on a line to the wall. The body's weight should shift from the rear foot to the front foot as you swing about knee high. Generally, it is aimed about three or four feet from the corner on the left front side, and it comes back to your opponent's forehand a foot or two past the short line, ideally going dead as it hits the point at which the floor joins the wall, for an ace.



The feet are, of course, an important part of the racquetball stroke. Here the student's feet have become criss crossed and her chances of stroking the ball properly are diminished because the body resembles a pretzel rather than the coiling and uncoiling spring it should be for racquetball.

Lob serve is made, high on wall, usually aimed to opponent's backhand, deep in court.



Doubles and cutthroat

Mixed doubles and "cutthroat" are growing in popularity. For one thing three or four players on a court cuts down the cost of play. More importantly doubles play is fun.

The basic thing to practice and remember in doubles is that each player should play one half of the court as if that half were his or her own entire court. Shots at or near the center should generally be taken by the player with the closest forehand. In case of potential collision players should resort to one or the other using "the only two words that should be spoken on the court," according to USRA President Bob Kendler, which have been widely accepted since he introduced them into handball: "mine" and "yours." The first player to say either word designates the taker of the shot.

In summary doubles play at your stage of development gives you a court that's only 10 feet wide but 40 feet long. Wear safety glasses because you can be easily hit by a racquet.

In "cutthroat," where three continuous scores are kept — the server against the other two players — the trick is to use your numerical advantage to keep the single opponent off balance and racing from side to side and front to back.

Cutthroat is also excellent exercise for a good player opposing two beginners, especially one who likes to run a lot.

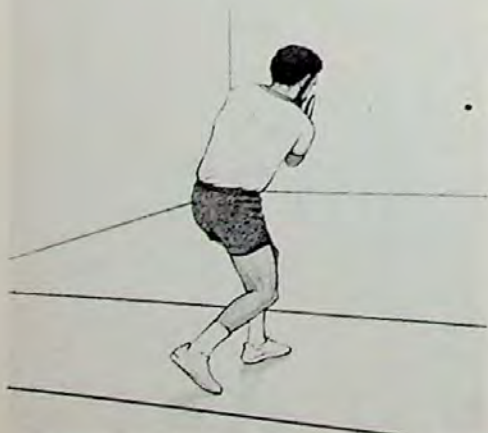
Drills

Lobbing for back-wall shots

This is a practice regimen in which novice partners can be of great help to each other. The idea is for the server to practice lobbing the ball to the receiver in different areas of the deep court. Hitting these lobs a little higher and a little deeper will cause them to hit the floor in deep court and bounce to the back wall. The receiver must then return the shot off the back wall.

These lobs can be angled into the deep corners, giving the receiver practice at playing those angles. Alternating gives both players this kind of crucial practice. Think of the lob serve as an extremely basic tool, especially if your accuracy is slow in developing. The lob is a good safe shot that the pros almost always use as a second serve and as a change-of-pace tactic against a tense player.

If three or four of you have remained on the court after doubles or cutthroat, practice lobbing to alternate sides. All players can in this way get some practice, either serving or returning. Let these serves and returns blossom into volleys. Keep them going if you can.

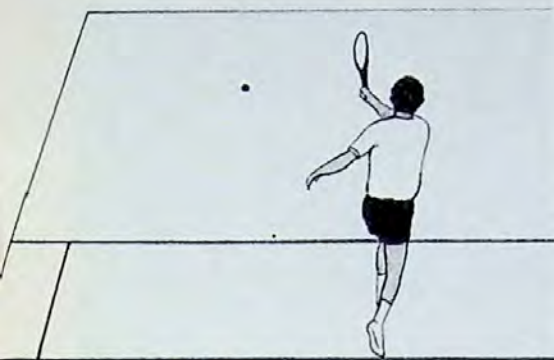


Player prepares to turn around for a quick glance at opponent's handling of his serve. This should be an over-the-left-shoulder look.

Instead of waiting for the ball to come just a bit more forward, towards her front foot, she has rushed her swing, bobbling the ball and causing her instructor to scratch his beard in dismay.



Perfect server and receiver positions. Note receiver is bent slightly forward, alertly ready to go wherever the ball is. Server will, ideally, turn around in the instant after serve, to see his opponent's shot and thus gain a jump on his next shot.



The drive serve

After two, three or all four players have achieved a degree of accuracy at the lob serve and return, you are ready for the drive.

The drive is more difficult than the lob because it is a faster, more powerful shot requiring somewhat more accuracy in its execution. You must keep your body weight well back until you swing and meet the ball with the racquet straight up and down, aimed at the front wall. Your body should be parallel to the side wall, with the front foot pointing to your target on the front wall.

After you hit the drive serve, you must take a swift peek at your opponent and step back a couple of feet from the short line to take up a center court position, which will be discussed in the Fifth Lesson. For now you should understand that when you serve hard and fast you're likely to get a return shot that's equally hard and fast. Be ready for it, because you will have somewhat less time to set up your defense when play begins with a drive than with a lob.

Point and serve, with return

At this stage of your racquetball progress you should be able to predict where on the front wall and, by extension, where on the court your serves will go.

This is where you get a chance to do the Babe Ruth number — point to a spot on the court and hit to it. Do series of three serves to one spot in the receiver's court. Let your receiver (or receivers if you're now practicing with two or three other players) return your predicted serves as well as he or she can. Keep the volleys going.

Ultimately, of course, you will try to mask your serves' intentions, incorporating a degree of deception and surprise in your game. (Brumfield says that Hogan could make five more points a game if he would make his 140 miles per hour serve more deceptive!) But long before you are ready to

deceive your opponent, you must develop enough control to put the ball where you want it to go. This, as in all other ball sports, is called "control."

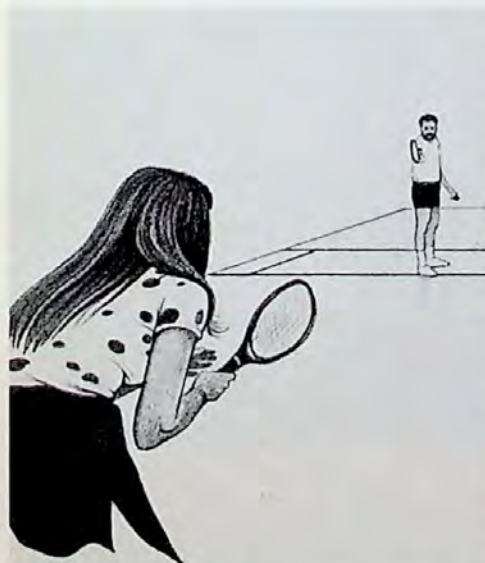
Play

Whether you are working out with one, two or three players in this lesson, you should use this 10 minute free-play period to work on your weaknesses and, if it's a friendly, constructive group, on everyone else's. If someone needs more drive-serve practice, let him or her have the time. As receiver work on positioning yourself for the shot and getting sideways so that you can get the power inherent in your body behind the ball. This gradual growth of confidence begins in racquetball after you've made a few good zinging shots. The swing feels good and the racquet meets the ball off that front foot or a little behind it, if by experiment you find that's where the crescent of your swing imparts the most power.

The point is to practice creatively with goals, rather than just hitting the ball around at random.

Wrap-up

More of the same. Take a one minute break and see if you can find agreement with your partner or partners on what each of you has been doing both right and wrong. Errors that baffle you are sometimes easily visible to others. Two common correctable faults at this stage: not bending from the trunk enough to meet the ball and "scooping" at the ball underhanded like a softball pitcher, instead of getting sideways. ●



In the point and serve drill, the server predicts where his serve will go, giving his partner time to get set properly.

If you have questions about the American Professional Racquetball Organization, contact APRO President Chuck Sheffel at 312-945-4678.

What's the Call?

Ask an Expert . . .

by Dan Bertolucci

Avoidable Hinders

In this month's "What's Your Call?" we're going to clarify situations in which a referee calls an avoidable hinder.

Rule 411 in the USRA rulebook states that "an avoidable hinder results in an 'out' or a point depending upon whether the offender was serving or receiving." Causes of avoidable hinders are: "failure to move," "blocking," "moving into (the) ball" and "pushing."

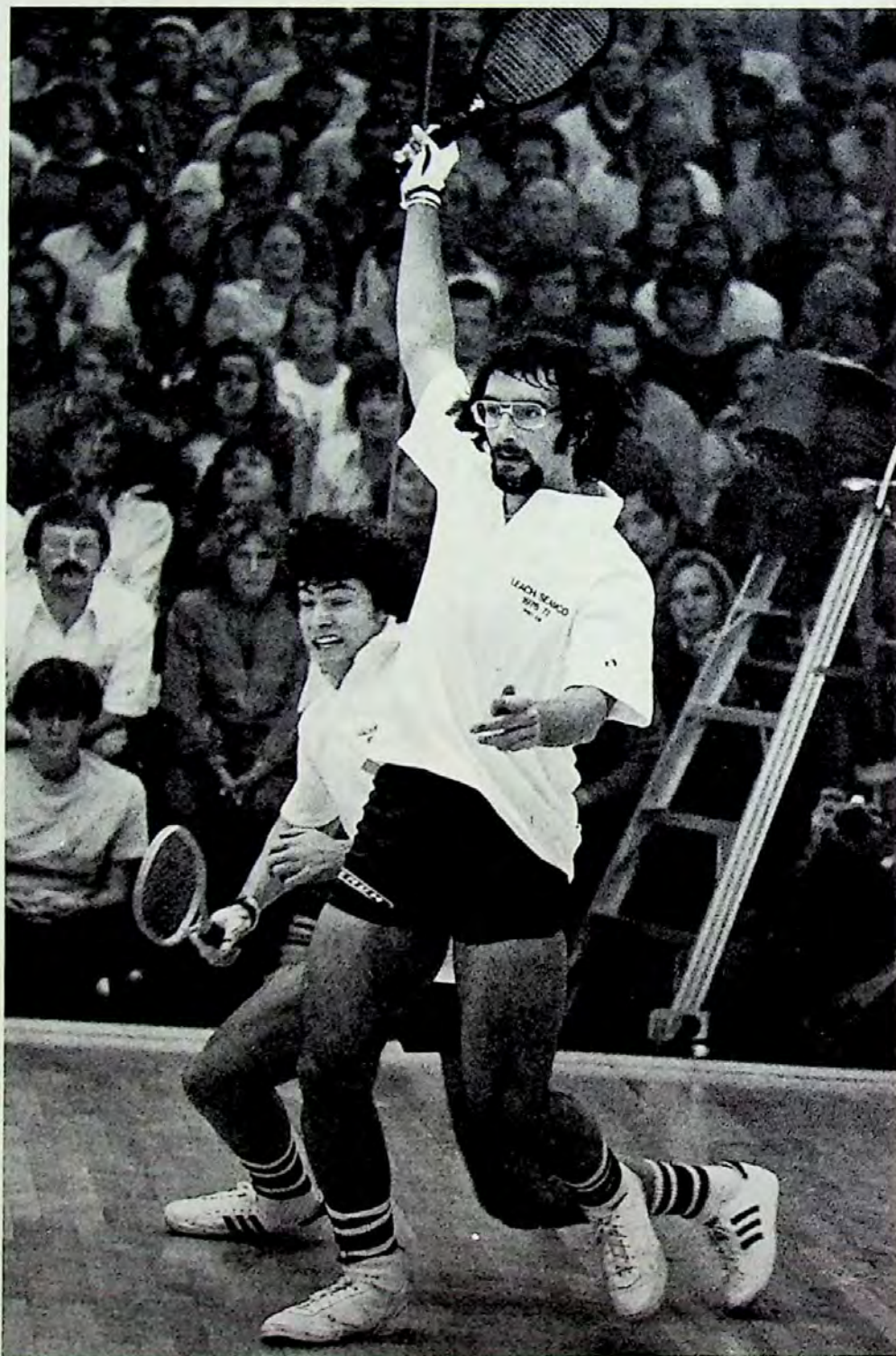
Examples:

1. Player X is pinned against the wall. He moves into the open court and in doing so creates a hinder. This is avoidable because had he not moved no hinder would have occurred.
2. Player X goes for a kill from center court, but leaves the ball up. The ball rebounds back to center court and Player X does not move in time for Player Y to take her shot. This is a "failure to move" avoidable hinder.
3. Player X is anticipating a kill and is moving forward when Player Y drives the ball down the line. Player Y must reverse his movement and uses Player Y's back to push off, creating an avoidable hinder.

As everyone realizes, a player is entitled to a fair chance to see and return the ball. It is the responsibility of the player or team that has just served or returned the ball to move so that the receiving player or team may go straight to the ball and not be required to scramble around an opponent.

When a referee feels that a player has been denied access to the ball by his or her opponent, the referee calls an avoidable hinder. That doesn't mean an *intentional* hinder — an avoidable hinder call puts no stamp of guilt on a player. (Though it is true that an intentional hinder *would* be called "avoidable.")

A referee does *not* call a hinder (avoidable or otherwise) if the referee feels that the ball could not have been retrieved under *any* circumstances. The men's match photo typifies a "no hinder" situation because Charlie Brumfield killed the ball and Marty Hogan would not have been able to return it even if Brumfield were not in his way. ●



See Steve Strandemo's "For a Better Game — Get out of the way" in this month's instructional section.

Send your questions about rules to Dan Bertolucci, Associate Coordinator, USRA, 4101 Dempster, Skokie, IL 60076. Bertolucci, who referees regularly at pro stop matches, will answer those questions of most general interest in his "What's the Call?" column.

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Do What I Say — Don't Do What I Do

by Chuck Leve

That's the philosophy of many top professional racquetball players who — with only a few exceptions — tell their friends and students to wear eye guards, but don't wear them themselves.

Steve Keeley served his well known backhand garbage serve along the left wall but his inexperienced opponent rushed the serve and ripped a backhand cross court pass. The ball never reached the front wall. Instead it collided with Keeley's left eye, instantaneously blinding him in that eye.

Recovery time: one week. Damage: None permanent. Personal opinion: extremely lucky.

Craig McCoy, age 14 and a promising racquetball player, had just served the first serve of the game. It was short. As Craig turned around to retrieve the ball he never knew what hit him. It was that ball, rebounding off the back wall because his opponent had taken a late hit. A week later it hemorrhaged. Four weeks later he was still in the hospital. Four months later he was still wearing patches over both eyes.

Recovery time: one year. Damage: Slight. Personal opinion: extremely lucky. Six years later McCoy, ranked number four in the world, does not wear eyeguards.

Ken Wong, ranked 10th in the world and on the way up in 1975, looked over his shoulder as his friend and practice opponent, Steve Serot, began his serve return. Serot opted for a forehand overhead cross court kill. Wong's left eye intercepted the ball. He has never played a major tournament since.

These are some of the experiences of racquetball professionals, the people who some claim are either too quick, or have too much control of their shots to ever get hit or hit somebody in the eye during a game of racquetball.

Steve Keeley with eyeguards.



In researching our series on eyeguards in racquetball we have found a disturbing and underlying current among today's top players — most of them don't wear eyeguards.

Despite the horror stories, despite personal near tragedy these pros continue to go to bed with Lady Luck without contraception.

"I know I'm taking a big risk," said McCoy, "and maybe I'll start wearing them again. The eyeguards I wore were distracting. I should wear them, though. Everybody should wear them."

As more and more professionals utter those famous last words, one wonders who will be tapped for the first major career-ending eye injury. Wong, who perhaps already qualifies for the award, suffered his injury prior to the era of decent prize money. The stakes are far higher today.

Marty Hogan, the man who stands to lose the most if a serious eye injury comes his way, refuses to wear eyeguards with consistency, although from time to time he'll have them on in tournaments.

"I wear them all the time in practice," he says. "I figure my chances of being hit are greater than most since I spend so much time on the court."

"Sometimes I wear them in tournaments and I may start wearing them again. It can happen at any time — tournaments or practice."

Steve Mondry, former northeastern amateur player, picked up stakes and moved to San Diego to make a career of racquetball. He befriended top pro, Steve Strandemo, and they developed a workout routine. One day the routine was interrupted when Mondry's left eye stopped a Strandemo shot.

Craig McCoy. When will his luck run out?

Steve Mondry



Recovery time: one week. Damage: none. Personal opinion: extremely lucky.

John Lynch, ranked 12th in the nation and on his game, had just finished practicing. The time was 24 hours prior to his first match in the 1976 National Championships. On his way to the shower John was talked into 11 more points, just for the fun of it. At 10-7 his opponent tried to fly the serve. The shot hit John's eye. He ended up in the hospital.

Recovery time: one week. Damage: none permanent. Personal opinion: extremely lucky. Outcome of his match: injury forfeit. John Lynch has never since reached a ranking of 12th. "When I went to the hospital I was so scared I was literally shaking and crying," says Mondry. "The doctors said I'd be all right, but that I was lucky. I've worn eyeguards ever since."

And no wonder. Strandemo, one of racquetball's greatest control players ever, is still bound to mis-hit a shot now and then, as are all players, pro or amateur.

"I've been hit three or four times while wearing the eyeguards," says Mondry, "and I've had no injury of any kind. It's scary to think that one freak accident and I'll never play again."

Back to Hogan, whose picture has adorned a model of eyeguards in the past: "A lot of top pros don't wear them because they think the eyeguards are ugly. Many who wear them in practice don't in tournaments for that very reason."

"Vanity is a problem with some players," says Strandemo. "I used to think that way but I don't any more. When it comes down to looks or health, looks is a distant second."

Yet the history of eyeguards is more than a vanity problem. In racquetball's



Steve Strandemo with eyeguards.

Marty Hogan with eyeguards.



early days the only available eyeguards were those being used in handball, and although adequate for that game, they just didn't do the job for racquetball.

But as time moved on and the incidence of racquetball eye and facial injuries continued (more and more beginners taking up the game without adequate safety instruction), manufacturers began to produce better models of eyeguards.

Keeley, recognized as the first pro to consistently wear eyeguards, gave them up "after a fair try of about two weeks." When he was hit a few months later it was a different story.

"I realized that I had to wear some protection every time out," he says. "At first I tried lensless glasses. Now I wear a standard eyeguard."

Are eyeguards distracting? Judge for yourself.

Products that Protect Your Eyes

"Not at all," says Hogan.

"The only adjustment is psychological," says Keeley.

"There is no visual hinderance at all," says Mondry.

And now that the market is inundated with outstanding eyeguard products, what could be the hangup?

For one many players still believe that eyeguards will slow their anticipation by blocking their vision. This argument continues that if Player A wears eyeguards and Player B doesn't Player B will have an advantage of an unknown number of points per game and will therefore win.

Some people say Strandemo disproved that theory when he won the JACK IN THE BOX Classic earlier this season.

"Vanity is the number one reason why pros don't wear eyeguards," says Keeley. "I guess these guys won't learn until their eyeball is rolling along the short line."

All pros, when they teach, encourage eyeguards. It's like the parent who tells his kids never to smoke as he lights up another one.

"I recommend that anyone who plays racquetball should wear eyeguards," says Hogan. "It's the first thing you should do before stepping onto the court."

But when he's not playing well, Hogan goes first to his eyeguards, ripping them off and whipping them out the court door.

"Eyeguards are like seatbelts," says Mondry. "Most players figure it won't happen to them."

Rather than end there, two final questions must be asked of the professional players.

"If eyeguards were made mandatory, would not the vanity, psychology and opponent's advantage arguments be destroyed?"

Would you, the professional, be willing to take the lead by example, and wear eyeguards on a mandatory basis, not only for your own good, but also for the good of the game?"

Seven of the major eyeguard manufacturers answered *National Racquetball's* request for photos and information about their products. Here's a rundown on these eye protectors, available at pro shops and sporting goods stores or through eye doctors and optometrists.

Champion makes two eyeguards. The premier model gives added nose protection. No lenses in either style.



Eyeguards by Solari, without lenses, come in six models.



Saftiguard eye protectors, without lenses, come in styles for players who wear eyeglasses and for those who don't.



Pro-tec's eyeguards are made without lenses in two styles - one for players who wear eyeglasses.



The Rainbo Prescription All-Sport Eyeguard comes with impact-resistant plastic lenses ground for the individual player.



Criss' Short-Sport is a frame in which a player can have his or her prescription lens inserted.



Next month:
The answers to those questions.

Court Shorts

Sport-Specs, with clear plastic lenses, are available in the model shown here, and in a wraparound style that Kareem Abdul Jabbar wears when he plays basketball.



Mort Leve, former executive secretary of the United States Handball Association and founder of the National Court Club Association, has announced the formation of the World Court Club Association to promote court clubs and work with products manufacturers. Governing board members of WCCA, headquartered in Phoenix, AZ, include Rick Coyne, Follett Recreation Division, Chicago, general manager; Dr. Joseph Bannon, head of the Department of Leisure Studies, University of Illinois, and president of Management Learning Laboratories; San Diego Architect Joseph Pisciotto, and John Kaye, president of Stratford Industries, San Jose, CA, court door manufacturer. . . . A recent story in *Sportstyle*, the Fairchild business newspaper, reports that small tennis retailers are looking to racquetball clothes to ease the slack in the sagging tennis clothing market. . . . Carlson Companies, Inc., with headquarters in Minneapolis, has acquired Omega Sports, a St. Louis based producer of racquetball racquets. . . . Vittert Sports, Ashland, OH, racquetball equipment manufacturer, has added three top Illinois players to its pro advisory staff — Sue

Carow, Nancy Kronenfeld and Denny McDowell. . . The Court House, owners and operators of seven court clubs in the Chicago area, is now assisting clubs in other parts of the country through licensing agreements. Existing licensees include owners who want to improve their operations as well as court club developers. . . . Sports Illustrated Court Club, Inc., has named Barbara Diedrich director of corporate training. The chain, which has its headquarters in Southfield, MI, also appointed John Holohan corporate fitness director. . . . *Off the Wall: Championship Racquetball for the Ardent Amateur* by Charlie Brumfield was a recent Playboy Book Club selection. . . . Racquetball International Corporation, developers of the Sportrooms racquetball clubs and fitness centers, is embarked on a \$7.5 million capital expansion program, according to RIC President Ed Torkelson. . . . Racquetball club owners and managers can pick up ideas about programs and services by joining the National Intramural - Recreational Sports Association, which is holding its 30th annual conference April 7-11 in Atlanta. Executive Secretary Will M. Holsberry at 503-754-3736 has details. ●

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**Barrier
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by Joseph M. Pisciotta



Joseph Pisciotta

Joseph Pisciotta, A.I.A., head of a San Diego architectural firm specializing in racquetball centers since 1973, has developed his expertise designing more than 47 facilities around the country.

Access to racquetball facilities by the physically handicapped is a problem we must all face up to as architects, owners and operators of facilities. Most states now have requirements that must be satisfied. In most instances requirements for access by the physically handicapped must be provided in all *new* facilities; however, some states have the power to enforce these requirements in existing facilities.

We should be considering two aspects of these requirements — the law, and consideration for the person who has physical limitations that make it difficult or impossible to gain access to a large number of public and private buildings.

The attitude of most enforcing agencies is that they recognize the fact that a person on crutches or confined to a wheel chair cannot play racquetball. However this person may wish to be a spectator, or avail himself of other club uses such as exercise rooms, whirlpool

baths, steam rooms, saunas, food and drink service, etc. With this in mind then, the handicapped person must be able to get from his car to the inside of the building without assistance from another person. This means that there cannot be any steps or stairs in his path. All access must be by means of a ramp with a slope of one foot in ten feet, or by means of an elevator, if the amenities are located on an upper floor.

If you have or are planning a facility with the principle entrance on the second floor, let us discuss the ramp approach. A ramp meeting the slope requirements, and intermediate landing requirements would be 150 feet long to serve a floor level 10 feet high. I think it is readily apparent that because of space requirements, the ramp approach is not too practical in most instances.

The second approach would be by means of an elevator. To install an hydraulic elevator — constructing the elevator shaft, equipment room, etc. — we are looking at an expenditure of approximately \$35,000.



The American Institute of Architects and the Rehabilitation Services Administration of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare have produced a Syllabus for a Barrier-Free Environment that outlines ways in which builders can help handicapped persons lead normal lives. This is one of the Syllabus drawings describing a typical problem facing the wheelchair bound person.

The simplest solution, if you can afford the luxury, is to locate all facilities and amenities on the ground floor. This, of course, would apply to new construction. In existing facilities often the local governing agencies will be satisfied if the following conditions are met:

1. Wheel chair access to the lower level principle entrance.
2. Viewing areas on the ground floor level.
3. Toilet facilities, complying with handicapped requirements, on the ground floor level.
4. Handicapped parking space near the front entrance.

Now what about the prospect that governing agencies might change their attitude about wheel chair bound people playing racquetball? We have recently received word from the California Department of Rehabilitation that some thought is being given to requiring racquetball facilities to provide a court or courts that may be used by persons confined to wheel chairs.

Lets assume for a moment that this requirement does come to pass. What are our problems? First, as has been previously stated, we must provide access into the building. Once inside

our locker rooms must be laid out to facilitate maneuvering in a wheel chair. Showers must be provided to accomodate a wheel chair; no water dams (curbs) entering the shower; controls and shower heads must be lowered; lavatories and dressing tables must be at the proper height; toilets and urinals must be accessible, grab bars must be provided at toilets and whirlpool baths; telephones and hair dryers must be at the proper height; floors leading to all rooms including saunas, steam rooms, courts, etc., must be elavated above corridor floors.

I think it is obvious that a retrofit approach in existing facilities is next to impossible. However the fact remains we might be faced with this problem in new construction. I strongly suggest you check this out with your local governing agencies before you advance too far with plans for future construction.

I would be very interested to hear from any readers who have experienced having to comply with requirements for the handicapped in particular communities. ●

New Court Club Listings

Atlanta Sporting House

1515 Sheridan
Atlanta, GA 30329

Chatham Squash and Racquetball Club

484 Southern Blvd.
Chatham, NJ 07928

The Corner Court House

1301 W. Copans Rd.
Pompano Beach, FL 33064

The Court House

707 N. 14th St.
Lamesa, TX 79331

Irondequoit Racquet Club

557 Ridge Road East
Rochester, NY 14621

Lakewood Sports Center

666 Lakewood Rd.
Waterbury, CT 06704

Monterey Racquetball Club

2560 Garden Rd.
Monterey, CA 93940

Pleasure Park Racquetball Club

2303 Highway 70 East
Hot Springs, AR 71901

Racquetball and Health Club

5190 W. Pea Ridge Rd.
Huntington, WV 25705

Racquetball Club of Salisbury

201 Milford Ave.
Salisbury, MD 21801

Racquettime of Dedham

Route 1 — Providence Hwy.
Dedham, MA 02026

Riverside Racquetball Club

62 Valine Ct.
Sacramento, CA 95831

Seymour Athletic Club

2023 E. Tipton St.
Seymour, IN 47274



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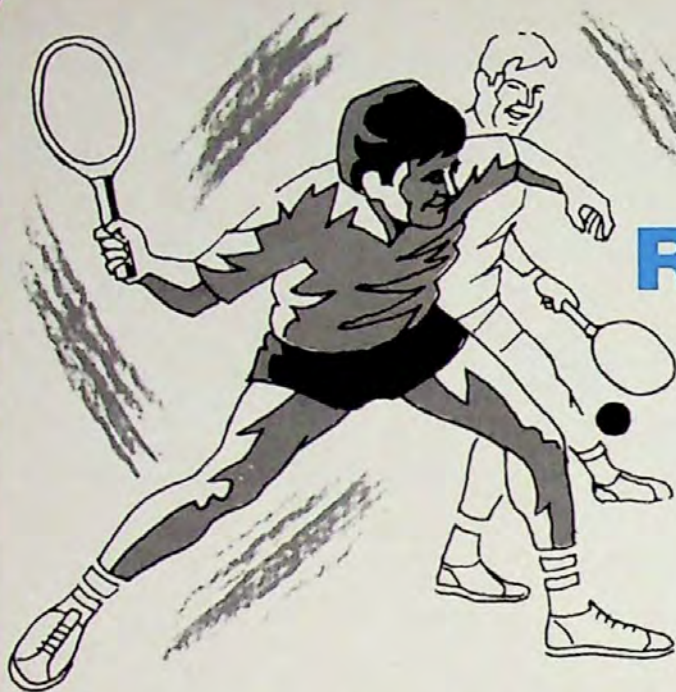
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Women In Racquetball

Carol Brusslan



Tendons Yellow, Muscles Blue

Athlete-Coach-College Professor-Practicing Physician Gabe Mirkin has written a book that every club manager should put at the front desk, right next to the reservation sheet.

The Sportsmedicine Book, published by Little, Brown and Company, has answers to questions a racquetball player would ask about — in the words of the cover blurb — "exercise, training, nutrition, drugs, injuries... and sex."

All that adds up to a good read — a book you can't put down. Mirkin and his co-author, Journalist Marshall Hoffman, wrote a lively medical manual.

To explain depletion, for example, they quote Muhammad Ali. "When the bell rang for the 15th round in the thrilla in Manila against the gorilla, my arms were so tired that I could barely raise them above my trunks."

But it's as a reference book that Mirkin's volume has front desk value. Page 94's "What To Do First" after an injury describes RICE, a 30 minute to 24 hour program to start seconds after you're hurt.

Muscles and Their Tendons



— good coloring material from

The Sportsmedicine Book

RICE, which Mirkin says "you can follow even if you will be seeking a physician's advice," stands for *Rest* ("Stop using the injured part the minute it is hurt"), *Ice* (decreases bleeding), *Compression* (limits swelling) and *Elevation* (keeping injury above heart level so gravity helps drain excess fluid).

Practicing RICE needn't be boring if you pass the time the way some San Francisco orthopedic surgeons do. The doctors, their wives and their friends have been using *Sportsmedicine* as a coloring book — filling in outlines of bones, tendons and muscles with crayons and pens.

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Mellowing Out Competition

Easy Does It in a League While Your Game Improves

by Jean Sauser

If you are a player who believes in improvement through competition, but considers weekend tournament play too grueling and time consuming, try joining a women's racquetball league. Racquetball leagues are growing in numbers as well as popularity because they combine individual competition with team spirit.

Women's racquetball leagues provide a comfortable initiation into competitive racquetball. Georgia Maisel, from the Court House in Northbrook, IL, describes the difference between league and tournament competition:

"I knew I wanted to compete in racquetball, so I entered a single elimination racquetball tournament. For my \$20 entry fee I received a T shirt and my most humiliating on court experience ever. Not only did I lose in the first round of play but the mismatch could not have been more classic. I scored a total of five points in two games against a player half my age and double my ability. The tournament went on three days and I was out in 20 minutes."

"I was on the verge of giving up the idea of racquetball competition when a friend suggested that an easier way to get into the competitive end of racquetball was women's racquetball leagues—that trophies were awarded just like tournaments but that you weren't eliminated from the competition due to the round robin play format."

"So I tried joining a league. What a difference in atmosphere! The competition is fun because win or lose I know there will be another week to come back and play again. Also I stay around after my matches win or lose to meet new players and potential partners. What's more league play is economical. All I pay for is my part of the court."

Georgia Maisel suffered some deflating experiences in tournaments, but a traveling league put her back in racquetball competition.



—Van Fuldauer photo

"Now I am finally beginning to develop confidence in my game and in my ability to improve through competition."

If you are inexperienced in racquetball competition but want to improve your game, the best progression is to move from lessons, to in-club leagues and then into traveling leagues.

Most clubs and racquetball facilities offer both in-club and traveling leagues for women. The in-club league members play between themselves over a period of weeks at their home club. Traveling league members play as a team against teams of other clubs in home and away games.

New Partners from In-Club Leagues

Most in-club racquetball leagues for women are conducted at different times during the week to accommodate all kinds of player schedules. These leagues are run for players whose skills range from novice through advanced.

The in-club leagues act as mixers—a way for women at a club to find new partners to play with. And since facing different players improves their games, most women prefer these leagues to session after session of racquetball lessons.

In the Portland, OR, area in-club leagues have helped hundreds of women develop into good racquetball players. Jennifer Harding, manager-owner of Milwaukie Racquetball Club, describes how she set up the in-club leagues.

"When we opened our racquetball club, I felt that we needed a program for novice players. To provide people with organized racquetball activities we started racquetball mixers. Ten players would come and play games to 21 points with different opponents. This took one hour. On the half hour or after one game (whichever came first), they would switch partners. The program ran over a nine week period and became very popular among the club members."

"After a few months some players improved more than others. With new players always coming in and others emerging from lessons our mixer evolved into divisions of play. We ran two divisions, A-B and C-Novice."

"Today our mixers are formally organized in-club racquetball leagues with A,B,C and novice for women as well as men. We've scheduled different days and times to accommodate as many players as possible. Records of match results

After a practice game Nancy Martin, left, gives teammate Cheron Vail some pointers on her footwork.



Cheron Vail does the clearing house work for schedules and scores for her San Diego nighttime league.

These are just a few of the game hints that are given to players between games during practice or at meets. Win or lose most of the players consider coaching tips as valuable as racquetball lessons.

"A month ago I lost pretty badly to a player I thought I would easily beat," says Melba Davidson of Gladstone, OR.

"One of my teammates pointed out to me that my opponent defeated me by playing ceiling balls to my backhand. I would error and she would put away the point.

"So I began to practice backhand ceiling balls. My game has improved considerably since then

are kept and at the end of a nine week period, the player with the most points in each division wins a prize.

"Our in-club leagues keep our courts filled. At the same time they keep our players improving, enthusiastic and in shape."

The in-club racquetball league is a logical progression from playing on an infrequent basis to playing on a regular basis with the added plus of competition and prizes thrown in. Most in-club leagues run all year round. They provide an excellent opportunity to play racquetball a little more seriously than once in awhile and allow you to improve your game at a pace that is comfortable for you.

The Upbeat Traveling League

The most formal and inspiring of all racquetball leagues is the traveling racquetball league.

Barb Harris, program director of Milwaukie Racquetball Club, describes how her club provides women with racquetball team experiences.

"When our club decided to try organizing a traveling racquetball team for women, we began by hosting a few exchanges between our club and a few other nearby clubs. We waived guest fees for each other and took turns paying for each other's courts. This worked out to one-half a court cost per player and the women who participated in this program were crazy about it.

"The word got out into the racquetball community about how much fun the exchanges were, and now the directors of all the clubs and racquetball facilities in our area are meeting to organize a more formal metropolitan league for women's racquetball teams."

In other areas with more experienced players traveling

leagues consist of racquetball teams representing divisions of play from novice through advanced (or C to A players).

Traveling leagues make for positive thinking. If you lose your racquetball match, you are not out of the competition — your team still has a chance to win. For you, personally, there will be another week with another opponent.

"When I win I feel super," says Carol Wohlner of SkyHarbor Court Club in Northbrook, IL.

"When I lose, I jet upstairs to cheer for the rest of my team hoping that enough of us can win so we can still win the meet. If our team loses, we all share the defeat and somehow it isn't so bad.

Celebrating a team victory or bearing the burden of a team loss develops spirit among the members of a traveling racquetball team. Players tend to practice harder and usually attend team practices religiously.

Traveling team practices involve round robin competition among the team members themselves. Most clubs provide a coach to help players improve their games. But if no coach is provided, the players coach themselves.

The team imposes an understood discipline — a feeling that if you don't play frequently between matches you're letting the team down.

At team practices, as well as at team meets, players help and encourage each other toward more sophisticated racquetball strategies.

"Hit Z serves to her backhand!"

"Watch it, your serves are coming off the back wall."

"She has the wrong forehand grip, hit the ball to her forehand and you'll win!"



Ready for the competition are Courtsports team members, left to right, Peggy Gardner, Nancy Martin, Cheron Vail, Alessia Martin and Carolyn Langford, who arrive in a nearby club via a carpool.

and I am confident that I'll never lose a game again on backhand ceiling balls."

Racquetball traveling teams often can obtain outside sponsorship for items such as balls, T shirts and racquetball bags, keeping player cost down to court fees. Wilson, for instance, provides balls, T shirts and racquetball bags to players competing in the Chicagoland Racquetball and Handball Association leagues. The racquetball clubs in this league pay a \$75 per team entry fee that covers the cost of awards presented to players on the winning teams at the end of the season. And the clubs waive guest fees for team play, so players only have to pay for practice court time.

Julie Buckun has been an A team player in the Chicagoland Racquetball and Handball Association leagues for the past three years. She says the price of the leagues is the best investment a player can make in her racquetball game.

"For what works out to little more than one half a court cost every time I play, I have a really nice shirt, beautiful racquetball bag and free balls to use at racquetball meets. Then you can add coaching and all the fun I've had meeting new players around Chicago. I consider it a bargain."

Fitness is a bonus for playing on either a traveling or in-club racquetball league. The regular weekly commitment finds players building up their racquetball endurance on the court while shedding a few unwanted pounds.

"When I was playing for fun, I would skip games a week or two at a time," says Tessa Parker of Milwaukee. "As I started gaining weight and getting out of shape, I would go back to playing and feeling like I was starting all over again. In this condition I was always short of breath and 10 points short of my best game."

"Now I've joined several leagues. I'm fit, playing 10 points better than I would have ever believed and I'm having a great time!"

Leagues for Working Women

Most women's in-club and traveling racquetball leagues meet during the day. But there are special night leagues for women who work by day and want to play racquetball at night. Many working women form racquetball leagues through their companies.

Nancy Martin of Courtsports in San Diego, CA, describes the evening leagues she has helped to create and promote.

"Courtsports has an A/B team and a C/advanced novice team. We participate in an inner city league."

Every Wednesday night we play another team from another club. One week is a home game, one week is an away game. There are five women per team. The league is sponsored by the WRL (Women's Racquetball League), which coordinates the scheduling and the scorekeeping. There are usually trophies for the winning team.

"The WRL ran its first women's tournament in the beginning of October. This was a significant event because it was really the first women's tournament successfully held in San Diego."

"Courtsports is also trying to arrange a stewardess's league as we are located near an airport. I am working with the Industrial Recreational Council (an organization composed of major San Diego companies) and am setting up intercompany leagues. If the response is great enough, we can have women's and men's leagues."

Any number of women who play together can form a racquetball league or become part of a racquetball league. If you are taking racquetball lessons, ask your instructor what your facility offers in the way of league competition.

Or you can contact your state association, to learn about league events in your area and put you in touch with the players in charge of league activities.

If you're new in town or new at a club, let a league put you in the mainstream of racquetball play. Or if you find yourself becoming bored with the same players, join a league and find that slightly better player you'll want to work to beat. When you begin to become competitive about your racquetball game, try a league before you try a tournament. A league is the best way you can improve your game in an atmosphere of fun.

Making What Shows Most Look Good

Some women wish they could play racquetball in an ankle length toga. Then they wouldn't have to worry how their legs look.

But comfortable shorts are another matter. Even with knee socks thighs are there for the world to see. Unfortunately, as we get older, the thighs sag first.

But the tide can be stemmed. And though running and bending on the court are a big help, many women need to supplement that action with exercises designed specifically to firm and trim these vulnerable parts of the body.

Here are three routines that are practically guaranteed to provide better looking legs, the objects most in evidence as a woman chases around a racquetball court.

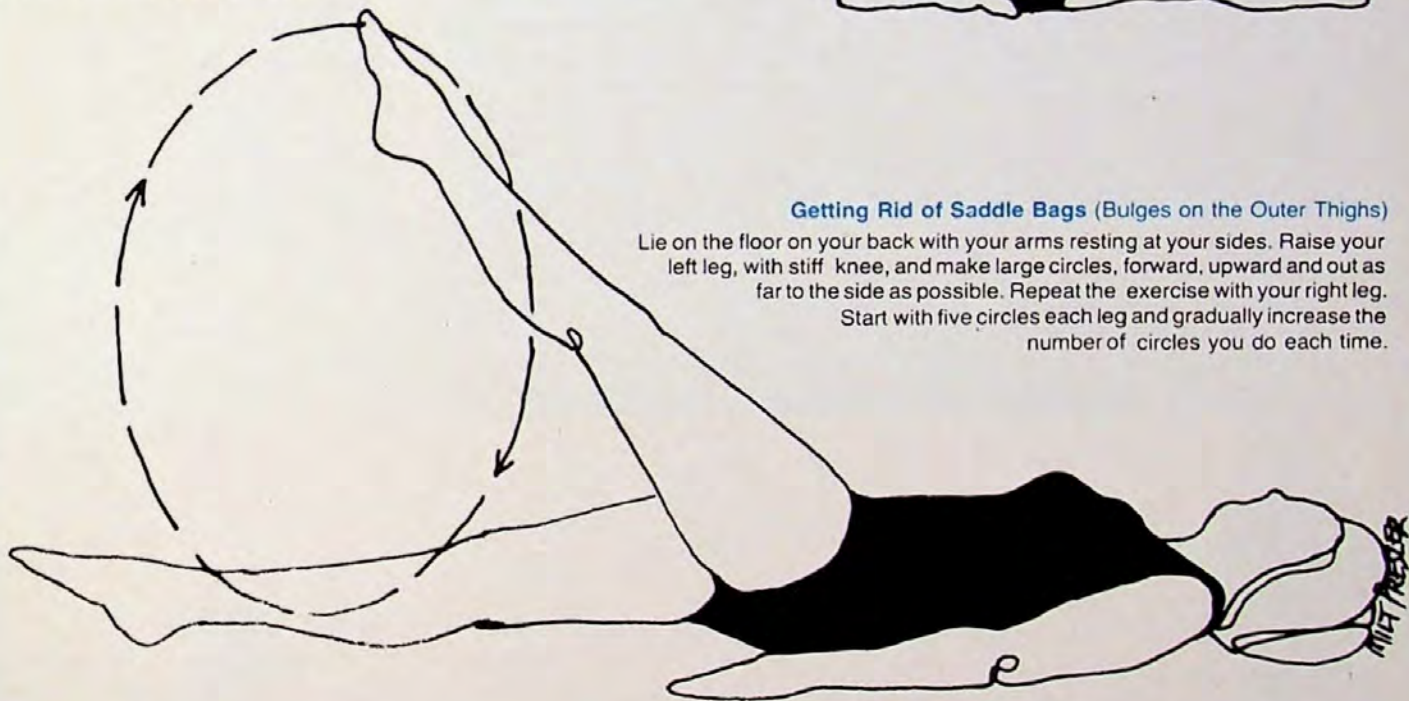
Firming legs

Lean back on your elbows with the end of your spine pressed into the floor. Keep your knees straight as you lift your legs up with your toes pointed. First lower your right leg three inches from the floor, then your left leg. Work up to 20 fast scissors kicks.



Getting Rid of Saddle Bags (Bulges on the Outer Thighs)

Lie on the floor on your back with your arms resting at your sides. Raise your left leg, with stiff knee, and make large circles, forward, upward and out as far to the side as possible. Repeat the exercise with your right leg. Start with five circles each leg and gradually increase the number of circles you do each time.



Slimming Inner and Outer Thighs

Start out again on the floor on your back with your arms at your sides. Cross your legs, right leg over the left, and bend your knees up to your abdomen. Straighten your legs and lower them to the floor with your feet widely separated. Hold your legs an inch or two above the floor. Repeat the exercise with your left leg crossed over the right. Alternate the legs five times, building up to 25 crossovers. Get your hips off the floor each time by pushing up slightly with your hands.



Who's Playing Racquetball

Sue Gilbert: Helping Boys Go Straight

She spends eight hours a day teaching in a correctional institution for adolescent boys in the mountains outside of Denver, drives 80 miles a day back and forth to work, and still wouldn't miss her twice a week court times. Sue Gilbert, 25, now of Denver and formerly of Deerfield, IL, finds racquetball becoming an increasingly important part of her life.

She loves her work at the Golden Gate Youth Camp, but it's a demanding job. Sue says, *"The work requires my complete attention. At the end of the day racquetball is a good way of getting out frustrations. It's so invigorating and I feel refreshed afterwards."*

With a few months out to heal a toe broken in a recreational basketball game at the school, Sue's ready for a return to the courts. She plays at the University of Denver courts where she takes classes with racquetball instructor Jack Rose. During her undergraduate days at the University of Iowa she had played racquetball for recreation. So when she noticed courses in

racquetball listed in the University of Denver continuing education catalog, she decided to learn more about the game. From the beginning course just over a year ago she's now playing twice a week and concentrating on learning more of the advanced techniques. She says, *"It's a fascinating sport. The more time I put into it, the more I learn about the game. I like to play with more experienced players when I can - working on placing the ball."* She plays singles or cutthroat, especially enjoying the intricacies of the cutthroat match.

Playing better is a challenge, and she loves challenges. Teaching boys who've been in trouble with the law is not every young woman's idea of an ideal career. Nor is the drive to work in the mountains, particularly during those frequent Colorado blizzards and rainstorms. But it's obvious she loves her work.

Sue says, *"I enjoy seeing the kids learn about themselves, learn things they can use later on in life."* With her background in special education she's able to teach both language arts and social studies to

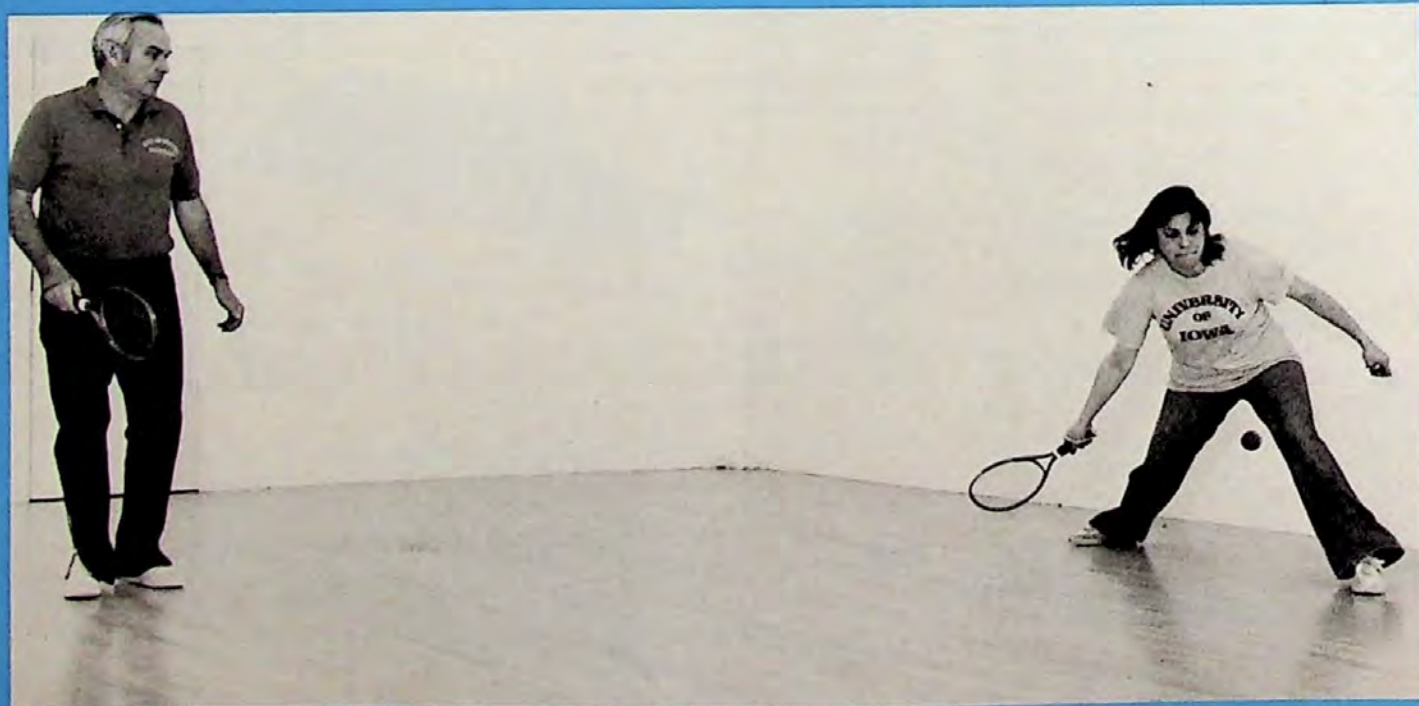
boys with varied abilities. She gears her teaching according to the individual ability of each student. Why teach at a correctional institution with its many problems? Her answer: *"I enjoy the kids."*

Although racquetball requires intense concentration and attention Sue finds it very relaxing. *"I'm never exhausted afterwards. I really feel better since I started playing racquetball. For me it's just a lot of fun."*

—Raeann Berman



Sue Gilbert does the whole sports scene with the boys she teaches, but her own athletic choice is racquetball. She's playing here with Jack Rose, her instructor at the University of Denver continuing education division.



Checking into This Motel Means You've Got a Game

by Nick Longhurst

Like a good hotel manager Warren Wilkie knows he should stay close to the pulse of the massive Holiday Inn on Fisherman's Wharf in San Francisco.

So it's just as well there are racquetball courts only a few blocks away from the hotel he supervises close to the Northern California landmark which annually attracts millions of tourists.

For Wilkie is an avid racquetball player who leaves standing instructions with the desk staff at the hotel reception that if a guest wants a racquetball game — they find him one.

Often Wilkie, who is a B class player, does the honors himself, slipping away to the luxury San Francisco Bay Club where he is a member.

"I try to play with guests who match my ability. Recently Steve Strandemo and Jerry Hilecher stayed here at the hotel and when they found out that I was a racquetball player they asked me to join them for a game. But good hotel managers are known for their tact . . . and I slipped gracefully out of that confrontation," he grins.

Racquetball plays a large part in the daily lifestyle of Wilkie, who — at 32 — runs the flagship hotel of the group run by Holiday Inns Corporation.

He explains *"This hotel isn't like a normal Holiday Inn. For one thing being close to Fisherman's Wharf, it has a really high yearround occupancy rate.*

"Like most Innkeepers I live on the premises so I can stay in touch with the front desk on a constant basis. It's good for my job, but it's hell trying to relax when the staff knows they can get me on my beeper page whenever they need me."

That's why Wilkie, who was born in Winnipeg, Canada, tries to get in a daily session of racquetball.

Smoothing the Creases

"It's more than a sport, it's positively therapeutic. It's the one time in the day when I can work out a lot of the creases."

Warren started playing the game two years ago when he was managing two Holiday Inns in Phoenix. His teacher was another hotel manager, and after a few sessions there was an interhotel grudge match going on between the Inn and the Sheraton.

"It didn't take me long to pick up the game," he says, "because nine or 10 years ago I had played a fair amount of handball when I was majoring in hotel and restaurant administration at Oklahoma State."

"After a few sessions I got to be a fairly decent player . . . and what is more important, I got bitten by the racquetball bug."

"Now I don't know what I would do without it. People who stay in a hotel never notice the pressure because we do our best to make them feel at home. But it's a 24-hour-a-day job which can be pretty frustrating at times — then I know it's time to play a game of racquetball. Weight can also be a problem in a hotel, because the job can be as sedentary as you want to make it."

"I need the exercise, and it makes me more alert for the job."

As a hotel business expert Wilkie foresees a time when racquetball and hotels will go hand in hand.

"It's starting now, but in a few years time, hotels will be providing much more in the way of recreation for their guests."



Hotel Business Boost

"Racquetball is a natural for that. In city hotels it doesn't take up much room and in areas where the weather is seasonal, it's a better alternative than tennis. Also hotels and racquetball clubs need the same kind of services to back up their facilities — swimming pools, saunas, lounge areas and things like that. Hotels have them already and if they are underused, racquetball could be the answer to fuller utilization."

"Already in our hotel we get several requests each week for directions to the nearest racquetball courts, and a lot of amazed looks when the manager personally takes 'em down and kills every ball they leave up."

Warren checks through the pages of *National Racquetball* each month to stay abreast of the players and the developments in the game.

"Now I would hate to get down there in a court with Strandemo and not know who he was. . . . That might be embarrassing," he chuckled, "and the last thing a hotel manager wants is something like that." ●

The Other Racquet Sports

by Dick Squires

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Racquetball — The word: "Kill!"

Appeals and Demands

The English essayist William Hazlitt (1778-1830) wrote the following description of the appeal that he found in the British wall game of "fives," the forerunner of handball. This description, written more than 150 years ago, could serve well to describe the appeals of many racquet games today, but perhaps it is an especially apt description of racquetball:

"It may be said that there are few things of more importance than striking a ball against a wall—there are things indeed which make more noise and do so little good, such as making war and peace, making speeches, and answering them . . . making money and throwing it away . . . (The player) has no other wish, no other thought from the moment the game begins but that of striking the ball, or placing it, of making it! It is the finest experience for the body and the best relaxation for the mind . . ."

The youngest of all racquet sports is presently growing at a rate that has taken practically everybody by surprise, and its growth during just the last five years has been mind-boggling to market analysts, equipment manufacturers and even the players themselves. It might be said that the game was never taken seriously until it became a nationwide epidemic. There just cannot be a single reason for the overnight racquetball boom. The sport has a great number of appeals that have contributed to making it such a success. In an attempt to identify these I've concocted the following list:

1. *Racquetball is easy to learn.* Even uncoordinated, unathletic and uncompetitive people can learn to play and enjoy racquetball in short order.

There is no net, and it is practically impossible to hit the ball out of the court. Tennis takes far more skill because of the margins within which you must keep the ball. What could be easier than hitting a high bouncing ball with a lightweight, easy-to-manage racquet up against a tall, blank wall at the front of a virtually enclosed space? Lengthy rallies are commonplace even with beginning players. The very nature of the sport — this ease with which it can be played from almost the first moment on the court — is in tune with the current taste for an "instant" sense of accomplishment.

Racquetball is, indeed, the *easiest* to learn of all the racquet and paddle games, and people who want to attain the greatest results from the least amount of effort in the shortest period of time will love it. Success and personal gratification come quickly, there is no need for months or even years of expensive professional instruction.

2. *Racquetball strategy is simple.*

Racquetball is not a game of subtle strategy for most people. All you have to do is maneuver your opponent out of position, moving the ball from one side of the court to the other, while you control the center. "Hit 'em where they ain't," so to speak. There is no array of sophisticated shot making skills that must be used. And subtle strategy is pretty much confined to contests between top professionals.

Nonprofessionals need only aspire to "kill" that high speed, high bouncing ball.

Certainly players do have to contend with some bizarre bounces that the ball takes off the walls and the ceiling, and the varying speeds and unpredictable

Last month's excerpt described how Joe Sobek's paddle rackets of the 50's grew into racquetball. This is the second part of *National Racquetball's* two part series from Squires' book covering 11 sports with history, method of play, equipment needed and glossary. The excerpt is from Chapter 11 — "Racquetball — The Word: 'Kill!'"

spins of the ball do take some getting used to. But to counter-balance this is the fact that the lively ball often comes to the player; it does not "die" like a squash ball does.

3. *Racquetball offers a strenuous workout in a brief period.* Someone estimated that one hour of racquetball burns off approximately 880 calories. It would take *three* hours of tennis at an equal level of skill to do the same. This should really not be a surprise to you. Tennis is, after all, probably 80 percent *waiting* — walking to retrieve your ball, waiting for it to come back from three courts over, waiting for your opponent to finally get a serve in, just walking from the net back to the baseline takes ages. (Imagine, you may be paying \$20 an hour for about 10 minutes of real exercise!) The play in racquetball is hardly interrupted, almost continuous. And the game is very "physical." You and your opponent or opponents share the same court area, and inevitably there is plenty of shoving, bumping and colliding with the opposition. The game sometimes has undertones that suggest a street fight.

4. *Racquetball's basic strokes are not complicated.* Because the shaft on the racquetball racquet is short making accurate contact with the ball is nowhere near as difficult as it is in sports with longer implements. In other words the strung hitting surface is much nearer the hand, and as the high-bouncing ball approaches, even the rank amateur is able to make it connect.

5. *Racquetball is healthful.* A vigorous, concentrated racquetball workout is an excellent cardiovascular conditioner, tones the muscles, cleans out the lungs, improves your agility, and hones your reflexes and response time also your muscular strength, staying ability,



balance, speed and power will all be tested on a racquetball court. In addition to make exercising and warming up as painless as possible, most of the commercial clubs now have saunas and exercise rooms that can be used before and after the game.

6. *Racquetball provides psychological release.* Perhaps more than any other paddle or racquet sport racquetball offers an outlet for those aggressive emotions we all feel from time to time. The sales order you knew you had but somehow lost, your mother-in-law, your irresponsible and unresponsive children, your lousy school grades, your whining wife or howling husband, your oppressive boss — get them all out of your mind for a while, or at least release that pent-up hostility by smacking the ball. In no time, you will also learn to *control* your

temper and frustrations. You will find the concentration and self restraint necessary in this game and in *all* racquet sports have their uses in all walks of life.

Charlie Brumfield, a former U.S. champion and an articulate spokesman for the game, has described the emotional aspect of the sport in this way: "*Racquetball, with its lightning changes of advantage and disadvantage, is the perfect psychological release for almost everybody. You can get rid of your hostilities by pounding the ball, berating your opponent, defeating your husband, embarrassing your dad. After the game everyone feels good, even the losers, because, ha ha, it's just a game, isn't it?*"

Karen Reischel, one of the country's leading sports therapists and a former member of the faculty at the University

of Washington, says that, "*If you want to improve your relationship with someone you love — or merely wish to learn whether you want to live with him or her — go to your nearest racquetball court and start psyching. If you can't get anywhere, forget the whole thing. You don't want to spend your life with someone you can't psyche!*"

7. *Racquetball makes use of other sports' skills.* Anyone who has played some tennis, handball, badminton, squash, table tennis, paddleball, paddle tennis, or platform tennis has a head start in taking up racquetball. Just a little "*racquet sense*" and experience go a long way in racquetball.

8. *Racquetball is inexpensive.* Racquets and balls represent a nominal investment for practically anyone. And those who want to "*try out*" in the game first can rent equipment. (Practically all clubs rent equipment.) There is no costly playing attire to purchase, and nowadays everyone already owns a pair of sneakers.

9. *Racquetball is played indoors.* The courts are temperature controlled and comfortable all year round. You will never be rained or snowed out. (This is important to both the participants and the club management.)

10. *Racquetball is a profitable investment for the commercial club owner.* Six racquetball courts can be installed in an area 60 feet by 120 feet. A single regular indoor tennis court requires the same amount of space. It does not take a financial genius to see the attractive economics of this game. Even charging one half the hourly fee of tennis the racquetball club owner's return per square foot is three times that of the tennis club owner's.

The Game Today and Tomorrow

Racquetball is like singing in the shower. It does something for the ego. I *am* a frustrated Caruso, and just about the only place I feel uninhibited enough to blast out some aria in slaughtered Italian is in the confines of my shower. And why can't the shower be compared to that enclosed room where a deluge of would be Chris Everts, or Jimmy Connors, or just plain folk caught up in the racquet fever can do something for their egos, and for their thickening waistlines and mental frustrations?

The appeals of racquetball are proven daily on thousands of courts. The less regimented tactics, the free swinging character of the game, its simplicity and its strenuous nature — all are attractive features to Americans who have recently become physical fitness freaks. And no nationwide sport has done more to crumble the high walls of class hierarchy and social status. The fact that the game began in Y.M.C.A.'s, and not at private clubs, schools, and estates, has kept it "open" in the best American tradition. While some of the other racquet and paddle games are trying frantically to live down their gloriously snobbish pasts, racquetball is already firmly established as a game for *all* people.

In researching this book I visited many commercial racquetball clubs all over the country. Some of the more elegant ones were built at a cost of \$3 million, but in the parking lots the dentist's Cadillac was next to the plumber's van; the lawyer's B.M.W. was parked near the young couple's 1969 Ford. One clubowner finds amusement in the fact that some of his new members come in to play and ask, "What alley are we on, Pete?" (And his name wasn't even Pete!) The bowling crowd of the 1950s has entered the racquetball ranks.

The "type" of person who plays racquetball defies simplistic statistical description. About 86 percent of all male racquetballers are classified as either "professional, executive or self-employed" persons. About six percent make their livings as "laborers," and 65 percent have family incomes of over \$20,000. About 85 percent have attended college or graduate school, and 60 percent of the men are 40 years of age or younger.

11. *Beautiful people are playing racquetball.* Just a few years ago, celebrities helped to convey the idea that tennis is a glamorous sport. The same is happening with racquetball today: Celebrities, as they take up the game, will give even greater impetus to its ever expanding popularity. O. J. Simpson and about one third of all professional football players and coaches play racquetball in the "off" season to stay in shape. Farrah Fawcett Majors is another player. And the late Elvis Presley owned a Memphis commercial club and had a private court at his estate.

12. *Men and women can both play racquetball.* Here is a sport that will bring men and women and even kids out of the house and down to a club. Many of the new clubs offer a pleasant, relaxing atmosphere, ideal for social get-togethers. And a big plus, some offer *free* babysitting. Married couples can work at their doubles game without having to worry about the little ones.

Racquetball is made to order for today's woman. It provides her with a physically challenging sport that is long overdue. Already over one third of all racquetball players who participate frequently are women. Karen Reischel, the sports therapist already quoted, says, "The racquetball court is the perfect arena for the accelerating battle by women for equality with men."



One of the age groups that has not thus far taken up the sport in a big way is made up of women between 35 and 50 years of age. It is the members of this so-called "yummy-mummies" group who often have the spare time and money to support recreational clubs during those important mid-morning and mid-afternoon "off" hours, and their participation can make or break a commercial venture. (These women certainly made a slew of indoor tennis clubs profitable during the past decade.) This fact does have some club owners worried, but they hope that the younger women, who make up about one third of the entire racquetball population will stick with the game. And as the "beer-drinking, hairy-chested, and earthy" image of racquetball gives way to a more civilized image, these statistics may change.

Some other rather revealing statistics concerning racquetball should be noted. Of the 700 clubs that have been erected in the last six years (*that* number never fails to amaze me), approximately 20 percent are located in California and 25 percent in the Midwest (Illinois and Michigan). In descending order the most popular



areas for racquetball today are San Diego, Chicago, Detroit, Minneapolis, Milwaukee, St. Louis and Memphis. In the east, where the sport was invented, the game is only now coming into its own. Perhaps this is because the easterners already have so many other athletic activities to keep them occupied. I'm convinced, however, that racquetball is perfectly suited to the tight big city schedules of Bostonians, Philadelphians, and, for sure, New Yorkers.

My son, Gary, took a year off from college and taught *both* racquetball and squash at the Manhattan Squash Club in New York City. His summary of the relative merits of the two sports proved enlightening: *"I can see racquetball's appeal, especially for a person who is not particularly athletic but wants to work up a sweat. Squash, for me, is far more interesting and challenging. There's more setting up the opponent before hitting any one of many possible winning shots."* He went on to liken the two games to boxing... the racquetball player is like the knockout artist; the squash player is more like a skilled boxer. The analogy isn't a bad one. The only question that remains is whether the "slugger" or the "jabber" will emerge triumphant.

I'm inclined to agree with my son's preference for squash (and I'm not above claiming at least a little credit for influencing him). Can a sport like racquetball, in which 98 percent of the strategy is based on hitting the ball as *hard* as you can, really be considered a great, "classic" game? Control, finesse, subtlety and defensive tactics are usually crucial to any truly great athletic game. Other lifetime, popular sports such as tennis and golf certainly require a good deal more than sheer power and stamina. There should be ample room for utilizing the intellect in every sport.

Perhaps racquetball's powers that be should reexamine the possibility of making certain rules changes. For example, what is wrong with Joe Sobek's original concept of alternating serves to specific service boxes, as in tennis and squash (but not handball)? The racquetball ball has gotten so lightning fast and racquets are so tightly strung that better players can now hit at speeds approaching 150 miles per hour. The serve has consequently taken on a dominance that detracts from the overall appeals of the sport. The server can now go for an "Ace" on every first serve. (Perhaps the single serve is an answer.) In any event the "kill" may be killing the

enjoyment to be gotten from extended rallies and ricocheting exchanges. The U.S.R.A. and I.R.A. should closely study the history of hard rackets and squash tennis to find out what happened to these once popular racquet sports when the ball became too fast for the average person to handle.

My son also made one other interesting observation about racquetball. He informed me that the squash players at his club usually *purchased* racquets while the racquetballers *rented* them. (He also mentioned that many of the rented racquetball implements have mysteriously disappeared, which is rather interesting and sad.) A person skeptical about the long term future of racquetball could set forth a fairly ominous theory if rental rather than purchase is a national phenomenon. The scenario would revolve around the word "commitment." If individuals do not have to invest a lot of money in lessons and playing attire, and if they rent equipment rather than purchase it, they may have no qualms about deserting the sport as soon as something else comes along. They simply have not made the investment that, say, tennis players have made in their sport.

But this may all be doomsaying at the least appropriate time. The sales of balls and racquets have revealed prodigious growth curves over the past several years. Manufacturers and retailers have been experiencing an almost miraculous increase in sales of racquetball accessories each year since 1970. The United States Racquetball Association predicts that by 1982 there will be around 1,200 commercial clubs and over 10 million players in this country. Some experts go even further. As stated before they confidently predict that racquetball will become a larger participation sport in this country than tennis. This may seem hard to believe, but then who would have predicted that tennis was going to grow from 11 million to 34 million players in the period from 1974 to 1978? And racquetball already has at least half as many participants as tennis had in 1974, at the time of the Bobby Riggs-Billy Jean King extravaganza that did so much to boost tennis's popularity. And while it took tennis 100 years to become so popular, racquetball has been around officially for only eight years! Some industry officials have publicly forecasted that by 1982 racquetball ball sales in the country will number close to 45 million. That's four times today's racquetball pellet sales in just four years!

In my opinion racquetball is not a passing fad. It is here to stay. For at least the next 10 years the sport will enjoy fantastic expansion, particularly in those areas where it has only been exposed for a short time: In the mid Atlantic and Southwestern states court construction and promotion of the game are only now just beginning, and therefore they are the ripest areas for dramatic development.

Of course there is always the danger that certain locations will quickly become saturated with racquetball clubs and courts. (This phenomenon has certainly occurred with indoor tennis complexes.) There will be the

inevitable shakedown, separating the well managed clubs from the rest. In the long term, though, the strong will survive and thrive. The proliferating multitude of fanatics, with their miniature mutant racquets, will simply not have it any other way.

Today the total annual racquetball market, including court construction, equipment sales, attire, and so on, is approximately \$200 million. This could easily soar to \$750 million within the next few years. And this in spite of the fact that the game is so far confined almost completely to the United States and Canada. At the moment the only place racquetball is played overseas is at U.S. military bases. A World Racquetball Association has recently been formed, however, to promote and organize international competition, so it is all beginning to happen.

Racquetball is by no means a household word worldwide, but one can't help thinking that the Japanese and the Germans, at the very least, will take it up in a big way. And both governing associations have been receiving a great deal of mail from entrepreneurs in foreign countries.

Racquetball almost perfectly suits the hungry tastes and insatiable needs of activity oriented Americans who want to stay young, to do and not merely view, and to shed pounds. The dedicated, able professionals have shown a great deal of foresight and imagination in capitalizing on these appeals, and they are doing an excellent job of overseeing the sport's mushrooming growth.

Just as games such as squash, tennis, and golf have burst out of their traditional, elitist confines, so will racquetball, at the other end of the social spectrum, rise out of its undeserved plebeian and gauche image. When that happy day arrives, racquetball could become *the* most widely played and enjoyed racquet sport in the world. And even though Joe Sobek and Bob Kendler are not young men today, it *could* still happen in their lifetimes.

Glossary

Amoeba Man. A player who moves with the speed of the single celled amoeba, or hardly at all.

Around-the-Wall Ball. A primarily defensive shot that first hits high on the side wall, then on the front wall, and then on the other side wall before landing on the floor at the three-quarter court.

Avoidable Hinder. A hinder or interference, *not* necessarily intentional, which clearly impedes the continuation of a rally or prevents an opponent from making what would probably be a clean winner. It results in the loss of serve or point.

Back-Into-Back-Wall Shot. A ball that is driven into the rear wall and travels in the air to the front wall.

Back Wall Shot. A ball hit on the rebound off the back wall.

Blinkus of the Thinkus. To lose concentration or to allow the mind to wander during a match.

Block. To prevent an opponent from seeing or getting to the ball. It constitutes a hinder, either avoidable or unavoidable, depending on the judgment of the officials.

Body Surf. Diving and skidding on the court floor in an attempt to hit a ball.

Bottom Boarder. A shot hit off the bottom board of the front wall; it "rolls off" onto the floor, and is the perfect killer.

Box Theory. A technique in which a player aims at a one-foot-square imaginary box in order to hit kills. (In practice a box can be taped on the front wall.)

Bullseye. The spot on the front wall that a server aims at for a proper serve to result.

Bumblebee Ball. A ball struck with the racquet rim. The ball rotates wildly on the way to the front wall.

Bumper. The protective covering or rim on most metal racquet heads; shields the wooden walls and provides correct racquet balance.

Bumper Ball. Same as "Bumblebee Ball" except that the ball is hit off the bumper.

Ceiling Ball. A defensive shot that first strikes the ceiling within a few feet of the front wall, then the front wall, and then the floor, where its topspin propels it deep into the back court.

Ceiling Serve. A serve that hits the ceiling. If the ball hits the ceiling first, it is side out. If it hits the front wall prior to the ceiling, it is a fault.

Controller. A player who hits more passing and defensive shots than kills. (Contrast with "Shooter.")

Court Hinder. Interference caused by an object such as a lighting fixture or door latch. It is ruled an unavoidable hinder, and the point is replayed.

Crack Ball. A shot that hits the intersection of the floor and either the side or rear wall; the ball "squirts" out irretrievably.

Crotch. The juncture of any two playing surfaces; for example, the front-wall-side-wall crotch, or the back-wall-floor crotch.

Crotch Ball. See "Skip Ball."

Crotch Serve. A serve that strikes the intersection of the front wall and floor or ceiling. This is a side out.

Crowding. Intimidating the opponent through playing too close. Continuing this practice constitutes an avoidable hinder.

Dead Ball. (1) A ball that does not bounce as high as is considered standard. (2) A ball that goes out of play or causes a hinder situation; for example when a ball going to the front wall hits one of the players.

Defensive Shot. A conservative return made to extend a rally or to "buy time," rather than to win an exchange. Examples are the ceiling ball, around-the-wall ball and Z ball.

Die. A ball that barely reached the front wall and then rebounded with little or no bounce.

Dig. To barely get a low "kill" shot just prior to its second bounce.

Donkey Kick. When a player dives to execute a shot and at the same time entangles his or her legs with an opponent's, causing the latter to trip. Usually occurs on a forehand drive.

Donut. Shutting out the opposition; not allowing them to score a single point in a game. Also called "whitewash" or "bagel."

Down the Line Drive. A shot laced hard down the side wall.

Drive Serve. A relatively hard hit serve that strikes low on the front wall and rebounds in a straight line to either the right or left rear corner.

Drop Shot. A softly hit push shot, usually employed to return a retrievable kill shot. It is aimed low into the front wall. Also known as a "Dump Shot."

Fatigue Factor. The condition of being extremely tired, most frequently in the third game of a long, tough match. It dulls the court senses and impedes accurate shot-making and deep concentration.

Fishbowl. A court that has one or more glass walls.

Flat Roll-Out. The perfect kill. The ball hits the front wall so close to the floor that it rebounds with no bounce.

Floater. A badly hit shot or one with so much backspin that it drifts very slowly toward the front wall.

Fly Ball. A "volley"; a shot played directly on the rebound from front wall, before it contacts the floor.

Freak Ball. Any shot, but usually one hit by a player who is out of position, that is a "lucky" or "miracle" winner.

Garbage Serve. A serve delivered at half speed; the receiver is forced to return at shoulder height, which is awkward. Also called a "Half Lob."

Garfinkel Serve. A forehand cross court serve to the opponent's forehand.

Golden Masters. A division in singles and doubles tournaments for players 55 years of age and older.

Gravity Ball. An intended kill shot hit so softly that the force of gravity makes the ball land on the floor prior to contacting the front wall.

Ground Ball. See "Skip Ball."

Gun Hand. The hand wielding the racquet.

Half-and-Half. One way of dividing court responsibilities between partners in a doubles game. An imaginary line drawn down the center of the court from the front wall to the back wall divides territorial rights. The player in the right half (forehand side) generally covers that half, and his or her partner covers the left (backhand) side.

Hypotenuse Shot. Kill that travels from the left or right rear of the court diagonally across to the opposite front corner.

I-Formation. Another method of partners covering the court in doubles competition. An imaginary line is drawn splitting the court across the middle (from one side wall to the other), this dividing the front and back courts. One player generally covers the front, while the teammate has responsibility for handling returns from the back.

Isolation Strategy. In doubles the tactic of hitting several consecutive shots to just one player in an attempt to tire him or her out and to "cool off" his or her partner.

Juniors. The division in tournament play singles and doubles for players 18 years of age and younger.

Kill. The ultimate shot in racquetball. It is hit so low on the front wall and rebounds with so little bounce that a return is impossible.

Long Serve. Any serve carrying on the fly to the back wall. It is a fault.

Masters. The division for players 45 years and older.

Mercy Ball. When one player holds up on a swing because if it were made the ball or racquet would have hit an opponent. This is a simple hinder play.

Non Front Serve. Any serve that hits any surface prior to initially striking the front wall. It is illegal and results in loss of service.

Offensive Position. Approximately in the center of the court.

Off Hand. The empty hand, not to be used to wield the racquet.

Paralysis Via Analysis. To "choke up" due to mental pressure.

Photon. A very hard hit shot. Also called "bullet" or "powder ball."

Pinch Shot. A kill shot which goes from a side wall to the front wall. A "wide" pinch bounds off the side wall at quite a distance from the front wall. Whereas a "shot" pinch makes contact with the side wall within three feet or less of the front wall.

Plum Ball. An extraordinarily rare setup, giving the hitting player an assured shot at a winner.

Portsider. A left hander.

Pushing Off. The illegal shoving or touching of an opponent during a rally in order to gain a better court position. This usually results in a point or side out against the offender.

R.A.W. Ball. A run-along-the-wall ball; it clings closely to the side wall.

Reverse Corner Kill. A kill shot made from the right side into the left front corner, or vice versa.

Reverse Garfinkel. A cross court serve sent into the left rear corner — toward a right handed opponent's backhand.

Roadrunner. A player whose strength is retrieving and making a lot of fabulous "gets," as opposed to player who merely "shoots" the ball.

Rollout. A flat, irretrievable kill shot.

Safety Hinder. Stoppage of play when carrying on could result in injury.

Sawdust Ball. Same as "skip ball," "short shot," "oilwell ball," "splinter ball," "dirt ball," and "ground ball."

Screen Ball. Any visual hinder; occurs on either serve or in the middle of a rally.

Self Waffle. When you hit your own body with your own racquet.

Seniors. The division in singles and doubles tournaments for players 35 years of age and older.

Shooter. An all out aggressive player whose game tactics revolve about attempting to kill a high percentage of setups. The opposite of "Controller."

Shoot the Ball. To go for a kill shot.

Skip Ball. A shot that hits the floor just before reaching the front wall; almost, but not quite, a "Kill."

Splinter Ball. The same as a "Skip Ball."

Straddle Ball. A ball that goes through the legs of one of the players on a front wall rebound. This may or may not be called a hinder.

Super Pinch. The frequently accidental kill shot that results when the ball hits into one side wall, ricochets into the opposite side wall, and then rolls off ("kisses") the front wall.

Swish. The noise that the racquet strings should make at the moment the wrist "breaks" in your stroke. (This is done in practice with no ball.)

Technical. A referee's call during a tournament match; usually precipitated by unsportsmanlike antics. The infringing player is penalized by the subtraction of one point from his or her score.

Tension. The amount of pressure at which the racquet is strung. The normal range is between 26 and 32 pounds.

Three-Quarters and One-Quarter. Another way of dividing the court responsibilities of partners in doubles play. An imaginary line is drawn diagonally from one front corner to the opposite back corner. Each player covers balls on only his or her side of the diagonal.

Three-Wall Serve. A serve that strikes three walls on the fly. It is illegal and results in a fault.

Time Out. A legal 30 second to 60 second respite.

Trigger Finger Grip. The normal method of grasping the racquet handle, as if it were a revolver.

Unavoidable Hinder. An interference of normal play brought about by an unintentional act of a player or by some feature of the court or equipment. The point is player over.

V Ball. A cross court passing shot. Also called a "V Pass."

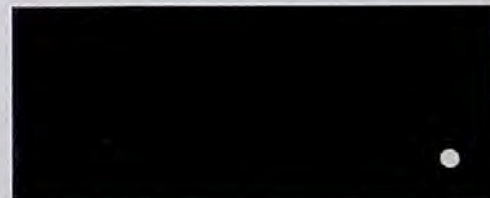
Veteran Hinder. An avoidable hinder that because of the offender's subtle body movement and theatrics is interpreted as an unavoidable hinder.

Waffle Face. When one player hits an opponent in the face with his racquet.

Wallpaper Ball. A side-wall "hugger." Also called a "R.A.W. Ball."

Windshield-Wiper Play. A long rally in which one player runs from one side wall to the other getting a series of cross court drive shots.

Z Ball. Basically a defensive shot. It is hit high on the front wall in either corner, ricochets quickly into the adjacent side wall, then travels diagonally to the opposite side wall deep in the court, where it finally strikes the floor.



National Racquetball

EXTRA!

24 Hours of Racquetball One Year after Bypass Heart Surgery

by Donna Halvorsen

Irrepressible Nancy Sturtevant sat at courtside, having been lifted down the stairs of the Mall Racquetball Club in her wheelchair. She had one leg amputated three years ago, the other last summer because of circulatory problems.

While she was in the hospital the second time, her husband, Gus, died of cancer at 58. Her brother, Bob Libby, of North Conway, NH., had died of a heart attack two months earlier at 48. Their father also had died of a heart attack at 48.

But she joked and laughed as she watched irrepressible Richard Sturtevant, 32, her only son, batting a black ball around against a series of opponents Saturday.

With a family history of heart problems Sturtevant went to a doctor quickly when he had chest pains a year ago. He went directly from the doctor's office to the hospital and had artery bypass surgery a week later.

Now, with surgical scars stretching nearly from stern to stern, Sturtevant was on the court, still smiling after playing racquetball for nearly 24 hours.

"It was hard," Nancy Sturtevant said of the trials of the past year. "You can't look back. You've got to go ahead. Dick and I both went ahead."

Having decided to lick the family malady rather than surrender to it Sturtevant had set up the marathon to raise money for the Maine chapter of the American Heart Association and to demonstrate that heart patients need not become sedentary after surgery. He had his doctor's okay and had trained carefully for the event.

But there was another reason as well.

"He called me yesterday," his mother said, "and said, 'You know, Mom, I'm doing this for the heart fund but I'm also doing it for you and Bob.'"



Two wire services and a national radio network flashed word around the country on December 17 of 1978's most heartwarming racquetball marathon. The player was Richard Sturtevant, who took up racquetball last March, as part of his therapy following open heart surgery on December 17, 1977. We're reprinting this story from the December 17 Maine Sunday Telegram with the publisher's permission.

Sturtevant looked at his watch several times as it edged toward 4 p.m. — the end of the 24 hours.

"Are you tired, dear?" his mother asked, after he had done a mock collapse against the court window. If he heard her, he didn't answer. "He wouldn't say yes if his life depended on it," she said.

The buzzer finally went off and a cheer went up from the two dozen people looking on from the stairs and the railing above. Sturtevant raised his hands in a victory salute, hugged his final opponent, Marsha Landers, and hit the ball up the stairs.

Someone tossed the ball to Mrs. Sturtevant, who said she would find a place to put it on display in her living room.

Sturtevant, an L. L. Bean employee, reached out to Mary Mathes, a long time family friend, who told him, "Hey, sweetie, I'm so proud of you."

"Hey, your ma's over here," Mrs. Sturtevant said in mock disappointment that she hadn't been recognized first.

He sat down beside her, gave her a kiss and insisted his only problem after 24 hours of racquetball was sore feet.

Like his mother he said he had no doubt he would finish.

"Never thought I wouldn't make it," he said. "Never entered my mind. Everybody depended on it — all the heart patients at the hospital. I couldn't let them down."

It won't be known for a week or so, after all the pledges are in and tallied, whether he reached his \$3,000 goal.

"I have a feeling he'll come close to that," said club owner Ken Astor, who played Sturtevant four times.

Those who watched expected the marathoner to devour a steak or lobster when his quest was completed. But, having nibbled on fruits and nuts during his five minute breaks each hour, he said he would wind down slowly, eating only a light meal.

But he said he knew what he was going to see in his sleep for a few days — "a little black ball flying around white walls."

And he said finishing the marathon — knowing the money would go for a good cause — would be the best Christmas present he could ever have had.

Kevin York, Mall co-owner, says Sturtevant came very close to his \$3,000 goal. ED.

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Racquetball



**Here's How to Get
New Instructional Film**

Terry Fancher



Racquetball goes Hollywood as Film Editor Sandy Keisel marks the scene that Bob Van Tuyle and Steve Strandemo will play out with their racquets.

Jockey International supplied shorts and shirts for "The Racquetball Series" cast - Players Janell Marriott, Kathy Williams, Steve Strandemo, Terry Fancher, Bob VanTuyle, Charlie Rish, John Lynch and Dan Bertolucci.



As promised in the December issue of *National Racquetball* I now have complete ordering information on the new series of racquetball instructional films. The four film set of color, 10 minute loops, complete with narration, stop action and ultra slow motion sequences, can now be purchased.

The films were recently previewed at the USRA national state chairman convention in Las Vegas and were found to be a long needed tool in the promotion of the sport. Hundreds of hours of tedious editing have made this project well worthwhile and ready for use in clubs, schools, meetings, clinics and classes as a simple means to introduce new players to the game and to assist intermediate and advanced players to learn some of the finer points of singles, doubles or cutthroat racquetball.



Steve Strandemo's technique is ready for viewing in "The Racquetball Series" four part instructional film: (1) Fundamentals, (2) Racquetball Shots, (3) Serves and Serve Returns, (4) Strategy for Singles, Doubles and Cutthroat.

The film was sponsored by the Racquetball Manufacturer's Association, and the USRA provided the technical supervision. The film script was compiled and edited from half a dozen top instructional books to make sure every phase of technique and strategy is covered by some of the best men and women players who depict actual competitive situations.

After eight months of hard work you can now order the finished product by contacting the not-for-profit distributor. For one film \$139 per film for 16mm or \$99 for Super 8) or all four (10 per cent discount). Contact: The Athletic Institute • 200 Castlewood Drive • North Palm Beach, Florida 33408 • (305) 842-3600.



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Tournament Results

Please send tournaments results (and clear black and white action photos) to Terry Fancher, USRA, 4101 Dempster St., Skokie, IL, 60076. Type your results double spaced using the form you see on these pages. Use first and last names the first time you write about a player (in doubles matches, too) and last names only when you mention the player again. Allow two months or more for your tournament writeup to appear here.

In choosing photos of tournament play for these pages, we will give priority to pictures of players wearing protective eye gear.

Hold on to your playing records so you can send them into the *National Racquetball Most Improved Player* contest next June. You may be your state's winner.

Canada

The 1978 Canadian Closed Racquetball Championships was the largest to date with over 300 individual entries and more than 50 doubles teams vying for honours in 13 events at the Regina YMCA and the Regina Court Club Nov. 9-13 in Saskatchewan.

Results

Men's Open

1st - Lindsay Myers d. Wes Hadiken 21-18, 21-19, Consolation - Peter Starodub d. Bill Silverman (default).

Men's B: 1st - Rob Napper d. Rick Wagg 21-8, 21-9, 3rd - Gregg Caulfield d. Bill Hodgins (default), Consolation - Mark Starodub d. Randy Delanau 21-17, 21-18.

Men's C: 1st - David Graham d. John Mohan 21-11, 21-10, 3rd - Rusty Rischuk d. Paul Nogler (default), Consolation - Harry Harrisersad d. G. Gunn 21-14, 21-12.

Women's Open: 1st - Linda Forcade d. Monique Parent 21-19, 21-17, 3rd - Lynn Murdoch d. Dena Rassenti (default), Consolation - Diane Clairmont d. Karen Dellow 21-14, 21-10.

Women's B: 1st - Taffy Savard d. Merle Zimmerman 21-15, 21-11, 3rd - Barbara Grant d. Wanda St. Laurent, Consolation - Cathie Parsons d. Rae Mullaly 21-10, 21-14.

Women's Open C: 1st - Shirley Ripplinger d. Christine Moore 21-6, 21-7, 3rd - Joan Harrisersad d. Liz Wallace 11-21, 21-14, 11-7, Consolation - Jayne Thompson d. Belina Archibald 21-2, 21-9.

Senior Men's: 1st - Bill Condratow d. Murdoch Cranston 21-11, 21-11, 3rd - Steve Katz d. Tim Filuk (default), Consolation - Dennis Churchill d. Stan Pisko 21-9, 19-21, 11-3.

Masters: 1st - Roald Thompson d. Dale Pond 10-21, 21-8, 11-0, 3rd - Dunc Stockwell d. Fintan Kilbride (default), Consolation - Lawrence Dzuren d. Al Haider 21-10, 21-7.

Juniors 16-18: 1st - Ross Harvey d. Wendel Talaber 21-11, 15-21, 11-3, 3rd - Steve Derbyshire d. Adam Katz 21-16, 21-13, Consolation - Sherman Greenfield d. Gus Kovmarelas 21-12, 21-17.

Juniors 15 and under: 1st - Allan Lee d. Anoop Chawla 21-20, 21-11, 3rd - Tim Cranston d. Heather Stupp (default), Consolation - Earl Schaeffer d. Ian Mant 16-21, 21-13, 11-0.

Men's Open Doubles: 1st - Wayne Bowes/Bob Daku d. Manny Gregorio/Brian Valin 21-16, 21-11, 3rd - Hadiken/Ken Suffron d. Silverman/Ross Harvey (default), Consolation - Doug Talaber/Wendel Talaber d. Rob Napper/Frank Mymryk 21-10, 21-12.

Senior Men's Doubles: 1st - Condratow/Steve Keiler d. Logan Tait/Tim Filuk 21-9, 19-21, 11-10, 3rd - Cranston/Howie Rankin d. Wayne Smith/Ian McKenzie 21-17, Consolation - Ian Archibald/Al Gordichuk d. Lawrence Dzuren/Stan Pisko 21-17, 21-17.

Women's Doubles: 1st - Clairmont/Murdoch d. Dellow/Lindsay Robinson 21-11, 21-16, 3rd - Myrelon Isaman/Helen Olson d. Rassenti/Lisa Marcu (default), Consolation - Sharon Freel/Lavern Dzuren d. Taffy Savard/Merle Zimmerman 21-14, 21-9.

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New Jersey

Even players who didn't make it to the finals had a chance to come home a winner from the Second Annual State Championships held Oct. 6-8 at What's Your Racquet? in Wall Township. And those who did win, toted home more than a trophy thanks to Don Hamilton of Gateway Toyota, Don Freeman of Herman's Sporting Goods and Doug Clark of Courthouse Inc. who helped furnish many of the prizes, including sterling silver brandy snifters, \$1,000 in gift certificates and \$1,600 in prizes such as bikes, cameras, radio's and CB's. Others contributing prizes at the tourney, which attracted 410 players, were Ektelon, Omega and local restaurants — Lobster Shanty, Jack Bakers's Wharf Side, Cowbarn and Howard Johnson's.

Aside from the prizes everyone got a treat watching all the matches including the Men's Open final where Doug Clark came from behind in the first game to beat Paul Lazure 21-16, in a close and exciting match played on the club's three wall glass tournament court.

Other events of the weekend were Paul Lazure's referee's clinic and the presentation of plaques to Bob Nichols and Frank Pescatore, northern and southern chairmen, respectively, for the New Jersey USRA State Association.

—Andrea Czarniecki

Doug Clark, right, beat Paul Lazure in a close finals match during the New Jersey State Championships.



Results

Men's Open

Semis: Doug Clark d. Fred Letter 16-21, 21-18, 11-0, Paul Lazure d. Ray Captinelli 21-12, 21-10.

Finals: Clark d. Lazure 21-16, 21-11, Third: Captinelli

Men's B

Semis: Heme Gonzalas d. Don Nickerson 21-19, 21-18, Ken Eagle d. John Bierman 14-21, 21-19, 11-6.

Finals: Gonzalas d. Eagle 16-21, 21-15, 11-8, Third: Nickerson

Men's C

Semis: John Bierman d. Jay Yancy 21-12, 21-9, Phil Ciarco d. Bill Welaj 21-15, 21-18.

Finals: Bierman d. Ciarco 21-14, 21-11, Third: Welaj.

Men's Masters

Semis: Mike Bykowsky d. Joe Czekla 21-16, 21-11, Pete Talbot d. Gabe DiDario 21-13, 21-12.

Finals: Talbot d. Bykowsky 21-18, 21-14, Third: Czekala.



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Men's Seniors

Semis: Pete Talbot d. John Sergantanis 21-19, 21-16, Fred Letter d. Hal Weber 21-16, 21-14

Finals: Letter d. Talbot 21-15, 21-17

Men's Doubles

Semis: Clark/Bob Ellis d. Frank Pescatore/Bill Ramirez 21-20, 21-12, Capitelli/Sergantanis d. Lazure/Dick Booker 21-2, 21-5

Finals: Clark/Ellis d. Capitelli/Sergantanis 21-11, 21-5, Third: Lazure, Booker

Juniors

Semis: Greg Levine d. Joe Gowen 21-7, 21-12, Bruce Ruxh d. Joe Billheimer 21-17, 21-13

Finals: Levine d. Rush 21-13, 21-8, Third: Gowen

Women's Open

Semis: Cira Nickerson d. Karen Borga 16-21, 21-17, 11-9, Gerry Rudyz d. Karen Bednarski 20-21, 21-5, 11-7

Finals: Rudyz d. Nickerson 21-9, 21-13, Third: Borga

Women's B

Semis: Marcy Lynch d. Sue Hurwitz 21-17, 21-11, Joan Lecke d. Sue Giroux 21-17, 21-16

Finals: Lynch d. Lecky 21-13, 21-19, Third: Giroux

Women's C

Semis: Kathleen Lacey d. Cindy Capitelli 21-13, 21-17, Evelyn Thomas d. Maffucci 21-18, 21-14

Finals: Lacey d. Thomas 21-19, 21-14, Third: Capitelli

Women's Doubles

Semis: Nickerson/Bednarski d. Pam Perrotti/Lecke 21-7, 21-11, Lynch/Susan Wilson d. Andrea Czarniecki/Pat Struthers 18-21, 21-12, 11-4

Finals: Nickerson/Bednarski d. Lynch/Wilson 21-5, 21-11, Third: Czarniecki/Struthers

Ohio

The WHIO Radio Racquetball Championship Tournament was held in Dayton, Dec. 14-17 at Dayton Circuit Courts North, Dayton Circuit Courts South and Dayton Court House. Eleven racquetball facilities in the greater Dayton area were invited to send their top three men and top three women to participate in the tournament.

The Women's division winner was number one seed Sandy Brickley, who represented the Dayton Court House. Sandy is a racquetball instructor at the Dayton Court House and her tournament victories include Women's Open Champion in the Dayton Area Racquetball Tournament held in May of 1978. Brickley won the championship by defeating number two seed Cheryl Moore by the scores of 21-7 and 21-8. Moore was playing as a representative of Sinclair Community College.

The Men's championship went to number one seed Jim Marsh who defeated number four seed Phil Cohen 21-18 and 21-20. Both Marsh and Cohen have won numerous racquetball tournaments in the past few years. Marsh played as a representative of Dayton Circuit Courts North. He is a Captain in the Air Force and is a professor in the Aerospace Engineering field at the Air Force Institute of Technology, which is

located on Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton. Cohen was representing the Dayton Central YMCA. He also is an Air Force captain and is an Electronics Projects Engineer at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

The Men's Consolation was won by number three seed Dan Cartee who bested second seeded Mel Kince 21-16 and 21-14. Third seeded Barb Warnick captured the Women's consolation trophy with a 21-20 and 21-16 victory over fourth seeded Eileen Crotty.

Results

Women's

Quarters: S. Brickley d. C. Caplan 21-2, 21-1; B. Warnick d. N. Lademan 21-2, 13-21, 11-10; E. Crotty d. C. Surmann 21-5, 21-7; C. Moore d. D. Shartle 21-17, 21-19

Semi-finals: Brickley d. Warnick 21-4, 21-12; Moore d. Crotty 21-8, 21-12

Finals: Brickley d. Moore 21-7, 21-8

Men's

Quarters: J. Marsh d. D. Kronaur 21-4, 21-12; D. Cartee d. G. Harrison 21-16, 21-7; P. Cohen d. D. Smith 20-21, 21-12, 11-5; M. Kince d. R. Huss 21-15, 21-14

Semi-finals: Marsh d. Cartee 21-14, 21-13; Cohen d. Kince 8-21, 21-11, 11-10

Finals: Marsh d. Cohen 21-18, 21-20

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Wisconsin

"Last weekend I played terrible and beat him" stated Paul Ikier. "He'll go down in two this time." Ikier was referring to Gari Tate just prior to the start of the finals of the Lord Calvert Tournament of Superstars held Dec. 8-10 at the Town and Country YMCA in Oconomowoc.

Just one week before Tate pushed Ikier to three games in the finals of the Sun Prairie Open and Ikier felt he could have played much better while defeating Tate in the tie-breaker.

This time, in game one, it seemed Ikier's prediction would come true as he raced to an 11-0 lead. Tate astonished everyone by not giving in and proceeded to outscore Ikier 21-2 and take game one 21-14. In game two Ikier again captured a big lead and held on this time to win 21-12 and set the stage for the tie-breaker. The tie-breaker was all Ikier as he served to near perfection. Hitting six aces (5 unreturnable Z serves) Ikier dominated the game to an 11-4 win.

In the upper bracket semi's Ikier topped Bruce Thompson 21-17, 21-6. In the lower bracket Tate came up against young Jim Wirkus and proved that he will have to be contended with for the state title and defeated Wirkus quite easily 21-10, 21-11.

Patricia Schmidt, Wisconsin's perennial powerhouse in the Womens Open, easily outclassed the field and did not allow any

opponent more than 12 points. In the semi's Schmidt rolled over Lynne Farmer and in the finals Connie Peterson. In the lower semi's Glenda Young pushed Peterson to the tie-breaker 21-14, 10-21, 11-7. It was the second straight tournament defeat of Young by Peterson.

A total of 122 entrants participated in the three day event. Lord Calvert Distilleries donated \$500 in prize money in the Men's and Women's Open divisions and the money was divided equally. In addition Lord Calvert provided shirts and a Saturday evening dinner for all participants. The USRA-Wisconsin provided Gatorade and rulebooks, while Seamco donated the 558 balls. Helping tournament Director Phil Bouche were the entire YMCA staff and Brad Nelson, of Lord Calvert.

—Bob Keenan

Results

Mens Open

Quarter-Finals: Paul Ikier def. Kevin Semenas 21-15, 21-9, Bruce Thompson def. William Bilty 21-11, 21-16, Gari Tate def. Craig Wagner 21-12, 21-3, Jim Wirkus def. Bob Kohl 21-9, 21-14. Semi-Finals: Ikier def. Thompson 21-17, 21-6, Tate def. Wirkus 21-10, 21-11.

Finals: Ikier def. Tate 14-21, 21-12, 11-4. Third: Thompson (forfeit).

Mens B

Quarter-Finals: Dan Skalecki def. Jon Oehrlein 15-21, 21-4, 11-7, Gary Bender def. Jim Schmidt 21-16, 21-9, Pete Roehl def. Mike Reitbrock 21-14, 21-19, Pete Giljohann def. Sid Weickhardt 21-9, 21-6.

Semi-Finals: Skalecki def. Bender 21-15, 14-21, 11-6, Giljohann def. Roehl 10-21, 21-8, 11-4.

Finals: Skalecki def. Giljohann 21-20, 21-11. Third: Roehl def. Bender 21-18, 21-12.

Mens C

Quarter-Finals: James Meden def. Brad Oehrlein, Jim Giljohann def. Rick Hearn 21-11, 21-7, Jim Babbit def. Terry Walsh 21-5, 21-13, Walter Dodds def. Ed Froelich 21-8, 21-11.

Semi-Finals: Giljohann def. Meden, Babbit def. Dodds 21-2, 21-10.

Finals: Babbit def. Giljohann 21-8, 21-9. Third: Dodds def. Meden 21-19, 21-17.

Womens Open

Quarters: Schmidt (bye), Lynne Farmer def. Ginny Luscomb 21-7, 21-2, Connie Peterson def. Gale Jensen 21-6, 21-8, Glenda Young def. Theresa Gnewuch 21-7, 21-8.

Semis: Pat Schmidt def. Lynne Farmer 21-7, 21-3, Peterson def. Young 21-14, 10-21, 11-7.

Finals: Schmidt def. Peterson 21-9, 21-12. Third: Farmer def. Young (forfeit).

Womens B

Semis: Diana Gagliano def. Judy Froh 21-15, 21-11, Dyanne Singler def. Sue Mahaney 21-16, 19-21, 11-9.

Finals: Dyanne Singler def. Gagliano 21-11, 21-6. Third: Mahaney def. Froh 21-19, 21-1.

Womens C

Quarters: Linda Eckert def. Karen Falzerano 21-17, 21-8, Laurie Frenkel def. Ann Rietbrock 21-18, 21-11, Rachel Kuehl def. Christine Males 21-7, 17-21, 11-6, Gerni McFadden def. Carol Carlson 21-5, 21-19.

Semis: Eckert def. Frenkel 21-8, 21-18, McFadden def. Kuehl 21-11, 21-16.

Finals: McFadden def. Eckert 21-16 (injury forfeit). Third: Kuehl (forfeit).

Consolation: Mens Open: Brian Kirkpatrick. Mens B: Wayne Franke. Mens C: Willie Gasper. Womens Open: Gale Jensen. Womens B: R. Schatzka. Womens C: Karen Piscione.



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Florida

The weekend of Dec. 1-3 found over 300 entrants competing in the First Orlando Holiday Tournament. Competitors included such top amateur players as Rick Stevens, Percy Philman, Jim Adkins, Van Dubolsky, Diane Green, Donisa Zetrouer and Pam Harrison. Besides the open events, which included Singles for both men and women, there were two Junior divisions which provided exciting action.

Results:

Men's Open: 1st - Jim Adkins, 2nd - Rick Stevens, 3rd - Carson Turlington

Men's B: 1st - Brian Kimball, 2nd - Jeff Leon, 3rd - Frank Katz

Men's Novice: 1st - Bobby Cullio, 2nd - Tico Fernandez, 3rd - Steve Smith

Men's Seniors: 1st - Leon, 2nd - Mike Mojer, 3rd - Graig Shaak

Men's Masters: 1st - Mojer, 2nd - Chub Bon Fleur, 3rd - John Hinkamp

Men's Open Doubles: 1st - Adkins/Potter, 2nd - Zetrouer/Shaaak, 3rd - Biederman/Drury

Men's B Doubles: 1st - Ruffing/Thomas, 2nd - Garriga/Hinkamp, 3rd - Hewitt/Warden

Women's Open: 1st - Diane Green, 2nd - Gail Troxel, 3rd - Donisa Zetrouer

Women's B: 1st - Julie Knight, 2nd - Jamie Hall, 3rd - Donna Furlong

Women's Doubles: 1st - Zetrouer/Green, 2nd - Harrison/Wilcox, 3rd - Knight/Powers

Jrs. 8-13: 1st - Mitch Campbell, 2nd - Richard Potter, 3rd - Rick Bywater

Jrs. 14-17: 1st - Scott Nelson, 2nd - Sergio Gonzales, 3rd - Malon Brown

Hawaii

The Central YMCA in Honolulu sponsored a Class C tournament Dec. 7-13.

Results

First Round: Al Raterman d. Gary Brown, John Nolan d. Phyllis Gomes, Paul Lubermiski d. Gabe Garduque; Carol Leiban d. Kaipo Lau; Calvin Yim d. Leslie Uhrich; Mark Renzi d. Duane Gibbs; Vito Baker d. Dancetta Feary, Tony Baldomero d. Jane Goodwill.

Second Round: Richard Kimball d. Raterman; Nolan d. Jerry Lau; Andy Keanui d. Lubermiski; Greg Ahuna d. Leiban; Yim d. Derek Gasper; Renzi d. Shizu Takayasu; Dave Kolbrecher d. Baker; Baldomero d. Richard Lee.

Quarter Finals: Nolan d. Kimball, Ahuna d. Keanui; Renzi d. Yim; Baldomero d. Kolbrecher.

Semi-Finals: Nolan d. Ahuna; Baldomero d. Renzi.

Finals: Baldomero d. Nolan 17-21, 21-20, 11-9.

Upcoming Events

The Leukemia Society of Delaware, the Delaware Racquetball Association and the USRA are staging a three day fund raising tournament March 9, 10 and 11 at the new 15 court Branmar Racquetball Club at Marsh and Silverside Roads north of Wilmington.



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Official Entry

United States Racquetball Association 1979 Regional Championships

Dates • April 5-8, 1979

ENTRY DEADLINE: All entry blanks and corresponding entry fees must be in the possession of tournament director by Friday, March 30, 1979.

ENTRY FEE: \$15 for one event, \$25 if two events are entered. Limit two events per player.
(\$12 additional for non-USRA members).

OFFICIAL BALL: Seamco 558 (black) in all events except Northwest Region where Seamco 600 (blue) will be official.

RULES OF SANCTION PLAY: All current USRA rules will govern play. No player having accepted \$1000 or more in prize money on NRC Pro Tour within last 12 months may enter amateur events.

ELIGIBILITY: All participants must be current USRA members. Membership applications and renewals will be available at host facility for an additional \$12.

AWARDS: Trophies to first three places in all events. Round-trip coach air fare for the winners of the men's and women's open divisions to the 1979 USRA National Championships June 9-16, 1979 in Tempe, Arizona. Trips will only be awarded to those winners who play in the same event in the Nationals as they won in the regionals. For example, an open player who chooses to play pro will not be awarded the trip.

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE AND MAIL ENTRIES TO: Information listed for your regional. Starting times may be obtained by contacting host facility. See regional tournament information page.

NOTE: All entrants must play in the regional in which they reside (no exceptions will be made) as depicted by the boundaries set forth on the accompanying map.

Region 1 - NEW ENGLAND: Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia.

Region 2 - NORTHEAST: New York, Pennsylvania, Ontario, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia.

Region 3 - SOUTHEAST: North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama.

Region 4 - CENTRAL: Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota.

Region 5 - SOUTH CENTRAL: Mississippi, Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Arkansas.

Region 6 - SOUTHWEST: New Mexico, Arizona, Hawaii, California, Nevada.

Region 7 - MID-WEST: North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Missouri, Iowa, Manitoba.

Region 8 - NORTHWEST: Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, British Columbia, Yukon.

Region 9 - OHIO VALLEY: Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Tennessee, West Virginia.

Region 10 - ROCKY MOUNTAIN: Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, Utah, Saskatchewan, Alberta.

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| ☐ Open singles | ☐ Open doubles |
| ☐ Women's singles | ☐ Senior doubles |
| ☐ Senior singles (35 & over) | ☐ Master doubles |
| ☐ Master singles (45 & over) | ☐ Golden Master's doubles |
| ☐ Golden Master's singles (55 & over) | ☐ Women's doubles |
| ☐ Men's "B" singles | ☐ Men's "C" singles |
| ☐ Women's "B" singles | ☐ Women's "C" singles |

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I hereby for myself, my heirs, executors, agents and administrator, waive and release any and all rights and claims for damages I may have against the USRA, its affiliated clubs, and their respective agents, representatives, successors and assigners for any and all injuries which may be suffered by me in connection with my participation in the Regional or National tournaments.

Date _____

Signature _____

USRA Region Tournament Information



Region 1 - New England

SITE: The Lake Wood Racquetball Club, 666 Lakewood Road, Waterbury, CT 06704

PHONE: 203-755-6699 Tournament Director: Jack Fruin

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO AND MAIL ENTRY TO: The Lakewood Racquetball Club

TOURNAMENT HEADQUARTERS: The Red Bull Motor Inn, Schrassts Dr., Waterbury, CT, 203-756-8123, The Holiday Inn, 88 Union St., Waterbury, CT, 203-757-0521

Region 2 - Northeast

SITE: Westvale Club House, 3328 W. Genesee, P.O. Box 291, Syracuse, NY 13219 & Dewitt Clubhouse, Widewaters Pky., Dewitt, NY 13214, Tournament Director: Bruce Clark

PHONE: 315-488-3126; 315-446-0376

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO AND MAIL TO: Same as above

TOURNAMENT HEADQUARTERS: Holiday Inn, Carrier Circle, Syracuse, NY 13057, 315-437-2761

Region 3 - Southeast

SITE: Jacksonville Racquetball Club, 6651 Crestline Drive, Jacksonville, FL 32211, 904-724-6994, Tournament Director: Gordon Ira

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO AND MAIL ENTRY TO: Same as above

TOURNAMENT HEADQUARTERS: Holiday Motor Inn, 8016 N. Alternate #1, Arlington Expressway, Jacksonville, FL 32211, 904-725-3343

Region 4 - Central

SITE: The Supreme Court, 5555 Odana, Madison, WI 53719

PHONE: 608-274-5080, Tournament Director: Joe Wirkus

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE AND MAIL ENTRY TO: Same as above

TOURNAMENT HEADQUARTERS: The Quality Inn, 4619 E. Broadway St., Madison, WI 53716 608-222-5501; The Sheraton, 706 John Nolen Dr., Madison, WI 53713, 608-251-2300

Region 5 - South Central

SITE: Racquetball/Handball Clubs of San Antonio, 7700 Torino Dr., San Antonio, TX 78229, 512-344-8596, Tournament Director: Bruce Hendin

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO AND MAIL ENTRY TO: Same as above

TOURNAMENT HEADQUARTERS: LaQuinta, 9542 1H 10W, San Antonio, TX 78230, 512-690-8810

Region 6 - Southwest

SITE: The Las Vegas Racquetball Club, The Almond Tree Shopping Center, 1100 E. Sahara Ave., Las Vegas, NV 89104, Tournament Director: Dan Seaton, 702-733-1919

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO AND MAIL ENTRY TO: Same as above

TOURNAMENT HEADQUARTERS: Marina Hotel, 3805 Las Vegas Blvd. South, 89109, 800-227-4700

Region 7 - Midwest

SITE: Sports Courts of Bellevue, Hwy. 73-75 at Victoria, Bellevue, NE 68005, phone 402-475-5686, Tournament Director: Dick Kincade

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO AND MAIL ENTRY TO: Same as above

TOURNAMENT HEADQUARTERS: American Family Inn, 1110 Fort Crook Rd., South. (US 73-75) Bellevue, NE, 402-291-0804, Bellevue Inn, Hwy. 370 & Hillcrest Dr., Bellevue, NE, Phone: 402-292-3800

Region 8 - Northwest

SITE: Courtsports, 2510 Oakmont Way, Eugene, OR 97401, 503-687-2811, Tournament Directors, Reed Fitkin, Dale Wood, and Linda Prefontaine

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO AND MAIL ENTRY TO: Same as above

TOURNAMENT HEADQUARTERS: Holiday Inn, 225 Coburg Rd., Eugene, OR 97401, 503-342-5181, Thunderbird Motor Inn, Coburg Road & Hwy. 105 Interchange, Eugene, OR 97401, 503-342-5201

Region 9 - Ohio Valley

SITE: Jefferson Racquetball Club, Hurstbourne Lane & Shelbyville Rd., Louisville, KY 40222, 502-425-4471, Tournament Director: David Fleischaker

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO AND MAIL ENTRY TO: Same as above

TOURNAMENT HEADQUARTERS: Sheraton Inn, 164 at Hurstbourne Lane, Louisville, KY, contact Julie Neely 502-425-7621 or Sara Hamm 502-426-4500

Region 10 - Rocky Mountain

SITE: Executive Park Athletic Club, 2233 Academy Place, Colorado Springs, CO 80909, 303-597-7775, 7779, 7780, Tournament Director: John Mooney

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO AND MAIL ENTRY TO: Same as above

TOURNAMENT HEADQUARTERS: The Palmer House, Interstate 25 at Fillmore, Colorado Springs, Co 80907, 800-528-1234

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Jennifer Harding's Double Hold on Racquetball



Once a lefty... always a lefty. Only in this case a flower basket substitutes for a racquet. Jennifer is the only left hander in the top 25 women competitors... probably the only rose princess too.



Being on top in tournaments is nothing new to Jennifer, who started winning early in her racquetball career. Here she takes a tight grip on the winner's trophy at the Dafty Open tournament, held in Tacoma, WA, in 1973.

Along with her playing and clinic preoccupations Jennifer has some racquetball related business ventures which she runs from the wood paneled office in the Milwaukie Racquetball Club, in Milwaukie, OR, which she also manages.



The smiling face of USRA/NRC National Commissioner Joe Ardito tells the story of another win, this time the 1976 NRC National Doubles title with Camille McCarthy.



by Nick Longhurst

A late model Porsche sits outside the racquetball courts in the quiet Oregon town of Milwaukie.

It is the sort of luxury carriage which attracts envious glances from sundry passersby because \$20,000 imported sports cars don't grow on trees anywhere . . . and most certainly not in this state which boasts of more wood than people.

In fact in Milwaukie, where tastes tend to run to sturdy station wagons and four wheel drive go-anywhere pick up trucks, the maroon colored bomb is a definite rarity.

Which is exactly what can be said about its owner.

She is Jennifer Harding, a 26-year-old businesswoman, racquetball professional who enjoys computing other people's taxes on the side.

That is when she can find the time in a daily schedule which somehow often takes 16 or 17 hours to complete.

For Jennifer has as tight a grasp on the business end of the sport as she does on the grip of her new pale blue autograph racquet.

For the record she is Ektelon's leading woman professional, currently ranked number two behind Shannon Wright in the 1978-79 pro rankings.

Jennifer avenged her defeat at the hands of Shannon Wright, which gave Shannon the National Champion title, by beating her first time out in the new season in their semi-final clash. She went on to wrap up the finals, slamming home a 6 and 14 victory over Peggy Steding.

She also manages two clubs in Oregon, runs a racquet stringing business and dreams of owning her own club.

Jennifer Harding follows through with a forehand ceiling ball in a semi-final match against Kathy Williams.

When television viewers first saw racquetball, they got a glimpse of Jennifer Harding too. Here she talks about racquetball and its benefits as the camera records a pregame segment.



But that is only half of the story. To understand her current dynamic lifestyle you have to understand how she got there.

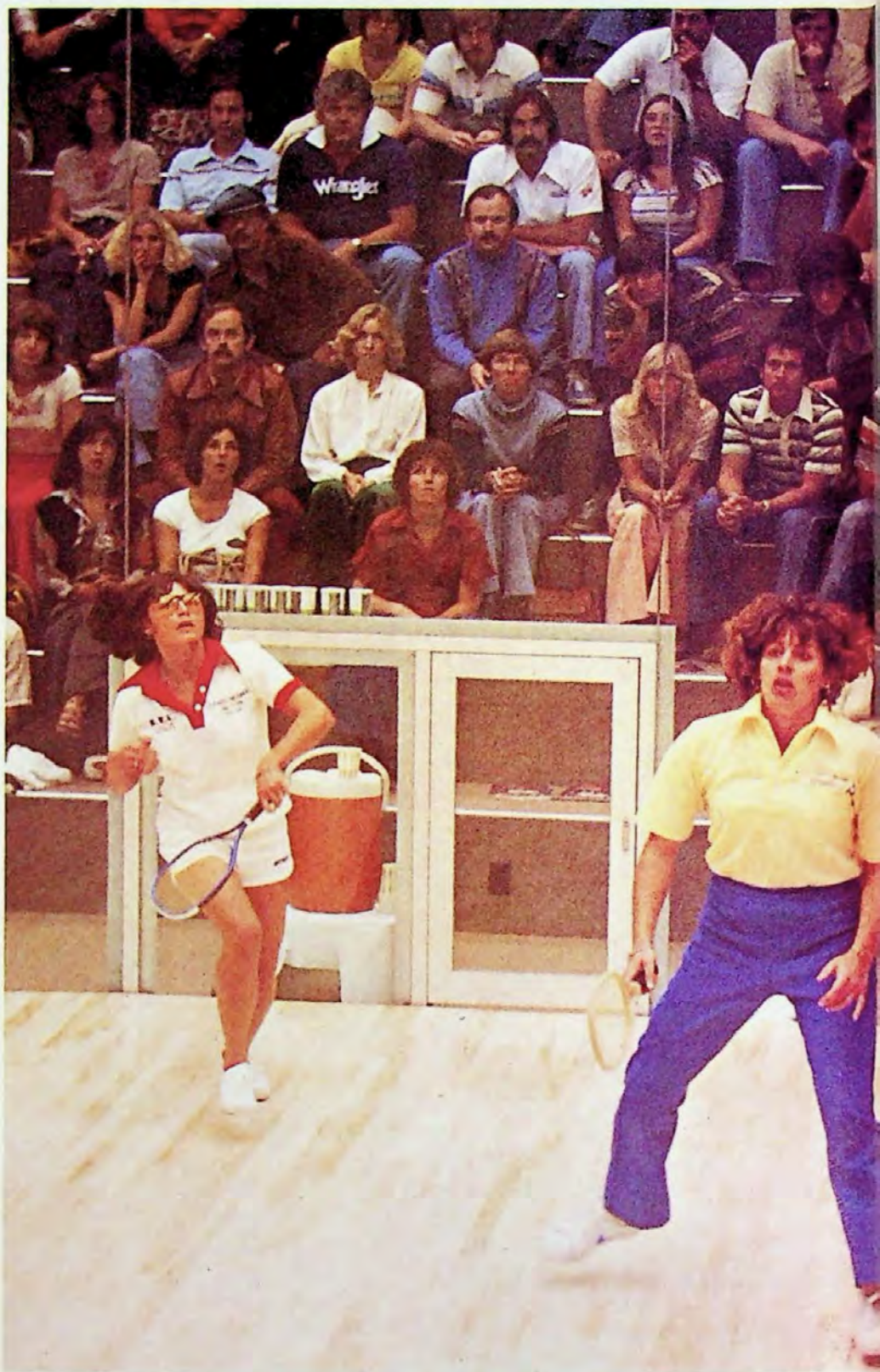
It all began a few years back at the University of Oregon Dental School. She had played other sports — tennis in college, softball, a little basketball and paddleball.

"I had always played some sport. When I first started at Oregon I was going to be a physical education teacher," explains Jennifer.

But that desire lasted precisely 48 hours.

"That was the length of the freshman orientation period," she laughs. *"I just looked around the buildings I would have to spend my time in and the girls I was going to have to work with — the P. E. majors — and I decided against it. I was afraid I couldn't be feminine and a jock at the same time."*

So Jennifer, who had worked as a dental assistant during a summer recess, remembered that the dentist who employed her had tried to get her to be a hygienist. The second day at school she changed her major.



Harding takes center court position against her frequent opponent, Shannon Wright.



Putting Her Teeth into Paddleball

Studying dental hygiene finally paved the way to her present career. Dental school led her to paddleball, which was on the curriculum.

"I had to take it whether I liked it or not so I started to play and began to enjoy it."

"In those days I was always oriented to exercise so during the lunch hour I would go up there and play the men students or one of the dentists on staff. Then I would run back."

"I would be the last one rushing in to the clinic, throwing my cap on with my patients sitting in the waiting room — throwing my instruments on the table and going."

When she said goodbye to dental school on graduation, she also said goodbye to paddleball. And for a while it was tennis which took up her time. Then she met some racquetball players from Portland and began playing competitively — in Canada.

"I liked racquetball right away. I always hated the image of tennis, that you had to be wealthy to play the game. Racquetball on the other hand — even in those days — wasn't very expensive and I liked the people involved. They cared more about how much exercise they were getting and they were not concerned about how they looked."

The first tournaments across the border turned into weekend jaunts, with five or six people splitting the gas for a trip north. Then Jennifer won the northwestern regional tournament.

"There wasn't very much competition. Nobody played racquetball, so you didn't have to be very good. I think that Oregon in those days had a total of 10 courts in the entire state."

After a year of working as a hygienist even the good money she was earning didn't help the boredom. So she started trying to find people who were willing to put money into racquetball.

And time after time she was rebuffed.



"No one would listen to me. At least I was going to some of the tournaments and kind of getting a national concept of racquetball – it was doing well. So here I was, still working as a dental hygienist, trying to get someone to build a club in Portland."

Among the prospective investors that Jennifer singled out was the dentist she worked for, and even the Georgia Pacific Railroad.

The answer was always the same. "No."

She needed another challenge, so she enrolled in tax school.

"I went two nights a week until I got my license. I like figuring out problems and I knew that I would be really good for investments. I was going to go ahead and get a consultant's license, but meanwhile I got into business a bit and I started taking some classes at night in accounting."

Head First Plunge

"I couldn't afford to totally quit my job because I had bills to pay so I stayed on as a hygienist and worked taxes on the side."

"Then the next thing I knew, there was a club going up and they called me."

Jennifer was hired . . . just as a pro, but she was content to stay in that position for a while.

"At the time the manager was not doing the job he was hired to do and I was running half the club anyway. I started getting into doing the books and after coming back from the 1973 Nationals I found that I had been made manager. . . . And I jumped in head first."

Then the two partners in the club decided to split their partnership, but another club was already in the planning stage. They were at odds deciding which of the two clubs Jennifer should run.

"I decided that I could run both. I hired three other people to give lessons and carried on."

It was work for Jennifer in those days. In that first season she was running two clubs, giving nine sessions of lessons, working 18 hours a day.

"Although I hadn't played much during my spare time, my game seemed to improve on the tour."

It was a classic case of getting thrown in at the deep end, but she had the determination to succeed.

"I admit that I didn't know all there was to know about running a club," she laughs. "But I worked a lot of hours for the opportunity."

"At that time, especially with pro women's racquetball, I didn't want to risk what my fellow players were risking – if they sprained an ankle – even if they won the tournament – big deal. \$1,000 a month. I wasn't about to risk everything and give up what I had as far as managing in Milwaukie and the possibility of owning or designing clubs. . . . There are some people who are happy being racquetball bums. I don't want that for me."

Her game has improved over the past couple of years and Jennifer can usually rustle up enough hustle to make her a hard person to beat.

There are those who argue that she just isn't as hungry as her fellow competitors and that the will to give everything for a win is sometimes lacking.

But, for sure, her heart is with racquetball and with the future of the game. When it comes to the directions that the game will take she is the most vocal of all the pros.

"I want to own a club, and I would also like to design my own club. I want more quality than you find in most club's today because I believe that will pay off in the future. I just want to own my own club and put my ideas into practice."

Jennifer wholeheartedly plans to put her future into racquetball.

"The clubs I manage are everything to me right now and I believe that racquetball is going to last a long, long time. Just look at the face of a person who has just played his first game and you will understand why." ●



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SPALDING

"Happy Days"!

Donny Most's the Winner

by Nick Longhurst



Take some hot California sunshine, a star studded roster of celebrities from entertainment and sports, a worthwhile charity and some crowd pulling racquetball.

Those were the ingredients which brought in over \$40,000 recently to help in the fight against multiple sclerosis when racquetball was added for the first time to the annual Steve Garvey Celebrity Tennis and Racquetball Classic.

Garvey, the clean cut first baseman of the pennant winning Los Angeles Dodgers baseball team, was happy to add racquetball to the customary format of his yearly effort to aid his favorite charity, and he proved that he is just as adept slamming kill shots into the front wall as he is in his customary role, drilling homers out of the Dodger's ballpark.

There were 15 well known names playing in the round robin tournament at the Warner Center Racquet Club in Woodland Hills, an LA suburb which many celebrities call home.

The tournament — which resulted in a close win for Donny Most, the carrot haired star of the TV series "Happy Days" — pulled in almost half of the total donations raised.

Donny, who has been picking up lessons from Pro Jerry Hilecher, managed to stay ahead of his nearest rival, former Kojak costar, Kevin Dobson.

Racquetball Organizer Gloria Fleishman was emphatic in her endorsement of the hard hitting racquetball players whose devotion to the game grows with every tournament.

"Celebrity racquetball is definitely here to stay," she said. "The players may not have the same shot arsenal as professionals, but they sure do draw the crowds. Both days the club was packed with spectators."

Warner club member Kathy Warman managed to strike a blow for women's lib, too, when she walked off the court after a resounding victory over self-confessed tyro Dick Whittington.

Dick, a Los Angeles radio celebrity, spent the preceding week conducting a daily male sexist pig campaign over the air, decrying the looks and abilities of female racquetball players.



Woman Batters Whittington

But his desserts came when his pretty opponent challenged him to prove his remarks on the court.

After his battering Whittington admitted ruefully *"This game is a great leveller. I was soundly beaten by a woman!!!"*

"... I learned first hand that it's true what they say, racquetball certainly is a game where women are equal. I still don't believe in equality, but I'm going to take a few lessons so I can beat her next year."

Kevin Dobson, long time Kojak regular, was filming in a hospital for his role as the recipient of a new heart in an upcoming movie called *"Transplant."*

"If I played any more racquetball, I would have to give up acting," he explained after winning a close match with Debra Clinger.

Kevin, a two year convert to the game, is also a far ranging ambassador for the game.

"Just recently I performed in New Zealand and since I normally travel with my racquetball gear, I just took it along with me to the other side of the world."

"There was just one problem – there are no racquetball courts in the country. But I started playing on double squash courts with some of the locals. They became so enthused with the game that I left them an outline of the rules and a set of court dimensions."

"They promised me that next time I went there would be at least one real court to play on . . ."

Kevin, a transplanted New Yorker, started playing one wall paddleball as a kid.



That gave him a taste of the action, and after a couple of games at Yogi Berra's New York facility he got into a serious program with the game.

"But boy, it was hard at first. In paddleball you can switch hands — so I started out the game with no backhand. . ."

Kevin gets a lot of pleasure out of his three time weekly workouts.

"I'm a competitive player, and I just want to get better. Working for this role as a heart transplant patient and being around a few hospitals during the filming really makes you realize just how important it is to keep the heart in good shape."

"One thing I know is that I never want to go through the trauma that my character went through — and it's based on real life facts."

Kevin's first objective is to get in shape for the next celebrity tournament — *"the next time it's Most who is going to come in second."*

The slim winner of the tournament isn't so sure that he wants to let that happen.

Donny mixes TV with racquetball — he has already appeared on the networks playing his favorite game.

"I have been working hard so I haven't been getting much time to play, but during my time off — five or six months — I plan to play every day."

Handball and the Catskills

Donny got a good grounding in the sport — he started playing handball in New York at 15 — about the same time that he was singing in a night club act in the Catskill Mountains.

He's still singing — he has a new record called *"Here's Some Love"* — but he switched from handball to racquetball 12 months ago.

He plays regularly at the prestigious Century West Club in the high rise Century City area of Los Angeles.

"Celebrities love to help raise money for charity. Their time in exchange for a few hours fun is a great way to serve some of the people who watch us each week."

"But until now celebrity tournaments have only been for things like golf and tennis — neither of which I play."

"I have just been waiting for racquetball to get big enough to be a part of these affairs. Even top tennis clubs are putting in racquetball courts now so I know there are going to be a lot more chances to play the game in the future."

"And lets face it. I'm the best."

— *"O. K. Garvey, in this game you hit the ball every time. Think you can manage that? —"*

Those were the terse instructions from Racquetball Professional Jay Jones before the exhibition match in which he defeated Steve Garvey.

"Garvey managed a tight smile and a little hustle." I don't know how to play this game. . . how about a few points."

But it soon became clear that Steve is an all around athlete who can hit a racquetball as hard as he can a baseball.

"He has lightning quick reflexes and a good eye. Those things are just as valuable in racquetball as in his own game," explained Jones after Steve drove a couple by him.

"The pros had better watch it. Garvey could be a tough player."

And after the match Garvey, who went down 21-12, had only one thing to say. *"Racquetball is a fine game. I'm pleased that it has become a part of this tournament. Sports do so much to entertain people and supporting charities like mine is just one more way us healthy ones can do something for the ones who have problems they have to live with all their lives."*

"Racquetball players who know the exhilaration of a hard fought game are getting the same feeling that professional athletes get. I only regret that not everybody can have those very same experiences." ●



Could You Place the Face???

Starting with page 82, left to right: Gloria Fleishman, Donny Most, Debra Clinger; Kevin Dobson and his four-year-old daughter, Mariah Shannon; Grant Goodeve; Harvey Korman and Robert Ginty; Steve and Cindy Garvey.

-Peter Borsari photos

She Put Racquetball Into Tournament



Racquetball playing celebrities who took part in a recent charity fund raiser in Los Angeles developed a lot of respect for petite mother-of-four Gloria Fleishman.

For Gloria, the wife of a Los Angeles attorney, treated most of them like an extension of her family and hustled them from game to game, from autograph session to bar and back again during the two day Steve Garvey Racquetball and Tennis Classic.

And it was in no small way thanks to Gloria that the racquetball tournament, held for the first time along with the tennis classic, went off at all.

For the small but ever growing band of racquetball playing celebrities, many of whom have been featured in the pages of *National Racquetball*, attracted a good 40 percent of the donations to multiple sclerosis.

Gloria originally joined the Warner Center Racquet Club in Woodland Hills, CA, to play tennis.

But that didn't last long.

"I couldn't tolerate the people in tennis. I started playing the game but I couldn't handle all the garbage the women players threw out."

"As soon as the racquetball section opened I played the game and loved it. I didn't have to go through the tennis rituals and social chit chat, I just left the court feeling good physically and mentally."

Originally there were no plans to hold a racquetball section in the tournament and that made racquetball's new convert a little mad.

So mad she waylaid Steve Garvey and put it to him.

"Steve had no objections when I told him of my plans to organize a racquetball tournament with celebrities. He offered to give an exhibition and invited me along to a planning meeting."

Besides organizing the tournament Gloria found time to play — and win — a doubles exhibition game with partner Donny Most.

"It was exhilarating to be able to play. Racquetball players don't tend to be at all stuffy so we really had a good time."

—N.L.

Can Grandpa Play Racquetball?

57-Year-Old Utah Player Says "Accept the Invitation"

There are two kinds of grandfathers, explains Wallace E. Hight in his book, *Can Grandpa Play Racquetball?*

One is inactive, with limited interests. "I remember my own father who strictly limited his activity in later life," Hight writes in his book. "I think of my dad's long sittings at the kitchen table, reading a book and drinking a beverage. Such inclination of senior citizens to occupy themselves in sedentary activities — playing solitaire, watching TV, etc. results in a loss of muscle tone in the body, and even an atrophy of the body muscles as they wither from lack of use."

Hight is the other kind of grandfather. More like the men he describes in his opening chapters — fellow Utah residents like Frank Nebeker, who took up racquetball the week after he retired at 60, or Nebeker's playing buddy, Stan Russon, 72, who uses racquetball to begin his daily exercise.

Hight, who's 57, first played racquetball 10 years ago, shortly after he recovered from a collapsed lung.

"I remember the circumstances preceding the hospitalization," writes the accountant with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Salt Lake City. "I was riding the bus to and from work at the time. To meet work deadlines I carried heavy briefcases with me on the bus . . . and would often leave the office so late I had to run two or three blocks to the bus stop. My problem was that my memory was far superior to my judgment, for I could remember earlier years when I could run a mile or more at a stretch without noticing problems."

"It took my doctor to explain that the aging process was taking place. The elasticity of my lungs has given way to brittleness."

His doctor told him to jog, but when Hight went back for a checkup — as a racquetball regular — the doctor said "I'd suggest you keep doing what you're doing."

"Now I don't pretend to have medical judgment to know what exercises you grandpas should be doing," Hight writes. "But with the assurance of my

Wallace Hight with the grandchildren who ask him to play.

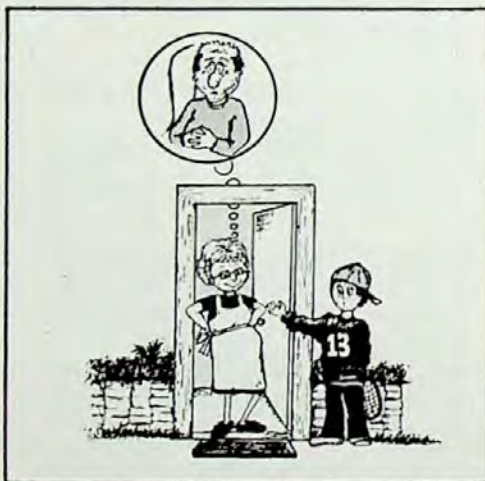


Illustration from *Can Grandpa Play Racquetball?* ©Wallace E. Hight

doctor that racquetball, played regularly and sensibly, is a good physical activity for me, I am getting the fullest value of an annual gymnasium membership by greatly enjoying . . . racquetball."

Hight thinks racquetball is a good game for Golden Agers and pre-Golden Agers because it's easy to get into a game, it's a gregarious sport ("Man is naturally desirous of associating with others of his kind") and it's an effective way to earn aerobic points ("After a 45 minute session one comes out feeling better.")

"Playing racquetball," says Hight, "adds days to your life and life to your days."

Hight devotes more than 50 pages of his paperback book (published by Jubilant Enterprises, Inc., P.O. Box 341, Farmington, UT 84025) to instruction — including a comparison between racquetball, tennis and billiards and a description of two kinds of racquetball games — "the games for humility — the games I lose" and "the games for confidence . . . which should be played with wife or kids." And, the reader would guess, with grandchildren.

"Prudent physical exercise," Hight writes, "is the prescription most suitable to conserve well being, and playing racquetball is an enjoyable way to physically exercise."

"You should play the game as vigorously as appropriate to your physical condition and the playing ability of your opponent. Against those of considerable skill play the best your physical condition will allow. On the other hand play sportingly with novices."

"Play the game as an option for keeping alert and happy so that you 'live' your days with a zest . . . Get into the court, play racquetball and enjoy life." ●

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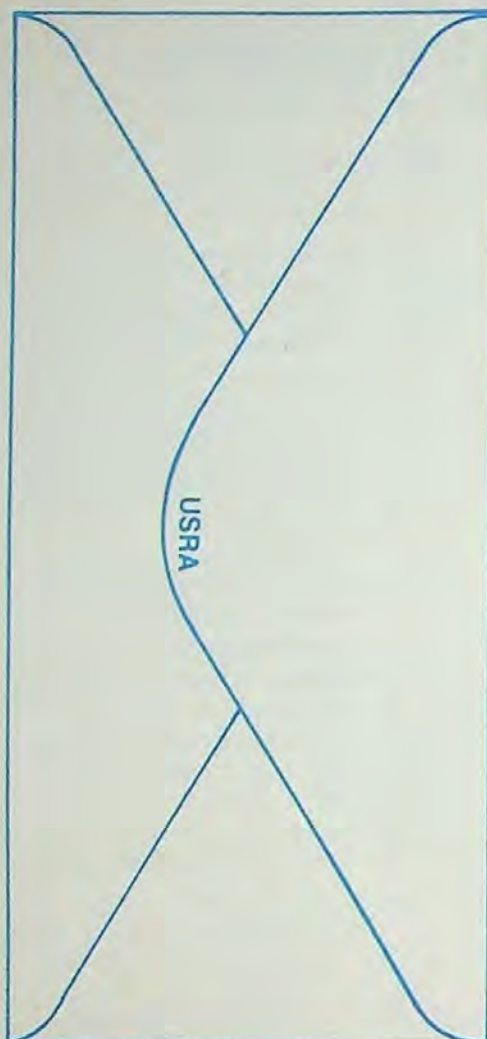
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Love at First Sight

Hi Bob:

I was at our athletic club the other day where I saw my first game of racquetball. What a terrific game it is. I love it. What a contribution to the sporting world you have made.

John Templeton
Portland, OR

National Racquetball's a Teacher

Dear Sir:

I very much enjoy your magazine. It always contains good information about our game, both articles and instruction. We use many of the instruction hints at our YMCA. I also enjoy going to the USRA tournaments, which are run and organized well. Keep up the good work in both areas.

Samuel J. Pettinato Jr.
Jessup, PA

Praise from Greece

Dear Mr. Kendler:

First off I would like to say that I enjoy your magazine very much. I am in the Air Force overseas, in Greece. Here we have two racquetball courts that are full all the time. I try to get a court whenever possible, because the game is one of the most exciting, fast paced games I've played. I'm new to the game and your magazine, but I've never watched a game evolving that has more potential than racquetball does.

The main reason I'm writing to you is that, despite your success and achievements, you thank God for all your accomplishments, which these days is not seen not heard often enough. I applaud your decision to do so.

Pat Gore
APO New York

Looking for Tony Craig

Dear Ms. Brusslan:

First let me introduce myself. I am a racquetball player who introduced his wife to the game, first of all for sport, and secondly for weight control.

Now, thanks to *National Racquetball*, she is thrilled with the game, loves the clothes, (even bought herself the "Streaker" outfit as shown in your December issue) and loves the idea that maybe someday she might come face to face with Tony Craig on the courts.

Thank you from both of us for your December issue.

David Cashman
New York, NY

Working Wonders at Boys Republic

Dear Mr. Kendler:

Thank you very much for helping me spread racquetball to the boys of Boys Republic. It was quite a surprise when we received those magazines and rule books from the National Racquetball Club. Boys whom I have never seen read before, are looking at them with much excitement.

I would also like to thank you for forwarding my letter to Leach Industries, who helped satisfy our needs by sending us 14 of their racquets.

I thought that you might be glad to hear some examples of how racquetball has had an effect on our boys. We have a boy who is a member of our racquetball club. He is what we call a "goalless" boy, a person who really doesn't appear to have any goals for his life. He is a boy who since he came into the program about five months ago has not been active in many of the activities we offer. He is a person who for some reasons has had trouble interacting with most of the other residents in our program. He has also showed very little emotional growth during this period. Since becoming interested in racquetball he has shown some growth by becoming more interested in his life. He has begun interacting with his peers, primarily through racquetball. He has become, through practice, one of the best racquetball players in our program. In fact he placed second in the last tournament we held.

At the school at Boys Republic boys are rewarded for their work, behavior, attendance etc., by receiving points which later can be turned into money. The money earned by them is usually used for buying their cigarettes, but this boy saved up for weeks so that he could buy himself his own racquet.

Another example of the influence of racquetball is a boy who is also a member of my racquetball club. He is a boy who is very overweight. His first few weeks in the program he refused to leave the TV room and take part in activities because he was embarrassed to show his body for fear of being picked on by his peers. He soon started feeling more comfortable here, but still didn't take part in many physical activities. He would sit around and either watch TV, or read, while at the same time, he grew heavier. I somehow got him out on the racquetball court one day. He became so interested in it, he returned from Christmas with a new racquet which he had asked his family to give him.

These are two examples of how racquetball has affected Boys Republic. Your support has been very valuable to us. Any future support in the way of magazines, pamphlets or films on racquetball will certainly be most appreciated.

My thanks to you and the NRC on behalf of myself, my kids and the staff at Boys Republic.

Michael Weinman
Farmington Hills, MI

Senior Citizen Loves Donna Jo

Dear Editor:

I am a senior citizen and I must admit to never having played the game of racquetball. My young grandson does, and he showed me your December magazine with pictures of Donna Jo modeling racquetball clothes. I know Donna Jo as the "Grand Darling of the Senior Citizens" through her appearances at some of our functions.

Knowing how much we at the Center love this beautiful young lady and how much my grandson adores her I want to thank you at *National Racquetball* for sharing her with us. We have followed her career over the years and are hanging the article by Stella Hart on our bulletin board.

Who knows. I might decide to play racquetball yet!

Sara Kingston
Saddlebrook, NJ

Another Vote for Mandatory Eye Protection . . .

Dear Carol:

In Terry Francher's article "The Problem of Eye Protection," many fine points were made for adopting a rule calling for a mandate on protective eye wear in sanctioned tournaments. And then he turns around and states "However we are not going to infringe upon our players individual rights and make legislation to that effect."

I would hate to see the USRA forced into such legislation. But little league baseball was forced into requiring the use of helmets. If playing the game has certain hazards inherent in it, there is an obligation of the governing body to legislate safety into the game.

I do not want to see the game of racquetball maligned because of eye injuries. It's a great sport and it's popularity has been greatly enhanced by the USRA and *National Racquetball*.

Thomas U. Pipes
Escondido, CA

This letter, referring to USRA Coordinator Terry Fancher's October column, carries the same message as most of the replies to Commissioner Joe Ardito's December editorial, many of which were printed in Ardito's February column. ED

Celebrities: To Be . . .

Gentlemen:

I wanted to take a moment to compliment you on the development of *National Racquetball* magazine. I am particularly pleased to see the expansion of articles regarding well known celebrities and others becoming involved in the sport. Publicity which encourages new people to become interested in this great industry is especially valuable. Your magazine has become much more than just a tournament players publication.

Thanks for everything you are doing for the racquetball industry.

C. A. Spaulding
Manchester, MO

Look Him Up for a Post Prison Game

Dear Sirs:

Regarding the article by Bill Cudd, "*Racquetball Behind the Walls*," it is good to hear that something other than pumping iron is taking place at T. I.

If a player is released to the San Diego area, I would invite him to look me up for a game.

Randy Swanson
U.S. Probation & Parole
Rm. BN 71, U.S. Courthouse
940 Front Street
San Diego, CA 92189

. . . And Another Against

Eyeguards are very useful and maybe clubs will post signs concerning their use for insurance liability purposes — but I am *opposed* to any USRA rule that would require their use.

An individual should have a choice about wearing them.

E. A. Johansson
Winter Haven, FL

. . . Or Not to Be

Dear Editor:

That's enough with the celebrities already! I'm not interested in movie stars. If I were I would have a subscription to a movie magazine. How about a feature on Charlie or Peggy? Who are they? What's their opinion, etc.?

Shirley Scheithe
Chicago, IL

National Racquetball thinks top players are celebrities, too, and has run stories on Charlie (Brumfield) and Peggy (Steding). We hope you'll read Nick Longhurst's stories on Jennifer (Harding) in this issue. ED.

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Brumfield's Exclusive Series

This issue of *National Racquetball* begins the first of 12 issues which will be highlighted by an exclusive series of instructional pieces by Charlie Brumfield. And unlike many instructional articles bylined by top professionals, the entire series is written by Brumfield himself.

Knowing Brumfield as I have for over nine years now, that's the only way he does things. This four time national champion has weathered every possible storm in racquetball to continue to be a vital force in our game. And as the saying goes, "he's done it his way."

And that's the essence of his instructional series. It's Brumfield's way. Not only the how to, but the why's. It does little good to know how to hit a shot if you can't do it in a game and the concept of pragmatic instruction is what Brumfield the person and Brumfield the instructor is all about.

When first approached about this series, Charlie was apprehensive. "I don't know if I can get across what I want to say," he told me. "And I know many of my concepts are radically different from the way things have always been taught."

I assured Brum that the racquetball public would be extremely interested in his opinions, why he held them and how the average player could incorporate them into his game. With that he perked up and as he got into the series, he became nearly obsessed with it.

"I've never seen him take a project so seriously," said his wife, Pat. "He'll come home from practice and rewrite sections just because he noticed something during his workout."

In talking with Charlie at the Coors All Pro Championships (where he served as head referee) I found what I had supposed was true. Never before has Brumfield been asked to do an indepth study of racquetball technique and strategy — at least not since the beginning of the power playing days.

And it has not been an easy time for Brumfield, who dominated the early years of racquetball with control, only to have his dominance destroyed by what he feels were product changes that benefitted power players.

Yet he maintained solidly his position as the number two player in the world, failing only to stop Marty Hogan consistently. And it wasn't until a bout with hepatitis last summer and fall that he fell out of the top four.

During his illness Charlie had a chance to reflect on the game and put his mind to work, not only developing theories, but figuring how to best use his own abilities. Playing up to one's potential has been the goal of all athletes through the ages and Brumfield is no exception.

The key point is that potential is both mental and physical. Brumfield will be the first to tell you that of all the top racquetball professionals he is the least athletic in terms of natural ability. The other pros will tell you that he is the tops in terms of mental ability.

Therefore Brumfield's instructional series is an attempt (and well done, I might add) to combine the two, by telling you not only what to do, but why and how and when you should do it.

He has analyzed each facet of racquetball and will systematically explain what you need to do to be a winner. Some of the ideas will be unusual and you may think them out of step with the mainstream of today's racquetball thinking.

Others may seem ridiculous by their simplicity and you'll get that, "why didn't I think of that" feeling.

But no matter what your opinion of Charlie Brumfield the truth is that no single individual has ever dissected racquetball as thoroughly as has this man. No single individual has earned as much praise and awards as has this man.

And never before has Charlie Brumfield authored a comprehensive instructional series — until now.

Exclusively. In *National Racquetball*. We hope you enjoy it and put it to good use. ●



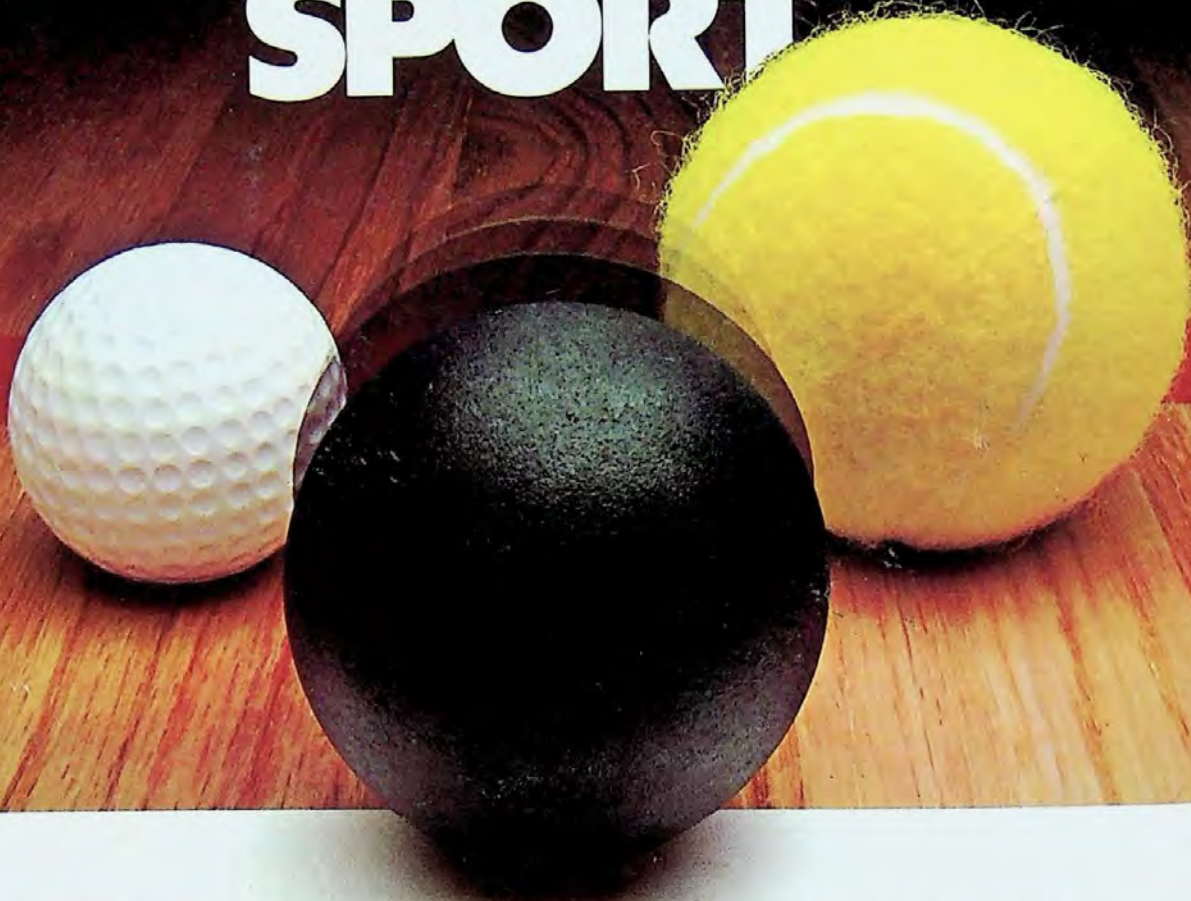
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