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SEPTEMBER, 1980

# RACQUETBALL TODAY

## Shannon Wright Recaptures Number One Spot

By RALPH MOIL

In a thrilling 21-20, 21-16, victory over Heather McKay in the finals of the Newport Beach, Calif., WPRA tournament (August 14-17, Newport Sporting House) Shannon Wright avenged her previous two losses to the former "squash legend" and took back the No. 1 ranking she has been so used to holding for the past four years.

After the sound beating Shannon took from Heather in the finals of the Nationals in Chicago last June, there were many who doubted Shannon's ability to "come back" against such a formidable opponent, though no one doubted, (and the tournaments are proving) that women's racquetball has clearly boiled down to a "two-woman show."

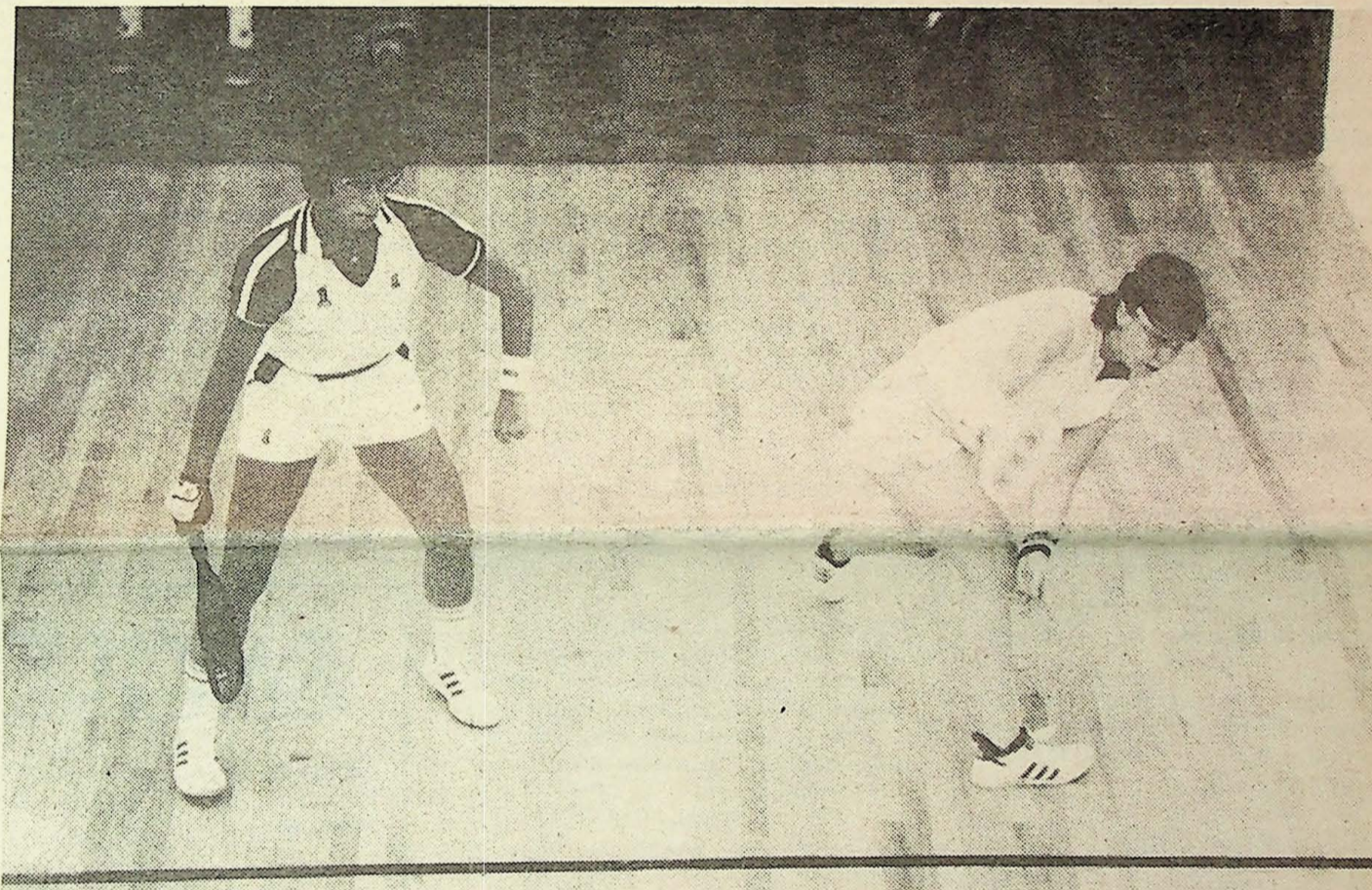
In the following RACQUETBALL TODAY exclusive interview with Shannon, she recounts her thoughts and strategies before and during that exciting match in Newport.

R.T.: What did you do between the Nationals and Newport Beach to prepare for the tournament, and more specifically, for your battle with Heather?

SHANNON: First of all, I got myself into a little better shape. I lost a few pounds and continued with my Nautilus workouts, but I also spent a lot of time in the court practicing. As for strategy, (my brother) Pat and I noticed that in practice I was hitting a lot of really effective pinch shots, but in the previous matches against Heather, I guess because my adrenaline was pumping, I had a tendency to just hit the ball hard and hit pass shots. A lot of those pass shots came off the back wall for set ups. We also decided that I should play more to Heather's forehand. In the actual matches with her at Newport, my second serve was usually a lob-Z to her forehand and it worked great. Believe it or not, I even aced her a couple of times with that serve!

R.T.: Tell me about the match itself; what happened in that close (21-20) first game?

SHANNON: Well that was one of the most exciting games I've ever played. Everything was going along just fine with me pretty much in control and I was up 19-10, then she made an incredible comeback! I mean, she played fantastic! I hardly made any mistakes, she just played great; and the score got tied up 20-20 with me serving, and I skipped in a shot to give her the serve. The next rally, she hit a shot deep in the court to my forehand, and concentrating on my game plan, I decided to go for the soft pinch shot. It was perfect . . . rolled right out! I got the serve and won the next point for the game, but that shot was the turning point that really gave me the match. The next game, she jumped out to a 9 to 1 lead, and at 12 to 4, I called a timeout.



Shannon Wright (right) knocks off Heather McKay as the two duel for the championship of the Newport Beach Pro Stop.

Photo by C. George Charfauros

R.T.: Did you do anything to change your strategy during the timeout?

SHANNON: Yes! I realized I was back to hitting the ball hard again so I decided to slow the game down, keep working on those pinch shots, and get that first serve in! Well, it sure worked: she only got four more points the rest of the game.

R.T.: What about the rest of the tournament; did anyone else give you any trouble?

SHANNON: No. Not really. I played Mary Dee, Linda Prefontaine, Martha McDonald and then Janell (Marriott) . . . all good players, but you know, when I'm really on my game I don't think anyone can beat me, and I think this proves it. Heather really played well. She's certainly the best opponent I've had to face since I began playing racquetball (and I rank Lynn Adams right behind her) but if I prepare properly and play my game, I don't

think she can beat me.

R.T.: I know you beat Heather the first time you met, but she did beat you the previous two times you played . . . what happened?

SHANNON: Well, of course, she played great. I won't take that away from her at all, but I was involved in a new Nautilus program that really built up my upper

(Continued on Page 11)

## Preview of the 1980-81 Racquetball Season

By ALAN SHETZER

The 1980 racquetball season should be an interesting one at all levels of the game.

The Men's Professional Tour will still be the Marty Hogan show. Don't be fooled by Yellen's strong finish last season. Hogan's still 5-8 points better.

Of the rest, Yellen and Peck will continue to vie for the second and third ranking. Hilecher and Bledsoe will drop out of the top ten. (Bledsoe says he won't play at all.)

BRUMFIELD and Strandemo won't make the quarter's as often and will probably drop into the low teens by the '81 Nationals.

One note that could effect the standings: the ball will be slowed down a bit by the middle of the season. If this happens then Brumfield and Strandemo will remain in the top ten.

Also, look for the NRC to experiment with the scoring systems. There will be some television coverage this year which will dictate a change in the way the game is played.

It appears 1980 will be the year of the young turks; Don Thomas, David Fleetwood, Larry Myers and Doug Cohen will be solid contenders for the quarter's.

WATCH FOR Egerman, Christensen, Hawkins and Harnett to push out Zucker-

man, Morrow and at times Koltun and McCoy.

The men's association (NARP) is still trying to put together their own tour separate from the NRC. However, they have had little success so far. Their deal with Playboy fell through and they currently have Capital Sports out of New York trying to put something together. And, we'll have to wait to see what comes out of the other, new men's pro association (PRA) which features players in the top 16 only.

The women pros under Dan Seaton's leadership have a better than ever chance of having their own tour of 10-15 stops put together. Vittert has made a substantial

(Continued on Page 16)

# We Get Letters...

## Bledsoe Controversy Gets Continuing Response

Dear Phil Simborg:

Please be more professional in your handling of certain stories. I'm surprised a respected publication such as yours would not contact Racquetball Illustrated for a comment on the article that appeared on the front page of your August, 1980, edition.

There is a difference between reporting for the sake of controversy and responsible journalism.

Responsibility is the reason I am not printing a letter (article?) written to Racquetball Illustrated from someone signed "The Conscience of Racquetball."

In a nutshell, it was not really a letter but out and out diatribe.

No professional publication would print such a thing. Responsible publications want facts, not innuendo. We are not in the habit of letting some anonymous person take sour grape pot shots at a subject without having the subject give his or her side of the story.

Racquetball Illustrated will do a story on Charlie Drake some day but it will be done in a responsible and professional manner.

Just because Leach Industries is a sometime-advertiser with us is not the reason we are not running the letter. I think the racquetball industry knows me better than that. I have taken Drake to task before and I will do it again if I disagree with his policies. And, by the way, I am still waiting for my invitation to Hawaii from Drake (which Bledsoe reported I received), which to this date I still have not received.

**Ben Kalb,**  
Editor

Racquetball Illustrated

Dear Ben,

Your points are well-taken. If anyone ever does offer you a trip to Hawaii and you're embarrassed to accept it, have them give me a call.

Phil

Dear RACQUETBALL TODAY,

Your interview with Davey Bledsoe (August) was one of the most interesting, direct, and even inflammatory things I've ever read. While I'm sure that many of Bledsoe's remarks against the people who have run the pro tours are justified, they're obviously very one-sided. With all their bungling and "egotism" I think it's obvious that people like Kendler and Drake have done a heck of a lot to put racquetball on the map. I'd like to read something in their defense from someone who might be a little more objective than Bledsoe.

**Richard Lewis**  
Los Angeles

Dear RACQUETBALL TODAY,

Between the article on Bledsoe, the jab about Hogan having his own referee in the Grobmisi satire, and the article saying that the rules of the game should be changed, your August paper doesn't have a lot of nice things to say about the people who run the pro tour. Anyway, I applaud your guts for "telling it like it is." And my hat's off to Bledsoe, too.

**E. Carroll**  
Los Angeles

Dear Editor:

I've never seen anything in a national publication like your interview with Davey Bledsoe! It sounded like a lot of sour grapes because he's not "in" with the in crowd.

**Tom Balsom**  
E. Orange, New Jersey

Dear RACQUETBALL TODAY,

It's very enthusing to see a publication of your caliber printing some of the true facts about the pro tour from a players point of view. It takes guts to take a shot at the NRC, Charlie Drake and Leach Industries. Keep up the good work.

Sincerely your,  
**Doug Duorak**  
Hoffman Estates, Ill.

Dear Editor:

I loved your article on Wilson and how they've patterned their racquetball promotion after Jack Kramer's work in tennis. I was a real tennis freak back in the '50s and was lucky enough to be at a few of Jack's clinics, and he made the game exciting for all of us. I'm anxious to see Bledsoe and Wright do the same thing with racquetball for my kids (I can't get them interested in tennis). Nice article.

**Rick Steinberg**  
Houston, Texas

Dear RACQUETBALL TODAY,

I just got my September issue of (another racquetball publication...Ed.) and they say to look in their October issue for coverage of the Women's Nationals! I already read everything there is to read about the Women's Nationals in your July issue! That's three months before they even mentioned who won! Unless you like reading about Hollywood actors who stub their toes playing racquetball, why in the world should I read their magazine instead of yours? You people are really doing a great job and on top of the racquetball scene. Keep up the good work.

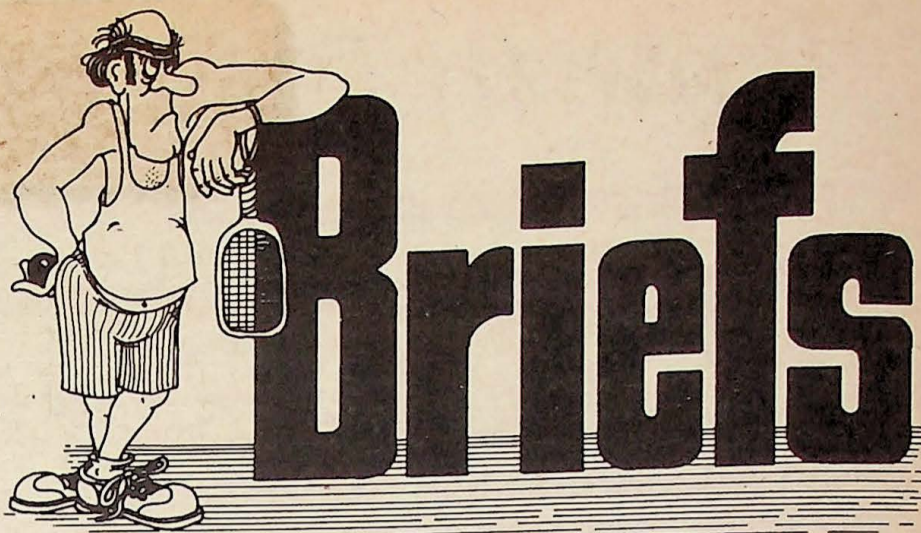
Sincerely,  
**Ellen Newburger**  
Chicago, Illinois

Dear RACQUETBALL TODAY,

As a woman, I thank you for your excellent coverage of the WPRO. I search through all the magazines for information on what the women are doing, and your paper has the best coverage, without a doubt. You have more pictures and articles, more information about their tournaments, and with Janell's column give more information about what's going on than anyone. I just want you to know that those of us, men and women, interested in the women pros, thank you and appreciate it.

**Linda Green**  
Detroit, Mich.

(Continued on Page 17)



## New Men's Pro Racquetball Group Announced

According to a press release from Leach's public relations firm, a new men's professional association, called the PRA has been formed under the leadership of Steve Strandemo. Membership is restricted to the top 16 pros, and any that do not get into the group by August 25th will be excluded, as membership will be closed for one year. The group will "sanction events and equipment and guarantee that its players, the best players in the game, will perform." The group also plans to become active in areas such as making the sport more attractive to sponsors, public awareness, and setting standards of player conduct.

As of the date of the release, August 13, ten of the 16 were listed as having agreed to join the group. There was no statement as to how this will effect the relations with the existing NARP men's association; why the group was limited to just

the top 16; why membership was closed for one year; how new players will be let in as they break into the top 16; if players will be excluded after they drop out of the top 16; or why it was believed that the goals could not be accomplished within the existing men's group. RACQUETBALL TODAY is trying to get the answers to these questions, and hopes to report them in future issues.

## New Metro Club Staffs

The Chicago-area Metro Clubs has announced the following new managers and pros at their various facilities:

Jim Babbit, manager/pro, Evanston Court Club; Pat Dennis, manager/pro, Olympian Court Club; Bob Kieta, pro, Oak Park Court House; Bob Goode, manager, Oak Park Court House; Frank Walsh, pro, Edens and Mid-Town Court House; Denny Pfiffner, manager/pro, Skokie Court House, and Jim Stebel, manager/pro, Glass Court Club.

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# How to Play Power Racquetball

By MARTY HOGAN and CHARLIE BRUMFIELD

*Editor's Note: Marty Hogan, the current national champ and the guy known as the hardest hitting racquetball player alive, has teamed up with Charlie Brumfield, five times national champ and known as the smartest player alive, to produce a book based on the "power" style of racquetball. With permission of the authors and publisher, RACQUETBALL TODAY will reprint portions of that book.*

Absolutely, the most troublesome area for the beginning player is the grip. The hand slips, the fingers are wrong, you "shake hands with the racquet" the way just about every instruction book advises — but the racquet doesn't respond with great shots. It continues to wobble at the moment of impact and otherwise trash up a good basic swing.

Marty Hogan has, first of all, gone to the ultimately efficient grip. He uses the same grip for his forehand that he uses for his backhand. This runs against almost every previously taught grip in racquetball and even in tennis. The traditional grip requires you to aim the "V" of thumb and forefinger right down the racquet. That's for the forehand. The backhand, traditionally, has been accomplished by a slight turning of the hand, bringing the face of the racquet forward. A turn of anywhere from one-eighth of an inch to one-half inch has been recommended. Player were — are — supposed to shift hand position while racing for the ball.

Slow motion movies and high-speed stills indicate that Hogan has evolved a compromise grip between the "move" and the "non-move" for his backhand. He has moved the "V" of his grip slightly away from the orthodox position so that his "V," instead of being right up the middle (bevel) of the racquet, is actually near the left upper edge of the top of the racquet, and the knuckle of his right index finger rests alongside the upper right edge.

## THIS ALLOWS HOGAN to do two things:

It allows his racquet to square off deeper in his stance (farther back) so that his racquet will be square to the intended line of flight of the ball at the moment of contact. This contact, running absolutely against all previous orthodoxy, is generally made off the *back of his right knee*. (More on this later.)

*Repeating:* Hogan, ideally, when he has time to set up, hits the ball from one to three feet *behind the spot* generally recommended for contacting the ball. The recommended, traditional spot is off the front foot.

The second thing that this "unorthodox" grip does for Marty Hogan occurs during his backhand, which, by the way, he hits *harder* than any other player hits his forehand!

**TO HIT HIS BACKHAND** shot, Hogan uses a reverse "supination" on the back swing. Supination is a turning motion of the wrist that is imparted to the racquet, a motion that opens up as the racquet turns, unleashing wrist power as the ball is struck.

If Hogan used his unique grip with a traditional straight-back, straight-through swing, the racquet face would climb upward in the hitting area, and the ball would float.

But Marty turns his racquet and meets the ball on the down swing of the arc he swings through. Basically, the racquet is still in a slightly closed position at contact, which transmits tremendous power and, for him, excellent control.

Thus, Hogan hits his backhand and forehand with the same grip but adds a slight, practically invisible increase of pressure on the inside of the thumb for the backhand. In other words, he makes a microscopic pressure adjustment instead of changing his grip for that vicious backhand.

**AMAZINGLY, THIS** technique permits Hogan to hit with almost equal power from both sides and to contact the ball deeper in both stances. It also allows him, in an instant rally, to race off in any direction, concentrating only on the ball and not worrying about changing his grip for a backhand shot that might turn into a forehand shot if it makes it to the back wall, and so on. Thus, he cannot, as many players do, bobble the ball in the middle of a grip change.

When Hogan wants to power the ball, which is almost always and especially on a serve, he starts with that forefinger — the trigger finger in the traditional grip — extended. When he starts to hit, he gets that forefinger right back down with the other fingers by the time he's into his back swing. It is a regripping process, possibly involuntary, and it's not the easiest thing to teach the average player. It's an idiosyncrasy of Hogan's fully-developed swing, and he'd be crazy to change it for any reason.

Well, now, should the good B or A player, anxious to move up into the stratosphere of racquetball, change his grip so that he can emulate Hogan or at least duplicate some of Marty's results occasionally?

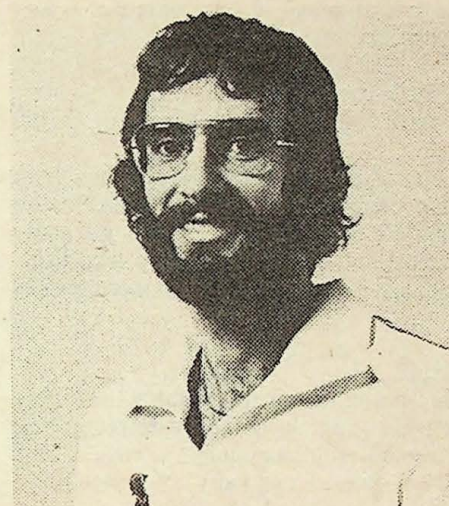
The answer is a guarded yes. But, of course, you must practice and, obviously, ex-

periment like mad. To use the Marty Hogan method of power racquetball, you have to start with his grip. There are no two ways about it.

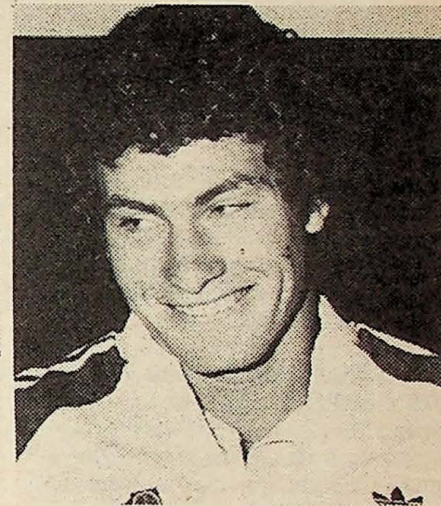
**IF AN A OR B** player isn't progressing with his or her own grip, give Hogan's grip a try for perhaps three or four hours of play. If it feels natural and good and the ball feels as though it's coming off the racquet with power, consolidate it into your game. Everyone is built differently and has different reflexes. There's no substitute for practice and experimentation. Hogan developed by copying or emulating techniques such as Brumfield's control and Jerry Hilecher's serve. You can learn something by watching almost any good player.

The original Brumfield grip of the early seventies had his thumb and forefinger forming a "V." This "V" moved up the right upper bevel of the racquet. Thus, his grip was too far to the right, compared with Marty Hogan's grip.

Since then, Brumfield has decided that it's to his advantage to change to a grip very similar to Marty's for the forehand stroke. So far, he feels the change already has given him about 30 per cent more power. He used it with fair success in the Milwaukee tournament all the way up to meeting Marty Hogan in the finals!



Charlie Brumfield



Marty Hogan

"The Brum" also finds that he now can hit the ball cross-court much easier by meeting it a good deal farther back in his stance than before.

Brumfield's coach, Carl Loveday, and Brum now are working on his backhand. At Milwaukee and then in New York Brumfield used the old straight-back, straight-through swing. Completely changing over to Hogan's grip and swing will take him about a year.

Brumfield feels, however, that in order for him to develop the power necessary to compete against younger players, he eventually must go to a similar backhand to Hogan's so that he can hit with equal velocity from both sides.

New "power" players won't have anything to unlearn!

## Grip Exercise

Marty Hogan likes to use a twenty-pound weight for ten minutes a day, curling it up toward his body and curling it out and away. He likes to do a few push-ups on his fists, also in the interest of strengthening his grip.

Charlie Brumfield's prescription to good A and B players, anxious to add power via the grip to their games, involves a simple prop: two sheets of newspaper.

Start with a double sheet of paper. Hold it by a single corner with your racquet hand. Now start curling the paper into a compressed mass the size of a racquetball! You can do this when you're just standing around or, if you're driving, at stoplights.

Curling two sheets of paper a day is terrific for the wrist, forearm, and grip. It's better than squeezing a ball because it requires dexterity and the utilization of all your fingers; and it's not just a strength exercise. It's a fine program — even if the Ox gets away from you for a few days.

Brumfield, his coach, Carl Loveday, and Marty Hogan agree that the first week of your entry into the new world of power racquetball should be spent learning proper gripping procedures. So that gripping your racquet won't become tedious, it's recommended that you do your gripping-of-the-racquet exercises while watching TV. Just grip that racquet in the newly recommended way, keeping in mind the five fundamentals. Grip, take you hand off the racquet completely, and grip again. If you do this, you won't feel comfortable with your *old* grip after a few weeks! And you should start feeling new power come on with the new grip.

# Bledsoe's Statements Called 'Untrue'

In the August issue of RACQUETBALL TODAY, we carried an article on the front page entitled, "Bledsoe Blasts Mishandled Tours," which contained many quotes from Davey about Leach Industries and the people involved in running the NRC pro tour. We have asked them to comment, supply us with an article refuting Mr. Bledsoe's remarks, or grant us an interview to give the other side of the sto-

ry. Representatives of Mr. Drake, Leach Industries, and Marty Hogan have asked us to notify the public that the following remarks made by Mr. Bledsoe in the interview are untrue:

- 1) That Ben Kalb, editor of Racquetball Illustrated, told Bledsoe that Drake offered to pay Kalb's way to Hawaii to cover their (Leach's) tournament.
- 2) That Bledsoe was told not to show up

at a major tournament until the tournament director delivered a color TV to Marty Hogan's mother after which time Bledsoe got word that it was okay to go to the tournament.

- 3) BLEDSOE'S statement that Drake tried to bribe Peck and Yellen to get out of the NARP.
- 4) That Hogan and/or Drake have

signed a contract with Catalina for tournaments in a very tricky manner that channels everything through a company owned by Hogan and Drake so that they get 25 per cent off the top and the players get cheated some more.

RACQUETBALL TODAY *did not* purport that any of the above statements were true, but simply quoted Mr. Bledsoe's remarks in the interview.

# For the Health of It



By Jerrold Shapiro, M.D., F.A.C.C.

## How to Deal with Hot

## Weather and Fluid Loss

**QUESTION:** How do I replace my fluid loss from sweating in these hot weather racquetball games?

**DR. SHAPIRO:** The problem of hot weather athletics is heat balance. Under warm conditions, even 75 degree playing temperatures, the body produces significant amounts of heat which it must get rid of. The major body mechanism is *skin cooling by evaporation of sweat*. Heat acclimatization enables us to start sweating earlier to stay cooler. This takes seven to 10 days of gradually increasing hot weather activity.

If body heat builds up faster than it is dissipated then real trouble can start. *Heat exhaustion is the result of excessive body fluid losses*. The player experiences severe fatigue, nausea, headache and muscle cramps. He feels irritable. He may get goose bumps and even stop sweating. His skin is cool and pale, and he may feel dizzy. Should the player disregard these warning signals, heat stroke, a much more serious problem can follow.

**QUESTION:** How can heat injury be avoided?

**DR. SHAPIRO:** First, be smart. Don't play if you feel uncomfortably hot before starting the game. Drink water frequently during a match. *Avoiding drinking while playing is a dangerous myth*. Don't worry about salt containing drinks, a well trained acclimatized athlete sweats almost pure water. Should any of the symptoms I mentioned develop, stop playing immediately and drink plenty of fluids. If symptoms persist or reappear, see your doctor.

**QUESTION:** I'm 36 and just getting into racquetball. I feel fine, do I need an exercise test?

**DR. SHAPIRO:** That is a very tough question to answer. Certainly a thorough physical exam should be a requirement for competitive vigorous athletics at any age. The treadmill (exercise test) is another matter. The exercise test is meant to identify the individual with coronary artery disease (hardening of the arteries that feed the heart). But it is not perfect. It is most accurate when applied to groups of people with coronary risk factors (most likely to have coronary disease). This includes smokers, and those with diabetes, hypertension, high blood cholesterol, or a family history of heart attack. People with sedentary lifestyles and certain personality traits are also more heart attack prone. *The problem is that if you do not fall into any of these categories, not only are you less likely to get coronary disease, but the stress test is less likely to identify the problem even if you do have it.*

However, with the tremendous increase in vigorous physical activity in America, exercise related deaths are on the rise. Heart attacks have occurred on the racquetball court, during marathon racing, and while just jogging for pleasure.

So there is no simple answer, but here are my recommendations:

- If you are having any chest discomfort at all during activity, see your doctor;
- If you are under 40, have been exercising regularly for some time, and have no coronary risk factors, an exercise test is not indicated;
- If you are under 40 and active, but do fall into the coronary prone group, get a stress test;
- If you are over 35, inactive, and interested in vigorous sporting activity, ask your doctor about a stress test. It might be a good way to start out.



Dave Peck has become a consultant to Nautilus Sports/Medical Industries and will be available for seminars around the country to show how racquetballers can make use of Nautilus equipment.

## Sportsman of the Month

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

### Dave Kilcrece A True Sport

I would like to nominate Dave Kilcrece of the Schaumburg Court House as Sportsman of the Month. During the recent Metro Club Invitational Tournament, I was refereeing Dave's quarterfinal match. Dave had lost the first game badly but fought hard to come back and tie

the match. Dave was then serving in the tie-breaker, down 9-10. During a good rally his opponent hit a shot into the front wall floor crotch which was obviously a skip and so called by me. However, I then mistakenly awarded a side out instead of a point to Dave. There were numerous friends for both players shouting and yelling, however, no one attempted to point out my error. Dave said nothing. I think he didn't even hear the call over all the noise. Unfortunately, his opponent also said nothing, rushed up to serve and won the match on the ensuing rally.

Afterwards, in talking to some of the spectators, I realized my mistake and went to Dave and apologized for blowing the call. He told me to forget it — that I was only human and anyone could make a mistake. His attitude after losing such a close match through someone else's error has surely affected my future attitude towards both referees and racquetball.

Vincent Radosta  
Roselle, Illinois

## Grobmisi — Six 'Quick Tips'

By TOM GROBMISI

### GROBMISI QUICK TIP NO. 1

What is the best way to hit the ball?  
Towards the front wall.

### GROBMISI QUICK TIP NO. 2

Helpful hints when playing on a glass-walled court:

1. Always wear clean clothing.
2. Don't scratch yourself indecently.
3. Cheat less.

### GROBMISI QUICK TIP No. 3

How to prepare for a tournament:

1. Always eat a good meal . . . food at tournaments usually stinks.
2. Always tell your family you'll be home for dinner — it's kind of a "standing joke" in the racquetball community and they'll soon appreciate the humor.
3. Get a letter from your optometrist saying you suffer from eyestrain and should not be required to referee.

### GROBMISI QUICK TIP NO. 4

What is the best way to divide the court

in doubles?

In fourths.

### GROBMISI QUICK TIP NO. 5

What's the best way to start children in racquetball?

I don't recommend doing it that way at all. You shouldn't start having children until you're at least 16, married, and realize that racquetball has nothing to do with it whatsoever.

### GROBMISI QUICK TIP NO. 6

What's the best racquet on the market?

The Kendler Autograph Two-Bounce Composite is unquestionably the best racquet you can buy and is well worth the \$500 tag. The racquet comes in an attractive leather case which also contains a certified letter from Bob Kendler which allows the racquet owner to hit the ball on the second bounce at all USRA or NRC tournaments.

For the more economy-minded, I recommend the Hilecher Autograph for \$8 which allows you to hit the ball on the second bounce at all NARP events.

### ALVIN BARASCH ACCOUNTANT

Investment and Tax Consultant

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# Strategy

By JEAN SAUSER

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

**Situation:** Playing a player who covers most of the court with a backhand.

**Strategy:** Play his forehand.

Don't be afraid to play his forehand. You may find it nonexistent. Surprise drive serves to the forehand may catch him off guard and force him to make errors. Use cross-court passes to his deep forehand corner of the court. This will be the only place he cannot back up to take a backhand shot.

**Situation:** You've given your opponent a set up off the back wall.

**Strategy:** Watch your opponent and anticipate his shot.

Watch your opponent as he sets up to shoot the ball. You may be able to detect where he will hit the ball before he does. Move to center and, if possible without causing a hinder, move slightly to the side of the court your opponent is on as he shoots. This maneuver will take away his cross-court pass and force him to shoot the ball to your side of the court. You at least have a chance of recovering the ball if it comes up high.

Try to determine the shot he is likely to

try. You may even try to force that shot by standing in the position that will make him shoot it, then as his eyes drop to the ball to hit it change your position to the one that will cover his shot.

Another trick — if you know your opponent can't kill the ball off the back wall you may deliberately stay back a little and let him try. You may get a skip ball or a ball left up in center court for you to run forward and kill.

**Situation:** Your opponent has given you a set up off the back wall.

**Strategy:** Shoot the ball.

1. The back wall set up is as favorable to most good players as getting a set up in center court. In fact, it is the "second center court" to all pros. First, kill the ball if you can. Killing should be your first priority as you get better. Shoot to the near corner as you set up to take the ball off the back wall. (See Diagrams 1 and 2).

2. Use the straight kill to the open side of the court if your opponent has hit the ball up the middle of the court, forcing him out of center. (Diagrams 3 and 4).

3. Pass for points only if your opponent gets overanxious and moves too far forward to cover your kill. (Diagrams 5 and 6).

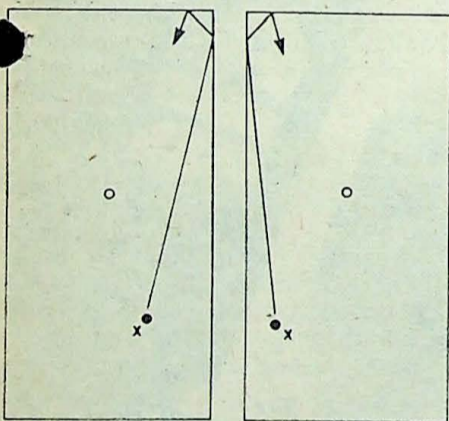
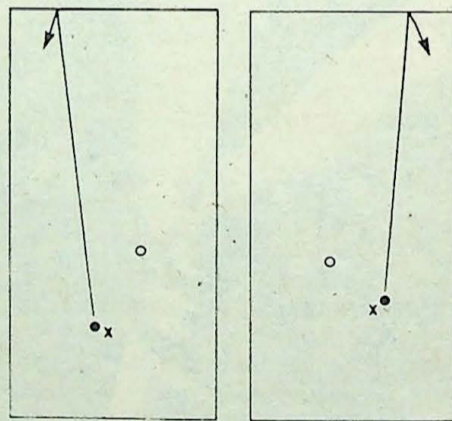
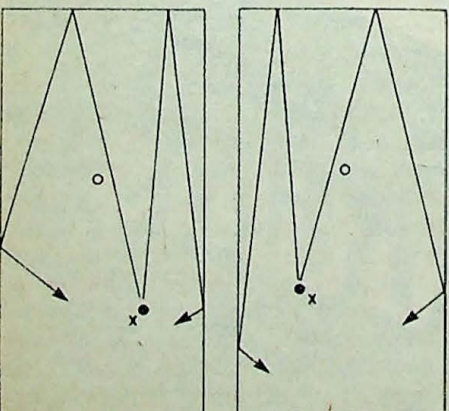


Diagram 1.

Diagram 2.



Diagrams 3 and 4. Straight kill to the open side.



Diagrams 5 and 6. Pass for points.

*A racquetball court is nothing more than an empty room filled with rules.*

*Phil Simborg*

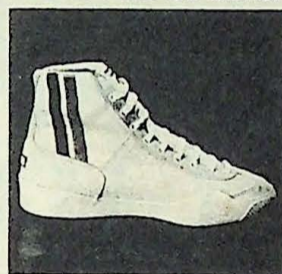
*Per square foot, a racquetball court is the most expensive real estate you can rent.*

*Phil Simborg*

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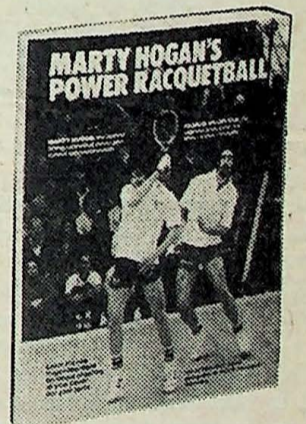
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# Court Talk:

## Salesman Speaks with Torque Tongue

By BOB GURA

Being economical by nature, or cheap by other terms, I spent a summer's day shopping for a racquetball racquet. To my way of figuring July and August are slow months for the industry and a deal could be had. Since most folks prefer to exercise outdoors in the hot weather I thought the market would be mine. Here was a chance to pick up one of those outrageously high-priced racquets at a reasonable cost. I always day-dreamed of playing with a \$100 to \$150 racquet. It would be even more fun if I could buy one for 40 per cent or so off.

I decided to reconnoiter some of the larger sports outlets in the area. You're probably familiar with these places, chain stores and huge athletic specialty shops.

It didn't take long to realize there weren't many great sales abounding. Inventories were understandably low and most racquets were regularly priced. There were a few sales for middle priced name brand racquets, but none justified the considerable expense for gasoline. Nor were there a wild abundance of package deals, the ones where you get a racquet, can of balls and bag for a reduced cost. This was disappointing as I was hungry for a bargain and would have snapped up a pleasant package. After all, I carry my gear in a battered nylon backpack and a fancy leather tote would help the image.

I SOON TIRED of the search and decided to get my old \$30 racquet restrung. That was when the problems started. There wasn't a salesman in any of the three stores I visited who could tell me what the proper tension should be. One guy went so far as to suggest I have the racquet wound as tight a possible. This would, he assured me, help my power game. I thought about it and tried to picture an opponent's face when my racquet exploded during a shot. While it might reap some points psychologically I decided against it.

I finally traveled to a store where a salesman looked up the proper tension from a table in a racquetball book. I was appreciative and told him I was originally interested in a new top-quality racquet. Before I could take another breath he turned into a rabid merchandiser. I was directed to take hold of a \$100 racquet perched on the highest shelf. He asserted this piece of equipment would provide more torque and a longer life than my old reliable. I don't know much physics so I asked about torque. It took a while and some roundabout sentences but it turned out he didn't know much either.

Matters worsened when I noticed a racquet endorsed by Marty Hogan hanging on the display rack. It was white, fiberglass and surrounded by cardboard packaging. A picture of men's champ Hogan was plastered across the front. There was also a personalized message from Marty saying "Play my racquet."

Now only a buffoon would think he could snatch up that racquet and play like Marty Hogan. As a merchandising hook though, the slogan and picture caught the eye. So did the price, in the \$20 range. Since it was roughly \$80 less than the expensive racquet I asked the salesman about it. The Hogan racquet he said, wasn't constructed as well. He went on to

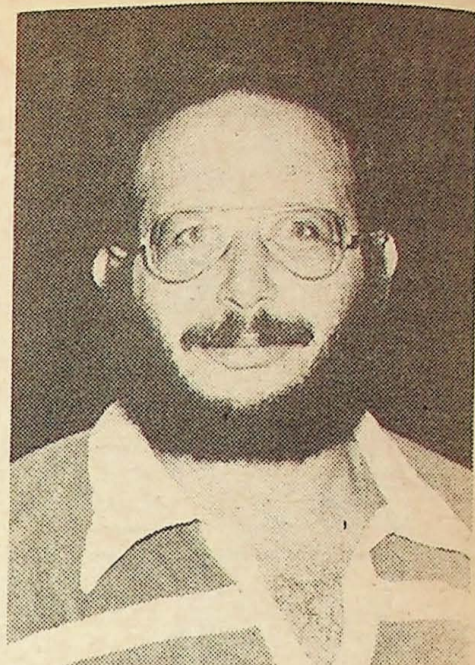
say a lot of other good things concerning the high-priced model. Some made sense, some didn't.

BY THIS TIME I was bushed and more than a little depressed. It's important to keep in mind the salesman wasn't all wrong. Many of the costly swingers, especially the graphite composites are beautiful pieces of work. They are light to handle, well-built and come with lengthy guarantees. The irritating thing about the incident is that the salesman was ready to feed me, and others, a load of you know what to sell the expensive job.

I guess I was annoyed because it was

summertime and the sales pitch was unrelenting. My defenses were low, I knew it, and I could have been moved by a bargain and some honest talk. The tough sales pitches usually don't begin until the peak winter months. That's when catch words like warpage, string tension and the intimidating torque fly like bullets.

On the way home I realized not all salesmen were as profit motivated as those I had dealt with. Still, I was determined to turn the trip into a productive experience. So, I went to the bookshelf and looked up torque. In case you need to know Webster says it's "a force that tends to produce rotation or torsion."



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Professional racquetball should be arrested for "indecent exposure!"

Phil Simborg

# TOURNAMENT NEWS

## Five-Point System Spurs Lite New England Finals to 'Most Exciting Tournament' for Participants

By TOM MELLOR

BRAINTREE, MASS. — "Set, match point, Mr. Christensen," was the call heard during the finals of the Lite Beer New England Pro/Am late Sunday afternoon. The familiar call had echoed weeks before through the Longwood Cricket Club, site of the U.S. Tennis Open, but such was not the case here. Christensen's "roll-out" to end the match is a term unknown to the Connors and the Borgs. Racquetball was the game, and the 300-plus entries that jammed the Playoff Racquetball/Handball Club agreed it was the most exciting tournament they had ever participated in. The Playoff, a chain of racquetball clubs owned by Dr. Bill Lenkaitis, New England Patriot center and practicing dentist; Randy Vataha, ex-Patriot wide receiver, and businessman George Matthews, had taken the first step to change the game.

The tournament was the first ever to be held with the new five point scoring system. A brainchild of Vataha's, the system was devised to keep the game exciting from start to finish; not only for the players, but also for the crowd.

The number of key points seemed to hold the crowd through the entire match. Too often in racquetball, the number of spectators depends on the size of the draw. The faces peering into the 20 by 40 court during a match are generally those of the players' family and friends. The many close matches held during the Lite Beer Open really seemed to capture everyone's attention. But the real success lies on the court, not in the halls above, and the players loved it.

BRUCE CHRISTENSEN, winner of the Pro division and a \$1,000 check had this to say: "I like it a lot. It takes a little getting used to. I think if the games were extended to 7 or 8 points it would be even better. Momentum is so important in this type of scoring system. The theory is terrific and I'm looking forward to coming back to the Playoff for next year's tournament."

Vataha, who last year earned the richest purse in racquetball when he won a tournament consisting of professional athletes at the Las Vegas Sporting House, described the system: "The system is the best of three (3) sets. Players play games

to 5 points; best of 5 games make one (1) set. Should the sets be tied at one each, the match goes to a third and final set which is a 7 point tie-breaker, whereby the champion must win by 2 points."

A total of \$7,000 prize money was awarded to the participants in the three day tournament at Playoff Racquetball and Handball Club. The top prize was \$1,000 in the men's professional division and \$750 in the women's professional division.

The tournament was divided into a men's and women's pro division, and a full slate of amateur classes. Maureen Boulette, the Massachusetts State Director, was on hand for the weekend and had this to say: "The sanctioning of an amateur tournament in conjunction with a Pro division is a new step for the AARA in Massachusetts. Always looking for innovative ideas has become one of the goals of the Massachusetts Racquetball Association. Massachusetts, currently being the hotbed of racquetball in the United States, was the ideal location for staging racquetballs new 5 point game."

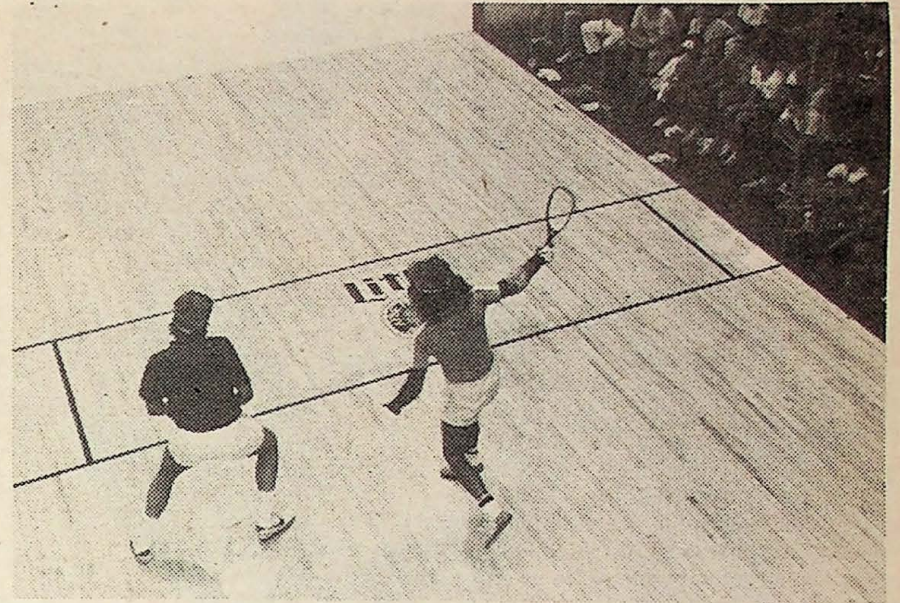
Vataha also indicated the advantages the system would have in its appeal to television; a barrier which has yet to be successfully overcome. If the Lite Beer New England Pro/Am has any effect on the future of the Vataha scoring system, it's sure to be around for a long time.



Sue Carow captures top spot in the Open Division of the fifth annual Northbrook Women's Open.



THE WIRKUS BROTHERS GO AT IT AGAIN. This time Jim Wirkus (right) defeated brother Joe at the Wisconsin State AARA tournament. (Photo by Bill Precht)



Bruce Christensen (left) defeats Dieter Schmidt at the Lite Beer New England Pro/Am held in Braintree, Mass., July 25, 26 and 27. (Photo by John Gillooly)

### 5th Annual Northbrook Women's Open Northbrook, Illinois July 25-27, 1980

#### RESULTS

Open Division: 1st: Sue Carow; 2nd: Barb Allweiss  
A Division: 1st: Joan Azeka; 2nd: Pat Kilinger  
B Division: 1st: Gay Kenna; 2nd: Kim Donahue  
C Division: 1st: Diane Chisam; 2nd: Diane Byers  
D Division: 1st: Ilene Shapiro; 2nd: Sandy Masilionis  
Novice: 1st: Mari Koerner; 2nd: Joan Ennessey  
Senior C: 1st: Julie Buckun; 2nd: Dorothy Loud

### Chicago Area Metro Club Invitational NCCA National Amateur Qualifying Event August 15-17, 1980

#### QUALIFIERS

Men's A  
Barry Allen; Chris Broderson; Scott Lavender; Dave Negrete; Paul Rogers; Craig Steichen; Marshall Waldo.  
Men's B  
Bo Bergstrom; Ed Fry; Lorenzo Garcia; Mike Irwin; John Negrete; Dave Plesh; Vincent Radosta; Mitch Solomon.  
Men's C  
Liaquat Ali; John Cullen; Terry Dunne; Scott Gordon; Dave Kilcrece; Larry Kreda; Corey Mertes; Steve Mink.  
Women's A  
Joan Azeka; Barb Edelstein; Lynne Farmer; Randy Kalai; Nancy Kronenfeld; Sharon McGregor; Jan Troy.  
Women's B  
Debbie Adams; Cheryl Brandin; Carmen Galarza; Charlene Kirshenbaum; Kris Nicholson; Jenny Pyne; Harriet Radka; S. Rosen.  
Women's C  
Mary Baranowski; Janice Blure; Karen Hanselman; Sandy Hanson; Joyce Morgan; Liz Newman; Ann Olson.

### Wisconsin State AARA Sun Prairie Racquetball Club Sun Prairie, Wisconsin June 27-29, 1980

#### RESULTS

Men's Open: Jim Wirkus def. Joe Wirkus  
Men's B: Larry Zanoni def. Scott Gomez  
Men's C: Ray Orlikowski d. Jeff Semenas  
Men's Seniors: Jim Lucht d. Dave Hulst  
Women's Open: Sheryl Kraus d. Linda Frank  
Women's B: Karen Anderson d. Joan Schalleme  
Women's C: Nancy Freyer d. Debbie Quamme

#### TOURNAMENT RESULTS

Southfield, Michigan Division of National Court Clubs Amateur Racquetball Championship held August 1-3, at Racquetime Racquetball Club, Southfield, Michigan; Taylor, Michigan, and Livonia, Michigan.

#### AT SOUTHFIELD:

Men's A  
John Tocco d. Dan Dutcher, 21-14, 21-16  
Men's B  
M. Constantine d. Mike Simons, 21-8, 21-12  
Men's Novice  
B. Lipson d. B. Webster, 21-12, 21-8  
Women's A  
D. Erhart d. D. Henry, 21-16, 17-21, 11-4  
Women's Novice  
K. Reilly d. S. Johnson, 21-18, 21-11

#### AT TAYLOR

Men's B  
D. Rodriguez d. S. Marx, 21-12, 21-10  
Men's Novice  
D. McElroy d. G. Benart, 21-16, 21-8  
Women's B  
R. Froman d. P. Finazzo, 21-14, 21-14  
Women's Novice  
N. Burtka d. D. DeAngelis, 21 15, 21-14

#### AT LIVONIA

Men's B  
M. Young d. C. Swaney, 12-21, 21-3, 11-4  
Men's Novice  
R. Marvel d. M. Moroney, 21-18, 21-9  
Women's Novice  
B. Gauthier d. G. Wenger, 21-9, 21-9

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# TOURNAMENT NEWS



Gregg Peck (right) takes the top spot in the Boys 17 and Under division at the USRA Junior Nationals held in Indianapolis, Ind. He is pictured here with the other El Paso kid, brother Dave Peck. (Photo by Bill Precht)

## Gregg Peck and Stacey Fletcher Take Top Spots at USRA Juniors August 11-16, 1980 Indianapolis, Indiana

### RESULTS

**Boys 17 & Under**  
 Finals: Gregg Peck, El Paso, Texas, def. Brett Harnett, Las Vegas, 21-19, 21-14.  
 Semi's: Peck d. Sergio Gonzales, Miami, 21-18, 21-9; Harnett d. Scott Oliver, Stockton, Cal., 21-13, 21-14.

**GIRLS 17 & Under**  
 Finals: Stacey Fletcher, Warren, Mich., def. Liz Alvarado, Odessa, Texas, 21-14, 14-21, 11-9.  
 Semi's: Fletcher d. Heather Stupp, Montreal, 12-21, 21-4, 11-2; Alvarado d. Betsy Koza, Lake Forest, Ill., 21-13, 21-7.

**Boys 15 & Under**  
 Finals: Gerry Price, Castro Valley, Cal., def. John Klearman, St. Louis, 21-17, 13-21, 11-7.  
 Semi's: Price d. Jon Amatulli, Merrillville, Ind., 14-21, 21-7, 11-4; Klearman d. Sean Fitzpatrick, Auburn, Cal., 21-8, 21-16.

**Girls 15 & Under**  
 Finals: Lynn Wojcik, Tucson, def. Loretta Ann Peterson, Salt Lake City, 21-12, 21-1.  
 Semi's: Wojcik d. Marci Drexler, N. Hollywood, Cal., 21-20, 21-9; Peterson d. Tina Heath, Posen, Ill., 21-13, 8-21, 11-7.

**Boys 12 & Under**  
 Finals: David Simonette, Baltimore, def. Andy Gross, Creve Couer, Mo., 21-12, 21-1.  
 Semi's: Simonette d. Mark Monje, Park Forest, Ill., 21-11, 21-12; Gross d. Bobby Rodriguez, Sunnyvale, Cal., 21-17, 21-14.

**Girls 12 & Under**  
 Finals: Elaine Mardas, Bye, Cal., def. Tammy Horrocks, St. Louis, 21-11, 21-9.  
 Semi's: Mardas d. Lorie Miller, North Syracuse, N.Y., 21-7, 21-2; Horrocks d. Adrianna Miranda, Lafayette, La., 21-14, 21-13.

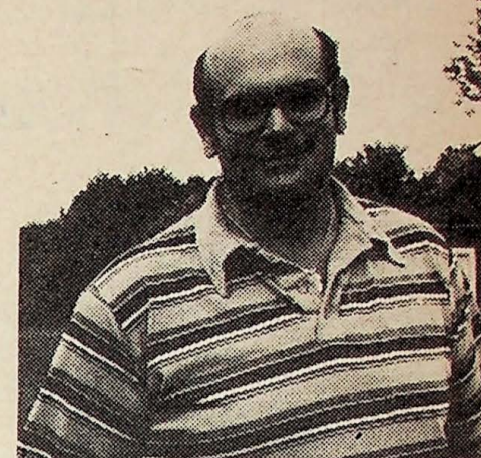
**Boys 10 & Under**  
 Finals: Jim Floyd, Burton, Mich., def. Brad Nelson, Lincoln, Neb., 21-6, 21-8.  
 Semi's: Floyd d. Sloan Holmes, Las Vegas, 20-21, 21-18, 11-9; Nelson d. Tony Jelso, 21-14, 21-17.

**Girls 10 & Under**  
 Finals: Alma Fuentes, El Paso, Texas, def. Cindy Doyle, Williamsville, N.Y., 21-20, 21-17.  
 Semi's: Fuentes d. Stephanie Pinola, Blue Bell, Pa., 21-3, 21-1; Doyle d. Kim Pinola, Blue Bell, Pa., 21-9, 21-16.

## First Annual Triple S/Diamond Lil 3-Wall, Outdoor, Midwest Championships (where the cost of trophies was the biggest expense) August 15-17, 1980 South Haven, Michigan

### RESULTS

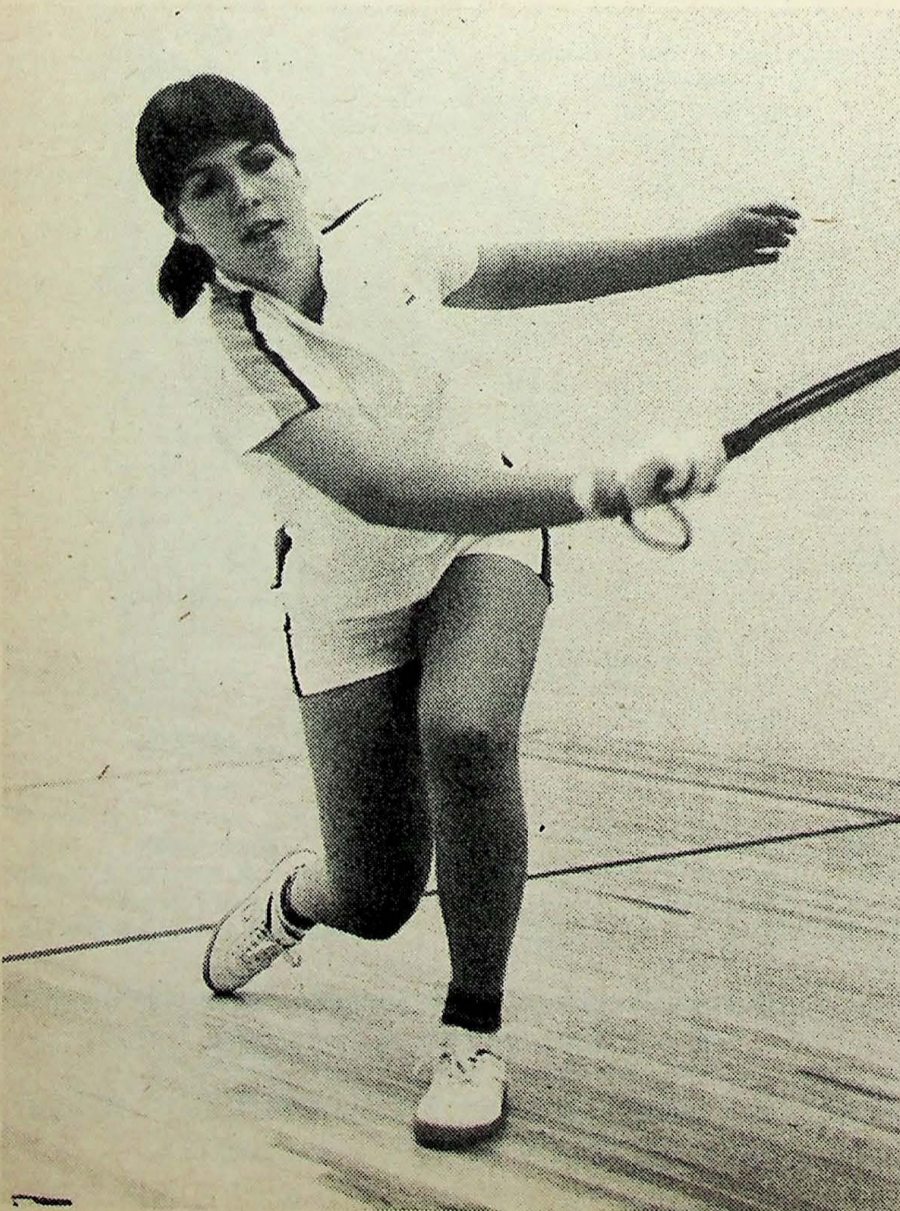
Men's Open: Clyde Senters, Hoffman Estates, Ill.  
 Men's B: Dr. Ed Blumstein, Chicago, Ill.  
 Men's C: Milt Shochet, South Haven, Mich.  
 Men's Veteran: Ken Reinshuttle, Grand Rapids, Mich.  
 Men's Seniors: Phil Simborg, Homewood, Ill.  
 Women's Open: Ruth Shochet, South Haven, Mich.  
 Women's B: Lara Blumstein, Chicago, Ill.



Clyde Senters, Men's Open Champ, Diamond Lil.



"Mean" Phil Simborg, Senior's Champ, Diamond Lil.



Stacey Fletcher from Warren, Mich., captures the championship in the Girls 17 and Under division at the USRA Junior Nationals. She defeated Liz Alvarado of Odessa, Texas, 21-14, 14-21, 11-9.



Ruth Shochet, Women's Open Champ, Diamond Lil.

The game doesn't need slower balls, it needs slower players.

Al Shetzer

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# Bob Keenan—A Man for All Seasons

By BOB GURA

When it comes to his trade Bob Keenan, national director of the United States Racquetball Association (USRA), is a man for all seasons. Whether it's acquiring sponsors for the men's pro tour; looking after the state of officiating, or dickering with the folks in televisionland, he's involved. What's surprising is despite the demands on his time the 38-year-old father of two finds time to discuss his work casually.

A top referee, Bob became involved in the administrative end of racquetball courtesy of a love for the game. After beginning to play racquetball in 1972, following time on the handball court, Keenan became involved officiating basketball and baseball games. Given a propensity for racquetball, and an ability to execute decisions, he began to officiate racquetball matches in Wisconsin. Before long his name was a natural when it came to arbiters for matches between the guys who play for pay.

Moving up the racquetball ladder Keenan advanced to the point where refereeing only occupies part of his time. "As it stands now," he says, much of my work has to do with sponsor acquisitions and the professional tour." Of the pro circuit, he reports, "The tour itself is now four stops larger than last year." The upcoming campaign will now feature "12 stops as opposed to eight."

**TALKING IN** an easy-going fashion he added information concerning the size of the prize monies. "The total purse," he pointed out, "will be \$700,000 next year." Part of that largesse will be provided courtesy of Coors Brewing company.

The beer company, said Keenan, formerly held a racquetball tournament featuring top professional athletes from other sports. "Instead, they're turning the dollars into three Pro Stops." Those stops are scheduled for "Denver, St. Louis and an as of yet undetermined site."

Since the purses and the tour appeared to be growing in a healthy fashion, the national director turned his attention to TV. "Television (coverage) is the key," he announced. "We're very close to TV

*"There are always players who create avoidable hinders. But years ago it was like pulling teeth to get an official to call the play."*

coverage." Slowing for a second he said, "It has a lot to do with one-way glass. Several top facilities have begun to install the visibility aid," he commented. "Of these clubs, one is located in New Jersey and the other in New York."

Keenan was enthusiastic about the prospects of television coverage, especially since the glass improved the viewing angle of the audience.

**HE WENT ON** to say "over the past few years the PBS network has purchased the right to televise racquetball at their leisure. The only problem is that they don't announce their scheduling."

Still, Keenan remains certain racquetball will soon grace millions of living rooms over the small screen. The goal, he mentioned, is special coverage by a major network on a major sports show. Shows that fit this bill are usually telecast on weekend afternoons, a prime time for dedicated sportswatchers. To make racquetball more attractive to the television moguls, the people at the USRA are considering a few changes.

"We have considered the use of a slower ball," said Keenan. This is a common suggestion made by many people in the racquetball world. The reasoning is that if the ball moved slower in the men's pro game it would be easier to follow, and



Bob Keenan

would allow for more tactical play. Keenan stated there are proponents at both ends of the fast ball-slow ball theory. "Many of the manufacturers," he contends, "are currently producing the faster ball."

Another possible innovation has to do with changing the format for television purposes. As it takes a relatively long period to play a game to 21 points, Keenan mentioned a style of play employed in Ireland. Over in the land of green, "racquetball is played in time increments." This sort of format would probably be right up the alley of American fans used to seeing teams play against the clock.

**KEENAN ALSO** waxed effusive about the value a superstar like Marty Hogan could have upon a television audience. "Hogan," he said, "is comparable to any superstar in any other sport." He believed

racquetball fans and sportspersons in general would tune in to see if anyone could knock Marty from his perch.

Putting such matters aside, he began to explore officiating, a subject obviously dear to his heart. "I take racquetball officiating as much of a challenge as playing the game," he chimed. Ever since he officiated three Pro Stops held in Milwaukee in 1973 Keenan has upheld the banner of the officials.

He continues to be concerned about officiating, and has devoted much time to the new National Racquetball Referees Association (NRRRA). Bob, along with Dan Bertolucci, executive director of the NRC, is vitally interested in the program. "The goal," he said, "is to begin a national program at a local level, and certify officials state by state, city by city." Through this type of program, consisting of clinics, lectures and certification tests, "the NRRRA can create consistent officiating across the country."

Thinking back to his days as a ref, Keenan touched on what he felt is the hardest call to make. "It has to be the double bounce pickup" he promptly stated. "Probably more guesswork is involved on that call than any other."

**HE REFLECTED** on the need for offici-

sible, he added. (Bob will be writing a regular column on the rules in RACQUETBALL TODAY beginning with this issue.)

Turning to the future, Keenan let loose some thoughts on what racquetball will be like. Given adequate television coverage and promotion he felt a competent pro could earn "at least \$20,000 a year, and possibly double that." He felt players will be "22-23 years of age and younger. Twenty-seven years will be the peak for many of these players," before the skills erode.

Speaking of sponsor acquisition today, a matter he is heavily involved in, Keenan named a few. "The sponsors are becoming more diversified from the racquetball industry. They go from beer, to thirst quenching drinks, to carbonated drinks, to clothing manufacturers to equipment manufacturers."

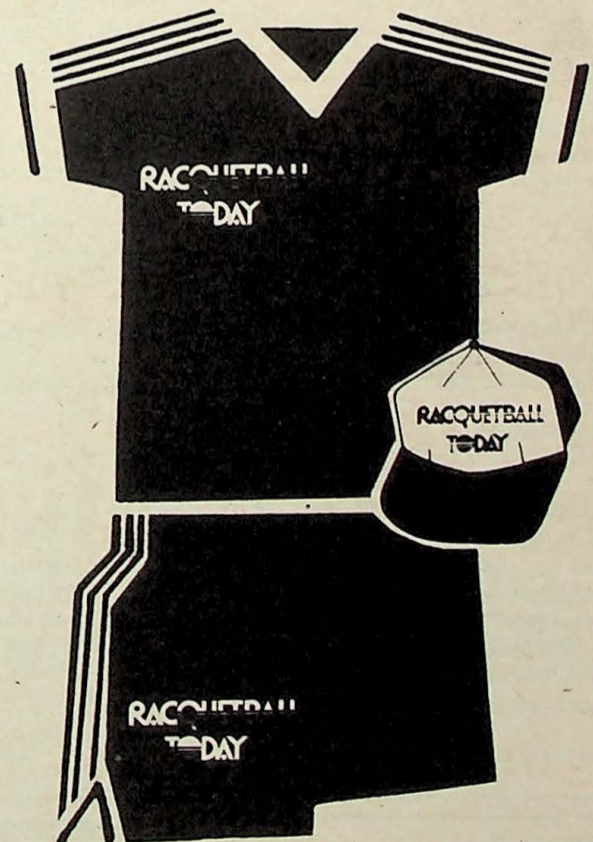
The talk turned to a controversial topic of late — the USRA split with the women pros, now the Women's Professional Racquetball Association. Commenting the issue was old news, Keenan mentioned the USRA's plans for lady professionals. "We have goals and plans to establish a women's tour of our own." The plans, he said, are in the works and should be set for next year.

Putting it all together, there seems little room for anything but racquetball in Bob Keenan's life. Nonetheless, he manages to keep a lively spirit and sense of humor well honed. As soon as the interview ended, however, he said "I've got a million things to do and have to leave for Indianapolis soon." Judging by his pace the state of racquetball and the USRA look healthy.

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# RACQUETBALL TODAY

## 1980-81

# Tournament Schedule

September 4, 5, 6 & 7, 1980  
Southern California Grand Prix  
Site: Stadium Racquet Club  
5885 Rancho Mission Road  
San Diego, California  
Contact: 213-956-3300

September 12, 13 & 14, 1980  
Site: Jacksonville Beaches  
Racquetball Club  
Jacksonville, Florida  
Contact: Ed Lease  
904-241-5252

October 10, 11 & 12, 1980  
MRA-2  
Site: Dearborn Athletic Club  
2145 S. Telegraph  
Dearborn, Michigan  
Contact: Match Point Enterprises  
517-372-2886

November 7, 8 & 9, 1980  
All-Women's Turkey Tournament  
Site: Spaulding Racquetball Club  
2702 Brooktree Lane  
Gladstone, Missouri 64119  
contact: Kay Yarnell  
816-452-1516

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

September 12, 13 & 14, 1980  
Don Simon Realtors \$4000 Pro/Am  
Site: Sun Prairie Racquetball Club  
Sun Prairie, Wisconsin  
Contact: Bruce Thompson  
608-837-4646

October 10, 11 & 12, 1980  
3rd Annual Men's Open  
Southwest Side Shootout  
Site: Tinley Park Racquetball Club  
Tinley Park, Illinois  
Contact: Mike Bazzo  
312-532-7900

November 14, 15 & 16, 1980  
Midwest Invitational  
Site: Metro Clubs  
Contact: Lynne Farmer  
312-441-6700

September 5, 6 & 7, 1980  
Columbus Klubhaus Autumn Open  
Site: Columbus Klubhaus  
Columbus, Indiana  
Contact: 815-372-8438

September 19, 20, & 21, 1980  
3rd Annual Happy Joe's  
Courtside Tourney  
Site: South Courtside Racquetball Club  
Moline, Illinois  
Contact: Gary Whitaker or  
Judy Thompson  
309-797-1966

October 11, 12 & 13, 1980  
USRA New Jersey State Championships  
Site: Hopewell Valley Racquetball Club  
Pennington, New Jersey  
Contact: Thomas Bonanne  
609-737-1555

November 21, 22 & 23, 1980  
Thanksgiving Classic  
Site: To be announced  
Contact: S/S/S Promotions  
312-371-2555

September 5, 6 & 7, 1980  
Site: Racqueteers  
Brandon, Florida  
Contact: Jeff Ball  
813-685-5702

September 19, 20 & 21, 1980  
MRA-1  
Site: Little Traverse Racquet Club  
P.O. Box 825  
Petoskey, Michigan 49770  
Contact: Match Point Enterprises  
517-372-2886

October 17, 18 & 19, 1980  
Fall Classic  
Site: To be announced  
Contact: S/S/S Promotions  
312-371-2555

December 12, 13 & 14, 1980  
MRA-4  
Site: To be announced

September 12, 13 & 14, 1980  
1980 USRA Ohio State Tournament  
Site: Hall of Fame Racquetball Ctr.  
2700 Roberts Avenue N.W.  
Canton, Ohio 44709  
Contact: Fred Zitzer  
216-455-7788

September 19, 20 & 21, 1980  
MDA Racquetball Classic  
Site: Suncoast Courthouse  
Clearwater, Florida  
Contact: Bill Koegnig  
813-531-8936

October 31, November 1 & 2, 1980  
3rd Annual Forest View Open  
Site: Forest View Racquet Club  
Arlington Heights, Ill.  
Contact: Jeff Wilke  
312-640-2574

December 19, 20 & 21, 1980  
2nd Annual Tinley Park Open Doubles  
Site: Tinley Park Racquetball Club  
Tinley Park, Illinois  
Contact: Mike Bazzo  
312-532-7900

September 11, 12, 13 & 14, 1980  
Southern California Grand Prix  
Site: Rancho Mesa Verde Athletic Club  
1600 Adams  
Costa Mesa, California  
Contact: 213-956-3300

September 25, 26 & 27, 1980  
Site: Escondido Athletic Club  
Escondido, California  
Contact: Jim Pool  
714-746-9300

November 7, 8 & 9, 1980  
MRA-3  
Site: Michigan Racquetball & Fitness  
Lansing, Michigan  
Contact: Match Point Enterprises  
517-372-2886

January 23, 24 & 25, 1981  
1st Annual Junior Hotshot Tourney  
Site: Tinley Park Racquetball Club  
Tinley Park, Illinois  
Contact: Mike Bazzo  
312-532-7900

September 12, 13, & 14, 1980  
\$1000 Lite Summer Smasher  
Tournament for Multiple Sclerosis  
Site: Brookfield Racquet Club  
Waukesha, Wisconsin  
Contact: John Bergman or Mary Peters  
414-782-6120

October 3, 4 & 5, 1980  
AMF Voit, Inc. & AMF Head, Inc.  
National Mixed Doubles  
Racquetball Championships  
Site: Winning Walls Racquetball Club  
Portchester, New York  
Contact: Mel Carrozza  
914-939-5000

November 7, 8 & 9, 1980  
3rd Annual Women's Sharpshooter Open  
Site: Tinley Park Racquetball Club  
Tinley Park, Illinois  
Contact: Mike Bazzo  
312-532-7900

February 27, 28 & March 1, 1981  
2nd Annual Tinley Park Invitational  
Site: Tinley Park Racquetball Club  
Tinley Park, Illinois  
Contact: Mike Bazzo  
312-532-7900

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# Newport Beach Report

By BOB SCHMENDRICK

As you can see from our cover, and the interview with Shannon, Ms. Wright beat Heather McKay in the finals of the Newport Beach Pro Stop held August 14-17 at Newport Beach, California, 21-20, 21-16.

In the semi's, it was Wright over Janell Marriott (easily) and McKay had a good match with Lynn Adams, winning in two, but the first game was 21-19. At 20-19, with Heather serving for the game, "one of the best points I've ever seen played occurred," reported Dan Seaton, WPRCA Commissioner. "Lynn made, by my count, six great diving gets in a row from side to side — she looked like a windshield wiper. Finally, Heather hit a shot that Lynn dove for and couldn't quite reach, and that was game. There was a capacity crowd, and they absolutely went wild!"

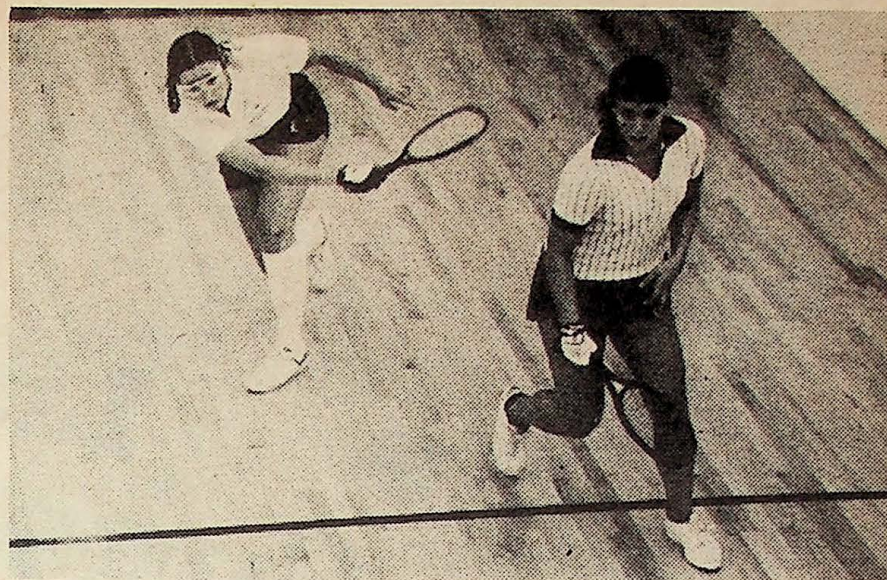
In the quarters, it was Adams over Karin Walton, Janell Marriott over Laura Martino, Shannon over Martha McDon-

ald, and Heather over Francie Davis.

THE NEW OFFICIAL WPRCA rankings are as follows:

1. Shannon Wright	564 points
2. Heather McKay	430 points
3. Lynn Adams	366 points
4. Janell Marriott	244 points
5. Marci Greer	190 points
6. Sarah Green	166 points
7. Bonnie Stoll	130 points
8. Elaine Lee	114 points

The next scheduled WPRCA tournament is set for September 25-28 at the Escondido Athletic Club in Escondido, California. For information, contact Jim Pool — 714-746-9300.



Janell Marriott (left) faced Laura Martino in the quarter's of the Newport Beach Pro Stop. She won that match, but was wiped out by Shannon Wright in the semi's.

## Shannon Wright's Back to Being Number One

(Continued from Page 1)

body strength tremendously and it threw my timing off! You've got to spend a proportionate amount of time in the court when you make great changes in strength, increases or decreases, to keep your timing and shots working right. Like I said, I just kept hitting everything hard against her instead of concentrating on the control game, which is really my bag. I got my timing and my strength working together for the Newport tournament, and I concentrated on slowing the game down and hitting those pinch shots, and I'm gonna just keep doing that as long as it works! Wouldn't you?

R.T.: I don't know, I've never had anything that "worked!" Shannon, I've talked to you a lot in the past, but you really seem excited about this win. With all your victories and championships in the past I'm almost surprised you're not blasé about it all.

SHANNON: Well, I was a lot more relaxed than before for this tournament. That loss to Heather in Chicago at the Nationals was a big one, and losses like that make you go back and reflect on what was wrong and so forth. I think I probably did a lot of growing up over the summer. One thing I didn't do before this tournament was go around telling everyone how I was going to win... I figured I just had to go out there and prove it on the court. I've learned a lot about myself and the game and I'm still learning, and I guess I always will! Anyway, I am excited! I can't wait to get back in the court and play her some more!

Note: According to the official WPRCA rankings, as a result of this tournament, Shannon has indeed taken over the No. 1 ranking, with Heather second and Lynn Adams third. Look for Shannon's column elsewhere in this issue of RACQUETBALL TODAY.

### Life-enrichment through sports

By Laurence Korwin, Director, Sports Training Institute

## Crippling Advice from Mom and Dad: "Pay Attention to What You're Doing"

Most child abuse is done in the name of love—to set the child on a socially acceptable track. Percentwise, few child-abuse injuries are from parents who hate their children.

Also in the name of love and guidance, parents cripple a child when they say, "Pay attention to what you are doing."

Why is it wrong to say this? Because it tells a child to try to control movements with the "aware" part of the brain—the upper conscious brain that does not know how to coordinate complex body movements. The lower brain resents this intrusion and presses the ANXIETY button. The result: clumsy, uncoordinated accident-prone kids.

Equally damaging (with the best of intentions) are sports instructors who try to get students to control body movements with bad advice like:

"Keep your eye on the ball."

"Be aware of where your racquet head is."

"Stay in control when you ski."

"Be aware of the angle of your edges when you ski."

"Swivel your hips to the right, pivot on the ball of your left foot, guide your club up slowly with a straight left arm, snap the wrists at the one o'clock position."

The results of such advice: students who hate sports, hate lessons, and hate themselves for failing to learn.

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Laurence Korwin is the author of "You can be good at sports!" To order the book write: Sports Training Institute, 333 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60601. The book is available for \$14.95, plus \$1.55 postage and handling. The book is hardcover and richly illustrated in full color. The editor and publishers of RACQUETBALL TODAY recommend it to help you play better and enjoy it more. It is with permission of the author and publisher that portions of the book are reprinted.

## Lite Beer/Penn Super Racquetball Championship Series for Multiple Sclerosis Circuit Plans Announced

By Alan Shetzer

This series of eleven amateur tournaments is designed to raise money for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. The tournaments will be sanctioned for national amateur rankings at a grade level three by the AARA.

The participating club listed below should be contacted for further information.

Brookfield Racquetball Club  
670 Larry Court  
Waukesha, WI 53186 414/782-6120  
September 12, 13 & 14

Thirteenth Street Racquet Club  
1901 East 13th Street  
Cleveland, OH 44114 216/696-1365  
October 10, 11 & 12

Town and Country Racquetball Club  
1777 Des Peres Road  
St. Louis, MO 63131 314/965-7777  
October 24, 25 & 26

Racquet Club  
1 Racquet Lane  
Monroeville, PA 15146 412/244-8400  
October 24, 25 & 26

Continental Racquetball Club  
14880 Bammel N. Houston  
Houston, TX 77014 713/893-5146  
October 31-November 2

Supreme Court 5  
3033 Alvarado Street  
San Leandro, CA 94577 415/351-5323  
January 15, 16 & 17

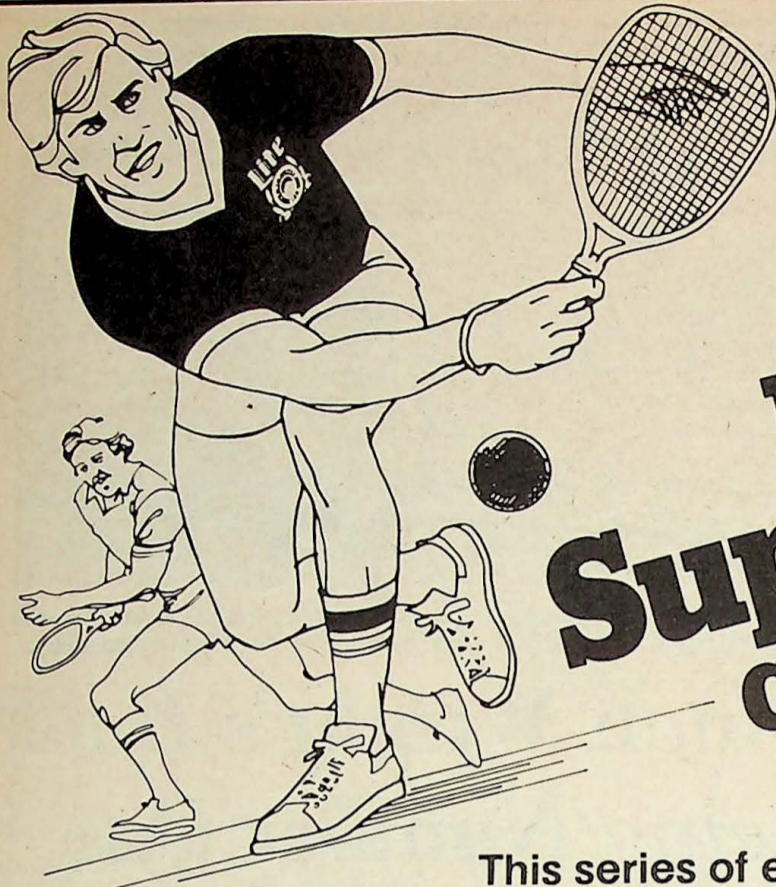
Perfect Racquet  
405 Camino Del Rio South  
San Diego, CA 92108 714/297-6062  
November 7, 8 & 9

Denver International Athletic Club  
1630 Welton Street  
Denver, CO 80202 303/623-2100  
November 11-16

Towson Court Club  
8757 Mylander Lane  
Towson, MD 21204 301/821-0160  
November 21, 22 & 23

Louisiana Racquetball and Health Club  
2121 38th Street  
Kenner, LA 70062 504/443-4512  
December 5, 6 & 7

Sporting House  
1515 Sheridan Road  
Atlanta, GA 30324 404/325-2700  
December 5, 6 & 7



# Lite Beer/Penn Super Racquetball Championship Series for Multiple Sclerosis

This series of eleven amateur tournaments is designed to raise money for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. These tournaments will be sanctioned for national amateur rankings at a grade level three by the AARA.

### OFFICIAL ENTRY

- ENTRY DEADLINE:** All entry blanks and corresponding entree fees must be in the possession of the club post marked the Friday before the tournament date.
- ENTRY FEE:** \$20.00 per entry; \$12.00 for second entry.
- OFFICIAL BALL:** Penn Ultra blue.
- RULES OF SANCTION PLAY:** All current AARA rules will govern play.
- AWARDS:** Trophies to 1st, 2nd & 3rd in all events, and 1st place consolation.
- PAYMENT:** Make checks payable to the club.
- STARTING TIME:** Contact Club by phone.
- CONSOLATION:** All division-first-round losers must sign up.
- HOSPITALITY:** Food and beverage will be provided free to all tournament participants.
- SHIRTS:** A souvenir tournament shirt will be provided to all participants.

Please enter me in the event(s) checked below. Players may enter two events.

- WOMEN'S DIVISIONS:**  Open  B  C  N  Seniors 35+
- MEN'S DIVISIONS:**  Open  B  C  N  Seniors 35+  Masters 45+

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**WAIVER:** 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 Miller Brewing Company, Penn Athletic Products Company, AARA, the National MS Society and the racquetball club, 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.



Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

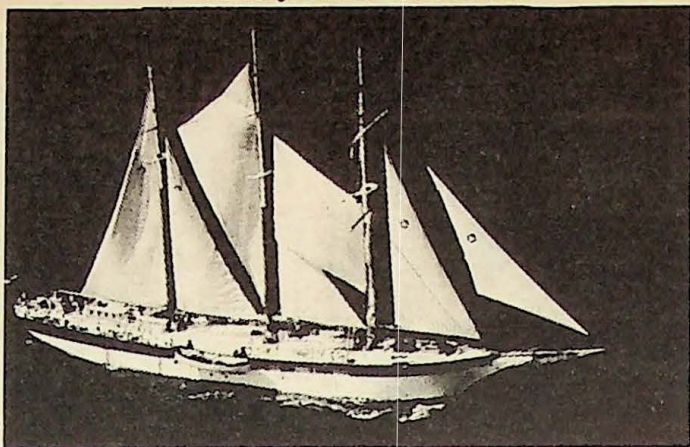
Parent or Guardian (Under 18) \_\_\_\_\_

All entrants receive a free introductory membership into the American Amateur Racquetball Association. This membership includes three issues of Racquetball Magazine, membership card, official rule book, voice in all AARA policies, special product and service discounts.

A portion of the entry fee will be donated to the National Multiple Sclerosis Society.

All entrants will be eligible to win one of the 150 door prizes that will be awarded on Friday night. These prizes are valued at over \$1000.00





# Sail to a Caribbean Adventure.

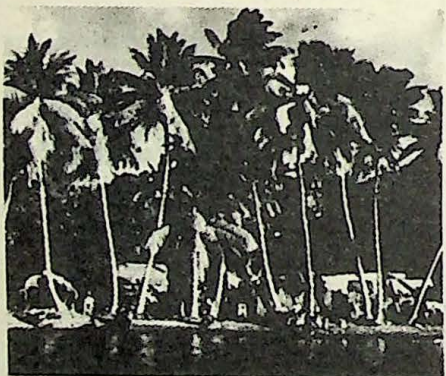
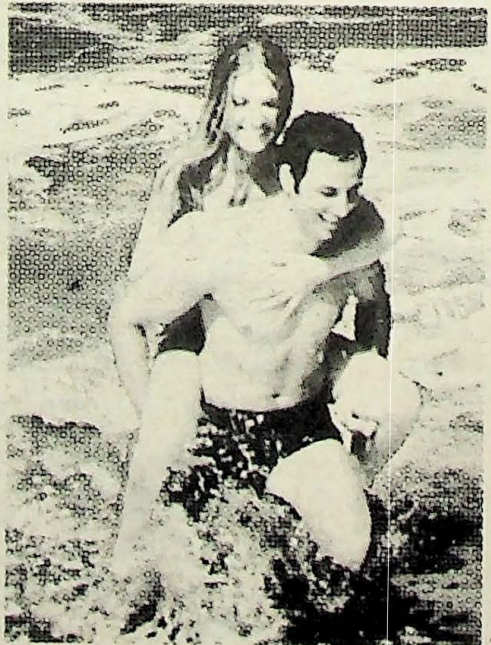
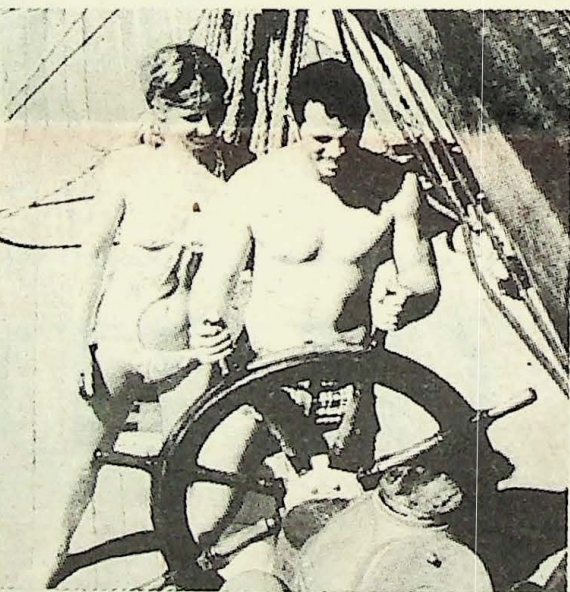
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# Ask Bob: What Goes into a Pre-Match Briefing

By BOB KEENAN

**QUESTION:** What do you do in pre-match player briefing?

**KEENAN:** Probably one of the most overlooked responsibilities of an official is the "pre-match briefing." Many officials neglect to take the time to properly instruct the players, or answer questions, before the match begins. This time can be used in a positive way and, most important, the official has the undivided attention of both players.

Over the years I have prepared a checklist for myself; issues that should be discussed or pointed out before the coin flip and start of the match. I have found this system works best for me, saves time, and helps gain player respect. I'd like to share that checklist with you today:

**1. THE BALL SELECTION** — The players should be given the game balls by the official as early as possible. Two balls are enough, with instructions to select number 1 and 2 ball as they warm up. While the players are warming up the official should prepare for his or her duties.

**2. REFEREE'S DUTIES** — The official is responsible to see that towels are readily available and the scorecard is properly filled out. **DO NOT** leave this responsibility to someone else. If linesmen are to be utilized, select them early and brief them as to their respective duties. This shouldn't take more than a minute or two. You are now prepared to enter the court and speak to the players.

**3. CHECK FOR COURT HINDERS** — Immediately upon entering the court check carefully for obvious court hinders. Check door frame, door, locks, balcony ledges, trim or any surface that may interfere with play. (If any, note them, because they will be discussed during player briefing.)

**4. STOP PLAYERS FROM WARMING UP** — You want their undivided attention and you won't get it unless they discontinue their warm up shots.

**5. WHO'S WHO** — Introduce yourself first and then make sure they both know each other. If you are not familiar with the players, make yourself a note on the scorecard on some identifying feature of one or both players. (Color of shirts or shorts usually works best.)

**6. THE COURT HINDERS** — If there are court hinders that will interfere with play now is the time to establish just how a particular play will be handled. Explain that all court hinders will be called by the official. Once this has been understood then the players may have the option of agreeing to a specific court hinder. For instance, a door frame or door handle is usually the most common court hinder. You can give the players the option of holding up on a shot that has taken a bad bounce off this type of court hinder but, they must hold up on the shot, they cannot take the shot and then ask for the court hinder. Both players must agree — if they don't then the official will call everything.

**7. CONDUCT** — Explain to the players that you expect their conduct to be sportsmanlike. Mention that you will be willing to discuss any call the players may disagree with but, you will not argue with them. If linesmen are being utilized clearly make it understood that no criticism, gestures, or verbal abuse to the linesmen will be allowed.

**8. TECHNICALS, TECHNICAL WARNINGS, AND AVOIDABLE HINDERS** — The pre-match briefing is the best time to give a general warning on misconduct, technicals and avoidable hinders. One of the most misunderstood rules is that many players feel they are entitled to a "warning" on the above violations during the match. *This is absolutely not true.*

**9. APPEALS** — If linesmen are being utilized explain clearly that all appealable calls will be made directly to the official. It is best to repeat the appeal so the linesman clearly understands what is being appealed. Explain that once the appeal has been upheld or overturned, play will immediately resume — no further discussion will be allowed.

**10. THE TEN SECOND RULE AND CALLING OF THE SCORE** — I lump these two areas of the rules together because they do go hand in hand in controlling the match. Explain to the players that the ten seconds will not start until the score is called. Explain to the players that after each rally both players will be given a reasonable amount of time to return to their respective positions. Clearly explain that once both players are in position then, and only then, will the score be called and the ten seconds will com-

mence. Also remind the players, while in the receiving position, the only recognized signal that will be acceptable to allow for the ten seconds is a *raised racquet*. The racquet must be raised so there is no misunderstanding to both the server and the official of his or her intent. Also explain, while in the serving position, it is the server's responsibility to see that the receiver is ready — it is not the official's responsibility to hold up play on a raised racquet. When actually calling the score be clear and concise, maintaining the same audible tempo throughout the match. Do not allow the server to "rush" your duties or to commence the serve before the calling of the score is completed. If explained clearly to the players prior to the match, and sequentially handled as I described above, the ten second rule and calling the score should be problem free during the match.

**11. CALLING FOR "SECOND SERVE"** — Explain to the players that if a fault serve occurs you will call for a "second serve." The receiver and server again have the right to another ten seconds. The calling of "second serve" begins the ten second sequence again. By explaining this sequence you will alleviate any misunderstanding during the match.

## First Rule Is 'Duck for the Door'

By TOM GROBMISI

"Door location" is probably the first skill one must master to have any chance whatsoever of becoming a skilled racquetballer. And since, at first sight of a racquetball court door one might logically assume that the sport was invented by Pygmies, door location is often not so simple as it sounds!

After locating the door, we are faced with the First Rule of Racquetball Safety: *the smaller the door the more you should duck*. Actually, the door was purposely designed small to discourage football players, but that obviously didn't work. Now they're experimenting with a complicated door handle that requires an IQ of at least 80 to figure it out (but that would not only eliminate football players, it would be the end of pro racquetball). In reality, the door is not really very small, as anyone familiar with the metric system can readily testify. My personal experiments with increasing the size of the

**12. QUESTIONS** — Once your pre-match duties are completed ask the players if they have any questions. If either player has a question make sure both are aware of it, and your answer.

**13. THE COIN FLIP** — The lower seeded player (if seeding has been determined) has the right to select "heads" or "tails." The winner of the flip serves first — he or she does not have a choice of serving or receiving. Note the first server on our scorecard immediately.

**14. PLAYER INTRODUCTION** — If the match warrants player introductions, it should be done appropriately. The lower seeded player, whether serving or receiving first, should be introduced first. Credits and achievements should be acknowledged along with their respective seed in the event. The higher seeded player is introduced last with similar acknowledgements. Linesmen should also be introduced and identified for the players.

The pre-match briefing should take no longer than 5-10 minutes. It is time well spent! Questions and controversy during the match can virtually be eliminated if the pre-match briefing is handled properly. Remember — every player wants a quality official and quality officiating requires preparation.

door have proved impractical, mainly because of the small size of the opening.

After having located the door and gone through, the racquetball player is quickly and naturally brought to Steps 3 and 4: Step 3 — close the door, and Step 4 — *don't take your eyes off the door until it's time to leave the court!* Far too many beginners have been forced to pay one, or even two extra hours of court fees because they allowed themselves to become distracted and were not able to relocate the door before the lights went off.

When your court time is up, Step 5, of course, is to open the door, and Step 6 is actually a repeat of a previous rule which I like to abbreviate simply as the "smaller-door-more-duck" rule. After that, the rest is a breeze — just remember not to take your clothes off until you're in the locker room, which you'll find easily by following the string you've already tied from your locker to your ankle.

## Keep Your Eyes Focused on New Products

By ALAN SHETZER

Good eye protection is becoming an increasing problem and numerous types have been developed for racquetball.

Adding to the list of manufacturers is Bausch & Lomb with their "Action Eyes Sports Protector." These safety glasses have the following features:

- 3mm thick polycarbonate plastic.
  - **OPTICALLY** correct lenses from edge-to-edge for maximum peripheral vision.
  - Lenses specially coated for extra scratch resistance.
  - Ability to accommodate most prescription lenses.
- Additionally the glasses are quite fashionable and are available in several colors.

**WHILE THERE ARE** a wide variety of glasses on the market, the all plastic ones with plastic lenses tend to scratch readily and become useless after being carried around in a racquet bag after awhile.

The wrap-around plastic type offers pretty good protection; however, they are often uncomfortable.

The Action Eyes Sports Protector avoids all of these problems and is still affordable at its \$25 suggested retail price.

One further note: Dr. Paul F. Vinger in an article in "The Physician and Sports Medicine" indicated — "The ultimate protection available is the 3mm center-thickness lenses mounted in a frame specifically designed for industry or sports." It appears that these new guards meet this criterion.

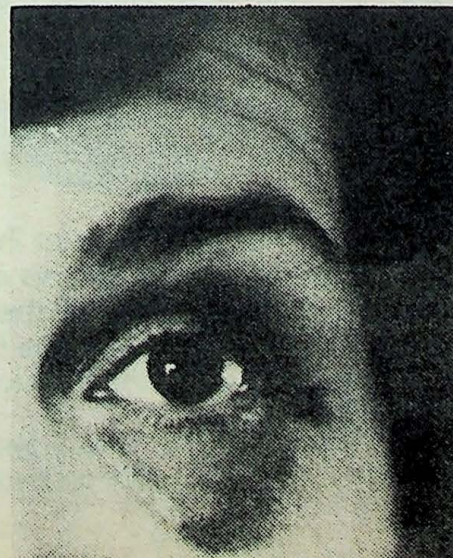
**PENN ATHLETIC** Products company has two new racquetball items.

The first is a new racquetball glove, a 100 per cent deerskin suede leather. The glove features are: a soft, pliable fabric that won't harden or crack; stress areas double stitched for long-life; non-slip grip and flat seams to prevent blisters and add comfort. Suggested retail price is \$10.95.

The second is a racquetball bag "designed with the needs of the racquetball player in mind."

This bag is extra size, made of 100 per

cent vinyl, tan with brown trim, containing two extra roomy compartments that are fully lined. Each compartment has its own nylon zipper; one that's big enough to



This is how you might look without eyeguards . . .



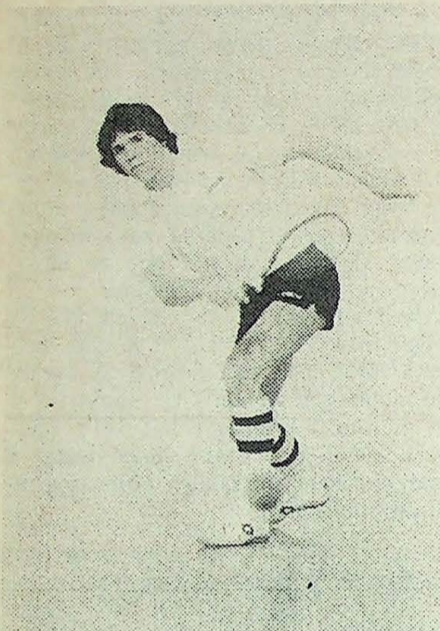
and this is how you might look with eye protection.

# Who Is Who in 1980-81 Racquetball Season

(Continued from Page 1)

offer to become their official ball and other companies are showing considerable interest.

One comment: the Women's Nationals, while successful as a finely run tournament, didn't demonstrate that the women will draw paying fans. Further, the women-only amateur draw concept will be hard to stick to in other than a few select major markets. (There just are not that many women tournament players yet.)



John Egerman is a player to watch . . . he may be upsetting a few applectarts.

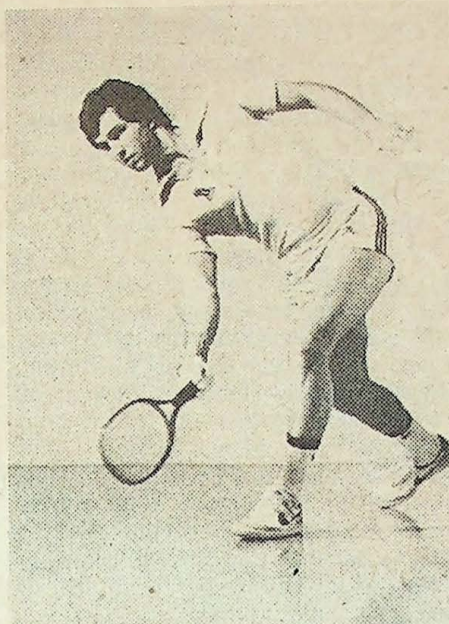
AS I PREDICTED last September, Heather McKay has become a major factor in the women's ranks, but don't count Shannon Wright out. Lynn Adams is clearly No. 3. The remaining group will be the same. Outside of Stacey Fletcher there are not many promising players coming up.

Amateur tournament costs will be going up this year and the number of tournaments should decrease.

Previous support from manufacturers giving free balls, shirts and prizes will diminish, as promotional budgets are being cut because of the slow economy. Further, recent buy-outs of racquetball equipment companies by large established sport product companies will change the promotional policies of the past.

Also, 1980 will mark the time where court club owners will have to go out and sell their product, if they want to survive. Over-building in many areas of the country has spread the existing pool of players out and a lot of clubs are experiencing financial troubles. Further pressure is on the pure court club from multi-recreational facilities.

WITH NON-PRIME rate approaching \$8-\$10 per hour and prime-time \$10-\$14, racquetball is not cheap. Very little is being done by club owners or their associations to attract and/or subsidize junior play and the industry could experience a shake down period like bowling went through.



Don Thomas, one of the young turks who will be a solid contender for the pro quarters.

Indications are that the USRA will have some interesting changes on tap for the players this year. Look for a National Computer Ranking system, and a National Certified Referee's program.

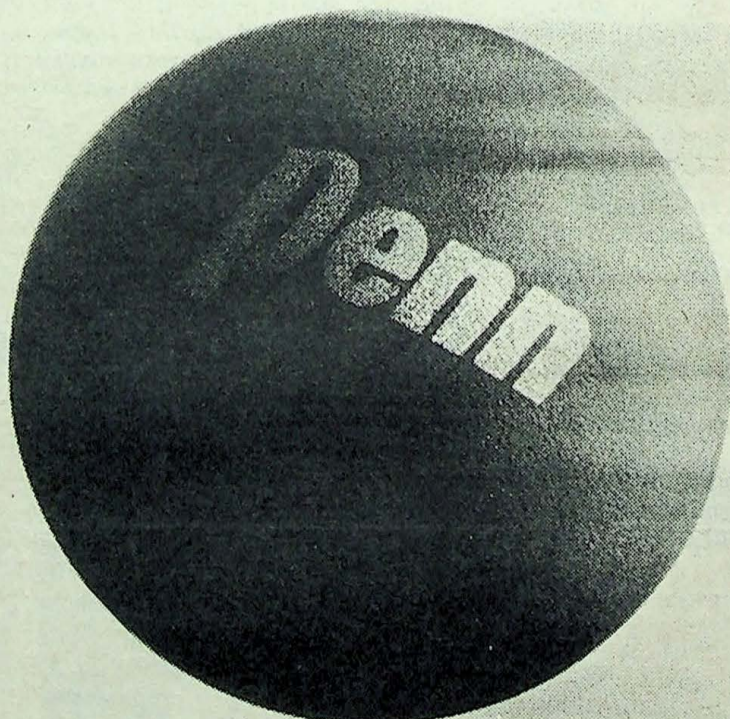
The AARA will be working to strengthen their junior program through high schools.

We, at RACQUETBALL TODAY will endeavor to keep you up to date as the year develops.



Steve Strandemo (pictured) along with Charlie Brumfield are two that have a chance at staying in the top ten if the ball is slowed down.

## The one part of your game that never has an off day.



Rely on it. This ball is so lively, consistent, and durable, it comes with the guarantee no one else offers: "If any Penn ball should fail before the label wears off, return it to the place of purchase or to Penn for two new balls."

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# The Wright Answer . . .

*Editor's note: RACQUETBALL TODAY IS PROUD TO ANNOUNCE the addition of Ms. Shannon Wright as an exclusive columnist for this paper. Ms. Wright, who has virtually dominated women's professional racquetball for the past four years, travels around the country giving racquetball clinics and exhibitions, playing in*

*tournaments, and representing Wilson Sporting Goods Company and Triple-S Promotions. Ms. Wright will answer personal and professional questions submitted by our readers and our staff. Please address your questions to Ms. Wright, c/o RACQUETBALL TODAY.*

the control or mastery to play a slow game. I would like to point out that it is much easier to play a hard hitting flailing game than to play a slow and controlled game. Because I believe that the game will be using an increasingly slower ball (for television audiences), it would be very wise for younger players to work hard on developing their control and accuracy.



SHANNON WRIGHT

not mean that you don't ever ask for advice or that you know all the answers. What it does mean is that you are able to think for yourself.

Because practicing the basic shots can get tedious, a coach can be a real motivator for a young player to master the technical parts while also teaching him about the various strategies of the game. But the main importance of a coach is to get the athlete to be able to *think, analyze, and make decisions on his own.*

I reached a point in my game a couple of years ago where I was able to analyze my matches for myself. I know how to train properly and I understand the technical aspects of the game well enough to feel that I don't need a coach any longer. This is what all athletes should strive for — independence. But independence does

## Coaches — Yes or No?

By SHANNON WRIGHT

**QUESTION:** What kind of coaching have you had? Do you have a coach now? And, do you recommend using one?

**ANSWER:** When I first began playing racquetball Pete Wright, a top racquetball player and excellent instructor, was my coach and instructor. The first three years that I played racquetball were extremely disciplined. I played racquetball at least six days a week and we practiced and drilled nearly every day. We emphasized control and accuracy in my game.

Sometimes I would get bored or annoyed doing the same old drills and practicing the same basic shots, but Pete got me to realize the extreme importance of having the basics down pat.

When I moved to California, four years ago, I began to develop my power game. I certainly was glad that I had mastered the basic shots because it made the transition from a control game to a power game very smooth and easy. I see a lot of young players going about racquetball in just the opposite manner; they start out hitting the ball extremely hard but do not have

## We Get Letters . . .

(Continued from Page 2)

Dear RACQUETBALL TODAY,

Enclosed is my filled-out survey from your August issue. I guess you plan to use the survey to determine what the readers want to see in your paper. I absolutely love all the humor in your paper . . . keep it up, and I really enjoyed your articles on the rules . . . I'd like to see more there. Why do the rules have to be so complicated?

Ed Forester  
New Orleans

Dear Ed,

Thanks for your comments. We can promise you a steady flow of humor, we enjoy doing it too. As for the rules, we're excited about that too, and proud that Bob Keenan, director of the USRA and one of the top refs in the game has joined us as a regular columnist answering questions on the rules of the game. We'll submit yours, "Why are the rules so complicated?" to him and see what he's got to say in a future issue. Why do you ask such tough questions?

Editor

\*\*\*\*\*

Gentlemen:

Visiting Decatur, Illinois, was a point 21 for me. At the Racquetball Plus club they had your August issue available for reading.

Being a player and eager to learn more I took a copy and neatly folded it and put it in my bag.

On the drive home to Ohio I treated myself to that issue and I can honestly say it was one of the nicest racquetball information publications I have read . . .

Mary De Dauw  
Litchfield, Ohio

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear RACQUETBALL TODAY,

A big congratulation goes to the entire staff of RACQUETBALL TODAY. I find it very open, enthusiastic and excellent in promoting the sport of racquetball.

Kay Yarnell  
Manger  
Spaulding Racquetball Club  
Gladstone, Missouri

Dear RACQUETBALL TODAY,

My husband suggested that you print the puzzles and something like the survey on the back of an advertisement, this way the paper isn't all cut up before he gets a chance to memorize it.

Thank you,  
Joyce Schul

Dear Joyce,

We have a better idea — take out a double subscription! Special deal — two for 20.

Editor

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear RACQUETBALL TODAY,

Bob Shmendrick? Ralph Moil! These are your writers? Who are you trying to kid?

Ima Fagella

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear RACQUETBALL TODAY,

I enjoy your paper very much, and I also enjoy Shannon Wright's column. I'd be interested to see what she thinks of Heather McKay's game and how a lady in her late 30's can play so well?

Marilyn Sipple  
New York

Dear Marilyn,

Thanks for the good words. Shannon discussed Heather in our June issue and pointed out two great strengths in her game that make her so tough: she hits every shot very hard; and she's had over 20 years experience at winning racquet sports, and that gives her a big edge in mental preparation. We have discussed Heather with Shannon more recently, and Shannon's attitude is as positive as ever and she's just determined to work harder to beat Heather.

Ed.

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Dear Sirs:

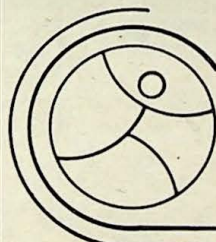
I really enjoy your paper; it has a lot of variety in it and that's what I like. My wife and I both love racquetball and we're always looking for ways to improve — the paper helps us.

Thanks,  
Tom Bosma  
Wyoming, Mich.

Thanks readers! Thanks to those of you who filled out and returned the reader's questionnaire that appeared in last month's issue. The information not only gave us some insights on consumer trends, but it also helped us make decisions regarding the content of the paper. For your reference, a great majority of the readers who returned the survey indicated that they like to read more about individual players, the rules of the game, and humorous articles in our paper; we'll

plan accordingly. Sorry you couldn't all win, but 10 of the people who responded were sent a can of Seamco balls, and another 10 were sent tournament shirts. We'll have the poll again from time to time to keep in touch with our readers. In the meantime, drop us a line if there's something you'd like to see in the paper, or something you'd like to see getting greater coverage.

Editor



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Charlie Club's new multi-million dollar facility is a dream come true for racquetball enthusiasts! Featuring 17 racquetball courts with low, low court rates of only \$1.50 (night-owl); \$3.00 (non-prime); and \$6.00 (prime), Charlie Club also features a glass court with gallery seating, which will be the site this month for:

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- \*exercise rooms
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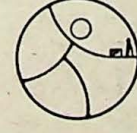
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# Reflections Concerning the Davey Bledsoe Article

By TERRY FANCHER

I read with incredible interest the article in the August issue of RACQUETBALL TODAY about Davey Bledsoe's comments on the NRC Pro tour and his attempted "character assassinations." I found the article both interesting and not entirely false, but definitely biased. It showed a lack of insight and understanding as to what actually goes on behind the scenes in promoting and managing a professional racquetball tour or building an amateur program. The failure of the newly formed NARA is a perfect example of incompetency in starting a competitive tour.

Since I am no longer associated with the pro tour, the USRA, NRC or any of the sponsors, I feel my opinion carries validity. As a national headquarters executive, I saw almost every possible aspect of the day to day racquetball business. Plus, I had an interest from the players standpoint as I actually played on the tour for a year and achieved a certain status. In short, I formed my own opinion from contact with just about everybody in the sport, at all interest levels, from manufacturers, sponsors, players, and concerned bystanders.

I have no intent to discredit Davey as an accomplished player or a person; but he

has a totally one-sided view of what the tour is all about. The lack of recognition of the tremendous investment of time, effort and money by others which raised him to the elevated position he holds today. His total contribution at the beginning consisted of being a player. His dispute and complaints stem largely from one basic fact: an intense dislike for Charlie Drake. The two have been feuding for years ever since Bledsoe played under contract for Leach Industries. Anyone on the tour can substantiate that.

TO HAVE THE gall to state that Drake, Leach, and the NRC mishandled the players, the tour and recent developments for promoting the game is astonishing! The tour started back in 1973, as a promotional tool for the game and its equipment, a fledgling business that no one else was willing to undertake. This attempt has grown over the years into a respectable and dependable sports promotion and it's run exactly like any successful enterprise — business-like. That's what people forget and now suddenly Bledsoe becomes and expert on administering a tour.

Certain people invested time, effort and money to put together something respectable that the game in general could be proud of. In my opinion, players like Dav-



Terry Fancher

ey and several others literally destroyed the respectability of a new and exciting sport by throwing temper tantrums, rebelling against attempts at standardization, seedings and rules, along with constant complaining about everything from the draw to the official equipment used. The use of poor conduct continues to hurt the game's reputation.

To say that the officiating was biased is incredible to me since I was an official who spent hundreds of hours refereeing myself. If you would ask Chuck Leve, the head referee, or myself the question whether or not we cared one way or the other who won any racquetball match ever, the answer would be that we tried our best to be fair and let the chips fall where they may. The statement that there was a "lack of qualified refereeing" is unjustified. And, I feel that most anyone who has watched pro matches over the past years would agree. There's simply no way to appease a loser of a match and someone always had to be the loser.

Insinuating collusion between the sponsors who run the tournaments is a vague statement at best. Everyone protects their own best interests, especially if their funds are at stake. Anyone who has built a tour from scratch is not going to appreciate a non-business person telling them

how to run their own show, especially after seven years of personally doing all the hard work.

MY FAVORITE section of the article that points to some interesting aspects of organization is the NARP, a group founded by players mostly anti-NRC/Leach/Seamco. If you build a tour and then the players who you pay prize money to try to form their own group in direct competition with you, what do you think the average person's response would be? They would be directly insulting current sponsors who paved the way for the tour originally.

The bottom line in all of this response is that the manufacturers are in the sport to make money. To insinuate that Bledsoe's sponsor has any other interest than that is ludicrous and it's the same for every manufacturer of sporting goods or racquetball related equipment. That's life. To say clinics given by a certain sponsor don't make money is true in the short term; the goal is to make money as in any other business over the long haul through future product sales. In fact, to say that a company who happens to be new to the sport is trying to benefit by all the injection of funds and effort of the real pioneers of the game, would be a much more truthful statement.

Whether Bledsoe or any other player stops playing on the tour in protest or otherwise is meaningless. There are hundreds of future stars with positive attitudes toward the sport who will step in and provide optimistic reflections on the game. Racquetball has enough immaturity at all levels of the sport, and that's not just limited to the pros. Critics run rampant.

The key promoters of professional racquetball normally do not respond to such articles or interviews as Bledsoe's. But I felt compelled to give some counterpoints that get left out over and over again. The average concerned racquetball person should consider these and become aware before passing judgement on the "establishment."

## Frankenstein Wins Feet First, Just Like Everyone Else Does

By PHIL SIMBORG

Frankenstein won. They didn't call hinders. The only avoidable I saw them call was against the flailing fiend's opponent in the finals — the poor guy got so frustrated trying to get around the big dead weight that he tried to go through him.

Now, I can't say for sure that the big galoot wouldn't have won if they had enforced the rules — he sure hit the ball hard. He broke a dozen balls in one game alone! But the big flathead simply didn't move... ever! And the footfaults! Terrible!

Between games I asked the tournament director why they didn't call avoidables and footfaults and ten second violations, etc. He said, "Nobody, does, hardly. And when they do the players and the fans just complain and say we're being too technical or 'uptight.'" I thought about it, and he's right.

I remember the last time I was at a men's professional tournament and was surprised to see the player footfaulting like crazy without being called for it (by "professional" referees). The pros also took a lot of extra time between serves and really were allowed to abuse many of the rules. The only avoidables I saw called were in the most obvious situations,

and even then, the refs made the call almost apologetically. Most of the time, the players reacted like they'd been accused of stealing, and most of the fans sided with the player.

Anyway, now that I've seen how even someone as slow and stupid as Frankenstein can win, I understand better that the rules are there to protect the players and insure they get a safe, fair match. Next time I see the ref make one of the more "technical" calls, I think I'll cheer him. And the next time they let Frankenstein in a tournament, I think I'll insist that, at least, they make him use a racquet.

## How to Play the Game When You're Tired

By TOM GROBMISI

When you're tired, you generally play much slower. You tend to drag your feet, and find it difficult to get to pass shots down the walls. If your opponent hits a soft shot in the front court, and you are in back court, you just can't seem to move fast enough to get to the ball. Your overall game is much worse than normal, and you are likely to get fewer points than usual.

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# Racquetball on Rollerskates

By TOM GROBMISI

In an effort to make the already exciting sport of racquetball even more challenging and fun, many people have begun playing the sport on roller skates, while others have been experimenting with all kinds of rule changes, slower and faster balls, and other new ideas. We formed a committee here at RACQUETBALL TODAY to come up with some new ideas of our own, and we gave them a try. Following are those ideas and our test results.

**Piggyback Mixed Doubles** — the woman rides her partner and does the hitting.

**Generally, the women seemed to enjoy this very much, though the men were called for a lot of footfaults and some technicals for profanity.**

**No Racquets** — just play the same game but hit the ball with your hands.

**Forget it!** We all looked silly trying to play that way, and afterwards we had an uncontrollable urge to drink excessive amounts of beer and sit around telling lies.

**TEAM RACQUETBALL** — four players on each side.

**Too hard to squeeze three people into that little box when your partner is serving.**

**Nude Racquetball.**

**Too many avoidable hinders.**

**Racquetball on Horseback.**

**The horses were too intelligent to go into a small room where people are swinging racquets, so we had to scrap the idea.**

**PLAY RACQUETBALL with your wife.**  
*She got a "headache."*

Play racquetball with your children.  
*They didn't bounce very well off the front wall.*

**Bionic Racquetball** — play in slow motion.

*Too much like tennis!*

**HAVE A Racquetball Tournament.**

*Totally impractical! Everybody, including the better players, entered the D Division; all the shirts were too small; the food was terrible, and when it was finally over we found that the trophies had been stolen.*

**Macho-Racquetball** — put on pads and a helmet and allow unlimited physical contact.

*It was fun for a while but a wierd thing happened: some girls who were walking by saw us and began yelling silly slogans and jumping up in the air showing everyone their underpants. Eventually they had to get married so we went to a drive in movie and fooled around.*

**RACQUETBALL with a Net** — stretch a net across the court and play like tennis.

*By the time we got everyone to agree who would play with whom and got through discussing how nice our outfits looked, our time was up!*

**Racquetball for Money.**

*Boring — everyone just kept killing the ball and arguing with the ref.*

**Hostility Ball** — instead of racquets, we wore boxing gloves; the main object was to release our frustrations by hitting each other and screaming and yelling nasty insults at each other.

*Too much like regular racquetball.*



By JAN DIENGOTT

The smart one's do . . . is the answer to the question, "Do racquetball players jump rope to stay in shape?"

Jumping rope probably sounds like child's play to you. It is. But, it's for grownup children, too. Jumping rope is being touted as a great conditioning exercise that increases stamina and it's also superb as a secondary, supplemental exercise. Outdoor joggers who have been sidelined due to treacherous weather conditions have discovered that rope-jumping can help keep them in peak condition. Tennis and racquetball players can keep at their sport for longer periods of time and with more intensity after conditioning with rope-jumping. Even if you don't consider yourself a real jock, jumping rope might be just what you need to get the blood flowing and muscles tensing. Fifteen minutes a day is all the time required.

From Sidney Filson, a YMCA instructor in New York City, come the following tips: Jump lightly, flex your knees and land on your toes and balls of your feet. This makes it easier on your knees and ankles. Never jump barefoot and if possible, wear a running type shoe.

**SOME ADDITIONAL TIPS:**

- The secret of not tiring quickly is to keep the upper arms near the body, forearms at right angles; move only the wrists.

# Jumping Rope the Ups and Downs

• Turn on some music because it's more fun that way.

• Jump with feet in a normal position. Then jump pigeon-toed, then with the toes pointing out. Different muscles will get a workout.

• Next, try a skipping rope movement. Then, jump backwards. And finally, work up to a fast "pepper," no-jump-in-between motion. End your workout with a slowed-down skipping motion once again. A proper cooling-off period is necessary because after exercising the blood flow slows, but the heart continues to work at full exercise rate for a little longer.

• THE BEST rope is a heavy one, 9 1/2 feet long with handles you can grip. If you wish, use a digital jump rope that will count for you or a rope with ball-bearing handles.

• If you are out of shape, begin with a two-minute session and gradually build up to 10 or 15 minutes.

• For females only . . . wear a bra. It's a real "must" to prevent stress on breast tissue.

Rope jumping has a calorie burnoff rate of 720 calories per hour. And, there is one final plus not to be overlooked. Vidal Sassoon, the fitness-conscious hair wiz, says that jumping rope air-dries hair and gives it bounce. And that's where the bounce belongs!

# RACQUETBALL

G N I D R A H A W K I N S O R H I N D E R  
F O T O N O S P M O H T R E P X E E N T E  
T O U R E N G A W A R D S T E S S V O I T  
A A R A L A E P P A S O O N N H J O I N S  
P I K S X N J U N K L O O E L E O L P I K  
O T U N O D O D E E H T T M M T N G M G C  
B R U M F I E L D S S S O A P Z E E A L U  
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T N I P L O Y H H E G N U U A E A V A O V  
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C R R W I N O L E T K E L E B S G E L H Y  
C A G H O X W F C E F C H E E R R N D A Y  
I K I E R R E H E A T H E R N S E U N N T  
F A A L E V E O A A P C R N U T L O K L G  
O C N E L Y O C M O N E Y N A M R E G E I  
H C A O C N E S I E L H E U M O N D R Y R

# P U Z Z L E

The following racquetball names and terms can be found in the above puzzle. Circle them and send us the puzzle with your name and address. We will have a drawing from the entries for free tournament T-Shirts and balls.

AARA, ace, Ambler, appeal, awards, bad call, Bertolucci, ball, Bowman, Brumfield, Carow, champion, cheer, coach, Cohen, darn it, Dee, dig, Drake, donut, draw, Egerman, Ektelon, expert, fan, Fletcher, Foton, Fox, game, Grobmisi, glove, Handley, Harding, Hawkins, Heather, hinder, hit, Hogan, Ikier, Jones, junk, Keeley, Kendler, kill, Koltun, Lee, Leve, lob, loser, long, Loveday, luck, match, McCoy, Mondry, money, Morrow, Moore, Muehleisen, Myers, NRC, pass, Prefontaine, pro, reach, referee, return, righty, Rish, Sauser, semis, Shetzer, shoot, skip, Stoll, Strandemo, timeout, Thompson, tour, tournament, tiebreaker, Troyer, Voit, Wagner, Walton, win, Yellen

Congratulations!!! You won the puzzle drawing for August. A can of balls will be sent to: Gail Maines, Norristown, Pa.; Fred Sapp, Medford, Oregon; Bob Bales, LaGrange, Ill.; Rev. Carl H. Fisher, Jr., Dayton, Ohio; Cheryl Fuentes, Phoenix, Arizona; Kathie Selsted, Fremont, Cal., and Shelly Phebus, Kansas City, Missouri.

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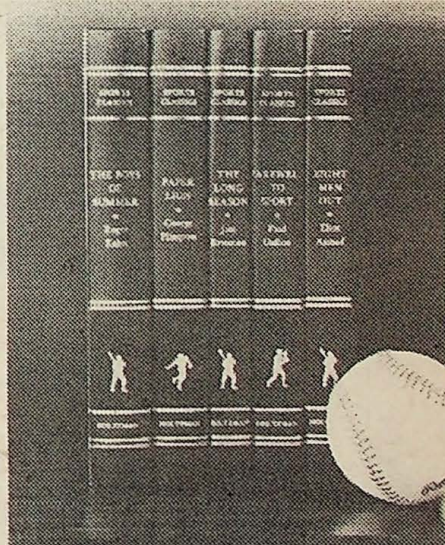
*Roger Kahn* The Boys of Summer by Roger Kahn  
The unforgettable Dodgers...Reese, Robinson and Campy...then and now

*George Plimpton* Paper Lion by George Plimpton  
Pro football from the inside of the inside...told with warmth and humor

*James Brosnan* The Long Season by James Brosnan  
The first of the ball player diaries...witty, candid, illuminating

*Eliot Asinof* Eight Men Out by Eliot Asinof  
The crooked World Series...Eight White Sox players banned for life

*Paul Gallico* Farewell to Sport by Paul Gallico  
The signature of Mr. Gallico (deceased) is a reproduction  
The grandfather classic...The Golden Age of Ruth, Dempsey and Tilden



"This is a feast, a royal banquet. It is too late for Christmas, but here is a gift that will serve just as well next year, or the next decade or the next century, which isn't so far away as all that."  
Red Smith, The New York Times, December 26, 1979

"A gift for all time for all fans" The Chicago Tribune

"Not only makes for great reading but dolls up the bookcase" Ray Fitzgerald, The Boston Globe

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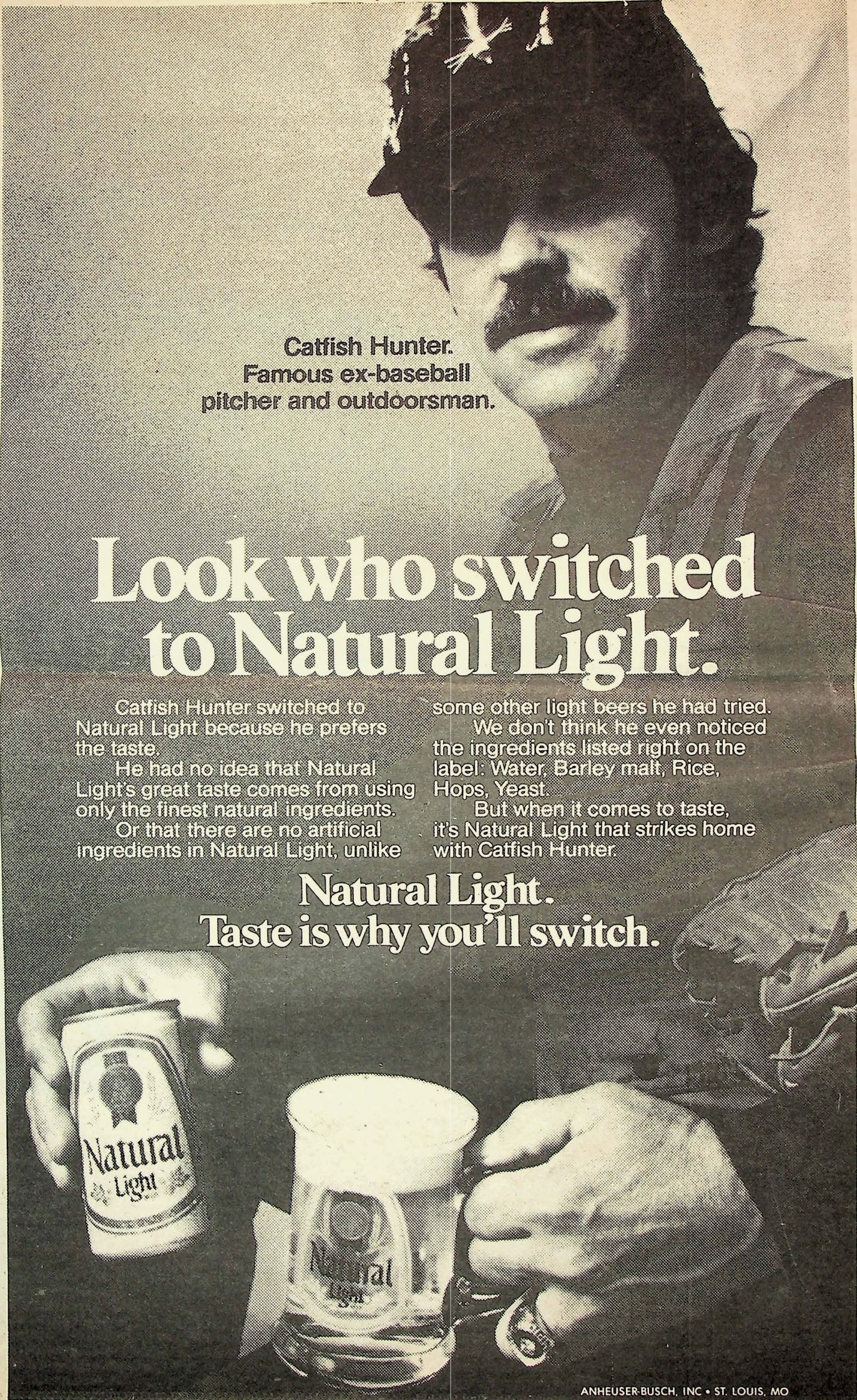
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