

National Racquetball®

Vol. 7 No. 2
February, 1979
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On the cover . . .

There is no need to introduce the face on the cover this month. Donny Osmond probably has one of the most exposed sets of teeth in the free world. The television star is an avid racquetball player, part owner of a multimillion dollar racquetball facility and a firm believer in the future of racquetball and television. National Racquetball West Coast Editor Nick Longhurst and Photographer Peter Borsari flew in to Utah for this exclusive cover taken after a day's work at the Osmond Brothers television studio facilities in Orem.

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From Bob Kendler

All Stars . . . All Pros . . . All Americans

In The Coors All Pro Championships

If you happen to be one of the heroes of American sports and have not heard of the Coors All-Pro Racquetball Championships, here is some good news. The Coors Brewing Company of Golden, CO, is sponsoring a racquetball tournament just for you. The idea is to provide a big event for today's big names as well as for those who have retired from active competition.

And big bucks are going along with the big names, just to make the tournament even more interesting.

The first year of the Coors All Pro competition ended in January. There were four featured and separate tournaments — for baseball, football, basketball and hockey, and "veterans," for nonactive former professional athletes from any sport.

These four tournaments were followed by a Grand Championships, with the winner receiving a total sum of \$58,000, by far the largest purse ever in racquetball's short history.

Has the Coors All Pro attracted attention? You bet! With names like Don Kessinger, Al Oliver, Gail Goodrich, John Brodie, Rick Barry, Al Kaline, Tommy Mason and others, the big time sports names were all over the place.

Each of the four preliminary tourneys were held at the Las Vegas Racquetball Club with the Sahara Hotel as the host in that exciting city. We are extremely grateful to both organizations for their help in bringing this outstanding competition to a head.

The Grand Finals Jan. 11-14 were held at the Las Vegas Sporting House and brought together the finalists from each of the four previous competitions. The heightened interest in the Grand Finals

found the Coors All Pro event negotiating for television coverage as of this writing, as we attempt to bring racquetball more coverage on the tube.

You have to wonder why a company, whose product is so thoroughly enjoyed throughout the west, would spend well over a quarter of a million dollars on a relatively new sport. In the words of Mr. Peter Coors, *"We see an enormous future in racquetball and although we are already hard put to keep up with the demand, we look to the day when we expand to other parts of the country. Getting on the racquetball bandwagon can't hurt us when it reaches its zenith, and we hope to be right up there with them."*

From my point of view identification with a firm so highly regarded as Coors is a signal honor. It was my privilege to work side by side with Mr. Adolph Coors on the President's National Business Council. It certainly wasn't difficult to understand why Coors became a legend in the west, if not nationwide. I well remember my visit to the brewery in Golden and the wonderful impression I was left with. Unfortunately Coors is not marketed in the east, although my friends frequently smuggle in a pack or two as a special treat for all of us at home.

But an equally important consideration is this: isn't it remarkable how many of the greatest athletes of the recent generations have chosen racquetball as their lifetime sport? — that so many pro athletes, those who truly know the value of keeping their bodies in shape, are turning to racquetball as either their off-season or post-career method of staying in shape.

On the business scene many are taking advantage of the current



racquetball facility boom and investing in our sport as well. Don Kessinger, for example, is not only an outstanding player, but he also owns two clubs in Memphis and another in Little Rock. Tim Foley of the Dolphins is a partner in a club in Miami. Lance Alworth, former Charger, has invested in San Diego and O. J. Simpson in Los Angeles.

There just isn't any doubt that the court sports have attracted the heroes of almost every game. The Coors All Pro Championships are providing those players with an opportunity to bring home some cash, and to help us promote racquetball to its fullest degree.

What's even more a sign of the times is the number of ladies involved in the Coors All Pro "veterans" event. Hilary Hilton gave a good account of herself and little Heather McKay, of squash fame, came within an inch of reaching the finals. What she did to some of her male opponents was cruel and inhuman treatment. Anyone who tells you the ladies aren't here to stay hasn't seen the Coors tournament.

I wish I could sign off with something very clever about the Coors people. I've met them all and they are fine people to whom we are indebted for their contribution to racquetball. I hope everyone will call for a Coors whenever refreshment is in order.

They deserve it. ●

Evie & Bob Kendler

Evie and Bob Kendler

Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; . . .
They go from strength to strength, every one of
them in Zion appeareth before God.

Psalm 84:5,7

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The Readers Speak – Loudly!

Never in the history of *National Racquetball* has an editorial statement met with so great a response as did my December, 1978, article on eyeguards. Proudly I report to you, the reader, that the flood of letters, telegrams and phone calls regarding eye safety has been overwhelming.

It would be impossible to print each and every letter, and since many readers voiced the same thoughts, we have collected a sampling of the responses, both pro and con, in the same percentage as they came in.

The matter of whether eyeguards should be made mandatory in USRA sanctioned events is still under careful consideration. Meetings with state chairmen, legal experts and sponsors are addressing the situation, and any final decision will be detailed in *National Racquetball*.

Needless to say the response from you readers on the subject will be taken into account during these deliberations.

To all of you racquetballers who cared enough to voice your opinion, let me thank you for your efforts. Nothing could be more important to the future of racquetball than eye safety and believe me, the USRA recognizes this fact.

If all was equal, I'd start wearing mine again.

Dick Frye
Greenfield, IN

The Illinois Racquetball Association requires eye protection for junior players at sanctioned tournaments. This is a beginning. Once players play with eye guards they become accustomed to them. Today's market offers a variety of styles to accommodate both the fashion and physical needs of players.

Barbara E. Larrain
Champaign, IL

I wish to add my professional support of the mandatory use of protective eye wear while on the court. As an optometrist I am very aware of the potential loss a person can experience. I support any activity which would protect sight from needless loss or damage.

I feel I speak for many doctors in the Portland, OR, area. The Portland Metropolitan Optometric Society has passed and supported a resolution to recommend eye safety wear and to promote its use in the clubs in the area.

O. Keene Clay, O.D.
Gresham, OR

I am glad to see your article on eyeguards. As all of us in the industry know any accident exposure is a liability to our sport. Really the only extremely serious accident could be to the eye. I think we all should encourage every player to protect his eyes when playing racquetball. If you require this for the pro circuit, I think maybe the club owners would follow suit in requiring the same for the amateur tournaments.

C. A. Spaulding
Manchester, MO

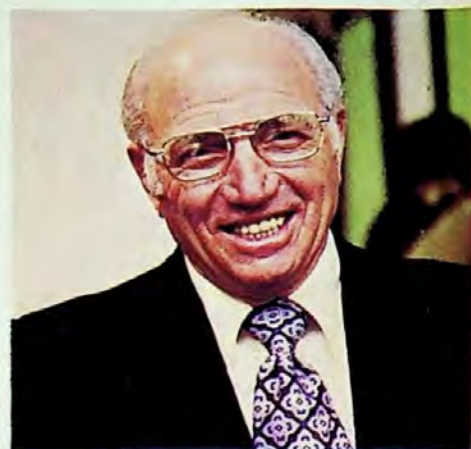
Common sense might indicate that if there is a hazard in any occupation or recreation activity, and there is a means of eliminating that hazard it should be done.

I played handball for years without eyeguards, but after being struck in the eye and spending five days in the hospital with both eyes bandaged I got a good indication as to how it might feel to be blind. I have worn eyeguards ever since and actually feel "naked" on a court when alone, warming up by myself and not wearing them.

Finally after some insurance battles with students . . . commencing Spring semester 1979 students must have and wear protective eye equipment to take racquetball classes at Palomar Community College.

As to wearing eye guards at sanctioned tournaments — I feel that they should be mandatory at all times at all levels. The ones that could really assist in this effort are the "Pros" and other leaders in the sport by setting the example and wearing them.

G. Vernon Ellison
San Marcos, CA



I'm in favor of eyeguards at the tournaments because I think that will make the average club player wear them.

In the club I own — the Dual Racquets Club — we have signs posted on our doors, "Eyeguards Recommended," but I'd say less than 10 per cent of our members wear protection for their eyes. People think — "Others aren't wearing them? Why me?" I even know a member — a bank president — who got a ball hit square in his eye (unfortunately by me) and after the eye healed and he'd worn eye protection for a while, the guards found their way off his face and to the corner of the court.

That's why it's important that examples be set. I had stopped wearing my goggles, but after reading your article they're on again and I think I'm looking at the ball better than I did without them.

I agree — the adjustment and the few dollars for the eyeguards (and even missing one shot) are nothing compared to losing an eye.

John Taylor
Danville, KY

Yes! I agree — make eyeguards mandatory at all USRA sanctioned events.

Even though I was hit in the eye in a tournament last year, I have not learned my lesson. As you stated in your article, I'm worried it might "cost" me a few points. But if everyone was made to wear them, I'd at least feel that my opponent was at the same advantage/disadvantage as I was. The player on top of the situation will be the one who wears them to practice, too, since that's the way he'll be competing.

Lois Jandris
Downers Grove, IL

Joe Ardito's article about eyeguards is excellent — and I vote for mandatory requirement for use of eyeguards. Unfortunately the large majority of players shown in the same magazine issue, December 1978, are not wearing eyeguards. Our heroes?

Phil Levin
Springfield, VA

Eye guards? Yes.

Robert "Alex" Duckworth-Ford
Los Angeles, CA



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I would strongly support a mandatory eyeguard rule for USRA sanctioned tournaments. However, I do not feel our responsibility should stop there. If the eyeguard rule is supported by the USRA members, I feel that an effort should be made so that players will associate eyeguards as a necessary piece of equipment, just like a football player's helmet. To do this the USRA will have to reach out beyond the tournaments to the other players. I feel this should be approached in at least three areas: the USRA magazine, instruction and the racquetball clubs.

In leafing through back issues I found very few photos of players wearing eyeguards. I feel the magazine should be used to set the example by having eyeguards worn for all instructional and posed photographs. This could possibly be expanded to include most advertisements and the promotional photos used by the leading professionals. Then the casual reader and player may begin to accept eyeguards as the rule instead of the exception.

As an instructor I make it a point to introduce eyeguards before I introduce the racquet. Then I carry it through by wearing my eyeguards throughout the entire lesson. An instructor's actions can help form good attitudes in the students, attitudes which may carry over to others. I feel the USRA should support an effort to promote the safety aspect of instruction.

The third area where eyeguards can be promoted is through the individual clubs. It is as easy for a club to provide rental eyeguards as it is rental racquets. They can be promoted by signs conspicuously placed at the sign in area and over court entrances, and should be rented for a nominal fee. It did not take much effort to convince the club where I play, but someone has to make that effort. Perhaps the USRA in conjunction with eyeguard manufacturers could mount an effort in this direction.

Charlie Ennis
Warren, MI

I would like to comment on your editorial, "Should We Make Eyeguards A Must?" From the article I get the feeling from you that you agreed that eyeguards are a must from your quotation from Mr. O'Neal of the Society for Prevention of Blindness and Mr. Chambers of the Canadian Racquetball Association.

However I feel it is very curious that if this is your feeling, that pressure has not been brought to bear on the *National Racquetball* magazine. I refer to the article on pages 22 through 29 of December's issue where Terry Fancher is demonstrating retrieving the pass shot. It is interesting to see that Terry does not have eyeguards on in any of those pictures.

If we are concerned about protection, we must set a good example in our own publication!

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my opinion. I hope you will keep us updated on the progress towards this.

Charles H. Johnson
Grafton, ND

Mr. Johnson raises a good point and readers can expect to see more and more players with eyeguards on in instructional articles. ED

When I saw Steve Strandemo wearing eyeguards on the front of the December issue, I was hoping that the time has come when common sense shall replace whatever it replaces. It would appear that that is the case so I shall gladly respond with a definite "YES" to your query, "Should We Make Eyeguards A Must?"

Howard M. ("Scotty") Muler
Pittsburgh, PA

I have been wearing eyeguards for two years now. And to give credit to my play I have won three separate city tournaments and recently won the Sports Illustrated Court Club Class A tournament (a Harley Davidson motorcycle) and rank as one of the top players in the state. I state this not to boast, but to show that eyeguards have helped my play.

I started wearing eyeguards after receiving a blow in the upper cheekbone — too close to a serious injury. Only one local player, to my knowledge, has received a serious injury (detached retina). He now wears the guards religiously. A small percentage of people wear the guards here.

I agree with making it mandatory in the tournaments. Then possibly racquetball clubs will enforce the same rule.

Ron Anderson
South Bend, IN

In reference to eyeguards — a must.

I am 49 years old and have been wearing eyeguards for the last five years. It has not hurt my game and I feel safe on the court, knowing that my eyes are protected.

In the last year or so I have seen so many new players get cut or hit in the eye with the ball. That is a rough way to find out that you should wear eyeguards.

I also think that racquetball clubs should post a sign saying "Eyeguards a Must."

Joe U. Nathan
Sepulveda, CA

I have read with interest your comments in the December issue of *National Racquetball* on the subject of eyeguards, and am writing to say that you have touched on, perhaps, the most critical issue facing the continued successful growth of our sport throughout the world.

Mr. Ardito, let me take this opportunity to thank you for your strong leadership in making racquetball a safer sport.

Tracy A. Leonard
Boulder, CO

Our country has tried to legislate safety but the American people simply reject being told what to do and how to do it. We sense that much of the objection to an eyeguard regulation stems from the same nature that argues against seat belts. Of course you guys at the top must make the rules and you must bear the responsibility for those rules and the ones you fail to make.

Please make eyeguards mandatory.

Greg Speier/Tom Myers/Roy Turner
Frankfort, KY

I totally endorse the idea that eyeguards should be mandatory for all racquetball players, whether in competition or leisure playing.

I had the sad experience of playing nursemaid for my boyfriend when he got hit and was unable to see for two weeks. Luckily he regained total vision and has no damage.

Safety should be the first priority in all sports. It is much easier to heal a wounded ego than a damaged eye.

Meryl Anderson
Watertown, MA

I read your article on eyeguards and found it most interesting. I always wear mine and recommend them to everybody. I've been working at court clubs for about four years and have seen too many eye and brow injuries not to recommend them, especially to controlless novices.

As manager I decided to take a quick poll of some of our players to see how they felt about a rule that required eyeguards in tournaments of all levels, house to national level. The score was 12 for and 19 against eyeguards being required for tournaments. The main comment was that it should be an individuals decision to wear them and not a dictated one. Some of the "No's" came from people who wear eye protection but feel strongly about it being the individuals right to choose.

As a manager I hate to see the eye injuries continue when they are so needless. There are enough protective devices on the market now that one can find a comfortable product that does the job. I agree that they take some getting use to but it's easier than getting use to being blind.

Dick Booker
Lyndhurst, NJ

In December 1975, I underwent eye surgery for a detached retina. This was not racquetball related as I awoke one day to discover my vision significantly impaired (although a retinal detachment is quite common if the eye is hit with a ball or racquet). I cannot relate the excruciating post-operative pain I encountered much less the mental anguish of trying to cope with the possibility of being blinded after the removal of the bandages. Fortunately I have recovered and although my vision in the eye is very bad (I now wear contact lenses), I can still enjoy all the beautiful things in life that I had envisioned as being lost forever. I suppose one must actually experience such a traumatic event to realize how very fortunate we are to be sighted.

On legislation and the use of eyeguards I feel we are obligated to make everyone aware of the dangers involved and also make everyone aware of the protective equipment available to reduce the possibility of injury. However I think that we both realize, Joe, that no matter how much one (or a governing body) tries to regulate a sport, occupational hazards, or whatever it may be — you will always have an element of dissidents who disagree with regulation.

In closing I would like to offer a word of advice for all of our racquetball playing friends — novice to professional: DON'T LEARN BY EXPERIENCE; WEAR EYEGUARDS BECAUSE YOU WANT TO NOT BECAUSE YOU HAVE TO! I wear eyeguards and you can be assured that I will SEE you at the Nationals in June!

Chuck Hallock
Tempe, AZ

Next Month:
What The Pros Say
About Eyeguards

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Tune in Donny Osmond For Racquetball

by Nick Longhurst

The bottom board was waiting. And when the black ball made contact it came out rolling.

The author of the kill straightened up and let out a yell and his familiar face broke into an even more familiar grin.

"Now that's what I should be doing all the time," exclaimed the part owner of the two and a half million dollar Sherwood Hills Racquetball Club in Provo, Utah, as he stepped back into the service box. And once more superstar Donny Osmond went for a point.

The two workmen busy finishing off the dry wall of the club's 500 seat exhibition court were visibly unimpressed with the proceedings, and they decided to carry on their completion work in the recently opened facility.

But within minutes of *National Racquetball's* cameras clicking into action to record Donny's best — and worst shots, it seemed that every teenage girl within a five mile radius of the club was hanging over the viewing gallery rail offering encouragement.

But Donny is used to audiences, and presumably after so long in the business, to the adulation. But even so racquetball isn't the "Donny and Marie" show and an errant backhand, coupled with an eyeball sizzling pair of purple socks do not a racquetball star make.

He played it cool.

Microphone Throw

"I just don't play this game often enough," groaned the 21-year-old sports mad idol as he coped with an unfamiliar creeping shot down the side wall, using a style which was instantly dubbed a revolving microphone throw. The ball stubbornly refused to react to such unusual methods and the game was over.

"Now that we have the club built, it's going to be three times a week for me," explained Donny, whose court time problems stemmed from the lack of racquetball facilities in the general area.

"That's one of the reasons why the Osmonds decided to invest in this club. Provo doesn't have too many sports facilities and this club is going to go a long way to providing enjoyment."

He explained his involvement with the sport: "My brothers and I have been playing the game for over a year now, normally renting courts over at

Brigham Young University. We like to get away after a day's hard work at the studios for an hour. It's a great way to take out the tensions and frustrations of a day working on the show."

The Osmond family feels so much at home in their native Utah that they decided years ago to bring Hollywood into the foothills of Orem, a small town half an hour's drive south of Salt Lake City.

Two years of work and three and a half million dollars later they had their own television studio, its flat windowless walls standing starkly against the surrounding landscape of single story homes.

Later on they built condominiums to house the guest artists who have worked on the "Donny and Marie" show over the last three years. And last of all they built the racquetball club, all 18 rb courts, 17 indoor and outdoor tennis courts and fully equipped gymnasium of it.



There are some demon shots in the Osmond arsenal as *National Racquetball* contributor Dr. Mark Sorensen finds out. Mark, a teaching pro at the Club, is also an exercise physiologist — "Donny is fast and agile. With time he could become a pretty strong player."

Action

Donny Osmond shows his TV smile after a tough workout on the racquetball courts of his home town court.

The television star may not have achieved the same stature in this game, but he's a definite fan.

"Racquetball is a fabulous game. With a tough job like mine, it's a great way to relax."



Swinging Quartet

And now that it is open, it's not uncommon to see a quartet of the brothers, Merrill, 25, Jay, 23, 29-year-old Alan and Donny swinging away at the end of the day.

"We started playing when Art Fisher, the former director of the show came down with us," explained Donny. "I was used to playing tennis but I soon realized that with just a short space of time I could really get a workout."

"People would think that when we had finished a day's work on the show we would be totally tired. We rehearse three days and tape the results for two more, so we are going pretty well non stop through the television season."

"But I find that I normally have so much on my mind at the end of the day that it's not much good taking it all home. The show provides constant frustrations - things don't always go as well as they seem on the screen - so it's great to be able to come over here and get rid of it all. Racquetball is a great game to take out the stresses and strains of a hard day's work."

Donny is also a self confessed sports junkie. He even tried out last year for the BYU football squad, taking part in a couple of games as a wide receiver. And back there on the list of projects that the Osmonds are considering are some sports shows.

"We decided to build full television facilities into this club. We have a full glass side wall exhibition court, complete with TV window in the front wall and room for 500 people in bleachers to watch. I think that soon we shall be doing something on racquetball, maybe a complete segment on the game in the "Donnie and Marie show."

"We shall be doing more film projects in the future, too. And sports will feature heavily in those, too."

Their most recent film, *Going Coconuts*, has been released and Marie's television movie, *Gift of Love*, was shown in December.



And he added, "We want to break into new areas now. We built the racquetball court with television in mind, so when we get the time and the project to go with it - racquetball will be just as big a star as the Osmonds." ●



DYNAMITE OFFER.



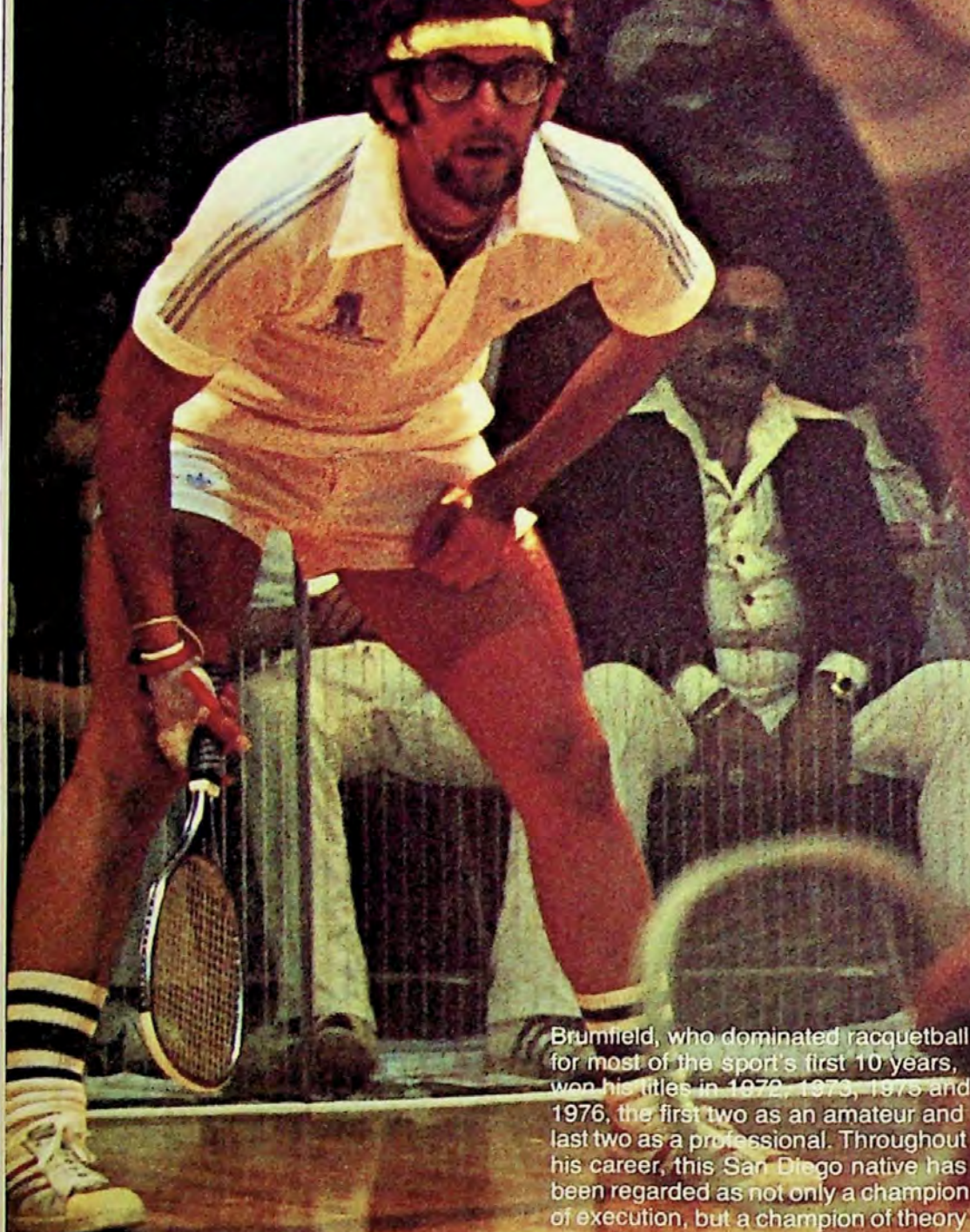
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RACQUETS

Brumfield Instruction Series Begins Next Month



Charlie Brumfield, four time national racquetball champion and world-reknown master of racquetball technique and strategy, has signed a one year exclusive contract for a series of instructional articles for *National Racquetball* magazine.

Brumfield, who dominated racquetball for most of the sport's first 10 years, won his titles in 1970, 1973, 1975 and 1976, the first two as an amateur and last two as a professional. Throughout his career, this San Diego native has been regarded as not only a champion of execution, but a champion of theory as well.

"We are extremely pleased that we could sign Brumfield to do this instructional series," said USRA president and *National Racquetball* publisher Bob Kendler. "The articles done by Brumfield will be a sure bet to add points to every player's game."

The series will be entitled "Looking Into The Master's Mind."

"I welcome the chance to develop a series of my own," said Brumfield. "I believe that racquetball has changed a great deal in the last few years and that many of the instructional books on the market are obsolete. Many of the ideas I go into are revolutionary."

Brumfield's gift for gab and reputation of pulling no punches should make interesting reading for *National Racquetball* subscribers, who have come to expect nothing but the best in their instructional section.

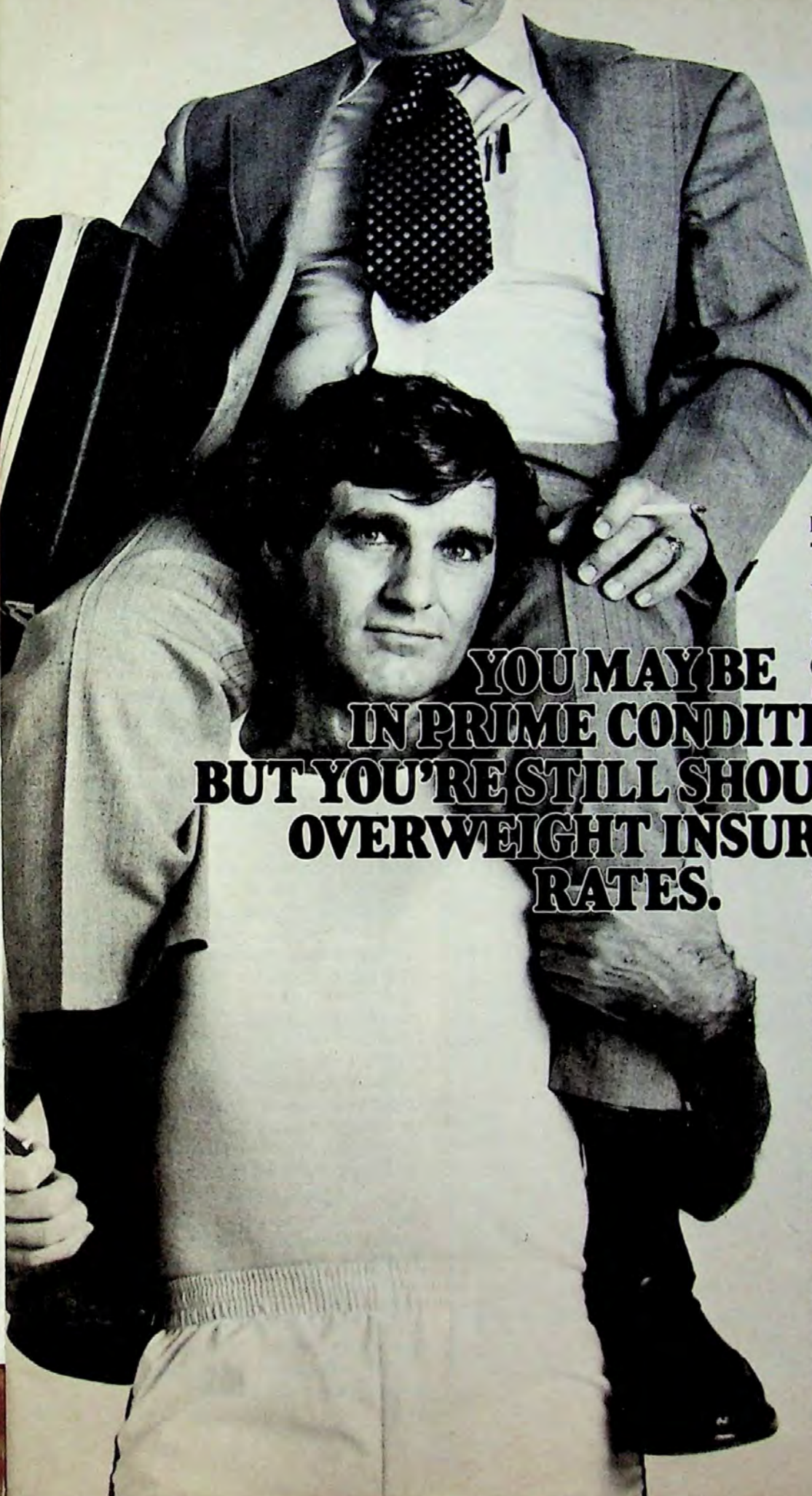
The series will delve into virtually all aspects of racquetball, from the how to hit this shot to the why and when of each shot. Brumfield will also stress the importance of understanding what is going on on the court, along with psychology and the mental aspects of the game.

The 12 articles will vary widely in topic. Some of the articles are entitled "Court Coverage and Game Strategy," "19-20-21 - When The Going Gets Tough," and "Avoiding Injury."

"The Brumfield series will be unique," said *National Racquetball* editor Chuck Love. "For the first time Charlie Brumfield has a free reign to expound on his theories and techniques in racquetball. Each article will be must reading for racquetballers of all skill levels."

Each article will be accompanied by photographs, diagrams or illustrations to help Brumfield make each of his points.

So if you want his points to become your points — you'll have to have read it here, in *National Racquetball* magazine. ●



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Key Words to the Serve:

Relax, Think, Picture, Move, Shoot, Cover

by Ken Wong

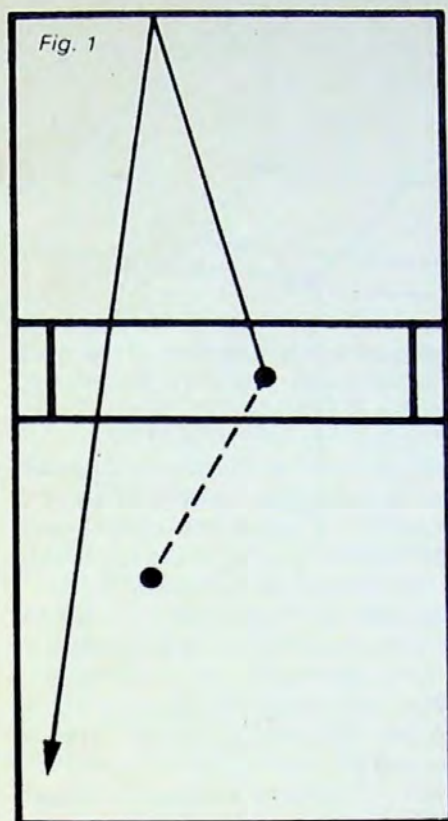
The serve and service return — the heart of every player's game — have remained most requested topics for instructional stories ever since *National Racquetball* started covering the game in 1972. Through the years many authors have tackled these topics, but none with more skill and clarity than Ken Wong, St. Louis player and former instructor, used in this article which appeared in our magazine in 1976. For the benefit of those millions of players and readers who've taken up the game in the last three years here are Wong's story and diagrams on the serve and service return.



Few players realize the importance or the limitations of a racquetball serve. Unlike tennis the serve usually does not produce a large number of aces. But on each point the serve does set the tone of the rally. With a good serve a player can virtually determine whether a rally will be a long ceiling ball rally or a short series of shots. Rather than describe every possible serve this article concentrates on four basic serves, a simple service strategy and a service return.

The serve is the only shot during a match when you are in complete control of the game. Even though very few aces are hit by the pros, the importance of the serve cannot be overemphasized. The most important fact about serving is that you can only win a point when you are serving; this means that you should take some risks and think 100 percent in terms of offense when serving, not just getting the ball into play; the amount of offense you can generate will depend on what abilities you have. Your main thought should be to apply as much pressure on your opponent as possible; this usually means attempting a kill shot at the first reasonable moment. You do not have to wait for a perfect setup before trying a kill shot; so long as your shot can keep you on the offense and your opponent on the defense, a kill shot or pass shot should be attempted. Which shots you should try to kill can only be determined by examining your offensive abilities and your opponent's defensive abilities.

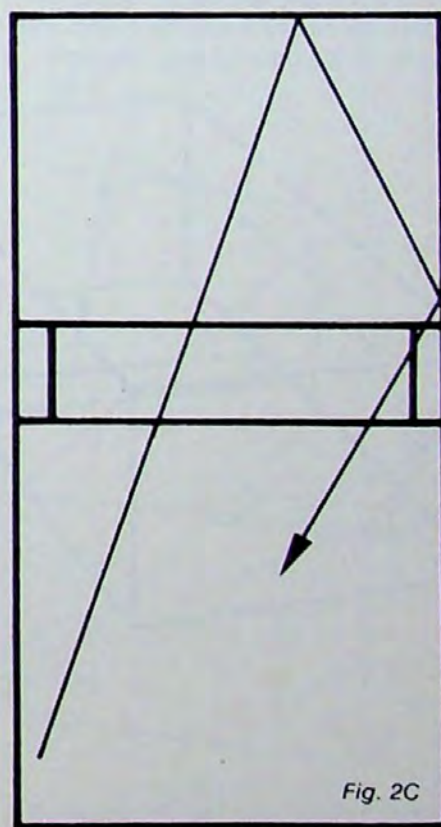
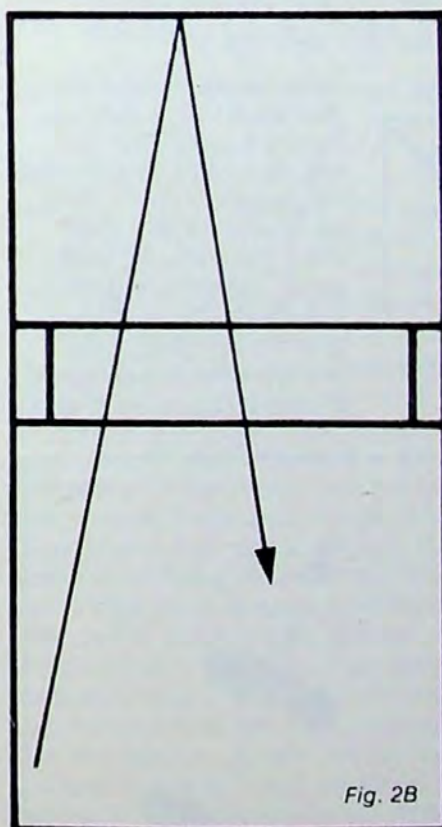
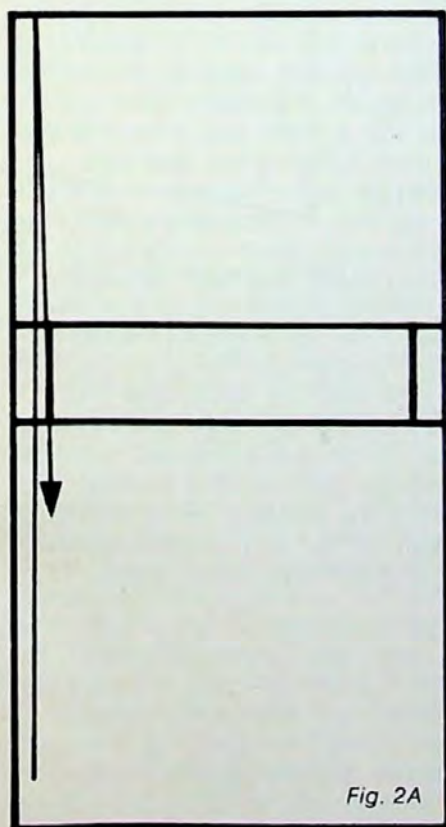
One rule of thumb is if your feet can be set at least one second, the ball is below the waist and your opponent is not already running up to the front wall to cover your kill shot, go ahead and take a shot. So long as you move to cover that shot the results should be favorable for you. Your chances of getting offensive chances will increase if you follow these hints:



1. When you get into the service box, relax for a few seconds before serving.
2. Next analyze your opponent's physical and mental condition to determine what type of serve will give you the weakest return. Also determine which side, how fast, and how high to serve the ball.
3. Before serving the ball picture in your mind what the serve and the resulting rally will look like.
4. After hitting the serve move as fast as you can to *center court position* and wait for the possible weak return. *Figure 1* shows the proper center court position. Note that the position is slightly toward the side of the serve;

this position allows you to cover almost any shot except a perfect kill or pass shot. Any returns down the wall are setups, (*figure 2A*) and any cross court returns (unless they are perfect) will come straight through the center of the court or off the side wall into the center for a setup (*figures 2B and 2C*).

5. If you get a setup, shoot the ball and move back near center court to cover the possible return. Movement back to center court is as important as hitting a good kill shot; you can't expect to roll out every ball, but if you cover every attempted kill, you will probably get the point on the following shots if your opponent returns the ball.



Thus the key words for an effective serve are relax, think, picture, move, shoot, cover. These hints will help you develop a better offensive game.

The Basics

There are four basic serves: 1) the *lob* serve, 2) the *garbage* or junk serve, 3) the *drive* serve and 4) the *Z* or two wall serve. Other serves are just variations of these four serves. These four serves when coupled with the three variables of ball speed, direction and height, will give you a full range of offensive serves. If possible all serves should be hit from near the center of the service area so that it will be easier to obtain your center court position; however the *Z* serve to the left, rear corner for a right hander may be more easily hit from the left side of the court if you are right

handed. If you find trouble controlling your serves, take a step away from the side that you intend to serve towards to give yourself a greater angle.

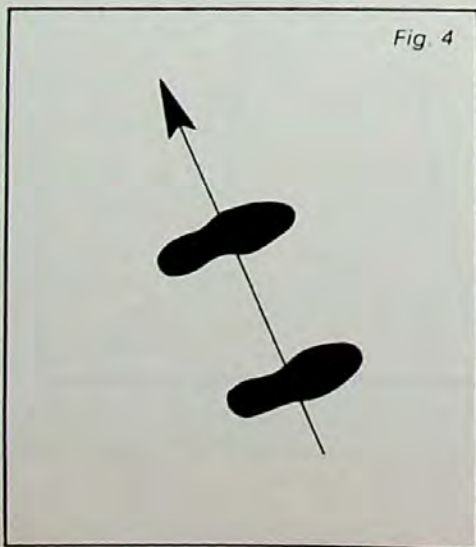
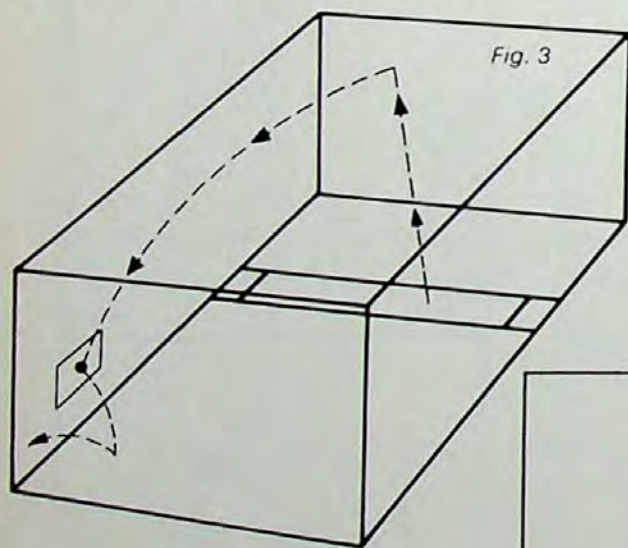
Figure 3 shows the path of a good lob serve. Ideally the serve should be hit as high as possible; then the ball should hit the side wall about shoulder or head high about 10 feet from the back wall and die near the back wall. The advantage of the lob is that it requires very little energy to hit and gives you plenty of time to get into position for the next shot; also the lob serve is good for slowing down the pace of a game. However the disadvantages are that it requires some finesse to keep the ball either from coming off the back wall or into the center of the court when you are using a very live ball.

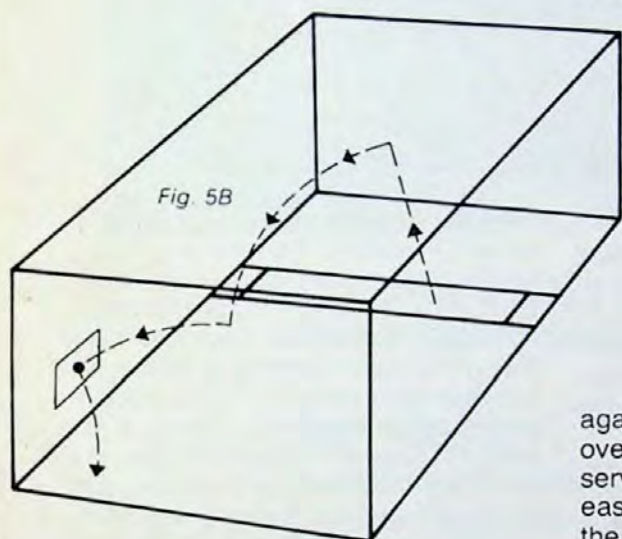
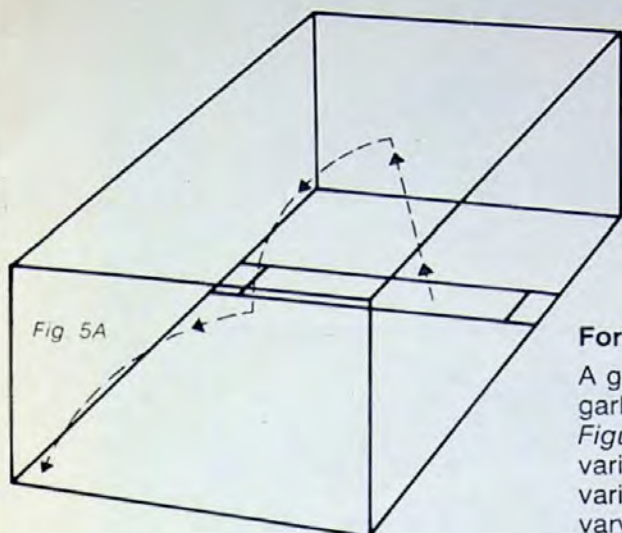
The best way to hit a lob serve is to find a spot on the front wall which the ball should hit to give you the desired results; then try to aim for this spot every time you hit a lob serve. When hitting the lob stand with your feet lined up in the direction of the intended serve (see figure 4) and swing upward with a

rigid wrist; follow through by pointing the racquet in the direction of the spot on the front wall. Since the ball should be struck in front of the instep of the leading foot the wrist should be in a full cocked position so that the racquet will strike the ball either flat or with a slight underspin; but again the wrist should remain rigid when you hit the lob serve. The ball should be contacted softly about waist or chest high. You will be able to control the ball much better if you bend the knees, shift the weight from the back foot to the front foot and try to get underneath the ball. The serve can be an effective weapon if hit properly; however it's harder to hit well than it looks.

An alternative to the lob serve is the garbage or junk serve. It is easier to hit than the lob and achieves almost the same results. A garbage serve is a lob serve with a lower arc which hits the floor before hitting the side wall.

Figures 5A and 5B show two paths of a garbage serve. The ball should hit the front wall about six to eight feet high, hit the floor about four feet behind the short line and bounce into the rear corner. The ball may be directed straight at the rear corner or into the rear side wall, but remember that serves into the side wall need to be hit harder because the side wall tends to slow down the speed of the ball. If hit properly the garbage serve should be medium speed and give the receiver only a chest high ball to return.



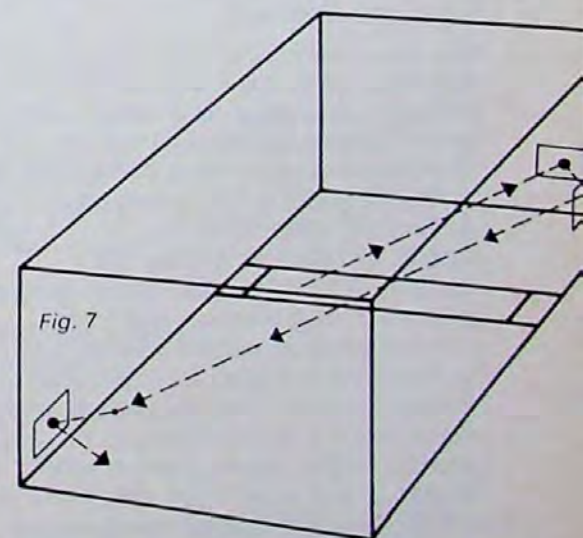
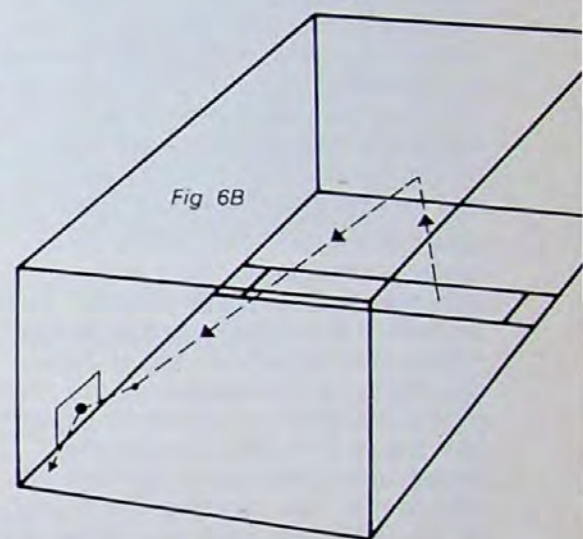
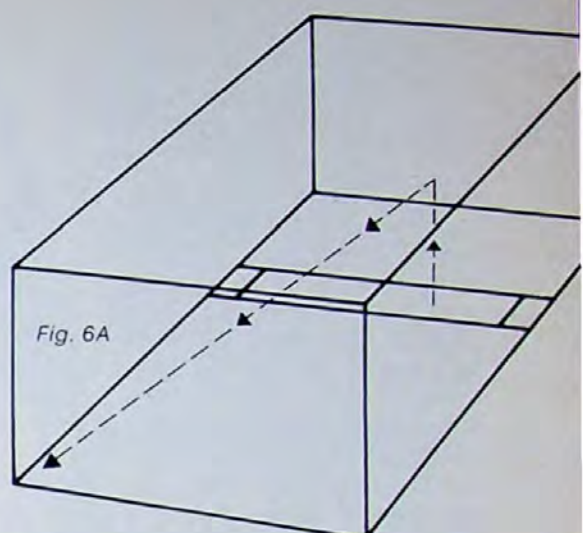


For Overweight Opponents

A good serve to combine with the garbage serve is the drive serve. *Figures 6A and 6B* show two variations of the drive serve. A large variety of drive serves can be hit by varying the speed, direction and height of the serve. The serve is hit with the same motion as a hard, low pass shot to a rear corner. Ideally if hit very low and hard, the ball will bounce twice before your opponent will react to the serve or if hit into the side wall, the ball will die near the rear corner. Hopefully if your opponent is either tired or undisciplined, he will attempt a hurried return which will result in a setup for you. This is a very good serve to use

against players who move slowly or are overweight. The disadvantage of the serve is that if mis-hit, the ball can easily become a back wall setup; also the serve affords you very little time to get into position for the next shot. Usually a series of quick, fast shots results from this serve, and the rally ends quickly.

The Z or two wall serve is just another serve to add to your repertoire of serves, but it may get you many points against most players because of the different bounces which the ball may take. *Figure 7* shows the path of a Z serve. For a right hander it may be easier to hit the Z serve from the left side of the court because you can get a better angle on the serve. The serve is hit about six to eight feet high on the front wall; then it should hit the side wall, come across the court, hit the floor near the left rear corner, hit the side wall and hopefully travel parallel to the back wall. The serve should be hit fairly hard or else your opponent may move up on the ball and catch you off guard. The disadvantage of the serve is that it comes through the center of the court so that you are momentarily out of position; also it is very easy to mis-hit



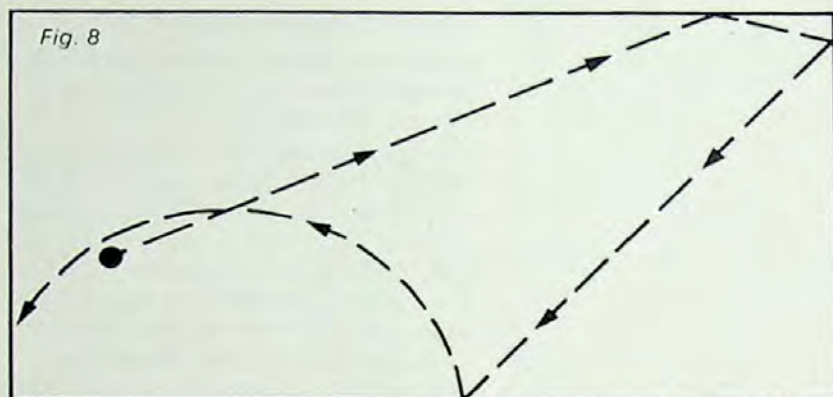
the serve so that you hit the side wall first which will result in an automatic side out. If hit properly, this serve can earn you many points against opponents who have never seen the serve before.

The garbage serve, unless hit perfectly, is usually easy to return if the receiver is patient and hits a ceiling ball return. However most beginners and intermediate players cannot stand the temptation that a garbage serve offers and will elect to attempt a kill shot. This is the return you would most like to see because kill attempts of a garbage serve usually result in a setup for the server. Against good players the serve usually results in a ceiling ball rally because the proper return is a ceiling ball. This is the serve I use most frequently but with variations. The advantage of this serve is its ease of execution; its disadvantage is that a quick player can sometimes run up, take the ball out of the air and drive the ball past you if you are not alert.

All of the examples have been to the left, rear corner, but they can also be hit to the right, rear corner as well. In most cases you will want to serve to your opponent's backhand since this is usually his weakest side. But try to vary the types of serves and the direction of the serves to keep your opponent off balance. I recommend that you pick two serves and use these two serves exclusively for about a month; in fact try using one serve for an entire game just to practice that particular serve. As you become proficient in each serve, try a new serve or a variation of an old serve.

Now that you are armed with a service arsenal, what do you do if your opponent has the same service arsenal? This brings us to the service return. Most writers will spend pages describing various service returns. To me the answer is just two words: ceiling ball. *Figure 8* shows the path of a perfect ceiling ball return from the left rear corner. You should aim at a spot on the ceiling about two to four feet in front of the front wall.

Why use a ceiling ball? When you are receiving serve, you are totally on the defensive. In order to hit a winner, you have to almost roll the ball out. By returning the serve with a ceiling ball you get yourself out of a defensive position and neutralize your opponent's chances to take the offensive. The ceiling ball return does not have to hug the side wall to be effective: the only real requirement is to get the ball to the rear part of the court. Women can use a lob in place of a ceiling ball if it is too difficult to hit because the lob requires less strength. The lob is just a soft high shot preferably hit to one of the rear corners. The lob is fairly easy to hit; the ceiling ball on the backhand side is not as easy.*



When to Kill

Does this mean that every serve, even a setup, should be returned with a ceiling ball? The answer is almost every serve should be returned with a ceiling ball. For a service return you should attempt to hit a kill shot for one of the following reasons:

1. You are so much better than your opponent that it doesn't make any difference what kind of return you hit, or
2. You get an easy setup and you want to keep your opponent honest.

You should be conditioned to return all serves to the ceiling because when you are tired, you can't afford to spend time deciding what type of return to hit. If you normally go for a kill shot, you will try to kill when you are tired; when you are tired, your kill shots will be higher than usual and therefore you may find yourself losing a lot of points in the end game on service returns. For practice try returning every serve with a ceiling ball; you will find that you will begin to think that you will never make an error on a service return and therefore put pressure on your opponent to score by hitting winners.

How can you develop an effective serve? If you are a beginner, concentrate on the key words relax, think, picture, move, shoot and cover, but only one at a time starting with the first word. After learning to relax between each point, try thinking before serving; then slowly add the other key words to your service game. If you are not a beginner, perhaps analyzing your serve with respect to these key words may tell you something about the effectiveness of your serve. Work on one serve at a time. For instance start by hitting a medium speed drive serve to the backhand. Then after three or four weeks add a garbage serve to your game. Once you have these two serves, start experimenting with other serves, ball speeds, directions and ball heights. For service returns either lob the ball or hit for the ceiling. The serve looks easy, but an effective serve takes longer to develop than it looks; however the time spent practicing serves and service returns is very valuable because every rally begins with a serve and service return. ●

*Turn to our next instructional story for more on the ceiling shot.

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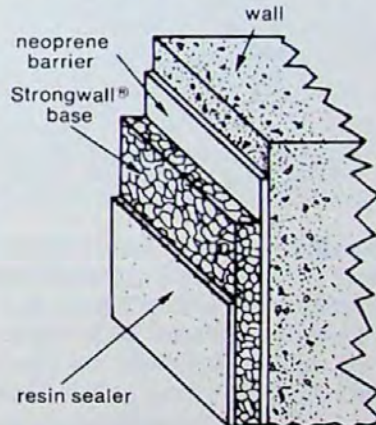


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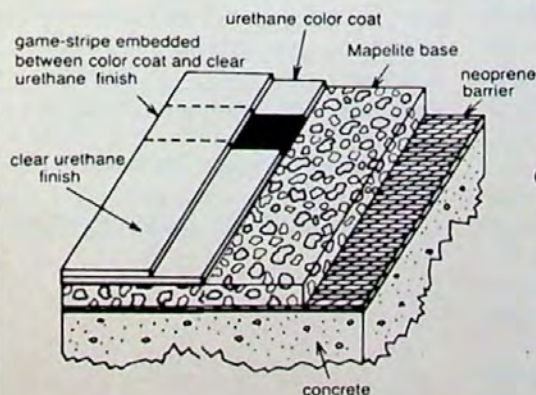


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Playing Over Your Head

Why Hit a Ceiling Shot?

by Patricia Froeba and Bob Morgan

Number Four Men's Player Craig McCoy pulls out his ceiling shot during a defensive moment in a pro match.



What a mess! You thought you had the point — your kill shot was almost perfect, and you knew the rally was over. But — your opponent has shown you why he is “*the Rabbit*,” and the ball is floating back into your face. A kill shot would not be wise — he is in good cover position, and you are off guard as well as off balance. In desperation you pop the ball toward the ceiling, but your shot is weak. The ball hits the side wall and falls into the middle of the room. Blam! Now the rally is over.

But it didn't have to end this way. Your ceiling shot was a wise choice, but it was wasted through poor execution. There are any number of books and articles out on how to hit a ceiling shot — anyone willing to spend a bit of time in practice should be able to carry on a respectable ceiling rally. Why then the mistakes?

Part of the problem is the influence of the powershooter's game. A ceiling ball is less dramatic than a booming kill; in contrast, it is rather dull. It is also deceptively simple to hit. But a well rounded player not only knows *how* to hit the ceiling ball, he also knows *when* and *why* he uses the shot. In some cases the ceiling shot is as offensive as the rollout; the trick is to learn when to use the shot most effectively, and to practice diligently until you can hit it where you want to, when you want to.

The ceiling shot is an essential part of a well rounded game; to some players, it is so central to their style of play that they are classified as “*ceiling players*.” In club competition a solid ceiling player is feared as much as an awesome shooter; the opponent of a ceiling player can expect long, strenuous rallies that demand patience and precision.

On the Offense

But a ceiling game consists of more than an unbroken series of ceiling shots. A good player varies the placement of his shots and seizes on the weaknesses in his opponent's returns as aggressively as the powershooter. To develop an effective ceiling game as part of your total skills, then, you should consider two objectives of the ceiling shot. One — it is a defensive shot much like the lob in tennis. It gives you time to return to court and to regain offensive momentum when you have been forced out of position or are off balance and unable to effectively “*put away*” the ball. Two — a ceiling shot can be a powerful offensive weapon. A well placed, deep shot can be an outright winner, or it can force a return so weak that a novice could finish off the rally by accident. In addition a deep ceiling shot when your opponent expects a kill shot can catch him off balance and moving in the wrong direction.

The disadvantages to a ceiling game seem slight when compared to its effectiveness. To play a consistent ceiling game requires patience and endurance — you must be prepared to wait out your opponent's impatience, and you must be in the kind of shape necessary to hit dozens and dozens of powerful overheads and to run to position repeatedly during long rallies. And a good ceiling game needs practice to learn it and to maintain it.

As a ceiling player you must develop an attitude of concentration — while you are preparing to lull your opponent into expecting one ceiling shot after another, you must maintain the mental sharpness to always expect the unexpected from him. You should concentrate on two aspects of the ceiling game — your own shot, and your return of your opponent's ceiling shot.

The ceiling shot ideally falls so near the back wall that it is unreturnable. It does not bound off the back wall, and it does not fall so short that the opponent can set up, get his racquet back and shoot away. So to practice you should tape a target area line three feet from back wall or imagine that the line is there and plan to drop your ceiling ball near that line. (Diagram A)

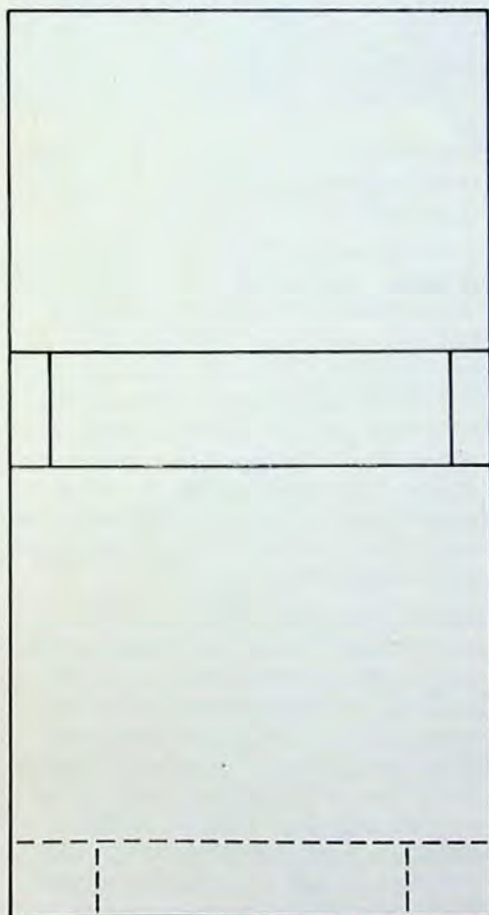


Diagram A *Imagine a target line 3-5' from the back wall—try for deep shots to the corners.*

To the Backhand Corner

The most common (because it is generally the most effective) ceiling shot is directed toward the backhand corner — usually the left. If the ball should fall a little short, or come off the wall a bit, the backhand side is generally the safer side to err into. In practice, then, you should concentrate on hitting to the backhand side. You should practice the ceiling shot from varied positions on the court — from the backhand corner itself, the middle of the court, even the front area where shooting usually occurs. (Situation: you are set up, but the opponent is effectively covering the front area. You have little margin for error if you shoot, so you hit a deep, underhand ceiling shot. If the move is deceptive enough, he may even move forward; if not, at least he is madly scrambling backward to hit a deep shot with his backhand.)

It is important to work on both corners of the court. You will play left handers, so the backhand corner won't always be the left side. Also many players have failed to practice retrieving from the forehand corner quite so diligently — you may find an unexpected weakness in a right hander. Never become so grooved into a shot that your opponent automatically and correctly moves to the left corner every time; keep him moving and off balance in deep court — not a bad objective whatever your choice of shot!

Practice hitting ceiling shots from a variety of spots. Work off of short, soft shots as well as deep ceiling shots. Have a partner serve a variety of serves that you can return to the ceiling; also have him drive down the sides, Z shot or ceiling shot to both your forehand and backhand. Concentrate on moving to the ball, setting up with the feet turned in the appropriate direction and stroking the ball smoothly and under control. Practice a few underhand shots as well as overheads; the shot may lose some power but it becomes increasingly deceptive if the opponent moves to anticipate a kill shot.

As you become comfortable with your ceiling shots, you should experiment. Try shots that graze the side walls, shots which reduce the chances of your opponent stepping up and cutting them off. Be careful, though, to avoid shots that fall short of the back wall and kick off the side walls into the shooting area. (Diagram B) Whatever the placement of the ceiling shot, remember to be in position, with your feet solidly underneath you, for the best control of your shot. It is often helpful to turn and run back for a deep shot, rather than back pedaling frantically. The goal is to be squared off and in control.

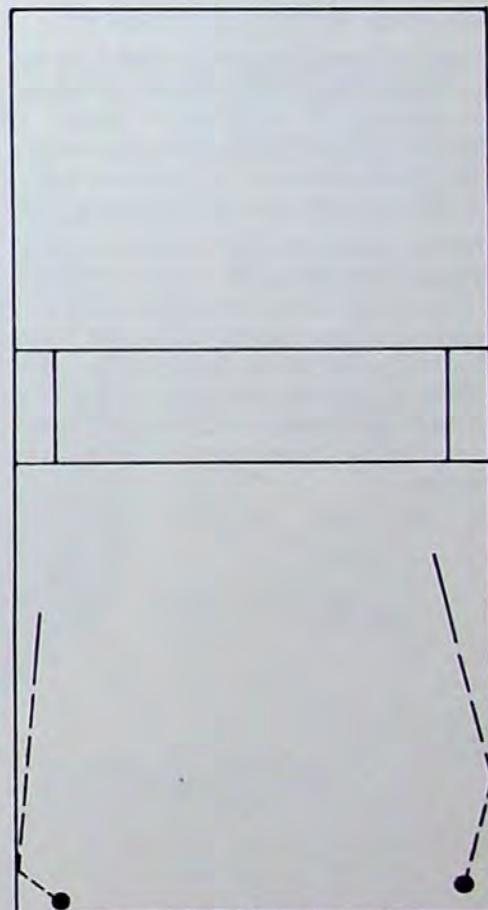


Diagram B *A ceiling shot that grazes a side wall should still fall into a deep corner area, or it becomes a setup.*

The ceiling shot works for Jennifer Harding, second among woman pros.



Testing the Force

When you are in control, you not only choose the placement of your shot, but the force with which you strike it as well. Always hit a few ceiling shots with the ball designated "game ball;" you must know before the game starts what effort it takes to keep the ball out of three-quarter court, and what it takes in finesse to keep the ball from bouncing off of the back wall.

When you know what your shot will do, you can anticipate your opponent's shot and prepare an effective return. Don't expect a ceiling shot in return every time. If you begin to hang back, even to crowd the backhand corner, you are doing to yourself what you should be doing to your opponent.

Concentrate on moving toward center to cover a kill shot or a drive. Be ready to move in all directions — expect those bizarre "home-court bounces" and remember that light fixtures aren't always classed as room hinders.

If your opponent returns the ball with a deep ceiling shot, be ready to return it — you can always go to the ceiling again, or you may wish to try an around the room shot. The latter shot is more effective against impatient or out of shape opponents; a steady shooter may simply follow it and let it drop for a setup.

When Return Is Weak

On the other hand many ceiling shots elicit weak returns. Shots that fall short, or rebound off the side walls into the center, or bound off the back wall into shooting range provide you with offensive opportunities. (Diagram C) An opponent who combines a weak return with a reluctance to move forward is a double blessing — a kill shot need not roll out, nor the corner shot be perfect to be effective. When taking aggressive action you should, as always, take care to give your opponent access to the ball — this is no time for a hinder (or avoidable hinder!) call. Besides the more obvious kill shot, a medium height, hard hit, around the wall shot can be effective. If the ball rebounds into a shooting zone, you

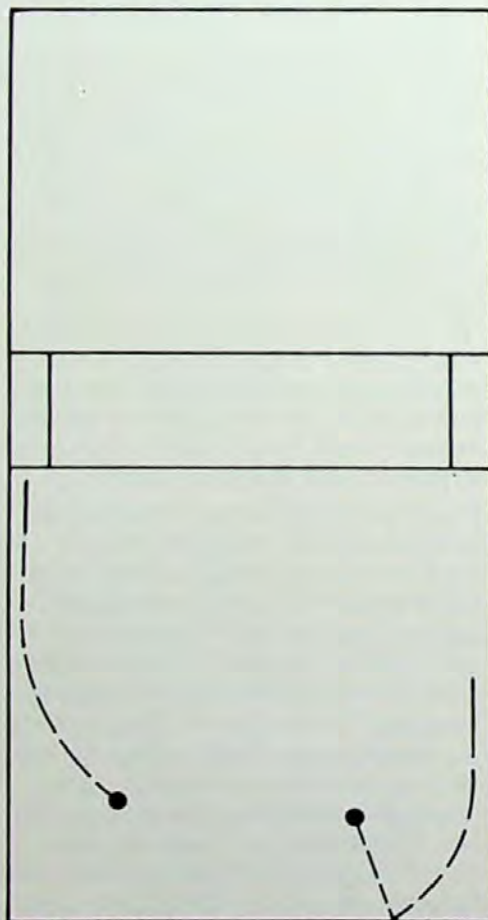


Diagram C Common ceiling errors include balls that fall short, or rebound off the back wall.

may face trouble, but a fast moving, chest high shot is difficult for your opponent to roll out.

An overhead kill shot is always a very dramatic way to return a ceiling shot. Your opponent may be deceived by the racquet motion and may actually retreat a step. The major disadvantage is that the ball tends to kick up, so that a less than perfect shot becomes a setup. And a nervous or overeager player, fretting at having to hit ceiling shots, may shoot the ball hurriedly into the floor at his feet — it has happened to the best of us.

Ceiling ball practice, then, should cover two phases. You should practice hitting shots with varied placement and force, and you should practice returning ceiling shots both defensively and offensively. Well used, skillful ceiling shots can not only keep you out of trouble, they can also be effective offensive weapons against overeager shooters or out of shape opponents. Points count just as much when they are scored by a patient, careful rally as when the ball rolls dramatically off the wall into the opponent's big toe. Whether you choose the patient strategy as a prime force in your game or not, you should have a solid background in hitting and returning ceiling shots — a background that comes only with careful practice. ●

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Talk to Your Body

by Jerry Hilecher

Everyone knows that it's important to warm up the body before playing racquetball.

But have you ever thought about warming up your mind?

Concentration is as important as a good kill shot, but you can't expect to turn it off and on like a light switch. It must be cultivated and applied to every aspect of your game.

Your match should really begin in the locker room approximately 10 to 15 minutes before you walk onto the court. Think about your game, your shots, your strategy.

Remind yourself of your strengths. If you like to kill the ball in the right corner, draw yourself a mental picture of that and rerun it time and again.

If you serve well, picture lots of aces zipping just past the short line.

Think about your opponent's weaknesses. Lots of unforced errors with his backhand? OK, play the percentages and let your opponent give away points.

But try to think about these things **BEFORE** you play — not while you're in the shower after losing. There's nothing worse than saying, "I should have . . ."

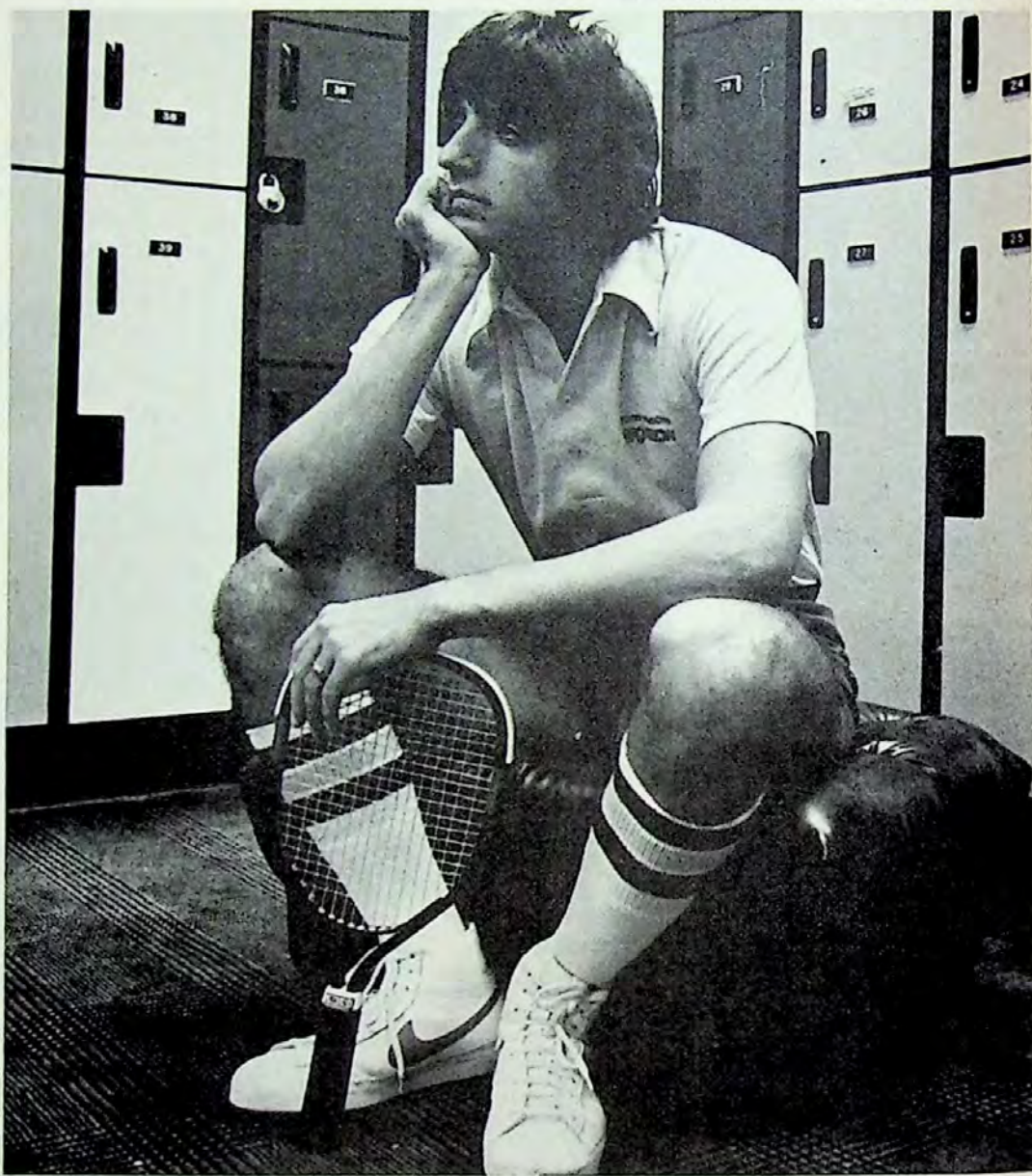
Think about Your Wrist

While you're loosening up, think about your body. Warm up your arm and picture how you'll keep the racquet up and the wrist cocked during your match. Wait for the ball and lead your stroke with the butt of the racquet.

Keep in mind how you'll crank your hips into the ball.

Why should I take the trouble to remind myself when all these things come natural during a match, you ask? Hitting a fast moving racquetball may be a reflex action, but hitting it correctly isn't. You have to actually tell your body to do it the right way. Why do you think some people talk to themselves during matches? Sounds crazy but it works.

Warm up your mind before a match and



These little tricks are just ways to make yourself conscious of what you want to do.

When you start to hit the ball before the match, continue your "mental warm-up." Get the feel of the racquet and the feel of all your shots. Go slowly, reinforcing the mental pictures you've drawn: ceiling balls tight to the wall, crisp passing shots, changes of speed, kills.

As you hit the ball low during the warm-up, remember that you'll want to keep it low during the match.

As you stand in center court, remember that's where you'll want to spend a lot of time during the actual play.

Think about it. I'll bet you know lots of people who look like dynamite when they're warming up, but seem to forget everything they know when it really comes time to play.

keep telling your body what to do . . . then watch your game improve.



Your Brain in Gear

You can avoid that common failure if you pay attention to what you're doing before the match instead of just flailing away at the ball.

Now that you've got your brain in gear, don't let it slip into neutral — or even reverse — as the points add up.

Consistency is everything. That means keeping your head in the game.

Got a big lead? Don't relax. Finish it off. Stay tough and continue to concentrate on winning or you'll wonder how you suddenly lost.

If you're behind, get back on track. Analyze what you're doing wrong. Call time out and get back to a winning attitude. Give yourself an instant replay of all those great positive thoughts you had in the locker room.

Have you abandoned your game plan? Are you doing something grossly wrong?

Don't become unnerved or lose your concentration over what you may feel was a "bad call" or a "lucky shot" by your opponent. Channel any anger you might feel into your game. A good adrenaline flow should just serve to heighten the color in those mental pictures of kill shots.

Remember, all other things being equal, it's the player who keeps his mind on his game who will win every time. ●

— Alex Sakowski, Jr. photos

APRO Teaches . . . Lessons for Two Beginners

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



Second Lesson

Remember: You can set your own pace. You may want to repeat any of these lessons two or three times, especially if you play just once a week.

1. Warm up before entering court (jogging in place, knee bends, stretching, etc.) (5 minutes)
2. Review briefly the grip and the basic forehand and backhand strokes (3 minutes)
3. Your stance: Assuming a ready position (2 minutes)
4. Refining the basic strokes (8 minutes)
5. Studying off-the-back-wall shots and angles (10 minutes)
6. Alternate with your partner at lobbing shots to the back wall and returning them to the front wall (11 minutes)
7. Play (16 minutes)
8. Wrap-up (5 minutes)

Warm-up

Warm up before entering court (or on the court if the court is empty before your hour begins).

Review the grip and forehand and backhand strokes

Remember that it is the fingers that accomplish the slight turn of the racquet for the backhand grip, and that this turn occurs as you race to meet the ball on your backhand side. Keep looking down at where your thumb and forefinger make that all important V on the racquet handle. Hit a few shots to the wall, aiming waist high for accuracy, with the V dead center on the handle, then vary the V slightly, first to the right then to the left. Note the effect this slight shift has on the direction of the ball. Resolve to keep that V straight up, except for a backhand shot.

After a few months of play you may want to experiment with the placement of this V and with not shifting your grip that quarter-inch for the backhand. But for now be a good, average student and try to become an orthodox player with a dependable, improvable style—the kind of player for whom this lesson plan was designed and has worked extremely well.

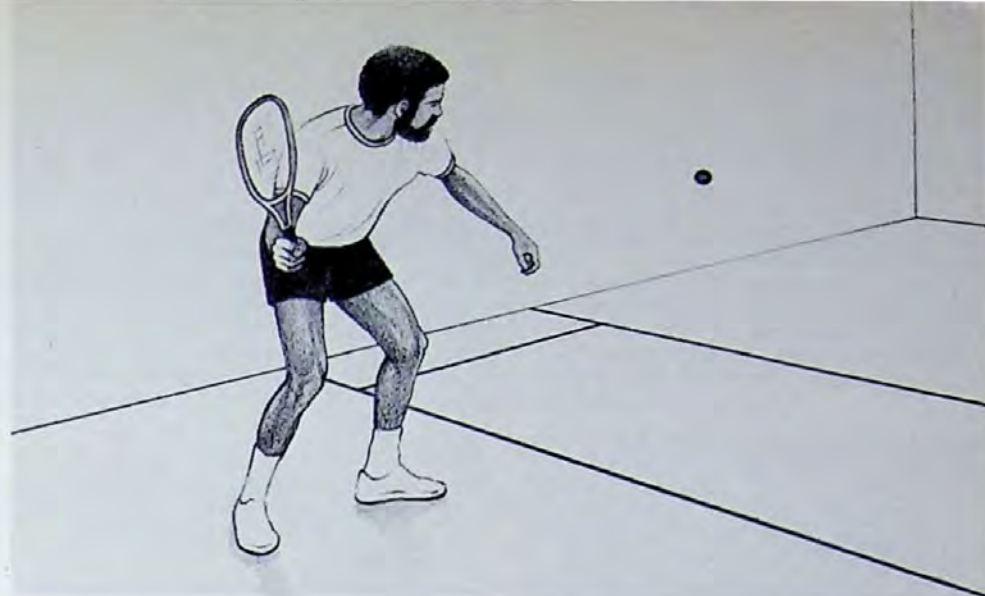
Your stance

Racquetball is primarily a sideways game. You generally hit the ball while facing one side wall or the other.

However your ready stance should keep you alertly facing the front wall. To receive the ball (receiving the serve will be covered in the next lesson), go into a slight crouch, balanced on the balls of your feet. Be ready to move in any direction, turn your body sideways on the run—facing the right wall for a forehand, the left wall for a backhand—and hit the ball in a smooth arcing swing.

To begin position yourself in center court about a racquet's length from the rear wall. Crouch forward alertly, with the body's balance forward. The ready position is the same as in tennis, which you know from your own tennis career or from watching the pros on television. Alertness and readiness to chase the ball are the keys, with one slight difference. In racquetball it's a good idea to carry the racquet slightly higher, with the top of the racquet pointing to the ceiling and its face parallel to the front wall.

The reason for this is simple. As noted the cocking and uncocking of the wrist, like in a snap throw, is vital to transmitting the body's power down through the arm to the racquet and the ball. Carrying the racquet aloft helps you snap that wrist with a slight turnover motion when you actually hit the ball. This is more easily felt than explained, and you will feel it more and more as you practice. When you feel the wrist snapping properly that first



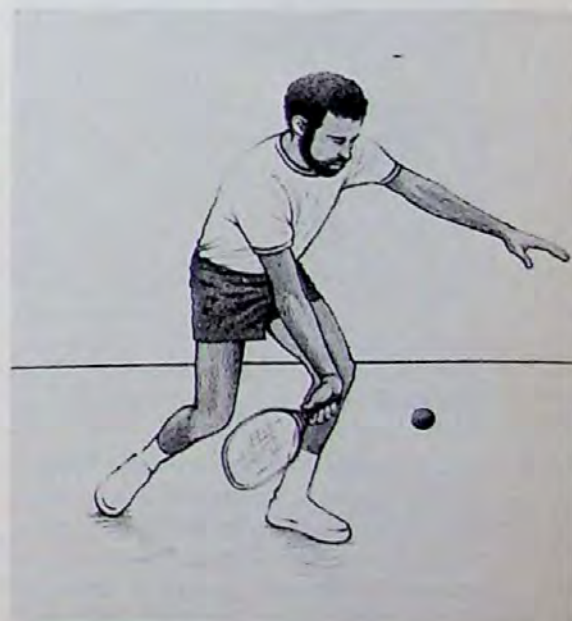
time, you'll remember it and work to achieve the feeling in subsequent shots, both backhand and forehand.

Marty Hogan's unorthodox superhigh racquet position has been called a "*coiled spring*" by Charlie Brumfield. As Hogan hits, the racquet uncoils a tremendous amount of body, arm, and wrist power at impact with the ball. You won't be able to hit faster than 140 miles per hour at the beginning, but it's something to think about if you're fairly strong and your shots are just barely reaching the wall, despite a powerful swing. The crucial component is the wrist snap, which delivers the power from the body to the ball.

And the entire transmission system begins with the stance!

The forehand

Imagine the racquetball stroke as a crescent that starts well back and high, meets the ball at the center of the crescent, then follows through by rising to the other side of the crescent.



A controversy currently rages among pros about the point on the crescent at which the ball is met.



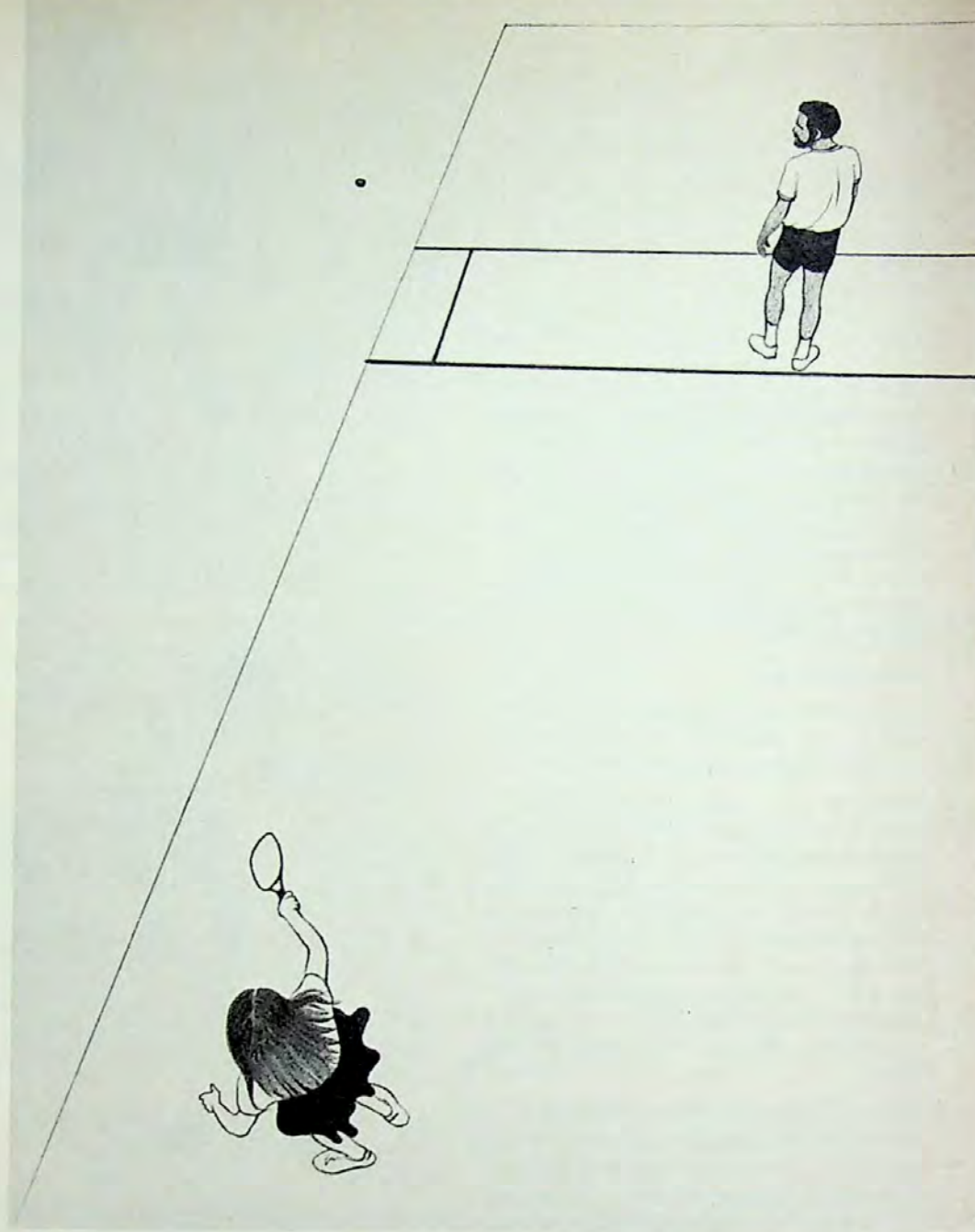
Marty Hogan "is so powerful a hitter," says Brumfield, "that he creates his own shots and hits anywhere along the crescent he finds himself, muscling the ball to the wall by sheer strength and accuracy. He hits two or three feet back of where most players hit."

The orthodox method — hitting the ball off the front foot — is probably much safer for you. Practice getting your

body into position so that the crescent of your swing is at midpoint as the ball comes in line with your front foot. The process of getting the body into the swing is very much like the baseball player at home plate. He or she waits for the pitch, weight balanced and slightly forward. As the swing begins, the weight goes momentarily to the back foot, then thrusts forward so that the body's power is transmitted to the ball at the moment of impact. Golfers too will feel at home trying to develop a powerful, accurate, coordinated swing in racquetball. Just imagine the trough of that crescent around the area of your front foot — low, medium, or high doesn't alter the "where" of that crescent. You will just have to start your crescent a little higher or lower (overhand shots will be discussed later).

The backhand

In a group of racquetball students those who develop a good backhand will generally make the fastest progress. What must be avoided is "taking everything with the forehand," even if it's a good forehand. This one sidedness is a bad habit that generally develops early in a racquetball player's career, and usually doesn't make much difference until he or she runs up against a better player. This player will then proceed to crowd the opponent to one side of the court or the other, then pepper the far side with shots the person with no backhand can't possibly reach because he or she has left fully half the court unguarded.



(Upper left) For most beginners the racquet should contact the ball when the ball is off the front or lead foot. Ideally this foot should be pointing towards the front wall, or wherever the player wants the ball to go. In this illustration the player is striking the ball off the rear foot and his front foot is pointing away from the front wall. There errors will result in a loss of power and a loss of direction. As a player improves he or she may want to experiment with hitting the ball further back in the stance—that is off the rear foot—but this doesn't work well for most players (only for the most powerful). In general racquetball is a sideways game with most shots made facing one side wall or the other. The "open" stance illustrated here most often occurs in a panic situation such as racing to make a shot coming off the back or side wall before you're ready to meet it with a proper stance. (Upper right) This is a much improved body position for meeting the ball—if contact is made as the ball flies past the front foot. (Bottom) This is a good follow through, with racquet ending up pointing to the front wall. The racquet can swing even higher to complete its arc. The important thing is a rhythmic, not choppy, stroke.



Backhand shots for accuracy should be attempted in this drill. Aim down the left wall, trying to catch it just short of the corner. It is especially important in practicing the backhand to keep that front foot aimed at where you want the ball to go.

The overhand

The stroke that seems to come most naturally to racquetball players is the overhand stroke. This is a natural overhand baseball throw type of swing—a pitcher's motion with a racquet attached. It has had relatively few uses in racquetball, but recently it has begun appearing in the arsenal of certain pros as a power stroke, not unlike the tennis serve.

The trick to the overhand is not letting your elbow lead your arm into the shot. This results in a great loss of power and ultimately to elbow trouble. Racquetball players with no baseball or softball throwing experience should grab for an imaginary ball behind their right ear and attempt to throw it out straight from that position. This exercise will keep the elbow well back. Now all you have to do is add the racquet. The overhand is used against balls that come at you above shoulder level. (Do not confuse the overhand

stroke with the "ceiling ball," an advanced maneuver discussed in the final chapter of this book.)

Overhands are most effective when they propel the ball low into the corners, but many a point is lost because of the tendency to hit the floor first unless you practice them.

Studying off the back wall shots and angles

In most sports the ball generally comes at you from the front as it often does, of course, in racquetball. However many racquetball shots come at the player off the back wall. This opens up an entirely new area of judgment. The purpose of this lesson and drill is to teach this judgment.

Remember when playing a ball off the front wall your body must move from side to side. When the ball hits the back wall, you must adjust to moving up and back. (Of course there is some lateral movement, but we're talking about the principal adjustments in thinking and body position.)

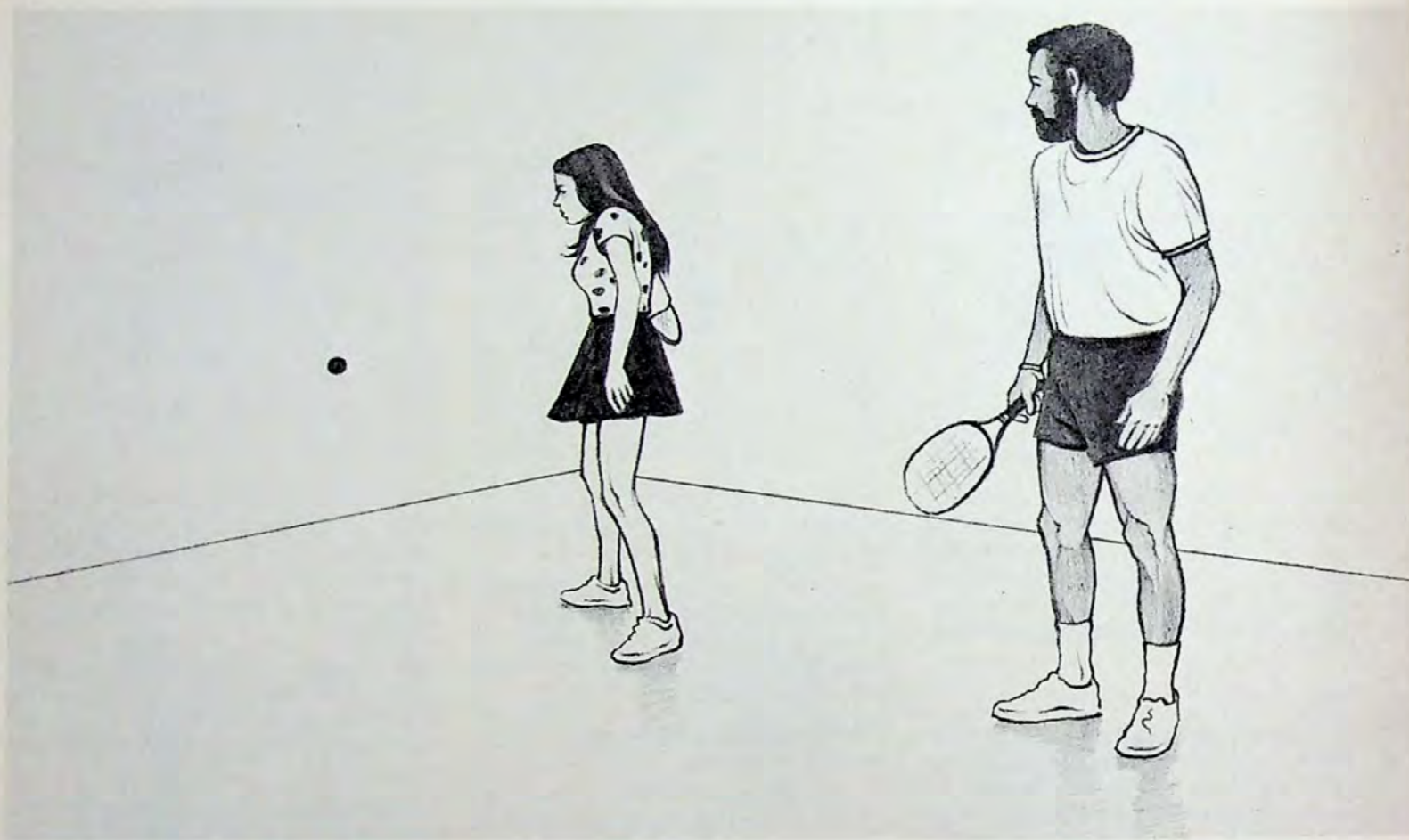
A crucial judgment for the beginner to back wall play is gauging where the ball will bounce after it hits the back wall.

The closer the ball bounces to the back wall before hitting it, the further out it rebounds. The further from the back wall it bounces en route to hitting it, the closer the ball rebounds, generally speaking.

At this point another difficult judgment area arises: the ball comes towards the back wall at any angle, hits the floor near the back corner, then angles out sharply.

Students should become aware at this point that a ball that angles into the right corner will come out to the left and vice versa, whether hitting the front or the rear corners of the court. It is in learning to play these angled shots that the well coordinated player with natural alertness or what the TV commentators call "quickness" will do well. It takes many practice shots for most beginners to become adept at figuring angles and to solve the difficult problems of "hitting off the back wall."

The first rule is never rush the ball—wait for it to come to you. Racquetball appears to be a lightning fast series of movements, but broken down into its components it is largely a waiting game. There is often more time than you think. There will be mad rushes too, of course, but we are speaking



about the majority of shots. There is almost always time to get into a good receiving stance, racquet up, wrist ready to cock, front foot facing your target on the wall.

There is a tendency for beginners to overrun the ball on corner shots that go in and come out about waist high. Here the waiting game is crucial.

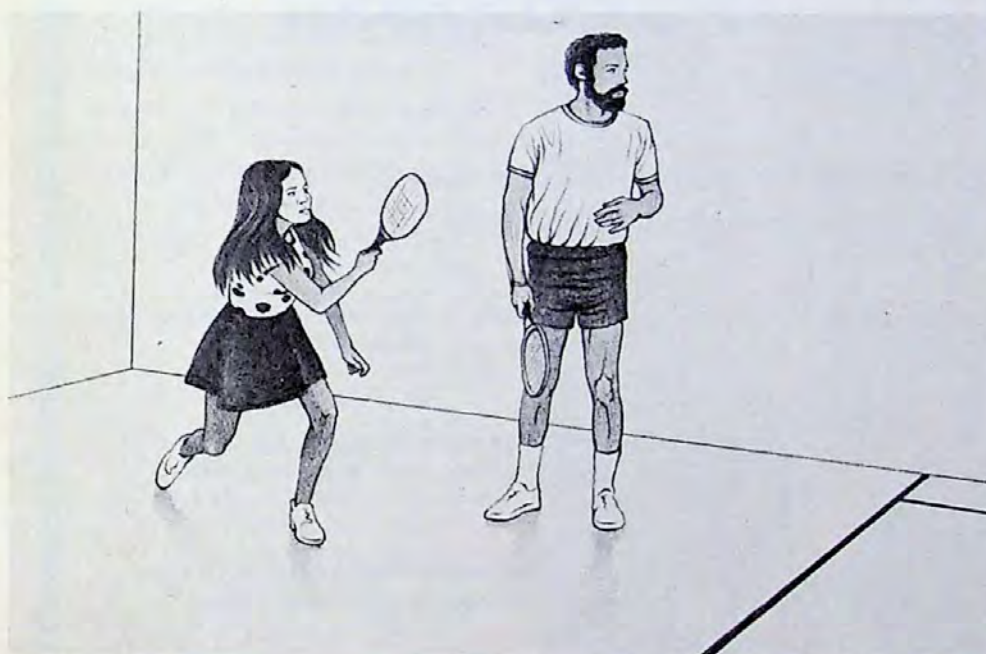
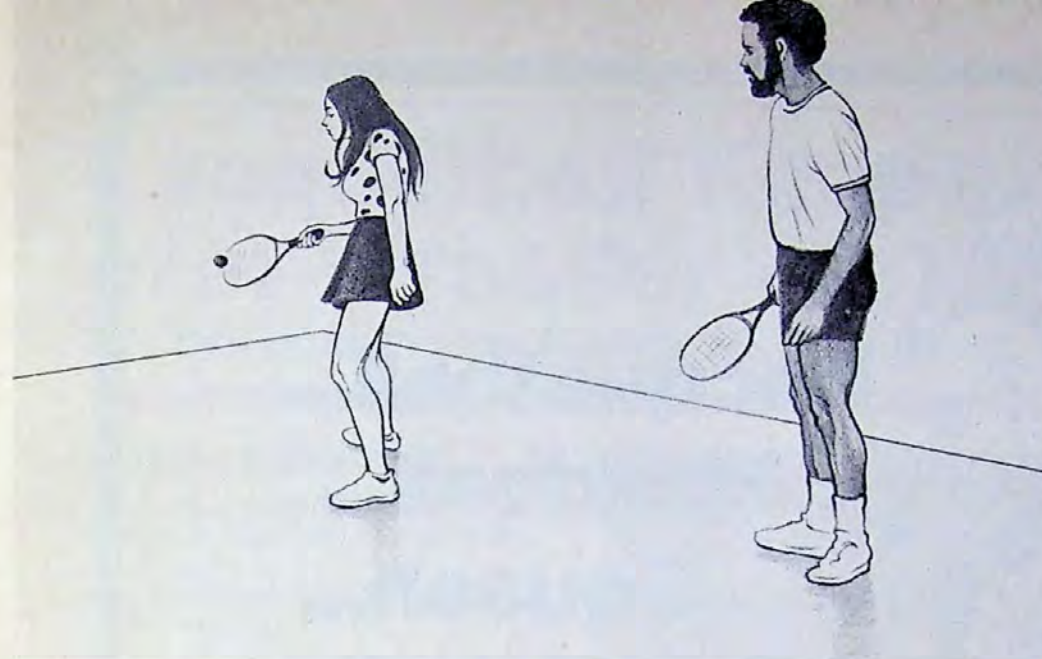
Almost every beginner seems to rush the ball. As you develop your game you will be able to save your rushes for when they really count — those low shots up front and ones that have passed you on one side or the other, for instance.

Bearing in mind whatever you can retain, alternate with your partner at lobbing shots to the back wall and hitting them back to the front wall. Try to compute the angles the back wall balls will make as they come out of the rear corners and get into your ready position in time to meet the ball properly. Aim some low, medium, and high shots at the corners just for the fun of it and also to judge where the ball will go — then run to the right spot at the right time.

Lob some of these practice shots into the back wall on the fly, so that they may legally bounce once on the floor before you hit them. This is a little easier to master at this stage than shots that bounce on the floor close to the rear wall and scoot out fast, which must be taken on the fly.

Play

You should now challenge each other with practice shots and volleys based on this lesson: forehands, backhands, and those frustrating back wall shots, angles and all. Don't rush the ball if it comes at good, playable height. The important things are getting set, facing those side walls as you swing, and *always* carrying that racquet high, wrist cocked and ready to snap during your stroke. A good time to practice your waiting game is when playing balls coming down from the ceiling or from high on the side walls. There's usually enough time to turn your body sideways, forehand or backhand, and take a good swing rather than a stab.



Wrap up

Practice what you think are your weakest areas or at least discuss them with your partner. Go down the list of what you've practiced during this hour. If you're not too tired and there are other empty courts, and the management doesn't object (as it generally doesn't), continue with some creative free play, incorporating what you've learned where possible. If both of you need back wall practice, work with each other on this.

Much improved stroke. The pupil has begun the stroke with her feet pointing to the side wall and with her knees slightly bent. Her body pivots comfortably at the right distance from the ball, and her shot probably is just fine.

The difference between flailing around at the back wall and taking shots off it with respectable accuracy is often a matter of two hours of cumulative practice. Once you learn to judge this crucial racquetball shot, you will be able to refine it from a good defensive tool into a powerful offensive weapon. But goodness, this was just your second lesson! ●

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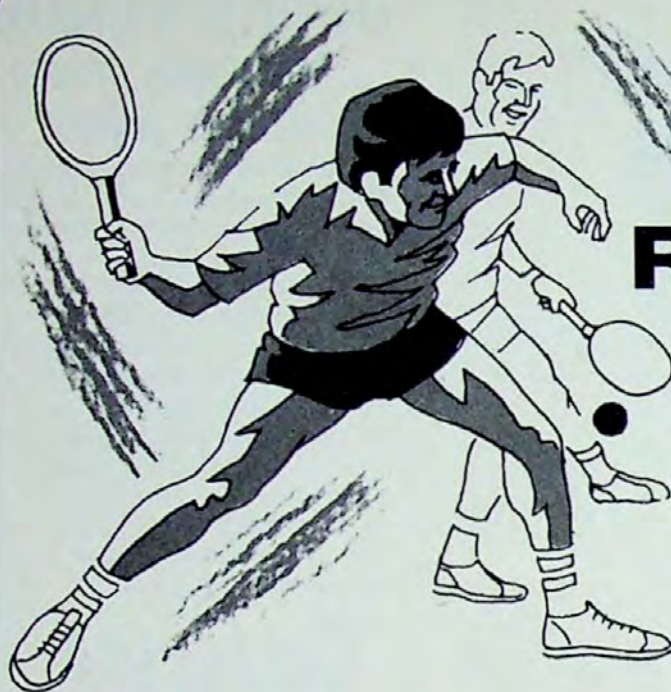
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Racquetball Keeps Arm Wrestler on His Feet

He's One of All Pro Contenders

by Nick Longhurst

"Yeah man, you just lost your title," grinned racquetball's lovable Marty Hogan as he faced up to yet another opponent with his customary gentlemanliness.

Flexing his abundance of arm muscle Marty the Mouth prepared for another easy kill, this time against this gentle looking giant called Virgil Arciero.

Old Virgil didn't show much reaction, though. He just stood there — a slow grin spreading over his face.

"You, beat me," he muttered incredulously, slowly peering down from the top of his six foot and then some frame into diminutive Hogan's St. Louis-style afro haircut.

"Yep," said Hogan explicitly, beaming his way through the crowd to the nearest flat surface. "You wanna do it standing up or sitting down?"

"Up," added Virgil, chugging down a can of Coors for starters, while numero uno made a few playful backhand swings by way of a warm up.

No racquetball this, just a side competition away from the Coors All Pro tournament's main spotlight.

No court games either. This time Mr. Hogan was to meet his doom on the corner of the bar of the Las Vegas Racquetball Club, where the Coors' All Pro competition for sports veterans and individual sports stars was held in November.

Back at the bar Marty was psyched up and ready, that is until ole' Virgil peeled off his shirt to reveal the biggest set of arm muscles this side of King Kong.

Rich Wagner, rear, longtime football fanatic, finally gets to line up with the gridiron pros. Wags prepares to take the snap from Superbowl veteran, Miami Dolphin powerhouse Irv Goode.





World's Strongest Man Virgil Arciero compares forearms with World's Best Racquetball Player, Marty Hogan.

"This guy has wrists like my thighs," Hogan observed. And his audible gulp was only a prelude to the one sided arm wrestling contest about to take place. Virgil, who happens to be the World Champion at this seemingly simple sport, had Marty's arm flat on the bar in less time than it takes to say "champion," to end the hottest non event of the year.

"Hadda let him win. That guy looks mean," muttered the owner of racquetball's most irrepressible ego, as Virgil packed up his biceps and took off for tougher pastures, trying to battle his way into the prize money which floated around this racquetball tournament like the free beer . . . in monstrously large quantities.

Gold Medal Motorcyclist

In fact there was enough of it to whet the appetites of some of the sports superstars of yesteryear, all of whom found they were really having a ball playing something competitive again after their initial careers had closed up. Then there were characters like tall blond haired A.C. Bakken.

A.C., as he calls himself, rides motorcycles for a living. He normally spends his time belting around Baja California's inhospitable landscape looking for impossible situations to ride through.



John Brodie, ex-All-Pro quarterback and current broadcaster, relaxes in the hospitality room at the All Pro tourney.

He's no Evil Knievel cowboy either having just come back from Sweden where he brought home a gold medal for America against the world's best motorcyclists in the International Three Day Trials.

Or sportsmen like Alan Mayer, currently the goal keeper of the San Diego Sockers. He's a former United States National team player, international player and one of America's most aggressive goalkeepers. His current record is 10

concussions, two knee operations and five ko's, which just goes to show how much he puts into winning.

Then there were guys like "Mr. Perfection," the Detroit Tigers' own Al Kaline, and former 49ers quarterback turned TV personality, John Brodie.

Throw in sports stars like squash champion Heather McKay, a lady who boasts of never having lost a squash game since the early sixties, and world



Hall of Famer Al Kaline, former Detroit Tiger, follows through on a backhand ceiling ball.

class shot putter Brian Oldfield, all heading for the \$22,000 in the tournament purse, and it's easy to see the sort of action which was taking place around the club.

Well known sports commentator, John Brodie, played for the 49ers and never left the San Francisco area.

"I'm one of the oldest racquetball players. I have been playing the game for years. We used to use it as conditioning then when I was playing pro football and about four years ago I took it up seriously again. It's a fine way to stay in shape, and," he added hopefully "win a little money, too."

As for Arciero - he's a gentle person who owns a garageful of weight training equipment and some incredible muscles. The world champion heavyweight arm wrestling champion gets into some long drawn out contests.



Alan Mayer, the 25-year-old goalkeeper of the San Diego Sockers, was a two time All American player. He participated in the 1977 American National Soccer Team tour, including the 2-1 victory over the Chinese National Team. Mayer is known as one of the most aggressive goalkeepers in the North American Soccer League, and he carries his goalkeeping aggressions onto the racquetball court, earning a pair of bloody knees.

When the Legs Buckle

"But arm wrestlers have a big problem . . . staying on our feet long enough."

It's not because they have to carry all that extra muscle around with them but, as the Californian explained, it's because of the way arm wrestling contests are set up.

"There's no sitting down in a real contest. We arm wrestle standing up," he explained.

"One time I was wrestling for so long that my legs started to buckle and shake. That's when I took up racquetball. It helps me condition myself for those long contests, and I know that I have a much better cardiovascular setup now than I did before I started playing the game."

And chances are that if you see 45-year-old Al Ferrari anywhere around a basketball court, he'll be singing "Forever Young."

Al, a former St. Louis Hawks basketball star, was one of the two tournament winners, collecting a \$4,000 purse and a place in the January televised finals.

Ferrari beat professional golfer Frank Connor of San Antonio in the final match of his division, taking his opponent in two games 16 and 9.

The other finalist, Bob McNamara, a former Denver Bronco turned bar owner, beat Heather McKay in a close and exciting tie-breaker.

Forty-seven-year-old McNamara had a few years on her, too.

After the game Ferrari had some definite opinions about the benefits of racquetball. "I'm not saying that McNamara and I are getting younger." But, the way he puts it, "there's no finer game. Participation in a game like racquetball for a sports vet can actually retard the aging process. I don't think McNamara and I have lost

Bob McNamara, 47, veteran of the Denver Broncos, downed World Champion Squash Player Heather McKay in a close final match 21-11, 20-21, 11-3.

— Randy Tunnell photo



Al Ferrari, past star of St. Louis Hawks basketball club, (left, rear) raises hands in defense as he ducks ball's path in his final match against professional golfer Frank Conner. Ferrari downed Conner 21-16, 21-9.

The Contestants Included:

Virgil Arciero (current world heavy weight arm wrestling champion), Mike Adamle (former Kansas City Chief), Eddie Bell (former New York Jet), John Brodie (former San Francisco 49er), Irv Goode (former Miami Dolphin), Don Kojis (former Houston Rocket), A.C. Bakken (off-road motorcycle racing champion), Bailey Howell (former Baltimore Bullet), Tommy Mason (former Los Angeles Ram), Alan Mayer (goalkeeper of the San Diego Sockers), Len St. Jean (veteran New England Patriot), Don Horn (former Green Bay Packer), Heather McKay (current world champion squash player), Billy Johnson (former Boston Patriot), Bob Eastwood (professional golfer), Bruce Wilson (Chicago Sting), Bob McNamara (former Denver Bronco), Hillary Hilton (platform tennis co-champion), Al Ferrari (former St. Louis Hawk), Russ Stiffler (trick water skiing champion), Frank Conner (professional golfer), Al Kaline (former Detroit Tiger), Artie McNickle (professional golfer), Ron Williams (former Los Angeles Laker), Brian Oldfield (world record holder in shotput), John Block (former San Diego Rocket and LA Laker), Ken Broderick (former San Diego Gull and Quebec Nordique), Jimmy Johnson (former San Francisco 49er) and Kermit Alexander (former San Francisco 49er).

— Randy Tunnell photo

much of the quickness of our professional days. Conditioning was a prime factor in this tournament."

Surprisingly enough golfers have to stay in shape, too. There are those of us who think that golf is nothing more than a stroll around some pretty countryside, but the pros — as in any other sport — have to stay in good condition. Frank Connor knows that his sport has deficiencies. "Most golfers turn to another sport to get the physical activity that golf doesn't offer.

"With Trevino it's running. Jack Nicklaus plays tennis and I play racquetball." Frank, an ex Davis Cup junior player, prefers racquetball over tennis though. "Racquetball gives me a more extensive workout. You are always moving on a racquetball court."

Basketballers Back on Court

Ferrari's closest match was in the quarters against another former basketball player, Ron Williams, who retired from the Los Angeles Lakers three years ago.

Ferrari took the first game 21-8, but the hollow defeat stung so hard Williams came back to win number two 18-21. But he had gone too hard and could only tack on four points in the tie-breaker.

The series is sponsored by Coors Brewery of Golden, CO, in conjunction with Leach Industries (San Diego) and Seamco Sporting Goods (LaGrange, GA), the nation's leading manufacturers of racquetball racquets and balls respectively.

"The purpose of the All Pro Tournament is to determine the outstanding racquetball player among professional athletes," said Horace Irwin, advertising and marketing director of Coors. The Jan. 11-13 All Pro championship finals in Las Vegas determines the winner. ●



Women In Racquetball

Carol Brusslan



Women Build Careers in Racquetball

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Laurie Makes (a Little) Money in Racquetball

Laurie Curtis' racquetball business has made her more friends than money.

The 32-year-old player from Yarmouth, ME, has heard from racquetball fans all around the country since a gift story in the November, 1978, issue of *National Racquetball* featured Laurie's notepaper decorated with whales, mice and other happy animal competitors.

"I've had fun corresponding with the people who order my notes," Laurie says. "One woman said 'I'm glad you're using your talents to further the wonderful world of racquetball.'"

"I got a big order from Minnesota for boxes of the notepaper as prizes at a racquetball banquet. And one manager asked me to draw my animals on her club stationery."

"I've filled a lot of orders, but with what I pay in materials I've just about broken even. Well - maybe I've made \$25."

Playing racquetball is hearing someone call "Good Get!" and knowing that it is.



From Laurie Curtis' *The Game of Racquetball* © 1978 by the author

Sally Ruggles, who is assistant manager of the Down East Club in nearby Falmouth, got Laurie started in racquetball and the racquetball business. As a birthday thank you for introducing her to the game Laurie made Sally a book of racquetball sayings — then did pen and ink drawings for the book and then put the drawings on the notepaper which sold at the Down East Club before its national exposure on these "Women in Racquetball" pages.

Laurie, who studied at the Boston Museum of Art and has co-authored textbooks, stays close to home taking care of her three daughters — Beth, four, Marian, two and a half, and 10-month-old Alysa. And though Laurie is expanding her line into 18 different characters for books and notes, she's content — at the moment — with her low key business.

Which is a contrast to the women who are giving their all for racquetball. For stories about their high powered careers read on in "Women in Racquetball."

Women Build Careers in Racquetball

But They're Not Quite Ready to Build Their Own Clubs

Dozens of women who thought they'd grow up to be teachers, speech therapists, or secretaries are finding themselves in a job field that's filled with opportunities beyond their most ambitious dreams.

The racquetball business — coming of age at a time when more women are making serious commitments to their jobs — is giving women a chance to use their skills with people, with ideas, with organization and — in some cases — with valves, pipes and generators.

In interviews with racquetball businesswomen from coast to coast *National Racquetball* concentrated on those women with managerial or executive positions — women in the \$8,000 to \$25,000 plus income range, whose focus was on business rather than playing the pro tour or instructing the game.

The women *National Racquetball* contacted think "opportunities are excellent today for women in the racquetball business." "When they're looking for managers, club owners look for ability — it doesn't matter if you're a man or a woman." Though one woman adds "I think — in general — women get less money as managers than men."

Club Managers

Kathy Evans, of the Spaulding Racquetball Club in Manchester, a suburb of St. Louis, MO, is a pioneer among club managers of either sex. When she began working at Spaulding in the summer of 1973 she was studying speech and hearing at Purdue University. She came back to Spaulding as an assistant manager while she worked toward a masters degree in her major. She was nine hours short of her degree when "the managership opened up. I just thought I should take the opportunity. The timing was right — I wanted to get settled on my own."

Kathy still loves her job. "The atmosphere is pleasant — I like the varied hours. Sometimes I work from 5:30 in the morning til four in the afternoon. Other times from noon to 9 at night. There's no set routine in the work — I do everything from bookkeeping to helping in the nursery. I enjoy people and 90 per cent of this job is dealing with people in person or on the phone."

The biggest challenge for Kathy is supervising club maintenance. Though her club is part of a well run chain and "all we do is write up work orders to get service," there are times when Kathy has to face breakdowns in the lights, whirlpool or air conditioning. "I've learned to change filters and clean compressors," Kathy says.

The mechanical end of her job is a pleasure for Linda Vaile, manager of the 21st Point Racquetball and Handball Club in Mountain View, CA. "Every two months I put on grubby clothes and clean the generator in our men's steam room. It's a great feeling of satisfaction making the machinery work."

Linda, who came to the 21st Point as a membership salesperson, took over as manager when the club opened two years ago and "learned on the job." Her background was in personnel, as a secretary and as a dental assistant — "no formal business training. But I had a high record in sales, I was good at dealing with people and I was willing to learn. Besides one of the owners was a friend of my husband's."

Officially Linda's is a nine to five Monday through Friday job, but her husband, David, and six-year-old daughter, Tracey, understand when she's "on call" some weekends and evenings.

"It's all part of being your own boss," Linda says. "I like the responsibility of this job — overseeing and scheduling the desk people, keeping the books (to an extent I'm responsible for keeping the place solvent),



promotions (I arranged to have the local college have racquetball classes here) and for tournaments that I work on with our pro."

Promotion is a big part of Court Club Manager Jan Shurtz's job, but Jan has special reason to make the club prosper — she owns it along with her husband, Rick. The Shurtz' business partnership begins before 6 two mornings a week. Rick fixes breakfast for Susan, 10, and Ricky, eight, after Jan leaves for the club where she starts her day checking equipment and courts and ends up doing anything from taking over the nursery to ringing up pro shop sales.

Jan, a former University of Illinois instructor, says she and Rick "function in a dual role. For instance Rick had the final word on the four courts we just added to the club (he's in the real estate business), and I'm using my ideas — like holiday court rates and club parties — to fill the courts."

In another kind of racquetball job Sales Representative Myrna Stein gives prospective members a tour of the Michigan Avenue Club, including the club's restaurant that overlooks Chicago's "Magnificent Mile."

— Tom Trento photo



Working the desk (Kathy Evans, Linda Vaile and Jan Shurtz) is part of a manager's job, and so is basic maintenance. Here Linda Vaile cleans the steam room generator and Jan Shurtz tests the temperature of the whirlpool in her Champaign, IL, club.



Prili Bock photo



INTRODUCING TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY RACQUETS FOR THE PLAYER WHO CAN'T WAIT.

It took Leach to unleash the powers of darkness.

Graphite. The extraordinary successor to wood, fiberglass and aluminum.

Using the ultimate material, Leach has crafted the ultimate racquets, unlike any others on the pro shop shelf today.



The Graphite 100. Racquetball's first 100% graphite racquet.

Strictly for the purist, this is the most expensive racquetball racquet in the world, at a suggested retail price of \$150.00.

Using the lightest, strongest, stiffest material available, Leach has produced a racquet virtually indestructible on the court.

And since the Graphite 100 uses pure graphite fiber, vibration has been reduced to the point that all power generated by the player is transferred to the ball — not back down the grip.



The Graphite Competitor. The age-old properties of wood balanced with graphite.

This could well be the most unique racquet in the sport, combining the natural

lightness and flex of wood, with the strength and power of graphite.

Five plies of maple and ash sandwiched between layers of graphite. And looks that could kill.

We've fashioned a tapered handle for less slippage and designed a recessed string pattern for longer wear.

The lightest racquet in the world carries a suggested retail of only \$75.00.



The Graphite-Performer. Graphite for under \$35.00.

Leach introduced the Graphite-Performer over a year ago, and it remains one of our best selling, best playing racquets ever.

Its glass-filled/graphite combination gives the player flex, control and power — all in one racquet.

Its unique narrow-throat, one-piece construction turns the entire string area into one big sweet spot.

And it feels as great as it looks.

All three graphite beauties come with the Leach 2-year unconditional warranty and a pro-designed heritage you won't find anywhere else.

So if you've been waiting for the twenty-first century to roll around... stop waiting.

It's here right now, and it's from Leach. The company that's been years ahead from the beginning.



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Quick Rise through the Racquetball Ranks

Judy Williams' and Provie Russo's careers are riding high on the success of the Wallbangers racquetball chain which they joined as individual club managers. (Before that Judy had been a medical research administrator, Provie a housewares buyer.)

As of July Provie has been regional manager, operations for southern California, while Judy took on the same job for the northern part of the state.

Provie moved to Los Angeles to set up Wallbangers' regional office and put together a plan of action for new Wallbangers clubs in Costa Mesa, Huntington Beach and Montebello. Judy stayed on in Wallbangers' Daly City headquarters to look after the northern California clubs for the chain which expects to expand throughout the west during the next five years.

- Norton Pearl photo

Judy Williams



Provie Russo

- Duane Greeley photo

Working for 200 Clubs

Cathy Austin, executive director of the not-for-profit National Court Club Association, spends most of her time working quietly in her one woman office in Northfield, IL, preparing for the crowds and excitement of NCCA's annual convention — the main educational and social get-together for the organization's 200 members.

To prepare for the Jan. 25-30 second national convention in Anaheim, CA, Cathy joined forces with NCCA President John Wineman to find stimulating seminar leaders (including two women — Sandy Coffman discussing programs for women and Sharon Banzhaf talking about pro shop sales.) Cathy also handled mail and phone requests for reservations, as well as arrangements for the banquet featuring guest speaker, George Plimpton.



Cathy Austin

Racquetball Promotes Their Products

— Randy Tunnell photo

Vicki Adamo, marketing and promotion representative for Coors Beer, and Nadine Normandin, vice-president, advertising for Catalina sportswear, are in the racquetball business now that their companies have linked up with the sport.

Nadine works with Catalina regional managers in pro tournament cities to arrange promotions including store appearances for the pros who wear Catalina clothes on the tour. (Those pros are Sarah Green, Jay Jones, Steve Keeley, Craig McCoy, Karin Walton and Rich Wagner, along with amateur, Doug Cohen). Other responsibilities of the 15 year Catalina veteran, headquartered in Los Angeles, range from deciding which clothes the pros will wear to getting blocks of tournament tickets.

Another woman on the Catalina staff — Jane Wylie — will handle publicity at the Catalina sponsored Colgate Pro/Am tour stop (co-sponsored by Seamco/Leach) March 28-April 1 at King's Racquetball Court in Westminster, CA.

Vicki Adamo's job at Coors Brewery of Golden, CO, (sponsor of the Feb. 19-25 stop in Denver) is in "a brand new area — we're just getting started with promotions here at Coor's."



Vicki Adamo held the score card for Referee Rich Wagner during the Coors All Pro tournament in November.

Nadine Normandin



Jane Wylie



"I'm the contact between Coors and the All Pro staff," Vicki says, as she explains her role in the Coors All Pro Racquetball Championship, in which professional athletes in other sports played racquetball in a series of Las Vegas events for \$270,000 in prize money.

Vicki, who came to her job from real estate sales and hotel catering, considers herself a "recommending body" — making promotional suggestions to Coors local distributors and sales representatives.

Racquetball Lawyer

Georgetta Wolff, general counsel and corporate secretary of Sports Illustrated Court Clubs, Inc. racquetball chain, performs all the legal work of the corporation including preparing legal documents, taking part in negotiations and retaining outside counsel for particular projects.

A 1971 graduate of University of Michigan Law School she is an avid though non-expert racquetball player who competed with her fellow attorneys (nearly all male) in the Ford Motor Co. Office of General Counsel, where she worked for seven years.



Georgetta Wolff

Want to Own Your Own Club?

Door Is Closed unless You Have a Husband to Open It

"Women aren't exposed to the connections they need to get financing," says Ava Stern, publisher and editor of the magazine, *Enterprising Women*, and author of *The Self-Made Woman*, a book to be published by Doubleday.

"Bankers are reluctant to lend women money," the financial expert says, "because they haven't seen enough growth-oriented proposals from women."

One midwestern woman who wants to stay anonymous until she's finalized her racquetball club deal says "in an ordinary money market my ideas would sell the club to the lending institutions. I feel our package is super — it's a complete facility offering a health program and recreational activities that are totally new. The lending institutions want to see something unique, because they're afraid the racquetball-only club will go the way of the bowling alley."

"Creatively this project has been my baby. I've had marvelous support from a woman lawyer, who guided me through some narrow channels. (A good attorney is essential for a woman, who tends to be too trusting.) And I hired an architect who hadn't done a club before — I've even learned to draw to scale."

"As for finding limited partners being a woman hasn't been a liability. But when it came time to get the big money behind the \$2,000,000 project — I had to turn to my husband. He's been a doctor in our town for 17 years — he has the track record to get the loan money."

Ruth Berk's husband, Maurice, liked the suggestions his wife made for his real estate business. Now the two are partners building and managing property, which includes the Players Club in Gaithersburg, MD.



Though it's possible to keep preliminary expenses down — as this midwesterner tried to do — a woman (or a man) has to have a tidy bundle before she thinks about raising more capital, according to Mort Leve, executive director of World Courts Association, and one of the country's most knowledgeable court club investment consultants.

"Before you approach a lending institution you have to have preliminary drawings, a feasibility-performance study and an option on a piece of property or a leasing proposal," Leve says. "That can add up to \$15-\$20,000."

Playing Tip Number 15

If you often feel crunched on the court, you're probably making one of racquetball's most common errors — you're too close to the ball when you hit it (or miss it).

Moving further away from the ball is one of the corrections which Pro Jean Sausser and Photographer Arthur Shay have included in their popular book, *Inside Racquetball for Women*, published by Contemporary Books and available at pro shops and book stores around the country.

Shay, a photographer-writer with well over 15,000 published pictures and 35 books to his credit, is a former *Life* and *Time* staff reporter and bureau chief. Sausser is among the top eight women on the pro circuit.

Mistake: Standing Too Close to the Ball

The most embarrassing moment in many sports — golf, baseball, racquetball — is to swing at the ball and miss it completely. If this happens to you with annoying regularity, you are probably setting your body up for your shot too close to the ball. Your elbow gets stuck on your body as you attempt to compensate for your poor stance. Even if you do contact the ball, you have little power behind your shot. And, of course, missing the ball completely shakes your confidence and gives your foe a sneering psychological edge.



Correction: Extend Your Arm

Your arm with racquet extended gives you more than three feet of extension. That should be adequate for most shots. Practice throwing the ball around the court and not quite getting to it. Use that extension. Don't run into the corners after shots. Await them in momentary luxury — at the far end of that long, long racquet.



Who's Playing Racquetball?

Patsy Ingle: Up in the Air Over the Game

Patsy Ingle is infected by an advanced case of wanderlust, but it isn't terminal. How could it be in an airline flight attendant?

A 26-year-old Women's Open player Patsy flies out of Memphis, TN, for Southern Airways and, when she isn't in the air, she's on the court.

It's an ideal job for a woman who has always enjoyed travel and who likes to play in racquetball tournaments.

"What I like most about my job," she says, "is that, when I'm off, I don't have to stay in the same town. I have free flying privileges and can get up and go where ever I want."

Patsy not only follows her heart, but the racquetball tour as well.

She is a frequent competitor in major tournaments around the country and has even qualified for the round of 16s against the pros on occasion.

"They have nothing but experience over me," she says, and that is a situation she is working to rectify.

Patsy first picked up a racquetball racket three years ago at the urging of her boyfriend, John Dunlap, who has since become her coach.

Since she only works three or four days a week, Patsy has plenty of time to practice and compete.

The daughter of a former Air Force maintenance supervisor, she spent her childhood traveling between Hawaii and Florida. She attended high school and business college in Hawaii and then left that island paradise to join her parents, who had moved back to Florida.

Patsy prefers the mainland where there are many more and varied places to visit.

"I haven't even seen half of the United States yet," she says with an air of anticipation.

Another benefit of her flight career is that she has made a lot of friends in the racquetball community.



Patsy Ingle's job as airline flight attendant (she's with Captain Jerry Wilcoxon in the cockpit) is good for her racquetball game — she gets free transportation to tournaments all over the country.



"I can't tell you how many times top racquetball players have been on my flights," says Patsy. "Jerry Zuckerman, Marci Greer, Mike Yellen, I know racquetball players all over the country who I can visit when I travel."

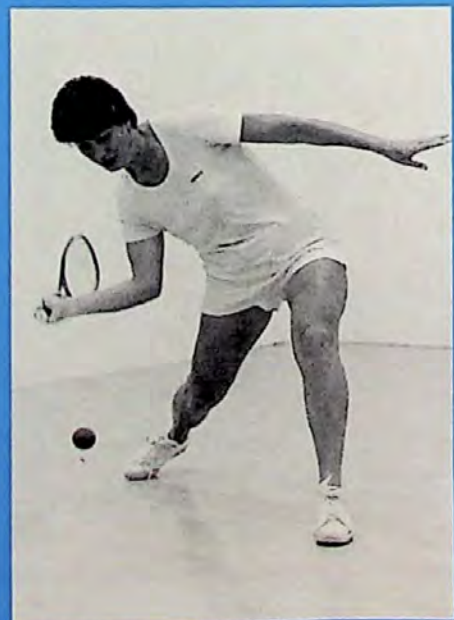
"Marci wants me to come out to San Diego where there are a lot of other good Ektelon players. She says that it will really change my game."

But Patsy likes the south, her job and her lifestyle too much to relocate.

"Southern Airways treats its employees well and that makes my job that much more enjoyable," she says. "The pay is good for the little time we have to work and the benefits are great."

A songstress and guitar player Patsy has also had requests from local musical groups to consider a singing career. In Hawaii she sang with a group called The New Creations. Now she only sings for pleasure and there is no performing career on her horizon.

For the time being, at least, she intends to divide her time two ways: flight time and court time.



United States Racquetball Association 1979 Regional Championships

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

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

OFFICIAL BALL: Seamco 558 (black) in all events.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Please enter me in:

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

SHIRT SIZE: _____ Small _____ Medium _____ Large _____ X-Large

Name (Please Print) _____ Regional Name _____

State representing _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

USRA Membership card # Exp. Date _____

Business phone _____ Home phone _____

Doubles Partner _____

Please print

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 USRA, its affiliated clubs, and their respective agents, representatives, successors and assigners for any and all injuries which may be suffered by me in connection with my participation in the Regional or National tournaments.

Date _____

Signature _____

USRA Region Tournament Information



Region 1 - New England

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

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

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

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

Region 2 - Northeast

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

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

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO AND MAIL TO: Same as above

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

Region 3 - Southeast

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

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

TOURNAMENT HEADQUARTERS: Ramada Inn, 6237 Arlington Expressway, Jacksonville, FL 32211, 904-725-5093

Region 4 - Central

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

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

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE AND MAIL ENTRY TO: Same as above

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

Region 5 - South Central

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

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

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

Region 6 - Southwest

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

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

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

Region 7 - Midwest

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

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

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

Region 8 - Northwest

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

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

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

Region 9 - Ohio Valley

SITE: Jefferson Racquetball Club, Hurstbourne Lane & Shelbyville Rd., Louisville, KY 40222, 502-425-7621, contact Julie Neely; Sheraton Inn I64 at Hurstbourne Lane, Louisville, KY, 502-426-4500, contact Sara Hamm

Region 10 - Rocky Mountain

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

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

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

First Annual Men's and Women's USRA National Intercollegiate Championships

March 23-25, 1979

Note: All entrants report to tournament site March 23, 3 p.m. CST.

ELIGIBILITY: Participant must be an *undergraduate* student at an accredited university or college (not business college, trade school, etc.) who is a full time student as defined by the regulations of the institution. Players may take part in one event only, and a player who has accepted any prize money in any National Racquetball Club professional event is ineligible for this tournament. All players must submit valid proof of being a full time student along with the entry form on the back of this page, or the entry will be disallowed.

SITE: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign • Room 170
Intramural-Physical Education Building • 201 Peabody Drive • Champaign,
IL 61820 • Phone 217-328-3143 (after 6 p.m. CST).

FACILITIES: 23 regulation courts, one glass wall championship exhibition court (seating for 200), complete athletic facilities.

ENTRY FEES: \$15 per individual (\$60 per four-man team) both men and women.

ENTRY DEADLINE: Monday, March 12, 1979. Entry fee must accompany application. Entries postmarked later than March 12, 1979, will be returned unopened. No phone entries.

SANCTION: By United States Racquetball Association (USRA). Tournament seeding and final jurisdiction in all matters pertaining to rules interpretations and tournament procedure is the sole responsibility of the USRA. Participants must be in compliance with USRA official rules (with the exception of the USRA \$1,000 amateur rule).

OFFICIAL BALL: Seamco 558 (black) in all events.

AWARDS: Joseph G. Sobek Cup goes to championship men's and women's teams. Trophies awarded to first four places in all divisions. All American certificates to first four places in all singles divisions and first two teams in all doubles events. Hospitality and souvenir shirts to all players.

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: Don Webb

MAIL CHECKS AND ENTRY FORM TO: Don Webb, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Room 170 Intramural-Physical Education Building; 201 Peabody Drive, Champaign, IL 61820.

TOURNAMENT ACCOMMODATIONS: Dormitory reservations one block from the tournament site are available through Robert J. Henderson, 150 Clark Hall, Conference Housing, Champaign, IL 61820, 217-333-1766. Rates are \$7 for March 22-24 plus 5 percent tax. No reservations accepted after March 1. Hotel reservations may be made at the Ramada Inn, 1505 S. Neil St., Champaign, IL 61820, 217-352-7891.

TEAM AND INDIVIDUAL SCORING: Only one four-person official team per school (two singles and two doubles players) in both men's and women's divisions can score points toward the team championships (Sobek Cup). Team players must be ranked according to #1 seeded singles and #2 seeded singles as decided by each school. Individual players, in both singles and doubles, can enter, but those wins do not count toward team championship points. Scoring shall be as follows:

#1 Singles 1st-10 pts. • 2nd-8 pts. • 3rd-6 pts. • 4th-4 pts.

#2 Singles 1st-8 pts. • 2nd-6 pts. • 3rd-4 pts. • 4th-2 pts.

Quarterfinalists-2 pts.

Doubles 1st-10 pts. • 2nd-8 pts. • 3rd-6 pts. • 4th-4 pts.

Quarterfinalists-2 pts.

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You MUST include phone where we can reach you during the day so that we can notify you of any schedule changes in the event you are scheduled to play earlier than the 3 p.m. March 23 starting time.

Official School Team Entry

☐ Male ☐ Female (Must Have Four Members).

Name of School

#1 Seeded Singles Player

#2 Seeded Singles Player

(Name) Please attach other name.

(Address)

(Home phone)

(Other phone)

Doubles Team

(Name) Please attach other names.

(Address)

(Home phone)

(Other phone)

Shirt Size (Please fill in number your team needs): ☐ sm ☐ med ☐ lg ☐ xl

Individual Entry ☐ Male ☐ Female

Name of school

Name

Address

Phone

(Home)

(Other)

I prefer to play in:

☐ #1 seeded division ☐ #2 seeded division

Shirt Size

Men ☐ sm ☐ med ☐ lg ☐ xl

Women ☐ sm ☐ med ☐ lg ☐ xl

I hereby for myself and my agents waive and release any and all rights and claims for damages I might have against the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and the United States Racquetball Association (USRA) and any of their agents, for any and all injuries received by me in connection with tournament.

SIGNATURE(S):

1.

2.

3.

4.

All individuals or team members must sign before entry is accepted.

DATE:



Racquetball



Terry Fancher

Keep Track of Your Improvement for National Racquetball Award

With all the new people taking up the game of racquetball the USRA and *National Racquetball* magazine are recognizing those new players in each state who have made exceptional progress at the sport.

The people who will receive *National Racquetball's* Most Improved Player awards may be male or female, of any age and may be of C, B or A skill level.

We want to know about these people who have moved up the racquetball ladder and we will require evidence to substantiate any claims. Draw sheets, signed by the USRA state chairman or a tournament director, will be accepted, as well as written recommendations, as long as they are substantiated. Our USRA state chairman will be asked to send in their selections for this award, and we want our general membership and court club owners and pros to do the same.

Evidence for the award will be gathered until June 1, 1979. *National Racquetball* will feature each state's winner with stories and pictures, and winners will receive lifetime memberships in the USRA and other valuable prizes.

So if you know someone whose game is improving, please remind him or her to save the evidence. You might clip this reminder and post it on your club bulletin board.



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

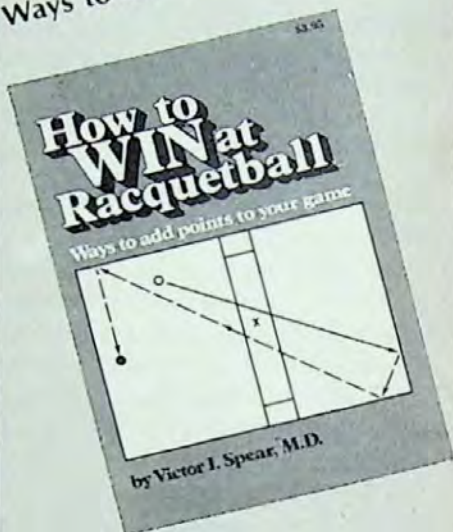
Will You Be Your State's Most Improved Player?

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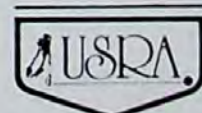
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Meet Your State Chairman

Bob Adam — Minnesota

"Back in 1972, when nobody knew who Steve Strandemo was, he and his doubles partner, Ron Strom, were called Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid," says Bob Adam, our USRA Minnesota state chairman. He remembers those days well since Steve and Ron used to drive in from St. Cloud and introduce the dress alike doubles partner look to racquetball at Bob's King's Court Club in Minneapolis.

Organized racquetball was less developed in those days but Bob Adam is as much involved in the sport and running tournaments as ever. The USRA was privileged when it was starting its amateur program a few years back to solicit the services of such a long standing and devoted promoter of the game. He is also an excellent seniors player, having won numerous local, state and regional titles.

Bob Adams, Jr., an undergraduate at the University of Minnesota, is also a champion amateur competitor and was runnerup to Ben Koltun, who's now number nine men's pro, in the 1976 National Juniors Championships in Orlando, FL. He is known for his skill as a player and for his fine sportsmanship and composure during tournament competition. Though only recently recovered from a bout with mononucleosis he defeated a top amateur player, Jim Wirkus of Wisconsin, in a local tournament to signal his return to competition.

Bob Adam, Sr. is also an accomplished sportsman and he loves to go on fishing and hunting trips all over the country. "I try to make several short vacation trips each year," says Bob, "we travel to Jackson Hole in Wyoming for elk and to our cabin in Ontario to fish and hunt in the summer. We go turkey hunting in the spring." Bob also is proud of his hunting dog, a black labrador he enters in dog trials.

Annual Aquatennial Tournament

In 1970 Bob started the Aquatennial, one of the first big amateur summer

Tournament Results

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

events. "We started the Aquatennial to promote racquetball in the summer and the first two years it was a 16-man invitational. When we opened the tournament up to all categories, the first year we had 250 entries and I knew we had a winner," says Bob. The event provided needed off season competition and is a popular midwestern event which is now played at Adam's King's Court clubs in Minneapolis (Edina) and Roseville (St. Paul), and includes numerous divisions of play and a small semi-pro division for prize money.

Bob got into the racquetball business because "I started playing at the King's Court and some of the owners wanted to sell, so I took them up on the offer." Using his clubs as tournament centers Bob anticipates a great turn out for the Minnesota State Championships this year and will use both clubs to accommodate the anticipated 400 entries. "By having the tournament in the centralized Twin Cities area, we can draw on all of the novice, C and B players who account for about one half of the entries. All of the divisions have to be cared for and developed," says Adam.

Bob Adam has four children and his young daughter, Lisa, has started as a novice just the way Bob, Jr., did. His

attractive wife, Mary, is an avid player and helps organize women's events locally and statewide. She is also ranked in the top eight in the state. Competition is keen in the Minneapolis area with such players as Bill Schmidtke, Paul Ikier, Steve Singer, Bob McNamara, Juniors Champion Hart Johnson and 1978 National Women's Doubles Champions Barb Tennesson and Ev Dillion, as well as Strandemo and Strom. There are almost more than can be listed here.

Bob Adam describes women's racquetball in Minnesota as "booming" and about a year ago the state conducted the first USRA women's state tournament which was held separate from the men's event. There were 140 entries and 200 are expected this season. "Tournaments should always include women's divisions and juniors divisions for obvious reasons," says Bob. He also has pioneered the "short tournament" which begins on Friday night at both his clubs and finishes on Saturday at noon in time for the football games.

Together racquetball in Minnesota and Bob Adam have been a great success.



Missouri

Town and Country Racquet Club in St. Louis was again the site of the Missouri State Singles and Doubles Amateur Championships, this year held Aug. 3-5. Sponsored by the Mid-America Racquetball Association and the United States Racquetball Association the tournament drew over 150 entries in 11 divisions from all over the state. It could easily have been called a "spectator's tournament" as every division proved to be hotly contested with incredible games being played.

The Men's Open division attracted almost every top player in the state, which led to many tough matches. Number one seed, Ken Wong, again captured the top honors by defeating Cliff Dawson, third seed. Dawson was in control the first game, downing Wong 21-19 in a superb show of racquetball. But Wong came back, champion that he is, and defeated Dawson. In the Women's Open Mary Dee swept through the field to clinch the title over Mary Herling.

Possibly one of the most exciting matches of the tournament was the final of the Men's Open doubles. The first and third seed teams of Jerry Fondren/Bo Champagne and Cliff Dawson/Marti Dreyer met in the emotional match that had the entire crowd cheering and Dawson/Dreyer ending up taking home the first place plaques. In a tough match Bob Hardcastle/Denny Frye won the consolation round over Marlow Phillips/Irv Roseman. Frye put in a good performance under the tremendous handicap of helping organize and run the tournament. Mary Herling/Barbara Halpern squeezed out a win in the Women's Open doubles over Carol Garven/Ann Wirick.

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The Men's B division was captured by Larry Ashford, who defeated Gene Livingston, and in a close match between the two top seeds Gina Dodson, second seed, defeated Joni Lund for the Women's B championship.

The finals of the Men's B Doubles division was another exciting and emotional match as number one seeds, Bob Freeman/Chuck Feltz, met up with the team of Arnold Goodman/Marty Pranger. Freeman/Feltz pulled it out with a tight score of 12-21, 21-11, 11-8. A large field in the Men's C was overcome by Harry White, as he became the new champion. Ruth Vrana topped the large turnout in the Women's C division by defeating Kathy Pogue in a close match. Another close match was found in the playoff for third place when Kathy Barr beat Ann Morrissey.

Hospitality was provided by Kathy Symons and the staff at Town and Country Racquet Club, with Rita Brinkley, Kathy Pogue, Gina Dodson, Carolyn Smith, Barbara Halpern, Bo Champagne and Denny Frye also making a smooth running tournament possible.

—Mid-America Racquetball Association

Results

Men's Open Singles

Quarters: Ken Wong d. Jon Zuckerman 21-9, 21-18; Bo Champagne d. Denny Frye 21-7, 21-6; Cliff Dawson d. Danny Cohen 21-9, 9-21, 11-6; Al Ferrari d. Dave Skillman 21-7, 21-12

Semi-Finals: Wong d. Champagne 21-20, 21-6; Dawson d. Ferrari 21-20, 18-21, 11-3

Finals: Wong d. Dawson 19-21, 21-9, 11-3

Third: Champagne d. Ferrari 21-7, 21-14

Consolation: Jay Manzoor d. Bill Sanders 15-21, 21-10, 11-3

Women's Open Singles

Semi-Finals: Mary Dee d. Barbara Halpern 21-6, 21-14; Mary Herling d. Donna Housley 21-4, 21-7

Finals: Dee d. Herling 21-4, 21-13

Third: Halpern d. Housley 21-5, 21-6

Consolation: Pam Loges d. Joni Lund

Men's B Singles

Quarters: Gary Bates d. Larry Fairchild 21-9, 21-8; Gene Livingston d. Steve Gilgros 21-8, 21-7; Larry Ashford d. Joe Diederich 16-21, 21-19, 11-8; Dale Schlater d. Mark VanFossen 21-8, 20-21, 11-5

Semi-Finals: Livingston d. Bates, Ashford d. Schlater 21-15, 21-19

Finals: Ashford d. Livingston 21-11, 21-16

Third: Bates d. Schlater 10-21, 21-14, 11-0

Consolation: Arnold Goodman d. Marty Pranger 21-17, 21-20

Women's B Singles

Quarters: Joni Lund d. Donna Harvey 21-9, 21-3; Rosie Epps d. Missie Seeger 9-21, 21-15, 11-4; Ruth Vrana d. Carolyn Smith 11-21, 21-11, 11-4; Gina Dodson d. Marianne Vaki 21-16, 8-21, 11-6

Semi-Finals: Lund d. Epps 21-2, 21-12; Dodson d. Vrana 21-15, 21-16

Finals: Dodson d. Lund 14-21, 21-5, 11-4

Third: Epps d. Vrana 21-14, 21-4

Consolation: Valli d. Engelbert 18-21, 21-11, 11-2

Men's C Singles

Quarters: Dann Lennertson d. Shep Hyken 21-19, 21-16; Mike Harvey d. William Johnston 21-6, 21-14; Harry White d. Jim Smith 21-4, 21-10; Ron Maggard d. Alan Lemley 21-19, 21-20

Semi-Finals: Lennertson d. Harvey 21-9, 21-14, White d. Maggard 3-21, 21-13, 11-8

Finals: White d. Lennertson 21-14, 21-19

Third: Harvey d. Maggard 21-9, 19-21, 11-1

Consolation: Michael Worthington d. Donald Ware 14-21, 21-10, 11-10

Women's C Singles

Quarters: Kathy Pogue d. Rita Brinkley 21-12, 20-21, 11-5; Ann Morrissey d. Kim Bowers 21-14, 21-15; Ruth Vrana d. Lani Becker 21-5, 21-11; Kathy Barr d. Carol Schallert 21-5, 21-13

Semi-Finals: Pogue d. Morrissey 17-21, 21-9, 11-0; Vrana d. Barr 21-14, 21-17

Finals: Vrana d. Pogue 21-17, 16-21, 11-7

Third: Barr d. Morrissey 19-21, 21-12, 11-10

Consolation: Jo Casalone d. Rita Brinkley 21-17, 21-17

Men's Seniors

Quarters: Bob Hardcastle d. Irv Goode 21-11, 21-10; Joe Simon d. Jack Reddick (forfeit); Ken Becker d. Lenny Arky 21-14, 21-10; Gary Woods d. Herb Orf 21-18, 21-10

Semi-Finals: Hardcastle d. Simon 21-5, 21-2; Woods d. Becker 21-16, 21-16

Finals: Hardcastle d. Woods 18-21, 21-5, 11-2

Third: Becker d. Simon 21-5, 21-19

Consolation: Herb Orf d. Larry Fairchild 21-14, 20-21, 11-1

Men's Masters

Quarters: Arthur Albert d. Dan Hilecher 21-5, 21-2; Ron Cooney d. Jack Ross (forfeit); Marlow Phillips d. Charles Sarne 21-15, 21-9; Larry Carlisle d. Elmer Schulz 21-13, 21-18

Semi-Finals: Albert d. Cooney 21-1, 21-0; Carlisle d. Phillips 21-13, 21-16

Finals: Albert d. Carlisle 21-10, 21-18

Third: Phillips d. Cooney 21-5, 21-4

Consolation: Charles Sarne d. Dan Hilecher 21-11, 21-18

Men's Open Doubles

Quarters: Fondren/Champagne d. Phillips/Roseman, Zuckerman/Gitt d. Podgorny/Zelson; Dawson/Dreyer d. Knobloch/Lieb, Cohen/MacKeen d. Hardcastle/Frye

Semi-Finals: Fondren/Champagne d. Zuckerman/Gitt, Dawson/Dreyer d. Cohen/MacKeen 21-3, 21-5

Finals: Dawson/Dreyer d. Fondren/Champagne 21-20, 21-19

Third: Cohen/MacKeen d. Zuckerman/Gitt 18-21, 21-19, 11-4

Consolation: Hardcastle/Frye d. Phillips/Roseman 12-21, 21-12, 11-7

Women's Open Doubles

Semi-Finals: Herling/Halpern d. Smith/Dodson, Garven/Wirick d. Symons/Shippely

Finals: Herling/Halpern d. Garven/Wirick 18-21, 21-16, 11-10

Third: Symons/Shippely d. Smith/Dodson 21-11, 21-10

Consolation: Brinkley/Pogue d. Gilmer/Schallert 31-11

Men's B Doubles

Quarters: Freeman/Feltz d. Wagner/Hard 21-4, 21-7; Mattingly/Harvey d. Kastner/Arky 16-21, 21-12, 11-9;

Gillespie/Unger d. Stenger/Keltner 21-17, 21-16;

Pranger/Goodman d. Simon/Symons 21-15, 18-21, 11-8

Semi-Finals: Freeman/Feltz d. Mattingly/Harvey 21-17, 21-9; Pranger/Goodman d. Gillespie/Unger

Finals: Freeman/Feltz d. Pranger/Goodman 12-21, 21-11, 11-8

Third: Mattingly/Harvey d. Gillespie/Unger (forfeit)

Consolation: Donio/Weinstein d. Simon/Symons 21-11, 21-9

Missouri

The Second annual West James Court — Steinhoff Racquetball Classic was held at the St. Charles club Oct. 20-22. Mark Pitliangus took first place in the Men's Open Class with a win over Jay Manzoor 17-21, 21-15, and 11-4. In Men's B Elliot Silk defeated Mark Vandergriffe 21-10, 21-9. Steve Miller defeated Gene Leung 21-10 and 21-5 to take first in Men's C. Mike Egelhoff took first in Men's Novice with a win over Lowell Rogers 20-21, 21-8, 11-7. In the Women's C Kaye Powers defeated Jackie Highfill 21-9, 21-15 for first place. Rose Thompson took first in the Women's Novice division with a win over Vicki Holliday 21-7, 21-5.

— Rosie Epps

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Missouri

More than 125 women participated in the second annual Spaulding Racquetball Clubs' Ladies' Turkey Tournament Oct. 27-29 at the Spaulding Creve Coeur Club.

The first place winners — Open — Mary Herling, A — Chris Cheak, B — Gina Parks, C — Gerry Keller, D — Billie Sigler, Novice — Tammy Wood — each received a 10 pound turkey and a racquet.

Diann Bosworth was awarded the Sportsmanship Award.

The second Annual Spaulding Racquetball Clubs' Ladies' Turkey Tournament was co-sponsored by Sunset Racquets and Vittert Sports.

Illinois

Dianne Willarth won the Women's C division at the Lehmann Court tournament benefiting the American Cancer Society.



Over 250 racquetball enthusiasts took a wack at the first annual American Cancer Society Racquetball Classic featuring the "Chicago Cup in Racquetball" at a benefit at Lehmann Courts sports complex, in Chicago.

In addition to the entry fee a number of participants received pledges from relatives and friends per point scored thus giving the American Cancer Society a benefit income of close to \$10,000 for cancer research and education.

Results

Men's novice — Dave Rogers, **Men's B** — Phil Simborg, **Men's C** — Bob Bolier, **Men's Senior** — Jordan Tilden, **Men's Masters** — Bob Troyer, **Men's Open** — Rick Dern, **Women's Novice** — Joanne Bittman, **Women's B** — Joan Rogers, **Women's C** — Diane Willerth, **Women's Open** — Judy Sawicki

Illinois

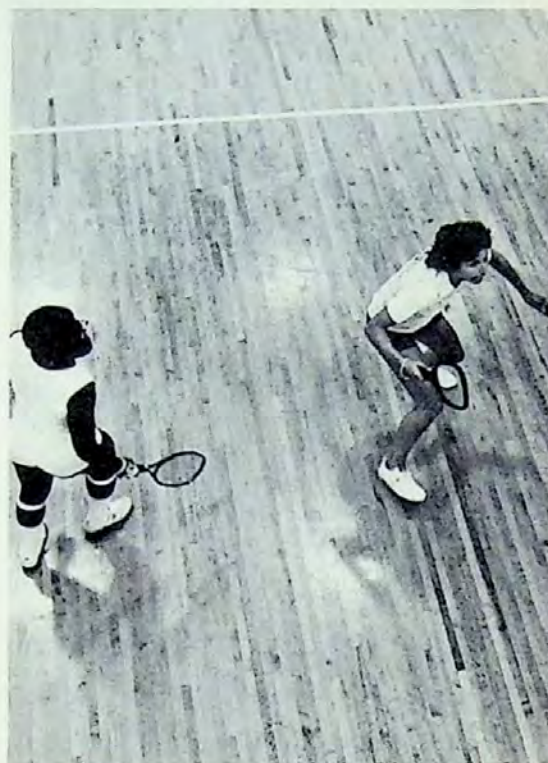
A jubilant Bill Hoffman came off court one at Mid-Town Court House flush with his victory over young Doug Cohen, the St. Louis sharpshooter who has been making quite a name for himself in the city that spawned the careers of Marty Hogan, Steve Serot, Ben Koltun and Jerry Hilecher.

Hoffman, who defeated Cohen 21-18, 19-21, 11-10, was as effervescent as the bubbles in the magnum of Paul Masson premium California champagne he was to uncork later to celebrate his victory in the Men's Open of the Paul Masson/Court House Midwest Invitational tourney at Mid-Town Court House.

The event was sanctioned by the Illinois State Racquetball Association and played under the rules of the United States Racquetball Association. According to ISRA's Alan Shetzer more than 200 players competed. Entries were received from several states surrounding Illinois, including Missouri, Indiana, New York, Ohio, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and Kentucky.

The Women's Open final was an all-Wisconsin match. Connie Peterson, the Wisconsin state champion, met Glenda Young, also a former Badger state player. Peterson prevailed 12-21, 21-19, 11-9.

The Men's B went to Phil Klintworth, now the athletic director of the Oak Park Village Athletic Club, Lansing, MI, who defeated Bill Kane 21-16,



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Barb Edelstein, right, takes aim on an off-the-back wall shot by Margaret Olawoyr during an early round match in the Women's A division of the Paul Masson/Court House Midwest Invitational at Mid-Town Court House in Chicago. Edelstein defeated Olawoyr.

7-21, 11-6, for his first tournament triumph in the Chicago area after more than two years of competition.

The Men's C was won by Gary Peckler 21-18, 21-8 over Walt Byington.

The Men's Seniors division saw two perennial finalists, Jordan Tilden and Shelly Clar, meeting for the title. Tilden prevailed 21-13, 21-7.

The Women's B title went to Joan Azeka 21-9, 21-16 over Randy Kalal. Grace Touhy, who defeated Sue Korienek, 21-17, 21-18, emerged victorious in the Women's C division.

Perhaps the biggest winner of all was the Ronald McDonald House, an adult lodging facility for parents whose children are undergoing treatment at the nearby Children's Memorial Hospital in the Lincoln Park area. Brody said that all net proceeds were donated to the organization for the second year in a row.

Minnesota

The 1978 edition July 14-16 of the Kings Court Aquatennial Racquetball Tournament was the largest yet, with approximately 275 participants. With 14 different divisions available there seemed to be a spot for any interested racquetball enthusiast. With the large number of entrants it was necessary to use both of the Kings Court facilities — the Edina club with its eight courts was used all day Friday and one half of Saturday, while the Roseville club was used from the time the tournament started on Friday until the last award had been given on Sunday afternoon.

As in the past the weather co-operated for the Bar-B-Q and beer bust on Saturday night. The Bar-B-Q was followed by disco dancing at the Kings Court in Roseville, featuring Dean Constantine in famous "Kings Court Hustle."

Results

Men's Pro: 1st — Paul Ikier, 2nd — Bob Adam Jr.

Men's Open: 1st — Don Constable, 2nd — Alex Cooley, Cons — Tom McNeely

Men's Open Doubles: 1st — Ikier/Steve Singer, 2nd — Adam/Pat Page, Cons — Cooley/Bill Block

Men's B: 1st — Bill Franke, 2nd — Greg Wagner, Cons — Larry Kinney

Men's B Doubles: 1st — Steve Davis/Dave Harsha, 2nd — Chuck Carlson/Kevin Joppe, Cons — Randy Kouri/Greg Roth

Men's C: 1st — Jay Quam, 2nd — Dennis Hoalman, Cons — Romeo Cyr

Men's Novice: 1st — Tim Boland, 2nd — Bill Behrens, Cons — Mike Kennedy

Men's Masters: 1st — Ralph Stillman, 2nd — Duane LeBraun, Cons — J. Eisert

Men's Seniors: 1st — Tom Saterdalen, 2nd — Bill Soderlind, Cons — Dick Uphoff

Women's Open: 1st — Connie Peterson, 2nd — Meg Sander, Cons — Sandi Riach

Women's Open Doubles: 1st — Jacque Coplin/Sander, 2nd — Sandy Chapek/Barb Jacobson, Cons — Judy Franke/Margaret Kuhfeld

Women's B: 1st — Kuhfeld, 2nd — Franke, Cons — Berth Tomita

Women's C: 1st — Mary Strei, 2nd — Lisa Adam, Cons — Donna Hesli

Women's Novice: 1st — Mary Sueter, 2nd — Nancy Hausen, Cons — Cheri Payne

New Mexico

The 1978 USRA New Mexico State Tournament was held April 28-30 at the Supreme Courts Racquet and Health Club in Albuquerque.

Results

Men's Open: 1st — Jack Blystone, 2nd — Gary Mazaroff

Men's B: 1st — Rick Wright, 2nd — Eric Sanchez, 3rd — Ron Chavez

Men's C: 1st — Ken Brock, 2nd — Bruce Hutcheson, 3rd — Craig Larsen

Men's Open Doubles: 1st — Mazaroff/Clay Childs, 2nd — Blystone/Bob Rossi

Men's B Doubles: 1st — Wright/Steve Rozzell, 2nd — Steve Chowning/Ron Chavez, 3rd — Dale Scott/Ron Jacobsen

Men's C Doubles: 1st — Gary Parker/Don Raines, 2nd — Terry Linton/Gary Arbogast

Men's Novice: 1st — Daniel Agopsowicz, 2nd — James Cornfield

Men's 35 and Over: 1st — Ernie Nello, 2nd — Louis Lucero, 3rd — Reed Barnitz

Men's 45 and Over: 1st — Robert Sanchez, 2nd — Bob Bogan

Women's Open: (Roundrobin) 1st — Jan Corsie, 2nd — Cathie Motica, 3rd — Roberta Moorehouse

Women's B: (Roundrobin) 1st — Debbie Snider, 2nd — Louise McDonough, 3rd — Linda Repp

Women's C: 1st — Mary Lou Furaus, 2nd — Marla Higgins, 3rd — Connie Burch

Women's C Doubles: 1st — Higgins/Jeanine Henry, 2nd — Judy VanderGeest/Carman Montoya

Women's 35 and Over: (Roundrobin) 1st — Ellie Boecker, 2nd — Diane Frank, 3rd — Roberta Schoenfeld

Women's Novice: 1st — Jeanine Henry, 2nd — Connie Caffrey, 3rd — Karey Schoenfeld

Juniors: (Roundrobin) 1st — Scott Cannon, 2nd — Kevin Dean, 3rd — Charleen Chavez

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Kentucky

The largest tournament ever held in Kentucky drew 240 participants to the Louisville YMCA the weekend of November 3-5. The finals of the Open were relatively routine as Keith Dunlap disposed of Phil Stepp 21-15, 21-17. Phil, who forgot his tennis shoes, did not forget his serve. Several aces and other unreturnable shots kept him as close as he was. However Dunlap, who twitches his nose, adjusts his glasses, and moves to the back wall quicker than the ball during rallies, had too much.

He almost had his comeuppance in the semis, though, as Kentucky State Champ Chuck Cooper lost in three 21-14, 9-21, 11-3. Dunlap had too much strength at the end. Stepp had defeated Tennessee doc Bryce Anderson 21-15, 13-21, 11-5 in the other semi.

Lynn Simon and Beth Mowery proved themselves the class of the women's field as neither was tested until the finals, which went to Simon in a strange match. The first game was close; Lynn took it 21-17. She then started hitting everything bottom board and sailed out to a 17-6 lead in the second game. It was over. No it wasn't. Mr. Momentum played a trick. Beth came in, got a couple points, and Simon's confidence deteriorated. She did not score another point in the second game. Mowery started firing right where she left off at the outset of the tie-breaker. She ran quickly to 8-3. It was over. Wrong again. Lynn got back into the box, and Beth immediately deflated. She got no more points. Simon wins 11-8. Strange.

In one of the tournament's most exciting matches Dave Fleischaker and old-timer Bob Dabney staged a two hour attrition affair in the Senior's final. In a match with more turnabouts than a Watership Down burrow, Fly finally prevailed 19-21, 21-16, 11-10.

Results

Open

Quarters: Keith Dunlap d. Bob Dabney 21-13, 20-21, 11-6; Chuck Cooper d. Danny Clifford 21-14, 12-21, 11-10; Phil Stepp d. Tom Marr 21-10, 21-7; Bryce Anderson d. David Brown 21-19, 14-21, 11-8.

Semis: Dunlap d. Cooper 21-14, 9-21, 11-3; Stepp d. Anderson 21-15, 13-21, 11-5.

Finals: Dunlap d. Stepp 21-15, 21-17. 3rd: Anderson d. Cooper 21-15, 5-21, 11-1.

Mens' B:

Quarters: Frank Brohm d. Ron Pitt 21-7, 19-21, 11-0; Larry Hedgspeth d. Chuck Blackburn 21-17, 19-21, 11-9; Jay Manley d. Paul Merkel 21-20, 21-7; Doug Layne d. Donnie Harris 21-13, 21-6.

Semis: Hedgspeth d. Brohm 21-10, 21-15; Manley d. Layne 21-7, 21-8.

Finals: Manley d. Hedgspeth 21-20, 21-19. 3rd: Layne d. Brohm 19-21, 21-10, 11-6.

Mens' C:

Quarters: J. T. Sims d. Bob McAuliffe 21-13, 21-2; Gary Chapman d. Ed Lee 21-18, 19-21, 11-4; Frank Pruitt d. Ron Yannucci 21-8, 21-9; Ed Sword d. George Lawson 21-14, 21-14.

Semis: Gary Chapman d. Sims 21-12, 21-19; Pruitt d. Sword 21-10, 21-19.

Finals: Pruitt d. Chapman 21-14, 21-19. 3rd: Sword.

Mens' Novice

Quarters: Bob Varney d. Steve Creed 21-7, 21-13; Robert Forsberg d. Steve Elsea 21-3, 21-6; Ed Burns d. Jeff Bauer 21-17, 16-21, 11-8; Phil McGee d. Dick Shapero 21-4, 21-13.

Semis: Forsberg d. Varney 21-7, 15-21, 11-6; McGee d. Burns 11-21, 21-12, 11-5.

Finals: Forsberg d. McGee 21-12, 21-16. 3rd: Burns.

Masters

Finals: Bill Evans d. Leigh Jones 21-20, 21-9.

Seniors

Quarters: Dave Fleischaker d. Randy Embry 21-4, 21-14; Len Wilson d. Bob Adkins 21-13, 21-15; Bill Evans d. Eli Helton 21-8, 17-21, 11-8; Bob Dabney d. Mike Heitz 21-7, 21-1.

Semis: Fleischaker d. Wilson 10-21, 21-20, 11-7; Dabney d. Evans 21-17, 21-10.

Final: Fleischaker d. Dabney 19-21, 21-16, 11-10. 3rd: Evans d. Wilson 21-16, 21-13.

Womens' Open

Quarters: Lynn Simon d. Lu Ann Gifford 21-12, 21-18; Emily Burke d. Bobbi Brennan 21-14, 21-15; Beth Mowery d. Julie Simon 21-4, 21-8; Julie Selm d. Holly Rentz 21-7, 14-21, 11-0.

Semis: Simon d. Burke 21-9, 21-4; Mowery d. Selm 21-7, 21-14.

Finals: Simon d. Mowery 21-17, 17-21, 11-8. 3rd: Selm d. Burke 21-14, 21-18.

Womens' B

Quarters: Pam Holien d. Robyn Metzner 21-13, 21-6; Emilie Pinto d. Patty Burden 10-21, 21-10, 11-5; Micki Anderson d. Pat Zellner 21-11, 21-8; Connie Clemens d. Barbara Brooks 14-21, 21-19, 11-8.

Semis: Holien d. Pinto 21-8, 21-14; Anderson d. Clemens 16-21, 21-14, 11-10.

Finals: Anderson d. Holien 21-10, 17-21, 11-10. 3rd: Clemens d. Pinto 21-19, 21-14.

Womens' C

Quarters: Janice James d. Sally Click 21-11, 21-12; Dawn Brackman d. Peggy Kilgore 15-21, 21-19, 11-5; Pat Schuhmann d. Evelyn Liner 21-13, 21-2; Cheri Turner d. Vicki Reed 21-12, 21-18.

Semis: Brackman d. James 16-21, 21-14, 11-2; Schuhmann d. Turner 18-21, 21-3, 11-5.

Finals: Brackman d. Schuhmann 19-21, 21-6, 11-6. 3rd: James d. Turner 21-2, 21-5.

Womens' Novice

Quarters: Jenna Fleischaker d. Nancy Patrick 21-7, 5-21, 11-3; Ellen Kochman d. Juanita Lee 21-8, 21-6; Dorothy Pitt d. LuAnn Wilson 21-12, 21-2; Kathy Oechsle d. Eleanor Ling 11-21, 21-12, 11-6.

Semis: Kochman d. Fleischaker 21-6, 21-19, Pitt d. Oechsle 21-19, 21-17.

Finals: Pitt d. Kochman 21-17, 21-15. 3rd: Oechsle d. Fleischaker 21-8, 21-14.

Womens' 30 and Over

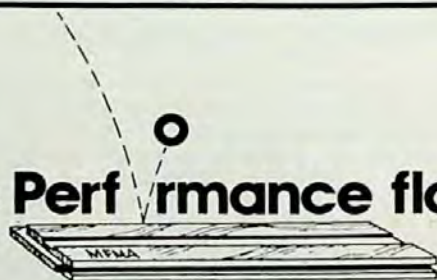
1st — Betty Matthieu, 2nd — Nancy Bodnar, 3rd — Martha Stober.

Utah

The Towne & Country Racquet Club in Woods Cross hosted the Fifth Annual Rocky Mountain Championships, also known as The Wild Bunch Open.

In the Men's Novice Singles John Edwards defeated Spencer Mortensen, in the C Singles Scott McNabb won over Rick Jackson and in the Seniors Bob McNabb beat Larry Gardner. Women's Singles Novice winner was Glenda Soloman over Pat Flanders and in the B division Marianne Lambert beat Karen Powers. Dave Bernacki beat Morgan Sayes in the Men's Open Singles finals and in the B Men's Singles it was Bert Sanchez over Dave Day. Morgan Sayes and Trey Sayes won over Bernacki/Paul Haanstad in the Men's Open Doubles, with Brian McNabb/Scott McNabb coming out first in the B/C Men's Open Doubles over Dave Hoch/Bob McNabb.

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Michigan

Kathy Betts prepares to shoot a rollout as she and Pam Bauer defeat Lori Harrison and Becky Fairman in the doubles finals of the recent Scottish Open Racquetball Tourney at Alma College.



Ithaca Community Education sponsored the Fourth Annual Scottish Open Racquetball Tournament at Alma (Michigan) College Nov. 3-5. Tournament Director John Raducha arranged play among 40 entries across three divisions, plus a last minute Pick-A-Partner doubles competition for both men and women.

Results

Men's Open

Quarter-finals: Bill Terry d. Tim Hahn 21-4, 21-16; Doug Sheperdigian d. Jack Raducha 21-7, 21-7; Ted Lockett d. John Raducha 21-14, 21-9; John Tocco d. Jim Hornak 21-19, 21-10.
Semi-finals: Sheperdigian d. Terry 21-11, 21-7; Tocco d. Lockett 21-13, 21-18.
Finals: Sheperdigian d. Tocco 18-21, 21-5, 11-7; Terry d. Lockett, injury default.

Women's Open (Double Elimination)

First: Kathy Davis d. Becky Fairman 21-6, 21-1
Third: Pam Bauer d. Kathy Betts 21-19, 21-19

Men's Master's (Double Elimination)

First: Lynn Hahn d. Jack Mellinger 21-11, 21-12
Third: Carl Ludtke

Men's Doubles

Quarter-finals: Penner/Haske d. Ludtke/Mellinger 21-9, 21-9; Terry/Lockett d. Weston/Russell 21-19, 21-19; Hahn/Hahn d. Tocco/Sheperdigian 21-17, 21-19; Raducha/Raducha d. Davis/Smekar 21-12, 21-13

Semi-finals: Terry/Lockett d. Penner/Haske 21-11, 21-11; Hahn/Hahn d. Raducha/Raducha 21-10, 19-21, 11-5

Finals: Hahn/Hahn d. Terry/Lockett, injury default

Women's Doubles — Bauer/Betts d. Fairman/Harrison 21-19, 21-17

Hawaii

Woody Cox and Sam Koanui were the organizers of the Hawaii Open Racquetball Tournaments at the Central YMCA in Honolulu Oct. 19-23 for women and Nov. 1-5 for men.

Jane Goodsill

Women's Results

First Round: Carol Leiban d. Jackie Leong, Jill Savage d. Luella Tahara, Dancetta Feary d. Rachael Haili, Shu Takayasu d. Mary Mason, Cheryl Zarbough d. Ginger Hendrickson

Quarters: Lorna Naluai d. Leiban, Feary d. Savage, Gomes d. Takayasu, Jane Goodsill d. Zarbough

Semis: Naluai d. Feary, Goodsill d. Gomes

Finals: Naluai d. Goodsill 21-17, 18-21, 11-3

Men's Results

First Round: Kevin Dorr d. Dale Landrum, Tim Geary d. John Nolan, Loyd Wailai d. Bernie Melemai, Randy Lau d. Jabo, George Akeo d. Dennis Haynes, Don Olsen d. Danny Vega, Norman Akau d. Paul Collins, Owen Lovell d. Bill Casart, Sam Koanui d. Mark Renzi, Stan Draper d. Les Skelton, Woody Cox d. Andy Keaunui Jr., Manny Rezentes d. Andy Keaunui Sr., Paul Bonds d. Nelson Moku, Alan Naulai d. Bobby Ubasa

Second Round: Shippy Kealoha d. Dorr, Geary d. Wailai, Lau d. Akeo, Olsen d. Akau, Lovell d. Koanui, Cox d. Draper, Rezentes d. Bonds, Naluai d. Wong

Quarters: Kealoha d. Geary, Lau d. Olsen, Cox d. Lovell, Rezentes d. Naluai

Semis: Lau d. Kealoha, Cox d. Rezentes

Finals: Lau d. Cox

Okinawa

The Okinawa Racquetball Association and the Kadena USO held their first of six racquetball tournaments at Makiminato Gym during the Columbus Day weekend. The tournament drew over 60 participants in the open, novice, women's and doubles divisions.

Ken Allison won the Men's Open by defeating Don Greene and David Yarde won the Novice division against Barvia Harris. Greene/Allison were Men's Doubles winners.

Vittert, Ektelon, Leach, Saranac and Seamco provided prizes.



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

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For the past three years Jeff Verona, 26, has been driving to every pro tour stop that's a reasonable distance from his home in Chicago.

Verona, who says racquetball is his "main and only" interest, is fascinated by the way the top pros can execute the shots they've planned before they even enter the court.

"They have the brains to play the game—they train all year and their games are really thought out," Jeff observes.

One brainy pro whom Verona particularly admires is Charlie Brumfield ("a guy with a mature attitude—one you can look up to, but who's always willing to talk to the fans") and the match that

stands out among the hundreds he's watched is one that Brumfield played.

"It was the tour stop in Milwaukee in 1975," Jeff recalls. *"Brumfield was playing Richie Wagner. In one rally they kept hitting the ball fast and hard for about five minutes—then Brumfield finally won the point."*

Though Jeff spends his own hard earned money (he's a machinist) on pro tournaments "mainly because it's exciting and good fun," he's also picking up pointers for his own game.

But Verona makes it clear that he is "strictly a recreational player . . . I myself would never want to play under that kind of pressure. Sometimes I think I'd like to be a top player, but I realize it's only a dream."

—Arthur Shay photo



Watching his favorite pros from the stands Jeff Verona feels as if a few of his own dreams are coming true.

Know of any other avid pro tour followers? Let us know their names and we'll write about them in future issues. ED.

Jeff Verona



Racquetball, Running Center Opening Benefits Cancer Society

Chicago Mayor Michael Bilandic, second from right, visited his city's newest racquetball facility when Lehmann Courts held a grand opening benefit that raised \$5,000 for the American Cancer Society. Co-owner Bob Najman, right, and players Ron Rubenstein and Rick Dem, left to right, welcomed Bilandic to the jogging-racquetball center.

You Can Chew Up This Opponent



Chef Ken Brown made this sculpture with roast beef hair, bologna arms and legs, a cheese T-shirt, sliced potato shorts and chopped liver feet, and then he added a lemon frosted blueberry cake gear bag for a Chicagoland Racquetball Association luncheon proclaiming November as Racquetball Month.



Steve Levon, general manager of Four Flags Court Club, Inc., Niles, IL, explains racquetball scoring to Steven Williams, Muscular Dystrophy Association poster child, as the club begins its four month challenge ladder to raise money for MDA.

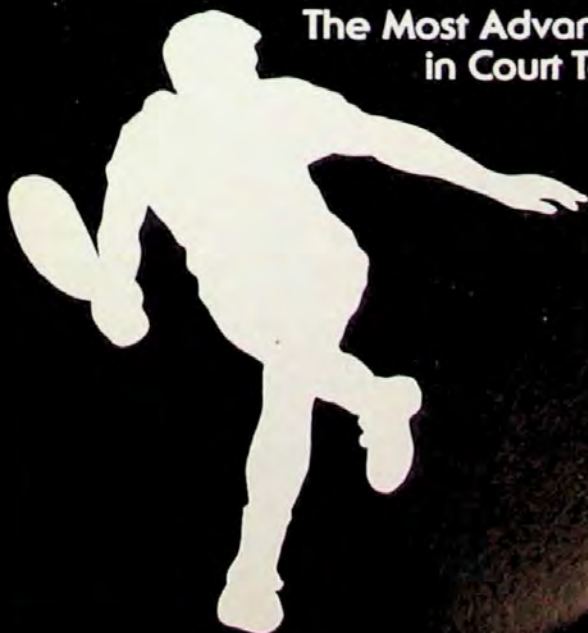
Jaycees Name Craig Hall One of Ten Outstanding Men



Craig Hall, president and chairman of the board of Standard Realty Corp./Sports Illustrated Court Clubs, Inc., is one of America's Ten Outstanding Young Men for 1979 named by the United States Jaycees. Hall, who was one of the main banquet speakers at the June, 1978, Nationals, held at Sports Illustrated's Lemontree (MI) club, turned a \$4,000 investment in a rundown rooming house into a personal net worth of more than \$15 million in just 11 years. Hall is one of 10 men between 18 and 36 years old distinguished in the fields of business, entertainment, sports, health care and government service, honored by the Jaycees for this 41st year. Hall is 28.

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The Other Racquet Sports

by Dick Squires

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**Racquetball —
The word: "Kill!"**

—Arthur Shay photo



Glass walls opened another chapter in racquetball history—they turned the game into a spectator sport.

Brief History and Evolution

No other racquet sport had a faster and more frenzied evolution than racquetball. The development of racquetball is essentially the tale of two men possessing very different motivations and backgrounds.

Organized racquetball goes back to the years immediately following World War II. Joseph G. Sobek, a New York and Connecticut tennis and squash teaching professional, was discharged from the military service in the late 1940s. He took a job with a Connecticut based rubber manufacturing firm. Being an excellent racquets wielder, he had a good deal of difficulty finding

opponents who could give him much of a game when he sought some exercise. He did acquire something of a workout playing handball at the nearby Greenwich Y.M.C.A., but according to him the game was "pretty rough on the old hands, especially for surgeons and concert pianists. It takes about six months to develop the callouses required to make the game painlessly enjoyable."

Fairly quickly he and his genteel friends substituted a durable wooden paddle for their bare palms, which sped up the game somewhat and spared the hand. Joe thought paddleball was fun, but it

occurred to him that a short handled, strung racquet would be more lively and might even produce a better game.

Newspaper accounts nowadays invariably state that Joe Sobek "sawed off a regular lawn tennis racquet," but the truth of the matter is that he designed a specific racquet for his new game, using the weight, dimensions, and balance criteria of paddleball, paddletennis and platform tennis paddles.

Working with Charles Currie, the president of the N. J. Magnan Racket Corporation, Joe developed the first racquet prototype for the new game he called "paddle rackets." Manufactured in July of 1950 it was made of wood and strung loosely with high grade nylon. On Nov. 9, 1950 he received his first shipment of the "mass produced" models — all 25 of them — from Magnan's factory in North Attleboro, MA. They were constructed on a steel reinforced badminton racket form.

These first racquets were sold to members of the Greenwich Y.M.C.A., and the game of "paddle rackets" was off the ground. Joe Sobek is the first to point out that he had some marvelous help in his attempts to promote the sport. Frank Minnerly, the physical director at the Greenwich "Y," and George Roberts, the head of the Health Service Department there, did much to encourage newcomers in the fledgling game.

As in so many other racquet sports there was in this one a "ball problem." The much faster handball and paddleball balls flew around and out of the court when hit with the new racquet. One day, while searching around in a five and dime store, Joe noticed a simple red and blue children's playball manufactured and distributed by the A.G. Spalding Company. It was slightly smaller in diameter than the pink core of a regular tennis ball, which up to that

point the Greenwich players had been using. Also the dimestore ball was lighter in weight, had less compression, and its walls were thinner. But when Sobek experimented with this ball, he found it was ideal for the new game: "You could hit the hell out of it and it would still stay in the confines of the court."

This ball worked satisfactorily for several years, but much to the dismay of the paddle rackets participants, the supply was eventually depleted. Joe contacted the Spalding concern only to be informed that the company was completely out of stock. In fact the last time that particular ball had been made was before World War II. Spalding was willing to make a deal, however; it still had the mold and would produce another batch if it received a minimum order of 1,800 balls. To keep his game alive Joe ordered the balls, but only after receiving assurances that they would have the same bounce characteristics and dimensions as the old. (The new color was to be solid blue.)

The aging process had naturally produced the perfect ball, but who wanted to wait two or three years . . .

On Aug. 30, 1954, the newly manufactured "same" balls arrived. To his dismay Sobek saw instantly that they were much livelier and larger in diameter than the old balls. It developed that the five and dime store balls they had been using were made 10 to 15 years before, and over the years they had lost some of their size and internal pressure. The aging process had naturally produced the perfect ball, but who wanted to wait two or three years before the new ones had lost enough pressure and stabilized at a point where they would be useable for paddle rackets?

Joe Sobek's affiliation with the rubber company made it possible for him to use his influence and contacts to find an adequate substitute. He got in touch with several rubber ball companies and received numerous balls from all over the country, but none was satisfactory.

At the time the Seamless Rubber Company (Seamco) was located in nearby New Haven, CT. Employed there was a close friend of Joe's, an engineer who owed him a favor. Joe told him his problem and was given instant cooperation. After several abortive efforts Seamco researched and developed a blue ball that seemed to work out satisfactorily. Breakage was a problem, but at least the game had a ball that played well. For years Seamco was to make the only ball available, and their entire production went to one Joe Sobek. Magnan, since purchased by Bancroft, continued to make the "official paddle rackets racquet." For over a decade Joe was sole distributor of the game's only racquets and balls.

In 1952 he founded the National Paddle Rackets Association and codified the official playing rules. It was his wish to preserve and standardize the rules, or if a change became necessary, it would be done with some thought. (All too often "in-house" rules were being devised and used at the whim of a particular Y.M.C.A.'s athletic director.) The original rules, written and printed up in 1951 at Sobek's expense, combined those of both handball and squash racquets. To this day Joe Sobek strongly believes these rules were the best ever developed: "Our rules incorporated service boxes, within which the server's ball had to land, just as in squash. As long as the server won points he would have to alternate his service placement from one box to the other. Nowadays the service has become an incredibly dominant weapon because the server can put the ball anywhere in the court beyond the short line."

As Greenwich business executives smitten with the game were transferred to other areas of the country, they called Joe and gave him orders for racquets and balls. Because so many were determined to bring new converts to the "Greenwich Game" Mr. Sobek found himself deeply involved in the

mail order business. He and his wife, Nancy, personally packed and shipped equipment and rule books after work, often into the wee hours of the morning. Sobek was, indeed, the lonely pioneer of paddle rackets, but his unfailing dedication and promotional efforts were beginning to realize results. The sport spread initially to Memphis, then to Y.M.C.A. centers in Cleveland, to St. Louis, and eventually out to San Diego and on up the entire coast to Seattle. This migration during the 1950s and '60s was slow but sure, and primarily promoted through word of mouth. One Y.M.C.A. physical director would call the game to the attention of his counterpart in some other area of the country, and slowly the sport established itself from coast to coast.

Frequently Joe would send out racquets, balls, and instructional literature *"with no obligation."* If the sport did not prove to be a popular activity, the athletic director could return the equipment and get back his money. (Not one single customer took advantage of this money back guarantee.) The prime customers were Y.M.C.A.'s, Y.M.H.A.'s, athletic clubs, gymnasiums, colleges, military posts and recreational organizations. Wherever there were handball courts, paddle rackets could be played. The important point to note here is that there were approximately 50,000 public handball courts already built and being used, making the astonishing growth of the sport possible in such a short period.

In addition to answering piles of correspondence and spending hour after hour of spare time on billing, shipping and accounting Joe Sobek traveled all over the country playing exhibitions and giving clinics wherever the paddle rackets program was adopted and introduced. In the early 1960s, he gladly turned over the entire distribution of racquets and balls to the Bancroft Racket Manufacturing Company, keeping for himself only a small royalty on all sales between 1962 and 1967. Even though he did not make a *"killing"* on this deal, Joe is happy he did it, and sums up his attitude this way: *"No monetary reward could compensate me for the work and time I devoted to paddle rackets in the 1950s and '60s. The appreciation expressed to me by physical directors,*

athletic organizations, and players themselves has been rewarding in itself. Even though I have received no income whatsoever from paddle rackets since 1967, I'm glad I did what I did." Sobek is obviously a man who has gotten great satisfaction from what he has been able to accomplish, as well as from the recognition he has finally received. For him being the *"Father of Racquetball"* is compensation enough. He is assured of the niche in the history of racquetball that Abner Doubleday holds in the history of baseball, Dr. James Naismith holds in basketball and Walter Wingfield holds in lawn tennis. Most other men in Sobek's position might spend the rest of their lives waking up at three o'clock in the morning to bemoan the fact that they had not *"cashed in"* on their inventions. Joe Sobek sleeps well at night.

Just for the record the first *"national"* paddle rackets tournament was held at the New Britain, Connecticut *"Y"* in April, 1959, 10 years before the premier national tournament of racquetball at the Jewish Community Center in St. Louis, the event that is most often listed in other histories of racquetball.

As a matter of fact another *"big tournament"* was organized in May of 1968 at the Jewish Community Center in Milwaukee. Under the able and avid leadership of Larry Lederman, its athletic director, the Center invited both paddleball and paddle rackets players. (The year before, 1967, Joe Sobek had sent several of his *"gut strung paddles"* out to Milwaukee. The new game was well received at the Center instantly, and it tickled Lederman's curiosity. He wanted to ascertain once and for all whether the racquet or the paddle made for a better game.) The tournament committee, which the previous year had formed the National Paddleball Association, called the event the *"National Paddleball Tournament,"* failing to differentiate between paddleball and paddle rackets. In spite of this confusion, 72 players from all over the United States entered the tournament.

Another important date in the history of racquetball is Nov. 12, 1966, when Joe Sobek was invited to the Downtown Leslie Stratton Y.M.C.A., in Memphis, TN. Sobek was asked to help inaugurate a new glass court, on which

the top paddle rackets player from New England, Myron Friedman, was to play an exhibition against the Memphis city champion, Giles Coors. This was to be followed by a handball demonstration pitting two skillful players, Gus Lewis and Ken Schneider, against each other. Joe did the *"running commentary"* during the display of his game, and a distinguished looking Chicago entrepreneur, president of the U. S. Handball Association at the time, was to comment on the racquetless game. This latter man's name was Robert W. Kendler.

Wherever handball courts were located feathers were bound to be ruffled and harsh words were often exchanged.

Ever since the creation of Mr. Sobek's hybrid game — paddle rackets — a cross between squash and handball, there had been a continuing feud. As might be expected the oldtime, incumbent handballers and the maverick breed, paddle racketeers, had little use for each other. Wherever the sports tried to coexist this feud often became quite vocal and even disruptive. In some clubs the paddle racketeers' time on the court was severely restricted. In some other private clubs, community centers and Y.M.C.A.s the new game was banned. Wherever handball courts were located feathers were bound to be ruffled, and harsh words were often exchanged. In some cases the dispute came to the point where members threatened the management of their clubs with resignation if they had to fight for court time with *"that other game."* This tense situation often persisted only until the handball players were cajoled into trying the new game. An adroit handball player usually had trouble finding a good game. There were plenty of paddle rackets beginners, however, looking for competition. Reluctantly at first, many of those were converted to the new game, and not surprisingly some were destined to become the fledgling sport's strongest advocates.

Even though Sobek and Kendler shared the same dais as featured speakers in Memphis, they hardly talked to one another. Kendler,

however, who has made millions of dollars in Chicago real estate by being tough, prescient, and perceptive, must have liked what he saw of paddle rackets on that day. Just three years later, during the running of the *first international* championship (both U.S. and Canadian players competed), the same Bob Kendler, who had done so much for handball, was elected president of the newly formed International Racquetball Association (I.R.A.). Kendler saw to it that the United States Handball Association (U.S.H.A., which he had formed and headed for 18 years) and the official publication of handball, *Ace* (also owned and published by Kendler) supported both paddleball and paddle rackets. The strong support of Kendler's organization and magazine were important to the development of the new game, and they helped Kendler in his campaign to become president of the I.R.A.

The hard core of players who decided to hold the "*first international tournament*" in 1969 believed it would be appropriate to give the new sport a formal and more descriptive name. To many the name "*paddle rackets*" was confusing and therefore unacceptable. (Indeed, the new game was not played with a paddle at all.) Most of the competitors at that time were athletes who had moved from handball to paddleball and then on to the new sport, which was played on the same court but employed Joe Sobek's strung racquets. Bob McInerney, a San Diego based tennis professional, has been given credit for coming up with the name "*racquetball*," the label that has stuck ever since.

The winner of the first National Racquetball tournament was Dr. Bud Muehleisen, a two time U.S. Paddleball champion. Muehleisen, who converted to paddle rackets in the mid 1960s, was the softspoken, bespectacled dentist

from San Diego who was to become a leading proponent of and spokesman for the new sport. In fact his involvement was so enthusiastic and time consuming that he gave up his successful dental practice and became involved full-time with the sport. In February, 1978, the same mild mannered man, who by then had endorsed his own line of racquets and balls, brought a \$1 million suit against several "*giants*" of racquetball. He claimed restraint of trade on the part of Seamco, Leach, Colgate-Palmolive, the U.S.R.A., and the I.R.A., among others, because they had allegedly made it compulsory for the top touring pros to wear shirts imprinted with names of his competitors.

Joe Sobek, already the "*forgotten man*," attempted to convince Bob Kendler that there was no need for two associations. Sobek had officially incorporated the "*National Paddle Rackets Association*" in March of



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1968, even though he had already been using the name for over 16 years. But for one reason or another Kendler, the new titular head of racquetball, completely ignored Joe's attempts to compromise and to consolidate the various factions who made claim to overseeing the game. A 1977 *Sports Illustrated* article dealing with racquetball and Kendler may give some insights into his character: "*Push Bob Kendler, and he is going to push back. With him it's a conditioned reflex. He is rich and powerful and loves a challenge. He will use his money and influence without reluctance. He is one of a kind, an original - the vanished American, the relentless Midwestern tycoon out of a Frank Norris novel, a man of absolute certainty in the correctness of his acts.*"

The tennis and squash professional from Greenwich was realistic enough to shy away from a battle with such an imposing figure. Sobek knew that splintering the sport into factions could do much harm to the game, especially during its formative stages. He also knew that Kendler, who had done so many good things for handball, could do much for the "baby." In 1951 Kendler had taken away the jurisdiction of handball from the Amateur Athletic Union and formed the U.S. Handball Association. The A.A.U., which had governed the sport for over 25 years, was letting the sport languish. Kendler had brought that "smelly, brutal sport" out of the basement and given it some respectability. Joe was convinced that Kendler's dynamism, contacts, magazine and financial wherewithal made him the ideal person to carry on the mission he had started over twenty years before.

Joseph G. Sobek's legacy is assured: he has rightfully been given credit for being the creator of racquetball. And if he is the "Father," then the man who took over in 1969 very emphatically became and still is the "Emperor." From the day Bob Kendler became the president of the I.R.A., he brought to his new position the same effective strategy and energetic leadership he had employed to promote and administer his first love, handball.

In 1971, just about three years after the International Racquetball Association started down the road to commercial success, the directors of this

democratically run body became somewhat officious. They asked for an accounting of some of the "deals" Kendler had negotiated with racquet and ball manufacturers. They were not accusing him of anything underhanded. Instead their collective noses were somewhat out of joint because he alone was running the game, and was somewhat like a demagogue. The democratic forces clashed head-on with the aristocratic ruler. It was 12 against one, which, where Bob Kendler is concerned, is just about even odds. He walked out of the meeting giving fair warning that he was going to establish his own administrative body for racquetball. And being a man of his word, he did just that. Today, eight years later, the I.R.A. is just barely still functioning, a fairly feeble voice from out of the past.

The United States Racquetball Association (USRA) and the National Racquetball Club (NRC), formed subsequently by Kendler, are now the major bodies governing the amateur and professional development of the game. By allying his groups with the major manufacturers of balls (Seamco, now located in La Grange, GA) and racquets (Leach, in San Diego, CA), Kendler was able to induce them to sign long term agreements whereby his not-for-profit organizations would receive a regular payment of royalties based on the companies' annual sales of officially endorsed racquetball products.

The business concerns who stand to profit most from racquetball's increased popularity . . . are helping to pay for the sport's further expansion.

The royalty monies pay for his ever expanding staff of workers at the organizations headquarters, which are in Skokie, IL. In other words part of the money generated by the sport is plowed right back into its promotion and expansion. When you think of it, isn't this a logical approach? The business concerns who stand to profit most from racquetball's increased popularity are the ones who, through sales of equipment and accessories, are helping to pay for the sport's further expansion. It is so simple and consistent that I wonder why the governing bodies of other sports do not

attempt to do the same. (Of course it helps to have manufacturing concerns who have vision and believe in the future of a specific sport!)

The monies also help support a magazine that became a monthly in January, 1978. *National Racquetball*, like Kendler's original publication for handball, *Ace*, is distributed nationally. The magazine contains an abundance of instructional articles, in-depth interviews with top players, helpful information on new clubs opening up, reports on association activity, both amateur and professional "doings," tournament results on national and regional levels and plenty of paid advertising.

Presently amateur affiliated associations in every state as well as 10 regional organizations belong to the USRA. All receive some financial support from the "home office" in their promotion efforts, junior development programs, tournament activities and so on. The tightly controlled and well organized administration are no doubt one key to the tremendous success of this game. And while Kendler has kept control close to his own vest, no one can doubt that it was he who "made" the game.

USRA statistics show a remarkable growth in the sport over the last few years. As recently as 1970 only about 50,000 people in the country played racquetball, or paddle rackets, depending on the name used in a particular college, athletic club, or Y.M.C.A. By 1973, that original core was multiplied seven times. And since 1974 the number of racquetballers has doubled each year. Depending on whose definition of "player" you wish to believe, the present count of players is somewhere between 6 and 8 million, and around 35 percent of them are women.

In the year 1972, slightly over 10,000 racquets and 650,000 balls were sold. Today these figures have soared to 100,000 racquets a month and 13 million balls annually. Even tennis in its astronomical growth years, 1971 to 1975, did not match racquetball's annual growth percentages.

The construction of new courts is also a booming business. "They're popping up like dandelions in spring," one court

builder told me. Up until 1972 there were no commercial racquetball clubs. All play was on the several thousand handball courts around the U.S. In just the past six years, however, over 700 racquetball centers have been built. The average number of courts per center is eight. The average cost per court is \$65,000. To date none of these complexes has failed. They've all made money in the first year of operation, and only one has had a change of ownership.

In the Chicago area, where racquetball has replaced indoor tennis as the number one racquet activity, there are close to 60 clubs. And it is probably no coincidence that the country's first commercial clubs were built here, in Mr. Kendler's "backyard," and that the growth there has been exceeded only by that in racquet starved southern California.

The pro tour began, with Kendler's blessing, in 1973. There was little prize money for the first tournament and it almost flopped, but today 16 men and eight women are competing in separate tours at major cities for close to \$250,000 in prize money. In addition to Leach's and Seamco's active support of the tour and underwriting the cost of cross country clinics, Colgate-Palmolive is putting some real bucks to lure more and better racquet wielders into the sport.

(Colgate-Palmolive now owns Leach and Bancroft.) In addition sports-industry giants such as Dunlop, Wilson, and AMF are staging tournaments and exhibitions, marketing products and signing up touring pros. A couple of major breweries (Coors and Anheuser-Busch) have also gotten into the act. And *Sports Illustrated* is putting its muscle and money behind a young man in the midwest, Craig Hall. Their joint venture goal is to build 75 to 100 new racquetball clubs within the next few years.

Suffice it to say that the future of racquetball looks bright. Some optimists are even predicting by 1985, just 15 years after the Association started counting people, the sport could exceed regular tennis in the number of serious active players.

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"The Game Today and Tomorrow" plus glossary from *The Other Racquet Sports*.

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Playing Racquetball Near Sea or Sun

Last month *National Racquetball* guided skiing racquetball players to the spots where they could get into a court after leaving the slopes. (Add to that list the new Incline Court House, 300 Northwest Blvd., Incline Village, NV 89450, near Incline, Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows ski areas.)

Now *National Racquetball* presents a guide for players who want to pull themselves up from the sand or out of the pool long enough to keep their racquetball games from getting rusty.

On a warm weather vacation you can look around for outdoor courts — three or four wall — at high schools and colleges or at the beach if you're taking an oceanside holiday. You'll play with the same ball and racquet you're accustomed to, but you won't be able to use your ceiling game and you'll lose the serve or rally if your ball flies out of the court.

You can try the outdoor game in luxury if you check into LaPosada, a new "mission style oasis" resort hotel at the foot of Camelback Mt. in Scottsdale, AZ. The Del Webb resort on 35 acres includes a pair of four wall outdoor courts. La Posada is at 4349 E. Lincoln Dr., Scottsdale 85253, 602-952-0420.

For indoor facilities in some of the country's popular resort areas contact these centers, which are open to out-of-town players.



Arizona

Arizona Athletic Club
1425 W. 14th St.
Tempe 85281
602-894-2281

The club is open to members of affiliated athletic clubs in other cities. Others should check with the manager for special arrangements.

Tucson Athletic Club
4220 E. Bellevue
Tucson 85712
602-881-0140

This club offers the same arrangement as the Tempe Club for members of affiliate clubs.

YumAthletiClub
300 W. 22nd St.
Yuma 85364
602-783-2171

California

The San Diego area is such a racquetball mecca *National Racquetball* can't begin to list all the places where you can play. Jerry Monnell, our USRA state chairman, would be happy to help you locate a club if you'd call him evenings or weekends at 714-275-3344 or you can find "Racquetball Courts" in the San Diego phone book yellow pages.

Florida

The Courtrooms
940 N.W. 7th Tr.
Ft. Lauderdale 33311
305-764-8700

Jewish Community Center
18900 N.E. 25th Ave.
North Miami 33160
305-932-4200

Challenge courts are open to all.

The Racquet Ball
5165 Adanson
Orlando 32804
305-645-3999

If you present your USRA membership card or proof that you belong to a racquetball club in your home town, you'll get \$2 off of the guest court fee.

Supreme Courts Center
5065 N.E. 13th Ave.
Ft. Lauderdale 33334
305-491-2255

Hawaii

Central Branch YMCA
401 Atkinson Dr.
Honolulu 96814
808-941-3344

Nuanu Branch YMCA
1441 Pali Highway
Honolulu 96813
808-536-3556

Louisiana

Racquetball One
One Shell Square
New Orleans 70139
504-522-2956

During the two weeks of Mardi Gras, culminating in Mardi Gras Day Feb. 27, you can play racquetball and then sit in the lounge or whirlpool and get a perfect view of the parades from this new club on the 13th floor of a high rise in downtown New Orleans.

South Florida Has The Fever

by Tim Gallen

Who would believe it? Especially in a tropical paradise for outdoor sports like para-sailing, scuba diving, golf, tennis and a hundred other enticements.

Believe it! Seems like just about everyone in South Florida is chasing racquetballs.

Actually it won't come as much of a surprise to those who know the area well. South Florida is really a megalopolis not unlike Los Angeles. Miami, South Miami, Kendall, Hollywood and Fort Lauderdale are all pretty much alike. Contrary to some opinions they're young, vibrant and growing. A lot of families are settling there . . . just the kind of environment in which racquetball thrives.

Racquetball Well-Founded

Surprisingly racquetball's roots in Miami go back to the end of World War II. In the late 40's, when Miami Beach was converting from a military training area back to a tourist mecca, the city fathers' built Flamingo Park — what was to be hailed as one of the finest total recreation facilities in the nation. In the park are some of the first three and four wall outdoor courts in the U.S.

For years a small cadre of fiercely devoted handball players dominated the courts at Flamingo with an intensity resembling a New York street gang. As the South Florida mainland grew, and Everglade swamps were converted to open residential communities, new parks were developed . . . along with them, more outdoor courts. As a new generation of handball and, eventually, racquetball players started taking over these concrete hot boxes, the sport entrenched itself.

A few years ago, however, recreational developers started building indoor courts . . . air conditioned, hardwood floor courts with smooth panelled walls. The boom began.



Outdoor To Indoor

"Miami's in a transition," says Tom Costa, club pro at Kendall Racquetball & Health Club. "In California we saw the indoor courts develop first, then as prices rose, the municipalities started building outdoor courts. South Floridians started on outdoor courts and are learning to adjust to a completely different game indoors."

Most of the area's racquetball pros agree with Costa. All feel that racquetball in South Florida will take some time before the general competency of players reaches the level of areas like Chicago and San Diego. But, they add, the sport is young.

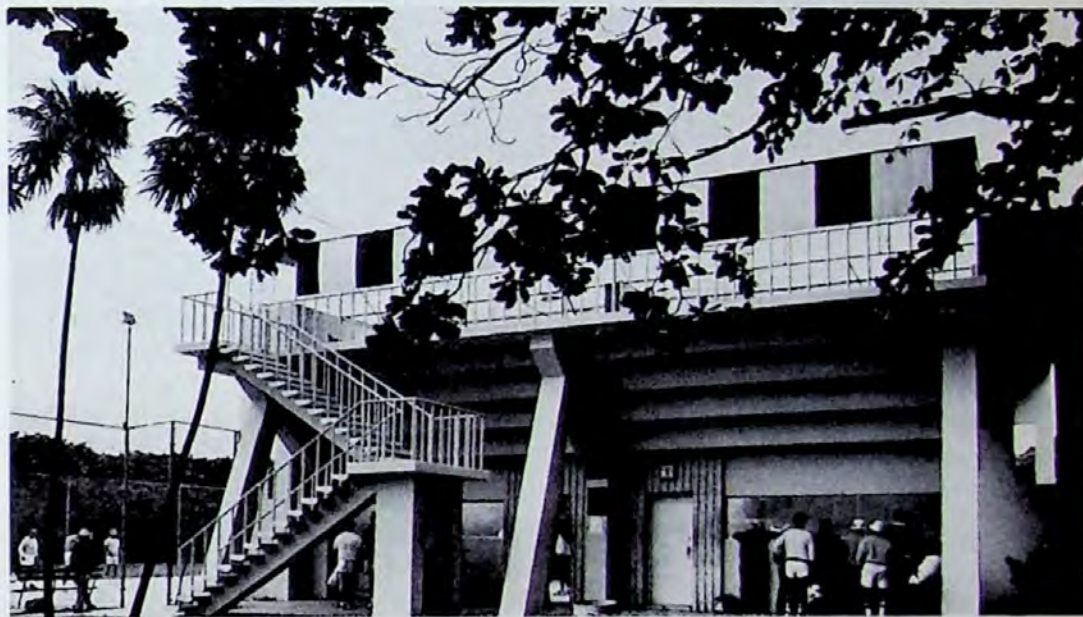
"Nevertheless, it is growing," says Fred Blaess of Fort Lauderdale's Courtrooms, the first indoor club in the South Florida area. "What we lack in experience, we make up in determination. It's part of the fever. Many of the new people coming into the game are now starting out on indoor courts, they're fierce competitors, they practice regularly and learn quickly."

Just two years ago the best South Florida players were transplants from northern states.

"Today we have players like 1977 Florida State Champion Kenny Hendricks and former Miami Herald illustrator-turned pro, Cheryl Nelson. There is no doubt that the level of play is still sandlot, but we're moving so fast, it's only a matter of time before we grab some national championships."

Everyone, including celebrities, is in on the action. At the Sportrooms in South Dade Miami Dolphins Tim Foley and Don Nottingham play regularly for fun and fitness.

Racquetball players have invaded the City of Miami Beach Flamingo Park handball courts, where an open ceiling lets players get their Florida suntans.



Racquetball is "in" in South Florida. Courts have virtually popped up in South Dade, South Miami's Kendall area, West Miami and Hollywood in recent months. Three clubs have already opened in Fort Lauderdale, more transient than other areas to the south.

While a few of the clubs are simply courts with locker areas, the state of the art has recently blossomed with the opening of "total clubs" like Kendall Racquetball and Health Club in South Miami's Kendall area. Kendall's 25-year-old to 40-year-old members join not only to play racquetball, but also to become active in fitness programs and a sophisticated social atmosphere. They are indicative of what the future promises.

Laid Back

None of South Florida's clubs are stratified as yet. Carpenters play lawyers; one's ability to play the game is still the equalizer. But small changes have come. T-shirts and cutoffs are being replaced by designer shirts and double knits. Name brand equipment is showing up to replace inexpensive racquets. Unlike the west coast, and to the dismay of club pros here, eye protection is virtually nonexistent. Bottom line though, the game is still a common denominator breaking down income barriers and creating its own special kind of camaraderie.

Part of the reason for the sport's phenomenal success is that racquetball is played year round in Miami. Out of state visitors are common in both winter and summer especially in the Fort Lauderdale clubs. Fort Lauderdale players, self proclaimed as the "friendliest and most

competitive," welcome the chance to play non-regulars if only to gauge their own games. They get plenty of action when the snowbirds descend.

"Although we find it is seasonal (November through February), we have actively promoted our facility to northerners," says Jeff Leon of Supreme Courts. *"We get a lot of people from Canada, Chicago and New York."* Courtrooms Director Fred Bleass agrees. *"We have developed special 'Snowbird' rates and try to get a special US-Canadian rivalry going."*

Programs Popular, Women Respond

Another characteristic of South Florida is its penchant for programs. Courtrooms recently had 700 people join in their "Racquetball Guarantee" program, a nine-hour orientation course for beginners spanning three weeks. At a recent Supreme Courts tournament sponsored by Yoo-Hoo, a chocolate energy drink, there were so many participants that entries had to be limited to one class per player.

South Florida women have responded to the game in great numbers. Tired of trying to learn the niceties of tennis under a broiling sun many women have met with their first real feeling of success in racquetball and most clubs report at least half their membership is female. The women in South Florida play racquetball just as intensely as the men, attracted to the physical fitness aspects of the game and its comparatively simple learning process.

Who's Who

Some players are making a name for themselves in South Florida circles. With them ride the hopes for both amateur and professional titles and national status. Yoo-Hoo tourney winner, Joe Icaza, and runner-up, Steve Sulli, are big names in Fort Lauderdale as are Audrey Simton and Nancy Hornack. Doubles Players John Drury and Steve Squire, Debby Drury and Dee Lewis are also big tournament names. Statewide South Floridians Frank Johnson and Kenny Hendricks are gaining fame.

Rates for court time are pretty much the same in most clubs, anywhere from \$3 to \$6 for nonprime; \$4 to \$7 for prime time. Most of the clubs offer discount rates and most managers don't expect prices to rise. If the cost of indoor racquetball is going to drive South Florida players back outdoors, it isn't written on the wall yet.

"Country Club of the Seventies"

Perhaps the most promising characteristic of the racquetball experience here is the advent of the complete facilities offering swimming pools, nautilus equipped health clubs, basketball courts, stress tests, inhalation therapy rooms and other goodies. As with the rest of the country racquetball courts aren't enough to draw the avid player anymore. While clubs like Sportrooms in South Dade and Courtrooms in Fort Lauderdale are expanding to meet the increased appetites of their members, sophisticated new "total club concepts" like Kendall Racquetball & Health Club are opening their doors with everything included. Restaurants, plush interior finishing and other amenities are aimed directly at making these facilities the "Country Clubs of the Seventies."

Other new clubs are coming on strong.

South Broward Racquet & Sports Club is rising on a 10 acre site in North Hollywood to serve a hungry crowd now forced to drive long distances to the north and south for time on the courts. A small facility at the Jewish Community Center in North Miami is always crowded. All in all, there's more and more opportunity to play . . . and play. Total concept clubs like Kendall are attracting the professional and family players with amenities, other clubs cater to singles with late night parties. Some remain bastions for the old timers who want nothing but an empty court, peace and quiet.

Regardless, there's no doubt about it. South Florida's got a heavy case of racquetball fever. ●

Fanning that fever for southern Florida residents and visitors is the Jan. 31 to Feb. 4 Kunnan/Kennex Men's Professional Tournament of Champions presented by the Colgate Men's and Women's Professional Racquetball Tour co-sponsored by Leach/Seamco. Sportrooms of Coral Gables is the site of this special tournament, which brings together the top 12 men pros playing for the biggest purse in racquetball history.

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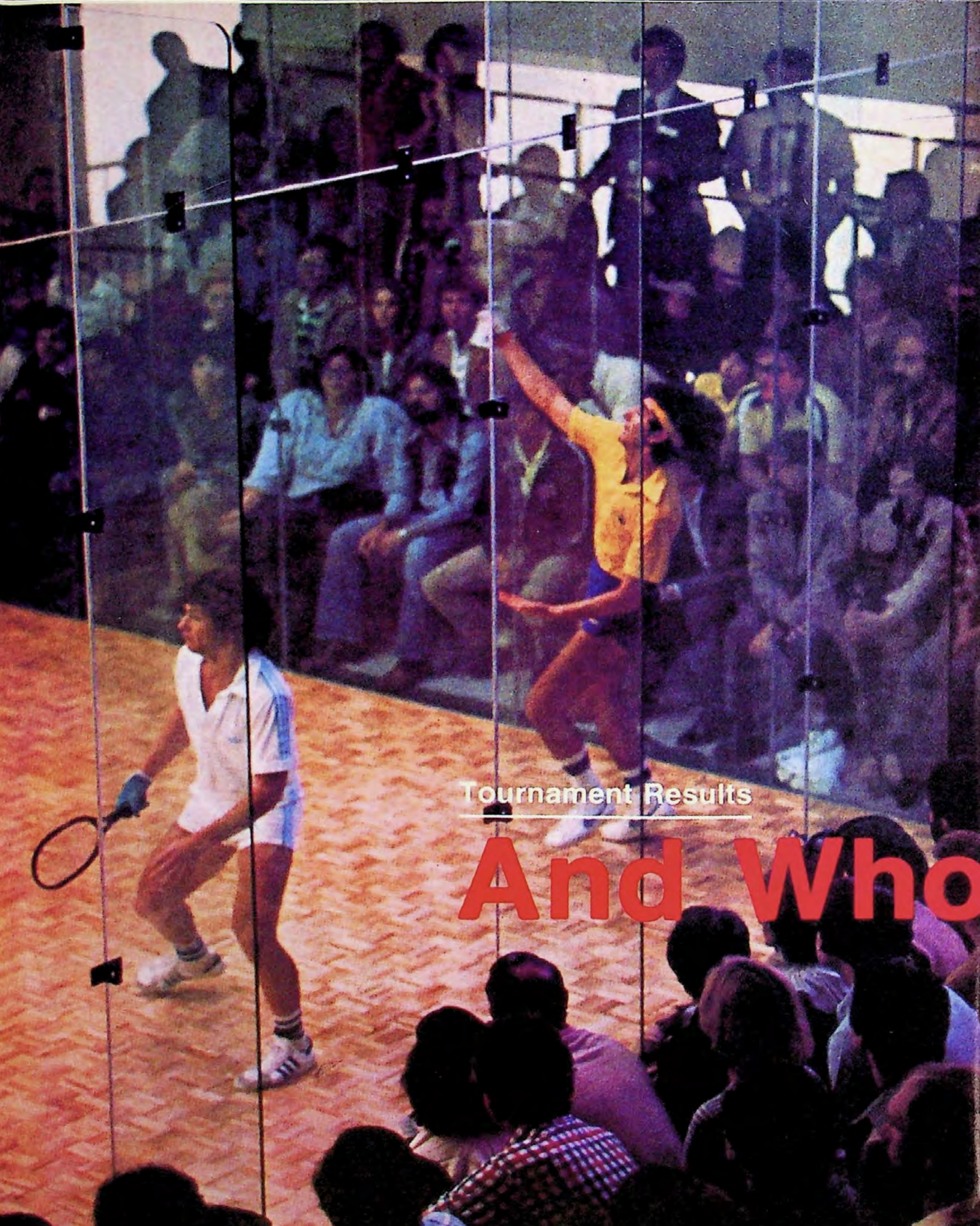
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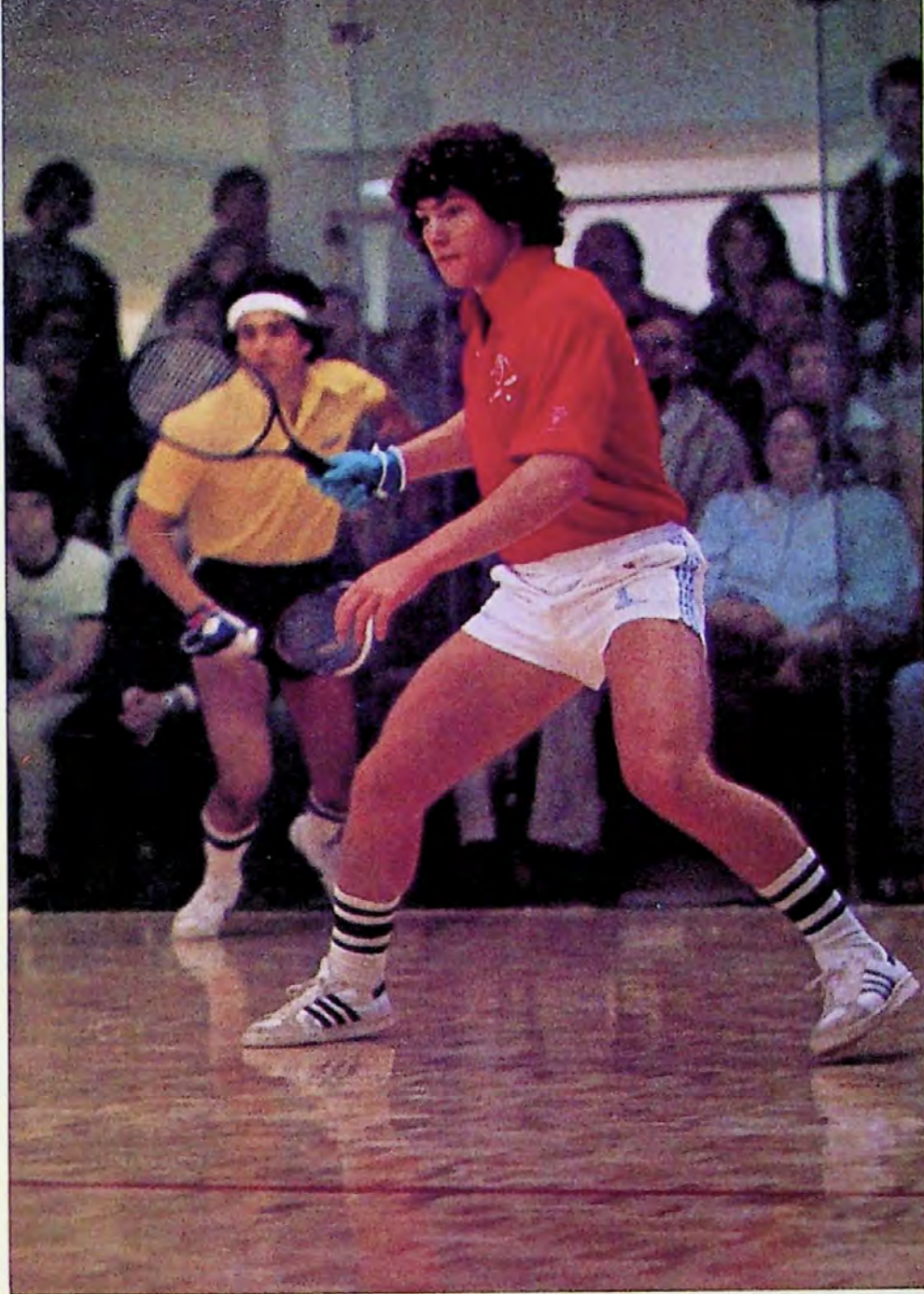
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A photograph of a tennis match in progress on a wooden court. A player in a white shirt and shorts is in the foreground, ready to receive a ball. Another player in a yellow shirt and blue shorts is in the background, having just hit a shot. A large crowd of spectators is visible in the background, seated in bleachers. The image is framed by a glass barrier with vertical supports.

Tournament Results

And Who



Hogan sets up in center court, where you'll usually find him, to bury a forehand kill in the finals.

Was Runner-up?

Jerry Hilecher, for the second time in three starts on the Colgate Pro/Am Tour, came in second — this time at the Seamco Racquetball Classic Nov. 15-19. Hilecher, by virtue of his runner up achievement, bolted past Richard Wagner into second place in the official rankings on the tour.

First place, of course, belongs to the winner of the Seamco tourney, the relentless Marty Hogan, who alternately cruised and battled his way to yet another victory, solidifying his top spot in both the rankings, the money earnings, the Colgate Bonus Pool and any other criteria used in our sport.

In fact with former champion Charlie Brumfield still sidelined with hepatitis each event now becomes a scramble to determine who Hogan's championship round opponent will be. This makes one of the most dramatic events of each tournament the coin flips of the official draw which determines which pros will have to play into Hogan in the top bracket.

We'd love to report that Hilecher, or Wagner, or Steve Strandemo or Craig McCoy or any other player has filled the void left by Brumfield. But that's not the case. Even Hilecher, whose game carries great concentration with precise kills, mixes in enough skips, shorts and mis-hits to leave him barely ahead of his nearest rivals. Jerry went three games in three of his four victories. Hogan has gone three games in three of his last three tournaments.

So while the rest of the field continues to scramble to catch him Marty continues to cash the \$4,500 first place checks each month and continue on his way. That way, of course, is the way of power serves, power drives, power kills and power everything else. And each time out he powers to 21.

Jerry Hilecher, that's who, as he knocks a forehand to the ceiling (l.) in his championship match with Hogan at the Seamco Classic in New York.

There seem to be two patterns to Hogan victories — either he takes a big lead early and coasts home, or the game stays tight early and Marty makes his move midway through. The championship match against Hilecher was of the second variety.

In game one Jerry seemed to respond well to the full gallery at the new Olympic Court club, site of the event in Port Washington, NY, just outside the Big Apple. He grabbed a quick 6-1 lead by being ready to play when the gun sounded.

But Hogan called a time out to get into the match and came back with a run of nine unanswered points to take a 10-6 advantage, mixing passes with kills along with his usual quota of aces.

Hilecher responded by closing the gap to 9-11, hitting a backhand kill in the left corner and watching Hogan stroke a mighty skip. But Marty regained the serve at 11-9 and proceeded to use game plan number two and blow the match wide open with another string of points that had the gallery instantly recognizing why this man is the champion.

At 12-9 a pass down the right line was 13; a forehand kill into the right corner 14; and an ace on a drive to the left 15. Hilecher aided the cause with two skips at this juncture — one forehand and one backhand — as he vainly attempted to regain the serve. A backhand pass down the line right was Hogan's 17th point and despite a Hilecher time out Marty continued to add to the total, connecting on an overhead drive right for 18-9 and another ace (drive right) to make it 19-9.

The run over — Marty sat back and cruised home 21-11.

Dominant serves, weak returns and the ability to kill the ball from any point on the court continue to be Hogan's calling cards. Hilecher played much better than the score gave him credit for, but he caught Hogan on one of his better days.

Game two was a much better game, lacking the big runs and giving the spectators a bit more for their money in rallies. Ties were the rule rather than

the exception with knots coming at 6, 10, 11 and 14 with never more than three points separating the combatants.

The game found Hilecher trading tough serves for tough serves and kills for kills as Hogan applied pressure only to receive pressure right back. It was one of Hilecher's best played games of the season, at least to 14-14.

There Jerry's battery seemed to go dead. Marty notched a single point in each of his next three times in (a forehand kill sandwiched between two backhand kills), but Jerry was unable to answer as Hogan killed with his backhand each time Jerry got the serve.

Still the lithe St. Louisian was in the match, for Hogan stalled at 17, giving Hilecher three serves with the score stopped at 14-17. But again Jerry was unable to connect. As fast as he could put out Marty, Marty did the same.

Well the inevitable then occurred. If you're good enough to hold Hogan scoreless over three innings (Hilecher was) then to win you need to be good enough to score on Hogan during those same innings (Hilecher wasn't). Because you know that if you don't, the dike will certainly fall.

It took only two key shots — a forehand kill into the right corner and a forehand reverse pinch right to left — and the score was now 19-14 and Hilecher's final time out was moot. Jerry came back only to drive a forehand off the back wall into the dirt for 20-14 and despite two more serves at 14-20 was unable to dent the scoreboard.

Hogan ended it with nothing more than his eyes as Jerry's forehand kill attempt from 38 feet fell two inches short. Game and match on the skip, 21-14.

Ah but you don't reach the finals of a pro tour stop without tasting the fruits of victory along the way and Hilecher had four well played wins to relish.



Hilecher races to deep court to cover a pass against Richard Wagner, in the tournament's key match for the rankings.

In the semi-finals the battle for number two ranking was the stake as Hilecher met Wagner, the number two player going into the tournament. Each player knew what was riding — a three month enjoyment of the second spot and all the glory it brings.

And they played the match just like it was for all the marbles, which in view of current pro tour situations it was.

In game one Hilecher was able to run points in bunches, a sure bet to lead to the winner's circle. Two key situations appeared early in the game and both were won by Jerry. Three times each player served with the score 8-6 Hilecher lead, and neither player scored until they both tallied twice to create a 10-8 situation.

McCoy drives his forehand toward the front left corner in his brilliant battle against Hogan in the semi's.



Again Wagner was unable to force home the winners, much to the dismay of his many New Jersey friends who were hoping to see their native son move on to take on that ogre Hogan. But it was Hilecher who forced the issue, taking the next four points and bolting to a 14-8 advantage.

Jerry built on that, cranking up his vaunted kill shot arsenal and leaping to a 19-10 lead which was coast time to a 21-12 first game victory.

In the second game Wagner had only two innings in which he scored more than two points — but they were enough. Trailing 12-14 and at the edge of cashing a semi-final check, Wagner hit three straight kills, accepted a skip from Hilecher and connected on a perfect backhand pass cross court to take a 17-14 lead. Those five points were in the first of his two big innings.

Moments later, leading 18-15, Wagner hit gold again in the form of his second big inning, this one a three-pointer which gave him the game. Hilecher gave him one on a skipped forehand (it was close — he lost the appeal) and Rich tallied the next two on passes, the first a forehand down the right wall — the second a forehand cross court left and the win 21-15.

But as quickly as a game can turn you off, it can turn you on. The tie-breaker found Hilecher on. Wagner made two errors the entire game and still lost 11-3.

Nine of Hilecher's 11 points were pure winners — all kills — not a single pass among them. After a 3-3 tie Wagner saw the serve once at 3-8 but it was over before you could blink. The last three points were noted as forehand kill, left corner; forehand kill, left corner; forehand kill right corner and match.

In the upper bracket semi-final Hogan and McCoy went through their usual shenanigans with the same result — Hogan winning in a weird, but exciting match. Actually weird is an unfair term — the match actually held a great deal of thrills and a near capacity crowd was on their feet at the end.

Game one, however, gave no indication of the drama that was to unfold later. After initial jockeying, which resulted in an 11-7 lead for Hogan, McCoy seemed to falter psychologically and Marty virtually cruised home with a 21-13 win.

So when Craig opened game two with a 6-0 lead, not too many eyebrows were raised as all figured Hogan wouldn't let it get out of control. But despite a double fault on McCoy at 6-1 Craig took a 7-2 lead and when Marty skipped a backhand and Craig caught an ace on a Z serve to the left, it was 9-2 and Hogan stopped play with a time out.

But like a boxer who senses his opponent is on the ropes, McCoy went right back to work after the delay. A backhand kill into the right corner was 10-2; another backhand kill, this one off the back wall, was 11-2 and a backhand pass cross court left made 12-2, and the whispers of upset in the making passed through the gallery.

What happened next was hard to believe, for as McCoy was devastatingly accurate with his shots, so Hogan became — and in a flash. Serving at 2-12 he scored 11 consecutive points (all winners not a single McCoy error) and took a 13-12 lead. Nobody could believe McCoy's lack of a time out to at least try to stop the momentum. After all how often does anybody get Hogan down 12-2? At least enjoy it.

Craig did eventually call a time out, at 18-15 Hogan's lead, but Marty went on to take an insurmountable 20-15 advantage. But then the weird part came into play. McCoy loves to play with his back to the wall, and he did.

Serving at 15-20 he hit a perfect ace, another Z to the left (his pet serve) and followed it with a backhand kill into the right corner to make it 17-20. To make things stranger Hogan nearly gave away the game in the next few rallies.

Still serving McCoy drove a pass-to-be right only to have Hogan attempt to fly kill into the reverse pinch corner — no dice as it skipped and made it 18-20. Craig went for the ace on his next serve and nearly got it with the Z to the left, with Hogan unable to take a full swing resulting in another skipped shot and now it was 19-20. The howling was wonderful.

You'd think Hogan might play it a little safe' right? Wrong. He again tried to fly a potential pass with his forehand and again he hit it into the dirt, making it 20-20 and well within the realm of luck.

So nitty was playing gritty at 20-20 and wouldn't you know it — they both went to the ceiling. The next rally had more ceiling balls and defensive shots than the entire match to that point as neither player seemed to want to take that big gamble. But in the spirit of champions Hogan went for it and took a backhand kill attempt off a good ceiling ball to connect on a 39 foot kill into the left corner, a heart stopping shot and a winner!

But all he gained was the serve and when he picked up a McCoy kill on two bounces, Craig had another shot. And the match got weirder. McCoy controlled the rally and finally Hogan, in a desperate retrieve attempt, was on the floor in the deep left court. All Craig had to do was hit the front wall for the win and, you guessed it — he nearly hit his toe with the shot — another skip and new life for the champ. How long could it go on?

Marty tried to end it quickly, that's for sure. Four shots into the rally he stood in center court and went for the short hop kill which hit the front wall on the short hop and McCoy was granted not only another reprieve, but a chance to snatch the game.

Could you imagine it all? Armpits measured to people's waists as the showdown had to be near. But Hogan was equal to this task and when McCoy mis-hit a backhand, it gave Marty an off-the-back wall opportunity which he promptly rolled out of the right corner to keep the score at 20-20 and give him another shot at the match.

C'mon now all you readers. Tell me what the fitting end would be. The Ace Hogan. The Ace. End it on an ace.

One swing later it was over. A drive to the right was the untouchable ace and Hogan was in another final 21-20. It was truly the best single game of the season.

Of course there were other outstanding matches involving the likes of Mike Yellen, Davey Bledsoe, David Fleetwood and Strandemo. These four

players were the quarter-final losers and not by much as each of the four matches in the quarters went three games.

First up was the match between McCoy and Bledsoe, who continues to show spurts of his overpowering style that led him to the 1977 national title. Davey's game lacks just the touch of consistency and if regained will be as good as any player he might meet en route to the finals. However despite an impressive win over Steve Serot in the round of 16 Bledsoe was unable to squeeze by McCoy in the quarters.

The first game was just a matter of who would score the final points because no game could have been closer to 17-17. Eight 13, 14, 16 and then 17 found the two knotted, until McCoy took advantage of key Bledsoe errors late to win. Both points 20 and 21 came on skips of serves as Bledsoe insisted on shooting the serve and McCoy let him give away the game 21-17.

Game two was much the same as they tied at 18-all and then McCoy on a near-ace grabbed a short-lived 19-18 lead. When Bledsoe regained the serve (on a McCoy error) he never left the service box. Instead of hitting his go-for-broke shots into the floor, he hit them for winners and took the game on a backhand kill, backhand V pass and forehand kill 21-19.

Game three was the tightest of the quarters, with the biggest lead being the final margin. McCoy lost a lead of 7-4 as Bledsoe closed to within 6-7, but never was Davey able to overcome the lead, as he trailed 7-6, 8-6 and 8-7. Somehow McCoy can smell that 11th point, however, and once serving at 8-7 he responded with a backhand pinch kill right to left; a backhand cross court kill off the back wall and then a final and fitting ace on a drive right 11-7.

The second quarter-final found Fleetwood, who entered the quarters with an impressive win over Ben Koltun, against Hilecher, who had been forced to a tie-breaker by Steve Chase. When game one went to Fleetwood, the likable Memphian was the closest to a semi-final berth in his career.

Hilecher, however, is a veteran of the wars and besides he knows what it takes to win the key matches. In this instance it was wait until inexperience takes over and jump on your opportunities.

Ready as the bell sounded for the second game Hilecher jumped to 9-3, 13-5 and 18-7 advantages, leaving Fleetwood grasping for those elusive points.

In the tie-breaker the first innings were crucial and for five serves nobody could dent the point column. Finally and predictably it was Hilecher who tallied twice to gain a slight margin. He held it to 7-6 where two errors by Fleetwood, followed by an ace and a kill, made the final 11-6.

If Fleetwood was victim of inexperience, then there were no excuses for Strandemo's loss in his quarter-final match with Wagner. Something in Strandy's style brings out the worst in Rich and the combination gave Steve an easy first game win 21-10, breaking the game open at the midway point with a flurry of backhand kills along with dominant left side play.

It just didn't seem to be Wagner's day. He fought with the referee, he fought with Strandemo and he fought with himself. The atmosphere was vintage Strandemo and Steve did nothing to upset the situation as he dominated game two by scoring 10 straight points (from 1-6 to 11-6) and taking an imposing 18-9 lead.

Wagner's final time out came at this point and there were as many Wagner backers as there were Spinks backers in the first Ali-Spinks fight. Of course we all know that the impossible happened then, and it occurred here.

Strandemo got stuck on 18. One winning went by and nobody scored. Another inning and Strandemo couldn't score while Wags notched two to make it 11-18. Another scoreless frame for Strandy and Rich added two more and it was now 13-18.

Three more scoreless innings for each player until Wagner hit pay dirt with four to close to within 17-18. Despite the timeouts by Strandemo, the tide never turned. Wagner hit a forehand fly kill, a backhand V pass, waited for the final time out and then watched Strandy skip the ensuing serve for a 21-18 win!

So they went to a tie-breaker and with momentum definitely on his side, Wagner broke open a 2-2 deadlock to 8-2, finally ending the match 11-4 with a forehand fly kill into the right corner.

Hogan and Yellen were the evening's final encounter and the match came out surprisingly well, despite periods of lackadaisical play. Hogan won the first game by taking his big early lead (6-3, 10-4, 15-8) and easing off to make the score closer as he gave Yellen half his points on 39 foot skips.

But as tour regulars now know, Yellen is one of the game's most deceiving players and he has the ability and know how to seize a situation and make the most of it.

He did just that in game two, as Hogan came out looking for his date and found Yellen breaking the game open from 5-5 to 10-5 and 17-9 before Marty regrouped to make a run at him. Yellen was too good, however, and like the quarterback who is forced to pass on third and long, Hogan was unable to complete the shots when he had to have them, and Yellen held on for a 21-16 win.

Mike continued his fine play into the tie-breaker, taking a 3-0 lead on a kill, error by Marty and an ace, but the champ fought back to a 5-5 tie, and looked for his opening.

He found it when Yellen skipped a backhand giving Hogan the lead 6-5 and seemingly loosening Marty's entire body. His next hit was an ace on a drive left and save one side out at 8-5, it was over with three more winners 11-5.

The round of 16 witnessed some good matches with unusual styles fighting each other. Bledsoe and Serot, who never seem to play each other, finally did, with Bledsoe's power dominating Serot, who has lacked kill shot consistency and power, the two lost strengths of his former game.

McCoy had an entertaining win over Mark Morrow 21-14, 21-15 as Morrow is still that offensive backhand away.

Chase gave Hilecher all he wanted taking the first game 21-20 before dropping the match 21-14, 11-6. Chase, who none of the top eight takes seriously, has that effortless style that looks unimpressive but scores points.

Fleetwood and Koltun were expected to be the highlight of the round and the two youngsters didn't let anybody down as they fought to the tie-breaker. Here the two matches in a day may have taken a toll on Koltun (who's not known to be long on conditioning).

Ben had to reach back to stop top rookie Lindsay Myers (though still looking for his first pro win) in the 32's and then a few hours later found himself going the distance against Fleetwood.

It was the Memphian 21-10, 7-21, 11-7 by making the forehand kills when he needed them.

The only other three-gamer of the round found Strandemo and Steve Keeley reliving days of yore in a typical 21-8, 17-21, 11-1 match. Watching two control players play control in view of today's power style was entertaining.

Wagner ousted Eric Campbell, who upset Mike Zeitman in the 32's (isn't somebody always upsetting Mike?) easily 21-9, 21-11; while Hogan and Yellen both had easy times in their preludes. Hogan bested Jerry Zuckerman (an 11-10 winner over Don Thomas in the 32's) and Yellen stopped first time 16'er David Peck.

Other than the Koltun-Myers match the other highlight of the first round never took place, that being the Bledsoe-Vic Niederhoffer match. Niederhoffer, who upset reigning national amateur champ Jeff Bowman in qualifying Wednesday, misread the draw and defaulted to Bledsoe Thursday in a no show.

Men's Pro

(Qualifiers): Capitanelli, Kwartler, Niederhoffer, Hawkins, Deuster, Myers, Schmitt, Campbell.

(First Round): Hogan d. Capitanelli 21-13, 21-4; Zuckerman d. Thomas 15-21, 21-16, 11-10; Peck d. McDowell 21-9, 21-7; Yellen d. Kwartler 21-11, 21-14; Bledsoe d. Niederhoffer, default; Serot d. Meyers 21-10, 21-18; Morrow d. Schmittke 21-8, 21-9; McCoy d. Hawkins 21-15, 21-15; Hilecher d. Mondry 21-15, 21-17; Chase d. Deuster 21-18, 21-6; Fleetwood d. Stephens 21-9, 21-16; Koltun d. Myers 21-10, 15-21, 11-6; Strandemo d. Schmitt 21-8, 21-8; Keeley d. Dern 21-15, 11-21, 11-6; Campbell d. Zeitman 21-14, 21-19; Wagner d. Ikier 21-16, 21-9.

(Second Round): Hogan d. Zuckerman 21-6, 21-11; Yellen d. Peck 21-9, 21-13; Bledsoe d. Serot 21-11, 21-14; McCoy d. Morrow 21-14, 21-15; Hilecher d. Chase 20-21, 21-14, 11-6; Fleetwood d. Koltun 21-10, 7-21, 11-7; Strandemo d. Keeley 21-8, 17-21, 11-1; Wagner d. Campbell 21-9, 21-11.

(Quarter-finals): Hogan d. Yellen 21-15, 16-21, 11-5; McCoy d. Bledsoe 21-17, 19-21, 11-7; Hilecher d. Fleetwood 16-21, 21-11, 11-6; Wagner d. Strandemo 10-21, 21-18, 11-4.

(Semi-finals): Hogan d. McCoy 21-13, 21-20; Hilecher d. Wagner 21-12, 15-21, 11-3.

(Finals): Hogan d. Hilecher 21-11, 21-14.



Shannon Still

About the only thing the Seamco Racquetball Classic proved in the women's pro division was that Shannon Wright is still the dominant female player in the land and only Marci Greer, still professionally wet behind the ears, can give her a game.

Wright and Greer met each other in the championship match for the second consecutive tour stop and the only difference between New York and Detroit is at the scores were a bit closer — 21-13, 21-17.

But please, no conclusion jumping. Sure the 30 points in two games was the most scored against Wright since she lost in the season's opener, but comparative scores lack validity in all sports, especially racquetball.

There were, however, plenty of truths that came out of the Seamco Classic. For one the tour's third stop enabled players to pick up the trends of others. Greer, Sauser and Hoff on the way up, for example and Marriott, Steding and perhaps others on the way down.

Of course there is no trend for Wright. She maintains a peak still a torso above the field with superiority in shotmaking, concentration and desire leading the way.

Against Greer, who the radar gun says is the world's hardest hitting female (106 mph), there was no appreciable difference in power as both players were getting some good rips at the green sphere.

It was slow going in the early stages of the championship match as Greer seemed to be walking on ice and Wright played as if she stayed out too late the previous night. Whatever the cause more balls were hit into the dirt the first 15 minutes than in field practice before a baseball game.

The result was a lot of side outing, little scoring and an 8-7 lead for Wright.

The top players, they say, are the ones who can analyze their own faults and correct them within the space of a match. It was that ability that changed the first game from shoddy play with no direction to Wright domination.

Recognizing that her kill shot had a hangover Shannon put it to sleep and pulled out the less exacting passing game. Greer, who lives and dies by the kill, had no such strategic option and the results were rapid.

Greer skipped a Wright serve making it 9-7 for Shannon which was followed by a backhand pass right (cross court) for 10-7. Then a forehand pass down the line right made 11-7, and when presented with an absolute plum Shannon connected on a pinch kill for 12-7.

Greer's time out gave her 30 seconds grace, but when play resumed Wright was still serving and still scoring. A backhand back wall pass cross court right made it 13-7 and when Greer whiffed an around-the-wall ball it was 14-7.

An inning later Shannon was still on the attack. Another forehand pass down the line right made it 15-7 and a forehand V pass left racked up 16. It's a lot easier to hit a kill when you've got a 16-7 lead and Shannon, now relaxed and awake, connected next on a 39 footer to take a 17-7 advantage.

From there it was rather moot, although Greer put up a good struggle at this juncture, holding Shannon scoreless for five innings. No progress was made, however, for Shannon was holding Marci scoreless at the same time.

A forehand back wall pass, cross court right broke the spell for Wright and a few innings later hit an ace on a Z serve to the left for a commanding 19-9 lead.

One thing Marci Greer is not short on is guts, and she has that instinctive "I hate to lose" attitude, so lacking in many of the top pros of the day. That desire doesn't allow her to give away even a point, let alone a game and she continued to fight back, even from a 10-20 deficit.

A backhand kill, an ace and a forehand back wall kill got her 11, 12 and 13, but Wright hit another winning pass off the back wall to regain the serve and followed it with a backhand kill to the right for the game winner 21-13.

Game two was much of the same, with Greer continuing to play in streaks, being nearly dominantly good in some stretches and qualifying round bad in others. The truth is that she would have won this game if her shot selection had been as good as her execution.

Hitting three kills for every Greer skip enabled Wright to grab a 6-4 and 9-5 lead, which she nurtured to 11-5, not bad positioning at the half way mark. But a skip, a pass and an ace while Greer was serving cut the lead to 11-8 and Shannon kept the ball in play long enough for Marci to hit a few more winners as the game tightened to 13-12, Wright's edge.

Shannon next tried to apply the coup de grace by stringing a bunch her next time in. An ace on a drive left made it 14-12 and when Greer obliged with two more errors it was 16-12 and Marci went the time out route.

But once back on the court Marci failed to connect on a routine 30 footer and the skipped shot notched the 17th point in Shannon's column.

But just like that the tables were turned as Marci regained the serve on a kill of her own, and an ace and two skips from Wright made it 17-15. A forehand pass cross court was 16-17 and Greer tied the match at 17 two innings later with a 39 foot kill with her backhand.

Unfortunately for the Greer backers that was her final flurry. Shannon hit a backhand back wall pass cross court

Reigns.....

Top seed Wright lunges for a backhand front court retrieve against Greer, a finalist for the second straight tournament.

for 18 and Marci skipped the next serve for 19. Twenty was a backhand kill and 21 a forehand pass left, cross court off the back wall as Wright ran out the match 21-17.

In a way it was good to see Shannon have to work for a victory, for throughout the tournament she was not getting anything close to pressure. Had Greer been able to turn five or six of her skips into kills the match could have swung the other way.

Those are big ifs, however, and until proven otherwise, Shannon Wright is the heavy favorite each time out.

The semi-finals found a great deal of interest for two new reasons, Jean Sauser and Rita Hoff. Sauser, whose move from Chicago to Portland, OR, has improved her game 100 per cent, made it two trips consecutively to the semi's. Hoff proved to be a giant killer this weekend, stopping both Steding and Martha McDonald en route to her battle with Wright in the semi's.

Unfortunately that battle never really materialized as Hoff, possibly pooped out from her two previous three game victories, was unable to make a dent in Wright's armor, succumbing 21-6, 21-6.

There really isn't too much one can write about the match. Rita, despite being in the best shape of her career, was seemingly a half step off of the pace of the match. Wright controlled the play and the pace, primarily with devastatingly accurate serves.

When a champ like Wright is serving well, it creates another whole series of problems for the opponent, especially when all concentration must be centered on just returning the serve, let alone hitting an effective shot off of it.

That was the case in Wright vs. Hoff. Mixing drives to both sides with super Z's Shannon rode aces and weak returns/set ups to easy wins in both games.

Sauser gave Greer a better battle in their lower bracket semi-final as she continues to prove that she is capable of top professional play. Freed of the obligations that held her practice time to a minimum Jean's move west has meant a rebirth of her game.

The irony in this tournament is that the person with whom she now works out daily, Jennifer Harding, was the player she beat to reach the semi's.

But that's a bit ahead of the story. In the semi's first game Sauser held 4-0 and 10-8 leads before Greer battled back to reach ties at 11, 12 and 13. Then a forehand kill down the right line and two straight aces (a drive right and a crack left) opened some daylight for Marci and seemed to take the starch out of Jeannie's game.

In fact Sauser was unable to score again and when forehand and backhand kills along with a final rally skip by Sauser occurred, the first game was history 21-13 for Greer.

Still Sauser was proving she could stay with Marci and in game two proved it some more. They continued to trade points early until Greer's 14-11 lead was being menaced at 14-16, Sauser serve. Then an avoidable hinder on Jean, (she called it on herself for the sportsperson of the year award) gave





Jean Sauser, another whose game and performances continue to improve, forces Greer to a time out in their semi-final match.

Marci all the edge she needed, racing to a 20-15 advantage.

Twice Sauser held, but she was able to manage only one point (a Greer skip, as usual) and on her third attempt Marci managed the match winner — get this, a forehand overhead kill into the left corner from the short line! Final tally was 21-16.

You can second guess all you want as to the wisdom of calling an avoidable hinder on yourself, especially before the referee can call it.

"It was avoidable," said Sauser later. "It's not a big deal, I took her shot away and called it. I'd do it again tomorrow."

The quarter-finals, as in the men's division, was a barnburner of a round. Two of the four matches went to the tie-breaker and those were decided by the juicy scores of 11-9 and 11-10. Only Wright wasn't pushed, although Greer managed to get by in two games as well.

The opener of the round was Hoff and McDonald and it proved to be a match worthy of the highest accolades. Both ladies were coming off impressive wins. McDonald looking as quick as ever in stopping qualifier Hope Weisbach 21-6, 21-16, and Hoff surprising Peggy Steding 21-11, 19-21, 11-9.

Steding, who continues to show up at each event with ailment after ailment, is constantly hobbled, this time by a pulled back muscle. Even so Hoff's improvement was apparent throughout the tournament and she earned her victories.

Rita didn't earn game one against McDonald, however, as Martha, showing the speed and quickness for which she's known, took a struggling game 21-15.

Game two went the opposite way. Hoff battled even with McDonald in the power category and hit her own shots at the crucial stages to pull away for a 21-15 win, making it even up going into the tie-breaker.

This third game was a true classic as Hoff came from behind to capture the match and berth in the semi's (her first trip there in a year) 11-10.

Wright prepares to take a backhand high off the back wall in the semi-finals against Rita Hoff, making her first trip that far in nearly a year.

The second match of the round found Greer, who stopped qualifier Susie Dugan in the 16's 21-10, 21-9, pitted against Kathy Williams. Williams, who's been a stranger to Saturday matches recently, downed good friend and teammate Janell Marriott in the first round by the impressive scores of 21-11, 21-10.

Marriott has been the tour's biggest disappointment thus far into the season. A solid top four and challenging for the second spot in the rankings as last season ended she has plummeted to inconsistency and apparent lack of motivation during the current campaign.

In any event Williams, who's been having troubles of her own, got by Marriott and gave Greer everything she wanted in the first game before falling 21-18. Kathy was unable to keep up the pressure in game two, however, and Marci rallied for a 21-13 win.

The noon match found Sauser and Harding against each other in one of those unfunny ironies. Daily opponents on the practice court for the past three months they now faced each other for real 3,000 miles from home.

Sauser had opened with a tough win over Sarah Green 21-10, 5-21, 11-6, while Harding bested qualifier Pat Schmidt 21-20, 21-9 to reach the quarters.

One advantage Sauser has against Harding which none of the other top gals have is that by playing against Jennifer daily, the fact of Jenny's left handedness never becomes a factor. Harding is the tour's only regular southpaw, a situation some say is worth five to seven points a game.

Five or seven would have been welcomed by Jennifer against Jean, for the second ranked player coming into the event went down to defeat 21-19, 12-21, 11-9. The toughest part of all was the fact that Harding held a 9-1 lead in the tie-breaker, only to receive an inside-the-tie-breaker donut and lose 11-9. An amazing series of events.



At a gala affair thrown by sponsor Seamco Sporting Goods three of those having a good time are (l. to r.) Al Mackie, Seamco's president, his lovely mother Florence, and Joe Ardito, USRA National Commissioner.

Women's Pro

(Qualifiers): Moore, Weisbach, Dugan, Schmidt.

(First Round): Wright d. Matthews 21-4, 21-3; Walton d. Moore 21-19, 16-21, 11-9; McDonald d. Weisbach 21-6, 21-16; Hoff d. Steding 21-11, 19-21, 11-9; Williams d. Marriott 21-11, 21-10; Greer d. Dugan 21-10, 21-9; Sauser d. Green 21-10, 5-21, 11-6; Harding d. Schmidt 21-20, 21-9.

(Quarter-finals): Wright d. Walton 21-13, 21-8; Hoff d. McDonald 15-21, 21-15, 11-10; Greer d. Williams 21-18, 21-13; Sauser d. Harding 21-19, 12-21, 11-9.

(Semi-finals): Wright d. Hoff 21-6, 21-6; Greer d. Sauser 21-13, 21-16.

(Finals): Wright d. Greer 21-13, 21-17.

NOTES OF THE TOURNAMENT . . .

In one of the best attended and most enjoyable parties in recent tour history just about everybody and his or her uncle showed up at a bash thrown by sponsor Seamco Sporting Goods. President Al Mackie, along with top aides Art Orloski, Don McAuliffe and Marv Konowitz hosted Saturday night . . . Excellent interest in racquetball is mounting quickly in the greater New York area. Crowds this year for the area's tour stop were at near capacity as compared to light galleries a year ago. The New Jersey area is already becoming a solid r.b. market and Long Island, where the Port Washington club is located, is making good strides . . . Owners Vince and Marilyn Immardino got plenty of help from Anthony Haralam, George Sauer and Ritz Johnson, all of the staff of the Olympic Court Club . . . Thanks as well to Ken Strong, Bob Tiedge, Scott Pollen, Susy Retterer and Tom Flannery . . . The club sports a side wall and back wall of glass and the place was packed most of the week . . . New club blues are always around, however, as a power failure put the scheduling back a few hours on Friday . . . Nice to see Hall of Famer Yogi Berra of Yankee and Mets fame attending with son Tim and Mike Patterson. Tim and Mike run Yogi's Hall of Fame Racquetball Club in Plainfield, NJ . . . Be sure to catch a feature on Yogi and his racquetball involvement in an upcoming issue . . . In the amateur divisions an all-Chicago final found Rick Dern stopping Bob Deuster 12-21, 21-12, 11-5 for the Men's Amateur Open title; Fran Davis stopped Jamie Abbott for the Women's Amateur top spot . . . Fred Letter took the Seniors. ●

Colgate Pro/Am Tour Schedule of Events

Date	Sponsor	Prize Money	City	Club
Jan. 31-Feb. 4	Kunnan-Leach	\$20,000	Miami	Sportrooms of Sabal Chase
Feb. 19-25	Coors	\$20,000	Denver	Court Club North
March 28-April 1	Catalina	\$20,000	Los Angeles	King's Racquetball Courts
April 25-29	Seamco	\$17,500	undecided	undecided
May 16-20	undecided	\$20,000	Chicago	undecided
June 9-16	Colgate	\$50,000	Tempe, AZ	Arizona Athletic Club



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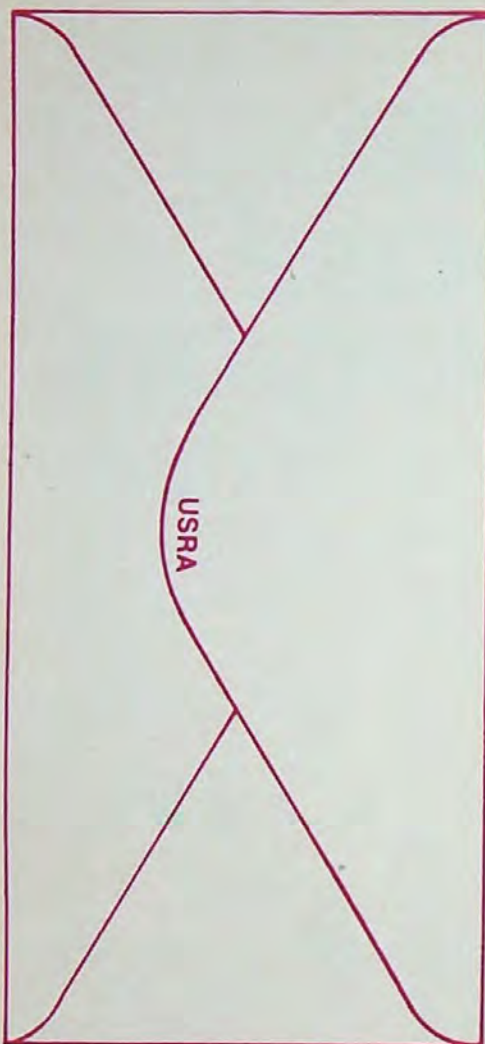
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SPALDING



Wants National Racquetball Across the Ocean

Dear Sirs:

I'm getting married and I'm moving, but I don't want to miss my copies of *National Racquetball*. I look forward to reading it every month and consider it number one on my list.

Keep up the fantastic work.

Sandi Byrum
Wahiawa, Hawaii

Lia Missed 107 by a Second

Dear Editor:

We, at What's Your Racquet in Wall, NJ, are pleased to advise you that our marathoner's had impressive records at a marathon we held for the Muscular Dystrophy Association. Our top man, Tom Condon, logged 111 hours and seven minutes, and a female marathoner — Lia Marchini — missed 107 hours by only one second. I was the third marathoner.

Paul Patruno
Wall, NJ

Good going, Lia! Glad to see a woman display her stamina. Our records show that Keith Kubik and Tommy Petersen's 150 non-stop racquetball playing hours set at the Las Vegas Racquetball Club in October is the longest marathon on the books. ED

Changes For TV?

Dear Ms. Brusslan:

Bob Kendler's August 1978 announcement of negotiations for production of a portable court with one way "white" glass was exciting. Racquetball tournaments held in Madison Square Garden or similar stadium facilities would be a breakthrough.

I'd like to make some suggestions for your consideration regarding TV: (1) Let the camera zoom in on the action; (2) Find a ball color that is highly visible; (3) Slow down the speed of the ball; (4) Change the scoring to stimulate spectator interest — for instance, divide the games into "rounds."

I am personally satisfied to play the game according to present rules in present facilities. However to promote the game as a spectator sport the innovative portable court will be a boon and it would be well to consider adapting the sport to maximum spectator interest.

Wallace E. Hight
Farmington, UT

A bright colored ball (such as orange) has been found to be difficult to play with because it blends into walls and floor. The two way glass is expected to solve the visibility problems that a ball color change couldn't. As for the speed of balls all manufacturers have slowed down the balls and veteran observers say there are as many rallies as ever. Regarding your other comments — camera work is improving all the time as crews cover more racquetball, and dozens of scoring change suggestions are being filed for future consideration. ED

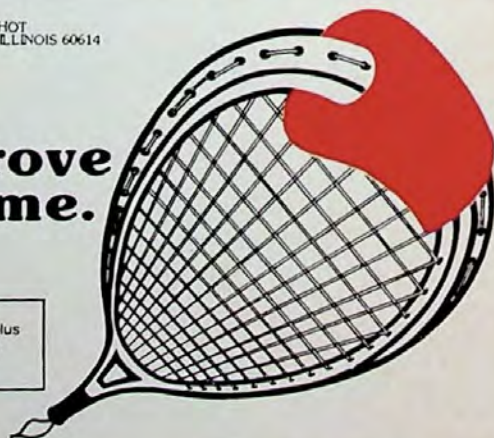


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First Class and Friendly

Dear Bob and Evie:

Bob, it meant a great deal for me to compete in the Coors All Pro tournament, and thanks to you it happened. You gave me the inspiration at your great party almost a year ago.

You and Evie are always so warm and friendly at the tournaments.

Again this was a first class operation from start to finish. The matches were great, and so were all the athletes.

It's fun going first class, thanks to you and Evie.

Bob McNamara
Minneapolis, MN

Third Stop a Success

Dear Dan:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for an enjoyable and well run tournament at the Olympic Court Club, in Port Washington, NY.

The entire tournament was skillfully organized and I completely enjoyed the third stop on the Colgate PRO/AM Tour. A successful tournament involves a great deal of work and the results of yours certainly showed.

Once again, thank you for a fine tournament.

Carol Z. Malikow
Port Washington, NY

Art, Not Luzell

Dear Editor:

May I draw your attention to an error of identification in your October, 1978, issue.



On pages 40 and 41 the picture of Bob Kendler and Burt Morrow shows "Looking on is eventual third place winner Luzell Wilde." The person in the background looking on is Art Payne, of Columbus, OH, and not Luzell Wilde of Salt Lake City, UT. Here is a picture taken at Lemontree after the tournament to show you that I was there.

Thought you might like to know of this needed correction; however, the magazine is getting better all the time.

Luzell D. Wilde
Centerville, UT

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Niederhoffer Does It Again

Victor Niederhoffer is one of those special people, a rare combination of athletic ability and intellect. It's no wonder that he is a former world squash champion as well as a phenomenally successful New York businessman.

What Niederhoffer has done in racquetball is worth repeating and the most recent pro tour results (in which he played a peripherally prominent role) will bring out some valuable lessons.

Back in the winter of '75 Niederhoffer, then reigning squash champion, for whatever reasons decided he would take on the world of racquetball, then ruled by one Charlie Brumfield with moderate pressure from the likes of Schmidtke, Keeley, Strandemo, Rubenstein and Serot.

At age 30, he felt, it wasn't too late to conquer some new worlds and with racquetball and squash being not too distant cousins, Vic felt racquetball was ready to present him with a new challenge. So in true championship form Niederhoffer predicted publicly in January that he would win the national racquetball title to be held that year in Las Vegas in late April.

Oh yes, in case you didn't follow the sport back then, Niederhoffer had never even played racquetball when he made his prediction.

Well, of course, Vic didn't win the title that year — Brumfield did. But in the round of 32 this awkward moving, stoic Manhattanite defeated a pimply teenager named Marty Hogan in a 21-20 third game.

The next day he practiced for three hours in the morning, *"trying to incorporate what I learned against Hogan into my game"* and met then number six ranked Rubenstein in the afternoon. Ruby managed the victory but not without pulling out all the stops 21-18, 21-19.

Later wins in another tournament over well known Mike Zeitman and others led many to believe that Vic could have had a decent future in our game, particularly since he had come so far in such a short period of time.

Perhaps it was the disdain that most of the established players showed him (jealousy?) or perhaps he longed for the calmer, more precise and comfortable world of squash. Whatever the reasons Niederhoffer faded from the scene as rapidly as he burst upon it.

Well Victor reappeared last October at the Leach Motor City Classic, announcing that he was going to give racquetball another try. He lost to marginal pro Paul Ikier in the opening round of qualifying and was out of town so fast I didn't even get a chance to say hello.

I guess I haven't mentioned yet what Vic is so well known for. You see he has this uncanny ability to think on the court. He knows what is going on around him, the situation at hand. And he couples that with the greatest concentration powers that I've ever witnessed on a court, Brumfield, Paul Haber or anyone else included.

Now around racquetball circles this is indeed a rare breed. A player who can think would be a real threat to most of



the tour. And thus when Vic entered the Seamco Classic in November a scant three weeks after his loss to Ikier, I wondered out loud just how much he might have improved.

And when he won a couple of qualifying matches I thought, hey, maybe he's going to make the main draw, so a quick look at the draw was in order. No way. He was due to play Jeff Bowman, the reigning national amateur champ, the guy who went through a zillion rounds to emerge as the best amateur in the land last June. No way.

Ah but no way is Vic's way. And after being down 14-3 in game one he came back to take the game 21-19 and then the second 21-20 to do in three weeks what scores of players haven't been able to accomplish in three years — beat the national amateur champ.

Vic must have slept well that night, dreaming of his impending match the next day, in the round of 32 against none other than Davey Bledsoe, former national professional champion and a true top 10 pro. I doubt that Bledsoe slept as well.

And I don't think Vic was worried about losing, or even winning. He doesn't think quite like that. I believe Vic was thinking about learning, for he told me later that he's still six or seven plateaus from most of the top pros, and that they're still a few plateaus from Hogan. But you knew it would be a helluva match one way or another.

So when Vic misread the draw sheet and didn't show for his match with Bledsoe, could anyone blame Davey for begging for a forfeit two seconds after the 20 minute limit?

Too bad. Would've been a good match. ●

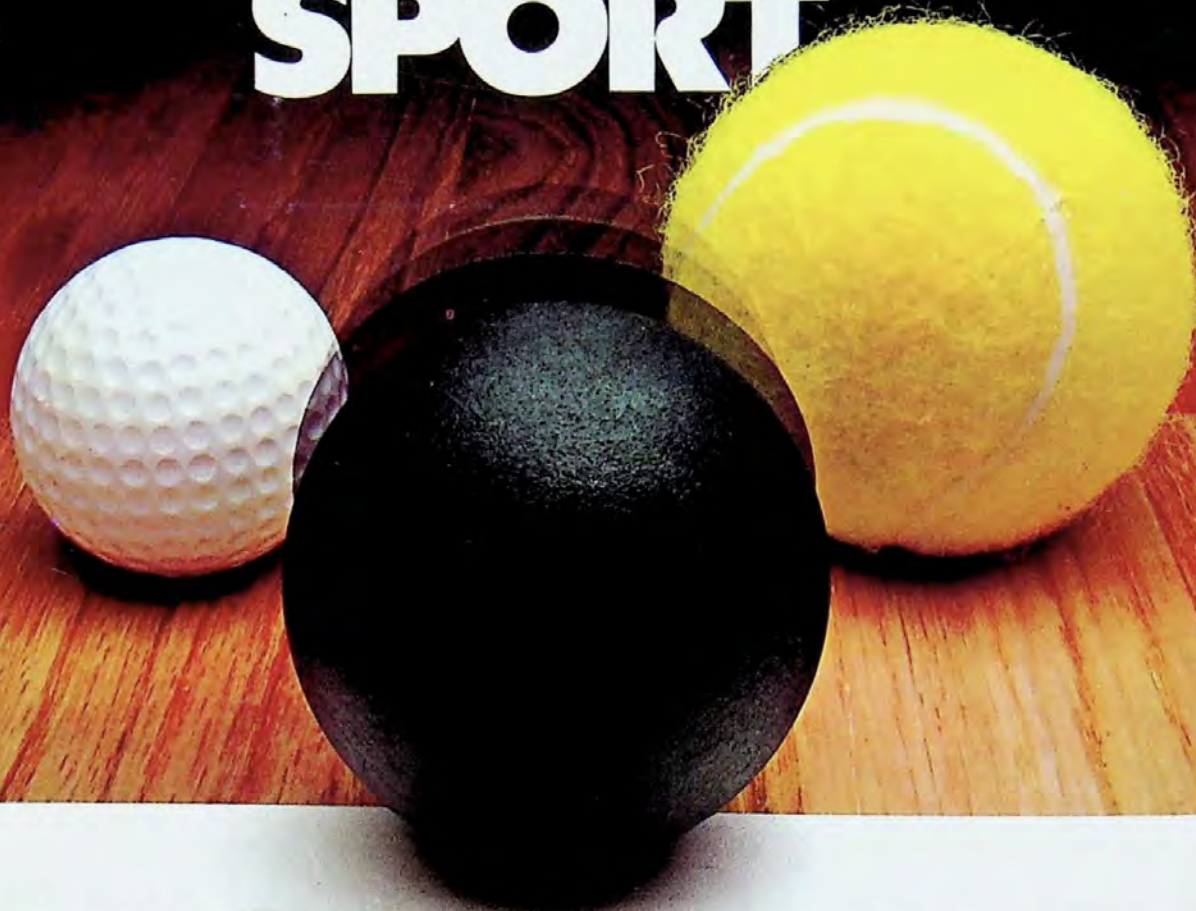


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