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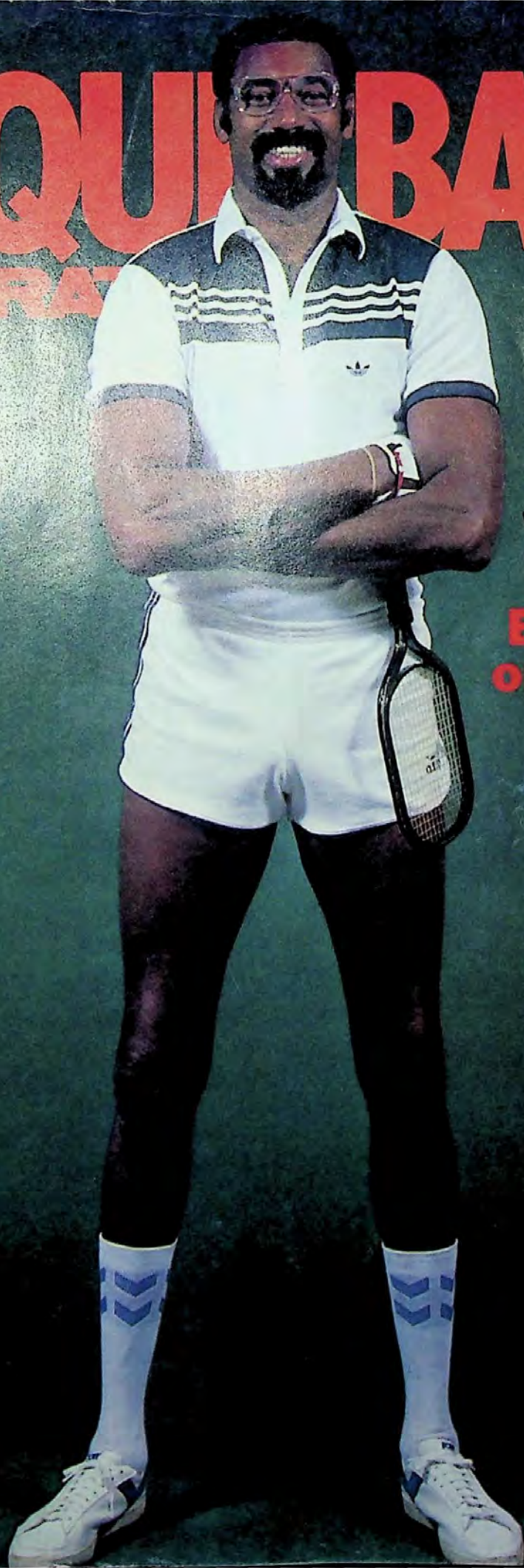
THE OTHER GAMES

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Be Played on a
Racquetball
Court?

Is Television
Ready for a
RACQUETBALL
GAME SHOW?

WILT

Big Man
on Court



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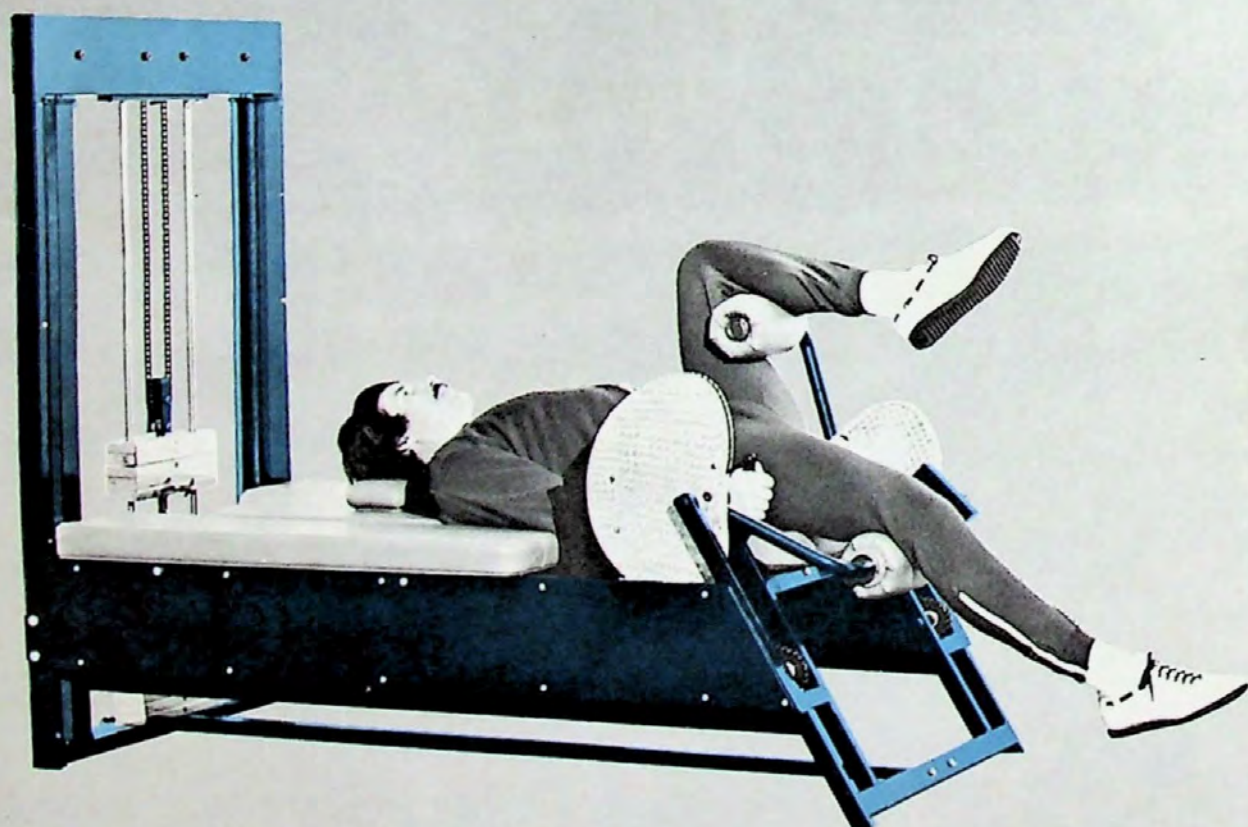
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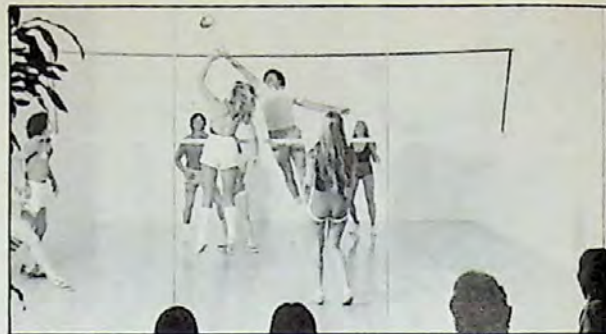
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RACQUETBALL

ILLUSTRATED

November 1980 Vol. 3, No. 11

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Prisoner Update

If you recall in our May, 1980 issue, we had a brief item in the Short Shots section titled "Racquetball In Prison" in which it was reported that prison inmate Joe Robledo had put in a request to his warden at the Utah State Prison to start a racquetball program.

Joe is not out of prison yet but he is due to get out early next year, thanks in part, he says, to the short article that appeared in *Racquetball Illustrated*.

Joe told us at the time that he had spent three years in prison (1972-75) for possession of marijuana and was back in prison now because he had violated his parole.

While in prison the first time he was the top handball player inside the walls and upon his release, he had taken up racquetball and progressed to a B level. "I started playing in as many out-of-town tournaments as possible partially because I was a federal fugitive," said Robledo. "I managed to witness Marty Hogan's first national championship in Michigan and his second in Tempe, Ariz."

Robledo had told us that there weren't any racquets available at the prison and he was hoping the warden would start a racquetball program so he "could regain his competitive edge by the time he gets out in 1981."

The interesting thing about that first communication was that Joe did not really know when he was getting out.

"Thanks a million kill shots for the article," says Robledo in a recent letter. "The warden was so impressed that he recommended me for a transfer to a federal prison system where I could get a lot more competition."

"Not only do you all have good imagination concerning the illustration inside the tier but the timing of the article was perfect. I presented myself to the State Prison Parole Board 30 days later (one of the three members plays racquetball) and they read the article and asked me how I got the idea I was going to be released in 1981. I responded simply that it was a wild guess."

"I guess it payed off because they granted me a Feb. 19, 1981 release date. So this is one guy who can say racquetball got me out of prison sooner than expected. And hopefully keep me out."

This month's features offer a wide variety of interesting topics. We have a story on a unique television game show idea involving racquetball, a story on the other games people play on a racquetball court, a look at the man they call the "P.T. Barnum of Racquetball" and an article written by an attorney on how to negotiate a racquetball contract.

Our instruction section features Dave Peck on court warm-ups, serving by Bruce Christensen, one of the game's hardest servers, and visual awareness tips from Pete Wright.

You'll also find our Player of the Year ballot inside. Time is running out. The next issue will be the last in which the ballot will appear.

Ben Kalb

Ben Kalb



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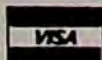


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SIDE OUT

Eye Section

I would like to compliment Racquetball Illustrated on the excellent series on prevention of eye injuries in racquet sports.

Dan Bertolucci of the USRA states, "There are no standards for evaluation except for comfort and preference."

On the basis of our experience in hockey and the standards for eye protection in hockey, we in Canada have formed a section of the Canadian Standards Association to look at eye protectors in racquet sports.

We have set up a task force of which I am chairman in an attempt to provide a standard such that manufacturers might submit their eye guards for testing. This has worked well in hockey in Canada and has provided many of our hockey players with an excellent standard by which to judge eye protection.

The C.S.A. Committee consists of representatives of consumer groups, two eye surgeons, an optometrist, opticians, representatives from squash and racquetball associations and squash and racquetball professionals. A Ph.D., in Kinesiology, who has done a lot of high speed photography with the hockey protection is on our committee and will shortly be looking at some eye guards taking high speed photographs of a ball and racquet as they hit an eye guard on a head form.

We welcome input from players, professionals and manufacturers and, indeed, have active representation from manufacturers on the American side of the border. We have had, in Canada, some 18 injuries with the open type of eye guard, eight in squash and ten in racquetball; 15 of the 18 players have told me that the ball went between the upper and lower rim of the eye guard. Whether the opening has to be made smaller or whether some of these guards should be redesigned is open to testing procedures and we will be commencing some of these tests shortly.

We are particularly concerned that in North America there is no standard for eye guards on the market. Any thoughts by your readers, professionals or manufacturers we would welcome at the Canadian Standards Association meetings.

Michael Easterbrook, M.D.
Toronto, Canada

Editor's Note: The author can be reached at 1849 Yonge St., Suite 303, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M4S 1Y2

Safety Helmet

Regarding the Aerolite Racquetball Safety Helmet mentioned in your section about eye injuries, Racquetball Illustrated issue of August, 1980, may I say that you are misinformed and have badly misjudged the potential of our racquetball helmet.

Our tests show that players of all levels show a marked increase in concentration while wearing the Aerolite Helmet. Players demonstrate improvement in control usually within an hour after wearing our helmet. Fur-

ther, we have a unique liner that cools down the sweater and removes that factor from affecting his game.

We suggest that you try another test. This time concentrate on the positive aspects. Quit looking for the negative ones. We've weeded them all out.

Robert L. Wantland
President, Aerolite Industries
Van Nuys, Calif.

Editor's note: The article was intended to give a brief CONSUMER'S view of the subject matter, showing positive and negative aspects, not a one-sided "advertisement" of the product. Mr. Wantland seems to forget that the "positive aspects" such as injury prevention, the elimination of the previous sweating problem and the addition of a third safety bar were all mentioned in the article as was the continuing "negative aspect" that he faces an "uphill climb" in trying to convince people to wear the helmet considering most players today won't even put on eyeguards for cosmetic reasons.

The Fox

Thanks for the fine article on "The Fox," in the August issue. He was really delighted with it.

Thought you might be interested to know that after the article came out he appeared on The Mike Douglas Show with racquet in hand.

Nancy Grade
Santa Monica, Calif.

Editor's note: The writer is manager/publicist for Bill "The Fox" Foster, the fastest beer drinker in the world.

Instruction

For a while I was displeased with your instruction section. You had too many things such as exercises and not enough basics.

But your August and September issues are what I had been looking for. I especially enjoyed the doubles instruction by John Eggerman and Scott Hawkins, service returns by Sarah Green, coping with tournament pressure by Charles Garfinkel, backhand pinch shots by Don Thomas and anticipation by Janell Marriott.

Ralph Garcia
Tucson, Ariz.

Sexist Ads

I think you misplaced a couple of ads in your April, 1980 magazine. Shouldn't the Iron Company's ad on page 26 and the Racquetball Courts by Milibra on page 49 be placed in your April Fools section?

Weren't you fooling us by accepting these ads as serious advertising?

Perhaps racquetball is presently a "macho" sport but I would think that you would realize that many women read magazines and play the sport.

How about using a little more judgment when accepting these types of ads for pub-

lication. Women are much more than just bust measurements.

June B. Worthington
Sacramento, Calif.

Women Pros

I want to express my thanks for the fine article and editorial on the women pros in your June issue.

It is rare to find a male editor and a male writer who can cover the subject so well without making fun of women players.

It shows me that you are a professional publication, unlike so many others in the sports field.

Bonnie Pascoe
Long Island, N.Y.

New Subscriber

As a new subscriber I would like to say thanks for a super September '80 issue and I look forward to my next issue.

Larry Cade
Huntsville, Ala.

Cover Lover

After months and months of seeing celebrities on the cover of your magazine, I was glad to see that you finally recognized Marty Hogan.

Your cover shot was long overdue and I think you have finally come of age. Please continue giving stories on celebrities but take them off the cover.

By the way, your story and photo coverage of the 1980 Nationals was the best I've ever seen on the subject.

Tomas Talbert
Honolulu, Hawaii

Legally Blind

Being legally blind, I would like to take the time to thank you for printing the excellent articles on "Eye Injury Survival Guide" and "Eye Injuries" in your August issue.

I have a suggestion to all racquetball players. Let's stop making excuses about how eyeguards look and wear them.

Leo John Zimany Jr.
Amherst, Mass.

Editor's note: The author is a racquetball instructor at the University of Massachusetts.

Cover Subjects

I loved it. Beautiful cover photo of Marty Hogan on your September '80 issue and a great article to go along with it.

I realize that celebrities may sell more cop-

ies but every once in a while it wouldn't hurt to put a real player on the cover.

I put in my vote for covers on Dave Peck, Mike Yellen, Hogan again, and, oh all right, Farrah Fawcett.

Richard Hawn
Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.

More Celebrities

I know that you have to please a certain hard-core segment of racquetball players out there who love to read about themselves and all their accomplishments.

But I have only been playing a short while and I don't really care about who wins the Nationals or any other tournament for that matter.

I always get a kick out of reading about the celebrity player. I can identify more with them, not because I see them on television but because I know I could probably beat most of them in a game.

Harry Goodyear
Ft. Lee, N.J.

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PLAYERS

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Celebrities and amateur racquetball players turned out in the hundreds to watch and/or play in the second annual CCCI (The Committee To Cure Cancer Through Immunization) racquetball tournament at the Sports Connection in Santa Monica, Calif.

Spectators were treated to pro racquetball exhibitions, body building and disco demonstrations, fastest serve contests, beer drinking challenges, psychic readings, and an enjoyable tournament. (See tournament section for results and photo).

Over \$10,000 was raised for the UCLA program.



Carroll O'Connor (Archie Bunker's Place) with Ed Asner (Lou Grant Show).

Patrick Duffy (Dallas).



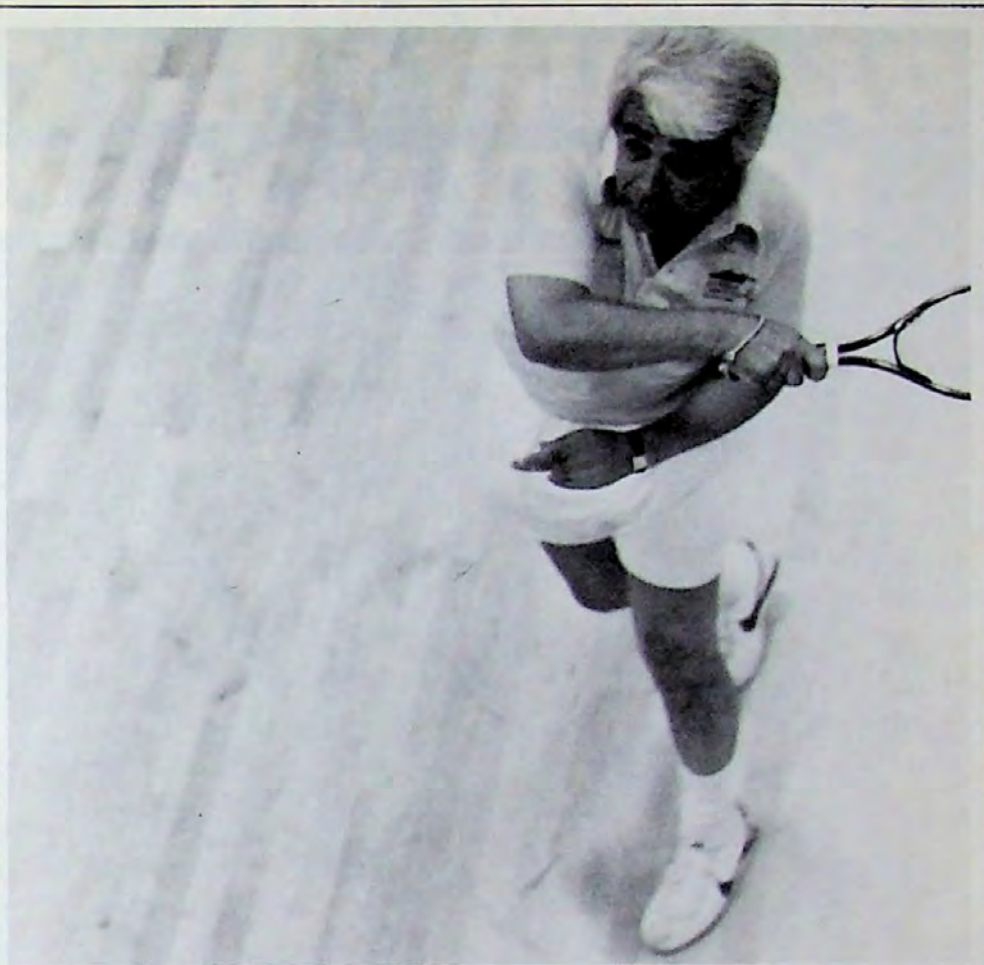
Michelle Lee (Knott's Landing).

Photos by David M. King



(Above) Pro football player turned actor, Ed Marinaro

(Right) Singer, Jerry Vale.



(Above) Comedian Jeff Altman (Pink Lady and Jeff) with Bill "The Fox" Foster, fastest beer drinker in the world.

(Left) Judy Norton Taylor (The Waltons).

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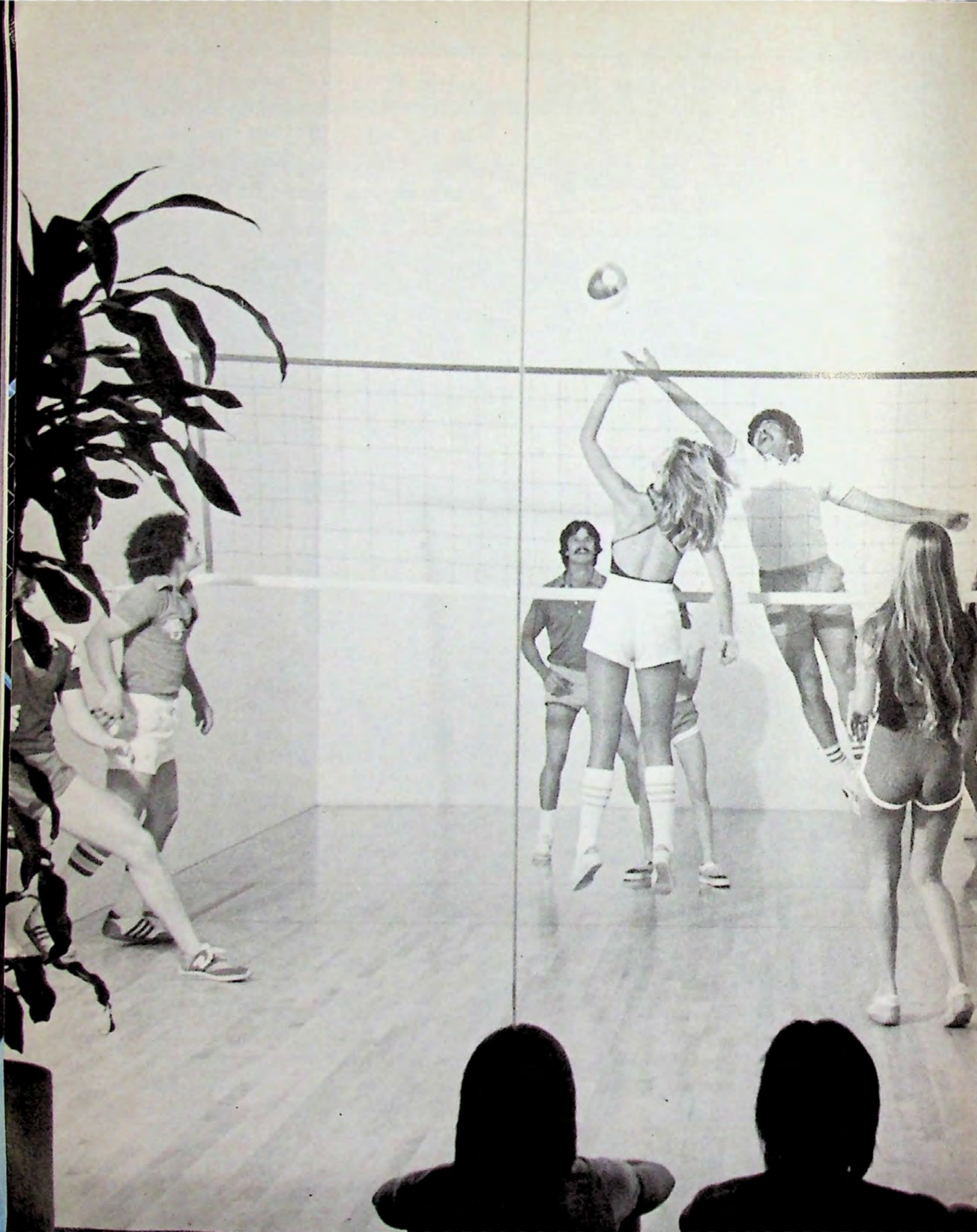


Leach Graphites: The Competitor, Bandido and Performer.



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One variation for the racquetball court is Wallyball, which is basically volleyball with side walls.

THE OTHER GAMES

Wallyball, Court Soccer and Goofyball are just a few new inventions taking over the racquetball court.

By Sandra Segal

What can you do in a 20 x 40 foot court besides play racquetball? If that question has ever stimulated your imagination, you may be pleased to find new games such as Wallyball, court soccer and Goofyball, bringing a little entertaining variety into your sports life. On the other hand, if you're the type of player who dreams of hours of unobstructed racquetball play, you may be alarmed to see your precious court filled with volleyball nets and flying soccer balls.

Although some of these games have been played informally on unused courts for years, now for the first time a few of these sports are being packaged and promoted. Wallyball, a modified volleyball game played in a racquetball court, is the best example of this new promotion.

Joe Garcia, once a racquetball court manager and now the self-proclaimed "Mr. Wallyball," took court volleyball in hand to try and make it a saleable item. Garcia made "Wallyball" a registered trademark, worked with AMF Voit to standardize a Wallyball ball, devised official Wallyball rules, and began actively packaging a game kit to give to court club owners. He is currently trying to patent the game itself, though he's not sure if such a game could be patented.

Wallyball is basically volleyball with the rules adjusted for a racquetball court so that the ball may be played off the side walls. The ball is out of bounds when it hits the ceiling, back wall, or two or more walls. The back wall is only in play on the side of the team that is returning the serve or rally. The game is won by the first team scoring 15 points with a two point advantage. Teams have 2, 3, or 4 players each. Points are only scored by the side that is serving.

Garcia's Wallyball kit includes the official rules book, the ball, a net and the hardware required to install it, Wallyball t-shirts, a display banner, and a press kit. The whole package costs \$395.

This price may seem rather steep for a single Wallyball set-up, but Garcia is quick to point out the compensations once the set is installed. "Wallyball provides more possibilities for the club owner. They can get six to eight people on the court—three or four on each side—at \$2 per person. That's \$12 to \$16 an hour for court time. Normally they wouldn't get more than \$8 or \$10 per hour. In a month's time, the club owner can easily get his \$400 investment back," says Garcia.

Garcia believes the new ball will turn the

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THE OTHER GAMES

game into a real sport rather than a mere court filler. The Wallyball, created by AMF Voit especially for Garcia, is only being sold through his kit. It has a volleyball interior with a foam rubber cover. Garcia explains, "It's the official size and weight of a volleyball, but the foam rubber takes the sting out of the leather volleyball." When a spin is put on the ball, the texture of the foam rubber lets the ball bite into the sidewall for a change in direction.

The Wallyball net is also specially designed. Garcia's promotional brochure claims, "An experienced carpenter or licensed contractor can easily install Wallyball in less than two hours." Once installed, the net can be put up and removed in a few minutes. The equipment used to hold up the net is completely flush with the wall and doesn't affect racquetball play.

Garcia's promotional effort has had some success. Although Garcia has only been actively marketing the product for a few months, he's already sold close to 100 kits. Most of the sales have been to court clubs in the East. Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Ohio have been the big buyers. Garcia theorizes that the sets have been particularly popular there because volleyball can be played outdoors for only a few months every year, unlike Southern California where it is played on the beaches most of the year.

But Wallyball has also found a home in Southern California. The Courthouse Racquetball Center, with a chain of eight facilities in the Los Angeles area, has installed a Wallyball set-up in each club. Spencer Garret, the operations manager of the Courthouse facilities, says, "In the few months Wallyball has been offered, we've gotten a good response. We have several leagues started with an average of 25 to 30 people in each league. We also have Wallyball challenge nights, and we're planning some tournaments." But Garret is cautious about the sport's future. "It's still an infant, and requires a lot of promotion," he says.

Ken Steinhorn, who managed the West Valley Courthouse for the past two years (he recently quit to investigate the racquetball world in Australia) is much more enthusiastic. "When we got one kit in the club, people went crazy. I reserved one court per week for Wallyball. First we started getting good volleyball players in to play, then women began playing it, and then it really started to take off."

In fact, the potential of this new sport seems so attractive that Garcia is already getting competition from other companies. "There are three other companies that are beginning to manufacture these set-ups with an unofficial Wallyball, and they're undercutting me," he complains.

Hard-core racquetball players are a little worried about how many courts will be used for these new games. Will volleyball players begin invading all the courts? Or will the new game begin seducing even dedicated racquetball players, eventually leading to Blumfield-Hogan vs. Peck-Yellen Wallyball matches?

Garcia sees Wallyball appealing mainly to the mediocre racquetball player. "It's not for the ace racquetball player," he says. "It's for the C player or novice player, someone who plays once a week. It's a family sport. You rarely see mixed doubles in racquetball because the wife may not play as well as the husband. But you can see two couples really enjoying Wallyball."

"Racquetball has some really frustrated players, people who just don't have the skills to play in tournaments. Volleyball is something the everyday guy can play. And Wallyball is even easier than volleyball."

Garcia believes that volleyball players will also be big users of Wallyball. "A lot of high school and college students learned volleyball and now have no place to go. Proposition 13 in California closed the park gyms. People spend years developing their skills, and Wallyball will give them a place to play."

However, Ken Stanley, the volleyball coach for Los Angeles Pierce Community College, is not so sure that skilled volleyball players will really enjoy it. "It's not for a good volleyball player," he insists. "It's better for the not-so-skilled player who can't hit the ball hard. Anyone who can jump over the height of the net and hit the ball hard is probably too good to play Wallyball." Stanley bases his opinions on his volleyball team's experience after a few lengthy Wallyball sessions. Stanley explained the problem, "The kids can hit the ball close to 70 miles per hour. In a racquetball court the ball can go off at all sorts of crazy angles. If you don't read the angle right, you can get hit in the head really hard. My kids came back and said, 'Hey coach, that is really scary.'"

Court soccer so far hasn't been as heavily promoted as Wallyball, but it may have an even greater impact on the racquetball courts due to the huge population of young soccer players. Since the mid-70s, soccer has enjoyed a phenomenal boom among children. The American Youth Soccer Organization boasts a national membership of 250,000 players between the ages of five and 18, while the United States Soccer Federation has 603,000 members in that same age group. Richard Rottkov, director of public relations for the USSF estimates that nationally there are over two million children involved in soccer in some way.

Although soccer leagues and tournaments are well organized and easily available for children up through age 18, by the time the soccer devotee is in his or her 20s it becomes increasingly difficult to find opportunities to play. It's possible that racquetball courts with court soccer set-ups could cash in on this young adult market.

Lee S. Jones, Chief Project Engineer for AMF Voit, began investigating the possibilities of bringing soccer to a racquetball court after watching his son, a 14-year-old player, using a three-wall training device for soccer. "I thought, 'I can put this game in a racquetball



Photo by Jennifer Booty

Two doubles teams put on a Court Soccer demonstration at Del Amo-All Pro Athletic Club in Torrance, Calif.

court with racquetball rules. 'I tried it using my son's team and they all really liked it,' he explains.

First Jones had to develop a new ball, since a regular soccer ball rebounds too fast to return in a court. Jones tried various models, and finally covered a soccer ball interior with a sponge rubber cover, much like that used for the Wallyball. Because sponge rubber reacts to the wall, the soccer player can put a spin on the ball. This ball has been tested at several racquetball facilities, but isn't yet on the market. "We're still working on developing the ball to make sure we can manufacture it at reasonable prices," Jones says. If we stay on our current time table, and if the interest level locally stays high, we will probably start promoting it by fall."

Court soccer uses soccer skills and racquetball rules. The teams (one or two players each) try to win each rally by serving or returning the ball so the opponents are unable to keep the ball in play. A rally is over when one side makes an error or is unable to return the

ball before it touches the floor twice. Points are scored only by the serving side when it serves an ace or wins a rally. The game is won by the side first scoring 21 points.

Although the number of youths involved in regular soccer creates an enormous pool of potential court soccer players, will this version of the game attract them? One typical young soccer player, Steve Laitin, thinks it will. Steve, 15, is in an organized soccer league, as are his older brother, Ken, 16, and younger sister, Lindy, 12. Steve says, "We play or practice three times a week and have games every weekend."

Steve had his first experience with court soccer at the Del Amo-All Pro Torrance, Calif. open house. "We thought it was really fun," he says. "It was great to be able to play soccer by yourself. I would go all the time if a racquetball court nearby had facilities." Steve thinks the serious soccer player would use court soccer as a training tool. "Most people, even if they've played for a long time, will only use one foot instead of both. In court soccer you

have to use both. After playing court soccer you're better on the regular game," he says.

These views are shared by a professional soccer player, Andy McBride, of the California Surf soccer team. McBride is also a racquetball player, and has participated in a number of pro-am tournaments. "Court soccer is fun and it's good practice," he says. "Many professional soccer players play racquetball for training, but now I'd prefer court soccer, since it's my sport. It's just as much exercise as racquetball, perhaps more."

McBride thinks that racquetball players have an advantage over the regular soccer player. "When I was playing court soccer a racquetball pro joined me. He had never kicked the ball before, and he screwed up a few shots, but he knew all the angles. That's where he got me. He knew just how the ball would come off the wall."

Once people begin inventing new games that can be played within the four walls of a racquetball court, the possibilities are endless. David Glander, now at the Honolulu Club, was

THE OTHER GAMES

formerly the athletic director of the Aspen Athletic Club, where he instituted a number of innovative court sports. Glander explained the process of starting a new game. "We would get tired of playing racquetball, so we'd say something like, 'This time let's play with one leg behind our head.' So we'd just start playing it, and there you'd have a new game."

One of the most popular of Glander's ad hoc inventions was Goofyball. Glander explains, "You use a British squash ball which looks like two rolled up socks. It's very squishy. Then two guys walk in with two racquetball racquets. They walk to the front wall and use tape to mark a line at the level of the shortest pair of knees. Then they play by racquetball rules, except the ball can't hit below the tell-tale line. We play a nine-point game, and score only when serving."

Glander says the game gives the players a great workout. "There's lots of dinking, drop shots, and long volleys. It's hard to kill the ball. I really like to play it." Glander has conveyed his enthusiasm to a number of racquetball pros, including Jerry Hilecher and Steve Strandemo. "I'll tell you that Jerry Hilecher doesn't like getting beaten nine to zip in Goofyball," Glander says.

Court jai alai was another novelty favorite. "You use a cesta, a long plastic fingernail, with a glove on the back," he explains. "It attaches to the hand. Use a fuzzy paddle tennis ball. Set up a tell-tale tin across the front wall, about 17 inches high. If the ball hits the tin, it's out. It takes a little eye-hand coordination to catch the ball in the scoop, and then shoot it out of

the scoop in one continuous motion." This game went over so well in Aspen that a court jai alai tournament was organized.

Glander says that court badminton is fun but doesn't work quite as well. "We set up a volleyball net, and used a fleece yarn ball about the size of a golf ball. Then we bat it around with regular badminton racquets. The problem is with the racquets. They don't hold up well against the side walls."

At present, Glander has no desire to package or promote any of his many game inventions. However, if Wallyball and court soccer hit, it's likely that other promoters will try to cash in on versions of court goofyball or court badminton. According to Jones, AMF Voit is already looking into several new games that would be adaptable to racquetball courts.

How do racquetball players react to all of these games which use up racquetball courts for non-racquetball activities? While the promoters of the sports deny that there will be any conflict, more objective observers don't agree. Jones, for example, comments, "The racquetball players do resent their courts being used for soccer. They look down their nose at it, as I would do if I were a serious racquetball player. It's an invasion on their turf."

One problem with the new games is the high noise level. Even Garcia admitted, "The enthusiasm and noise coming from the Wallyball court with eight people on it might distract the other players." Court soccer is also much noisier than racquetball.

Many court owners agree that some problems may arise, but they think the problem of

empty courts are more pressing. Spencer Garret, as the manager of eight courts, says, "Of course, some racquetball players say 'Oh no, now I'll have trouble getting a court.' But as an operator, I'm more concerned with keeping my courts filled."

Michael Kolpack, manager of the Century West Club in Century City, Calif. has some words of warning for these concerned court owners. Two years ago, Kolpack installed a net for court basketball on one of his squash courts. Now he says of his experience with this innovation, "I don't recommend it. We constantly have wars between the squash players and the basketball players. The situation is just not functional." According to Kolpack, problems with empty courts usually occur during the day. Then, at night, there's a double demand for the courts, and the wars begin.

Luckily, most court owners don't see the new games as playing any major role in their facilities. Garret's comment is typical: "Racquetball is our strength, and we try to attract people into our facility by emphasizing racquetball, not the other games."

Glander sums up the situation of introducing other games. "It's like this," he says calmly. "Racquetball players resent courts being used for handball, and handball players resent their courts being used for racquetball. Then someone comes in with a jai alai and they both go over to take a peek at it."

"My philosophy is, well, doggone, if I can play 400 different things I'll have more fun, and a better chance of picking up a lady friend."



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Racquetball Illustrated's 1980 Player Of The Year Ballot

Balloting begins this month for the 1980 Male, Female and Most Improved racquetball player of the year for 1980. Each category has three nominations and space for a write-in vote.

Voting must be done on the official ballot, which will appear in the magazine the next three issues. No ballots from copy machines will be accepted.

Past Winners
1979

MALE
Marty Hogan

FEMALE
Shannon Wright

MOST IMPROVED
Marci Greer

1980 Nominations

MALE

(alphabetical order)



☐ Marty Hogan



☐ Dave Peck



☐ Mike Yellen

(Write-In) _____

FEMALE

(alphabetical order)



☐ Sarah Green



☐ Heather McKay



☐ Shannon Wright

(Write-In) _____

MOST IMPROVED

(alphabetical order)

☐ Lynn Adams

☐ Doug Cohen

☐ Don Thomas

(Write-In) _____

COMMENTS _____

Send ballot to:
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The P.T. Barnum of Racquetball

By Barry Janoff

Earl Epstein could be considered the P.T. Barnum of racquetball because, like the famed circus owner/promoter, Epstein has more wild and crazy ideas for his club than you

can imagine. The difference, however, is that Barnum played it straight . . . unique but straight. With Epstein, you get the distinct impression that behind his sincerity he is pulling your leg as hard as he can.

For example, when Epstein, owner of



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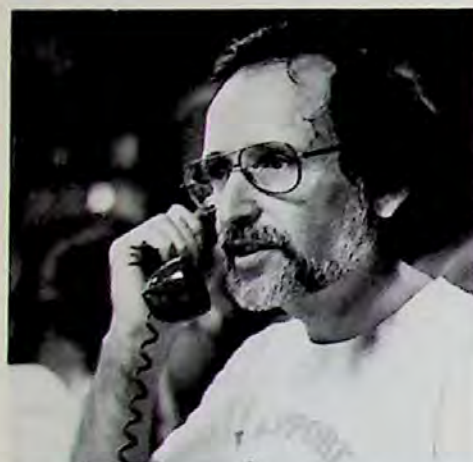
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The P.T. Barnum of Racquetball



Epstein: "A business reflects the personality of its owner. If this place is kooky I hope that's a reflection of me."

Rollout Racquetball Club in Northridge, Calif., and a four-year veteran of the sport, tells you the reason Jimmy Carter has done such a poor job of running the country is because he doesn't play racquetball, he sounds sincere enough, but you feel as if he's tugging on your leg beneath the table. And then he tells you that Billy Carter was able to straighten his life out not because of Alcoholics Anonymous, as officially reported, but because of a strict program of racquetball, a fact, Epstein adds, that has successfully been suppressed by a national lobby of politically-minded tennis players. And he also claims he can put all psychiatrists out of business by introducing their patients to racquetball, which sounds sincere enough, even though you are expecting him to wink any second.

After a session with Epstein, you get the impression he could look Ralph Nader in the eye, sell him the Brooklyn Bridge and leave Nader feeling he got a bargain in the deal.

"My aim is to have fun in whatever I do—and to be as innovative as I can," says Epstein. "I enjoy working with people and being with people. One of the reasons I became involved with racquetball is because it's a people-business."

Racquetball held little interest for Epstein until he discovered the game in a West Los Angeles club about four years ago. "Before then, I had been one of the great non-athletes of all time. When it came to sports I was a complete coward. That's spelled c-o-w-a-r-d," says Epstein.

"But I saw the game played one day and I immediately knew it was something I wanted to pursue. I saw that it was fun and competitive. And when I went on the court I found I could survive despite my lack of athletic ability."

Once Epstein was introduced to racquetball, it figured that Epstein would bring his business, managerial and promotional skills with him into the sport. After all, it was Epstein who, in 1972, had signed Vida Blue, then pitching

for the Oakland As, to do public relations work for his plumbing supply company in the midst of baseball season. And it was Epstein who had written a book on business entitled *No More Mr. Nice Guy*. And it was Epstein who realized early on that any business, from plumbing to racquetball, needs promoting or advertising if it is to succeed.

"I saw from the beginning that this sport was worth promoting and will always need promoting," he says. "Racquetball has great potential for mass appeal and it has really gained a lot of popularity in the past few years. But you can't just tell people you have a game and expect them to come out to play it. You have to show them some reasons they would enjoy playing it. And you have to get them into a club to watch a game or they won't even know what you're promoting."

Since opening his club this past April ("Just write that we opened on April Fool's Day," he says. "That sounds appropriate."), Epstein has put his words into action through a number of varied, although not always successful, promotional campaigns. One campaign offered a lifetime membership to his club and included,

for the paltry sum of \$100,000, free guaranteed court time day or night, a private shower, filmed birthday parties, a guaranteed standing ovation anytime the member walked out on the court and, for good measure, an annual rigged tournament that the member is always guaranteed to win. Epstein says he hasn't signed anyone yet in that particular campaign drive (which, incidentally, is still in effect), but adds that he would be happy with one lifetime member. "I'd be tempted to take the money and leave town," he says.

In another promotional campaign, Epstein has offered to pay for the wedding party of any couple who meet at his club and agree to get married there. "It's still too early to get any results from that one because we've been open only a short time," he said. "But there are two couples we're currently working on, so we may see some results yet." Epstein has also extended that offer to include divorce parties—couples who meet at his club and then agree to get divorced there can do so free of charge.

Of course, there have been a number of other promotions staged by Epstein that relate



"I saw the game one day and knew it was something I wanted to pursue. I found I could survive despite my athletic ability."



Photos by David M. King

Epstein talks things over with his club's pro, Ellie Hertz.

more closely to racquetball. Every Friday night, for example, contenders are invited to challenge Rollout's club pro, Ellie Hertz, in an attempt to win free shirts, beer and other assorted paraphernalia. "We don't even ask that they beat her," Epstein says. "All they have to do is accumulate a certain number of points. She still kills them." Rollout also plays host to jazz and blue grass bands and has held a number of Date Nights in which couples are encouraged to play racquetball. Epstein says he limits dates to male-female relationships. In fact, he once refused to let two men who came as a couple join in the festivities.

Even with all of this going on, the one promotional campaign that best reflected Epstein's personality was the 9th Annual Midnight Racquetball Classic. As Epstein explains, "It was the first tournament we held but we called it the Ninth Annual because we wanted people to think we've been around awhile. Also, none of the games were held at midnight and, from what I saw, the calibre of play was anything but classic. But everyone had a good time and that's what really matters.

"What I try to do is promote the social aspect of racquetball as much as the recreational aspect. We concentrate on racquetball, but we're more than an athletic club. We want people to come here and stay awhile.

"I feel that a business reflects the personality of its owner. If this place is kooky I hope that's a reflection of me. I reached a point in my life where I had only two choices: Suicide or opening a racquetball club. I decided to open a racquetball club. But this may be suicide, too."

Much of Epstein's life, in fact, has been a reflection of his novel—if not offbeat—personality. Born in Los Angeles, he attended Claremont Men's College before handling a stint in the army. "Being from a warm, Southern California climate, the army immediately sent me to Thule, Greenland to defend the ice and snow," he recalls. "Actually, there was one good thing about Thule. There was a girl behind every tree . . . except that there are no trees in Thule."

Once out of the army, Epstein turned his time and energy to business, which ultimately led to plumbing and the infamous Vida Blue incident. In 1971, Blue had an outstanding season in major league baseball as he won 24 games for the Oakland A's and was named recipient of the Cy Young (top pitcher) and most valuable player awards. Blue's salary that year was a reported \$22,000 but after his fine season, he felt that a new contract was in order. Oakland A's owner Charlie Finley offered Blue an increase to \$50,000, but that was far below Blue's expectation of a \$115,000 contract. Negotiations between Blue's agent and Finley dragged on without progress past the start of the 1972 season and that, coupled with a number of other Blue-Finley confrontations (a classic one occurred when Finley asked Blue to legally change his first name to True so he could be promoted as True Blue) caused Blue to search for new options. Enter Earl Epstein.

"Blue's attorney and I had known each other for a while, which is how the association began," Epstein recalls. "This was before free agency. Vida needed a place to go and I needed some promotion for a company I was running at the time. It was a natural combination.

"Vida was with us for about six weeks and he really did work for us. I know one San Francisco paper claimed the whole thing was a hoax, that Vida never came down here. But all they had to do was call the company and they would have gotten him on the phone. He was answering calls, meeting people, making some appearances. But I knew all along that he would go back—his biggest problem was that he wanted to play baseball. His heart wasn't in plumbing supplies."

Blue returned to Oakland, finishing the season for the World Champion A's (at a salary of \$65,000) and remaining in the East Bay city until 1978. At that point he finally got his wish to leave the A's and was traded across the Bay Bridge to the San Francisco Giants, where he currently earns about \$800,000 per season. And Earl Epstein—well, he found racquetball.

"I feel racquetball is reaching the point where a national TV network will think about covering it," says Epstein. "All that is needed is a commitment from some TV executive to do it, a commitment to put money into covering it. If someone at ABC woke up tomorrow and said that racquetball should be covered on their station, it would be. The only thing I would ask is that Howard Cosell not be allowed to do the reporting. The man is a hindrance to anything he does.

"As things stand now, though, there's not enough cooperation within the sport itself for that (national TV coverage) to happen. There are too many splinter groups trying to promote their individual needs instead of promoting the game itself. Also the game needs a sex symbol, and I think I'm the most logical person to fill that position. I try to be one around the club. But I understand that's why we've lost half our membership."

So, having conquered Greenland, plumbing supplies and athletic relationships, having taken on Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan ("There's no difference between the two—both have nothing to offer."), lawyers ("People who can't do anything else become lawyers. Lawyers are not human."), television ("If people shut off their TVs and played racquetball they'd be better off. There's nothing worth watching anyway.") and Howard Cosell and having delved into the intricacies of owning a sports club, what lies ahead for Earl Epstein?

"Survival," he says. "I just want to survive. But more than that I want racquetball to survive. It's a great sport and it's the only one I know of where you can exercise and not feel as if you've exercised. Racquetball knows no race, creed, color or height and I would like it to be remembered as the sport that made America great."

Epstein sounds completely sincere as he looks you in the eye. But for some reason you expect him in the next breath to try and sell you the Brooklyn Bridge.



EAT RIGHT WIN TONIGHT

By Mike La Bonne

Players must stay physically fit if they want to maintain their competitive edge and physical fitness is best achieved through a planned and balanced combination of diet and physical activity. Most competitive racquetball players meet the physical activity requirements, but very few study diet needs.

But what to eat and what not to eat? That is the question. What is good for you? What is not? What should you eat before playing? What shouldn't you eat? At some point, we've all read conflicting reports. For example:

Cholesterol can kill you.

You can't live without cholesterol.

Eating red meat is a must for every athlete.

Red meat has too much fat and forces the kidneys to work three times harder.

Sugar is quick-energy food.

Sugar is a high-level carbohydrate with no nutritional value.

A good American breakfast is fried eggs, bacon, pancakes with butter, coffee and cream.

Bacon (77% fat), fried eggs (72% fat), pancakes (41% fat), with butter (100% fat), coffee (0% fat), with cream (78% fat), adds up to an average 73 per cent fat and over 2,000 calories.

Confusing? You bet it is! Many athletes go bananas (are they good for you?) trying to figure out what to eat and what not to eat in order to maintain good health and a competitive edge. As for the above examples, the bottom statements are correct and, oh yes, bananas are an excellent food source.

Racquetball players burn from 800 to 1,000 calories per hour in competition. Two hours of hard play expends 24 hours of energy reserves. Thus, it's crucial to know which foods contain the nutrition necessary to help maintain that competitive edge and, unfortunately, most athletes are unaware of the nutritional values of certain food groups.

Why so little knowledge? There is an abundance of literature on the market which helps clarify the right formulas for nutritious food intakes.

But that's the problem. There are too many formulas, and unless you're a nutrition expert, you don't know which is best for you. There's the idea of a "basic-four" food group which

Preparing for a tournament? You should be thinking about what to eat and what not to eat.



permeates most literature but that's where the similarity ends. From that point on it's anyone's guess.

But who wants to guess about something so important? As a serious player, you want to know which foods will help you on the court, which will hurt you, which will slow you down, which will give you that bloated feeling, how long before a match you should abstain from certain foods, etc.

Robert F. Kennedy, who was part of the President's Commission on Physical Fitness, said, "We have more of the world's comforts than any other nation or people in history—but we also have the highest rates of disease, attributable to softness and affluence." What he meant is that Americans are the fattest people in the world, yet far from the healthiest. Even with the overabundance of sports programs, coupled with the availability of good, nutritious food, there remain too many nutrition-starved people.

Because we know so little about proper nutrition, we suffer accordingly. Many people, in fact, compensate in the form of one kind of diet or another:

Food-fad diets entail eating only grapefruit, or bananas, or liver, etc. These kinds of diets

are unbalanced and ineffective and may cause serious health problems. By failing to consume a variety of foods, dieters suffer from an imbalance of basic nutrients and nutritional deficiencies.

High-protein diets consist almost entirely of protein and very little fat or carbohydrates. This does not provide the dieter with all the nutrients required, and must be supplemented with vitamins. This diet may set up an imbalance in body water. Also, since the central nervous system uses only carbohydrates for energy production, blood sugar levels may fall to dangerously low levels.

The once popular **low-cholesterol** diet has taken a new twist, according to Dr. David Reuben, author of *Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Nutrition*. Reuben says that the "latest scientific theory shows polyunsaturated fat and low-cholesterol diets lower the blood cholesterol level by forcing the cholesterol out of the blood and into the walls of the arteries, where it clogs them up." The human body has a definite need for cholesterol.

With the **low-carbohydrate** diet, many people suffer a drop in blood sugar and experience impaired metabolism with accompanying feelings of impaired mental efficiency, irritability, and reduced work capacity. A low-carbohydrate diet isn't really low. One gram of protein has four calories, and one gram of carbohydrate has four calories.

This brings us to the **good-sense** diet. The most successful diet for most persons has proved to be the one which includes a variety of foods. This diet maintains excellent health, which is the first requisite to continued athletic competition. It boils down to what you've heard and have been taught for years: Regular physical exercise, combined with three balanced meals per day—from the basic-four food groups—is the only safe, sane, productive method available to ensure continuance of good health and athletic competition.

Sorry there are no wonder foods or diets which will magically transform you into a Marty Hogan or Shannon Wright on the court. It's simply a matter of choosing wisely from what is available—especially in the basic-four food groups.

These groups, as detailed in Dr. Ellington Darden's book, *Nutrition for Athletes*, include: **Milk group** (adults need two or more cups per day), in which cheese, yogurt, milk beverages and milk desserts may be used as substitutes; **Meat group** (two or more servings

per day), including protein-rich meat, poultry, fish, eggs, dried beans, peas or lentils, and peanut butter; **Cereals and Bread group**, which requires four or more servings daily of whole-grain, enriched, restored or fortified foods such as cereal, bread, cornmeal, macaroni, noodles, rice, and spaghetti; **Fruits and Vegetables group** which requires four or more servings daily of all fruits and vegetables, including citrus fruit or other good source of vitamin C every day. Also, dark green or deep yellow vegetables or fruit are needed for vitamin A every other day.

Dr. Nathan J. Smith, in an article in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, said, "Most athletes have been introduced to the 'four-food-group' diet plan. With two servings each from the dairy and high-protein food groups and four servings from the fruit-vegetable and grain groups of foods, an adequate intake of all essential vitamins, minerals, protein, and essential fatty acids will be ensured."

Dr. Smith does not recommend a steady diet of cheeseburgers, but warns that energy intake of less than 2,000 calories will be inadequate to support a healthy active life-style. The food schedule above would be for a moderately active person. For the highly competitive racquetball player who plays hard for an hour or more each day, 3,000 to 4,000 calories per day might be needed to sustain competition and maintain good health.

Dr. Smith suggests eating meat, which brings up a controversy of sorts. Athletes swear that red meat has high protein and go-power and that it is an excellent source of food. Not so. Red meat is NOT essential for endurance. It is low in carbohydrates and is therefore a poor source for go-power. High-meat diets raise cholesterol levels and offset the effects gained from a high exercise regimen. Some meats contain too much fat—and fat makes you fat. Dr. Reuben says we eat more than 40 percent of our daily calories in fat and every ounce of fat has 250 per cent more calories than one ounce of protein or carbohydrates. Fat places greater demands on our body systems. With meat, the kidneys must work three times harder to eliminate wastes than in a meat-free diet. And meats have more calories. A 3.5-ounce porterhouse steak has 465 calories, whereas a 3.5-ounce baked potato has only 93.

So much for red meat. Competitive racquetball players certainly do not need it. An all-meat diet, or high-meat diet, should be taboo. Instead, large amounts of natural carbohydrates—whole-grains, nuts, raw fruits, vegetables—provide more go-power than meats.

Now what about carbohydrates? Are they good for you?

Yes. Carbohydrates are simple sugars—glucose and fructose. Glucose occurs naturally in fruits, corn and honey, and is also the chemical which runs your body—the gasoline of the human body. **Refined** sugar contributes to heart disease, is high in calories, is non-nutritional, robs the body of vitamins B and C, and contributes to early fatigue in hard athletic competition. Dr. Darden says that carbohydrates convert to energy, but may take from two to 14 days to do so.

Another eating controversy deals with cholesterol. Cholesterol is a glistening white soapy crystalline substance occurring notably in bile (liquid secreted by the liver that aids in the digestion of fats), gallstones, the brain blood cells, plasma, egg yolk and seeds.

Dr. Reuben says that "cholesterol is absolutely essential for survival. It must be present in all body tissues, and is especially vital in the brain, spinal cord, nerves, liver and blood."

Reuben says that current scientific theory indicates that low-cholesterol diets actually lower the blood cholesterol by forcing it out of the blood and into the walls of the arteries, where it clogs them up. Thus, by avoiding cholesterol or resorting to a low-cholesterol diet, you may in fact be contributing to an eventual health problem. But if you chose to steer clear of the "cholesterol carriers," your diet should not include fish-liver oils, egg yolk, milk enriched with vitamin D, salmon, sardines, butter, liver, cream, whole milk, green vegetables and oysters.

Although there may be a little bit of controversy concerning cholesterol levels, there are some things almost all nutritionists agree with. There are some foods better off left alone.

In addition to avoiding products containing refined sugar—corn syrup, sucrose, dextrose, lactose, corn sugar—athletes should also avoid all products containing refined flour. Do not eat any flour product unless it states it is 100 per cent whole wheat, or 100 per cent whole rye, or 100 per cent whole oats. Do not eat processed fruits or vegetables. This means eat nothing that comes in cans, jars, bottles, frozen in boxes, or dehydrated. Avoid all soft drinks. Avoid all bottled and canned sauces, such as catsup, salad dressing, steak sauce, and barbecue sauce from the supermarket. These concoctions contain massive amounts of refined carbohydrates in the form of white flour and refined sugar. Avoid most prepared snack foods such as crackers, cheese nibbles, etc. All have massive amounts of refined carbohydrates. Avoid, also, pies,

cakes, cookies, instant pizzas. All are flour-based.

What's wrong with refined flour?

A grain of wheat has three components: bran, wheat germ, and endosperm. Nutrition comes from eating all three in their proper proportion. Refined flour is nothing more than nutritionless endosperm.

Now, one may think there is nothing healthy to eat. But there are many nutritional foods that are good for an athlete. Eat only unrefined sugar, honey, pure maple syrup, and foods made from or containing 100 per cent whole-grain cereals without refined sugar. Eat fresh fruits and vegetables as near to their original forms as possible (potatoes with skins; apples with the peels). Make your own condiments: salad dressing is oil and vinegar with spices; prepared mustard is ground mustard seed with water and sweetener; catsup is tomatoes with vinegar and sweeteners. Instead of factory snacks, eat nuts, seeds, popcorn, whole-grain crackers, sesame seed cookies and peanut butter balls rolled in coconut.

Because it takes from two to fourteen days to convert certain foods to energy, some foods should be limited in the diet 72 hours before your match. Very modest intakes are permissible, but large servings will result in water retention. Water intakes should be generous during this period, with no less than eight full glasses recommended each 24 hours.

The 72-hour list includes: salt and all heavily salted foods; sauerkraut; salted snacks such as potato chips, corn chips, pretzels, crackers, or popcorn; salty and smoked fish such as anchovies, herring, and sardines; salty meats such as luncheon meats, sausages or salt pork; sauces or relishes such as soy sauce, worcestershire sauce, chile sauce, catsup, or horseradish; any monosodium glutamate seasoners such as meat tenderizer; all cheeses; pickles; peanut butter; olives; bouillon cubes; canned soups, dry cereals; instant cocoa mixes.

A contributing factor to feeling "up" for a match is a relatively "light" feeling in the stomach. Avoiding foods with high salt content, maintaining good water intake, and avoiding large intakes of high-residue foods, can contribute significantly to your feeling "light." The following high-residue foods should also be limited in the diet during a particular 72-hour period of preparation for top performance: raw fruits and vegetables; dried fruits and nuts; whole-grain cereal products, and limit milk and cheese to two servings per day, that is, two glasses of milk or one-ounce serving of cheese.

Because large food residues may produce an undesirable feeling of heavy fullness, these foods should be taken in limited amounts within 72 hours of an important match. But that is not to say that these foods are to be eliminated from the diet. Modest intakes are fine. Large intakes, however, could result in water retention and bloating.

If you want to stay physically fit and competitive on the racquetball court—watch what you eat, when you eat and how much you eat. Common sense from the basic-four food groups will do more for your health than all the diets or fads around.

Doctor Smith's program:

Breakfast:	Fruit (two servings)	100 calories
	Bread group (two servings)	250 "
Lunch:	One sandwich or cheeseburger	400 "
	Twenty french fries	230 "
	One carton of milk	170 "
Dinner:	Six ounces of meat	450 "
	One medium-size potato	80 "
	One serving of vegetables	40 "
	One serving of roll and butter	125 "
	One eight-ounce carton of milk	170 "
		2,015

THE WALKING DRIVE SERVE

By Bruce Christensen

The Nationals was a big surprise for me. Going into it I was ranked 26th, so I knew I'd have a tough draw. My serve had been on all season, but it wasn't until the Nationals that my whole game came together. The front-wall glass probably helped a little bit, too. In fact, Lindsay Myers fell down a couple of times going the wrong way to return the serve. By the time he tried to regain his balance it was too late. My serve had gone past him.

My serve most resembles that of Jerry Hilecher. Hilecher is probably the biggest gun when it comes to serving.

I once saw an article on Hilecher's serve and I started practicing it over and over again. Since then my serve has evolved a little bit, but at that time I learned how to serve from a stationary position. Now I use a walking motion which gives me more momentum.

Hilecher's serves aren't as deceptive as mine, I think. He hits them more accurately, perhaps, but I think I have him when it comes to power and deception. I'm actually running

when I hit the serve while he takes a couple of steps back and then one step forward. He has to rely on his hip movement, shoulder, and arm to generate power whereas I let my body weight control the speed of the ball.

Marci Greer also uses a variation of the walking serve. She also hits the ball harder than most of the other women. This allows her to keep her opponents off balance.

As in any of the racquet sports, the serve must be considered your biggest asset:

1. You are immediately on the offensive and in good center court position.
2. You are controlling the tempo of the rally by keeping your opponent guessing and off-balance.
3. You are able to take your time and think about your shot. At any other point in the game you have to make split second decisions.

Accuracy, power, and deception are the three most important elements in becoming an effective server. You should master the first two before attempting deception.

Accuracy comes when one is using a slower speed ball. When I play with a slower

ball I have to aim for the cracks more and place my shots more precisely. Power and deception are not as important with the slower ball because your opponent has more time to react to your serve.

I create momentum to generate power. During the rally you can use the momentum of your opponent's shot, but on the serve you have to generate your own momentum. I do this by bouncing the ball away from me so that I literally have to chase it down before hitting the serve. Therefore the timing is just like hitting the ball on the run during a rally.

Because I'm left handed I begin my walking serve on the far right hand side of the court. I bounce the ball away from me so that I must take three long strides to catch up with it, picking up more momentum with each stride. By the time I catch up with the ball I have a significant amount of momentum built up so that I am able to hit with a lot of power on the serve. The important thing to remember is not to wind up too far across the court so that you're out of position and your opponent will have an open court to shoot at.

Deception is, in my opinion, one of the finer points of serving. This is what really makes my serve effective. I have practiced my serves from the same body movement so that everything is the same except the face of the rac-

Bruce Christensen shows off his walking drive serve. Note how he throws the ball far in front of him and also how he takes a step with his right foot (photo one), then his left foot (photo two), then his right foot again (photo three) before hitting it.



quiet at impact. The difference is so subtle that most of my opponents are unable to detect which serve I'm going to hit until I actually hit it.

Some people will take less steps on a certain serve or change their movement completely. But after all, it's the racquet that controls the direction of the ball, not the body. If you change your movement for every serve, then you're just telegraphing it to your opponent. Now he or she will have an advantage.

I also use what is called a legal screen to deceive my opponent. My height (6-foot-3) is also an advantage to help shadow the serve so that my opponent has less time to react to the serve. On the two drives that I serve (to the right and to the left) I actually turn my body so the opponent has only my back to stare at. He can't see the ball until it's past me.

By mixing your serves up you can also keep your opponent guessing. I have 12 serves which I use for an offensive advantage, but only occasionally will I throw in a lob for good measure.

The 12 serves I use are hit from three positions in the service area: Center court, just to the right and just to the left. From each of the three positions I can hit four serves: Drive to either side and hard Z to either side.

I can also hit a lob and a soft Z, but I rarely do it because I have so much confidence in my

Diagram shows three variations of serves Christensen uses from the same spot.

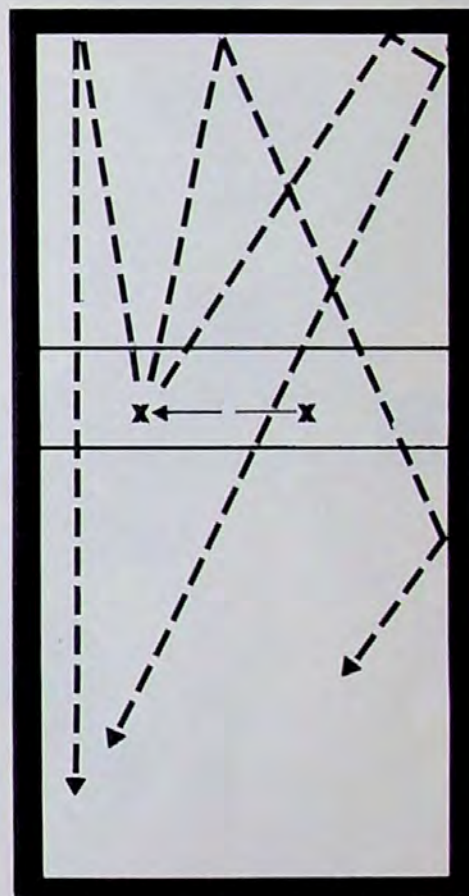
drives. Eighty per cent of my first serves go in so I'm not afraid to hit the hard drive again on the second serve.

A lot of players will ease up and hit a soft lob or slow Z to be sure that they won't double fault and lose the serve. But why should I ease up when I have a chance to go for the ace or force a weak return of the second serve? It's even more effective because my opponent expects me to ease up on the second serve, so I can usually catch him off-guard.

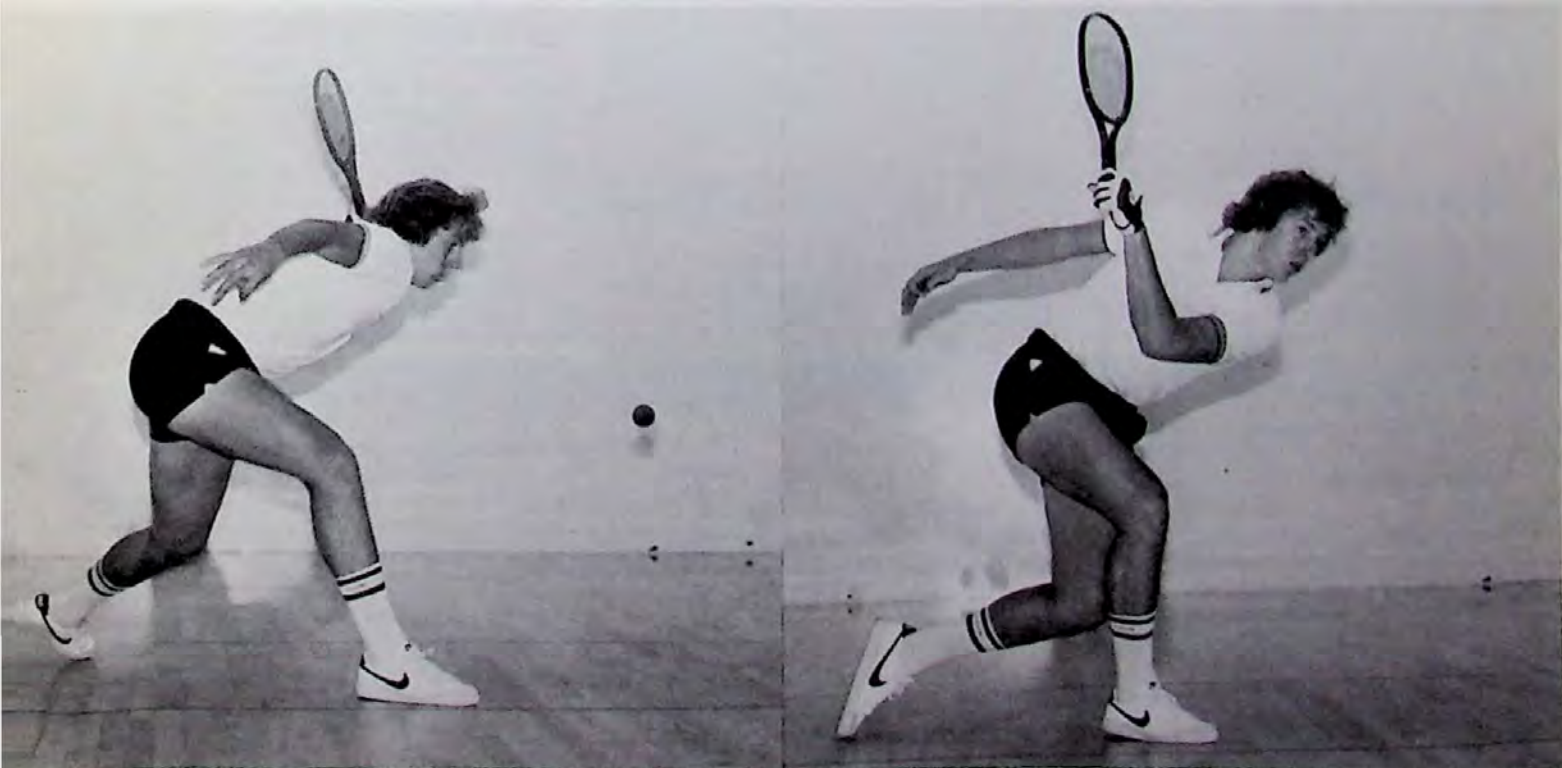
I also don't believe in playing any differently to a left-hander. Actually my best serve is to the right-hander's forehand. Since I'm left-handed, I hit this serve cross court, behind my body, which creates more of a legal screen. Regardless of whether the person I play is right-handed or left-handed, I have enough confidence that I can ace him to either side.

By taking an aggressive approach to the second serve I never give my opponent a chance to relax in the back court. I won't hit anything too risky, but I have a few hard serves which I know will go in every time and those are the ones I'll use.

To practice I'll hit 20 drives to the forehand, 20 drives to the backhand, 20 Zs to either side. I'll just keep doing repetitions until I've done all the basic serves. And mastered them.



Photos by Carol George



THE PRE-MATCH WARMUP



By Dave Peck

A few months back in a *Racquetball Illustrated* article entitled "Exercises for the Unthin," I described how a racquetball player could improve his conditioning prior to a match.

For those that missed it, I said that one should use stretching exercises to warm up, jumping rope for quickness and Star and Cariooca drills to increase your reflexes and conditioning.

Now let's pretend, you've stretched, your heart is racing from exercises and you're ready to play a match. What's next on the agenda? Probably one of the most important, yet overlooked aspects of the sport: The pre-match warmup.

Generally, most racquetball players figure the five-to-10 minute pre-match warmup period is one for casual conversation with your

opponent, a chance to really blast the ball around the court, or basically, kill time before the bell rings.

The better players have a different idea.

When I walk onto a court before any match, I have a set plan on how I want to use that warmup period. I just don't aimlessly flail away. Depending on my opponent, I'll work on skills and shots that will benefit me in the minutes to come.

You should too.

How do I gear myself and my game up? Easy, I break up the time. Say the warmup time is 10 minutes. I may use one minute of the 10 for different shots and angles I want to cover. Or perhaps I'll use two minutes on five important areas.

Either way, as that imaginary hand moves around the clock face, I slowly but surely get ready to play. My intensity increases, as does my concentration and the speed of my shots.

The best method I've found, after watching

the likes of my Ektelon teammates Mike Yellen and Jerry Hilecher, is to start at the back of the court with ceiling balls, and basic ground strokes, move back and forth with pinches and passes, then finish up with serves.

I usually start at the ceiling to get a feel for the type ball and consistency of the court. In five or 10 swings, my right arm is loose and I know what I can and cannot do.

I start with the forehand ceiling ball. Sometimes, when the ball comes off the back wall, I'll go for a kill. But usually you have another person warming up next to you, so you don't want to distract him (at least not too much!).

After hitting about 10-15 forehand and backhands off the ceiling, I move along to ground strokes. After hitting about 10 forehands off the side and back wall, I'll slide over and do the same thing on the backhand side.

The secret here is to make solid contact with the ball. Watch your hand-eye movement. See the ball hit the racquet. You hit more of these shots than any others, so feel comfortable before moving on.

At this point, I move to just off center court and concentrate on pinches. Usually I start with a short drive off the front wall, then work the corners, starting about 18 inches up and moving down.

Don't overload your concentration level at this point. Just look for a spot and try to hit it. Work both sides of the court so you feel comfortable enough to pinch either corner.

Now that I'm pretty warmed up shot wise, I move along to drives and passes, looking for spots on the wall I want to hit.

As my imaginary clock starts to work toward 20 minutes to the hour (which means I have about four or five minutes left), I start practicing kills and serves.

I take kills anywhere I can get them. By that I mean I'll drop the ball in various spots, simulating a game condition, then shoot for the bottom board. After two minutes of this, I move into the server's box.

Depending on my opponent, I'll start with lobs, or Zs or drives. Since I'm a driver server, I like to set up, concentrate on my footwork and form, then really work over the service line.

After I feel comfortable moving the ball around the court that way, I switch to my "off" serves, usually lobs and Zs, and take a couple of each just to make sure I have confidence in them when the time comes.

At this point, I've covered the court both mentally and physically. My game face is starting to show through and all I need is a change of glove, perhaps, a toweling off and I'm ready to play.



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VISUAL AWARENESS FOR THE WOMAN PLAYER

By Pete Wright

As the trends within our society continue to favor increased female participation in sports, it would be valuable to carefully assess the strengths and weaknesses a woman player draws upon when learning to master the sometimes difficult concepts related to a sport such as racquetball.

Very few women players have the built-in talent of Susie Dugan or Shannon Wright (both of whom I have trained). But they adapted quickly because along with their other attributes, they understood the basic visual mechanics involved in striking a ball with a racquet. And they were willing to devote the time required to perfect these skills.

Studies have demonstrated that in activities such as racquetball where strength is not an excessively important factor, women can develop a power and timing output which places them near their male counterparts in terms of overall capacity to perform. Anyone having witnessed Wright or Dugan hit a ball can see that the difference between their shots and those of most male players is minimal.

It would be safe to conclude that with proper motivation and training a woman player could compete in the same division as men. Of course, the majority of women are not interested in competing with men and the purpose of this article is certainly not to imply that a woman should or can be trained to defeat Marty Hogan.

The point here is that there are more subtle aspects of the game that we can concentrate on.

It is in the area of eye mechanics where many teaching strategies suffer. Many so-called experienced instructors totally skip over proper visual awareness in favor of a rapid journey into the merits of ceiling balls. Unfortunately most instructors come from the ranks of top players and without training they tend to assume their students possess fundamental understandings similar in scope to their own. Instructors should let students know that hand-eye coordination becomes increasingly more taxing after physical maturity is reached.

This article is designed for the female player without an extensive athletic background. It is not intended to examine proper racquetball stroke methods, but a basic knowledge of the stroke is helpful.

Although racquetball can be played with a stiff arm-pushing motion similar to tennis, you

can't reach a high competitive level of play without the snapping action derived from a combination of complex forces originating in the legs, hips, shoulders, and wrist, and culminating with the racquet impact at the side rather than the front of the body.

The correct striking motion demands a throwing or whipping of the racquet through the ball in a fashion that creates intense head velocity. This action is seen in the popping of a bullwhip or the uncoiling of a tightly wound mainspring.

Obviously with two objects meeting each other at high speed, significant coordination must exist between the eyes, brain and muscular systems. It is at this critical junction I find many women lacking in an understanding of the responsibility of the eyes, which invariably leads to limitations in other major phases of the game.

Let's begin by examining the general physical process taking place when racquet and ball collide. As the ball travels through the air, the eye, acting as an information source, conveys messages to the brain regarding the speed, height and angle of the ball in flight. The brain interprets these signals and relays commands to the various muscles that move the body in proper position for contact. Logic tells us that the more information available to the brain, the greater the chance for the muscle groups to receive the proper commands. Viewing the eye this way leads to the practical conclusion that the ball should be held in focus as the racquet is making impact. This is the single most difficult task for the inexperienced woman player to comprehend.

One problem occurs when the player jerks the head, creating a "flinch" effect whereby movement of the ball is not perceived clearly prior to contact. The result is usually an off-center hit because the eye prematurely stops sending information to the brain. Women not accustomed to the noise or the jolt of the striking action will fall into this habit as will the overly combative player who loves to smash the ball for the sake of hitting it hard.

Another negative habit comes from the player who has focused on the target instead of the ball. The result is a ball not hit on the sweet spot. Just like the golfer who cannot see the fairway or the baseball player who hits the ball without seeing the pitcher, the racquetball player, when striking correctly, should see only the action of contact. The front wall and the flight of the ball should be viewed as indistinct

images by way of peripheral vision.

Another common error occurs when the player has aligned the eye, ball and target in an effort to aim or guide the ball to the desired destination. This works fine if one is content with pushing the ball to the front wall and hitting the ball in front of the body. Although there are times when every player must bunt, so to speak, for control, it must be remembered that with today's lively balls, a pushing action is no match for a power stroke.

This type of player also wants immediate gratification. She wants to see the immediate results of the shot. But this is the wrong approach. At times a well-placed shot should reach the front wall before your eyes do.

The correct alignment is as follows: The head remains still and the focus is retained as the racquet proceeds through the ball, thus relaying maximum information to the brain. The front wall and the opponent's position are perceived through the corner of the eye without averting the focus on the ball.

This may seem easy to do but in reality it demands a great deal of confidence and concentration, all of which comes from a great deal of playing time.

One must avoid the temptation to guide or direct the ball and learn to properly position the body so that the normal motion of the racquet head through the swing directs the flight.

To understand this, picture the swing as a circle rather than a straight line which is created when the ball is pushed in front of the body. The ball is struck simply because it comes in contact with a portion of the circle perimeter. The ball should go straight when struck at a point directly opposite the hitting shoulder. This will be the rear shoulder on the forehand side and the front shoulder on the backhand side. Angle shots require meeting the ball a few degrees forward or backward in relation to the hitting shoulder.

It is vital that the player be introduced to the correct visual procedures at the beginning of her playing career prior to learning the specific strokes.

Drills are necessary at this point, especially one in which the instructor drops the ball in the hitting zone and has the player hit it without watching the front wall. In short, the instructor should not take for granted that the student fully understands the familiar command "watch the ball."



Wrong. Here the hitter has jerked his head creating a flinching effect.



Wrong. The player has focused on the target—the front wall—not the ball.



Wrong. The player is trying to align the eye, ball and target, and he ends up pushing the shot.

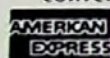


Correct. The head remains still and focus is retained as the racquet hits through the ball.



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INSTRUCTION

AROUND-THE-WORLD SHOTS



By Marci Greer

On one ABC television daytime game show, family members are asked to match audience reactions to questions like: "Name things found on a nightstand," or "Name things that click."

I always wondered how long it would take if the question ever was: "Name shots hit on a racquetball court," before someone called out Around-The-Wall or Around-The-World. Probably forever.

In a sport saturated with serves, passes, drives, pinches and overheads, Around-The-World shots seldom make headlines, or footnotes for that matter. But that's not to say in certain situations against certain opponents, ATWs can't be both effective and point-producing.

Primarily a change of pace shot designed to

buy time, Around-The-Wall shots are especially effective in doubles play (confuses other team) and against beginning to intermediate players, who find a ball bouncing off three walls in succession somewhat confusing.

That's not to say they also don't find their way on the pro tour. Shannon Wright, Lynn Adams and Laura Martino all use Around-The-Wall shots very effectively, especially Shannon who credited ATWs for her win over Heather McKay in the Ektelon-Perrier Championships last May. So, for that matter did Heather, who had trouble setting up to hit them.

So just what are Around-The-Wall or Around-The-World shots? When do you hit them? How do you hit them? And how do you defend against them? All are pretty common questions. Let's examine the answers one at a time.

As mentioned, Around-The-Wall shots are change-of-pace, back-to-mid-court shots that arise when you need time to collect your thoughts and want to break up the ceiling ball blues.

The best time to hit them is on the return of any soft serve, either a lob or Z, especially when your opponent is working on a string, or is somewhat inexperienced. In doubles when you need something to cross up your opponents, that's the time for an ATW shot.

Around-The-Wall shots differ from a Z in that you hit the sidewall first rather than the front wall. Your contact point along the sidewall should be 10-16 feet high (courts are 20 feet high) and about four feet in front of the front wall.

The angle of your shot should insure the ball rebounding off the front wall, crossing over to the opposite wall and landing near the backcourt.

Remember, this is a cross-court shot. So if you're playing the backhand corner, your Around-The-Wall should hit the opposite side wall and end up in the forehand corner.

What you want to do is force your opponent into a tough situation in back, perhaps pinning him or her into that corner.

One of the cautions of the Around-The-Wall, however, is the ceiling. If you hit the ceiling, the ball will drop straight down, leaving an easy front-wall set up for your opponent.

Another caution concerns hitting the ball too hard. If you really bang it off three walls, you'll end up hitting a fourth—the back wall—leaving Set Up City for your opponent.

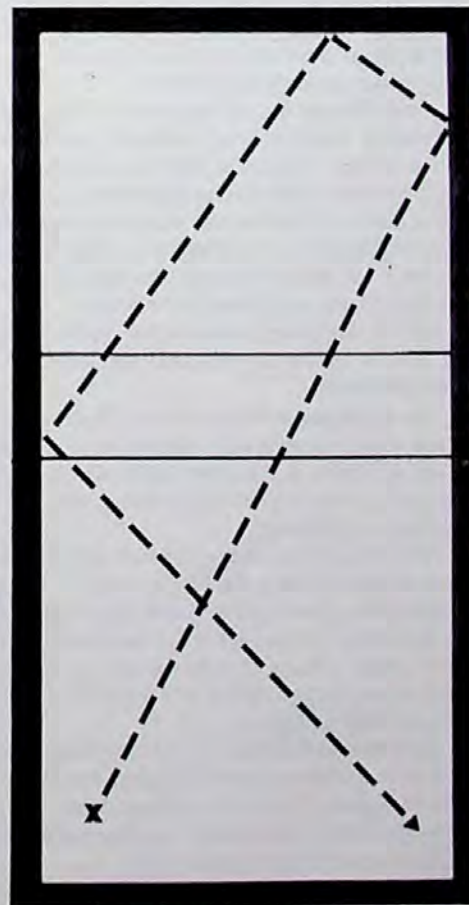
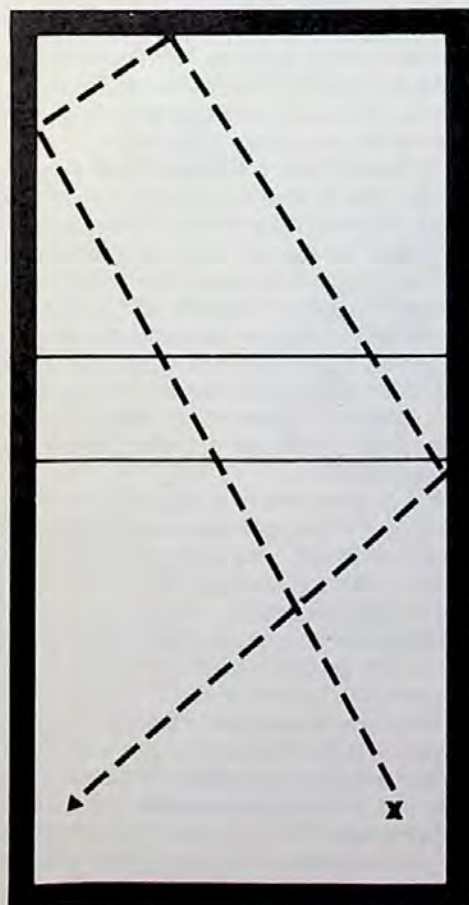
Hitting the shot, per se, is relatively simple. It involves somewhat of a ceiling or tennis approach, getting the ball just above the shoulder on the forehand and directing it toward the opposite sidewall.

On the backhand, contact comes just off the right shoulder and right foot. Go cross-court with the shot so it wraps around to the forehand corner.

So how do you defend these shots? Simple. Move to the ball, don't stand mesmerized while the shot rolls around the walls. Get yourself moving forward and cut off the shot at mid-court, before it makes its way to either forehand or backhand corner.

The best shots to use at this point, I've found, are down-the-line or passes.

Enough of those winners and your opponent won't be including too many Around-The-Wall shots in the next game.



Diagrams show flight of Around-The-Wall or Around-The-Wall shots, the purpose of which is to give you more time to collect your thoughts during a rally or to break up the ceiling ball blues.

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HOW TO TELL IF YOU ARE AN ADVANCED PLAYER

By Lee Pretner

So you think you are a hot shot player? You think that just because you win a lot of matches on your club's challenge court you can call yourself an A player? You know what? You're a long way from stardom.

There are an estimated 10 million racquetball players in the world. But 95 per cent of those are recreational players. They are the ones who are not interested in competing on a higher level of play. They are content to stay and play at their own little watering hole.

The true test in determining one's worth is to play in open level tournaments. Not the in-house challenge court, or even the in-house tournament. We are talking about playing against the best. If you want to become a tough player, then play the tough players. When you beat them, you can talk.

The open level tournament is what separates the real advanced player from the recreational advanced player. Most club players consider themselves at a higher level of play than they are really at.

A lot of this has to do with ego. A lot of this has to do with being a big fish in a small pond, not daring to venture out of the confines of greatness into the real world.

This article will go into the various levels of play, and how to separate one player from another. We will also discuss the things needed to make that advancement.

First there is the **Beginning Novice**. This player doesn't know how to do much. He or she should have a basic knowledge of the game, know all the rules, including ones for safety and on-court demeanor. This player has taken up the game within the past six months.

The **Novice** should have a good forehand stroke and a basic understanding of the game. He should have a working backhand and a ceiling game. Strategy and court understanding are things to come later.

If you are a **C Player**, you should have a pretty fair forehand but with room for improvement. You should be able to easily kill the ball off a back wall shot and are beginning to develop a good pinch shot. Ceiling game should be fair and your backhand should be able to keep the ball in play. You are beginning to develop strategy and knowledge of center court positioning and you possess a variety of serves.

That takes us into the B division. But just because you may have a knowledge of the game and can hit a few kill shots, you still shouldn't consider yourself an advanced player. Perhaps, if you get to a high B level, you can edge toward that advanced distinction but not before.

And when we talk about a B level, that is the level at an open tournament. Have you ever won a C tournament on the regional or open level? If so, consider yourself a low B player. In other words, you have proved yourself on one level, and you may take a giant step up to the next level.

Over 80 per cent of all players in the country are at a C level or below. Now some may think they are Bs or even As, but in reality, that should be proven. Talk is cheap.

Most players are beginners to intermediates. Even club B players are intermediates. The advanced player is probably the high B or low A player who has a proven record of winning in tournament competition.

The **B Player** should be able to kill the ball with either backhand or forehand, probably with a stronger forehand. He has a good ceiling game with forehand and backhand, and a good variety of serves, including lobs and Zs, an understanding of center court positioning, an array of shots, an understanding of percentage shots, and good court sense.

Most B players are physical with some natural ability. Good control and strategy are important here.

The **A Player** is the advanced player. This is the level that everyone aspires to. On this level, you have a complete understanding of the game, including strokes, strategy and center court positioning.

An A player can kill the ball from anywhere on the court at any time. He has a good front court game, good ceiling game, good variety of shots and he can place his serves. The A level player knows how to control his opponent by working on subtle weaknesses. Backhand is near-flawless.

But just because you are at one level, you don't have to become stagnant at that point. There is always room for improvement. With time, dedication and desire, you can raise the level of your game a notch or two.

The **Beginning Novice** should play a variety of people to understand the different levels of the game. Take one or two lessons with a professional and you can move up quicker.

It has always been said that a player should play someone a little better in order to improve his game and move up to the level of the competing player. That is good and bad.

A player should also play players of equal ability and even lesser ability. The match against someone you can beat will help you fine tune your own game. It gives you a chance to work on things you may not normally get to when losing 18-3 against a much better player. You should also play someone of equal ability. This gets you tournament tough. It gets you working hard for every point. Against a player of greater ability, you should try to raise the level of your game, and hopefully you can learn something.

The **Novice Player** can move into the C division by playing twice a week and working on the application of good, solid, basic strokes.

The **C Player** moves into the B category with a better understanding of strategy and shot selection. This comes from hours of practicing and playing. This also comes from competition in leagues and tournaments. A few lessons from your pro will also help.

To develop from a **B Player** to an A is the hardest step to take. It takes a lot of time and work. You need to be mentally ready to make the move. Strategy and mental awareness are the prime ingredients added to a basic knowledge of the game. Exposure with good players, most likely in open tournaments, will help you in this regard. Physical ability is the most important aspect, followed by strategy and, yes, confidence. Take lessons from a tournament-tough instructor and play other advanced players.

It is probably every A player's fantasy to become a touring pro such as Marty Hogan, Charlie Brumfield, Mike Yellen, etc. But only a few ever reach this plateau. In addition to all of the above ingredients, you need some intangibles here such as desire, dedication, coaching, and, in general, a good mental attitude.

One can't say he or she is an advanced player to impress people. You have to go out and show it. You may be strong at your peer's level or even the club level but the true test is to play and win in open competition. More than anything else, that separates the real player from the recreational player. It shows who the real advanced players are.

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The One to Watch



By Charles Garfinkel

Defeating Charlie Brumfield, Lindsay Myers, and coming within three points of beating Mike Yellen in a tiebreaker would make any rookie's season a great one. However, when this is done in the Nationals, people sit up and take notice.

The guy they are noticing is Bruce Christensen, 19, who at the 1980 Nationals, parlayed his deadly lefthanded service into winners off both z and drive serves, and when he wasn't scoring aces, he was rolling out backhands and forehands with amazing accuracy.

Brumfield was prophetic. When asked about his upcoming first round match with Christensen, Brumfield replied, "If you think Hilecher has a tough serve, you haven't seen anything until you've seen Christensen serve."

Although racquetball experts say that the front wall glass at the Las Vegas Sporting House helped Christensen, his opponents were generous in their praise. Myers said, "He had sixty-five per cent outright aces against me. Another twenty per cent of his serves were hit so well that I barely returned them to the front wall. I couldn't get into any rallies, so how was I going to win a point? The front wall glass had no effect on my play. Christensen

Bruce Christensen earned a reputation at the 1980 Nationals and now is one of racquetball's rising stars.

played well and he had a great tournament."

Then it was Yellen's turn to comment: "Christensen is capable of constantly playing at the level of play he showed at the Nationals. Reaching the quarterfinals was an admirable feat. His serve is the key. He has to improve the other aspects of his game. When he's serving well, the rest of his game is tough. Serving and shots based on the serve go hand in hand."

So, how did the new phenomenon get started in racquetball? "When I was thirteen years old I'd go to watch my dad play at a local club in my hometown of Nashua, New Hampshire," Christensen explained. "I liked what I saw and I started playing a few times. Even though I loved the game, I was really horrible at first."

Christensen had been playing Little League baseball and junior basketball until his dad and some of his friends let him into a club to play racquetball with them.

"I was very frustrated when I first started

playing. My main goal was to whip my dad but I couldn't even get close at first. My dad played hard and wouldn't give me anything. When I finally did beat him it gave me a great confidence boost," said Christensen.

His dad's friends looked like professionals to him. After all, he had never seen any other players. About a year later Christensen got a glimpse of top notch amateur play.

"Mike Romano and Mike Luciw came to Hampshire Hills to put on a clinic. I didn't think racquetball could be played that well. The things that impressed me the most were the way that they could shoot the ball and constantly keep it so low. I was also impressed with their movements on the court. Surprisingly, the fact that they had also competed in a great many tournaments made me want to start playing in organized competition immediately."

When Christensen had barely turned 14 years old he started playing in a beginners league. He was 5-feet-10 and weighed 160 pounds.

Playing in competition helped Christensen but he did have one problem. He wanted to win so badly that he developed a bad temper. He was playing so many people who were better than he, that it was hard for him to lose often.



The One to Watch

"Even though I was really frustrated I knew that I could get better. I wanted to be the best player at Hampshire Hills Club."

Christensen entered the New Hampshire State Championships later that year and in the first round he played a local club pro in a thirty-one point game. With the score tied at 30-30, the pro tried to psych the kid out. But it didn't work. Christensen won 31-30 and the gallery went wild. Even though he was defeated handily in the next round, Christensen was encouraged to pursue his tournament career. "I started playing more tournaments and I really was improving," said Christensen. "I saw the pros play and I was in awe. Then I started reading all of the racquetball magazines. I was really getting excited. I couldn't wait to enter more tournaments."

At 15, people told Christensen he had the

potential to become one of the best juniors in New England. He entered several junior tournaments, always losing to the same player, Todd Gibbo.

But this did not deter Christensen. He won the New England Regional B Championships, earning victories in five tiebreakers.

"About this time I started thinking about playing in the National Juniors. The next year I went to Chicago for the Nationals. I lost in the first round, but I went on to win the consolation championship. After the Nationals I started playing only in open tournaments and I was getting beaten badly. But it only made me strive harder."

Much of Christensen's support comes from his father, Frank.

"I knew Bruce was getting to show a lot of potential," said Frank. "However, his temper



Yellen consoles Christensen after the newcomer lost 11-8 in a tiebreaker, ending a string of upsets at the Nationals.

was terrible. I'd make him stop playing for weeks at a time until I thought he was ready to play and control his temper."

But not even dad's punishment stopped Christensen, because he would still practice in his downstairs basement. He'd set up his own tournament with draw sheets and times and would pretend that he was Steve Serot, Charlie Brumfield, Marty Hogan, Steve Strandemo, and other top players of that time. He'd play against the cellar wall and would alternate shots with each player. He would even post rankings on the cellar walls. "Unbelievably, John Lynch finished in first place," said Christensen, referring to a relatively unknown but good player of the day.

In April, 1978, Christensen's game really started to bloom. He reached the finals in the New England Regionals and lost a heartbreaker to Mike McDonough, 15-14 in the tiebreaker. "I realized then that I could become the best in the East," he said.

Christensen knew he had a good serve and forehand but his backhand needed work, not to mention his attitude. Christensen also had a tendency to try to hit everything as hard as he could, so when he was on, it was devastating. When he was off, it was disaster.

At 17 he and his dad decided to go to the Nationals, only for the experience. But he qualified for the main draw in the pro ranks. "I couldn't believe that I had qualified," said Christensen. "Even though I lost badly to Richie Wagner I was still on cloud nine. I'd never played on glass before and couldn't do anything. Wagner had me so psyched out, even his clothing had me in awe."

When he arrived back in New Hampshire, his friends treated him as if he had won the event. Now he knew he had pro potential and was ready to do whatever necessary to attain his goal of reaching the top.

During the summer of 1978, he went to San



Photos by David M. King

Christensen goes for a kill shot against Mike Yellen in quarterfinals of 1980 Nationals in Las Vegas.

Diego for a month and played with Charlie Brumfield, among others. Then he returned east and won his first big event, the Maine Open. He then lost in the quarters at the USRA Junior Nationals and although he did not qualify for the Pro Nationals, his father felt it was time to turn pro.

"I knew Bruce could definitely make it in pro racquetball and I told him that I'd sponsor him on the pro tour," said Frank. "He'd live in San Diego and I'd meet him at each pro stop."

In the first pro stop in Chicago in Oct. 1979, Christensen qualified and lost to Jerry Hilecher, 21-5, 21-12. In Arizona he again qualified but lost to Craig McCoy in a well-played match. In Memphis he qualified but lost to Brumfield, 21-11, 21-4. In San Francisco he again qualified and lost a tough match to Rich Wagner, 21-20, 21-14. In Los Angeles, he defeated Beaver Wickham and lost 11-10 in a tiebreaker to Don Thomas.

In Beverly, Mass., Christensen had a super tournament. He defeated Larry Meyers 11-3 in the third, and then lost a close match to Dave Peck 11-7 in the third. "After this match I knew I could play with anyone," said Christensen.

However, in Atlanta, the last pro stop before the Nationals, Christensen was obliterated by Mike Yellen, 21-4, 21-2. It was the worst defeat for anybody during the season. "I was upset. However, it might have helped me by showing me how much harder I had to work on my game," said Christensen.

Going to the Nationals, Christensen was ranked 26th in the nation. But with an exhibition court that had a glass front wall, perfect for hard serves, it was just what the doctor ordered to improve his game.

"In the Nationals, my serve was definitely on. I was really concentrating harder than ever. I don't think that the glass was the difference. I'm still trying to overpower my opponents as much as possible. I'm still going to play my game. However, I know I can change if I have to," said Christensen.

Christensen and his father make up a game plan for each tournament. They study potential opponents carefully. Then he trains by jumping rope, sprinting, and playing paddleball and badminton. Badminton is a good exercise for the short, quick, choppy strokes of racquetball.

Christensen plays top players every day.

He swims three days a week. He also runs one or two six-minute miles every day. There's also usually time to practice one or two hours every day by himself. Sunday he rests.

"I'm training hard and I know my Nationals showing wasn't a fluke. I'd like to be in the top ten next season. The ball that is used on the tour suits my game well," says Christensen.

"Being a lefty, I have the advantage of playing against many righthanders. They're not used to playing against lefthanders. They have to change their game around. They have to hit crosscourt ceiling balls for instance."

Christensen thinks that his size also helps to make his serve more effective. He gets great power from his legs and his 6-foot-2 height helps him reach a lot of would-be passing shots.

Christensen's coach more or less is his father. "My dad improves my self discipline and we discuss and critique each match," he says. "He also knows how to calm me down and knows what I'm doing right or wrong."

Bruce Christensen will be the player to watch this season. The other pros think so. His father thinks so. And most important, he thinks so.



Christensen laughs it up with his father-coach-manager, Frank.

Photo by Carol George

WILT:

Racquetball's BMOC (Big Man on Court)

By Linda Huey

The third day of the 1976 Olympic Track and Field Trials in Eugene, Ore., was warm and cloudless. The tall reporter draped his legs over three rows of bleachers and focused his binoculars on the finish line. Already he had watched and timed half a dozen races during the morning and afternoon sessions. Now, as the heat abated and a balmy breeze rose, there was a four-hour break before the evening competitions.

Wilt Chamberlain, track aficionado turned temporary journalist, needed a work out. He had tried finding some volleyball action at the University of Oregon, but his larger-than-life presence had stopped play. He even drew a crowd when he tried to run along the Willamette River. He wanted a good work out, but he wanted to remain unseen, if possible. A fellow reporter handed him a small unfamiliar racquet and pointed to the racquetball courts only a hundred yards behind the track stadium.

For the next week the 7-foot-1 former NBA

great swatted at racquetballs in claustrophobic quarters. Often he missed. Twice he ran into the wall. But at the end of that frustrating week, a powerful albeit unorthodox racquetball player emerged.

Wilt enjoyed the heavy sweat that came so easily in the small enclosed court. He began to use his height and armspan advantages as he slowly gained insight into what had previously seemed mysterious movings of the ball. Soon he developed his own particular game strategy: "Get in the middle of the court so the opponent can't see the ball." Before long he was calling racquetball one of his favorite sports.

"When I got home to Los Angeles," recalls Wilt, "the game just fell into place in my life. If it was raining and I couldn't head to the beach for some volleyball, I could drive to UCLA for some racquetball and a run on the track. I was amazed to learn how many of my friends already knew how to play racquetball."

The challenge of a new sport often lured Wilt to the courts alone. For hours he would stroke shot after shot, working on his backhand, his kill shot, his serve. Soon he had several racquets, wrist bands and gloves.

The game traveled well with him.

"If I'm in Boston or Vancouver, it's much easier for me to get a good racquetball game than a volleyball game," says Wilt. "It only takes one other person and a court to get a great work out. And that one other person doesn't have to be big, either. I've had some totally satisfying games playing against small women or men. Actually, the game isn't made for seven-footers. I guess that's why I find it so challenging."

"When I play in Hawaii, I really sharpen up my game," continues Wilt. "Four months a year I live in my second home, Honolulu."

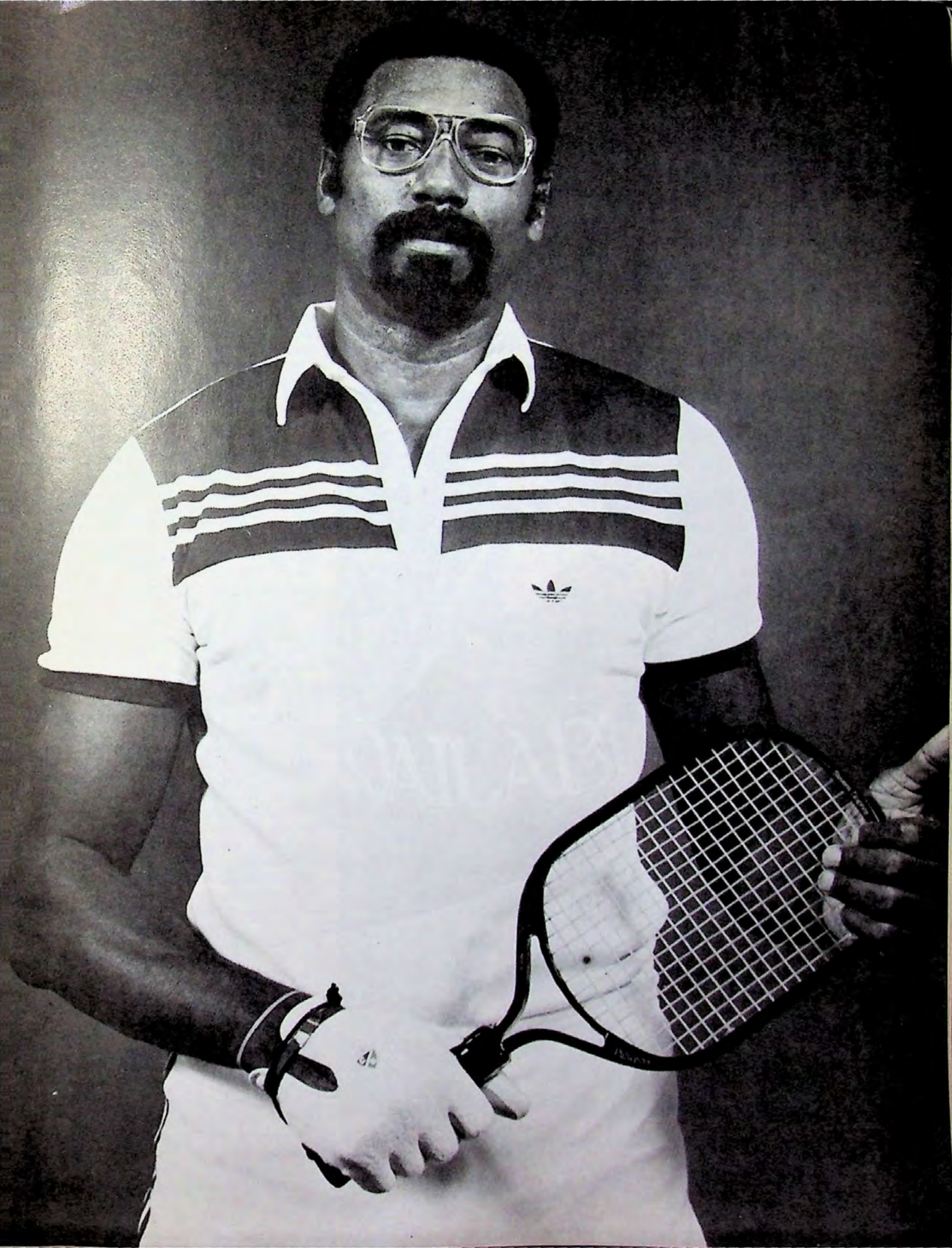
He owns the penthouse of a 25-story Waikiki high-rise in addition to his multi-million dollar home in Bel Air. In Honolulu, the Central YMCA became Wilt's serious racquetball home. For several winters he was beaten badly by his toughest opponents, but every time he returned to Los Angeles, his skill level had jumped up another big notch. Now, he says he can at least stay on the court with the top players from Hawaii.

Retired now after a long basketball career with the Globetrotters, the Warriors, 76ers, the Lakers and a final year as coach with the San Diego Conquistadors, Wilt simply does his best to enjoy himself. Athletics is a major part of that enjoyment.

Other prime components of Wiltonian enjoyment of life are fine food and good company. A gourmet cook and hilarious storyteller, Wilt partakes of them with equal obvious de-



Wilt Chamberlain in his days as a Los Angeles Laker when he towered over the opposition and helped the team to the NBA title.



WILT

light. He and his friends spend many hours in his dream kitchen in Bel Air making a meal become the evening's entertainment.

"What I'm proudest of in my cooking, is timing," says Wilt, dicing an onion on his two-ton 17th Century Virginia cutting block. "No matter how many different dishes there are, I'm able to make them all turn out on time. And that can be the hardest part."

To share some of his cooking and timing expertise, Wilt is in the process of writing a cook book that will be complete with all his secret recipes.

"I've done a lot of cooking, and I've found that all I have to do is make a dish, put plenty of it out when people are around and see if it

disappears. If it doesn't, I won't bother making it again."

Besides all the "disappearing" dishes, Wilt's book intends to pass on some of his philosophy on food and how its selection affects daily lives.

"If you can learn to identify your appetites—specifically what you want at this moment—you can learn how to make yourself happier, more satisfied. Once you learn to do it with your food, you can apply that principle to other parts of your life."

With his daily life completely open for his own structuring, Wilt has learned to do just that—identify his daily appetites and develop his own timetable. He does everything to ex-

tremes: Fast for three days, then eat several huge meals; party around the clock for a week, then hibernate with his television and *National Geographic* magazines; attend back-to-back business meetings, fly around the country negotiating deals and shooting commercials, then zip to Hawaii to drift into a lengthy rejuvenation. Whereas other working folks must submit to weekly schedules of work and relaxation, Wilt builds his own annual schedule of accomplishment and vacation.

Each spring, upon his return to the mainland, Wilt can be spotted in the press booth of all major track meets. Working as a correspondent for *Woman's Sports* magazine, Wilt follows the women's track scene closely. In August of each year he travels either to Europe or Canada to watch the season-end international meets. Last fall he traveled with an American track team to the Orient for competition and clinics. His mental computer banks overflow with times, relay splits, metric conversions and world rankings of athletes.

Long a supporter of women's athletics (he has sponsored a track team and a volleyball team), Wilt uses his fame to convince establishment sportswriters not to ignore the women tracksters. He truly appreciates their athletic achievements and, in fact, would rather watch women play volleyball, tennis—nearly anything—rather than men.

"Men rely on brute strength for most of their sports supremacy," explains Wilt. "When women athletes are in action, you get more of a chance to see finesse, strategy and refined skill. If the media would give the women their share of ink and air time, the public would be truly surprised to see how many fine athletes we have in America in all areas of sport."

Wilt knows what the media can do. It has made him one of the most recognizable figures in sports. This year, in fact, Wilt lent that visibility to Volkswagen for an endorsement fee, of course. His VW Rabbit commercial won a gold medal in the advertising business—the commercial equivalent of an Oscar or an Emmy and he just finished shooting his second ad for Volkswagen, a commercial that should begin appearing in late fall.

But leaving behind all the trappings of being a celebrity, Wilt Chamberlain is a very fitness-conscious man. His weight currently rests at an all-time low of 260 lbs. (his playing weight with the championship Laker team was 295 lbs.), and he recently completed a 30-mile run in Toronto. He periodically rejoins his volleyball partners for beach tournaments and he manages to work in a few racquetball games a week, mostly at the Mid-Valley Racquetball Club in Reseda, Calif. where he is a member.

"Going into these new racquetball centers is so therapeutic for me," Wilt says. "I've never seen such beautiful places to work out."

Wilt pauses for a moment looking around the house at his own Universal Gym center, jacuzzi, sauna and swimming pool. "Except maybe here at home."

R



Photos by David M. King

Wilt: "My strategy is to get in the middle of the court, so the opponent can't see the ball."

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How to Negotiate a Player's Contract

Looking For A Sponsor?
Read this first before you sign any dotted lines.

By Jon M. Steele

Editor's note: The author is an attorney in Boise, Ida. who has negotiated contracts for professional racquetball players.

As the popularity of racquetball increases, so increases the ranks of the professional and would-be professional racquetball players.

Most of us are familiar with the top professional players and the most visible racquetball companies. However, new players and companies are entering the racquetball industry continually and many players dream of being "sponsored" and many new companies dream of boosts in sales as the result of a top player endorsing their equipment.

The contracting game that results is similar to a courtship. An ambitious player will want to make himself/herself available (but not too available) and the sponsoring company will want to offer enough (but not more than it has to). The courtship can be a rocky one or quite smooth.

There is a preliminary decision that a player must face prior to entering the contract courtship. That is whether the player will employ a representative. As in other professional sports, there have appeared on the scene player representatives who handle substantive negotiations of a professional contract for a fee.

The initial reaction of a player about to enter the professional ranks to hiring a player representative is probably along the line of "What do I need one for?" The answer to that question is simple. Most racquetball players considering a professional contract for the first time are between the ages of 16 and 21. Their business experience is limited. On the other hand, most racquetball companies are represented by a businessman or attorney who handles contracts with players as a part of his normal duties. This leads to a built-in inequity. There is no reason to believe that an 18-year-old can bargain on an equal basis with an experienced attorney.

A player may employ an agent to negotiate on his behalf or hire an attorney to represent him in substantive negotiations. It has been my experience that a player will employ an agent to handle negotiations and that the agent will seek legal advice as needed. As most players 16 to 21 years of age have had little or no contact with attorneys and generally lack the funds to hire an attorney, the player agent situation is most common.

A player agent can be compensated through either a flat fee, a percentage of the negotiated contract or an hourly fee. The most important criteria in selecting an agent or attorney are his/her integrity and competency.

You can be sure that the sponsoring com-

pany is thoroughly familiar with the background and ability of any player it courts. Likewise, it is of utmost importance that the player become familiar with the courting sponsor. Obviously, if one of the respected companies offers a contract you will not have too many reservations about its financial ability. But there are a number of emerging companies looking for promising players. The basic rule here is: Look before you leap. A company which presents you with an attractive contract may not have the financial ability to live up to its end of the agreement. Find that out in advance, not after it falls behind in reimbursing you for your expenses. You are much better off without any contract than with a contract which a sponsor does not live up to. In that regard a player should consider asking for a personal guarantee of performance of the contract by the principal owners of any closely held company which extends a contract offer.

The substantive negotiations will include a number of subjects, the most notable of which are the length of the agreement, the form and amount of compensation, the player's responsibilities in terms of tournament play, personal appearances, and use and endorsement of the sponsor's products.

In the type of economy we are experiencing today those players who have multi-year contracts are sighing with relief. Those players who entered into one year contracts in 1979 with the idea of negotiating a better compensation agreement this year have probably found out their sponsor not only did not offer a better compensation package, but probably did not offer any contract at all.

There is some advantage to a short-term agreement. The financial backing enables a player to concentrate on developing his racquetball abilities, enter professional tournaments and ideally at the end of the year upgrade his professional ranking and hence his value to his sponsor and other courting sponsors. On the other hand, a longer term agreement (for instance three years) gives a player assurance of continued financial support based upon a preagreed compensation package.

A longer-term agreement is favored. It will compensate a player based upon a combination of expenses and/or salary and bonus incentives based upon his tournament finishes and year-end ranking.

Which brings us to the area of compensation. Benefits under a contract can take many forms depending on a player's ability. It may be merely the use of equipment or expenses in attending tournaments. For the proven professional player, it may include a monthly salary, equipment, personal coaching, college ex-

penses, royalties from sales of endorsed equipment, payment for personal appearances and bonuses based upon tournament finishes and year-end ranking. As the racquetball industry grows and matures, so will the professional player contracts and compensation benefits paid.

Player responsibilities under a contract will include participating in a certain number of tournaments, possible personal appearances for promotional purposes, and wearing and using the sponsor's equipment. The player's name may be used for endorsing a product of the sponsor and the player's picture or image may be used for promotional purposes by the sponsor.

A player should be particularly aware of the following items when negotiating a professional contract:

1. Under what circumstances can the contract be terminated by the player or by the sponsor?
2. Does the contract contain a clause defining the responsibilities of each party in the event of a default?
3. Does the contract prohibit the player from endorsing any other sponsor's product or piece of equipment?
4. Does the contract contain any options for its extension?
5. Is there a limitation on the number of tournaments a player could be required to participate in?

In terms of legal relationships the player and sponsor enter into an independent contractor agreement. Under that relationship a player, if he/she is injured, is not entitled to worker's compensation benefits. A player should be aware that he/she will not be receiving any compensation in the event of an injury unless the contract provides for disability income and/or medical insurance or the sponsor agrees that the player will be covered under the worker's compensation law of a particular state.

A professional player has a limited number of years in which to earn his living as a sponsored player. That player is entitled to the best compensation package that can be negotiated. There are a number of hurdles a player will encounter in his/her pursuit of a professional contract. However, once that player has developed the athletic ability and the necessary frame of mind and dedication to the sport he/she cannot afford to enter into less than the best available contract or cannot afford to receive ill or incorrect advice. As the racquetball industry matures and grows so will the demand for capable professional players with the ability to sell a product as well as swing a racquet.



AGREEMENT

Part 1, Section 1

1.1. The purpose of this Agreement is to define the rights and obligations of the Author and the Publisher in connection with the publication of the Work.

1.2. The Author grants to the Publisher the exclusive right to publish the Work in print and electronic form, and to make any other use of the Work that may be necessary for the purpose of the publication.

1.3. The Publisher shall have the right to examine, through its authorized agents and representatives, the Work and to make any other use of the Work that may be necessary for the purpose of the publication.

1.4. The Publisher shall have the right to make any other use of the Work that may be necessary for the purpose of the publication.

1.5. The Publisher shall have the right to make any other use of the Work that may be necessary for the purpose of the publication.

1.6. The Publisher shall have the right to make any other use of the Work that may be necessary for the purpose of the publication.

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Is Television Ready For A Racquetball Game Show?

By Ben Kalb

Racquetball industry insiders seem to think that when the sport hits network television it will be the beginning of a prosperous future and everybody connected with the sport will ride off into the sunset and live happily ever after. Of course, everybody is assuming that it will be the pro players who make it big on the tube. That may be the wrong assumption.

Racquetball may have a shot at network television in the future as part of a television game show tentatively entitled *Racqueteers*.

Illustration by Alan Takemoto



RACQUETS



Is Television Ready For A Racquetball Game Show?

The brain behind the proposed television show is Jacob Rosselli, a Los Angeles accountant who has been involved in racquetball for over five years, most notably as the producer of a Steve Keeley instruction cassette package.

Rosselli has pitched and repitched his idea to a couple of producers and syndication people and now because of the increased nationwide interest in the sport, the timing may be right for the show.

Of course, talking about selling a show and then actually raising the capital to get it off the ground are two different things. But the initial interest is there, and with interest comes the possibility of money.

"I'm calling it a game show because it can't be classified as a sports show. A sports show is too limited in its appeal. Sports is just a back-drop to the show," says Rosselli.

Racquetball is divided into two parts in its present form. The first part pits the celebrity player against a player from the studio audience. The celebrity then moves to the announcing booth to join the host and provide commentary for the second half of the show, a match featuring two players.

The two players are not necessarily pros. In fact, Rosselli doesn't want pros at first. "I want the *Real People* effect," he says. "I don't think the public is ready for the pros. I don't think we can do them justice. We need players people can identify with. We need lower quality players who make mistakes. That adds a human interest approach to the game and probably a little bit of comedy."

Rosselli sees novice, C, B and A players alternating on various weeks with the players coming from clubs around the country much like *Dance Fever* does with its weekly disco contest show.

Eventually, the pros will get their shot at it. "We'll monitor it," says Rosselli. "If we get better ratings with A players, that will be the key to us that the public wants a higher level of racquetball and then we'll bring in the pros. But right now people don't know who the pros are. There is no nationwide identification with them."

The key to the show's concept is Rosselli's made-for-television portable court and a character he calls "The Godfather."

The Godfather will be either the front wall or the back wall—he hasn't decided yet—and it will add a semi-carnival atmosphere to the proceedings.

"It will light up, show targets, ring bells, and have a voice saying, 'good shot' or 'nice try,'" says Rosselli. "The players actually won't be playing against themselves. They will be playing against the Godfather."

The Godfather is intended to bring another entertaining dimension to the show. "It will serve as the show's villain," says Rosselli. "Or you can consider it the third man in the ring. It's a unique character. It's the personality of the show."

Players will be given points in a number of ways. You can get a point, obviously, the same way one does in a regular racquetball match. But you can also score points by hitting certain targets on the Godfather and you can also score points with "quality shots." Rosselli says a computer will rate certain shots, and then keep score.

"As long as the contestants keep the ball in play by knocking out the targets, they can score points," says Rosselli. "The more points, the greater the prizes."

"I'm calling it a game show because it can't be classified as a sports show. A sports show is too limited in its appeal."

Rosselli is constantly changing details of the show as prospective producers or sponsors suggest. Originally, he had more of an emphasis on the celebrity or celebrities. Now he has things working about equal among celebrity, audience and competing players.

He has also decided to put a little more emphasis back on the game show aspect. "We will pick three contestants out of the audience and ask questions of each," he says. "The winner will then get to play the celebrity."

Another idea, which Rosselli hasn't incorporated yet, is the concept of a sudden-death playoff. Each of three contestants are asked a question. The one who answers correctly gets the right to play the celebrity in a match. If the contestant beats the celebrity in a one-point sudden death match, he or she wins a prize. If a target is hit during the point a bonus prize is awarded. After the sudden-death point, the contestant returns to the panel and the host asks another question, again with the winner gaining the right to play against the celebrity.

This concept has the audience-celebrity matches occupying the first and last third of the show with the middle third portion a seven-point challenge match with top pros.

Rosselli estimates that 50 shows can be produced for about \$300,000, not counting the cost for the pre-pilot (\$50,000), the pilot (\$100,000) and the portable court (\$150,000).

The portable court, which Rosselli says is being designed now and to which he will retain all rights, is not a spectator court. "It's a production court," he says. "It will be made up of regular panels and hardwood and plastic instead of glass."

The see-through areas will be on all four sides but the walls will not be completely see-through. "The plastic areas will be for key camera points," he says.

Rosselli has been trying to sell the show and although there has been some interest, no deals have been closed. He is now looking for some financial help in producing the pilot and the court.

"Even if the show doesn't make it, we will still have the portable court to work with and once we have this, we can do a number of things with it," he says.

Rosselli plans on shooting the show with six cameras, and include other things such as music sound tracks in post-production. "People get tired of the constant pounding of the ball," he says. "I want to soften it a little bit."

Racquetball is not the first racquetball show promoters are trying to sell to television. Mecca Television Productions of Dallas, Tex. put together a *Star Racquetball* pilot two years ago featuring challenge matches with celebrities Cathy Lee Crosby, Hillary Hilton, Ken Norton and Donny Most. The show was directed by Tony Verna, who has worked on every major sports event on television. But, alas, no sale yet.

"There is a glut of sports programming on television now, more than there is room for," says David Wynne of Mecca. "We thought we had a commitment from the syndication people but we couldn't get anybody to give us a straight answer."

Wynne says there was also some interest from ESPN, the 24-hour cable sports network. "Their offer was so low, it wasn't worth talking to them," says Wynne.

Star Racquetball used five cameras, including one that traced the path of the ball in dotted lines. "It was an expensive production and I don't think sponsors wanted to spend that much," Rosselli says he is more concerned with interest than cost. If the interest is there, he figures the money will be close behind.

When Rosselli tried to sell the show he was met with the response that there was not enough interest in racquetball nationally. That was two and one-half years ago. Since then the A.C. Nielsen survey was published, saying that racquetball was the fastest growing sport from 1976-79, and had over 10 million players.

There may or may not be room in television for a game show built around racquetball but lack of interest is no longer a valid reason for eliminating the possibility.

WHICH ATHLETE ARE YOU: TIGHT OR LOOSE?

If you can successfully assume a lotus position, the author says your ligaments are loose and you are not to be considered a "tight" athlete.



Editor's note: The author is a practicing physician in Sun City, Ariz. who specializes in athletic injuries.

By Dr. Ralph L. Gorrell

Doctors can now predict what types of injury may occur in racquetball, and what steps you

may take to protect yourself from such injuries.

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R FOR WINNING

(bones, joints, muscles, ligaments) are concerned—the "Tight" athlete and the "Loose" athlete.

The "Tight" Athlete

There are six tests to determine one's tightness or looseness. The "tight" athlete cannot:

1. stand with his or her knees fully straightened out and touch the ground with the palms of both hands
2. bend his knees backward at least twenty degrees from a horizontal position.
3. turn his feet wide apart—that is from 90° to 180° a la Charlie Chaplin.
4. sit in the lotus position.
5. overextend his wrists.
6. straighten his elbow out beyond a straight line.

The "Loose" Athlete

The opposite is true for the "loose" athlete. He can perform most of these exercises of flexibility, if not all of them. Younger people tend to be more "loose." This is especially true of children, since their joints are not fully formed and there are less limitations.

The difference

The "tight" athlete needs to follow a program of stretching exercises, so that he may be able to loosen up his connective tissues. The tight athlete is more susceptible to muscle injuries. For example, it is not uncommon to see a racquetball player jump forward for a short ball, using a sudden lunge. Then you can see him limp off the court with a torn calf muscle (especially the gastrocnemius muscle). Such a major injury takes up to three months out of the season and may leave a permanently weakened, lengthened muscle.

The "loose" athlete, on the other hand, needs muscle strengthening exercises, for obvious reasons.

Younger Athletes

Boys develop muscles and joints up to age 18 or 19 years. That is why grade school, junior high, senior high and some early college athletes are susceptible to injuries. The muscles, bones, ligaments, tendons (cords) and joints are in varying stages of partial or complete development, softness or hardness, tightness or looseness over this period of time.

Girls develop earlier and faster than boys. Their bones and joints do, also. Scientific study has shown that growth stops within a year or two after menstruation begins, so their period of liability is not as long.

In the cases of girls and boys, there is a danger of injury to the growth lines, so-called epiphyseal lines, the points at which bone growth takes place. These lines are located in all bones, near their joints. Injury may damage these lines, leading to stoppage of all bone growth in one leg or one arm, or abnormal bone formation leading to a deformity or partial loss of use. Such injuries may masquerade as simple sprains, strains or minor fractures. Younger players (those under age 19 for boys and under 15 for girls) must have films taken to

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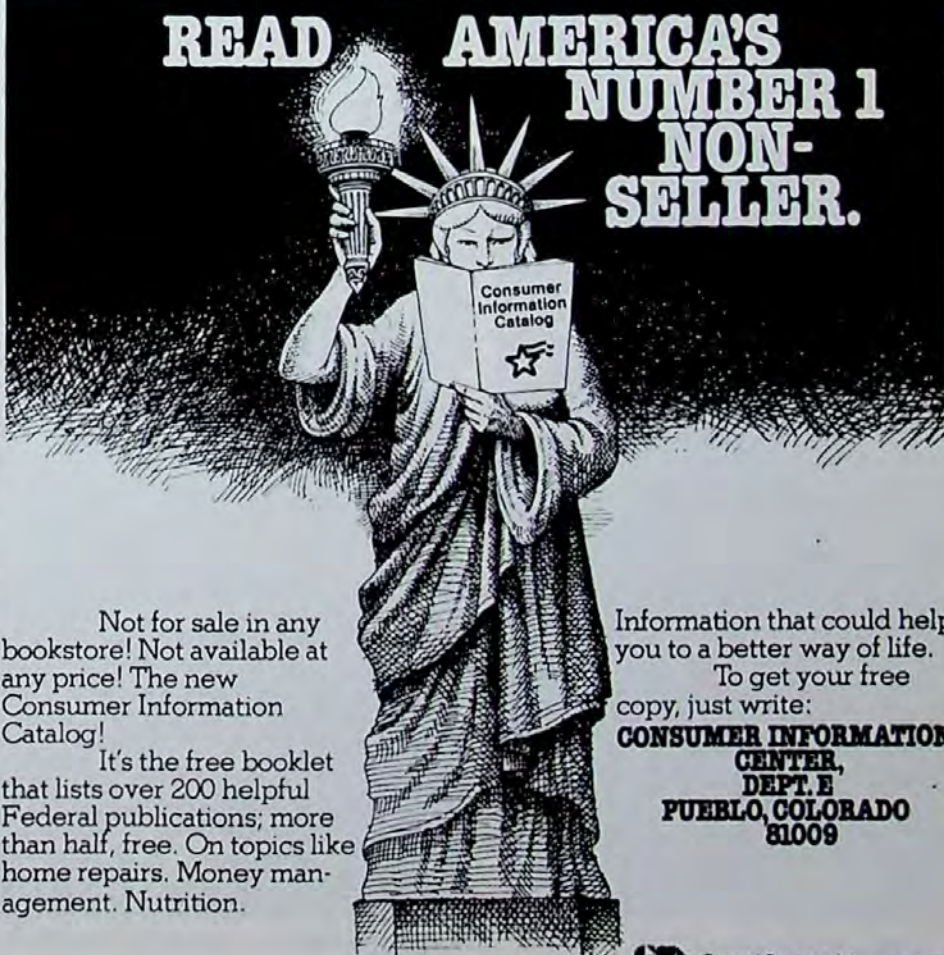
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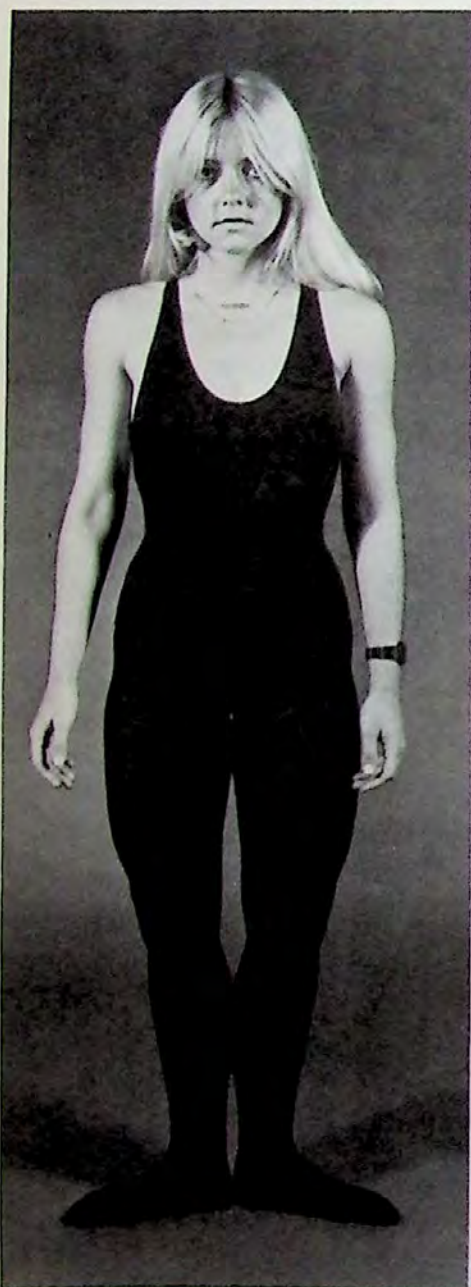
GSA General Services Administration

R_x FOR WINNING

be sure that such long-term injuries have not occurred.

If an injury does occur, consult a good physician. In some institutions, the coach or trainer acts as a doctor. In others, nurses, practical nurses, or physician's assistants take over. But the best physicians are those who care for a greater number of injuries, such as the orthopedic (bone) surgeons, the emergency room physician at your local hospital, team doctors, family physicians who keep up on their studies, and general surgeons. Don't rely on the word of a non-medically trained coach.

In short, winning racquetball depends upon developing all muscles, strengthening them so as to avoid tightness or tearing, yet exercising all muscles and joints to eliminate an overload on any one of them at any time during a game.

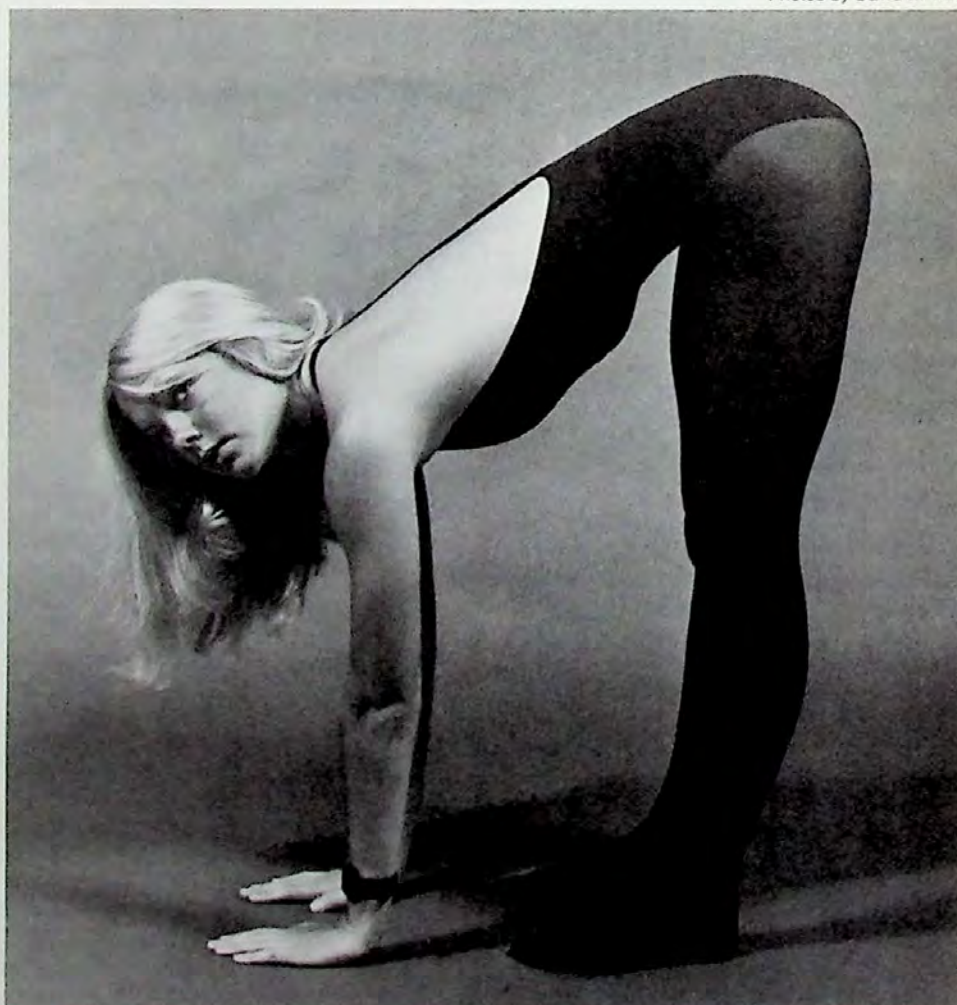


A "loose" athlete can turn his or her feet 90 to 180 degrees apart a la Charlie Chaplin.



The "tight" athlete cannot overextend the wrists. A "loose" athlete can bend back the wrist.

Photos by David M. King



Exercise Instructor Laurel Farrington (Sports Connection, Santa Monica, Calif.) shows that a "loose" athlete can touch palms to the ground while keeping the legs straight.

CLUB NEWS

Scottsdale, Ariz.

Located in downtown Scottsdale, Civic Center Racquetball Club has opened its doors with 14 regulation courts, a Nautilus Fitness Center designed in cooperation with the Arizona Heart Institute, restaurant, pool and backgammon room, nursery, conference room and multi-purpose room.

Boston, Mass.

Designed as part of the historic Athenaeum House located on the shores of the Charles River near Harvard University, sits the newly opened Cambridge Racquetball Club.

In the 1890s, the Athenaeum House printed over 10,000 books a day.

The racquetball club will have 14 courts, three of them with glass walls, exercise areas, saunas, lounge, nursery, and a decorative and historic entry area.

Cleveland, Ohio

The Geauga Fitness and Racquet Club opened its doors recently at 160 Parker Court on Route 6 in Chardon, near Cleveland.

The club is a two-level building with over 20,000 square feet and will feature eight courts, four with glass backwalls, Nautilus

and Isokinetic equipment, lounge areas, health food bar, massage rooms, therapeutic area, three-lane rubber jogging track and the other usual amenities.

The club plans programs in karate with instructor Sang Moon, gymnastics with Allison Jones, trampoline with Bill Copp, and even a football camp for juniors with former Cleveland Brown player Dick Schafrath, who is director of the club.

Racquetball pro is Liz Ortiz, Lynn Wallace, head trainer at Case Western Reserve University, is in charge of fitness, and Jeffrey Taylor is the club's masseur. Club owner is Paul Tiber. Assistant to Schafrath is Debra Branem.

Special guest at the grand opening was former Ohio State football coach Woody Hayes.

Asheville, N.C.

Construction is nearly complete on Asheville Circuit Courts, the ninth racquetball club owned by Circuit Court Systems of Dayton, Ohio.

The club will have 12 courts, Nautilus gym, lounge/bar, whirlpools and the other standard amenities.

General partner for the project is O. Carroll Smith.

Lyndhurst, N.J.

Located on the east bank of the Passaic River, King's Court opened its doors recently with 27 courts, health spa with Universal and Nautilus equipment, sauna, sunrooms, indoor swimming pool, hot and cold whirlpools and running track.

The club is expected to attract pro level tournaments and exhibitions with its one-way glass tournament court seating about 500.

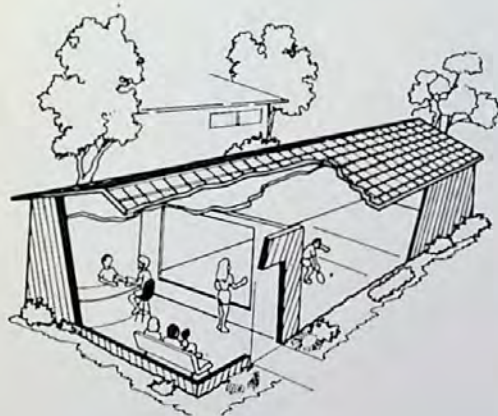
The club will also have a restaurant overlooking the river and a cocktail lounge with skylight and entertainment. There are also plans for a yacht dock on the marina.

"We tried to incorporate the best ideas from all the different clubs we visited from coast to coast and we feel we have achieved this goal," says co-owner Mimi Turco.

Etc.

Rob Rumpke is the new promotion director for the Circuit Court clubs in Dayton, Ohio.

Spalding Racquetball Clubs, Inc. of St. Louis has taken over management of the former Racquettime-Coryell racquetball clubs in Ballwin and Bridgeton, Mo. and the Eagle Rock Court Club in West Orange, N.J. and the Century Fitness Club in Paramus, N.J. Spalding now owns or operates 27 clubs.



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TOURNAMENTS



CCCI

The Radford family—Bruce, Wayne, Bo and Allen—teamed to win the second annual CCCI (The Committee To Cure Cancer Through Immunization) celebrity racquetball tournament at the Sports Connection in Santa Monica, Calif.

The Radford team, whose non-playing cap-

tain was actor Jonathan Harris, edged out the team captained by former California Angel catcher Tom Satriano. Satriano's team consisted of himself, Steve Yankelowitz, Ken Allweiss and Gerry Grossman.

Third place went to the team captained by former Playboy magazine Playmate of the Year Debra Jo Fondren and consisted of John Reese, Milo Muslin, Ben Kalb and Max Wojcik.

The fourth place team, captained by Heidi Hagman (sister of Dallas star Larry Hagman), consisted of Greg Birke, Gerald Ducot, Mike Bauhof and Nancy Kindelon.

Individual division winners were Bruce Radford (A), John Reese (B), Danny Salgado (C) and Gus Ahumada (Novice).

Celebrities attending the event included Patrick Duffy, Ed Asner, Carroll O'Connor,

Photo by Ed Ikuta

CONNECTION



Michelle Lee, Ed Marinaro, Jeff Altman, Tom Hallick, Judy Norton-Taylor, Jerry Vale, and others.

Highlight of the tourney was a special handicap exhibition pitting Debra Jo Fondren against former pro Jay Jones, who had to hit the ball with a bleach bottle while holding a huge teddy bear.

Former Playmate of the Year Debra Jo Fondren keeps her eye on her backhand shot in a handicap challenge match against former pro Jay Jones as part of the CCCI Celebrity tournament at the Sports Connection in Santa Monica, Calif. Jones, who had to hit the ball with a bleach bottle while holding a large teddy bear in his other hand, could only manage to score a few points off Debra Jo.

Ektelon/AARA

Sun Oaks (California) racquetball team scored 18 points to win the Ektelon/AARA Junior Nationals at Kangaroo Courts IV in Redding, Calif.

Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. was second with 8 points, followed by El Paso, Tex. with 7.

Sergio Gonzalez of Florida defeated Fred Calabrese of Florida, 21-13, 21-2, to win the boys' 17-under singles title. Mona Mook of California topped Ginger Sottile of New York, 21-6, 21-11, in the girls' 17-under singles division.

Over 220 juniors from the United States, Mexico and Canada competed in the event.

Other results:

Boys' Singles

15-Under

Gerry Price (Ca.) def. John Amatulli (Ind.), 21-6, 17-21, 15-13

13-Under

Louis Miranda (Tx.) def. Jeff Mulligan (Nev.), 21-4, 21-11

10-Under

Matt Rudich (Nev.) def. Derek Robinson (Wash.), 7-21, 21-7, 15-12

Girls' Singles

15-Under

Stacey Fletcher (Mich.) def. Heather Stupp (Canada), 21-13, 21-18

13-Under

Noelle Kunding (Ore.) def. Lisa Anthony (Ca.), 21-11, 20-21, 11-4

10-Under

Delainie Comer (Ca.) def. Nikki Anthony (Ca.), 21-8, 21-9

Boys' Doubles

17-Under

Gregg Peck-Paul Bakken (Ca.) def. Steve Ginsberg (Md.)-Ira Miller (Ind.), 21-11, 21-20

15-Under

Gerry Price-Shawn Fitzpatrick (Ca.) def. Jeff Plazak (Wisc.)-Ray Navarro (Tx.), 11-21, 21-14, 15-4

13-Under

Luis & Carlos Miranda (Tx.) def. David Simonette (Md.)-Roy Aronwitz (Tx.), 17-21, 21-9, 15-10

10-Under

Sloan Holmes-Matt Rudich (Nev.) def. Jeff Stark-Mike Vargas (Ca.), 18-21, 21-18, 15-5

Girls' Doubles

15-Under

Heather Stupp (Can.)-Stacey Fletcher (Mich.) def. Tricia Rasmussen (Or.)-Cheryl Mathieu (Mo.), 21-12, 21-16

13-Under

Lisa Anthony-Jenelle Deluff (Ca.) def. Michelle Gilbertie-Lisa Mark (Ca.), 21-17, 20-21, 15-2

10-Under

Delainie Comer-Rodie Martin (Ca.) def. Andriana Miranda (Tx.)-Dona Kunding (Ca.), 21-15, 21-11

Sundance Classic

By Carol George

Two-time national champion Shannon Wright of Las Vegas, Nev. upset reigning national champion, Heather McKay, 21-20, 21-

TOURNAMENTS



Janell Marriott jumps to escape backcourt shot from Lynn Adams in third place playoff won by Adams.

Photos by Carol George



Heather McKay gets set for a backhand shot against Shannon Wright in finals of WPRAC Sundance Classic at Newport Beach (Calif.) Sporting House. Wright won in two games.

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streak from 8-19 to 16-19, but her effort was too late as McKay finished it up at 21-17 and then went on in similar style to win the second game 21-9.

In the other half of the draw, Janell Marriott took advantage of Laura Martino, the 1980 WPRA amateur champion, who had upset third-ranked Sarah Green in the round of 16. Martino's hot streak came to an end as she fell to Marriott, 21-9, 21-9. Marriott, in turn, fell to Wright in the semis, 21-7, 21-7.

In the other quarter-final matches, McKay had little trouble with Fran Davis, 21-3, 21-5. But Davis had impressed the audience in the previous round with a win over Rita Hoff. Adams had a hard time getting started against newly-wedded Karin Walton-Trent and lost the first game, 21-15. Adams then took the next two 21-8, 11-1. Wright defeated Martha MacDonald 21-9, 21-7.

Some other interesting matches in the pro division took place in the first round. Qualified Kippi Bishop, who also was recently married, defeated Peggy Steding, 21-16, 21-14. Also two San Diego rivals, Marci Greer and Walton-Trent, met for a grueling match in the 32s. With her entire family watching, including husband Steve Trent, Karin was able to take the match in three games.

In the amateur division, top-seeded Hope Weisbach was replaced by Melanie Taylor because of an injury forfeit and Taylor was able to fight her way to the semis before conceding to eventual winner, Mary Dee of St. Louis who now lives in San Diego.

Dee finished off Ellie Hertz to win a trip for two to Hawaii. Hertz was awarded a racing bike, while third place finisher, Taylor, won warm-ups by Kori of California.

The men's open winner was a surprise to all, including runner-up Larry Meyers. Meyers was sweeping the field in the singles until he met Gary Berberet in the finals. Meyers and Jackie Harding won the mixed doubles finals against Diane Helms and Bill Chadwick, but Meyers lost the singles in two games.

Etc.

• Bruce Christensen defeated Dieter Schmidt to win the men's pro division of the New England/Miller Lite tourney at the Playoff Racquetball Club in Needham, Mass. Christensen collected \$1,000 and Schmidt picked up \$400. Bonnie Stoll took home \$750 for defeating Martha Callahan in the women's pro division. Callahan won \$250.

• Marty Dreyer defeated Denny McDowell and Pam Prina defeated Cheryl Mathieu in the open division finals of the fifth annual Spaulding Mid-States Open tournament held at five Spaulding clubs in St. Louis. A winners were Greg Steger and Gail Mendelsohn. B champs were Kathy Cooper and Ron Pruitt. C winners were Eileen Robshaw and Bob Null. D victors were Derek Ronnfeldt and Joyce Annett. Novice winners were Leonard Carson and Mary Label. Ron Johnson won men's seniors. Junior champions were Larry McDowell and Brad Fink.

• Don Green defeated Glenn Allen and Francine Young defeated Geneva Allen in the open division finals of the Okinawa Racquetball Association's Memorial Day tourney at Camp Kinser. The Allens teamed to win the mixed doubles title. B champ was Bill Winoitch. Novice was won by Craig Allen and Glenn Allen teamed with Chuck Myers for the open doubles crown.

• Russ Montague defeated Jimmy Young, 21-18, 11-21, 11-2, and Dot Fischell defeated Tammy Hajjar, 21-13, 21-18, in the open finals of the Phil Geiger Memorial tourney at the Hopewell Valley Club in Pennington, N.J. Joanne Hughes and Pete Litichevsky were the B winners.



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FASHION RAC



Warming up on the bandstand in their Geoffrey Beene warm-up suits are Camila, Jim, Terri and Odile. Camila chooses the black velour warmup with color braids as piping. **\$138**. Jim has the smart-looking navy cotton (Dan River) velour with raglan sleeves and side pockets. **\$126**. This also comes in another design with drop shoulder sleeves. Terri offers stage presence in an emerald velour warmup with beige trim and side-slit pockets. **\$126**. Odile dresses up in a navy velour warmup made of 100 per cent cotton velour. Comes with raglan sleeves and side pockets. **\$128**. All warmups feature Geoffrey Beene's bold zipper.

With the soundtrack from *Urban Cowboy* playing in the background, the urban cowgirls took over S.H. Kickers, a country-western restaurant in West Los Angeles, Calif.

Wearing the latest in sportswear from Geoffrey Beene, the four cowgirls (and their personal referee) finished up their doubles match at a local racquetball club, changed from tennis shoes into boots, and headed on over for food, conversation and bull riding.

The racquetball cowgirls were Coleen Grillo, Terri Cop, Odile Broulard and Camila Griggs. Serving as the urban referee was Jim Frankel.

Fashion coordinated and directed by David Chow
Photography by David M. King
Location courtesy S.H. Kickers (West Los Angeles, Calif.)
All-Sports bags courtesy Tri-Action Products (Sun Valley, Calif.)



Camila rides the El Toro bull wearing Geoffrey Beene's smart-looking navy velour outfit made of 100 per cent cotton velour. The green with navy velour trim scoop neck shirt retails for **\$32**. The velour shorts comes with a back pocket and sells for **\$32**.



Odile plays her racquetball and does her riding in this 100 per cent cotton cream V-neck top with emerald velvet trim. **\$32**. Emerald velvet shorts come with back pocket. **\$32**.



Terri is swinging in a long-sleeve crew neck black velvet top which features the color braids on the sleeves. **\$62**. Matching shorts comes with back pocket. **\$34**.



Coleen has any urban cowboy up against the wall in her caftan velvet outfit made by Geoffrey Beene. The black one-piece outfit comes with color braids on the sleeves. Features high slits on the sides, a hood and side pockets. **\$102**.



Camila arrived bags in hand and cowboy hat on head in Geoffrey Beene's chintz outfit made of 50 per cent cotton, 40 per cent polyester and 10 per cent nylon. The beige and radiant blue tanktop sells for **\$32**. The radiant shorts with front pockets retail for **\$34**.

Short Shots

Kill Shot

There are times when the proper racquetball swing comes in handy off the court. Just ask Ed Wojcicki of Monmouth, Ill.

While getting ready for bed, Wojcicki was interrupted by a black bat that found its way into his two-story house.

"The bat sailed toward me like a racquetball—small and frightening. I stood up, grabbed my racquet, and flailed it in self defense. It was an overhand swing. Perfect.

"The moral of the story, I guess, is always take your racquet home with you. You never know when you'll get a chance to practice."



Hogan's Clothing Contract

Marty Hogan's recent lucrative contract with Catalina to wear and endorse its men's racquetball clothing line may have caused a few rumples in his relationship with Adidas, the company which manufactures the outfits he used to wear.

Adidas contends that Hogan is still legally bound to wear Adidas clothing on the court. Charlie Drake, in representing Hogan, says things were supposed to be cleared up but because of a lack of communication, there may have been some unnecessary confusion.

According to Bart Stolp, general manager of Adidas USA, Hogan was to be paid a royalty for wearing Adidas shoes. He was also to wear the clothes, although no further royalties would be given.

"We think we still have a contract with him that he will wear all our goods in competition," says Stolp. "He is free to endorse another non-competitive line.

"I hope we can resolve this in everybody's interest. I don't want to ruin the (Catalina) deal for him but there are certain rules that have to be followed."

According to Drake, Adidas had informed all parties that it was discontinuing its racquetball line but that it would be happy to supply Hogan with all the tennis outfits he could wear.

"Marty is a racquetball player, not a tennis player," says Drake. "He wants a racquetball image." Drake says that Hogan's intentions to sign with Catalina were

conveyed to Chris Severn of Adidas and he was left with the understanding that there would be no problem. "They even sent us Marty's shoe endorsement check for \$24,000," says Drake. "Now, if they were going to contest it, do you think they would have sent the check?"

Drake thinks the problem stemmed from lack of communication. "We should have put it in writing," he says.

But Drake says he thinks everything is settled now. "We acted in good faith and Adidas acted in good faith," says Drake. "Marty is very satisfied with Adidas shoes and he will continue to wear them. He also has a Catalina contract and he will stay in their clothes."

Wedding Day



Photo by Carol George

Those racquets hanging from the top of the bridal arch serve as a fitting background to the recent wedding of 1979 National champion Karin Walton and Steve Trent, one of the top doubles players in the country.

Karin and Steve tied the knot in July in a small wedding at Karin's home in San Clemente, Calif. The couple plan to make their home in San Diego for the time being.

Shorter Shots

Seamco Sporting Goods division of Dart Industries Inc. has sold its racquetball/handball/paddleball business to Seamco, Inc., of Hatfield, Pa.

Seamco, Inc. has for years been marketing squash balls. Now they have added racquetballs to their line. "We are dedicated to manufacturing small balls of the highest quality," says Seamco, Inc. president Edward Marshall.

Top-ranked pro racquetball player Marty Hogan and Leach Industries officer Charlie Drake put in a bid to buy the Las Vegas Sporting House. It was turned down. Hogan and Drake have formed a corporation in which they have purchased various properties for investment, among them an apartment complex in Seattle.

Enter The PRA

A group of touring racquetball pros have officially formed the Professional Racquetball Association (PRA), designed to "enhance the player's position through increased sponsorship by private companies and set standards of player conduct and responsibility."

Membership is open to the tour's top 16-ranked players each season. Most of the top 16 are expected to join with the possible exception of the players who have spearheaded the organization of the potential rival National Association of Racquetball Professionals (NARP).

Steve Strandemo is chairman of the committee which will develop the bylaws for the new organization. Also on the committee are Charlie Brumfield and attorney Jerry Day, the agent for Dave Peck. By-laws must be ratified by 100 per cent of the membership.

The group says it plans to set standards on sponsor requirements, increased prize money, improved referees, and a new method of setting up the tournament draw sheets.

"Until now a major block to sponsor interest has been that they couldn't be guaranteed who would play in their events," says Marty Hogan. "This group will sanction events and equipment and guarantee that its

players will perform."

The PRA was set up after two lengthy meetings of the top players in San Diego. The players reportedly were flown to San Diego by Charlie Drake of Leach Industries. Although Drake is not directly involved in the PRA, he was instrumental in getting the organization formed. "Since Leach is organizing the tour, it is in Drake's best interest to get this group together," said one person close to the proceedings.

According to Drake, the new group will not lock out its players from participating in other tournament events.

But another source says the new group will "ask" its players not to participate in other non-sanctioned PRA events in the "name of unity."

The formation of the PRA could mean the demise of the NARP or it could mean a restructuring of the organization. The NARP had contracted with College Marketing Research, a division of Playboy, and later with Capital Sports as agents for potential sponsors, but both of those organizations have bowed out without success in getting a tour started.

"If nothing else, the NARP awakened the players to the need of a players organization," says Drake.

The Big Wall

In following up our recent report about racquetball at Utah State Prison, David A. Cavanaugh sends us his report on racquetball at Oregon State Prison Penitentiary in Salem, Ore.

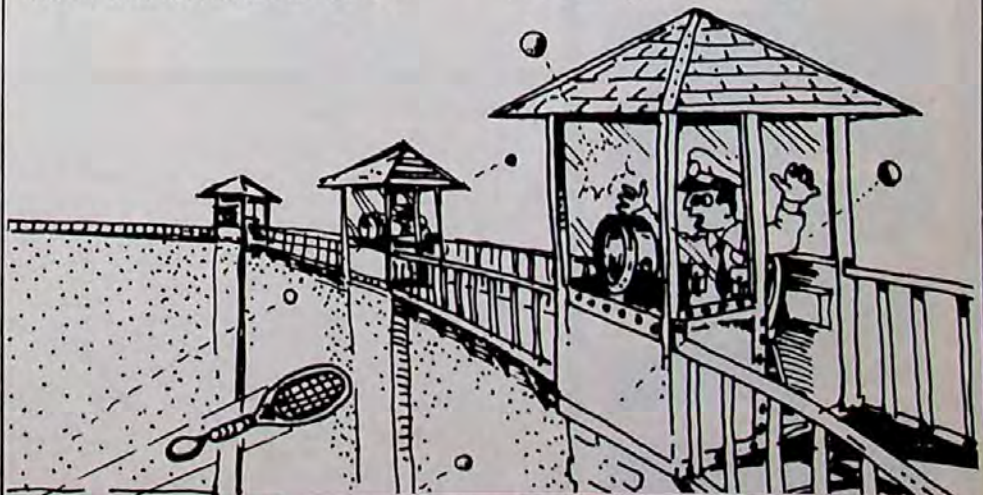
"Racquetball here is played on just one big wall," says Cavanaugh. "The 25-foot high grey wall that surrounds the big house is guarded by nine separate towers, one of which directly overlooks the court."

"It is not unusual for at least a couple of balls a week to go crashing through the tower's windows. Sometimes this even

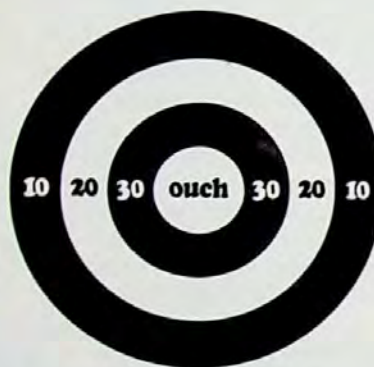
occurs accidentally. This is an accepted occupational risk by the guard assigned on duty, usually a guy we call Scooter because of the motorcycle he rides to work."

"One day an overzealous inmate inadvertently hurled his racquet through one of the tower's windows. The racquet missed Scooter by inches."

"After cleaning up the broken glass and accepting an apology from the offending inmate, Scooter returned to his perch—this time wearing a crash helmet."



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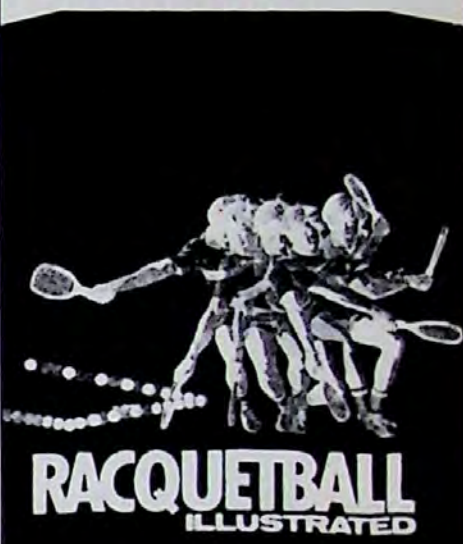
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(313) 434-2111

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Broadwater Athletic Club
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3448 Bernese Court
Carson City, Nevada
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Las Vegas Sporting House
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Off The Wall Racquetball Club, Inc.
Albany Ext.
(603) 431-1430

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Supreme Courts
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Tom Young's Racquet Club
305 E. Foster
(505) 526-4477

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6420 Albemarle Rd.
(704) 527-0975

Charlotte
Sports Illustrated Court Club 17
5501 77 Center Drive
(704) 527-0975

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Sportime Racquet Club
P.O. Box 21667
(919) 275-2521

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Carolina Courts
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(919) 832-5513

Raleigh
Highwoods Racquetball Club
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(919) 876-3641

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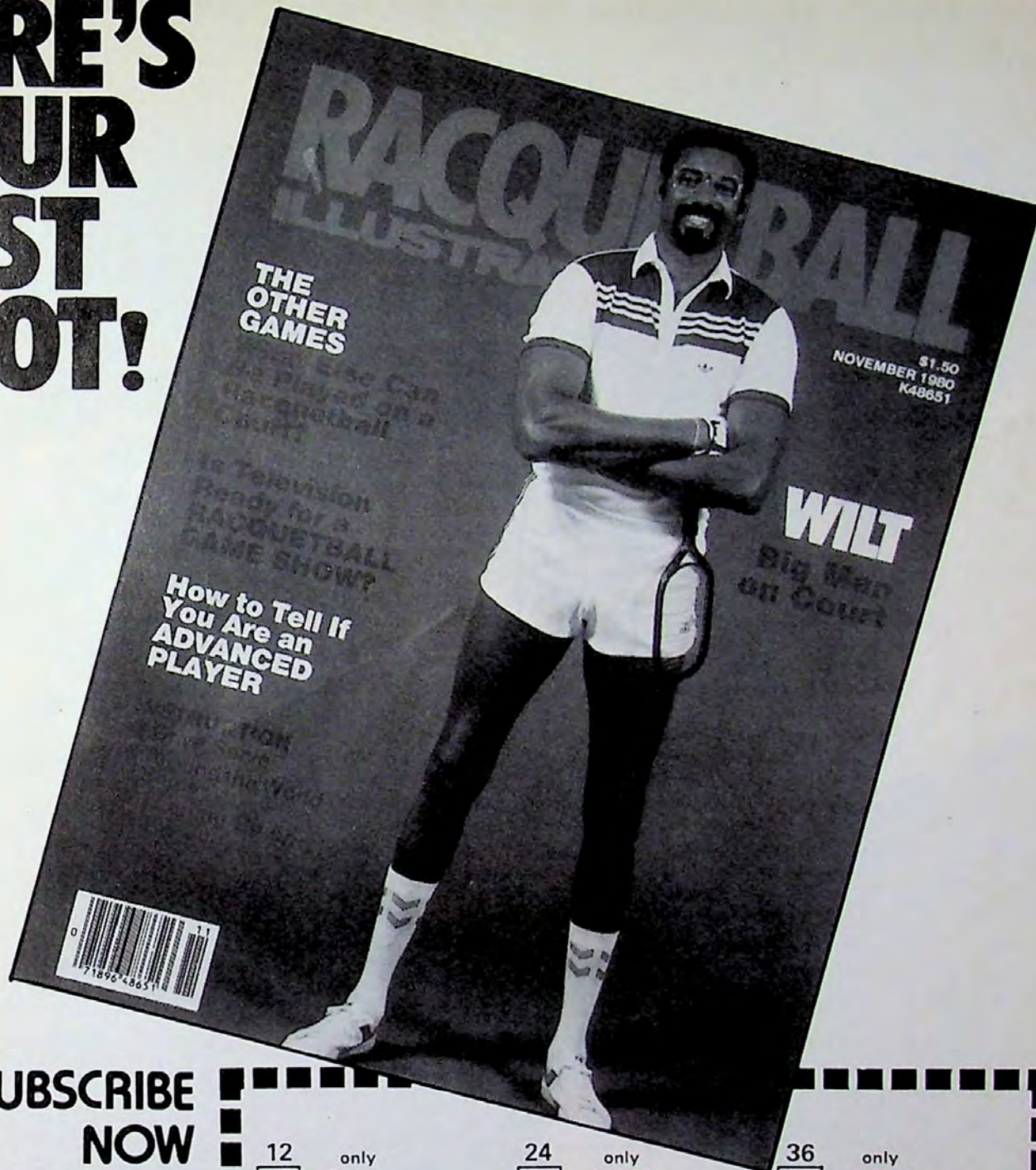
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