

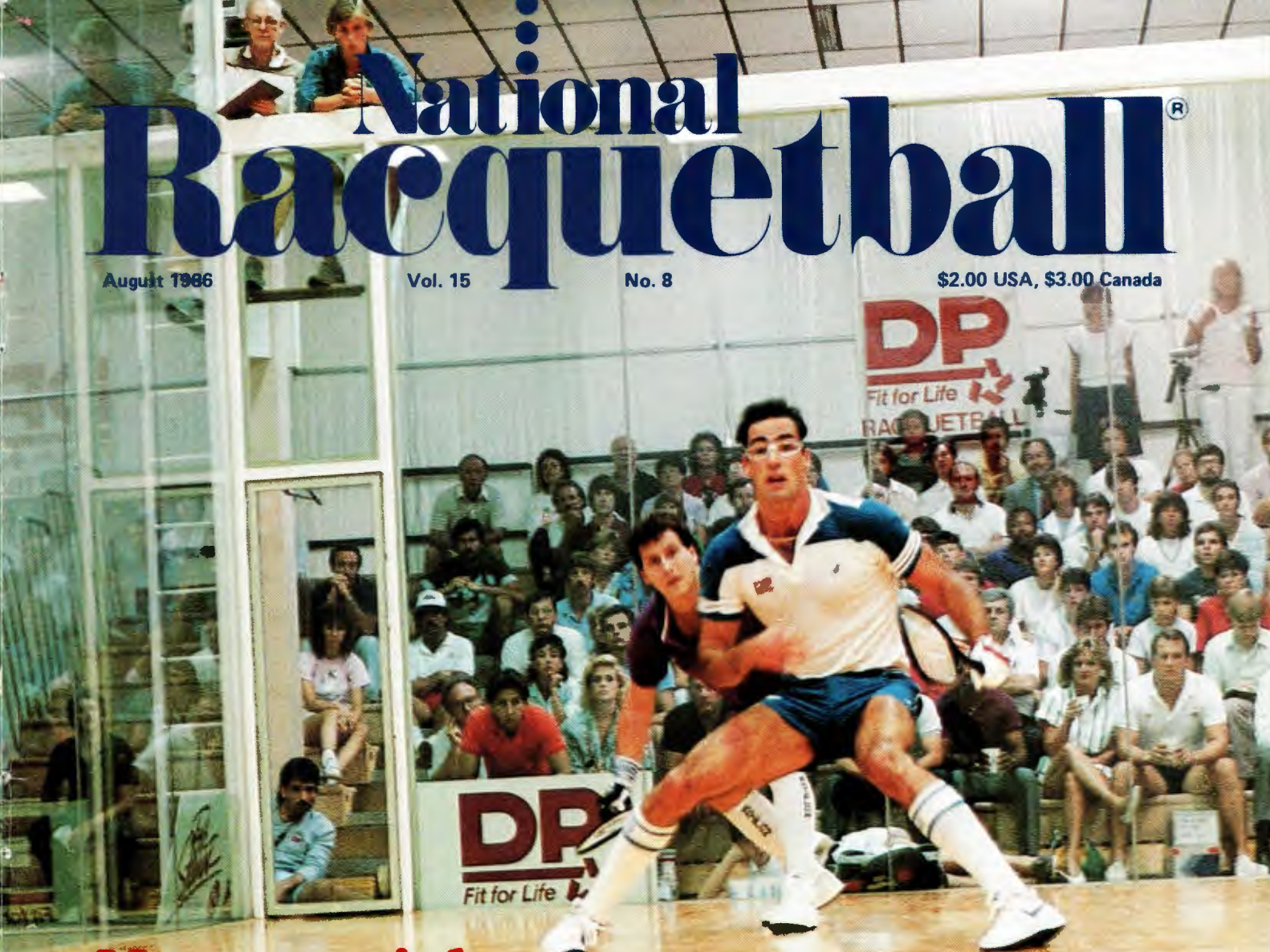
National Racquetball[®]

August 1986

Vol. 15

No. 8

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OFF THE WALL

by Joe Massarelli



You Asked For It, You Got It!

Probably one of the most interesting activities of publishing a magazine is the opportunity to read mail that comes across the desk from our readers. Unfortunately, you don't get the chance to see in print much of the correspondence that we review each month because space doesn't permit us to run every letter.

But, let me just say that one of the most frequently asked questions is why we choose the editorial we choose.

Some readers feel that we're too heavily pro oriented. In other words, why so much pro coverage? Others say we don't do enough for the pros. After all, they're the ones who are responsible for building visibility and credibility, thus giving racquetball more recognition.

Still others say we need better balance in our editorial coverage and a better focus on all segments of the sport. Frankly, it's this latter opinion that we share. We agree that any reporting function needs balance — be it in politics or sports. So, we're very excited about bringing you what you asked for so often in the past. Starting this month are two new regular columns authored by Jim Hiser, commissioner of the Racquetball Manufacturers Association (RMA) and by Caryn McKinney, president of the Women's Pro Racquetball Association (WPRA) respectively.

Our intention is clear. Each is actively involved in the pro end of

things and each is in an excellent position to provide balanced coverage of developments relating to the men and women pros.

Starting in September, we'll welcome Luke St. Onge to the pages of *National Racquetball* as author of his "New Directions" column which will highlight activities of the American Amateur Racquetball Association (AARA) and, of course, the developments across the nation that affect amateurs and amateur play. As the AARA's executive director, St. Onge, his officers and directors will provide a balanced picture of our sport at the grass roots level.

In the not too distant future, look for an intercollegiate report that will hopefully blossom into a regular column. We feel that college racquetball is in its embryo stage awaiting the opportunity to become a giant in the overall scheme.

These contributed regular features will be supported by our own editorial staff writers who manage to keep the pages exciting enough to generate the volumes of correspondence I referred to earlier. You'll find our editors sometimes critical, often outspoken, but always interesting regardless of your point of view.

National Racquetball is your magazine. We want to remain the authoritative voice of racquetball regardless of whether you're a pro, amateur or a recreational player seeking the exercise and camaraderie of fun competition.

So, let's keep hearing from you. Tell us what you want to experience through the pages of this magazine. It's our mission to deliver it! ☐

^{National} Racquetball

Publisher: Joe Massarelli

Editor: Chuck Leve

Managing Editor: Lydon Kuhns

Art Director: Becky Shutrump

Business Manager: Helen Quinn

Circulation: Leanne Massarelli

Production: Sharon Seabert

Typography: Sheila Waymire

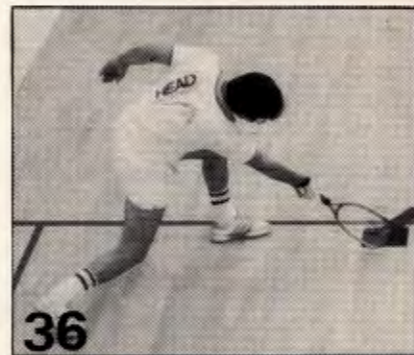
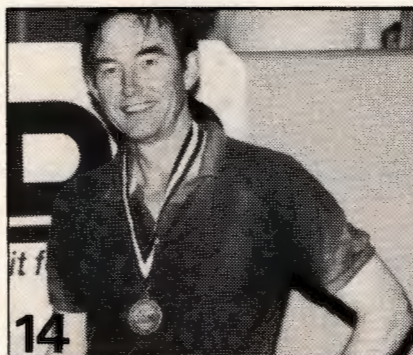
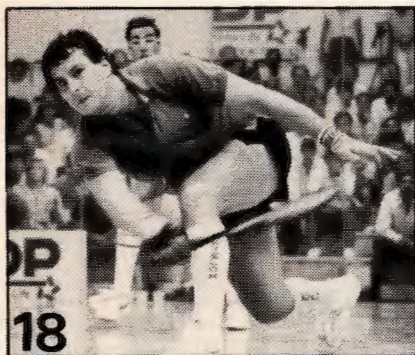
Advertising/Promotions: Ed Kaplan

Contributing Editors: Steve Strandemo, Sigmund Brouwer, Charlie Garfinkel, Jean Sauser, Keith Strandberg, Carole George, Bill Bruns and John Helsley

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National Racquetball



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On the cover: Bret Harnett and Mike Yellen in the final game of the DP Nationals. (photo by Jim A. Ashford, Arlington, TX)

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FIRST SERVE

by Chuck Leve



Racquetball's Balancing Act

I don't usually use this space to explain what I write. In fact, I rarely explain what I write, preferring that the words speak for themselves. If I've got a point to make I try to make it and let the chips fall where they may. Sometimes readers agree; sometimes they disagree; and sometimes (I hope not too often) they don't care.

My positions — and I should stress that this column each month is entirely my position on various subjects rather than that of the magazine's ownership — should be fairly well known by now. Just in case, though, I'll recap a few briefly for those of you new to *National Racquetball*:

- I agree with mandatory eyeguards in tournaments and I refuse to play with anybody not wearing eyeguards.
- I do not believe in the portable glass court as the "savior" of racquetball, believing rather, that the money it would cost would be better spent promoting the sport, using existing facilities.
- I agree with those who say the ball is still too fast, causing an imbalance of the delicate balance between power and control — the imbalance favoring power.
- I believe in professional racquetball as a viable means of promoting the sport and I would like to see the day where the top 100 pros could make a decent living playing pro ball.
- I believe racquetball in the Olympics would be wonderful, but more important would be seed money from the Olympic movement to promote the sport on the amateur level worldwide.
- I do not count myself among those who believe that racquet-

ball cannot be televised effectively. I will go to my grave believing that racquetball can, and someday will, become a viable televised sport where the drama, intensity and athletic skills can be translated onto the television screen.

- You can count me among those who view the trend from "racquetball" clubs to "multi-recreational" clubs as something good for the sport. More people play racquetball at one profitable, healthy, multi-recreational club than play at all the defunct, purely racquetball clubs there ever were.
- I view the magazine business as the toughest way to make a living that there is, and that's why I have a second job.

My reason for getting into all this stems from two letters that hit my desk on the same day — both admonishing me for my position on a particular subject.

I heard from one, well-known racquetball person that one of the problems with my column and indirectly the magazine, was our failure to deal with the obvious (to the writer) problems in the sport. Nowhere do we have a section listing clubs that went out of business this month. Nowhere do we have a section detailing the dollar amount of out-of-court settlements for damaged eyesight brought on by racquetball-related accidents. Nowhere do we have a section that monitors how many players there aren't any more.

This person's belief is that if we would only bring these issues out of the closet, examine them and, collectively as an industry, work to solve them, then racquetball the sport, would be better off.

And just when I began to agree with this position, I read the second letter.

In it, the writer got on my case for, simply put, being too negative. The burr under his saddle was his perception that I was "anti" everything. I knock the pros, I knock the amateurs. Can't I ever say anything positive about the sport?

This one really bothered me because when I look in the mirror every morning *my* perception is that I see a guy who loves racquetball, believes in it as a lifetime physical fitness activity and believes that its future is as bright as ever. All of the attributes of racquetball that caused it to become popular are still there.

If I take a couple of pot-shots at the pros (be it players or promoters), it's merely to avoid the ostrich approach to dealing with issues. Likewise the amateurs, who under the leadership of Luke St. Onge and the AARA have done great things for racquetball.

Believe me, it's tough to see the sunny side sometimes, especially when there's few viable pro tours for men professionals, no viable pro tour for women at all, and the amateur promotion is left to the AARA, an organization that wants to do more but is saddled with an annual budget of less than \$250,000.

So if I read my mail correctly, I am to be criticized for being too negative, while at the same time avoiding issues by not being critical enough.

It kind of reminds me of my days as chief referee on the pro tour. I knew I had made a bad call when one of the players would disagree vigorously with me while the other player quietly held his ground.

But I always knew I had made the right call when they both vigorously disagreed with me. □

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

If you would like to write a letter to the Editor, please send your comments to: Letters to the Editor, National Racquetball, P.O. Drawer 6126, Clearwater, FL 33518-6126. All letters become property of this magazine. We reserve the right to edit for clarity or space considerations. Letters will not be returned.

Heart and Soul

You're right! The amateur player vying for his or her age- or skill-level tournament trophy, and the "grass root" dedicated club league player who enjoys the sport for what it is and what it gives — is really the heart and soul of racquetball.

Many believe that recreational racquetball is not getting enough print . . . like interesting, informative articles for the beginning and intermediate player on how to improve his or her game . . . and make it more enjoyable. This is an important consideration. Because of the increasing numbers, this group will ultimately determine the health and stability of clubs around the country — the success of the product and service market — and circulation numbers for magazines like yours. By devoting more space in *National Racquetball* geared toward lower skill levels, you will not only increase your target audience, but help novices with their game and keep them active for many, many years!

That's not to say that you should change one thing in *National Racquetball* — you're doing a fine job; just make it bigger and better.

Carol Boyle
Indian Harbour Beach, FL

Tournament Publicity

Said Henri-Frederic Amiel: "He who is silent is forgotten; he who abstains is taken at his word; he who does not advance falls back; he who stops is overwhelmed, distanced, crushed; he who ceases to grow greater becomes smaller; he who leaves off, gives up; the stationary condition is the beginning of the end."

Incredibly, Amiel accurately described the state of racquetball — Apathy Incarnate. One full century

before the discovery of the pleasure of bouncing a ball around with a racquet inside a box, Amiel described racquetball in 1986. Racquetball — the sport that apparently shuns proven marketing techniques.

My case in point is the recent Ektelon Nationals where the entirety of the publicity given this major racquetball event consisted of a one inch report of the scores of the finals, buried deeply within the sport's section of the *L.A. Times*.

Does anyone care?

Robert L. Johnson
Glendora, CA

If you read publisher Joe Massarelli's column (*Off The Wall*, page 1, July 1986), you would agree that many in our sport care. But, the nagging problem remains of how we go about creating the visibility and credibility we need. — Ed.

Editor's note: The following verse was sent by Carole Spearin McCauley, Greenwich, CT.

A Poetic Player

Ode To You, Wee Blue Ball

This novice's complaint:

Where you are is where I ain't.
Forehand, backhand, matters naught;
Opponent scores, I'm distraught.
All those hours, days, this week
I've practiced hard, now feel weak.
Can I ever hit you, ball?
— Missed again. You slam the wall.
On the fly, on the run
I'm sweating hard. Can this be fun?
Her serve falls short. My serve at last!
Slam you sweet, and you whiz past.
Snap that wrist, stand proud, so tall.
Wee ball, I don't hate you at all!

Screen Serves

I was glad to see the recent article by Marty Hogan in regards to screen serves. Screen serves con-

(continued on page 8)

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Letters (continued)

ment director is not sure what a screen serve is.

When you are a receiver, if you call a screen serve, you are often made to feel you are the culprit or bad sport for making this call. I am very much in favor of changing the amateur rules so the screen serve is a fault serve.

I also think that it is quite important for other articles to appear which help to define the screen serve. Hopefully, as players become more educated one will not

be made to feel guilty when trying to return a serve which one doesn't see until it's seven or eight feet away.

Andrew K. Spongberg
New Bedford, MA

Your comments are right on target. If you are a member of AARA, you should direct rule change suggestions to Mike Arnolt, the Rules Commissioner, at their headquarters in Boulder, CO. — Ed.

WPRA Honors McKinney, O'Brien

Each year, at season's end, the WPRA membership votes on three awards: Most improved Player, Sportsmanship and the Steding Cup. The first two are self-explanatory. Named in honor of it's first recipient, Peggy Steding, the Steding Cup is awarded to the woman who has contributed the most to racquetball, both on and off the court, during the past year. Here are the winners:

Caryn McKinney, WPRA Most Improved Player — Two years ago, *International Racquetball* magazine selected Caryn McKinney as the most Improved Player on the WPRA Tour. Her peers have now voted her Most Improved for 1985/86.

Throughout the 1984/85 season, Caryn was a consistent quarter finalist. In theory, she should have then become a consistent semifinalist. However, Caryn chose a faster route as she vaulted into the finals of every professional tournament during the 1985/86 season. Needless to say, she holds a death-grip on the #2 spot and continues to put more and more space between she and the rest of the WPRA field.

Molly O'Brien, WPRA Sportsmanship Award — A four-year tour veteran, Molly O'Brien, was this year's recipient of the Sportsmanship Award. She exemplifies the type of competitor seen more and more frequently on the WPRA Tour. If you have ever had the opportunity to watch Molly play, you know how deserving she is of this honor. And if you have not been so fortunate, send your kids to watch any of her matches and rest assured that she will set an example in which any parent would take pride.

Caryn McKinney, WPRA Steding Cup — Caryn McKinney is keeping good company — Peggy Steding, Lynn Adams, Fran Davis and Jennifer Harding were all previous recipients of the prestigious Steding Cup. However, Caryn is the only WPRA player to have been honored twice with this award, first in 1985 and again this season. □

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Shuffling the Cards at Boulder

The Simple Quarterfinal Had Some Unexpected Twists

When the season began no one expected that the beautiful Flatiron Athletic Club in Boulder, CO would set the stage for one of racquetball most unusual finishes. Marty Hogan had dominated the pro tour for the month leading up to the Boulder stop, and it looked like Marty had almost certainly wrapped up another national title. With victories in Baltimore and at the Ektelon Nationals in Anaheim, Hogan seemed to have the momentum and point lead to solidify his sixth national title. A simple quarter-final finish in Boulder would force #2 Mike Yellen to win the season's last two stops in order to even have a chance to withdraw from Boulder due to an injury and the race for the national championship was once again renewed.

Marty had bruised his right heel while playing at the Ektelons in Anaheim two weeks earlier and compounded the problem when he developed a serious blood blister over the bruised area. In order to guarantee his presence at the prestigious DP Nationals, Marty decided to rest his injured heel.

Hogan's absence opened the door for Yellen to once again move into the #1 slot. All Mike had to do was reach the finals and he would regain the lead towards the 1985-86 National Championships.

Although Yellen was seeded #1, and everyone was aware of the Hogan/Yellen story, it was Dan Obremski who stole the show. Prior to Boulder, Obremski had never made it past the round of 32's. In fact had it not been for the absence of four of the top 24 players, Dan would have had to qualify in Boulder.

When #11 Doug Cohen defeated Obremski in the first two games of their 32's match, it looked as if Dan would retain his infamous record. But Dan fought back to tie the match at 2-2 and eventually break

the season's jinx by winning the tiebreaker 11-6. Obremski's next opponent was #5 seed Mike Ray, one of the tour's most improved and consistent competitors. Ray makes his home in nearby Denver and his acclimation to the conditions of high altitude and presence of family members and friends would seem to make Obremski's task almost impossible.

Recognized as one of the tour's best conditioned athletes, Dan's use of an arduous training program began to pay off as he forced Ray into another tiebreaker. Although Mike's game seemed as strong as ever, Obremski's tremendous diving and retrieving abilities kept him in rallies which normally would have been won by Ray. Obremski's determination seemed to frustrate Ray and Dan survived to win the tiebreaker.

The 16's usually provide some of the tournament's greatest matches and Boulder was no exception, five out of the eight matches were considered upset victories.

Number 13 ranked Jerry Hilecher and #9 ranked Scott Oliver clashed in a no-holds-barred battle, with Jerry the victor. Number 12 ranked Ed Andrews somehow outlasted and at times even out-dove (believe it or not!), #8 ranked Reuben Gonzalez to squeak out an 11-9 tiebreaker victory. Number 17 ranked David Gross muscled past #5 Cliff Swain in a match centered around ace serves.

But perhaps the most entertaining match was between #10 Dave Peck and #7 Gerry Price. These two fought each other point for point all the way through the tiebreaker, until Dave found himself serving at 10-10. Although the lateness of the match (12:10 a.m.) resulted in few spectators being present, many of the pros and tour-

(continued on page 35)

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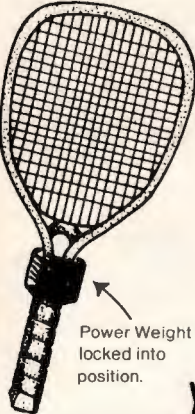
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Commissioner's Report

The beginning of a new season brings many changes and aspirations. Since the inception of the RMA tour, the pro game has matured and expanded into a viable spectator event. Perhaps one of the most positive signs for the future is the creation of the International Men's Professional Racquetball Organization (IMPRO).

Not only are the players uniting together, but they are creating policies that may forever change the game. The players have created a strict code of conduct covering all aspects of the game from dress codes to court behavior. Compulsory fines



Jim Hiser

have been incorporated for such actions as slamming one's racquet or appearing late for scheduled matches. The question of professional image has been discussed at every players meeting, with no player being exempt from enforcement of violations.

Perhaps more important than the creation of such policies is the attitude of the players themselves. All players realize the potential benefits derived from mutual cooperation and understanding, and sincerely want to do whatever is necessary to make the tour a truly professional event.

Already some difficult decisions regarding suspensions and rule changes have been undertaken. Although players' egos sometimes become threatened, without exception, the final factor in determining what decisions are made, is the success of the sport.

When I accepted the position of commissioner many skeptics questioned the future of professional racquetball. If the attitude of today's professional is any indication of what lies ahead, the success of the RMA tour looks promising. □

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Houston YMCA Hosts U.S. National Singles

By Cathie Frederickson
AARA Media Coordinator

1981 marked the first time that the top finishers in the mens and womens open divisions of the U.S. Nationals received an automatic berth on the U.S. National Racquetball Team.

The 1986 U.S. National Singles sponsored by D. P. and Penn again filled the downtown Hyatt Regency and the Houston YMCA for the 4th consecutive year. Play began daily (Thursday through Monday) at 8 a.m.. Evenings were scheduled with racquetball meetings and social functions for all participants. The weather, social activities, beautiful accommodations, and the two block distance between the club and the hotel, again lent unique atmosphere to this national event. This year's U.S. Nationals produced two four-time U.S. National Open Champions, and many two to sixteen time age divisional U.S. National Champions.

The Men's Open 1985 National Defending Champion, Ed Andrews from Huntington Beach, CA, captured his 4th U.S. National Open Title by defeating challenger Andy Roberts. Andy, the 1985 World Games Champion, from Memphis, TN, fell in two games, 15-12, 15-7. Jack Nolan of Tempe, AZ pushed Tom Montalbano, of Brentwood, NY into three games, but came up short for the third place title. The first game was taken by Nolan, 15-12. Montalbano then came back and won 15-14, 11-4 for the mens open bronze medal.

In the Women's Open Division, another four time U.S. National Open Champion emerged. The 1985 Women's Open Defending Champion, Cindy Baxter, from Lewistown, PA, was awarded the four time title after battling successfully with Trina Rasmussen of Sacramento, CA in two tough games. The final scores of the match, 15-14, 15-12. Mona Mook, another strong contender from Sacramento, received the



Men's Open winners (from left) are Andy Roberts, second place; Ed Andrews, first place; Tom Montalbano, third place; and Jack Nolan, fourth place.

bronze medal. Fourth place went to Mirjam Wielheesen who defaulted due to an ankle injury suffered during her semi-finals match.

Chip Parmelly, of Diamond Bar, CA was awarded the gold medal and the championship title in the Men's Wheelchair Division. Chip upset the 1985 National Defending Champion Jim Leatherman of Baltimore, MD, 15-4, 15-3. Jim Golden of Lubbock, TX defeated John Foust from Aurora, CO to take the bronze medal.

Lance Gilliam from San Antonio, TX, received a gold medal by dominating the Men's 19+ Division. Lance beat Tim Hansen of Palm Beach, FL, 15-9, 15-8. Ron Digiacoimo of Stony Brook NY, downed Jack Nolan for the bronze medal, 15-10, 15-10.

The Women's 19+ gold medal was awarded to Teresa Beresford of Arlington, VA. Teresa defeated Roz Olson of Sunderland, MA in three games. Roz jumped ahead and took the first game 15-11. Teresa battled

back to win the next two games 15-9, 11-9. JoEtta Hastings from Flint, MI beat Momi Lee of Salem, OR for the bronze medal. JoEtta won the first game, 15-10. Momi took the second game 15-2. The tiebreaker and match went to JoEtta 11-1.

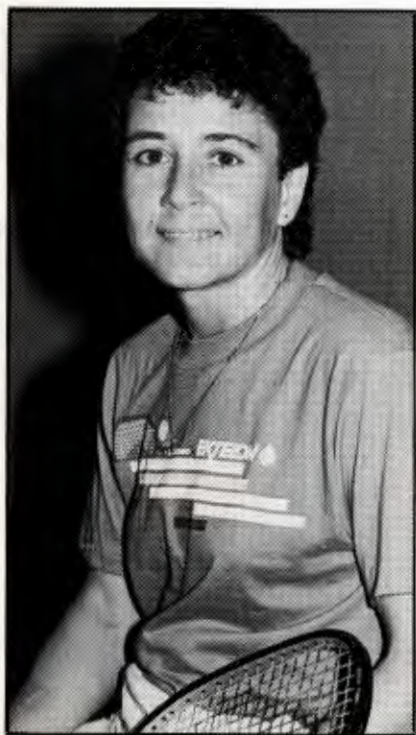
The gold medal in the Men's 25+ Division, was presented to Bill Land of Lafayette, LA. Bill turned the tables after losing the first game to Mark Morrison of Jacksonville, FL. The final scores were 14-15, 15-12, and 11-2. The bronze medal went to Larry Fox of MI and fourth place to Kelvin Van Trease from Chicago.

Diane Bullard and Mary Lyons, both from the State of Florida, met in the finals of the Women's 25+ Division. Diane defeated Mary 15-2, 15-8, to become the 1986 Women's 25+ National Champion and gold medalist. The 1985 Defending Champion, Kathy (Gluвна) Treadway, received the bronze medal by winning a difficult match against Chris Evon of Oak Park, IL. Chris won the first

game 15-12. Kathy came back and won, 15-8 and 11-7.

Bobby Corcoran of Phoenix, AZ and Jim Doyle of Seaside, CA battled for the gold medal in the Mens 30+ division. Jim won the first games 15-14. Bobby took the next two games 15-13 and 11-7, to become the 1986 U.S. National Men's 30+ Champion. The bronze medal went to Robert O'Brien of Sacramento, CA. Robert beat Stu Hastings of Flint, MI 15-10, 15-7.

Gail Woods of Mentairie, LA took the gold medal in the Women's 30+ Division by defeating Connie Peterson of Gresham, OR. Connie won the first game 15-7 but Gail dominated the remaining two games 15-8, 11-3. Susan Morgan of Jacksonville, FL won a close match against Julia Pinnell from Winter Park, FL to receive the



Pictured at left is Cindy Baxter (PA) who was also named Female Athlete of the Year.

bronze medal. Julia won the first game 15-10, but fell short in the remaining two games 15-14, 11-9.

The Men's 35+ Division was far from predictable. Craig Kunkle, #2 seed from Concord, CA crushed every one of his opponents to take the gold medal and the 1986 Mens 35+ National Championship Title. Craig frustrated Dave Kovanda, from Columbus, OH, 15-2, 15-4 in the finals. Ed Remen, the 1985 35+ Defending Champion, was upset by

Rick VanderLind, from Grand Rapids, MI. Rick was stopped in the semi's by Craig 15-5, 15-2. Rick went on to defeat Gary Mazaroff of Albuquerque, NM, 13-15, 15-5, and 11-3, to receive the bronze medal.

Eileen Ehrlich of Lake Worth, FL, breezed through the Women's 35+ Division to receive the gold medal and the Championship Title. Eileen defeated Mary Murray of Miami, 15-2, 15-6. Terry Voboril of Wichita, KS, prevented Salem, Utah's, Toni Dever from taking the bronze medal. Terry won the first game 15-7, lost the second 15-8, came back in a tough tiebreaker and won 11-9.

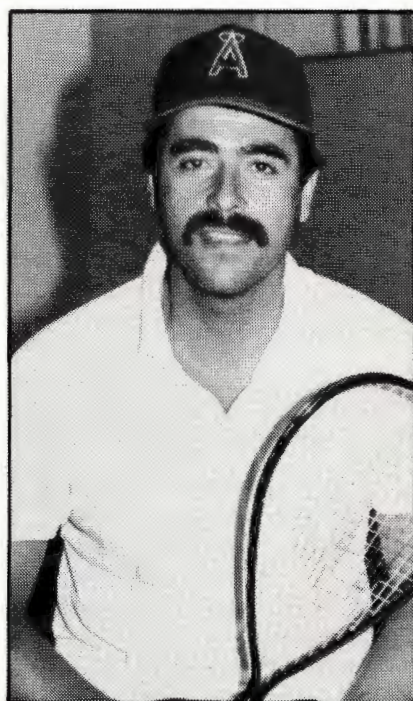
Ed Remen from Sterling, VA, was successful in defending his 1985 Men's 40+ title. Ed came out on top in a close finals match against West Palm Beach, Florida's, Robert Riley. Ed took the match 15-6, 11-15, 11-8. The bronze medal went to Herb Grigg of Caledonia, IL. Herb took out Denis Lose of Palo Alto, CA, 15-5, 15-3.

The Women's 40+ gold medal went to Maite Utza from Bellevue, WA. Agatha Falso of Boca Raton, FL, pushed Maite into three games by taking the first game 15-13. Maite won the last two games 15-6, 11-6. The bronze medal was received by Mildred Gwinn of Matthews, NC, who downed #2 seed Joan Pearce from Oak Park, IL. Mildred won the first game 15-10. Lost the second 12-15, and then took control in the tiebreaker 11-4.

#1 seed and Men's 45+ U.S. National Defending Champion, Charlie Garfinkel, from Buffalo NY, defeated Jack Ross from Miami, 15-10, 15-8. Charlie, who is a 16 time National Champion, now holds the Men's 45+ championship title for the second consecutive year. Robert Galbreath, from New Wilmington, PA, and Bobby Sanders of Cleveland, OH, battled for the bronze medal. Robert won the first game 15-8, was defeated 14-15, then took the third, 11-7.

Judy Schmidt, of Sarasota, FL, was awarded the title of 1986 Women's 45+ National Champion. Judy dominated Mildred Gwinn in the finals 15-7, 15-12. Marion Johnson of San Marcos, TX, downed Jean Tull of Annandale, Va, for the bronze medal. Marion won 15-13, lost 0-15, and won 11-10.

Charlie Wickham, of Charlotte,



Pictured right is Ed Andrews (CA), Men's Open winner.

NC, remains the Men's 50+ U.S. National Champion for the second consecutive year. Charlie defeated Cleveland, Ohio's Otis Chapman in an exciting finals match. Otis won the first game 15-12, then dropped the remaining two games to Charlie 15-12, 11-8. The bronze medal was presented to Bob Wetzel of Costa Mesa, CA. Bob defeated Pat Colombo of Scarsdale, NY, 15-8, 15-14.

The Women's 50+ championship title went to Jo Kenyon of Ft. Lauderdale, FL. Jo defeated Shirley Elgaway, a hometown opponent, 15-4, 15-3. The bronze medal was awarded to Mary Walker from Canoga Park, CA. Mary trampled Julia Atherley of Lantana, FL, 15-0, 15-0.

Chuck Lake, from Virginia, defeated the 1985 Men's 55+ defending champion, Patrick Whitehill, of Cheney, WA. Chuck dominated the match and won, 15-4, 15-8, to take the gold medal and the 1986 Men's 55+ championship title. The bronze medal went to Jim Herron of Warren, OH, who defeated Barney Friesth of Sioux Falls, SD, 15-5, 15-4.

The Women's 55+ gold medal and championship title was awarded to Mary Lou Acuff of Blacksburg, VA. Receiving medals in U.S. Championships is nothing new to Mary. She has received three in past years and took home three medals this

(continued on page 34)

Quick Tip: Re-Examine Your Coverage

by Sigmund Brouwer

Try a great offensive tactic by improving your defense. At all levels, retrieving those shots formerly out of reach not only means more saves, but more time to set up on all the shots you managed to barely reach before. A better defense forces your opponent to hit better shots — pressure that builds as the match lengthens.

This is the first of three "Quick Tips" to improve your court coverage.

Your game has advanced to where you are smart enough to hit the shots and serves that keep the ball in the corners, letting you keep that all important center court position to cover "perfectly". But somehow, no matter how often your opponent is in deep court, you have trouble covering his pass shots.

That's because *exactly* between the side walls is *exactly* why court coverage is so tough for you.

This can be easily seen in the accompanying diagrams. In Diagram

A, the shaded area (you are "X" your opponent is "O") parallel to the front wall represents your coverage reach to both sides with one step and an extended racquet. You'll note that by being in the exact center of the court, you cover both sides equally, leaving about three feet open to both the left and right. You are now covering "center court." Or are you?

The down-the-line to the backhand(left) side is nearly uncovered. Your opponent merely needs to hit in an alley, one to two feet wide, directly ahead of him. And despite covering the other side of the court, there is still a large alley for a winning cross court pass.

So, despite "center court" position, Player X is vulnerable to two of racquetball's most basic shots, the down-the-line and cross court passes.

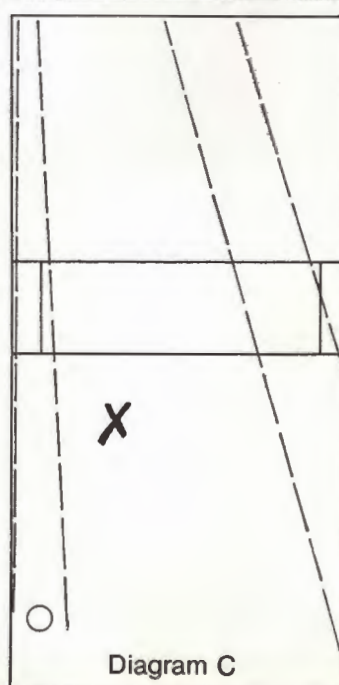
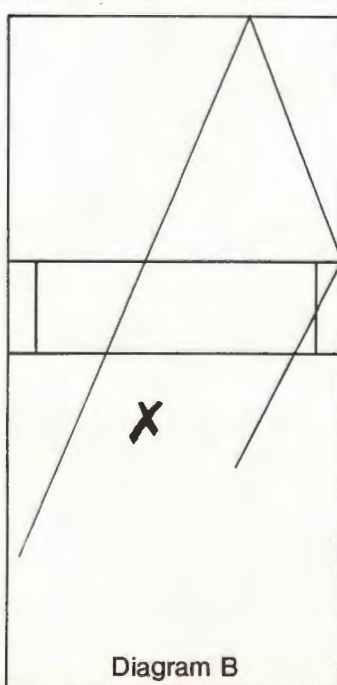
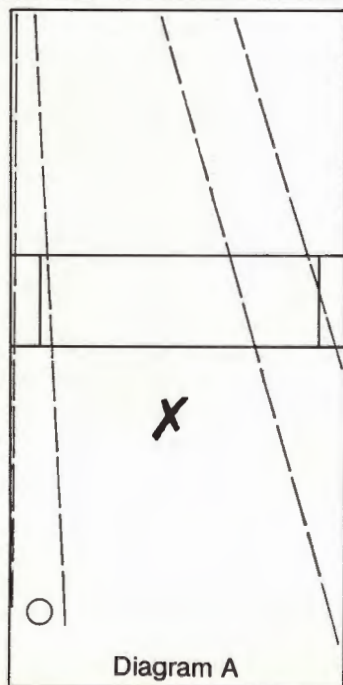
In Diagram B, you have moved closer to the left wall, so that you can cover the down-the-line pass.

This adjustment in your position leaves about six feet open on the cross court side, and this is what makes many players nervous. Well, you can relax.

Further examination shows that positioning in Diagram B is actually more efficient at covering not only the down-the-line (which you've got completely covered) but also the cross court. This is because a cross court pass attempt that is hit too wide (Diagram C) comes back to center court for an easy set up.

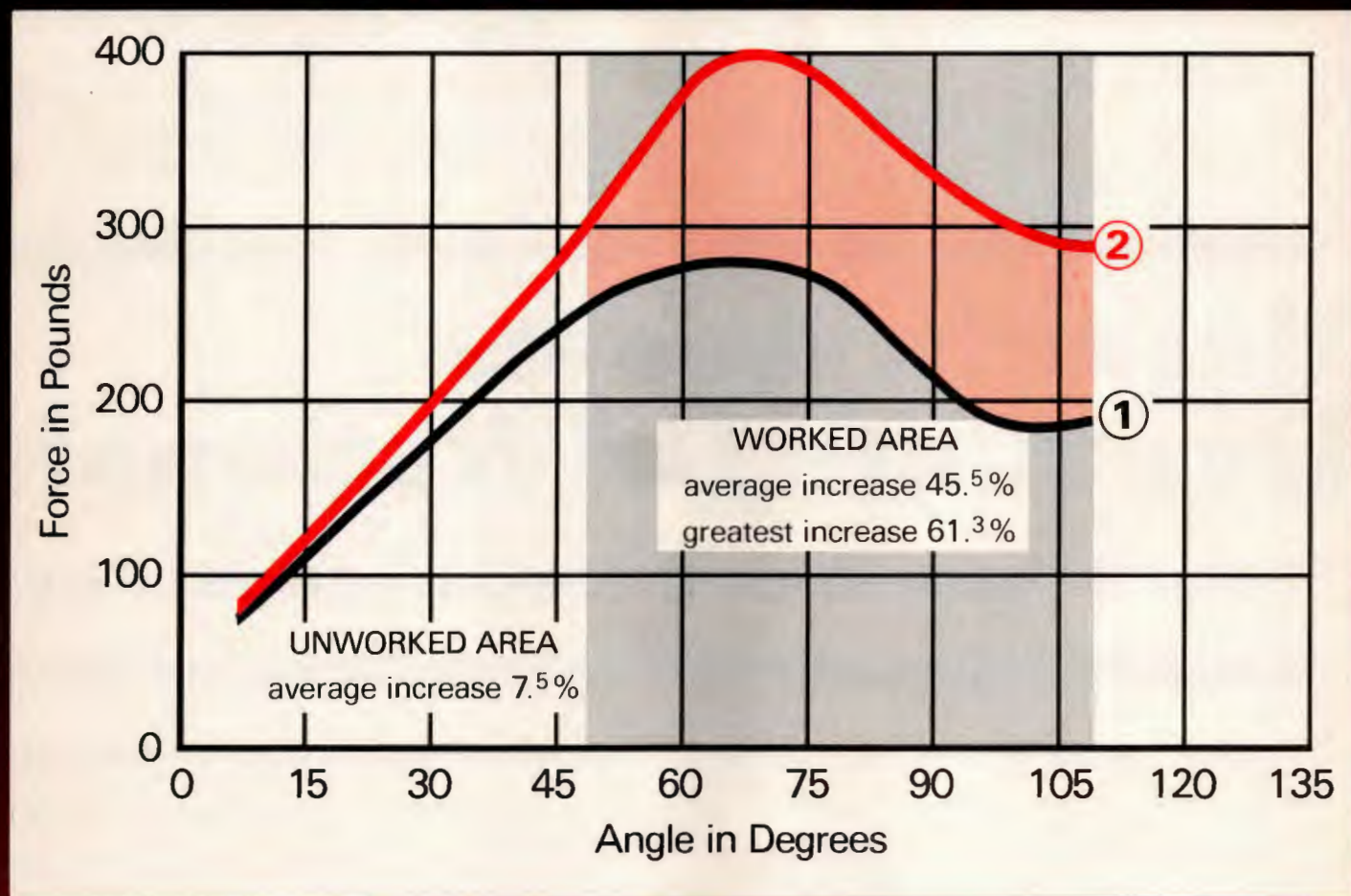
Therefore, the winning alley for a cross court pass in Diagram B is barely larger than in Diagram A, with the difference being the coverage of the down-the-line shot.

When you watch better players you will notice that they generally cover the side walls as close as possible and take their chances on the cross court shot. You should do the same and watch your game improve. □



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The title of national champion, as well as the tour's largest first place check were both on the line at the season's final tournament, the DP Nationals. For the second straight year the DP tournament would decide who had accumulated the most points over the entire season, and thus capture the prestigious title of national champion. As in 1985, the two players who have dominated the game for the previous 8 years would battle for the coveted title. Marty Hogan (four-time national champion) entered the tournament in second place behind Mike Yellen (three-time national champion). To have a chance at winning another national title, Marty would have to win the DP tournament. To capture his fourth straight national title Yellen would have to reach the finals. The ground rules were laid, and everyone knew what had to be done, but none expected the results.

In the round of 32's, qualifier Roger Harripersad, faced #2 seed Marty Hogan. Although Roger had struggled to qualify, beating Danny Costleigh of New York in a controversial 11-10 tiebreaker, he was definitely not a

Harnett, Adams Dominate DP Nationals

Andy Roberts, Kaye Kuhfeld Win Open Play

stranger to the other touring pros. Roger had recently defeated Andy Roberts to capture the National Collegiate title and was ranked in the top four on the Canadian pro tour.

Marty entered the court with a new mid-size ceramic racquet. The combination of a new racquet, first round sluggishness and a determined qualifier seemed to force Marty into uncharacteristic errors. Roger won the first game 11-1. Marty came back strong in the second game (11-2), and it looked as if his game was again on track, but Roger failed to fold under the Hogan mystique and won the third game 11-4. Marty went ahead 10-8 in the fourth, and seemed to be in control as Roger made a short ceiling ball return on Marty's drive serve. Marty leftup a forehand pinch to Roger's backhand, which he passed Marty for a side-out. This scenario repeated itself two more times until Roger tied the score at 10-10. Although Hogan regained the serve he failed to capitalize on Roger's miscues and Harripersad eventually won the match 11-10.

Marty was obviously disappointed. Not only had he lost his first 32's match in two years, but with it went his quest for another national title. However, an ever greater surprise was to follow.

The remaining round of 32 produced no real upsets.

Egan Inoue did give Doug Cohen his second straight first-round loss, and Dan Obremski regained the momentum of his semifinal finish in Boulder, by defeating David Gross in a tiebreaker.

The 16's found all top seeds victorious. Dan Obremski returned Roger Harripersad to the reality of professional racquetball by defeating him in four games. The first quarterfinal match found left-hander Cliff Swain facing #4 seed Gregg Peck. Swain had survived a come from behind tiebreaker victory over Scott Oliver in the 16's, while Peck had frustrated Mike Griffith in a three-game battle that found Peck playing from a 10-4 deficit in the first game and 10-6 deficit in the second.

Peck vs. Swain

The Peck-Swain battle, as expected, found Cliff utilizing a powerful drive serve to force weak ceiling ball returns, and Peck splatting backhand pinches at every opportunity. Swain's serves prevailed in game one, and he won 11-6. Peck served first in the next game and went out to a quick 3-0 lead which he never relinquished. Gregg won 11-7. Swain came back to win the third game with an identical serve from the second game and moved ahead 2 games to 1. The fourth game was a classic serve, shoot and dive exhibition. Gregg's backhand pinch continually forced Cliff to make diving gets, as Gregg tied the score at 10-10. Peck served five times at 10 but could not finish the game, and Cliff eventually hit a forehand pinch winner for match point.

Harnett vs. Ray

In the next quarterfinal match Bret Harnett, who had won his previous two matches against Lance Gilliam and Egan Inoue in easy three-game sets, faced the season's most improved player Mike Ray. This match was to follow the same pattern as Bret's earlier matches. Harnett won the first game 11-7 and went out to a demanding 10-3 lead in the second game. Bret looked unbeatable as his drive serves kept Ray off balance, and his pinches were unreturnable. Mike regained the serve at 10-3 and began to inch his way back by scoring the next three points all on Bret's errors. Bret's greatest challenge in the last three tournaments has been his inability to retain concentration. This nemesis again haunted Bret as Mike ran 8 straight points to win game two 11-10. Visibly disturbed at loosing such a great lead, Bret returned in game three to his power serve and shoot game. Bret regained his intensity for the next two games winning them both 11-6.

Obremski vs. Gonzalez

Dan Obremski then faced Reuben Gonzalez in a much awaited match of the tour's most prolific divers. The battle proceeded much as expected with Dan winning the second and fourth games and Reuben the first and third games. Spectators were treated to a true spectacle of great dives and retrieving ability. In the tiebreaker, Dan's youth and better conditioning seemed to make the difference as he powered precise drive serves, which Reuben barely returned. Reuben was visibly exhausted as Dan continually retrieved his best shots. Dan won the tiebreaker 11-5.

Yellen vs. Peck

In the final quarter-final match of the day, Mike Yellen



Bret Harnett, pictured with his mother, accepts the first place trophy after defeating Mike Yellen in the finals.

Photo by Jim A. Ashford, Arlington, TX

First place winner, Lynn Adams (right) accepts her trophy after defeating Caryn McKinney in the womens finals.



Photo by Jim A. Ashford, Arlington, TX

DP Nationals

dominated Dave Peck to win 11-6, 11-0 and 11-4. Mike mixed power and control to keep Dave off balance, and as usual, Mike played near errorless ball.

The Semi's . . .

The semifinals were actually anticlimactic when compared to the quarters. The setting for Mike Yellen's victory over Cliff Swain was established on Mike's first ace serve. Surprising to many, Mike has controled Cliff in their three meetings by out serving him. Mike won in three 11-2, 11-7 and 11-5.

In the other semi Dan Obremski looked to revenge his previous semi-final loss to Harnett. Unfortunately for Obremski, Bret's concentration, determination and forehand kill were at their peak as Bret obliterated Obremski 3, 1 and 1.



Lynn Adams backhands to Caryn McKinney in their finals match that saw Adams retain her title in what has become a classic battle between the two.

Photo by Jim A. Ashford, Arlington, TX

The Finals

The atmosphere for the finals was mixed. Mike Yellen had already captured the national title for the fourth straight year and many wondered if his intensity would carry over to the finals. What many didn't realize was that Harnett had defeated Mike in their last two finals, both matches in three straight games. Although Mike had reached the finals in his last six tournaments, he had only captured one first place title. The pride of the national champion was at stake, and Mike wanted this match, more than most realized.

Harnett started the first game the same way he finished the Obremski semi-final match, going for bottom board at every opportunity. Bret quickly went out to a 6-3 lead. As everyone knows when Bret is on, he's devastating . . . but when he's off, easy setups result in give-away skips to his opponents. Yellen went to a hard Z serve to Harnett's



Dan Obremski attempts to get a shot past Bret Harnett in the semifinals. Harnett proved to be too strong with his forehand kill as he won in three 11-3, 11-1 and 11-1.

Photo by Jim A. Ashford, Arlington, TX

forehand, seemingly challenging Bret to go for the kill. The strategy worked as Bret made six unforced errors in the next 7 points, as Yellen surged to a 10-8 lead. Yellen's final point came on an ace serve. Yellen's 11 points came on two ace serves, seven Harnett errors, one Yellen kill and one pinch. In contrast, 7 out of Bret's 8 points came on kill shots (the other was a service ace).

In the second game both players exchanged rallies until the score was locked at 7-7. Yellen seemed to be moving Bret more, resulting in weak Harnett returns. Unfortunately for Mike he could not kill the ball allowing Bret to retrieve Yellen's pinches and keep the rallies going. Bret eventually regained service and went out 11-7.

McKinney dispatches Bonnie Stoll in the womens pro semifinals in three straight games 21-6, 21-7 and 21-14.

Photo by Jim A. Ashford, Arlington, TX



Harnett started the third game with drive serves and took a quick 4-1 lead. Yellen eventually regained service and tied the score 4-4 on three Harnett skips. Yellen then took control, taking a page from Harnett's play book and killed 4 of his next 5 points. Mike won the game on a Harnett skip.

The Harnett philosophy of kill or be killed was never more evident than in game four. Harnett rolled out his first 5 points and took a lead of 6-2 on a service ace. Harnett's accuracy and power never allowed Mike to get in the match. Harnett won game four 11-2.

In the tiebreaker Harnett immediately skipped a backhand set up to allow Yellen service. Mike looked sharp as he won three straight points, two on pinches and one on a service ace.

The turning point of the match then occurred: Mike hit a great serve which Bret barely returned. Yellen hit four almost perfect shots, forcing Harnett to make full diving gets, but not only did Harnett make great gets he

returned the ball with almost perfect ceiling balls. The frustration finally seemed to affect Yellen as he went for an uncharacteristic overhead kill which he skipped. Harnett survived the Yellen onslaught and regained service. There was no stopping Harnett as he served two aces and killed 6 of the next 9 points. Surprisingly Yellen never called a time out and Harnett served out 11-3. Harnett had defeated Yellen for the third straight time this season.

Scotty Deeds, the RMA official score keeper from California developed a new score card for the DP's. The following chart provide statistics of the Yellen/Harnett final.

Interesting results show that Harnett definitely lives and dies with the kill. Bret made 71 percent of his total match points with the kill and service ace, and gave Yellen 38 percent of his points on skip balls. By contrast, Mike's game was much more balanced, reinforcing the possible reason for his six final appearances.

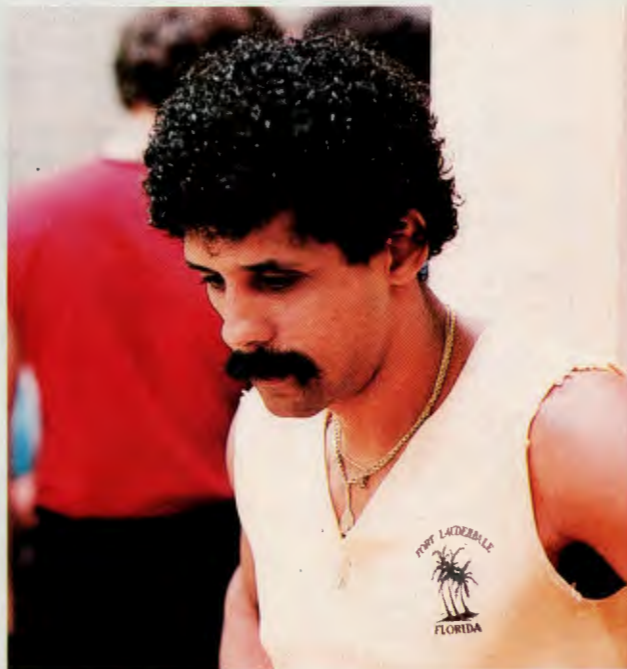
	Mike Yellen		Bret Harnett	
	number	percent	number	percent
Service Ace	3	9	4	9
Kills	13	38	30	63
Placements	5	15	9	19
Totals	21	62	43	91
Errors	13	38	5	9
Totals	34	10	48	100

A jubilant Mike Yellen beams broadly as he realized that he retains his National title for the fourth year in a row. Mike had to make the semifinals to retain his champion status.

Photo by Jim A. Ashford, Arlington, TX



A dejected Reuben Gonzalez leaves the court after losing to Dan Obremski in a quarter finals tiebreaker 11-5. The match saw the two split the first four games before Obremski prevailed. *Photo by Jim A. Ashford, Arlington, TX*



Amateur Results

The 1986 racquetball season came to a close in Arlington, TX June 12-17 as 675 amateur players converged on the Charlie Fitness Club and Hotel for the DP Nationals.

Racquetballers from most of the fifty states journeyed to the Dallas suburb to lay claim to the title of "national champion" for 20 different divisions. But it was the players of Texas who seized the opportunity to showcase their abilities and

prove that their state should be considered as one of the new hotbeds of the sport. Texans flexed their muscles enough to capture nine championships and 26 of the 60 top-three trophies.

The tournament proved to be not only a battle of talents, but also a contest of who could play the best without sleep! Play began Thursday afternoon and ran virtually non-stop through the finals Sunday evening. The 12-court facility was just not enough to handle the huge turnout.

Despite the scheduling problems,

most of those still awake managed to have a good time, either by watching the pros play or going on scheduled discount trips to Six Flags amusement park and Wet and Wild water park. Diversified Products made a nice gesture by giving complimentary park tickets to anyone who had to play between midnight and 6 a.m. any day.

Along with Diversified Products, other major sponsors were Penn Racquetball, American Airlines, Lite Beer from Miller, Coca Cola and Dr. Pepper. □

1986 DP Nationals

Qualifiers — A. Katz, J. Britos, J. Newman, M. Levine, L. Gilliam, A. Roberts, B. Parodi, R. Harripersad.

Round of 32's

Yellen d. Katz 11-5, 0-11, 11-2, 11-3; Lerner d. Britos 11-9, 11-5, 11-2; Price d. Egerman 11-5, 11-6, 11-7; D. Peck d. Newman 11-1, 11-9, 11-3; Swain d. Sell 11-5, 11-4, 11-6; Oliver d. Levine 11-10, 5-11, 8-11, 11-6, 11-4; Griffith d. A. Gross 7-11, 11-8, 5-11, 11-8, 11-2; G. Peck d. Brysman 11-10, 11-3, 11-8; Harnett d. Gilliam 11-6, 11-3, 11-7; Inoue d. Cohen 11-4, 11-7, 11-6; Andrews d. Navarro 7-11, 11-4, 11-3, 11-1; Ray d. Roberts 11-5, 11-8, 11-9; Gonzalez d. Parodi 11-7, 11-1, 9-11, 11-3; Hilecher d. Cascio 11-7, 11-9, 11-6; Obremski d. D. Gross 11-7, 7-11, 10-11, 11-10, 11-5; Harripersad d. Hogan 11-1, 2-11, 11-4, 11-10.

Round of 16's

Yellen d. Lerner 11-7, 11-6, 11-7; D. Peck d. Price 11-5, 7-11, 11-1,

11-8; Swain d. Oliver 11-4, 9-11, 11-4, 3-11, 11-8; G. Peck d. Griffith 11-10, 11-10, 11-4; Harnett d. Inoue 11-6, 11-2, 11-4; Ray d. Andrews 11-8, 8-11, 11-4, 11-0; Gonzalez d. Hilecher 11-6, 11-5, 11-10; Obremski d. Harripersad 11-3, 2-11, 11-2, 11-7.

Quarters

Yellen d. D. Peck 11-6, 11-0, 11-4; Swain d. G. Peck 11-7, 7-11, 11-7, 11-10; Harnett d. Ray 11-8, 10-11, 11-6, 11-6; Obremski d. Gonzalez 6-11, 11-8, 2-11, 11-3, 11-5.

Semis

Yellen d. Swain 11-2, 11-7, 11-5
Harnett d. Obremski 11-3, 11-1, 11-1

Finals

Harnett d. Yellen 8-11, 11-7, 7-11, 11-2, 11-3

Men's Open

- 1 — Andy Roberts, TN
- 2 — Lance Gilliam, TX
- 3 — Ray Aronowitz, TX

Men's A

- 1 — Dino Owens, TX
- 2 — David Rahn, LA
- 3 — Phil Theimer, TX

Men's B

- 1 — Bob Rodriguez, CO
- 2 — John Davis, LA
- 3 — Jim Gabriel, CA

Men's C

- 1 — Mario Martinez, TX
- 2 — Noel Chapa, TX
- 3 — Wayne Buturusis, TX

Men's D

- 1 — Chris Eagle, TX
- 2 — Ray Adams, TX
- 3 — Dennis Duhon, TX

Men's 16 and Under

- 1 — Charlie Garrido, TX
- 2 — Eric Schoen, OH
- 3 — Tony Zile, OH

Men's 19+

- 1 — Woody Clouse, CA
- 2 — Steve Kuykendall, TX
- 3 — Mike Kowalske, TX

Men's 25+

- 1 — Byron Williams, TX
- 2 — Eric Foley, FL
- 3 — Joe Hassey, AZ

Men's 30+

- 1 — Scott Clark, VA
- 2 — Dennis Aceto, MA
- 3 — Ken Smith, OK

Men's 45+

- 1 — Lee Humphrey, KS
- 2 — Jim McPherson, OK
- 3 — Don Costleigh, NY

Men's 50+

- 1 — Joe Simon, IL
- 2 — Ron Maggard, MO

Women's Open

- 1 — Kaye Kuhfeld, IN
- 2 — Trina Rasmussen, CA
- 3 — Dot Fischl, PA

Women's A

- 1 — Debbie Ratcliff, TX
- 2 — Jean Trimble, TX
- 3 — Scarlett Amo, TX

Women's B

- 1 — Kelley Conlin, TX
- 2 — Sara Hannon, TX
- 3 — Leslie Guditis, TX

Women's C

- 1 — Marsha Cook-Lindsay, TX
- 2 — Rhonda Grisham, TX
- 3 — Martha Houts, NJ

Women's D

- 1 — Jayne Gregory, TX
- 2 — Gwen Davis, TX
- 3 — Joyce Bourque, TX

Women's 19+

- 1 — Theresa Beresford, VA
- 2 — Robin Whitmire, GA
- 3 — Kim Cooling, IL

Women's 30+

- 1 — Becky Callahan, VA
- 2 — Holly Rentz, KY
- 3 — Lin Weatherby, MA

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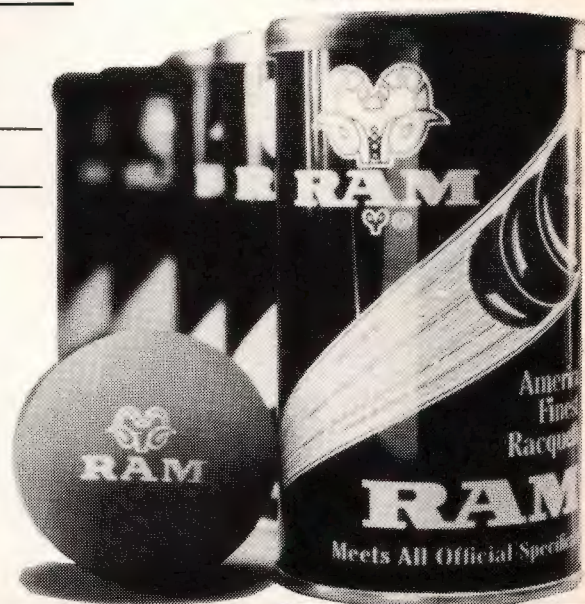
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Or better yet, ask yourself. Play-test a new Head mid-size racquet and you'll find out just how much muscle mid-size can add to your game.

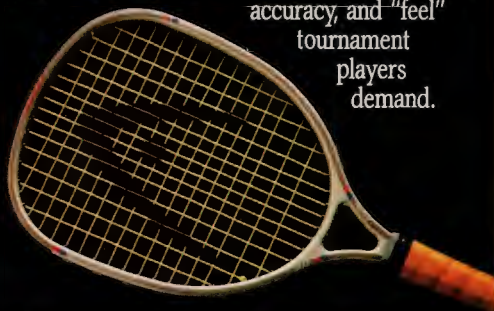
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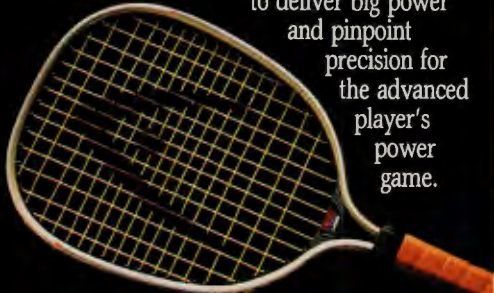
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Around-The-Walls With the WPR

by Caryn McKinney



This is the first Women's Professional Racquetball Association (WPR) Update. As President of the WPR, I have been asked by *National Racquetball* to write a monthly column on current tour news, who's doing what, where we're playing, changes in the game, our opinion on controversial topics, etc. If there is ever a question you would like answered or a subject which interests you, please write *National Racquetball* and let us know — we want to be a resource for you.

As you may remember from your last issue of *National Racquetball*, the 1985/86 season ended in storybook fashion for Lynn Adams. With the exception of Heather McKay during her squash career, Lynn accomplished what no other individual athlete has accomplished in any sport — a perfect season. The rest of us on the WPR Tour are determined to see that it doesn't happen again; however, we congratulate Lynn on her achievement.

The 1986/87 season promises to be the best ever for the WPR. Our opening event will be in Anchorage, AK, October 18-21. The people at The Alaska Athletic Club are some of our strongest supporters and have enthusiastically invited the WPR back for a sixth year! If you're looking for an excuse to see magnificent country and beautiful glaciers, join us and head north . . . Two-and-a-half weeks later will find the WPR in Lombard, IL. Our visit to The Glass Court, just outside Chicago, marks the Tour's return to the area after a three-year absence. I'm sure that the spectators, as well as the players, will be ready for the tournament, November 7-9.

Further down the line, the WPR

will again converge on RiverBend Athletic Club in Fort Worth, TX for our National Championships, May 28-31, 1987. This event will mark the fifth annual RiverBend tournament, each one raising at least \$35,000 for the "Youth For Tomorrow Foundation." I encourage you to attend this fun-filled event for a worthy charity. The RiverBend facility is fabulous, the staff is professional and the people are most hospitable. The women pros will be entertaining throughout the weekend with both singles and doubles competition, so plan now to stop by Fort Worth or come on over after the AARA nationals in Houston!

Keep your eyes open each month as I'll be bringing you updates as the tour heads for California, Florida, Maryland, Georgia, Washington, Oregon, Texas and more.

One last note . . . The WPR has voted to change our scoring system so it will correspond with the one currently used on the men's pro tour. That is, the best three out of five games to 11, scoring only on the serve. For those of you who are not familiar with the system we've been using for the past five years, we've been scoring on every rally. We still believe in our system and the fact that you certainly deserve a point if you roll the ball out from 39 feet on the return of serve. However, we feel any adjustments the pro and amateur organizations can make to become more unified is extremely important. Racquetball very much needs support from corporate sponsorships and unity within the sport is a must when negotiating with major companies. We hope you approve of our decision — let us know! □

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The revolutionary design of the new *Dallas* racquet sports eyeguard from Leader Sport Products offers increased safety by distributing impact force along the wearer's forehead.

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For more information contact: Sabin C. Abell, Jr., Director, Sales and Marketing, LSP Leader Sport Products, Inc., 60 Lakeshore Road, Essex, NY 12936-0271 or phone 800-847-2001. In New York State, call 800-341-2722.



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Number two ranked women's pro Caryn McKinney uses Tacki-Mac racquetball grips, as does Doug Cohen, number 10 ranked men's pro. Memphis State — with nine straight NCAA titles — has designated Tacki-Mac as its team grip. For the pro or the amateur, the beginner or the veteran, Tacki-Mac racquetball grips are your best bet. (Now in pink and gray, too.) For more information, contact: Network Marketing, 3844 Shawnee River, Lilburn, GA 30247 or phone (404) 979-9707.

Beating Racquetball Burnout

About the author: Patricia Wheele Trifunov is a freelance writer based in the Chicago area, with an educational and research background in the health sciences.

by Patricia Wheele Trifunov

For many, it begins slowly, almost imperceptibly. In spite of undaunted efforts to consistently get out on the courts and win, fatigue starts to battle against your progress. Irritability and frustration mount, and you begin to harbor a growing, unvoiced anger that your game is not going the way it should be.

Physical distress follows; stomach upsets and headaches, vague body pains and a diminished desire to eat. After years of love and loyalty to racquetball, you suddenly want to forsake it. Your passion has deserted you. You have experienced racquetball burnout.

According to Dr. Marian Kneer, professor in the Department of Physical Education at Chicago's University of Illinois, "burnout is basically a stress related phenomenon." And though this stress is emotional and mental in nature, physical duress, too, can contribute to, or exacerbate, a player's anxiety.

A classic inverted U-shaped graph (Chart 1), plotting athletic performance against stress, predicts the occurrence of burnout. The middle of the curve represents the optimal stress level needed for maximized athletic performance. Any lower stress intensity, however, creates under-stimulation and inattentiveness; too much stress makes performance very difficult.

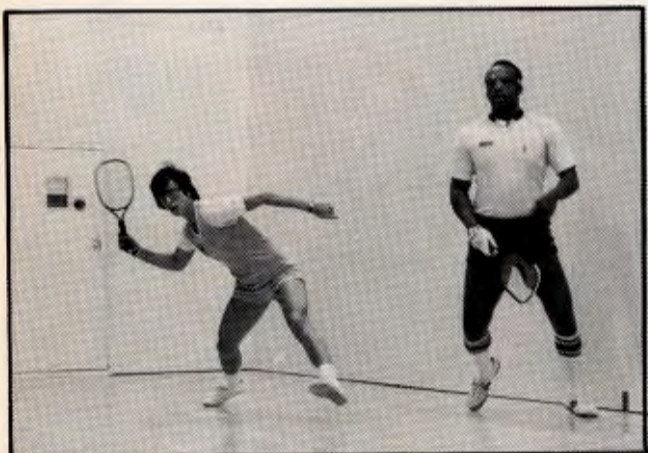
"The tough-minded athletes," says Kneer, "are the ones who can sustain themselves at the peak. But trying to keep on that peak can be very demanding, and coupled with physical tiredness, can create burnout. A good way of evaluating how well professional athletes handle stress is by looking at their performance the year after they sign major athletic contracts. Quite frequently they have trouble performing up to the optimal level that earned them that salary."

Not everyone is equally susceptible to psychological burnout, however. Burnout victims tend to have several common traits and similar personality characteristics, such as narrower values and goals. They may also have overly rigid training programs or authoritarian coaching assistance, which, over time, can kill any desire to play at all.

To those problems add the following specific sports factors: In racquetball there are two attributes of the game that make its players particularly vulnerable to burnout. For one, racquetball requires close motor skills — precision and accuracy — as opposed to gross motor skills required in sports like football and wrestling.

For racquetball players, this means that less stress can be effectively tolerated. For another, the monotony and invariability of the four bare walls makes the repetitiveness of practice stressful and more difficult for some players to handle.

Still, by understanding and combating the demotivating factors of the game, by recognizing personality traits conducive to burnout, and by adjusting both the workouts and training attitudes which cause excess



Burnout victims should take a lesson from former WPRA champion Heather McKay, who retired not from burnout but due to relocation Australia.

stress, burnout, according to the experts, can be avoided.

"Outstanding athletes have competed at high levels in virtually every sport until their skills have diminished with age, not with psychological staleness," says Dr. David Feigley, professor of leisure sciences at Rutgers University in New Jersey, and a leading specialist in sports psychology. In racquetball, players like former champion Heather McKay, who retired at age 42 still on top, exemplify Feigley's statement.

A psychological profile of the individuals who are most susceptible to burnout was recently outlined by the National Department of Parks and Recreation. Perfectionists who set high, and often unrealistic standards for themselves, are pinpointed as prime candidates for burnout. Guided by a strong and internalized set of "shoulds" and "oughts", they are generally over-achievers, investing more time and effort into the sport than is really necessary.

Statements like: "I ought to be able to return serve a lot better, with all the practice I have had," or "I should be able to play twice a night without getting tired," or "I have

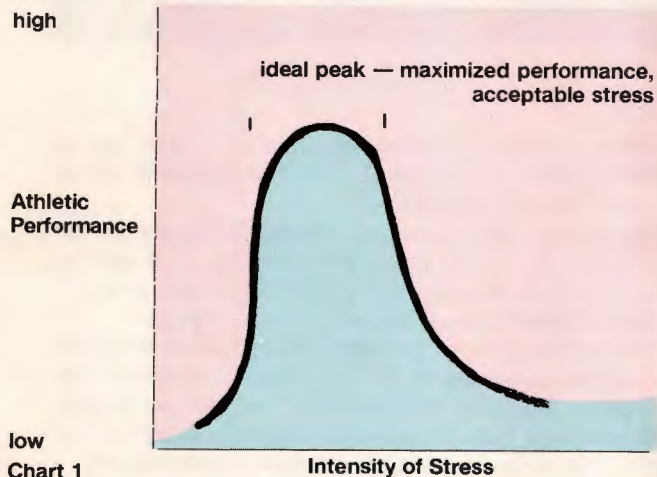
the basic skills are mastered, continued progression comes only after the player contributes a substantially greater effort.

For the advanced player, consistency of performance becomes more critical than learning new techniques. Small, often subtle advancements, though important and very necessary, engender less excitement. Boredom and a loss of enthusiasm for the game often come along as unwanted by-products.

As your playing ability advances, it is important to nurture your sense of accomplishment, and sustain your motivation by heightening your awareness of subtle improvements, say the experts. Consistency charts of matches won, and specific goals accomplished are useful; getting them down on paper creates a more concrete sense of achievement.

At higher learning levels, goals need to become more clearly defined and time spans allotted for their mastery set forth. As in many other activities, a coach or partner with similar goals and objectives can provide stimulation, inspiration and motivation which you may not be able to provide for yourself.

Athletic Performance vs. Stress



to practice at least six times a week, whether I want to or not," are good examples.

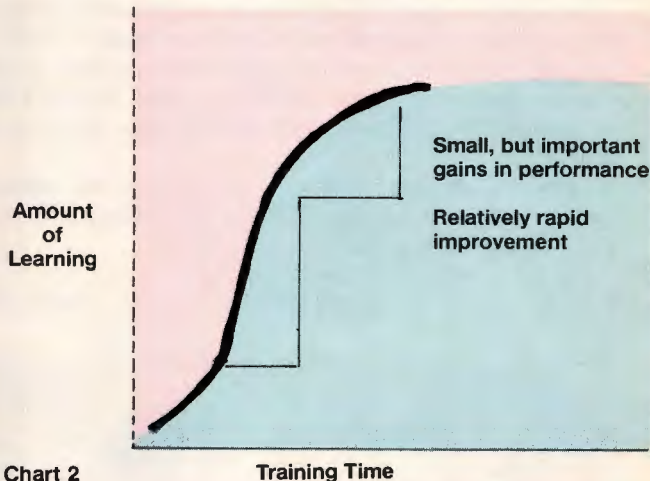
And burnouts, according to the classification, also tend to be other-oriented, that is, coveting the approval and admiration of others, and showing hypersensitivity to criticism. Other-oriented people are more motivated by social and interpersonal rewards, than by self accomplishment and self satisfaction.

Hence they find it more difficult to play simply for enjoyment, putting undue and stressful emphasis on winning. They find it very hard to say no, or express negative feelings like anger, without experiencing strong feelings of guilt. This, too, can create a buildup of stress.

Reduced learning motivation often accelerates burnout and can be a significant problem for advancing racquetball players. The classic theoretical learning curve in which the amount of learning is plotted as a function of the amount of training time illustrates this dilemma (Chart 2).

Beginning and intermediate racquetball players enjoy obvious improvements in their skills and ability after moderate investments of training time and effort, but as

Amount of Learning vs. Training Time



Zealous players frequently encounter pain, another powerful and annoying demotivator. Overuse syndromes, frequently in the elbow, and less often in the knee joints, can nag and discourage many a devoted racquetball lover.

One word to the wise, however: The fear of missed practice and lost progress can push an otherwise sensible player into a forced and painful grind. Matched with the anxiety associated with performing the body movements that created the physical problem in the first place, exaggerated stress and further physical injury can ensue.

Pain ignored can lead to major problems, possibly chronic complications, but dealing with it does not necessarily entail becoming an obsessive hypochondriac or unmitigated martyr. Instead, simply sharpen the consciousness of your body's many sensitive signals that warn of impending stress, and deal with injury before, rather than after, it runs away with you. Studies have shown that this mental tactic, termed "association" by sports psychologists, has proven especially helpful to marathon runners who might otherwise risk major injury

(continued on page 48)

Five Days at Camp: A Saga of Blood, Sweat and Cheers

by Edward C. Hutchison

Photos by Don Rutt

It was Day Five and the last play session of racquetball camp when I realized Steve Strandemo had worked his magic on my game. Stepping into the service area, I mentally checked what was needed to execute the Z serve required in this session. My brain said "Go!" and in a flash, the ball was off. In a second my partner, Marci Gray, telegraphed the results:

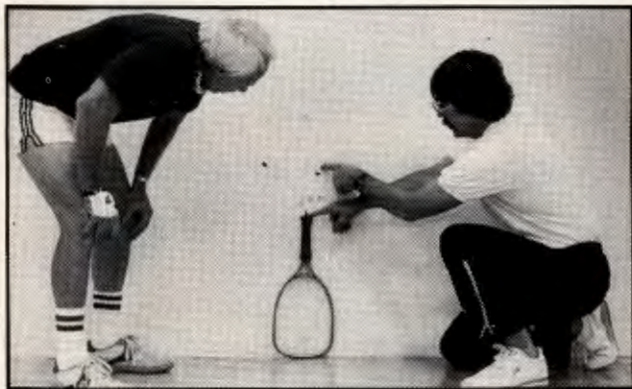
"What was that?" she asked quite pleasantly. And I had to admit that the intended hard Z had gone amok, the victim of bad habits clashing with new, powerful knowledge. At last, my game was changing. Strandemo had switched on the light.

Racquetball camp is not an experience taken lightly in the psyche or pocketbook. It cost me \$600 in tuition, lodging, meals and travel and five days of vacation. I was worried what my game would look like. Would I be laughed at for indecent exposure on the racquetball court?

Now, the \$600 is history. So are my bad racquetball habits. And nobody laughed at me. We had a grand time and I regret waiting so long to get help.

I fit the profile of the usual camper:

- A "C" player (an equal number are "B", fewer are "A");



- Experienced on the court, but not especially court smart;
- 39 years old (campers range from 16 to 65, with most in their mid-30s);
- And above all, frustrated. Frustrated at winning and losing but not growing better.

Strandemo believes too many of the 6.5 million racquetball players suffer because the sport is so new, and it is growing so fast that its promoters and gurus have neither asked, much less answered, the question "How should this game be taught?"

"I wish we were the finishing touch and all the preliminaries were down pat," Strandemo said. "There's nothing complicated about what we're doing, but when



you are changing everything around it gets to be overwhelming. We're doing a major overhaul of an engine, not just a tuneup."

Strandemo believes many racquetball players are frustrated with their current level of play and want to improve, while others are content because the game relieves tension and improvement is incidental.

"All they want to do is release anxieties from pressure jobs or life or whatever, and for those people with no interest in pursuing improvement, I'm the last person who wants to force them into a learning situation. I'm happy they enjoy racquetball as their sport to relax.

"But for the people who like it and want to improve, there is a method . . . by going through a learning process."

As for the "learning process" at the Little Traverse Racquet Club of Petoskey, MI, Strandemo and his assistant, Jack Nolan, chairman of the Racquetball Association of Arizona and head teaching pro at the Arizona Athletic Club (Tempe), were all business from Day One.

We were a diverse group: Jerry Gray, the Ferris State College (FSC) Racquetball Club coach and a few of his players; Mark Adams, owner of an exclusive Harbor Springs restaurant; Harry Jordon, co-owner of three Milwaukee Athletic Clubs; Nancy Stuart, a golf course management student at FSC; Marilyn Keigley, a marketing instructor at FSC; myself and a few other folks.

Day One: There's no sign of a prima donna among the campers. The first hour Strandemo does an autopsy via videotape of a recent match between two pros. Over and over in freeze frame and slow motion, one player touches his free hand to the racquet ("inefficient," we snort) as the other lunges for a left-up shot ("dramatics for the crowd," we judge).

Then come the diagrams on positioning, ball travel, low drive and Z serves. And then the "play" (translate:

work) session. There's to be nine of these over five days. We're divided in groups of three so 1 plays 2, 2 plays 3 and so on. The play sessions are series of drills. Today, it's a 30-second drill in which one player keeps the ball in play against the front wall from 35 feet back. The purpose is to condition us to be ready for shots left up in the course of play.

We practice low drive and Z serves in a 4 and 4 drill. We take turns serving and returning two of each to opposite corners. At the end of the day, there's not a dry sweatband on the court.

Day Two: We talk about and diagram lob serves and review rules for their return. We drill on these and the old standbys, 30-second and 4 and 4s. Strandemo shows us how ceiling balls can be more accurate when the player uses his non-racquet hand to visually direct his return. This is a day for wisdom:

"You must train to react instinctively, correctly. You don't have to do something exciting if you do it efficiently. I'd rather be 100 percent efficient than spectacular," Strandemo says.

It's also our first videotape session. New lines are put on the court and the glass back wall now becomes the front wall. We are videotaped doing our 4 and 4s. We are told to separate the emotion from the machine — our bodies — and not to be concerned with its fallacies. (Mine was major. In glaring realism, the tape showed I held the racquet to the floor and had to execute an awkward loop to get in stroking position. It took the rest of the week to work it out.)

It's a major effort to walk to the locker room.

Day Three: We talk about efficiency and how little things, like gripping the racquet, make a difference. Then it's another play session and more 4 and 4s, 30-second and ceiling drills. This is a half-day session to save strength for the two final days.

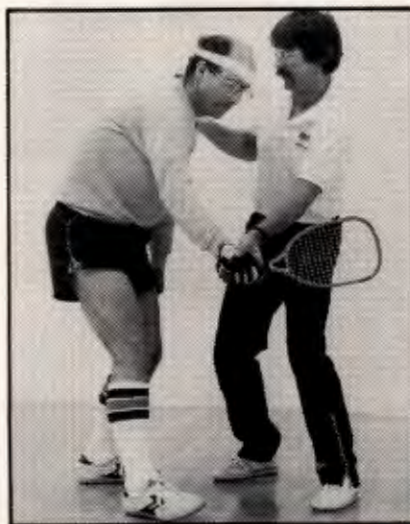
Day Four: We are told that every shot should do something; even a desperation lob return to the front wall should have purpose. We learn pinches, defense and how to move quickly to cover pass shots. Pivot. Step. Step, stroke and contact. It looks so easy when Strandemo demonstrates and feels so awkward when it's our turn. Drills, drills, drills during the play sessions and 15 more minutes of committing them to videotape.

Day Five: The information continues. We talk of positioning and

strategy. And the ceiling. We practice ceiling shots and learn when and how to use them. We practice around the wall shots and of course, the 4 and 4s and 30-second drills. We videotape again and are collectively impressed with our progress.

Our first game is played this final afternoon. It's doubles. My foursome spent more time tripping over each other than hitting the ball but at least we now know the principles.

Let me say that again. Our very first game is today. Seems odd that you don't play racquetball at a racquetball camp. Strandemo's logic is sound: Learn and refine the skills and strategy without pressure of points. Do your drills so the motion comes automatically, instantly, efficiently and logically during play.



And so camp ends, and with it, old habits, ready to be buried. Camper Mark Adams goes back to his restaurant to get ready for the Saturday evening crowd ("I noticed zero progress in my game," he said. "I wasn't learning enough, fast enough. Now I'll improve"). Camper Jerry Gray got his college crew together for the long drive back to Big Rapids.

"Be patient learners," Strandemo said. "Know how many good things there are to work on and take one at a time. Implement your strategies, work on your strokes, knowing you may have to regress and try new things before you make the jump up."

It was a week of blood, sweat and cheers. Lots of sweat. And cheers because we were now equipped to do smart things on the court. But Strandemo's warning lingered: The camp fee was just a down payment, the real dues would be paid by practicing, practicing, practicing so the machine reacts instinctively, efficiently, automatically and logically. □

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**HIGHTOWER
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Memorable Matches From The AARA Nationals

by Charlie Garfinkel

At the recent AARA National Championships in Houston, I took the opportunity to "scout" a variety of matches in many age and skill levels to determine what, if anything, I might have done differently than a particular player.

Many matches in the tournament were decided by one or two points in the tie-breaker and plenty of others were two game matches with extremely close scores. So many tough matches are indicative of the physical and mental demands placed on players in quest of a national championship.

One thing became clear to me as I watched and watched. That one thing is that many of the losers could or should have been winners. Had the player attempted different shots or strategies, especially late in games two or three, the match very well would have gone the opposite way.

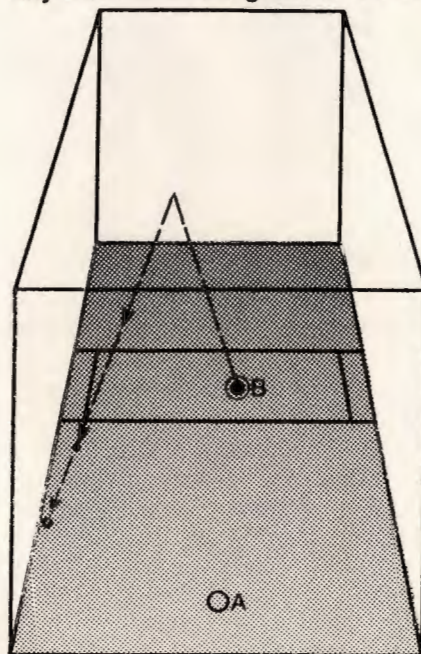
It was also interesting to note that a great majority of the matches were won by those players who had a coach or close friend observing the whole match. The coach was able to offer valuable advice, which proved to be the key to the winning player's ability to capture the last, few, decisive points.

No matter where you're competing there are many ways in which you can change your shots or strategy to ensure that you'll win the close battle, rather than lose it. Let's take a look at some of the matches I saw and learn how the loser could have been the winner.

In a match involving two veteran Masters players (ages 50-54), the first two games were split. Player A jumped out to a huge 9-1 lead in game three, primarily on the strength of hard drive serves and shooting at the earliest opportunity. Player B was tentative and on the defensive, hitting lob serves and staying on the ceiling almost continuously. Obviously, to no avail.

At 1-9, Player B took a time out. When he returned, he played like a man possessed. He disdained the lob serve for his own hard drives on the first serve and on second serves he went to the hard Z. When the ball was in play, he mixed his ceiling game with overheads — and he began to shoot the ball as much as possible.

Player B's changed style completely befuddled Player A. What were guaranteed kills became skips and easy setups. B came all the way back to tie the game at 10-all,



and if you would've taken a poll of the gallery, the tie-breaker was going to be his. But it wasn't.

At 10-all, Player A serving, Player B won the rally and promptly called time out. Unbelievably, when play commenced, B served a medium lob to A's backhand. After a short rally A passed B to regain the serve. A promptly hit a drive to B's backhand, got the weak return he was looking for and killed the ball into the right corner for the 11-10 win.

The lesson is that Player B, after making a remarkable comeback, lit-



erally threw away the match. He abandoned the exact strategy change that had allowed him to outscore his opponent 9-1 and put him in a position to win. This "adjustment" cost him dearly.

My feelings about a close match have remained unchanged for years. You go for the serve or shot that is most likely to produce a winner. Waiting for your opponent to make a mistake at this juncture is foolish. Go for it!

At 10-10, Player B should have used his hard drive serve to the back hand. He should have elected to stand in the center of the service zone (rather than the more common position of off toward the left wall) for two important reasons. First, his coverage would be slightly better if Player A did return effectively; and second, the position change would have altered the angle of the serve enough to give this particular drive a new look (*Diagram 1*).

The drive serve I would have recommended to Player B would have been the hard drive aimed at the crack at the side wall just behind the short line. Hit three feet high on the front wall about a 12-18 inches to the left of center, this serve would have been an outright winner or bounced twice before reaching the receiver. Had it been short, then B should have continued with his Z second serve.

One of the reasons I love watching Open play is to see how these

(continued on page 43)

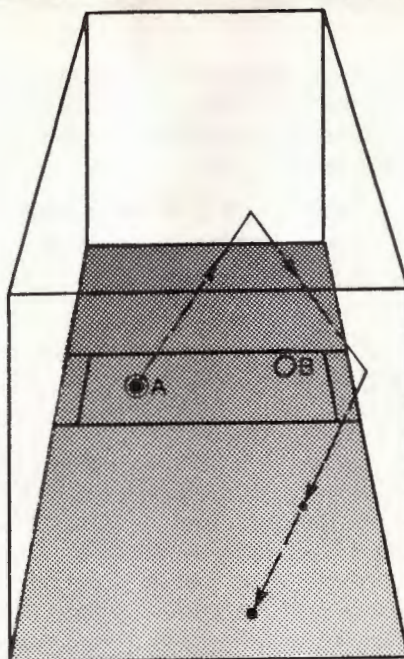
outstanding players blend the variety of shots into their own style. In a particular match I was intrigued by Player A's pinpoint ceiling game, which completely mesmerized his opponent. It seemed like every rally began and ended along the left wall as Player A hit ceiling after ceiling along the backhand side. Player B kept trying to hit with A on the ceiling but was unable to cope with the result being a kill or passing winner by A.

Thus Player A won game one 15-7 and was leading 7-2 in the second with B's chances looking bleak indeed. At this juncture, B made an adjustment that got him back into the match — he continued hitting ceiling balls, but he began hitting them cross court.

Player A continued to hit to the ceiling off these cross court ceiling shots, but his control was not the same. Some of the shots fell short, others caught the side wall; and B, using his excellent backhand, started shooting down the backhand line with kills and passes, mixing in a few cross court passes as well. The result: Player B came back to win game two 15-13.

In game three, Player B continued this strategy and it took him to victory. Too bad for Player A, who lost the momentum and the match — but I must add — needlessly. Had A made a simple adjustment in shot selection, he would have been the one to move on in the tournament.

Player A's obvious (to me) mis-



take was to continue to hit ceiling balls back to the left when Player B started to hit his ceiling balls cross court. Player A needed to hit hard, overhead drives down the right wall. This would have accomplished a number of things in his favor.

First, since B was relying on his own strong forehand to hit rally-ending shots off A's miss-hit ceiling balls, A would have eliminated these shots by forcing B to hit with his forehand. Second, the hard overhead drives down the right wall would force B to move rapidly cross court to return a shot moving quickly away from him. Player A would have been the one getting the set ups.

The hard overhead drive (*Diagram 2*) down the line is hit at shoulder height 18-24 inches from the right side wall. It's a great shot to have to keep that opponent with a strong backhand ceiling game off balance.

Having watched countless matches from professional to novice, I'm always impressed when different strategies or shots are used to produce victory out of certain defeat. I love the tremendous comebacks in matches that appear to be hopelessly lost.

In a Women's Open match, Player A was heavily favored to defeat Player B. Yet throughout the first game, A was struggling. The possessor of accurate pinch shots on both the forehand and backhand, Player A hit her patented shots time after time. But Player B continuously anticipated these pinches,

either re-killing them or prolonging the rally.

When Player B walked off the court with a 15-6 first game win, Player A was angry, dejected and frustrated.

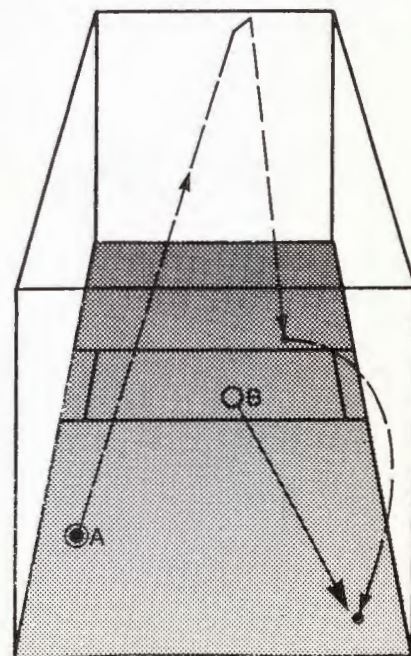
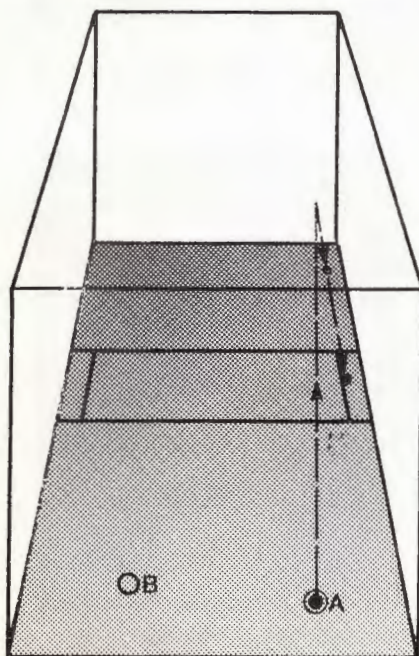
However, in games two and three Player A came back to show why she was one of the favorites. Sensing that Player B would continue to move up each time Player A was set to hit her shot, A started to hit V-passes to catch the side wall just behind A and carom behind her. Player A quickly won the second game 15-5.

When game three started, Player B wisely adjusted her court position, but it was too late. Player A, pinching or passing depending on Player B's position, won handily, 11-2. It was the cross court V-pass that turned the match around.

To hit the V-pass correctly (*Diagram 3*) the ball should hit the front wall, then the side wall about three or four feet high, parallel to or just behind the opponent. It will then move quickly to the back court before the opponent can return it.

In a Men's Senior (ages 35-39) match that I watched closely, I was greatly impressed by Player A (a left-hander) and his deadly drive and Z serves. He had won his first two matches quickly and easily, holding both opponents under double figures in each game.

It was easy to see why. His booming drives and acutely angled Z's, especially to his opponents backhand, scored many outright points. The few serves that were returned were quickly pounced on with his deadly forehand.



U.S. National Singles

(continued from page 15)

year! In the round robin division, Mary Lou came out on top, followed by silver medalist, Julie Atherly, and bronze medalist, Janet Kettman of Fairfield, CT.

In the Men's 60+ division, Victor Sacco of Norwood, NY, defeated Al Rossi from San Francisco, CA in three games to be awarded the gold medal and the Men's 60+ championship title. Victor won the first game 15-6, dropped the second to Al, 7-15, then won a difficult tiebreaker 11-9. Malcolm Roberts of Melbourne, FL, defeated Earl Acuff of Blacksburg, VA, 15-14, 15-10, to take the bronze medal.

Claire Gautreau from McAllen, TX, took the Women's 60+ championship title and gold medal in round robin play. The silver medal was awarded to Mary Lou Acuff, and the bronze to Betty Stone from Houston, TX.

Luzell Wilde, now holds the Men's 65+ U.S. National Championship title for the second consecutive year. Luzell of Centerville, UT, defeated Earl Acuff 15-5, 15-12. Don Goddard of Glasgow, MT was awarded the bronze medal. Don crushed Nick Sans of W. Palm Beach, FL, 15-3, 15-5.

In one of the most exciting matches of the week, Allen Shepherd of Rockville, MD, stole the Men's 70+ Championship Title away from Louisville's 20 time National Champion, Ike Gumer. After five unsuccessful challenges in the Men's 65+ division, (1979-1984), and one attempt in 1985 in the Men's 70+ division, Allen finally broke Ike's spell. Allen was victorious by winning the first game 15-7, losing the

second 15-4, and then winning the intense tiebreaker, 11-7. Norman Creamer of Clearwater, FL, received

This year's U.S. Nationals produced two four-time U.S. National Open Champions.

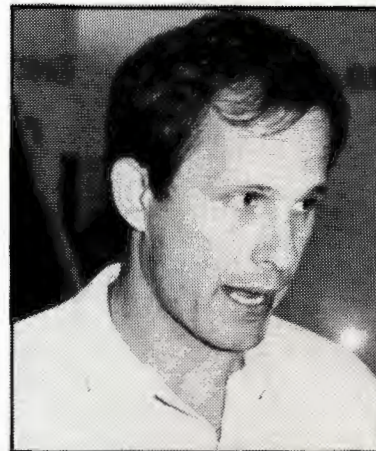
the bronze medal by overcoming threats from John Pearce of Waco, TX, 15-12, 12-15, 11-8.

James Grant from Rockland, MD, took first place in the Men's B division. Second place went to Mark Jenkinson, of Fanwood, NH.

Women's B winner was Janet Burke from Newton Highlands, MA. Second place went to Chris Collins of Clearwater, FL.

The 1986 U.S. National Singles Championships would not have been possible without the support of

all the participants and the sponsors. The AARA would like to extend their gratitude to all involved. Special appreciation is extended to Diversified Products, Penn Athletic Products Company, the Houston Downtown YMCA and their efficient staff!



Mike Arnolt



Wheelchair finalists (above from left) are Jim Leatherman, second place; John Foust, fourth place; Chip Parmelly, first place; Jim Golden, third place; and AARA executive director Luke St. Onge.



Women's Open winners (above from left) are Trina Rasmusen, second place; Cindy Baxter, first place; and Mona Mook, third place. Men's 55+ winners (below from left) are Chuck Lake, first place; and Pat Whitehill, second place.



Cathie Fredrickson.

Boulder

(continued from page 11)

nament staff had stayed to witness the tiebreaker exchange.

With Dave serving at 10-10, Gerry hit a bullet-back-wall ball for a setup at the front service line. Dave positioned and hit what everyone at ground level seating thought was a game winning roll-out. Mike Ray, the referee, called a skip. As Dave looked around in dismay, the crowd silenced in disbelief, awaiting the appeal. The lines judges were split in their decision and the referee's call was upheld. Dave looked stunned and lowered his head as he called a time out to regain his composure. Visibly disturbed, it looked as if Dave would have a difficult time controlling his emotions enough to regain the serve. The next rally looked like a repeat of the controversial 10-10 skip with Gerry giving Dave another service line set up. This time Dave left no room for doubt as he hit a passing shot for the winner.

Dan Obremski faced one more obstacle in his quest for a semifinal berth. Greg Peck, #2 seed, would attempt to stop Obremski's momentum. Greg and Dan had recently met in Portland with Greg winning an 11-9 tiebreaker. Their rematch in Boulder was a repeat performance. Both players exchanged games and once again found themselves tied at 10-10 in the fifth. Although Peck controlled most of the tiebreaking game with leads of 3-0, 4-1 and 10-8, Obremski's retrieving ability kept him in rallies and eventually found him serving for match point. After two and a half hours of exciting ball, both players looked exhausted as Obremski served the final point. Peck passed Dan on the right side with Dan returning a near perfect ceiling ball. Greg then decided to hit a forehand pass to Dan's backhand which Obremski somehow in a half-diving motion pinch-rolled out for the match. Dan was now in the semifinals for the first time in his career.

The Dave Peck and Bret Harnett match emphasized what many players have known all season, no

lead is safe when playing Bret. Harnett won the first two games 11-8 and was behind 8-2 in the third when he began another of his come-from-behind surges. Utilizing strong drive serves and powerful backhand splats, Bret worked back to a 10-8 lead. Dave managed to tie the game, but in a fitting finale, Bret won the game and match with a 39 foot backhand splat roll out.

Ed Andrews then faced David Gross for the first time this season. Andrews is another of the pros who have successfully adopted the oversize racquet to their game style.

Tournament Notes: Jim Turner former Denver Bronco, reaching the finals in Men's A . . . Tim Anthony practicing his motor-crossing techniques . . . Scott Oliver once again philosophizing on the status of the world's affairs . . . A certain young lady in the Women's Open finals playing with only half a racquet . . . Jerry Hilecher explaining to certain Head executives the finer attributes of racquetball . . . and Jack Nolan creating a new dance step.

Ed's effortless motion and large stature seems made for the extra power generated by the new racquet. Andrews controlled the young Gross and won in four games.

Mike Yellen faced Jerry Hilecher for the second time in the last two tournaments. Mike had defeated Jerry in the Ektelons in three games, but as always Hilecher gave Yellen all he could handle. Yellen won the first game easily 11-2 and went out to an early 4-1 lead in the second game. Yellen seemed to be in control as he went ahead 9-5 but then skipped three short backhand pinches, and before anyone knew it Hilecher had tied the score at 10-10. Hilecher finally won the game on a forehand pinch. It's seldom Yellen loses such a big lead, but Hilecher's unwillingness to give in, as well as his ability to short-hop Yellen's lob serves, forced Mike into making some uncharacteristic errors.

In the third game Hilecher went ahead 10-8 and he continued to

pressure Mike with great forehand pinches. Mike regained the serve and tied the score 10-10, winning the game on a backhand pinch, a shot which Hilecher had been camping out on throughout the match. Hilecher had continually anticipated Yellen's pinches catching Mike trapped on the left side and passing him on the right, but this time Jerry seemed to lose the ball on the left glass and failed to return the pinch. Yellen won the fourth game 11-7.

The semifinals were really anticlimactic as one went three games and the other four. Harnett's power seemed to handcuff Obremski as Dan found himself on the defensive most of the game. Bret daringly continued to blast from deep court, rolling out shot after shot. The combination of the high altitude and three long five-game matches seemed to be taking its toll on Obremski. Harnett won 11-6, 11-8 and 11-2.

Yellen again went out to an early 7-3 against Andrews as Ed continually skipped shot-hop blob serve returns into the floor. Once again, in what was to develop into a Yellen phenomena, Yellen lost the lead and the game 11-9.

Yellen returned, seemingly disturbed once again at losing such a big lead. Mike would never again be behind in the match. The next three games were vintage Yellen as he returned to a strong passing game with few unforced errors. As fatigue set in, Ed failed to retrieve Mike's passes and Yellen went on to win 11-4, 11-3 and 11-3.

The final was a rematch of the Phoenix final, where Harnett controlled Yellen and defeated the national champion in three games. Yellen started the match with strong drive serves and precise pinches. Yellen looked determined as he went ahead 10-7 and seemed to have the first game under control. Yellen served a high Z lob to Harnett's backhand which Bret returned with a short ceiling ball. Yellen attempted a backhand pinch, which Bret retrieved for a side out. As Bret entered the service box one could sense an abrupt turn-around as Harnett's first serve was an ace crack on the right wall. Yellen's recent characteristic of losing leads at

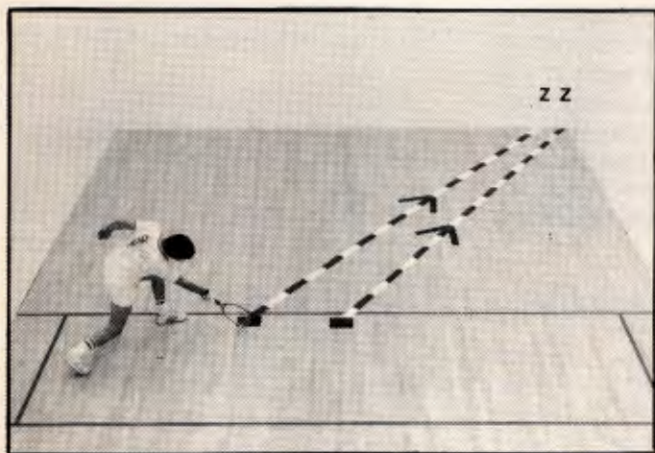
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The Strategic Game

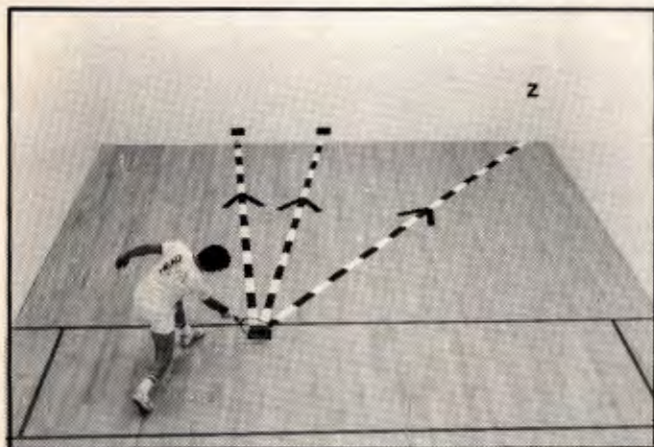
Part Four: The Hard 'Z' Serve

by Steve Strandemo
with Bill Bruns

If you're interested in ordering an autographed copy of Strategic Racquetball please write to Strategic Racquetball, Inc., Box 591, Coronado, CA 92118.



If you contact the ball directly in the middle of the service zone, you have to be consistently accurate to hit within inches of the right side wall and many mis-angles "Z's" will result. It is easier to hit correct "Z" angles from left of center.



In this photo, the low-drive to the back left corner, created by hitting the box on the left, would cause a screen, but the server can usually avoid this by stepping to the right as he serves.

Many players find that the hard "Z" is an untamed beast — a necessary ally with great potential, but difficult to harness under the pressure of competition. There's such a tiny margin of error hitting into the front wall that most hard "Z's" tend to come in short off the back wall, long off the back wall, or mis-angled down the middle of the court — all of which give your opponent a return he should shoot. Even a seemingly perfect "Z" can jump off the back wall at the last moment. Errant "Z's" also force you to give up vital coverage area as you relocate.

Still, you can't avoid hitting hard "Z's" in a competitive environment, for this serve complements the low-drive, putting pressure on the receiver and keeping him off-balance by presenting different hitting angles. When you can angle the ball correctly into the front corner, it will cut across the court and often force a weak or defensive return.

Positioning and Ball Contact

If you want your "Z" to travel to the back left corner, here are two reasons why you should position yourself close to the left wall, versus the middle of the court, as you go to hit:

(1) Geometrically, it's easier to hit the desired target area in the front right corner when you contact the ball 2 or 3 feet left of center than when you hit from the middle.

(2) Using the same hitting motion, you can hit either the hard "Z" to the back left corner, or low-drives to both corners. Your ability to execute these three serves from the same position keeps your opponent from cheating to the left on your hard "Z."

You should hit the hard "Z" off the same motion as a low-drive and at the same height. Then strive to hit a target area that will create the desired path: front wall, side wall, floor, and opposite side wall — and not come off the back wall.



These are different target areas in the front corner that create different-angled "Z" serves: long, good, short, or mis-angled.

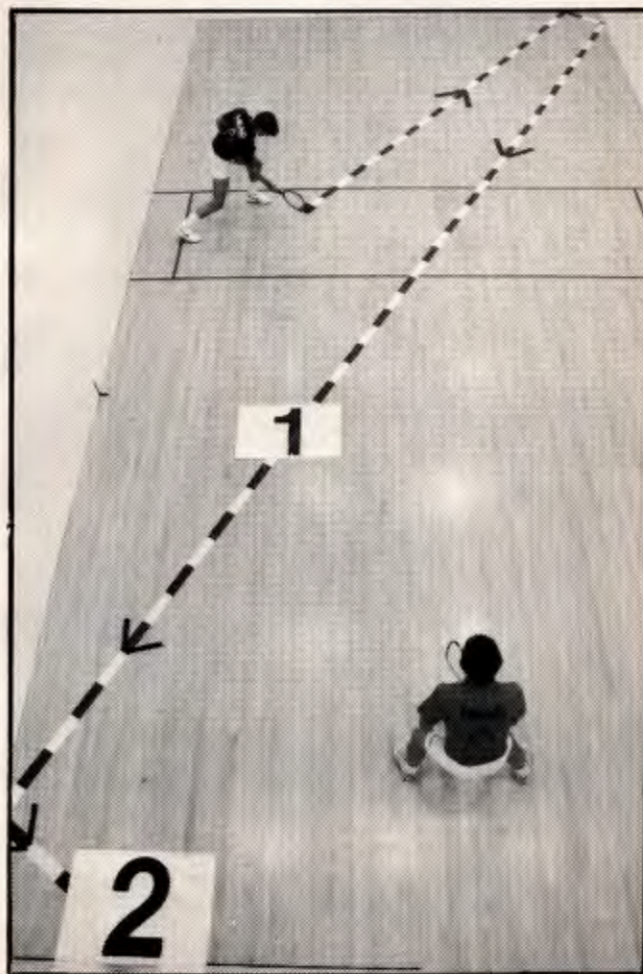
Relocation

Since many players are scared to serve a hard "Z" from the left side, fearing they will get ripped by the return, let's discuss what I feel is the logical, efficient, and safest way to relocate after hitting into the front *right* corner.

After you serve, actually turn away from the ball — toward the left wall, or to the "outside" — and pick the ball up over your left shoulder before it bounces on the floor. You briefly lose sight of the ball as you turn, but this isn't important, since a good player will not try to make contact until this serve bounces on the floor. By turning to the left like this, you protect the front part of your body against an opponent who panics on the return, moves up, and wildly rips the ball cross-court. And by eliminating this fear, you can study your opponent's intentions as you relocate, right up until he contacts the ball.

Try to always relocate back into the middle of the court, then adjust your coverage position in relation to where the ball comes off the side wall or back wall. If you read from your opponent's swing that he's going high, quickly move back to cover his ceiling shot. And if he's going low, square off to the front wall and be ready to cover a leftup shot.

When your hard "Z" is short, long, or mis-angled, be ready to adjust your relocation position accordingly so that your opponent is free to hit low and straight to the front wall, as well as cross-court to the side of the court



A properly angled hard "Z" serve will travel front wall, side wall, floor, side wall — and not come off the back wall. It's easier to hit the correct angle from left of center.

you're on. Many players are guilty of avoidable hinders on this serve because they refuse to move aside as the ball travels from left to right off the side wall in the back-court. Or, they turn back to the front wall too early, thinking they need to protect themselves, and they fail to adjust to where the ball eventually travels.

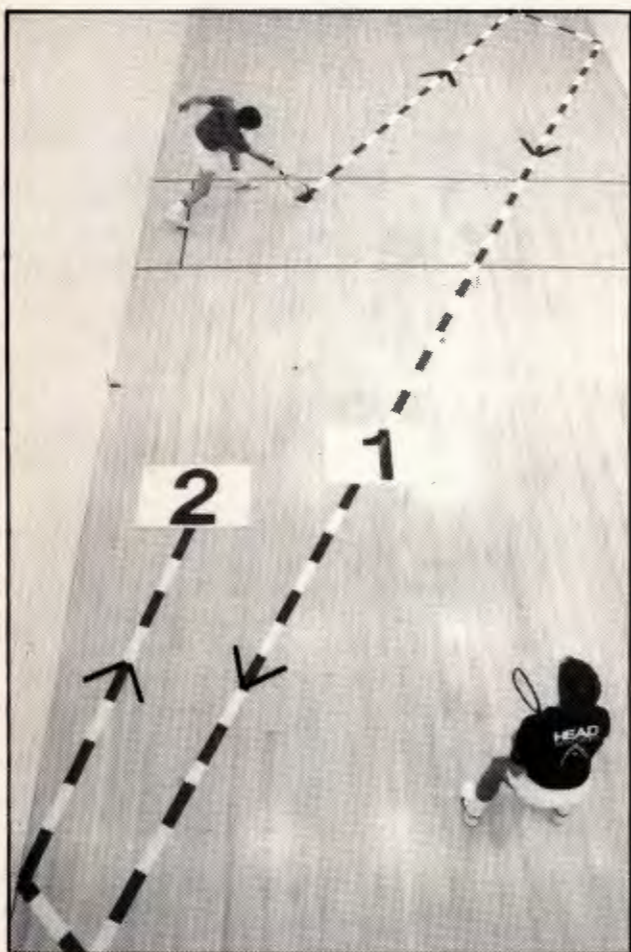
Hitting To The Back Right Corner

Spend time practicing the hard "Z" that carries into the back right corner, not only for when you want to attack a lefthander's backhand, but to complement your low-drive to the left corner. For example, if you've burned your opponent in the left corner several times, and he's leaning in that direction, then off the same serving motion you can snap a hard "Z" into the back right corner. Before he

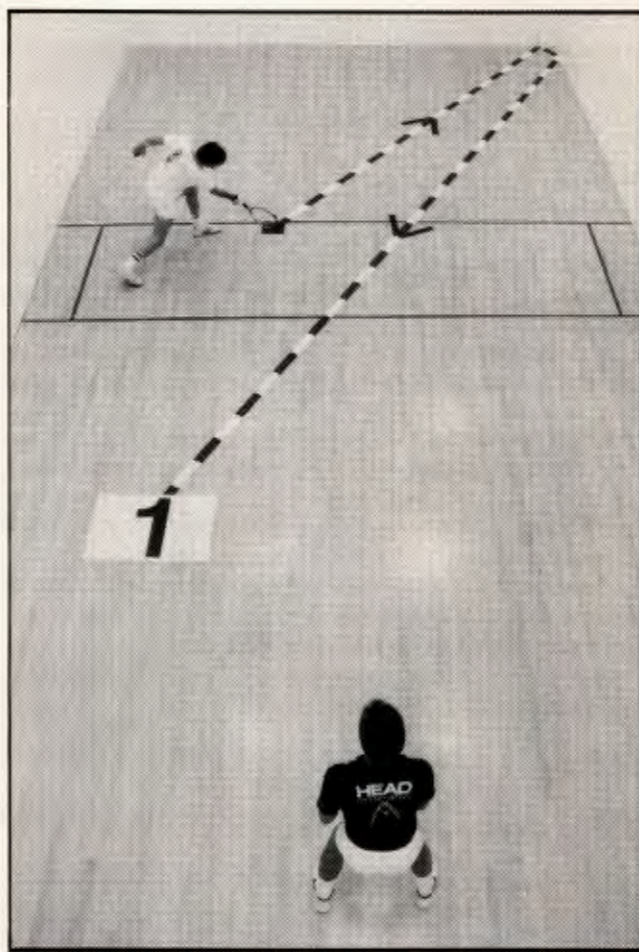
can adjust, the ball will get tight into that corner and very likely generate a weak return.

When you intend to hit this particular serve, you can start near the middle of the court, providing you toss the ball to the right of center and make racquet contact to that side. This creates a nice hitting angle into the front left corner and can also be a little deceiving to your opponent, who might be anticipating a low-drive.

In relocating, track the ball over your right shoulder as you slide straight back in the middle of the court and watch your opponent. You don't have to work on a relocation turn because after you complete your serving motion you're positioned in the same body alignment that you desire, behind the service box.



This serve hit too far away from the right wall and therefore takes an incorrect angle: front wall, side wall, floor, and then either off the back wall or a side wall for a setup.



In good play, the receiver doesn't attempt to return a hard "Z" until after it has bounced on the floor. Also, through knowledge and experience, the receiver can start reading the serve's effectiveness by the time it reaches the service-zone area.

The "Crack" Serve

In my opinion, this is too often a "feast or famine-type" shot in which you try to land a low-drive serve just beyond the short line and close to the junction of the floor and the side wall, hoping for an ace. The time spent on this serve could be far more profitably invested in a solid low-drive serve that you can rely on under pressure.

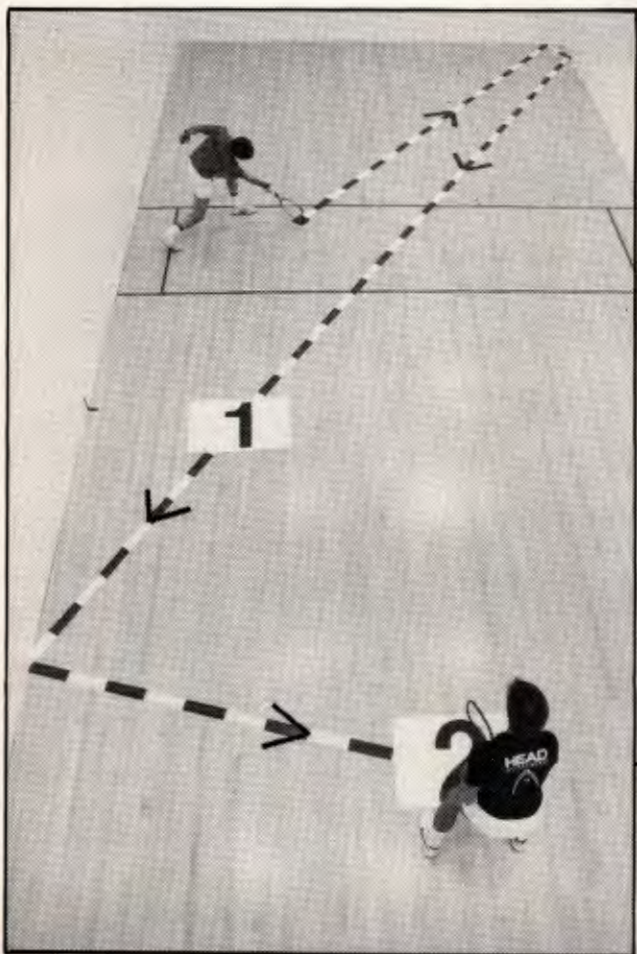
The "Jam" Serve

When used judiciously, this serve can catch your opponent napping and yield a weak return — but don't depend on it. For example, if he's conditioned to your regular low-drive serves, he may be caught off-guard when you angle the ball hard off the side wall and it either jams into his body or caroms around behind him toward

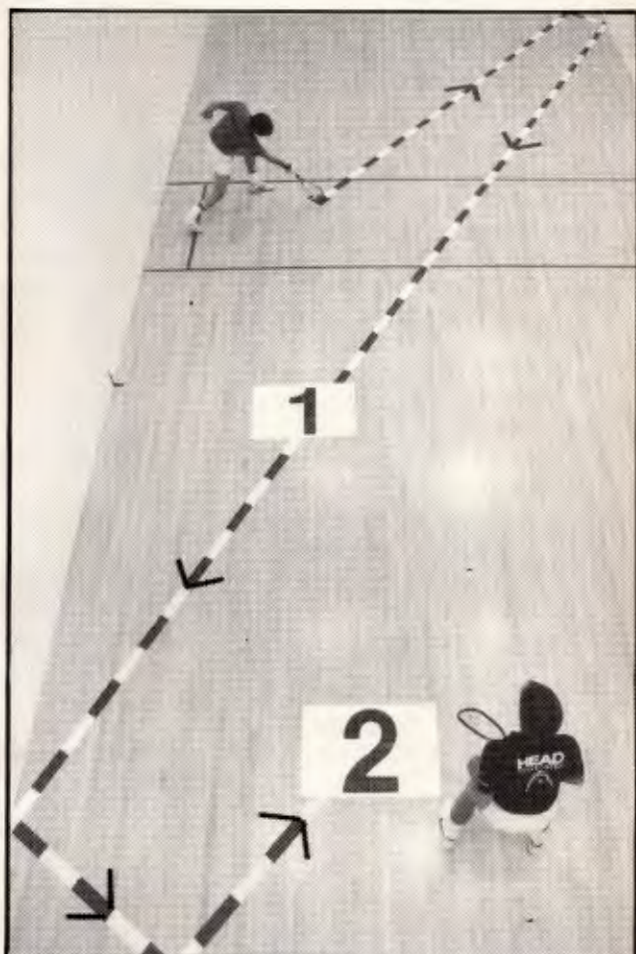
the opposite side wall. *However*, if you hit this serve too high and at the wrong angle, you hand the returner an easy setup. Even an accurate jam serve can be effectively handled by a good player when he sees it coming.

Here's my thinking. When I hit a low-drive, I'm aiming low so that the serve is either good (usually forcing a weak return or a ceiling-ball return) or short. Either way, I don't automatically lose the serve. On a jam serve, though, I might win the point right away, but I can lose it just as easily if I miss my target. I would rather play the percentages.

Next Month: Steve wraps up his discussion of serves with the "lob" serve. □



This mis-angled short "Z" hits a little tight to the right side wall and often a little low on the front wall, and thus caroms directly to where the receiver is positioned.



The long "Z" takes the correct ball path, but is hit slightly too close to the side wall or too high on the front wall and will kick off the back wall. Notice how the ball rebounds to the receiver as a relatively easy offensive opportunity.

Courting Disaster

A Descent Into the World of New Wave Athletics

by Kathy Perfect

One day a sign went up that read "Court 13 has been moved to Court 18." My heart sank. Translated, that meant another racquetball court had given way to some Other Activity. This one happened to be Exercise Ethics, a seminar where club members could explore the weightier issues of Nautilus protocol. And if 13 became 18, I mused, where did Court 18 go?

I remembered the day I called the club to reserve a court and Patty Speaking answered. Three had always been my lucky number until she informed me, "Sorry, but all odd-numbered courts are reserved for Wallyball tournaments. How about Court 2?"

I'm flexible. I took it. Court 2 played fine in spite of one flickering left corner ceiling light.

Another day I called and talked to Lori Speaking. "How about Court 2?" I innocently requested.

"Oops! Not available today. We've got Tiny Toners scheduled to accommodate our younger members." But Court 16 was mine if I wanted it. I did. Besides, most of the lights worked.

My next clue came in the form of a new sign that announced I no longer belonged to a mere racquet club. I was now a member of a "New Wave Athletic Club." I could live with that. What could be more athletic than a vigorous game of racquetball?

A few days later, the phone at the club was answered with a "Good morning, Jack Speaking."

"Hi, Jack," I started confidently. "I'd like Court 16 for tonight."

The pause was a bit longer than usual. "Uh... Court 16 is now a basketball court."

Concern began to set in. "Then how about 14?"

"Even as we speak, they're installing mirrors on the walls of 14 for our new Jazzercise center. But how about coming in for some Masso-Therapy at our introductory half-price special? That would put you on Court 12."

Concern made way for irritation. "Well, what court *is* available for racquetball?"



"Let's see... this is Tuesday, isn't it? You can have any court that rhymes with 'jive', so that would be Court 5. It's available at 10:40 tonight."

The chill in my voice was unmistakable as I bit off each word. "P.M.? You actually expect me to play that late?!"

Into the silence that suspended us for a few tense moments, Jack Speaking had a quiet suggestion. "You might consider attending our Stress Management Clinic. Emphasis is on coping skills."

I emphatically hung up.

I gave it a rest for a few days, but by Saturday I had new resolve. Getting a court became a mission. With shoulders back, chin up and a deep breath, I made the call.

"Jessie Speaking, how can I help you?"

I was already encouraged by Jessie's solicitous tone. "It's time to get back to basics at this club, Jessie. Can I have a court that can help me do that?"

"I've got just what you're after — our new tanning salon on Court 15. Get naked and just lie there for half

an hour. Can't get more basic than that!"

She had missed the point. I swallowed a rising sense of panic and tried again.

"By back to basics, Jessie, I meant something like a small blue ball and a racquet, a Z-serve, a lob... a back-hand pinch." I was beginning to sound wistful. "You know — games to 21 with a possible tiebreaker?"

Her voice brightened still more as she answered, "Don't you play badminton to 21? The new nets just went up on Court 9 for Court Badminton. Care to sign up?"

My determination wavered momentarily, but I was armed with a restrung racquet and a new can of balls. I pressed on.

"All I want is a plain old court with no mirrors and no carpeting, no nets, hoops or music. I just want to play racquetball."

"Well, why didn't you say so? If you had called yesterday I could've fixed you right up. Every available court today will host a face-off between our Junior Tai Chi teams and the Senior Stretch Squads. We've got courts all day tomorrow if you're interested."

I was beginning to feel like Alice in Wonderland in her quest for jam. Never courts today?

Days began to blur into weeks as I became more obsessed and frantic in my search for a court. I grew nostalgic for the camaraderie of the locker room, the challenge of avoidable hinders and the smell of human sweat. Dialing the club became automatic as soon as my feet hit the floor in the morning. It was a ritual I performed after every meal and before I said my bedtime prayers. I don't have to tell you what came right before the final "... and God bless Marty Hogan."

Events at the club grew worse. One by one the courts fell to still other activities like Aerobic Yoga and Advanced Breathing. I could feel the paranoia taking over. Just who was this Speaking family anyway, and what could explain their sadistic aversion to racquetball? But I wasn't ready to give up, I dialed the club. . .

"New Wave Athletic Club, Scott Speaking." He sounded harmless enough, but I had to be careful. Just keep the desperation out of my voice.

"What's up on Court 8 these days?" I asked casually while my heart raced on.

"That's our new People's Court, Judge Joseph Wapner presiding. Say, why are you so interested in Court 8, may I ask?" His suspicions were aroused. "What have you got in mind?"

"I'm exploring some new options, looking for something fresh and innovative. Have any courts free for an hour of Forward Thinking or Just Kicking Back?"

It worked. He bought it. The Last Surviving Racquetball Court in the English-speaking world was mine — for an hour, anyway. It was exhilarating!

I was anxious, I was eager, I was psyched. I tugged my shoelaces into readiness as I waited for my old doubles partner to show up. What a

game we'd have!

From around the corner flashed a figure dressed in hot pink leotards and legwarmers. Our eyes locked in a moment filled with disbelief and dismay. My mind whirled in recognition of my former doubles partner. My knees buckled and I went down with a *thud* on the locker room floor. But not before I heard someone say, "Quick! Drag her into Court 7. Creative Resuscitation starts in three minutes!" □

Memorable Matches

(continued from page 33)

Observing closely, I noticed that Player B was rushing every return of A's drive serve by shooting or trying to pass. He tried to go to the ceiling. On Player A's hard Z serve, B was constantly handcuffed because he let the ball hit the left side wall deep in the court, leaving himself no room for a backswing.

After losing game one 15-4, B was down 6-1 in the second game. His situation seemed hopeless. However, this is why racquetball is such a great game. Regardless of how desperate a situation may look, by implementing different shots or strategies, players at all levels can turn a seemingly sure defeat into victory.

After consulting with his coach, Player B attempted to return serve with a cross court ceiling ball off Player A's drive serve. On the hard Z second serve, B cut off each one before it could hit the side wall, again returning cross court.

Thus, by getting the ball in play and forcing the lefty into the deep right (backhand) corner, Player B was able to get back into the flow. And while Player A was tough and continued to serve occasional aces and elicit weak returns, Player B rallied to win the match 15-12, 11-8.

The lesson to be learned is to remember the words of one of baseball's all-time sages, Yogi Berra. Himself a racquetballer, Berra once said of baseball (we're sure he also meant our sport) "It isn't over 'til it's over."

Understand what's going on, make your adjustment, and race to victory. □



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Murray, James, Elected To SGMA Post

Cal James, president of Diversified Products (DP), was recently re-elected as vice chairman of the board of the Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association (SGMA). DP, one of the world's largest general sporting goods firms, is also a leader in racquetball equipment.

John P. Murray, Jr., chairman of the board and chief executive officer of Wilson Sporting Goods,

another major racquetball firm, was elected to a three-year term on the SGMA board.

"These men volunteer their time and pay their own travel expenses. It is not only a gesture of dedication to the industry on their part but also a feeling of giving something back," said Howard J. Bruns, chief executive officer of the SGMA.

The SGMA is a not-for-profit trade association of leading manufacturers and distributors of sporting goods equipment and supplies in the U.S. and Canada.

According to Bruns, more than \$7 million in trade show receipts

from the SGMA's two major shows (New York and Atlanta) will be recycled out of those shows and used to promote industry growth and participant safety in the next five years. □

Fitness Cruise

Nothing to do for a week this fall? You might consider the "Fitness Cruise" aboard the SS Norway, the reportedly only cruiseliner with a racquetball court on board.

The Fitness Cruise, always with a top name professional instructor on hand (past cruises have offered Mike Yellen, Steve Strandemo and Steve Mondry), combines the anticipated luxury and relaxation of a Caribbean cruise with plenty of fitness activities to help burn off the many calories sure to be consumed.

The SS Norway, the largest cruise ship currently on the seas, is the flagship of the Norwegian Caribbean Lines. The eight-day cruise departs Miami and travels to such exotic locales as St. Thomas, St. Maartens and Nassau on its round trip back to Miami.

So for those of you wanting to get away from it all, but still keep your racquetball game in top form, the Fitness Cruise may be for you. For further information contact Phil Wilson, (305) 358-6680. □

Dodge Series

The "Dodge Performance Racquetball Series", a 10-week statewide series of tournaments culminating with the California State Championships, has been announced by Dodge, the maker of cars, vans and trucks.

Sanctioned by the California Amateur Racquetball Association, the tournaments will include more than \$10,000 in cash and prizes, plus a chance to win the use of a 1987 Dodge Shadow for one year.

The Dodge California State Championships, to be held November 21-23, will be the first time northern and southern California players will compete for a state title. □



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OFF COURT FITNESS

by Jean Sauser



Calories Do Count

Let's face it. Health and fitness aside, the main reason most of us work out is to lose weight. And, when it comes to weight loss, even in the world of fitness, there's still only one reality you can't escape; the fact that calories do count!

It's sad but true. You can play all of the racquetball your body can stand and work out for hours on end, but you are still at the mercy of a very simple mathematical equation. Exercise or no exercise, when you eat more calories than you burn, you don't lose weight.

My favorite "I can't believe I ate the whole thing" story involved *National Racquetball's* resident exercise technologist Jacque Hooper and a woman who enrolled in a fitness program specifically to lose weight.

"I knew I was doing everything right," Jacque told me one night over the phone. "I'd given her a personal exercise prescription and had planned a liveable nutrition program so she could lose weight slowly but surely. Yet, every week she wasn't losing weight. Finally, after questioning her over and over again, the real answer came out. I asked her how she was preparing the vegetables in her diet. 'With some butter,' was her reply."

"How much butter?" I asked.

"One stick!" came her still shocked reply.

Think about that. A stick of butter has about 900 calories and is pure fat! I'm willing to bet that even Arnold Schwarzenegger can't cook with a stick of butter a day and get away with it.

Yet most of us are a lot like Jacque's pupil. We work out feverishly and fail at losing weight by defying the num-

bers involved. It's that "I'll do everything in the gym I'm supposed to, but I still need my grease" attitude that keeps most of us from paying stricter attention to what goes into our mouths.

Consequently, we put our fitness programs in the hands of experts and our nutrition programs into the hands of fast food restaurant owners who just happen to be geniuses at packing the maximum amount of empty calories into the minutest amounts of food.

The last fast food calorie chart I saw indicated that fast food calorie contents were at an all-time high. The average double cheeseburger, large order of fries and chocolate shake added up to 1,500 calories. That's more than half the daily adult calorie requirements for most people and remember, that's only one meal! At the same time, its nutritional value was holding fast at next to nothing.

In spite of this, most overweight athletes I know refuse to blame their pot bellies and thunder thighs on the drive-thru hamburger stand down the street. Instead, they insist that fat is as inevitable as old age.

This same group that eats double cheeseburgers like there's no tomorrow also insists that calories won't count if you simply increase the amount of exercise you do daily. Again, simple arithmetic blows this theory right out of the water.

Take the average male racquetball player, age 35, 5 ft. 10 in., weighing in at 159 pounds (a good average weight). To maintain this weight he must eat approximately 2,300 calories a day.

Let's say that for breakfast he has

a couple of eggs, some bacon, a couple of pieces of toast with butter and a glass of milk. For breakfast he will have consumed 680 calories.

If he has that double cheeseburger, order of fries and chocolate shake for lunch, add another 1,500 calories. For dinner, let's say he has some pork chops, mashed potatoes and gravy with green beans. Add 828 calories. Later on that evening, he has a candy bar. Add 302 calories.

On this day alone our model will have consumed 3,310 calories. Even if he plays racquetball for one hour (subtract 480 calories) and jogs for a half hour afterward (subtract another 300 calories), he will only burn off 780 calories.

If you subtract 780 from 3,310 you get 2,530 calories. Since his daily requirement to maintain and not gain weight is 2,300, he's just packed away 230 calories for a rainy day.

Since it only takes an excess of 3,500 calories over what your body needs to make one pound of fat, if that rainy day never comes, he'll be gaining two pounds a month!

Where weight loss is concerned, the real facts are that unless you've inherited an incredible set of genes (these people are called movie stars), self-deception about what you eat has no place when it comes to building a better body.

The real path to weight loss begins with learning what your daily caloric intake must be based on your age, sex, size and activity level. Making sure that you're getting all of the proper nutrients comes next and assures that you'll be on the right road to weight control. □

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

August 1-3
Courts Plus
P.O. Box 148
New Bern, NC 28560
Don Zagorski (919) 633-2221

August 1-3
Quadrangle
2160 University Dr.
Coral Springs, FL 33065
Libby Laney (305) 735-8900

August 1-3
Washington State Doubles
Site To Be Announced

August 8-10
Doubles Warm-Up
YMCA
3620 Cleveland Heights
Lakeland, FL 33803
Grace Page (813) 644-3520

August 8-10
Tahoe Blue Classic
South Tahoe Fitness Center
2565 S. Lake Tahoe Blvd.
S. Lake Tahoe, CA 95702
Ron Gardener (916) 544-6222

August 15-17
Altamont Chevron
Summer Blowout
Tracy Racquet Club
101 S. Tracy Blvd.
Tracy, CA 95376
Chuck Ellis (209) 836-2504

August 22-24
Masters-Gold. Masters Doubles
Supreme Court
1901 Pennington
Rochester, MN
Les Dittich (507) 257-3353



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Boulder

(continued from page 35)

game point was to continue. Harnett never lost the serve again as he made perfect shots to win the first game 11-10.

The second game was all Harnett's as he went out to a quick 4-1 lead. With a one game advantage and a lead in the second it was evident that Bret would shoot everything, from everyplace. Normal ceiling ball returns were now overhead pinches and defensive backhand returns were three wall splats. Bret impressively won the second game 11-6. The third game mimicked the first with Yellen controlling the momentum and once again going ahead 10-8. It was Harnett's ability to make the tough shots at crucial times that once again brought him victory. It was evident from Bret's performance in the semi's and finals that he was the dominant player in Boulder. His power and uncanny ability to make almost impossible shots at critical times moved Bret into the number three spot for the first time this season.

Although this was the first attempt at hosting a professional event, the Flatiron Athletic Club under the direction of Danny Rodriguez, organized an excellent weekend of activities. The extra efforts, such as a live radio broadcast from the club and the friendly atmosphere generated by the entire staff made everyone look forward to a return trip to Colorado again next season.

RANKINGS

The sources for these national rankings are as follows: Men's-Official RMA Pro Racquetball Tour rankings; Women's-Official WPR A Tour rankings; Amateur-Official AARA national rankings.

RMA PRO RANKINGS June 17, 1986

Ranking Player Points

1	M. Yellen	531.71
2	B. Hamett	451.38
3	M. Hogan	422.10
4	G. Peck	375.36
5	C. Swain	297.21
6	M. Ray	258.48
7	D. Peck	257.50
8	R. Gonzalez	248.19
9	E. Andrews	236.45
10	S. Oliver	222.73
11	G. Price	213.86
12	J. Hilecher	198.02
13	S. Lerner	181.15
14	D. Cohen	158.46
15	A. Gross	154.73
16	D. Obremski	146.45
17	D. Gross	144.80
18	E. Inoue	134.38
19	J. Cascio	133.14
20	J. Egerman	124.79
21	M. Griffith	121.83
22	B. Sell	93.90
23	R. Navarro	93.04
24	C. Brysman	91.10
25	J. Newman	75.22
26	R. Wagner	57.27
27	R. Harpersad	56.60
28	M. Levine	53.59
29	D. Green	51.31
30	J. Nolan	40.13
31	S. Moskwa	31.65
32	D. Johnson	31.35
33	A. Roberts	28.15
34	S. Clark	24.02
35	J. Plazak	21.43
36	J. Britos	21.05
37	L. Gilliam	18.27
38	A. Embry	16.49
39	M. Plotkin	16.09
40	E. Terry	11.80
41	D. Ganim	11.63
42	B. Williams	11.58
43T	A. Katz	10.98
43T	B. Parodi	10.98
45T	E. Hansen	10.06
45T	T. Stead	10.06
45T	T. Thielen	10.06
45T	D. Zirkle	10.06
49	W. Clouse	9.91
50	B. Wilhelm	9.69

WPR A Rankings June 22, 1986

Ranking Player Points

1	L. Adams	200.00
---	----------	--------

2	C. McKinney	160.00
3	T. Gilreath	97.14
4	M. Drexler	82.14
5	V. Panzeri	80.00
6	F. Davis	62.14
7	B. Stoll	59.16
8	L. Alvarado	56.66
9	M. O'Brien	46.42
10	S. Robson	45.00
11	J. Harding	42.85
12	M. Lynch	34.16
13	T. Rasmussen	31.00
14T	T. Bevelock	29.00
14T	L. Martino	29.00
16	C. Evon	27.85
17	J. Jackson	21.00
18	K. Kuhfeld	19.00
19T	M. Dee	16.00
19T	C. Nichols	16.00

AARA/ARHS NATIONAL RANKING MEN'S OPEN MAY 20, 1986

Ranking Player State

1	A. Roberts	TN
2	D. Negrete	IL
3	D. Obremski	PA
4	C. Nichols	FL
5	K. Vantrease	IL
6	D. Ganim	OH
7	A. Katz	TX
8	D. Kelly	CO
9	T. Hansen	FL
10	D. Aceto	MA
11	J. Sumner	UT
12	S. Gonzalez	FL
13	T. Gabriel	IN
14	R. Harpersad	CA
15	S. St. Onge	MA
16	O. Gonzalez	FL
17	M. Spugnardi	ME
18	S. Rubin	NY
19	M. Ceresia	CD
20	F. Calibreese	RI
21	M. Morrison	FL
22	T. Anthony	OH
23	P. Hawkesworth	MA
24	J. Cline	NJ
25	M. Levine	NY
26	S. Moskwa	IL
27	S. Moody	CA
28	K. Pillion	PA
29	J. Jeffers	IL
30	B. Bona	UT
31	R. Lamontagne	MA
32	F. Snow	WA
33	P. Marino	CA
34	P. Panarella	CT
35	R. Strout	UT
36	R. Gonzalez	NY
37	M. Lowe	CA
38	V. Ganley	FL
39	S. Fitzpatrick	CA

40	J. Negrete	IL
41	J. Roudebush	IN
42	M. Smith	PA
43	E. Andrews	CA
44	D. Zirkle	CO
45	S. Hastings	MI
46	S. White	AL
47	S. Thayer	CO
48	S. Deaton	AK
49	S. Lucky	UT
50	B. McDermott	NY
51	J. Hamilton	IN

AARA/ARHS NATIONAL RANKING WOMEN'S OPEN May 20, 1986

Ranking Player State

1	C. Evon	IL
2	C. Fried	CA
3	T. Latham	TX
4	M. Dee	NH
5	E. Mardas	OH
6	T. Rasmussen	CA
7	S. Robson	IL
8	M. Mook	CA
9	N. Higgins	NH
10	M. Lyons	FL
11	F. Davis	NJ
12	C. Doyle	NY
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CANADIAN REPORT

by Sigmund Brouwer



Congratulations, Sherman!

Memo to Sherman Greenfield (sent before the '86 Nationals): Sherman, you've worked on your game 10 years . . . You've made the finals of every Canadian Professional Racquetball Organization (CPRO) stop for the past two years and won each of those finals except two, one of which really hurt (the 1985 Nationals) . . . For 18 months previous to the '86 Nationals, you've been ranked #1 in CPRO, but you didn't win the big one, the national title . . . So you develop a secret weapon, maybe a backhand drive serve, and you go to Toronto for yet another try at the national title that has been so close for years. (And if you win, celebrate by losing your luggage and the expensive CPRO trophy on your way home.)

Some 493 players entered the 1986 Canadian National Championships in Toronto, Ontario, May 19-24. Two became the new singles champions. Sherman Greenfield of Winnipeg, Manitoba, and Crystal Fried of Medicine Hat, Alberta.

Both fought through talented draws. Both are formidable either side of the border.

Judge Crystal Fried's (pronounced "Freed") racquetball by her recent performance at the U.S. National Intercollegiate Championships where she won the womens singles title, playing for Sacramento State. Judge her skill by the other finalist, Heather Stupp, one of the few, as a professional, to ever defeat the now retired, then invincible Heather MacKay.

Judge Sherman Greenfield by his past wins over Brumfield, Bledsoe and Koltun, at a time when all three held high American pro rankings. And judge him by the draw.

Ross Harvey, current world champion could only last to the quarter finals. Roger Harripersad, Sacramento teammate to Fried, also Albertan and also singles winner at the U.S. Intercollegiates, fell in the semis to lower seeded Woody Clouse of Vancouver, B.C.

The survivors, Greenfield and Clouse. Greenfield went to his forehand splat and a backhand drive

serve. Clouse used everything else, but still lost 3-0 in the best of five to 11 points.

So, after coming so close for so long, Greenfield had his national title. Canada's reigning champion. And he still had to wait. The airport lost his luggage and trophies. But then, what is a two day wait after all those years?

Tournament results:

CPRO round of eight: W. Clouse d. M. Cericia; R. Harripersad d. P. Shanks; H. Jones d. R. Harvey; S. Greenfield d. M. Gervais.

Semifinals: W. Clouse d. R. Harripersad; S. Greenfield d. H. Jones.

Finals: S. Greenfield d. W. Clouse

Womens Open: 1st C. Fried; 2nd H. Stupp.

Doubles: W. Bowes/B. Daku d. R. Pratt/H. Fornefit. ☐

Beating Burnout (continued from page 29)

by ignoring important bodily cues.

Adjusting your technique, (a pain-creating technique is, more often than not, a poor technique anyway) avoiding pain eliciting actions on courts and just plain laying off the sport for a few days can do wonders for many of the athletic maladies associated with racquetball. A brief layoff will usually work to your benefit in the long run.

But if stress in racquetball is becoming increasingly more difficult to cope with, a reevaluation of your overall

goals might be in order. Is winning the be-all and end-all of your game? Be honest. Ask yourself how well your ego can handle coming out second in a contest for two.

If your answer is "not too well," it may be time to think about some of the more sublime rewards of racquetball. Rewards like companionship and the opportunity to meet new people and make new friends should never be overlooked. The excellent cardiovascular benefits, enhanced flexibility and better coordination will carry over into other areas of your life. ☐

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