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- How small companies survive against the giants

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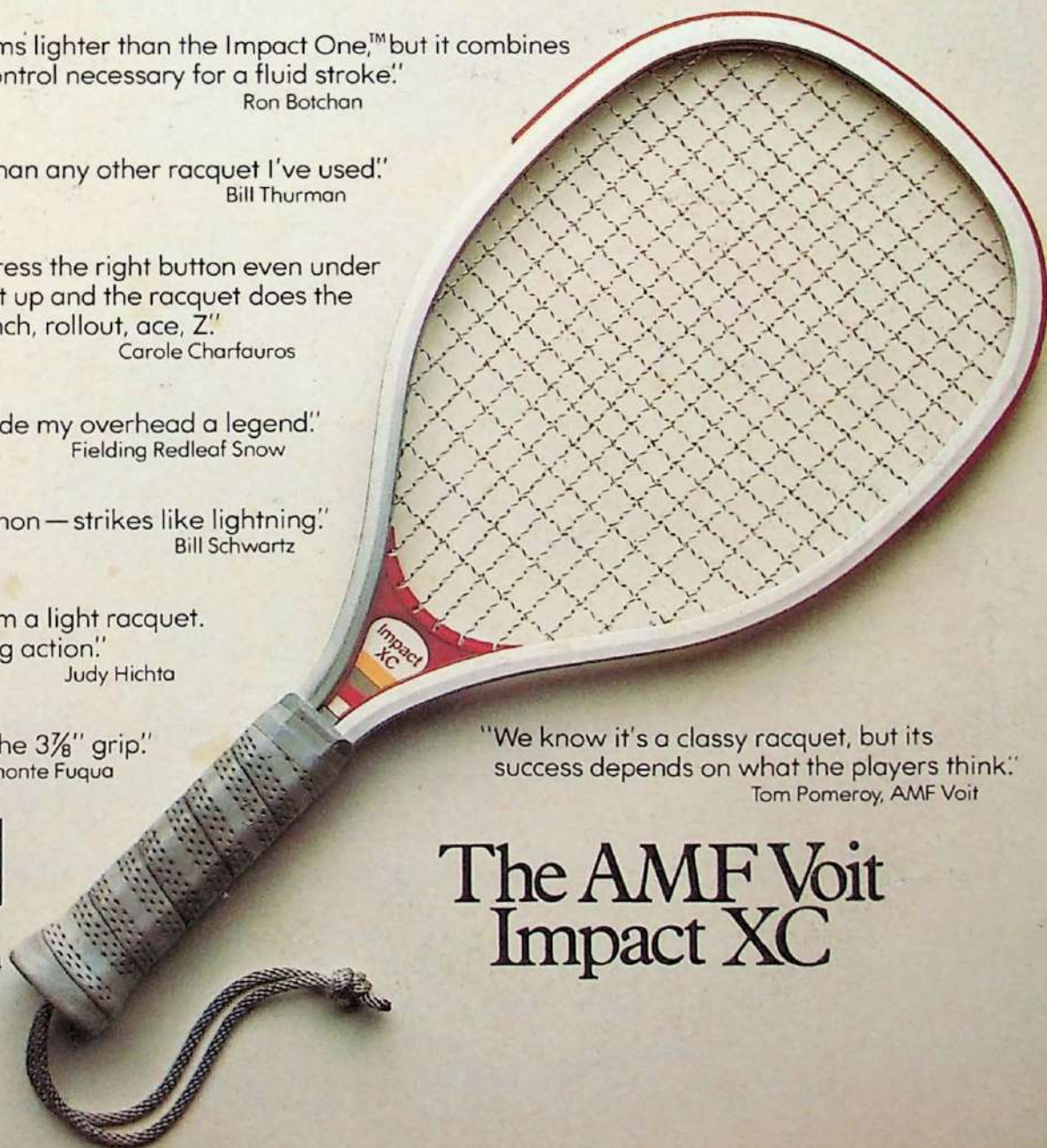
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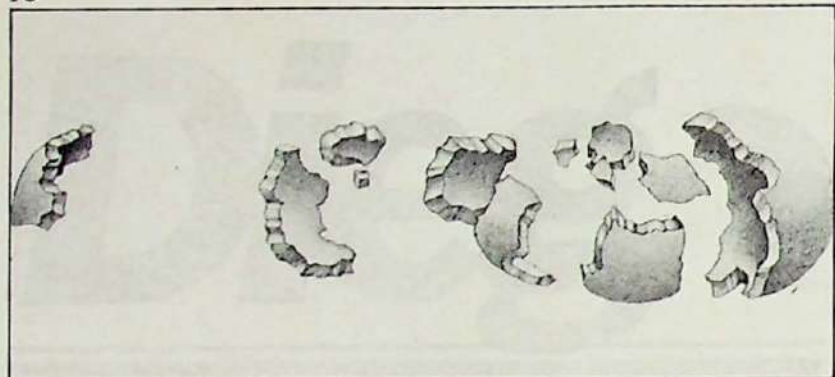
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RACQUETBALL

ILLUSTRATED

July 1980 Vol. 3, No. 7

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ED IKUTA

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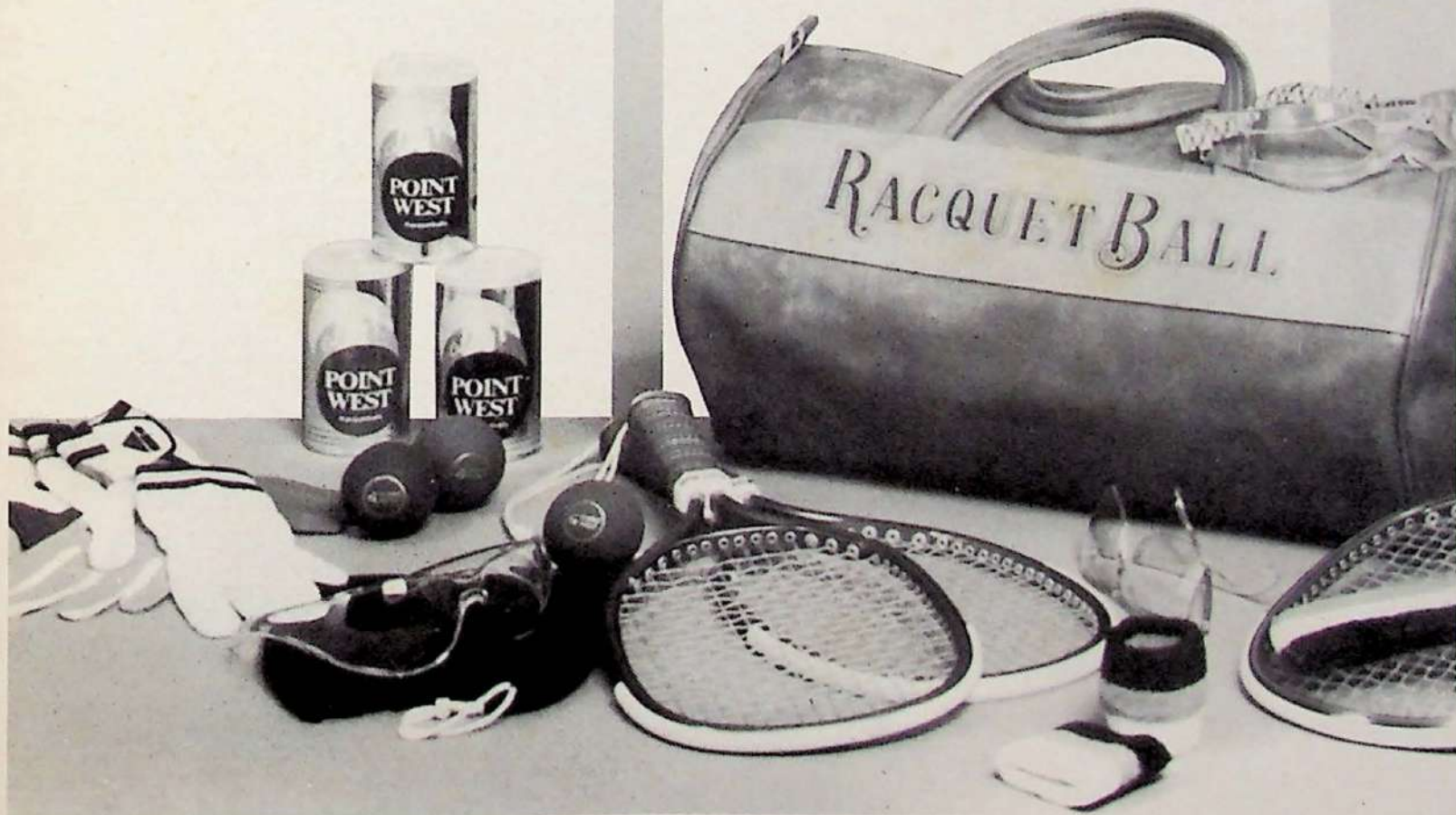
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A WARNING

In 1978, a newspaper story went over the wire services reporting that the tennis boom had gone bust. The story originated at the Sports Training Institute in Chicago and included facts on why tennis players had quit the game and what it took to get the disenchanted ones back into it.

The man who put together that study is Laurence Korwin, director of the Sports Training Institute, and upon its release, he was castigated and denounced.

The tennis industry, as expected, acted defensively. Instead of admitting that possibly some of Korwin's findings were true, it denied everything, and failed (at least publicly) to act on his recommendations.

Now, racquetball has come in where tennis has left off. The new kid on the block, so to speak. And with every new industry, comes growing pains.

Right now racquetball is experiencing a tremendous growth in popularity. But it won't always be like this. The industry has to expect a decline and leveling off period after a peak is reached.

Racquetball Illustrated has asked Korwin to look into the racquetball industry with the same critical eye looked upon at the tennis industry and come up with some suggestions on how to keep the sport healthy.

His findings, opinions and suggestions can be read in this issue under the title "Don't Let The Racquetball Industry Commit Suicide."

The story is his opinion. Some of his suggestions are safe. You can't go wrong with them. Others are somewhat controversial, and you may or may not agree with them.

But agreement or not, he has a right

to be heard, and the reader, in turn, has a right to rebutt them. We welcome any response.

This issue is highlighted by our second annual racquet guide, which is divided into three sections. Section one categorizes the racquets by price. Section two is a story on "Is An Expensive Racquet Really Worth The Money?" and section three deals with "How Small Racquet Companies Survive Against The Giants."

We also have an interesting story on San Diego, considered the mecca of racquetball, and a cute piece on the Diff'rent Strokes cast members receiving their first lessons from touring pro Davey Bledsoe.

Our instruction section is highlighted by Heather Kirkwood's article on racquetball training via running. Kirkwood is a former member of the Canadian National Track and Field Team. There is also the first of a two-part series from Rita Hoff on power racquetball for women.



Ben Kalb

Ben Kalb

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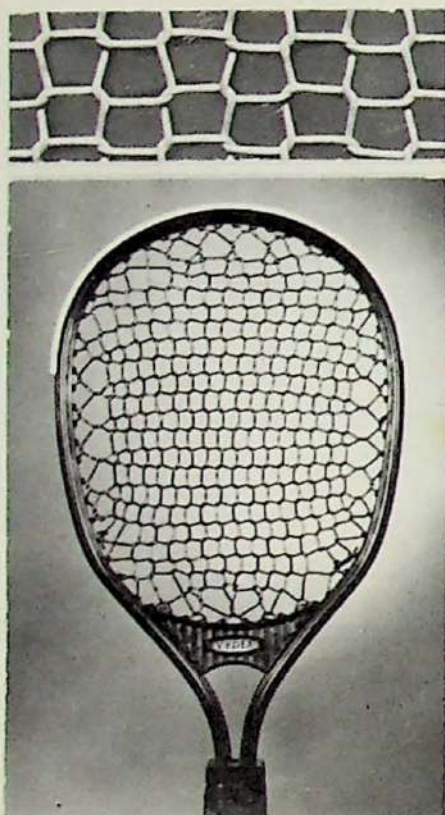
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SIDE OUT

Throw A Tantrum

Your story on "How To Throw A Tantrum On The Court" in your April Fools issue was one of the best stories I have ever read.

It may have been written as a satire but there was more truth to it than one may imagine. Intimidation does have an effect on opponents and officials.

Wallace Radcliffe
Eugene, Ore.

Too Good A Job

I'm not sure who wrote the "Tantrum" story in your April Fools issue but it could have easily been Ilie Nastase or John McEnroe.

You may have done too good a job with it. I wouldn't be surprised if the racquetball pros pick it up and follow it to the letter.

Sandra Lipton
Marina Del Rey, Calif.

Who Plays The Fool?

I was reading and greatly enjoying your comic and original "April Fools" section when I suddenly found myself at the end of the magazine. Who says racquetball isn't funny? I couldn't tell when the comic part ended and the serious stuff began.

Truthfully, your attempt to bring some humor into the sport is greatly appreciated and needed. Just be careful not to go too far. There are some of us who take the sport quite seriously.

Tom Grobmisi
Posen, Ill.

April Fools

I have been reading racquetball magazines for over two years now and I must say that your April Fools section was the best reading ever in any racquetball magazine. I couldn't stop laughing and neither could my husband.

It is nice to see a bit of humor and humanism in a magazine. Keep up the good work.

Janet Trapp
Berkeley, Calif.

Off Color

Overall, your April Fools section was a delight. I especially enjoyed the articles on the square ball and the tantrum throwing.

But I think you overstepped your boundary on a couple of things, namely the brothel that turned into a racquetball club and the letter about "playing racquetball with hemorrhoids."

J. Carlton
Evansville, Ind.

Serving Question

If a ball hits the floor or the side wall on the first serve, is it a fault or a side out? I have seen it written both ways in books and magazines and I have seen it played both ways. Please clarify.

Richard Ballinger
Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.

Editor's note: Side out.

Vote For Bach

For months I have seen men grace the covers of your magazine, and I began to wonder

when I would see a woman. Then I saw the Catherine Bach cover. I think it was your best cover. Put in my vote for her as player of the year.

Buddy Phillips
Austin, Tex.

Editor's note: Besides Catherine Bach, we have had Ruth Buzzi, Debra Jo Fondren, Elke Sommer and Charlene Tilton on our cover.

Cover Subjects

I read a letter in a recent issue in which the writer was annoyed that you put celebrities on your covers. I would like to respond by saying that I disagree with him.

Had it not been for your celebrity covers, I would probably not have picked up the magazine. I actually look forward to reading about your celebrities in every issue. The pros are interesting but not anywhere near as exciting as the celebrities.

I say don't put Marty Hogan on your cover until he gets a hit show.

Bonnie Compton
West Los Angeles, Calif.

Pointers

I have been playing the game for about two months. I enjoy your magazine very much, especially the pointers on how to improve your game. They have helped me improve mine.

Russ Hicks
Det. C, 42d MP GP (customs)
APO NY

Advertising Objection

I am writing to state my objection to an advertisement that ran in your April, 1980 issue.

I felt the IRON COMPANY's ad was sexist and low class. It is my opinion that they have reached a new low.

I am certain that this will have little if any bearing on whether or not you run this type of advertising in the future, but it certainly does not lend an air of respect to your publication.

Carol Mart Porth
Advertising and Sales
Bally Manufacturing Corp
Chicago, Ill.

Canadian Paper

In following up the write-up by Len Ziehm of the Chicago Sun Times on "How Newspapers Treat The Sport," I think you will find something special in the northern areas in Canada.

Racquetball is really booming here in Quebec City, Canada. Proof? Within a relatively small radius (20 x 15 square mile area) around the city (650,000 pop.), about 10 new clubs have been built in less than 10 months. And at least five new ones are under construction.

So, following the start of a weekly column on the sport two months ago, the main french daily newspaper "Le Soleil" ran a survey on the "boom" here. The sport is now given a lot of coverage here.

Jacques Arteau
Sportswriter
"Le Soleil"
Quebec City, Canada

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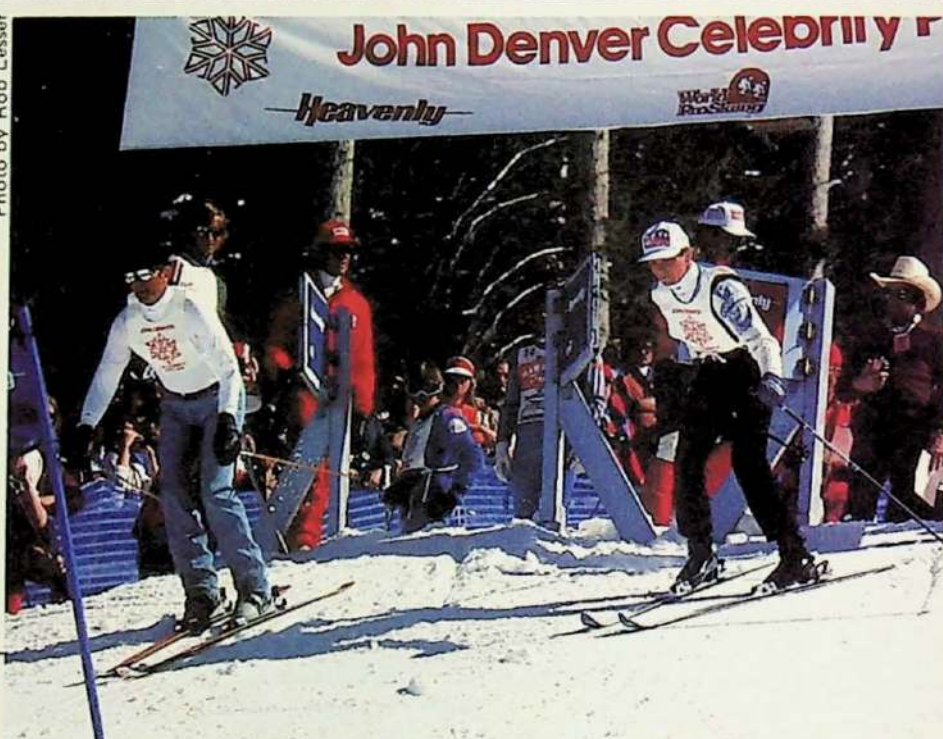


"If it wasn't for racquetball, I wouldn't get any exercise at all."

PLAYERS

Racquetball pro Davey Bledsoe (right) races sports announcer Don Meredith in downhill competition as part of the John Denver Celebrity Pro-Am skiing event at Lake Tahoe, Nevada. Bledsoe was the first racquetball player invited to participate in the annual affair.

Photo by Rob Lesser



Fourteen-year-old Rad Daly, who appeared in "North Dallas Forty" and "10," practices his backhand at Coldwater/Chandler Racquetball Center in Sherman Oaks, Calif. Daly, who also had a role in last year's television series "Bad News Bears," will soon be seen in Walt Disney's "The Ghosts of Buxley Hall." He also recently signed a recording contract.



Actor Clint Eastwood and actress Sandra Locke work out on the weight equipment at The Courthouse in Boise, Idaho while tak-

ing a break from filming "Bronco Billy" in the Boise area. The movie is scheduled for release this year. Photo by Drew Stoddard



Former pro basketball star Bob Cousy hits a few around during exhibition as part of the Seamco Classic pro tournament at Playoff Racquetball Club in Braintree, Massachusetts.

Photo by Drew Stoddard

Without trees, Bobby Hull would never have blasted a slap shot.



UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL PHOTO

This man worked with wood for a living. He used it to unload slap shots that travelled up to 118 mph. If you think that's fast, think how quickly that wood might have burned with one careless match. But thanks to you, The Golden Jet's rocket launcher didn't go up in smoke.



And without you, there's no way to prevent forest fires.



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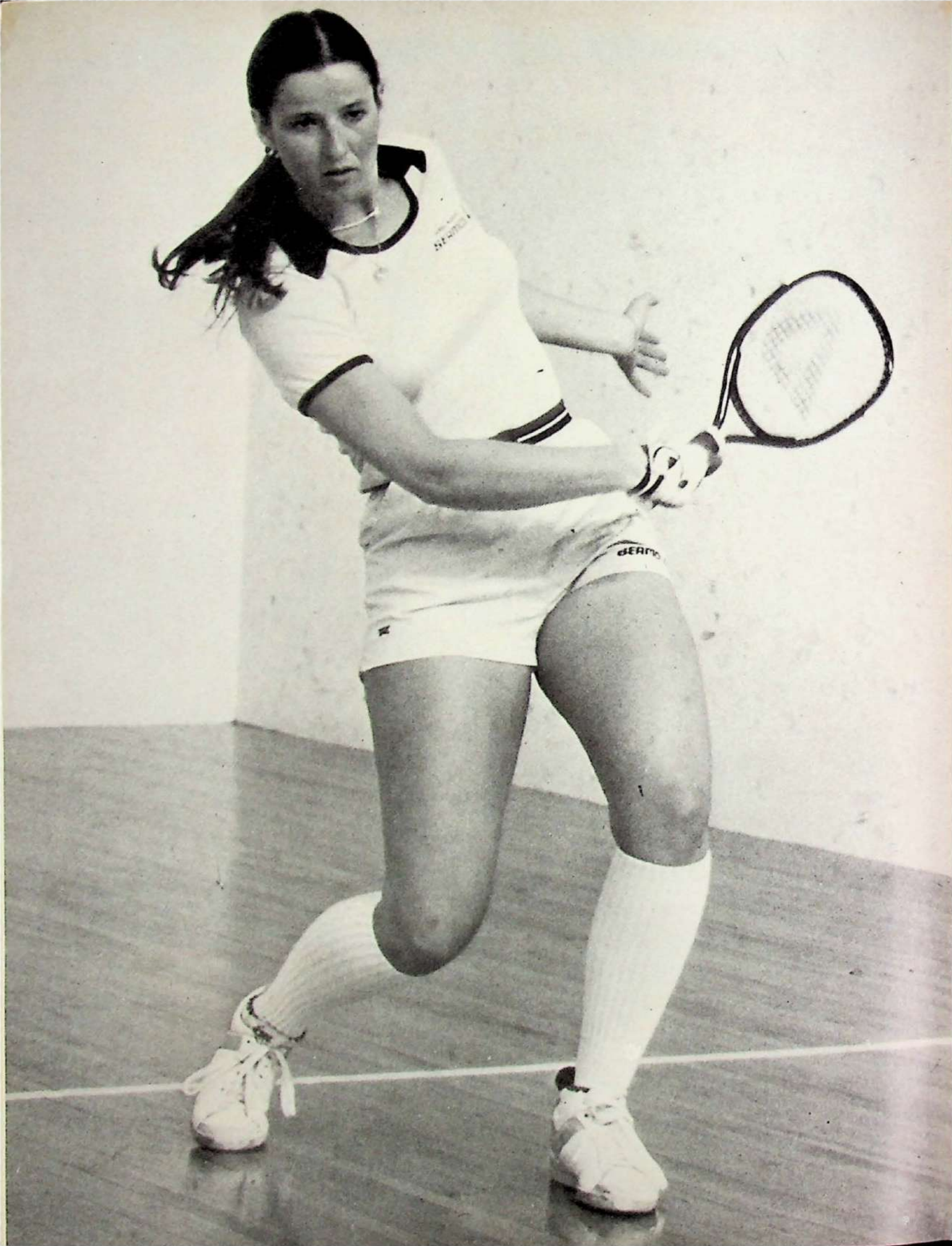
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The Voice of the Women

By Carole Charfauros

What's a nice girl from Salt Lake City, Utah doing playing professional racquetball when most of her school friends are married and have three or more children?

That is a question that has often puzzled Janell Marriott's mother, especially now that Janell's younger brother and sister are married and Mrs. Marriott continuously reminds her eldest daughter that it's time she settled down to raise a family.

"I know my mother wants grandchildren," confessed Janell. "She's really pushing for me and this guy I've been going out with, but I just never worry about getting married, probably because I've never been asked. Eventually someone's going to come along."

"In Utah the big thing when you get out of school is getting married. But I know that every one of my friends would love to be doing what I'm doing instead of babysitting every day. I had always dreamed of being a professional athlete and I really enjoy the travel that goes with it."

All of the Marriotts are athletic. Besides racquetball, Janell enjoys skiing, sailing, and camping. Her sister Jill is an excellent gymnast and her brother Brent played football in school. Mr. & Mrs. Marriott like to watch their children compete in sports. They even try to go to Janell's racquetball tournaments whenever they're close by.

When not on the road, Janell lives with her parents in Salt Lake City. There are numerous clubs in that area now, but eight years ago, when Janell first picked up a racquetball racquet, there were only a few courts. In fact, when Janell graduated from Utah State in 1974 with a degree in political science, they were just beginning to build courts on campus.

Originally, Marriott had planned on law school after graduation, but then she decided she was tired of school. Working full time at a gym as a swimming and gymnastics instructor actually gave Marriott free time to work on her racquetball game. With encouragement from Trey and Morgan Sayes, the top players in the state, Marriott entered her first tournament, the 1974 Western Regionals.

"Jennifer Harding was just starting out in competition at that time also. We both lost to

They'll always look back and thank Janell Marriott for her role in women's racquetball. But is it ruining her game?

Jan Pasternak in the regionals, but since Pasternak was ranked number two in the nation behind Peggy Steding, we figured we had done pretty well," recalled Marriott.

From there she went on to play in the 1974 Nationals, only to lose to Sue Carow ("Sue's claim to fame," says Janell). But since then, Marriott has finished in the semis or better in most every tournament she has entered.

The first racquet company to notice her was Leach Industries. Since racquetball was still only an amateur sport, they only gave her equipment. Then Ektelon came along with \$500 a year for travel expenses which was a "big deal" in 1975. "Of course, at that time the women were playing for \$50 total prize money per tournament," Janell said. Now she is sponsored by Seamco.

No one was playing racquetball to get rich in those days. Tournaments were new adventures and for the enjoyment of meeting new people and seeing new places.

One of Marriott's most eventful tour memories is her first hitchhiking trip. She had flown out to Los Angeles for two tournaments. In a five-day span between the two, friends Kathy Williams and Rita Hoff suggested that they all hitchhike to Las Vegas.

Unfortunately, because the first tournament ended on a Sunday afternoon, most of the traffic was heading back from Las Vegas into Los Angeles, so it took the trio 21 hours to make what is normally about a six-hour drive.

"We had our gym shoes and racquets tied outside our bags in case we needed them for self-defense. But we decided that we were all big girls and it would take some really big guy to mug all three of us."

"At first we were getting rides for just a few blocks and getting dropped off and eventually we made it to the middle of nowhere in the middle of the night where we had to sit for hours. Then this black guy picked up us."

"We had it all organized ahead of time that

whoever was in the front would be the ambassador. She would talk and keep the driver occupied so the other two wouldn't have to worry. Rita and I got into the back seat, so Kathy is in front with this guy and he's all excited that we're racquetball pros. He'd been smoking dope and he said, 'I have these friends I'd really like you to meet' and Kathy agreed even though Rita and I were kicking the back of her seat."

The house seemed to be in a nice area, but when they walked in the door they were shocked to see what Marriott described as "a bunch of Hell's Angels." Trying to make the best of a scary situation, the pros sat on a couch together and talked to the people who were watching television and drinking beer in the living room. Meanwhile their escort disappeared into a bedroom behind them.

"All of a sudden we heard this guy come out and say, 'Everybody—hands up!' We just about died. I thought that was it—it was all over. The three of us were as stiff as a board and no one would dare move because he was behind us and we couldn't see him. There was a big pause and he finally said, 'Hands up, who's got my beer?' but for those few seconds I thought 'This is only my first time hitchhiking. Why me?' But in the end he was really nice and took us back to the highway and dropped us off."

Hoff and Williams and Marriott are still spending time together, but now in a less dangerous situation. For the past few summers Williams and Marriott have taught racquetball at a camp in Aspen, Colo. and this summer Hoff and Marriott will teach a camp in Rhode Island. From the days when all the pros doubled up in hotel rooms to save expenses, Marriott and Williams have been close friends. They've gone on skiing trips, to the Mardi Gras, and to the Super Bowl together. Now Williams is semi-retired from the pro-tour. "I don't think she's over the hill, but she does," says Marriott.

Marriott's ranking has never dropped lower than number four since the first tournament the women received money. "For the first three years on the pro tour I was number three forever," says Marriott. "I never fell below, but I could never get above it. But I think I've had some bad draws in the past. Even though I

Women

Photo by David M. King



Janell Marriott's toughest loss came in the 1979 Nationals in Arizona when she lost in the finals to Karin Walton.

was seeded third I always had to play the number one player in the semis because the N.R.C. [National Racquetball Club] would flip-flop the draw. When Peggy (Steding) was on top I was always in her bracket and then when Shannon [Wright] was on top I was always in hers. I just couldn't get ahead that way."

In the 1979 Nationals in Tempe, Ariz., Marriott had her best chance to get ahead. Wright, the top seed, had been upset by number 12-ranked Karin Walton in the semis of the upper bracket while Marriott had taken out second seeded Marci Greer in the bottom half. It was Marriott's first trip to the finals of The Nationals and she would probably never have a better chance to win it. She lost to Walton in the finals.

"Even though I went to the finals, I consider that tournament my worst loss because it hurt so much," says Marriott. "I wanted to win so bad that I got too tight to play. I was so mad afterwards because I thought I had such a great chance. I couldn't even talk about it all summer. I wanted it so bad."

That was her worst. The Los Angeles pro-stop in March 1979 is the one Marriott considers her best tournament. "Actually, I hadn't planned on doing well. I'd been back in New York partying every night with my boyfriend. When I got there, I was really relaxed and I played terrific. I played Rita and beat her easily. Then I beat Jennifer in two games. Actually when I got to the finals I wasn't playing as well as I had been before that, but I played good and didn't let Shannon affect me."

Wright usually has a way of "irritating" Marriott. Shannon's competitive drive has kept her on top of women's racquetball for the past

three years, while magazines and tournament brochures have all described Janell as the player with the most ability. So how does it feel to have everyone saying she should beat Shannon consistently?

"Frustrated . . . I still am. I think that I have the entire game—everything I need to beat anybody, to be the best—but I think mentally I'm not as tough as I have to be. I think Shannon is the toughest of anybody. To her winning is everything. She'll win any way she can. I've held up a few times against her when I should not have and then it's whoever has that killer instinct."

Even as the top-ranked women's racquetball player, Wright made only a fraction of the \$200,000 or so that Marty Hogan was able to pull in. The women's prize money is only one-fourth to one-third of what the men make. Marriott made about \$6000 in prize money plus money from her endorsements for Pony shoes and an insurance policy for racquetball players. She doesn't receive a salary from Seamco because she gets paid on a daily basis for putting on clinics and promotions. Last year she worked 225 days, which gave her a fairly good income.

But this year she may not do as well financially, at least for a while. Since the newly formed Women's Professional Racquetball Association, which Marriott is president of, held its first all-women's pro-am (\$10,000) in New York, the N.R.C. cancelled the rest of the women's tour. The W.P.R.A. refused to sign a contract which would have given up its right to form a separate pro-tour because the NRC was only offering \$6,000 per stop for the next three years.

"I think a break is tough at any time, but it's better that we did it now when we're playing for only a couple thousand dollars, than if we waited until we were playing for tens or even hundreds of thousands," says Marriott. "But it wasn't just the money. The women were there on the tour, but no one was doing anything for us. We didn't get to play the best times on center court. We didn't get the exposure in magazines or on TV that the men got. They used to announce that the PROS would play at 2 p.m. when the women started at noon."

At the N.R.C. meeting at the beginning of the 1978-79 season the prize money breakdown was announced. Hoff asked who had decided on the breakdown and she was told that Charlie Drake, president of Leach Industries, had suggested the ratio to the sponsors. When Hoff asked him why he chose that breakdown (about three to one) Drake answered, "Well, if you don't like it—don't play."

"You should have seen the women after that," says Marriott. "It was like they'd lost their spark. We had always talked about forming our own organization, but you might say that Drake deserves the credit for actually getting it going."

As president, Marriott has very few duties, other than spokesperson for the group. She runs the board meetings, keeps in contact with commissioner Dan Seaton and gets the word out to the members. "I think one reason I am there is to keep things harmonious and to keep spirits up," says Marriott.

But because of her position, it has also caused her a little conflict with her sponsor, Seamco, which also plays a big role in the N.R.C. tour. "For a while I was caught in the middle," says Marriott. "Seamco put a lot of pressure on me to get the women to sign a contract with the N.R.C. But I felt the contract wasn't fair and I agreed with the rest of the women. Our differences are resolved now and I'm still with Seamco, although the WPRA is still a touchy subject sometimes."

The pressure of being president has also taken its toll on Marriott as a player. "I wasn't able to concentrate on playing racquetball. I was thinking about too many things that should have been left outside the court."

"I thought of quitting as president but then I think that what I am doing is important to us and to our future. I have put in a lot of time in racquetball and I want to get more out of it. The only way the women can improve on prize money and tournaments is through the WPRA, therefore, I feel this has been worthwhile for me."

But being a pioneer has its disadvantages. The financial benefits usually come after one's career has peaked. "I'm sure the younger players coming up will make more money than we ever did," says Marriott. "I'm not particularly thrilled to be a pioneer but it's been fun and I'm lucky to be where I am."

And after her racquetball career? She says she may want to get into the business end of racquetball. She also has an interest in sports photography. And she also wants to go on a safari in Africa someday. Oh yes, she also wants to get married someday.

Hear that, mom.



IS THE SAN DIEGO RACQUETBALL EMPIRE CRUMBLING?

By Mike Hogan

Ever since racquetball first exploded onto the American sports scene, the boom has been heard loudest in San Diego. Racquetball is so popular in this sunny city that it has been declared the unofficial capital of the sport.

Lately, though, there have been rumblings of a different kind emanating from that western corner of the nation. There are reports that San Diego court club business is down, that some clubs have folded and that others are up for sale.

Could racquetball be on the decline in San Diego and, if so, what does that say for the fortunes of the sport in other parts of the country? After all, several racquetball manufacturers and a good-size segment of the sport's 10.6 million players call San Diego home. It has always been the bellwether of trends in the sport.

A survey of a handful of court club owners and managers in San Diego indicates that, indeed, business could be better. But it is competition from their fellow court club owners—not a decline in players—whom they blame.

So far only two San Diego racquetball court

club operations have closed down: Racquet Time and George Brown's.

Ann Koerner, former manager of Racquet Time club on India Street, which just changed over into an office complex, says Racquet Time closed because there was just too much competition.

"I'm convinced that the entire San Diego market has become too saturated with court clubs," she says.

According to Koerner, even though the San Diego clubs still pack them in during prime time, business has fallen off during the critical non-prime hours.

"The number of players in San Diego is still increasing," says Koerner. "It's just that we have doubled the number of court facilities in the past couple of years and we haven't doubled the number of players locally. Players will continue to increase but their numbers just aren't keeping up with the increase in courts."

"Two years ago, everyone was making money. But we have too many facilities now and it just dilutes everyone's business."

The other operation which has closed down were the several (perhaps a half-dozen) owned by George Brown.



CRUMBLING?

Five years ago, seeing the beginning of a trend, Brown parlayed a loan from his father, a prominent local physician, into a half-dozen or so clubs that flourished right along with the burgeoning new sport.

As the competition stiffened, though, the empire which Brown had built was discovered to have a sand foundation. Some clubs were sold (one is expected to be an office building), the courts are deciding matters in some instances, and a lot of players in town are left with useless George Brown memberships.

"It was a management problem as opposed to a curtailment in business," explains Don Richley, one of the partners of San Diego Nautilus which took over the management of George Brown's Midway Drive club.

The halcyon days of court clubs in San Diego are over, says Richley. From here on out it is strictly survival of the fittest, and that means good management. The clubs which have adequate capital and are strong managerially will survive.

"The others," says Richley, "will simply go under."

Koerner believes that every other court club within a 15-mile radius was a competitor of

Racquet Time, and in San Diego, that takes in a lot of clubs.

There are more than 40 clubs to service a population of only 1.7 million throughout the entire San Diego area, and all of them are readily accessible using uncrowded freeways. As every sports franchise which has ever considered locating in town knows, the San Diego market is small but enthusiastic compared to most metropolises. The Chicago area, by contrast, has twice the number of racquetball clubs, but four times the population on which to draw.

"Considering the market and all the various forms of competing entertainment outside racquetball," says Courtsports owner Jenner Knight, "it's a wonder that the sport ever got a foothold here in the first place."

Courtsports, which opened about the same time as Racquet Time a couple years ago on India Street, is less than a mile away from the former club. Courtsports is now doing a good business, especially since its principal competition has been removed.

"We're making it," says Knight by way of understatement. "We think we have high ground and we expect to be in business for a while."

There are several reasons that Knight is doing so much better than his one-time competitors, says local court club management consultant Nancy Martin who helped open both clubs. Primary among them, though, is that Courtsports has "an enthusiastic, caring staff."

"I think keeping the membership in mind is the key to building a successful club," she says, "which is why Courtsports is so successful."

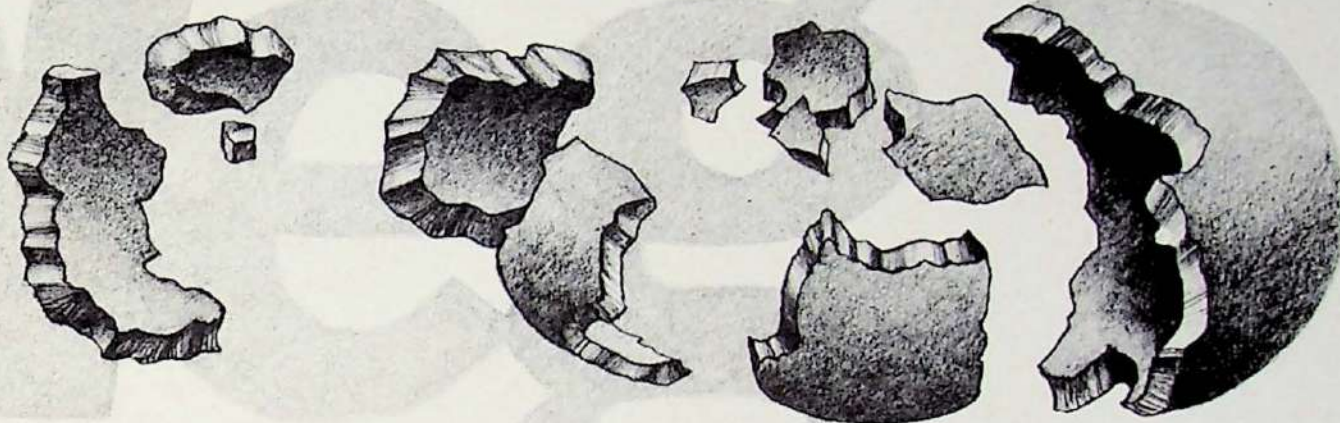
"They built top quality courts and they have a staff which really takes care of its members."

Martin and Knight agree that Courtsports manager Don Duarte is one of the club's major assets. A high ranked handball player, Duarte relates well to the membership and is able to bring in handball players to augment the racquetball business, making Courtsports one of the busiest handball facilities in town.

Other San Diego clubs are using similar techniques to keep their locker rooms filled. One of the favorites is the addition of gym equipment and other amenities.

Richley's San Diego Nautilus has taken over management of several area clubs. He believes that a two-product facility is the only way to go in the crowded San Diego market.

Chris Vile, manager of the Stadium Racquet club, agrees with his assessment. Gym memberships, she says, or combination gym and racquetball memberships are three times



those of racquetball memberships alone at the Stadium club.

"The only way a racquetball club can survive on racquetball memberships alone in San Diego these days," she says, "is if it is old and established with a low overhead."

The saturation of San Diego with courts has so lowered court prices that it doesn't make sense to get into a membership commitment when pay-as-you-go courts are so inexpensive. Most clubs charge \$3 to \$4 an hour prime time with a 50 cents to \$1 discount during non-prime hours. San Diego's Rose Canyon Racquetball Club, for example, charges \$2.50 an hour during non-prime on weekdays and that drops to a mere \$2 an hour on weekends.

Unusually high land costs, construction costs and utilities have pushed court owners' overhead up far above that in most other parts of the country.

Steve Cushman says that he and his partners in the Perfect Racquet knew that when they built a second court club in Mission Valley less than a year ago.

"Every marketing study we had," said Cushman, "indicated that you had better put your building in the right place in San Diego. There is no question that there is a lot of competition here."

The Perfect Racquet may have found the perfect location in town. It sits along a very busy frontage road at the intersection of Highway 80 and Interstate 15 and is highly visible from both.

The Perfect Racquet is a high-end club which charges top dollar for its court time—\$3.50 an hour non-prime and \$4.50 an hour for prime. It has 13 courts and all the usual amenities laid out amidst a very rich interior decor.

"There are 110 courts within three miles of me," says Cushman.

Cushman markets the plushness of his club, the friendliness of his employees and a full complement of amenities in order to keep his club full most hours. The Perfect Racquet is unique in that it is open 24 hours a day and, Cushman says, it is usually booked all hours except from 3 to 6 a.m.

According to Cushman, The Perfect Racquet has 1,300 members about equally divided between the racquetball and gym facilities and about 1,000 people a day passing through its doors.

"It's true that there are a lot of court clubs compared to the number of players right now," says Cushman, "but we're doing well and we're delighted."

Rumors abound that there are many clubs which are not doing well and that are for sale. No one would comment, though, on just which ones are supposed to be the troubled clubs.

There are no "for sale" signs hanging on court club doors in San Diego. Court clubs are generally private, not public, and companies and owners are under no obligation to reveal their intent to anyone but qualified buyers.

While there may be some courts for sale,

Courtsports' Knight points out that this fact alone means little.

"Anything is for sale," he observes, "if the price is right."

Still, most people interviewed agree that the San Diego market is less than idyllic for court club owners. San Diego has become saturated, they say, but the problem is simply that the boom in players hasn't kept up with the boom in clubs.

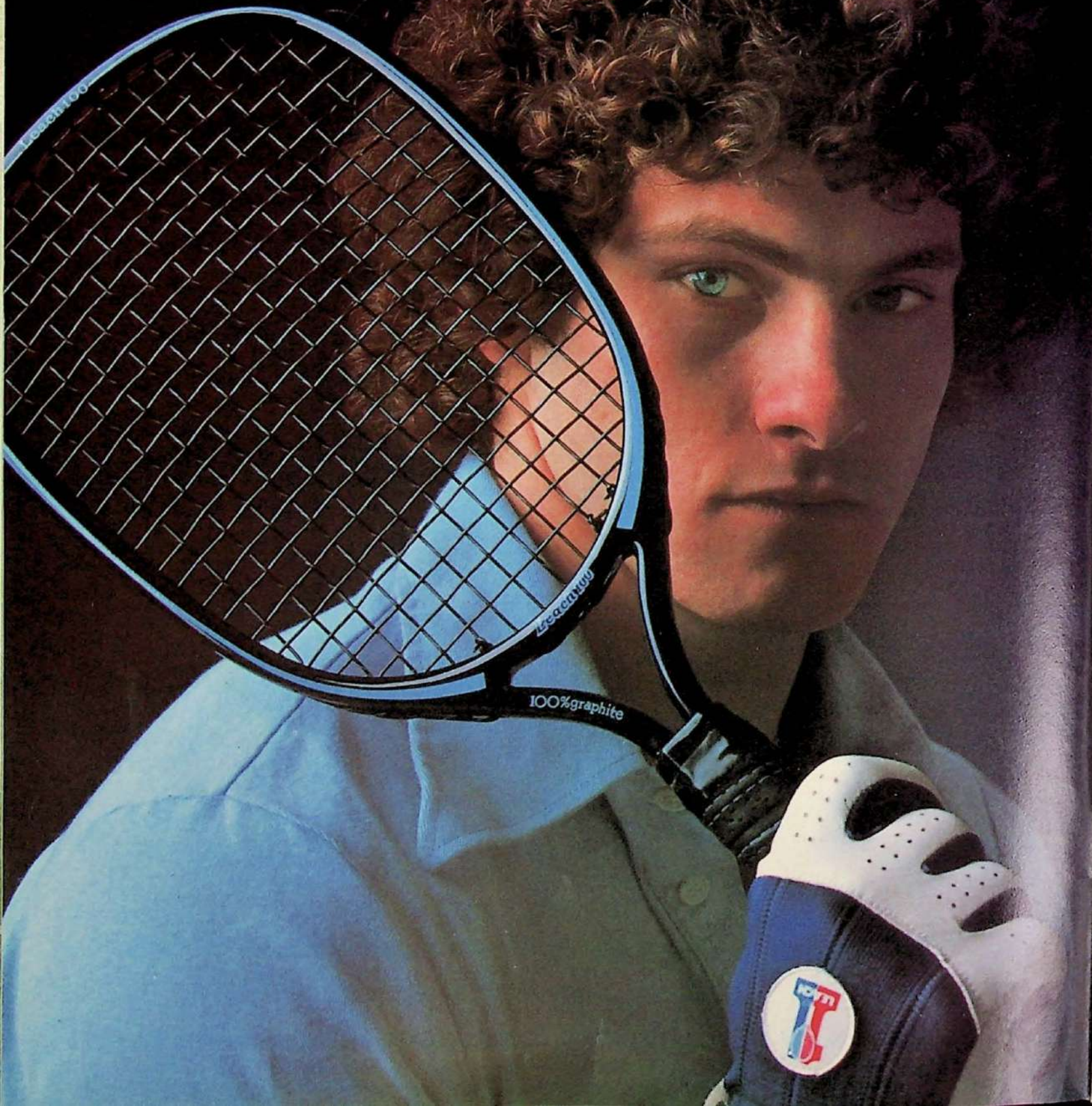
"The sport won't disappear," says Richley, "but, like anything else, it's going to have its ups and downs."

But the problem in San Diego, if one wants to call club overbuilding a problem, has evidently not reached other parts of the country. Richley reports that his two clubs in Cincinnati are doing well and the marketing people at Ektelon reported that the less mature markets—the Northeast, for example—have continued to grow at the same frenetic pace experienced in San Diego a few years ago.

The forecast is for more players in San Diego and other parts of the country. Ektelon vice president of marketing Ron Grimes says there is still a 10 per cent annual growth in number of players in Southern California.

So, in San Diego, it appears that the purveyors of court time have overestimated the demand for their product, which means owners will spend the next couple of years waiting for the playing population to catch up and hoping that no new clubs sprout up to cut into their business.

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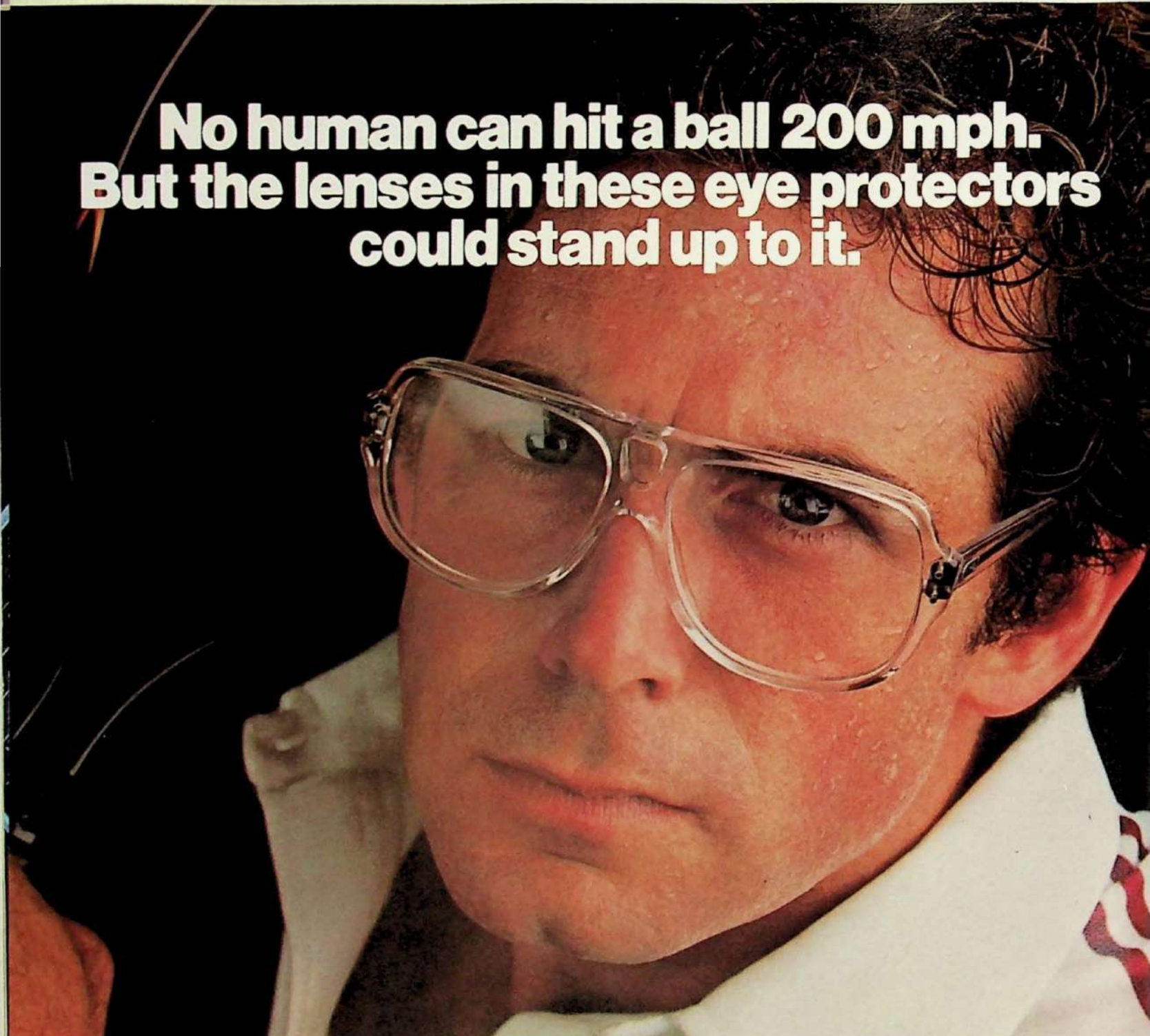


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BY BAUSCH & LOMB

How Small Racquet Companies Survive Against The Giants

By Sandra Segal

Proof that the free enterprise system is still working may be as close as the line-up of racquetball racquets in your local pro shop. Along with the offerings of the large, well-known companies such as Leach Industries, Ektelon, AMF-Voit, and Wilson Sporting Goods, there may be a number of racquets with the lesser-known labels of Stevens Sporting Goods, Dunhill Racquet Sports, and EST. The United States Small Business Administration estimates that as many as 90 per cent of all new small businesses fail, so one may wonder how these companies and other small racquet manufacturers have managed to survive in a highly competitive field. Although there seems to be no basic recipe for success, each small company does claim to have one key ingredient which it considers vital: "Quality."

Probably all racquet manufacturers will admit, without too much coaxing, that the high quality of their racquets is one of the keys to success. In fact, Bob Stevens, president of Stevens Sporting Goods, is unusual in insisting that his firm's entire strategy for success rests on this single fact. As if trying to convey the truth of his words by force of repetition, Stevens states over and over, "We make the world's finest racquetball racquet and the only way to guarantee survival is to have the finest racquet on the market."

Stevens' love affair with his racquet, the Pulverizer, is understandable. He is its designer, engineer, and prime promoter. According to Stevens, the Pulverizer is the best continuous graphite fiber racquet made. "We've spent over \$250,000 and two and a half years in research and development for this racquet," Stevens said. He then put in his pitch by explaining that some other manufacturers of graphite racquets may wrap the fibers around a polyfoam core or use chopped up graphite fibers as a filler in plastic or nylon materials, but the Pulverizer uses 40 layers of continuous and unbroken graphite fibers. "This means, very simply, that the racquet won't break," Stevens said. According to Stevens, no Pulverizer has broken since the company went into production in December. Stevens says his current racquet is the new, improved model

from his original racquet concept even though the two look the same.

Stevens' enthusiasm about the future of his racquet is substantiated by the racquet's sales record. Stevens says the company has already received \$40,000 in advance orders, and Stevens projects that the company will make and ship approximately 40,000 racquets by the end of 1980.

Quality racquets plus quality management is the professed strategy of Olympian racquets, another small manufacturer which began production this year. Olympian's co-partners, Bud Leach and Tom Gillette, provide the company with a rare combination of engineering and managerial expertise. Bud Leach, the originator of Leach Industries, was instrumental in designing the racquets which made Leach one of the giants of the industry. After selling Leach Industries to Colgate-Palmolive (which has since been resold to the Liggett Group), Bud decided to do what he knew best by starting a new, competing racquet firm. At this point, he joined forces with Tom Gillette, a management consultant with 20 years experience. So far, the Leach-Gillette team has been a success. In their first year of operation, Olympian says it has made \$1.5 million in sales.

"(Bud) Leach virtually invented the racquetball racquet," said Gillette. "All of the current good racquets show the imprint of Leach technology. Now Bud, our creative in-house genius, is improving on them."

To complement Leach's design of Olympian racquets, Gillette is using his expertise in designing the company itself. "Starting a business is like starting a car," Gillette explained. "You make sure you have gas and the key before you start the ignition." One essential for a small business, according to Gillette, is adequate capitalization. "Many small companies have problems in financing," he said. "They get an idea and stick it together with glue and paste. We anticipated our financial needs and made sure we wouldn't be under-capitalized. To continue the car analogy, you don't want to run out of gas halfway there."

A second essential for a small company, Gillette continued, is to have flexible management. "A lot of companies run on nineteenth century management techniques. Our com-

pany is in the twentieth century. We have the flexibility to respond immediately to new markets. For example, we'll probably be the first in West Germany," he said.

EST, a medium-sized company out of Seattle which has been manufacturing racquetball racquets for the past two and a half years, has a somewhat surprising strategy for success. EST has become a serious sponsor of pro and amateur players and some racquetball tournaments, a promotional technique which most of the smaller companies consider a luxury of the major manufacturers. "Sponsorship is the strongest way we have of getting the public to know about our product," said Jackson Tse, president of EST.

EST says it sponsors about 25 players. Although their sponsorship includes a monthly salary, royalties, traveling expenses, etc., depending on the contract, Tse feels that the most important part of the sponsorship is a special ingredient. "We work with our players," he said. "We're a close knit group. The big companies sponsor players, but we hear that some don't care about them." When asked about the recipients of EST's sponsorship, Tse would only name pro Sheryl Ambler. "I don't want to name any others," Tse said, "because our competitors may go after them."

Although EST makes an unusually large investment in this sort of promotional effort, it is part of a careful growth policy. "We were in business since 1973 manufacturing table tennis racquets. When we saw the future in racquetball, we went for it. But we take steps carefully," Tse said. "We don't want to be the best known company that goes under."

Since Stevens, Olympian, and EST are manufacturing for the serious player who is willing to make a large financial investment in a racquet, these companies aim their marketing efforts at the more exclusive pro shops and clubs. A completely different strategy is espoused by a number of other manufacturers who have carved out a niche in the racquet market by catering to mass merchants such as large discount chains. Dunhill and Trenway are two such medium-sized racquet manufacturers who have a line of racquets in the under \$50 market.

Trenway's racquets retail between \$12.95

Survive

and \$50.00. Dr. Bud Muehleisen, a consultant to the company, is somewhat sarcastic about the pretensions of manufacturers who sell only to pro shops. "We aim at the buying market," he said. "The pro never bought a racquet in his life." Trenway attempts to develop the broadest based market possible, and includes the armed forces among its buyers.

"We take steps carefully..we don't want to go under."

David Solomon, president of Dunhill, describes the success of Dunhill's racquets, which retail from \$9.99 to \$20.00. "Our racquets move off the shelves," he said. "If we can get our racquets in the first time to the retailers they'll just keep reordering." Solomon is convinced that the future of the racquet industry is in the so-called "popular priced" racquets. "We're where the market is going," Solomon said. "If a person breaks a racquet, he can't buy three \$40 racquets in a year. Now the two majors can't afford to specialize in racquets selling in the low end, and this will probably get them into trouble in the future. As money gets tight, who knows where the low end will be?"

A small company can succeed with a small line of elite racquets. It can also succeed with a large line of lower priced racquets. But how about a manufacturing company which has no line of racquets at all? Grafalloy, which seems to be in this third category, at one time manufactured a graphite racquet called the Hammer which retailed for \$69.50. Grafalloy no longer markets this racquet, nor does it market any other racquetball racquet with the Grafalloy label. However, the racquet manufacturing division of Grafalloy is reportedly doing better than ever.

According to Mark Ramage, the vice president and marketing director of Grafalloy, this unlikely situation can be explained by Grafalloy's unusual—but successful—strategy. "We're a strictly private label firm now," he said. "Tennis and racquetball racquet manufacturers come to us, and have us design and manufacture a graphite racquet for them. Then they put their name on it. From an industrial standpoint, it is much more efficient."

Ramage said that he made the decision to go private label this year. "Rather than manufacturing a few hundred racquets a month under our own label, we now manufacture thousands every month," he explained. "We don't care if the public doesn't know our name. We just want other manufacturers to look to us as the best and most sophisticated manufacturer of graphite racquets on the market."

The process of finding a market for

Grafalloy's expertise works like this. Ramage researches major manufacturers who may be interested in an elite, expensive racquet. "There really aren't that many companies," Ramage said. He then contacts the companies personally, and presents Grafalloy's program. If a serious interest exists, Grafalloy and the other company will split the cost of developing a prototype to fill the company's need. When the prototype is considered satisfactory, Grafalloy will begin production.

This arrangement can be extremely lucrative for a small company. "We have a \$2 million contract for tennis racquets with Prince, as compared to the \$100,000 we might make on sales of our own racquet," said Ramage. Grafalloy is also working on prototypes for Penn and Pro-Group, and has, in all, ten prototype racquetball racquets under consideration by different companies.

Ramage is optimistic about the success of this private label program, but he still sounds a bit wistful about giving up the Grafalloy label. "It's nice to think that Grafalloy could become Wilson Sporting Goods," he said, and continued after a pause, "But we're happy this way."

Grafalloy's private label strategy side-steps one of the major problems of any small business, that of advertising. In fact the impossibility of competing with the majors' expenditures in advertising was one of the reasons Grafalloy decided to go private label. Ramage said, "The other companies can spend money on ads until they have a subliminal effect. They have a head start we just can't beat." Stevens is also bitter about the ability of large companies to out-advertise the smaller ones, calling it his Achilles' heel. "It's a case of David and Goliath," Stevens said. "The public will buy whatever the advertisers dictate."

Most small companies try to turn this problem, the impossibility of competing with six-figure advertising budgets, into a virtue, a built-in way of keeping overhead low. Rather than compete in advertising, these companies will hold their advertising to a minimum and compete in the pricing of their product. Gillette's explanation of Olympian's advertising strategy is typical. "We have a low overhead and run very slim. We don't support players, and do no promotion of tours. We do some selected advertising, but we carefully research the periodicals first." Olympian holds its advertising budget down even further by developing all of their ads in-house. "We can't afford to support the advertising agencies," Gillette laughed.

The current economic situation is another major problem for small companies. Without the resources of a larger company, the smaller firms can be wiped out by the tight money from a recession. Tse agreed that a tightened economy will hurt the racquet industry. "Tight credit and money hurts the building of court facilities, and that hurts us. Racquetball is a product with growth potential, but the economy is still a dampening factor," said Tse.

However, other companies, while recognizing

the potential dangers of a recession, do not seem particularly worried. Most of them adhere to a theory of optimism, one version of which was explained by Dunhill's Solomon. "As people begin to get things out of their budget, the guy who usually takes a vacation and goes to California might put his dollars into family recreation instead," he said. "After all, racquetball is not an expensive sport. It's hard to read what's going to happen. But we've seen that when the economy gets bad, sales of ping pong tables and pool tables go up."

Gillette is likewise confident, and states another version of the theory: "When unemployment goes up, people have more free time and will spend their discretionary income on sports." Gillette is also sure his management of Olympian will see the company through any rough times. "If a company takes care of its financing in advance, there will be no problems with recession or inflation," he said calmly.

The ability of these companies to overcome the problems besetting all small businesses and to devise various techniques for making racquet manufacturing a profitable endeavor, should not delude one into the belief that the racquet-making game is an easy one. Aldila, a manufacturer of graphite racquets for the past three years, is one case in which the problems outweighed the profits of racquet manufacturing. Aldila originally manufactured graphite golf shafts and tennis racquets, and then became one of the first manufacturers of graphite racquetball racquets. Larry Barton, assistant production manager, said, "We were innovative and had a jump on the market. Until recently, we were the largest sellers of graphite racquets."

Now Aldila is shifting its marketing emphasis back to golf and tennis. Although the company will continue to manufacture racquetball racquets, their marketing will be, in Barton's words, "very minimal." There are a number of factors which contributed to this decision. Barton explained, "There's a softening in racquetball sales, and a resurgence in the tennis market. We've also seen organizational problems in the clubs and pro shops. The buyers in these shops change frequently, and we had to constantly re-educate them on graphite." Increased competition from other companies was also part of the problem.

In addition to these concerns, there is another, perhaps even more important factor for the change. "Our president is golf-oriented. That's where his heart really is," said Barton.

As Barton makes clear, the question of "heart" is important a factor in determining which companies succeed in racquet manufacturing as are the more technical considerations. The common denominators in the diverse strategies of the smaller manufacturing companies is their spirit, determination, and enthusiasm. Gillette seemed to strike a common tone for all the companies in explaining why he was determined to make his racquet company a success. "We all love racquetball," he said. "It's the fastest growing sport, it's exciting, and it's filled with dynamic people. It's sure more fun to do things in racquetball than in, say, insurance or typewriters."

Is An Expensive Racquet Really Worth The Money?

By Carole Charfauros

Is price alone an accurate reflection of the quality of a racquet? How do imported racquets compare with domestic? Can certain cheap racquets actually do more harm than good? Is an expensive racquet really worth the money?

The answers to these questions are varied, depending on which player, promoter, production engineer or practitioner you talk to.

"There's always a certain upper crust of people who will drink Perrier water," says Charlie Brumfield, five-time national champion who is sponsored by Leach Industries, "even though they find out from '60 Minutes' that it's bottled in the United States. Those are the people who are going to buy upper-line, hundred dollar racquets. Price, to me, is not relevant when selecting a racquet, except for those people who want the racquet with the most prestige."

Karin Walton, the current women's national champion who also plays for Leach, agrees with Brumfield. "My Lady Swinger sells for \$11.95 at GemCo and that's the racquet I won the Nationals with. It may be inexpensive, but it works. Like anything else, it's the player, not the racquet that makes the difference. I've tried the expensive racquets, but I still prefer mine."

Lynn Adams, the highest ranked unsponsored player, has used the same medium-priced Voit racquet since she started playing racquetball outdoors. "I've tried other racquets, but even a more expensive racquet wouldn't be better for me," says Adams. "I think plastic racquets vibrate too much."

One pro refrained from commenting on the subject because of a potential conflict with the sponsor. "How can I be truthful and say that a beginner should buy a lower-priced racquet if my sponsor doesn't sell lower-priced racquets?" says the pro.

Dave Peck, Ektelon's highest-ranked player, says, "I didn't even know how much the 250G cost when I first tried it out. I use it, not because it's the most expensive, but because it's the best feeling racquet to me. (Steve) Keeley, for example, uses that same old Bandido because it's comfortable to him."

Walton found her first racquet—a red Leach Swinger—and used it for a year until Omega sponsored her. "Omega was kinda upset because I didn't use their most expensive metal racquet. I really liked the Spoiler, which was their cheapest. Then when I went to Leach, they took the Omega stickers off and made it into a Brumfield carbon so I could keep using it until the Lady Swinger came out."

Many of the pros are not even aware of the price of their racquets. "I haven't bought a racquet in 10 years," confessed Jan Campbell Matthews, who was ranked in the top five for several years. The bottom line for the pros is not how much the racquet costs, but how much the company is willing to pay them to use the product. As Adams says, "I guess I could play with anything, if the price is right."

Even though the pros admit that price is not always the best indication of the best racquet, many amateurs still equate price with quality. It may be snob appeal, as Brumfield suggests; it may be for the security of a guarantee and a recognized name; it may be in psychological hopes of a bigger pay-off to one's game. Whatever the reason, racquet sales of expensive models are up.

"It's the player, not the racquet that makes the difference."

"When the XL was Ektelon's highest priced racquet it was also the number one seller," says Dave Charlson, production manager for Graffaloy after over three years as manager of research and development at Ektelon. "Then, we introduced the Magnum as our highest priced racquet and that became the number one seller and the sales on the XL dropped off. I wouldn't have recommended the XL, but some people really liked it, mainly because it was the most expensive racquet at that time. The Rogue had also been a top-seller because it was the least expensive in the Ektelon line."

Evidently, it is the American way to want to own something only a few can afford. John

Weaver of Leach Industries thinks that "if someone can afford anything they want, obviously they should get a high quality racquet. It's just like buying a car. Everyone doesn't need a Mercedes, but if they can afford it and their tastes are such, they'll buy it anyway. Obviously the more expensive racquets are higher quality, last longer, and have better balance."

But Frank Pace, who handles promotion and advertising for Ektelon, thinks that the \$100 250G is more like a Porsche Carrera. "Ektelon will kill me for saying this, but the 250G is not for every player," says Pace. "It's an extremely high performance racquet. The benefits of the 250G, like a Porsche Carrera, are so well-defined and so subtle that it takes a really advanced player to benefit from such a finely-tuned racquet. For example, I tried the 250G and went back to my Magnum. But Dave Peck and Marci Greer have taken the 250G and become stars."

Ektelon and Leach started out in San Diego as small businesses, but now have established themselves as the leaders in racquetball racquets, ahead in sales of large corporations such as Wilson, Head, Voit and Spalding, among others. What makes the difference between a name brand and an off-brand? "Advertising," says Dennis Foster, director of sales for Trenway Products of San Diego. "A consumer will pay 25 to 50 per cent more for a name brand and most of that difference is to cover advertising. Our racquets are much cheaper than the major manufacturers in San Diego, yet we all buy our raw materials from the same place." Trenway is content not to advertise, and thus keeps its overhead low. Most of their sales are to the government, schools, and the WoolCo department store chain.

About a year ago, Marty Hogan, the number one ranked player in the world, switched from a custom-made fiberglass racquet which is now marketed for \$20 as the "Pro Only" to the Graphite 100, which runs over \$100, perhaps proving that it's not the racquet that counts but the ability of the player. But why is one five times the other in retail price?

"The Pro Only is an excellent racquet, but it doesn't have the qualities of graphite," says

Expensive

Weaver. "It doesn't have the long guarantee either because of the thin wall construction which gives it lightness and flexibility. Another big factor is that the technology on the Pro Only is seven years old. The more recently a racquet has been developed, the higher the cost of research and development because of inflation."

One should not be misled just because a racquet is labeled "graphite." There is no law stating what percentage of the racquet's composition must be graphite in order to earn the name. "You can call something graphite or carbon filled even if it just has a trace of pencil lead in it," says Charlson.

Tom Brown, an engineer for AMF Voit, says that his company may be coming out with a graphite racquet, but that is still under discussion since there are many problems as well as benefits with graphite. "Graphite is much lighter than aluminum and technically it's stronger than steel. But it's also very rigid," says Brown. "So if you make a plastic racquet with graphite fiber in it you have to add enough to make it strong, but not so much that it gets too light and rigid. You can throw your arm out of joint trying to hit with a racquet that is 'tip light.'"

The other problem with graphite is price. Graphite is expensive. "It doesn't make sense to add graphite to a plastic racquet if you're going to make it strong and light and have much the same characteristics as metal, except have to charge twice as much for it," says Brown.

Charlson has seen some advantages with graphite since starting at Graffaloy less than a year ago. "Graphite has unlimited potential. We can make the throat smaller, put the balance anywhere we want it, put flex in a specific place. Plastic is similar but harder to do things with because it's injection molded and also doesn't have the strength," he says.

Another advantage of graphite is that it isn't as easy to copy. According to Charlson, Ektelon used to have the problem of spending money on research and development, only to find other companies coming out with imitations. That is less likely to happen with graphite. "Graphite takes a lot of technical expertise, so it's not a thing that can be duplicated without know-how," says Charlson. "With aluminum they can duplicate the extrusion almost identically. They use the same shape and same aluminum so they almost have the same racquet. The copies cost less because they don't develop them for themselves. Most copies try to get by with cheaper aluminum, eyelets and rivets, but to the consumer they may all look the same except for price."

Another innovator which claims to have had its share of piracy is AMF Voit. "We were the first to come out with a string specifically designed for racquetball," says Brown. "The other companies were using tennis and badminton string which is designed to be strung at 55 to 80 pounds whereas racquetball racquets are strung at 18 to 28 pounds of tension."

Continued on page 27

2nd Annual Racquet Guide

Welcome to Racquetball Illustrated's second annual "Racquet Guide."

This year the package includes a showcase of racquets divided into price categories and two in-depth, informative and interesting stories.

The racquet showcase is divided into four price ranges—\$75 and up, \$50–75, \$30–50 and under \$30. Each racquet company was asked to send its "top of the line" racquet, and that is what is shown here.

Last year's racquet guide showcased 23 racquets. This year 17 are pictured. Some companies went out of business within the past year, or redefined their priorities. On the other hand, the section includes racquets from new companies.

Some racquet manufacturers failed to send a racquet after being contacted, for reasons known only to them. One company, for example, is letting its current racquet inventory run out,

setting the stage for a new line of racquets later in the year. A prototype of its new racquet wasn't completed in time for inclusion in our section.

This section showcases one racquet from each participating manufacturer. Some companies make more than one high-priced racquet. Check your local racquet outlet or write to the company for a complete catalogue.

In addition to the racquet showcase, there are two stories of interest. One is titled "How Small Racquet Companies Survive Against The Giants" and the other answers the question, "Is An Expensive Racquet Worth The Money?"

From a consumer's standpoint, it is recommended that a potential racquet buyer compare prices and compare quality. Don't always take the word of a salesman. Check around with the players, or ask your club pro. Not every racquet is geared for every player.

The Editors



LEACH 100

100 per cent graphite with no fiberglass or boron . . . 250 grams . . . 18½ inches long . . . rectangular head shape . . . extra stiff . . . black raised leather handle. Aimed for intermediate or advanced player . . . **\$150.**

EKTELON 250G

Continuous-fiber graphite/fiberglass composite . . . 250 grams . . . 18½ inches long . . . hand-laid laminations of continuous fibers . . . continuous graphite core . . . continuous fiberglass fibers . . . torque tube construction . . . Polyurethane bumper . . . **\$100.**

STEVENS PULVERIZER

Over 40 layers of continuous and unbroken graphite fibers . . . additional core of continuous and unbroken Aramid fibers . . . Torsion-tension construction . . . large sweet spot . . . lightweight . . . **\$100.**

VOIT PACER

The most-expensive fiberglass racquet on the market . . . No nylon fillers . . . made from epoxy-bonded fiberglass with long, unidirectional fibers . . . I-beam construction . . . quadraform frame . . . 250 grams . . . floating nylon throat . . . special stringing pattern . . . stitched-on bumper guard . . . calfskin grip . . . **\$80.**



HEAD ENDURO

Aluminum sandwich construction. Syntactic foam sandwiched between two pieces of aluminum . . . 264 grams . . . wider (12 x 16) stringing pattern . . . hourglass handle . . . wrap-around bumper strip . . . **\$60.**

OMEGA SERIES 21

Total frame construction. Metal frame extends completely to butt of handle and is bonded to polyurethane . . . stringing extends to throat . . . quadriform headshape . . . large hitting surface . . . no throat piece . . . 230-240 grams . . . supertube frame extrusion . . . nickel-plated brass grommets . . . leather grip . . . **\$60.**

WILSON ADVANTAGE

Aluminum racquet made with Select 6, a durable, lightweight aluminum alloy . . . 255 grams . . . foam filled handle . . . leather grip . . . Strung with top-grade multifilament string . . . **\$55.**

OLYMPIAN GRAPHITE COMPOSITE

Constructed with graphite fiber . . . large sweet spot . . . lightweight . . . bumper guard . . . leather grip . . . new head shape with stiff throat piece . . . **\$54.95.**

2nd Annual Racquet Guide



VITTERT COBRA II

Black anodized frame with precision designed milled head . . . Tapered teardrop headshape . . . Large sweetspot . . . smooth black calfskin grip . . . 260 grams . . . 18 1/4 inches long . . . tough vinyl bumper . . . **\$49.95.**

TRENWAY MUEHLEISEN

Computerized-balanced metal racquet . . . Tourmaline frame coloring . . . Hex-form frame design . . . bumper guard . . . calf-skin grip . . . solid, curved throat piece . . . injection-molded, high-impact plastic handle, reinforced by metal pins . . . **\$49.95.**

EST GRABOPPER

Graphite with a blend of fiberglass fibers . . . quadrangular head . . . large sweetspot . . . raised leather grip . . . 245 grams . . . 18 1/2 inches long . . . throatpiece . . . **\$48.**

SLAZENGER JACKAL

Graphite frame with reinforced nylon . . . polyurethane foam handle . . . 265 grams . . . throatpiece . . . **\$48.**

MARCAFT TEMPO II

Combines nylon, fiberglass and thermal plastic permanently fused to an aluminum frame . . . patented . . . virtually no torsion, twist or vibration . . . extruded edge guard . . . cord leather grip . . . removable and replaceable wrist thong . . . **\$30.**



POINT WEST MAGNUM

Aluminum . . . double channeled construction with contour head . . . bumper guard . . . raised cowhide leather grip . . . poured foundation handle . . . **\$29.95.**

AJAY ENFORCER II

Aluminum . . . double heat treated . . . rectangular shaped . . . poured urethane foundation handle . . . smooth leather grip . . . 260 grams . . . **\$29.95.**

SEAMCO PRO STAR

Aluminum . . . precisely extruded frame . . . durable metal grommets . . . two-tone top-grade leather grip . . . flexible, non-cracking vinyl bumper guard . . . heavy nylon safety wrist cord . . . lightweight . . . **\$25.**

TAF 500

Aluminum . . . polyurethane foam handle . . . quadriform shape . . . bumper guard . . . double anodized frame . . . leather grip . . . 260 grams . . . **\$19.95.**

2nd Annual Racquet Guide

Expensive

Continued from page 22

So the tennis strings were too rigid. We also designed our way out of the eyelet problem by attaching the bumper, which is structurally compatible with the frame and strings. We don't pull any two strings out of the same hole, which reduces much of the pressure put on the grommet structure. We also realized that the eyelets should not be evenly spaced, so we changed our stringing technique to give it a trampolining effect.

"It's relatively easy to duplicate a molded racquet or to make the same head shape, but if they don't understand the compounding inside the racquet or the subtleties of design, they're going to have a lesser-quality racquet. They don't copy illegally because they change something a little bit to avoid patent infringements."

Many of these engineering differences are so minor that even the professionals can't tell the difference. "Players may pick one Magnum out of a group of six different prototypes and say they prefer that one," says Charlson. "But most wouldn't be able to select the same one again so the test becomes invalid. Only a few people are able to do it."

If a pro can't detect all the subtle differences in a racquet, it stands to reason that a beginner won't be able to detect many major differences, let alone know which racquet is the best for the money. Again, the answer will vary from person to person.

Dr. Bud Muehleisen, whose contribution to racquetball recently earned him a position in San Diego's Hall of Champions, recommends that every beginner seek the advice of either a qualified "A" level player or somebody knowledgeable in the pro shop. "There are many variables for each individual's strokes, including racquet weight, flexibility and grip size," says Muehleisen. "Some of the medium-priced racquets, or even the lower-priced, are just as good as the expensive ones. But it takes a person with knowledge and experience to distinguish between what is 'inexpensive' and what is 'cheap.'"

Although not on the pro tour any longer, Matthews still does teaching. Often her students ask her opinion on certain racquets. "I've been steering people pretty much toward the pure brands, just to be sure," she says. "But I know there are some pretty decent-looking racquets at the discount stores. What's happening is Fed-Mart and K-Mart are selling them cheaper under private labels, but it's still the major manufacturers that are producing them. I can tell a good racquet just by picking it up, but most beginners shouldn't risk buying off-brands."

Brumfield says that Leach has a wide selection of racquets for a specific purpose. "As many racquets as we make, there are that many different styles of players who use that particular quality racquet, with varying attributes such as weight, head size and flexibility. That's what you're looking at. Price is not really critical," says Brumfield.

For the developing player, Brumfield suggests experimenting with racquets in different

price levels, but to stick to major brands. "A beginner is bound to be hitting the walls quite a bit, so rather than test the two-year warranty on the Graphite 100, it would be best to start out with something less expensive," says Brumfield.

Weaver of Leach adds, "The technology that the imports have is incredible. They can build the same quality racquet for a lot less money. A lot of our graphite is made in Taiwan, so I wouldn't say that just because a racquet is imported the quality is necessarily lower. You do have to be careful, though, because there are a lot of bad racquets coming out of the Orient."

"Some of the medium-priced ones are just as good as the expensive ones."

"China has a labor rate of 25 cents an hour. Obviously, even our minimum wage is much higher than that," says Brown. "The Chinese can afford to live on such low wages because everything there is so inexpensive, but they become trapped in their own country because they can't afford to leave. I anticipate that the foreign designs will become more competitive, but prices will probably not come down. The Orient has a socialistic approach to prices. By law they're not supposed to sell their products any cheaper in the U.S. than they do in Japan, but that's only in theory. Actually they sell products much cheaper here than they do in their own country. Now that they're starting to play racquetball in Japan, they're importing U.S. racquets because they think they are superior."

Most imported racquets are made of a lower quality of aluminum. According to Charlson, Prince has a tennis racquet made in Taiwan, but the aluminum is bought in the United States and shipped overseas. By then, the savings isn't that tremendous. Another thing to consider is reputation. The American company which puts its name on an imported racquet runs the risk of less quality control and consequently, a poor reputation.

One company that is importing cheap racquets and doing a thriving business of it is Pic N Save, a chain of 67 stores in the western United States. Recently Pic N Save offered racquetball racquets for the unbelievable price of \$2.98. Archie Poster, manager of a Pic N Save store in Chula Vista, Calif., says, "We buy the racquets overseas direct, by the millions. We buy stock for six months at a time. If we sell 50 racquets at each store per week, then multiply that by 70 stores and 24 weeks. That's a lot of racquets. We buy in tremendous

quantity. If another company makes an order in Taiwan and can't pay the bill, we'll pick them up at the dock, no matter what the quantity, if the price is right.

"It's a one shot deal, you'll never see them again. The racquets may have been made to sell at \$20 retail, but we bid \$2 apiece for them, sell them for \$2.98 and make a nice profit. People come here to shop every week because we don't have a regular stock and there are always new deals."

Rick Frankel, vice-president of Pic N Save, headquartered in Carson, Calif., says that most of their items are discounted 40 to 70 per cent. "We by stock lots, close outs, and discontinued merchandise and have been doing so for 26 years. We have regular buyers overseas," says Frankel.

But some players would never consider a \$2.98 special. "One question a lot of people in my clinics ask is 'Does it make a difference?' Damn right, it makes a difference," says Peck. "I see people with these cheapie racquets, even wooden racquets, who don't think there's any difference between that and a 250G. A real cheapie will be gone after one shot at the wall. If it costs you \$15 and you break it in a month, three months go by and that's \$45 down the tube. By then you realize that you should have gotten a decent racquet in the first place."

Muehleisen thinks that the "bulky, overweight, really cheap racquets with big grips are a waste of time. When a good player can't play with one of those racquets you certainly can't expect a beginner to be able to do so. It's hard enough to get started in a sport without being hindered by your equipment. A better quality racquet will feel good and may possibly turn a player on to the game more."

Pace concedes that a "K-Mart Special" may be fine for someone starting out. "But it's not a racquet you can grow with," he says. "If you buy an \$8 racquet, that's the level of competence you're going to reach, but no farther."

Whether one can or cannot raise the level of his or her game with an inexpensive racquet is debatable. But most agree that cheap racquets may give one arm trouble.

George Brown Sr., who won the Master's Doubles in the 1977 Nationals with Carl Love-day, is a practicing doctor in San Diego. Brown thinks that plastic or metal or graphite is just a matter of personal preference, "but the cheaper racquets that are not tested by the pros may not be well-balanced. This can cause problems in the wrist, elbow, and shoulder. What you want is a well-designed racquet with a large sweet spot to soften the ball's impact. The heavier the racquet is, the more strain on your arm. Of course, someone with tremendous strength in his arm could probably play with a shovel and do very well."

Finally, comes the question of cosmetics. Fancy designs may drive the price up. "I like a pretty racquet," says Peck. "There's something psychological about using an ugly racquet. It makes me feel like I swing ugly. Some of those cheapie racquets are so ugly, I wouldn't be seen with them."

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"Don't Let the Racquetball Industry Commit Suicide."

One man's opinion on how to keep the sport healthy.

By Laurence Korwin

Editor's note: The writer is director of the Sports Training Institute (Chicago, Ill.) and author of the book "You Can Be Good At Sports." Some of his ideas and comments may be controversial. Readers are invited to respond.

The best kept secret in racquetball is that it's fun.

But few potential newcomers know this if they read the ads and brochures from racquetball clubs, or the club bulletin boards and newsletters, or if they watch instructors give lessons, or if they read the articles and equipment manufacturer ads in racquetball magazines.

Potential newcomers to racquetball never even hear from industry people that giving a ball a clean effortless hit could send an exhilarating surge of delight through their bodies.

"Racquetball-Macho" turns off millions

The impression potential newcomers get is that racquetball is a very macho recreation: Unique in its emphasis on ferociousness, physical interference with the partner, winning at any cost.

Adding to this impression of machoism are the claims that racquetball is a good way to get lots of exercise fast and sweat off excess weight. These are flimsy appeals to build an industry upon considering that some medical people claim short bursts of intense effort are unhealthy and that trying to absolve the pleasure of over-eating with the pain of over-exertion is a little psychotic.

It is bad marketing strategy to try to build a following for something people do as bitter medicine. Racquetball club members who say, "I don't enjoy it, but I need the workout," are likely to find an excuse for not renewing their membership next year. That is why health clubs with torture machines try so hard to obtain lifetime memberships—before enthusiasm and commitment have cooled.

Publications add to the racquetball-macho image: They have shown women players with large swollen black-and-blue marks where balls hit them, quoting how they wear the marks as badges of "character and determination" and they tell how to do such things as legally block and hinder an opponent and how to learn to hate your opponent.

Who is hurt by racquetball-macho?

Why is all this wrong? After all, the racquetball industry is growing. Equipment and clothing sales are skyrocketing. Prime-time at most clubs is sold out months in advance. Locker rooms are packed elbow to elbow, bare buttock to bare buttock.

Racquetball-macho is wrong because it hurts two groups of people:

The first group it hurts is the people scared away from trying racquetball. Even where racquetball is firmly established, it is only played by about one-tenth of its potential market—not one-tenth of the population, but one-tenth of the eligible, likely potential number of players. If racquetball is really a source of pleasure, these nine out of ten have been deprived of tasting its delight.

The second group hurt by racquetball-macho is the equipment manufacturers, club owners and publishers who have bet high piles of money that racquetball's popularity will spread and maintain its national growth rate. Yet the industry shortsightedly focuses its campaigns and services on the advanced players. Any savvy club operator or sporting-goods-store manager knows that the real profits come from adding new beginners.

If the people in a McDonald's were asked what they liked to eat, most would vote for hamburgers. Skewed samplings induce skewed conclusions. Manufacturers and editors ask present players what they want. They ignore the vast untapped potential market. They rarely poll those not active to ask, "Why haven't you tried it?" or "Why did you quit?"

Dare anyone criticize racquetball's fantastic growth?

In 1978, Sports Training Institute prepared a report telling 1) that millions of people stopped playing tennis, 2) why they quit, 3) how to get the disenchanted players back into the game. When STI's report was picked up by the wire service, it was called the biggest tennis story since the Riggs-King match. But what was the result?

STI was denounced and vilified. Although many manufacturers, publishers and associations asked for STI's statistics, not a single one showed any interest in the part of the report that told how to win back lost players. Why the icy response from the tennis industry? Were they blind or stupid? No, they had too big a stake in the growth of tennis to dare admit—to themselves or to the public—that their worst fear had come true: The tennis boom had ended!

Scars healed, skin thickened, STI now points its finger at racquetball and says, "Hey folks, you are not only making the same mistakes as the tennis industry, you have added some new crazinesses of your own!"

Ways to encourage growth

Here are some ideas on how racquetball can grow in a healthy, solid way. They are grouped under the following suggestions:

1. Spread a wider net

2. Make it easier to start
3. Make it easier to learn
4. Make it more fun to play
5. Promote positives

1. Spread a wider net

Invite groups to visit and use the racquetball facilities:

- Local businesses (contact the director of employee recreation)
- Schools (contact the P.E. department or sports clubs)
- Housewives (conduct total programs during slow hours: Exercises, discussion groups, racquetball, low-calorie buffet)
- Local hotels (offer specials to guests during slow hours)
- Ski clubs (offer meeting place and keep-in-shape program in spring, summer and fall)
- Tennis clubs (offer weekly keep-in-shape program and social hour)

Have special days of the month set aside for family combinations: Husband & wife, father & son, father & daughter, mother & son, mother & daughter, etc.)

2. Make it easier to start

Have a supply of racquets that can be used without charge.

Don't pressure beginners to think they need the most expensive equipment in the shop.

Don't set snooty dress codes.

Aggressively try to help loners find partners.

Approach club members face to face and invite them to hit a ball. An amazingly high number of members who regularly check into some clubs have never ever held a racquetball racquet in their hand.

Stop leading people to believe that running and hitting a ball are such unnatural acts that they can not dare start without first doing warm-up exercises or obtaining the permission of their doctor. Neither are required.

3. Make it easier to learn

Encourage beginners to hear and feel the rhythm of the bounce—their heads uncluttered by concern for grip, stance or ideal stroke form.

Don't expect everyone to mimic the strokes of the current champions. Let everyone play in their own individual style.

Permit experienced players to work with newcomers as coaches. They will be glad to do it.

Select instructors on the basis of their ability to help beginners, not on their racquetball skill. Knowing how to instruct is a totally different skill than knowing how to win.

4. Make it more fun to play

In addition to tournaments, encourage non-competitive hitting practice (without score).

Help single people and loners find partners.

Let members use open courts (cancelled, paid-for court-time) for practice.

Make it easy for men and women to meet and play together without competitive pressure.

5. Promote positives

Give racquetball an image of being fun, exhilarating, joyous—an opportunity to feel control, balance, rhythm, effortless grace.

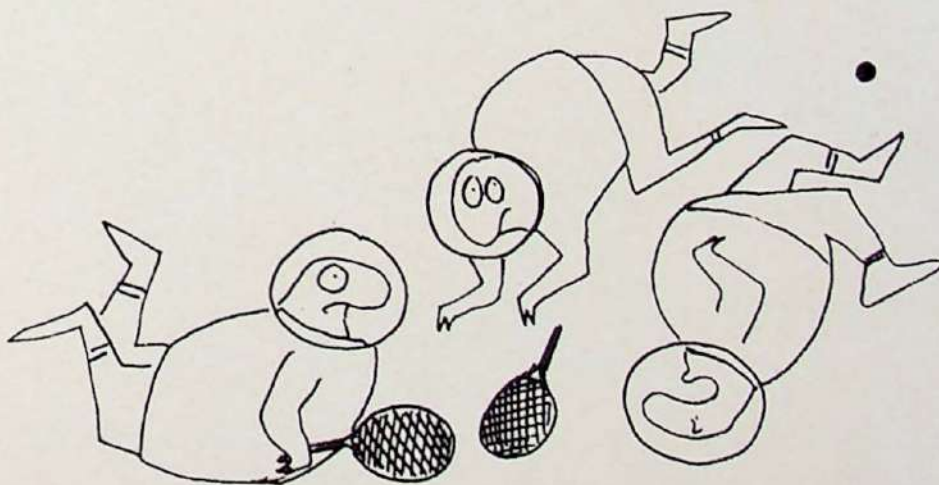
Emphasize that racquetball might well be the only popular sport that can be learned in half an hour, and can be enjoyed winter or summer, day or night, rain or shine.



Tennis-Playing Doctor Discovers New Relief For Tennis Elbow

New York, N.Y. A tennis-playing doctor has developed a device to help relieve the discomfort of tennis elbow. It acts as a "shock absorber" and is sold under the name ACE™ Brand Tennis Elbow Brace. This innovative product is so unique in design that it has been awarded a patent by the U.S. Government. The ACE Brand Tennis Elbow Brace provides comfortable protection, with firmer support than ordinary elastic braces, to enable the user to play with confidence, while it helps reduce elbow strain. Yet it is lightweight and completely adjustable—goes on and off quickly and easily. Now available to the public in the Sports Medicine Section of drug stores and other fine stores where ACE® Elastic Bandages are sold.

ACE is a trademark of Becton Dickinson and Company.



"I'm going to rule on that ceiling return. Just as soon as I rule on where the ceiling is."

Cartoon by Tony Saltzman

Three New Players with Diff'rent Strokes

Gary Coleman, Todd Bridges and Dana Plato take their first racquetball lesson from pro Davey Bledsoe.

By Carol Kaiser

Try to remember grammar school field trips your class took when you were younger. They were like rays of sunshine amidst the grind of subjects put out by the school system. A break into the real world for a while.

With the co-stars from NBC's "Diff'rent Strokes," a field trip to learn how to play racquetball, is a welcome diversion from the regular studio schedule of rehearsals.

Racquetball Illustrated invited "Diff'rent Strokes" stars Gary Coleman (12), Todd Bridges (14) and Dana Plato (15) to the Racquet Centre in Universal City, Calif. for a class field trip and flew in touring pro Davey Bledsoe from Denver to give them their first lesson.

Many people have referred to Coleman as an "adult inside a child's body," which is a fair statement when matching brains against size, yet totally off base in reference to his youthful energy and enthusiasm.

Coleman was discovered through his exposure in TV commercials and NBC was astute enough to design a show around him. Portraying the adopted child of a wealthy widower (Conrad Bain), living in New York, Gary (who plays the role of Arnold) formerly met his TV family—Todd, who plays his brother, Willis, and Dana, who plays his adopted sister, Kimberly. The three have become close friends in front of and behind the camera.

They arrive at Metromedia Studios to report for work by 8:30 a.m. each day. Private classes are held until noon. Rehearsal lasts from 1-5 p.m. with live taping in two shifts on Fridays. All the shows are taped before a live

audience, leaving not much time for play.

"They certainly seem to handle it better than a lot of adults I know," says Louis Smallwood, their tutor the past three seasons. Smallwood has taught other child stars such as Tatum O'Neal before inheriting his "Diff'rent Strokes" family.

"I've been in this business seven years and I have to admit the closeness between the kids and me is unreal," says Smallwood. "They are as close in real life as they are in the show, making my task much more enlightening."

"The field trips I prepare for them are a required part of their curriculum. We regularly visit museums, parks, exhibits . . . and Gary's favorite spot, Travel Town U.S.A., which is an antique train park."

"We bowl together once a week and occasionally hit some tennis balls or roller skate. The mixture of educational trips with physical excursions blends, keeping the kids healthy and smart at the same time and no matter what they might tackle, their commitment is always total. This ranges from their studies to their performance in acting and athletics."

Todd had played racquetball before. The others hadn't. "He (Todd) figures he's the expert of the group," says Smallwood. "I told you, confidence reigns supreme when it comes to this group."

The closeness of the trio could be easily recognized. "We're like an Oreo cookie," says Dana.

Bledsoe, the pro at the International Athletic Club in Denver and 1977 National Champion, arrived with his club T-shirts and Wilson Signature racquets for gifts.



Diff'rent Strokes



Photos by Ed Ikuta and David M. King

(Top) Dana Plato, who plays the role of Kimberly on *Diff'rent Strokes*, shows her ballet-form racquetball swing. (Bottom) Todd Bridges shows how he can "blast" the ball and Gary Coleman shows off the latest in racquetball headwear.

"Unfortunately, there are few if any racquetball facilities designed with children in mind," says Bledsoe. "I enjoy teaching kids. But you have to approach it differently."

"Obviously, small kids like Gary are going to have a hard time hitting ceiling shots, so the best start I can give them is how to hold the racquet properly. I'll teach less fundamentals than expected because I'll need to get their attention span. Proper grip and stroke are essential so they can hit the ball."

"Then, explaining the rules and regulations is important so they can at least walk through the way the game is played. However, with professionals like Gary, Todd and Dana, it could be a total turnaround. They're used to waiting, listening and then acting. They know what taking direction means more than most of us."

Still, theory plays an important part in dealing with teaching kids. "I like to separate the kids into skill levels, regardless of sex or age," says Bledsoe. "I think you have to keep kids who are learning the game within their respective skill levels, so they can see common problems within the group and identify. Identifying with another person, whether child or adult, is the easiest way anyone can relate and learn."

Fitting the three with racquetball outfits at the pro shop was no problem except for Gary, whose socks "stretched" all the way to his waist. They had to be cut in half so they would fit at normal length. Then came the lessons for Gary, Todd, Dana, Louis and Dana's mother, Kaye.

"There's too many balls flyin' around here," said Gary. "A person could get hit."

Todd, the "jock" of the group, took to the game like a duck to water, blasting the ball back to the wall. "I've played almost every sport," said Todd. "But I could really get behind this one."

Ice skater/ballerina Dana adjusted soon enough, putting her on equal ground with the others. She adds a bit of grace and poetry to her shots.

Their energy was bouncing off the walls as swift as the ball itself and they did not lose their attention span while Bledsoe taught them the fundamentals.

They each had their turns. A racquet's length from the back wall . . . Bledsoe's service . . . the return. The rally continued as long as they could keep it going. Some rallies were short. Davey had patience. Then, all of a sudden, the uniqueness wore off . . . and the hellraisin' began.

"Stay up on your toes," yelled Davey to Gary.

"Hey, coach . . . how am I supposed to take that? Standin' up I presume," countered Gary.

"Skip ball, Gary. Slow down and take your time. Watch that ball," said Davey.

"Slow down?" said Gary. "You gotta be kiddin' me . . . I might miss somethin'."

And then in a moment of discouragement, Gary says, "I think I like bowling better. At least

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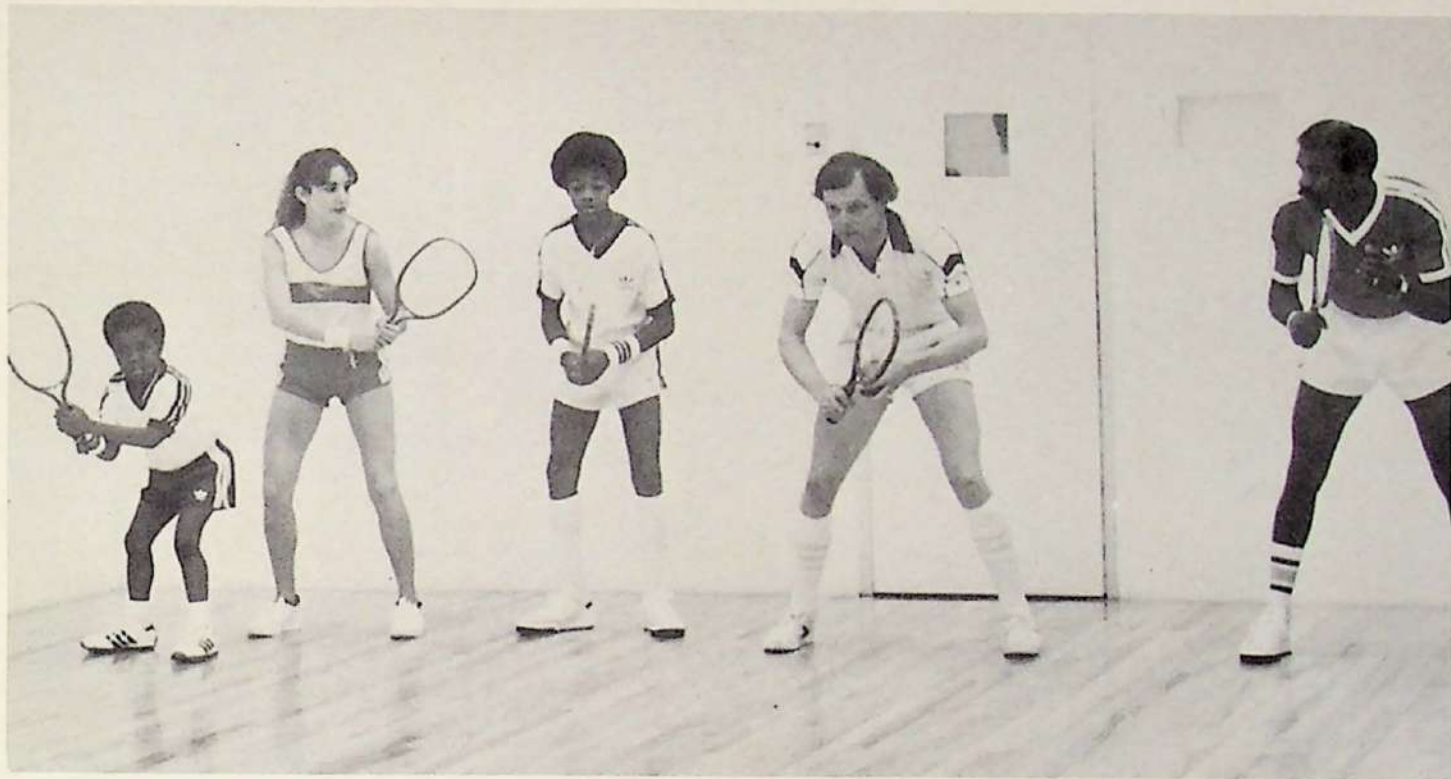
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Diff'rent Strokes



Touring pro Davey Bledsoe shows Gary, Dana, Todd and tutor Louis Smallwood the proper form for service returns.



in that game there's nothin' comin' back at ya."

At this point the bodies were flashing turns so feverishly it looked like a keystone cops review. The graceful ballerina Dana and her poetic strokes; firehouse Todd and his long rallies, and Gary, who sometimes threw out enough one liners to bring everybody to laughter.

"This is a blast," said Gary. "Watch out cause I'm mad now."

"This game sure has a lot of hustle to it," said Todd. "You mean too much, don't ya?" said Gary.

While Dana reaches for a wall shot with the grace of Linda Frattianne, Gary slides after the

ball, his knees serving as brakes. "Hey, you need knee pads for this game. No wonder you think it's like baseball," said Gary.

Then came lunch.

Roast beef sandwich in hand, Gary reflects on his first lesson. "I must admit that with all those balls flyin' around I thought we was in big trouble. Then in an hour we had it licked. It was almost as easy as learning my lines, 'cept you sure do sweat more."

Soda cans barely emptied, the kids were on the edge of their seats anxious to get back to the courts before reporting to the set by 1 p.m. They dragged Davey out for another lesson.

Dana and Todd started the procession. "C'mon, Gary . . . we've got at least 45 minutes left to play," said Dana. "Bet we can beat you, too. You can eat later," said Todd.

Eyebrows raised and his fist shaking, Gary retaliated. "It sure isn't gonna be sandwiches I'll be lookin' to swallow, cause when I get you guys on that court I'm gonna eat you alive."

"You sure I can't transport these kids to my summer camps for a while?" asked Bledsoe, obviously thinking their enthusiasm would be contagious.

"Clubs are always complaining how they're not filling their non-prime time morning/afternoon slots," said Bledsoe. "They ought to take their club pro, especially in the summer, and in a highly sophisticated form of child care, have the parent drop the child off for a one or two-hour clinic. A fee should be charged accordingly like any other lesson. It would fill the time, generate the revenue and

would finally get the kids inside the club, not to mention the sport. Most clubs are reluctant to be innovative in these areas and it baffles me. You saw it with your own eyes today. Tell me those kids didn't enjoy themselves."

It was obvious they did.

In fact, the following week they were back at the club three times for more racquetball. And after the season was over, Gary took a vacation to Hawaii, making sure he spent at least one day playing racquetball.

"I was wrong," said Gary. "This is better than bowling."



RACQUETBALL- A SPRINTER'S GAME

By Heather Kirkwood

Editor's Note: The author is a former member of the Canadian National Track and Field Team. Her collaborator on the story, Russ Kidger, is a track coach and a consultant to the Canadian Racquetball Association.

As well as skill on the court, racquetball players need speed, fast reactions, power and endurance. So do sprinters. While the two activities aren't exactly alike, similarities in the necessary physical requirements far outweigh the difference. Racquetball is a sprinter's game.

Unfortunately, most racquetball players either do no off-court conditioning or work as if they were preparing for the Boston Marathon instead of a speed sport. Very few people are born with the ability to become world-class sprinters, but every athlete can maximize his potential by proper training. In short, sprint work can dramatically improve any racquetball player's performance on the court.

Almost no North American research has been done in the area of off-court sprint training for racquetball players—with one exception. For the past year, Russ Kidger, Canadian track coach and Masters exercise physiologist, has been evolving and refining a special training program, based on sprint techniques but specifically adapted for racquet-sport competitors. His pilot group consisted of seven high-level players, including Brad Desnauviers, 1979 North American squash champion. After three months of Kidger's training, the athletes found their games had significantly improved. And there was also an important psychological benefit—conditioning gave them added confidence in the court because they knew fitness would be a factor in their favor during tournaments.

Kidger's yearly program is divided into four phases: Off-season (3 months); pre-season (3 months); in-season (5 months); and total rest (1 month).

Off-season—The tough preparation period when athletes must develop enough basic conditioning to carry them through months of depletion during competition.

Pre-season—Mostly intense preparation work, including some tournament matches.

In-season—Major tournaments; the time around which a competitor's life revolves.

Total rest—Athletes need a break, physically and mentally, after eleven months of work. Playing other recreational sports is fine,

but racquets should be tossed into a closet for two-to-four weeks.

Because of the psychological aspect, lay-off time varies with each individual. Players should rest until they regain their competitive edge. In all sports, victory goes to the 'hungriest'—the person with the strongest will to win.

Athletes will 'peak' (reach their top performance levels) the last few weeks of the in-season phase, so yearly training schedules are arranged to make sure major tournaments fall into this time slot. (You should begin off-season work about ten months before your most important tournament.)

Kidger's training program works equally well for men and women. However, it's a high-intensity, high-volume method, geared towards serious competitors. Casual recreational players or people without a running background might find it too strenuous at first. It's wisest to begin by doing only part of each workout, gradually increasing your workload, as you feel comfortable, over a period of months.

The program has four sections—skills, weights, aerobics and anaerobics.

Skills—on-court practice and matches. This differs with each person. Everyone knows which part of his game needs work.

Weights—weight-training, using either specialized equipment or barbells. Weight-training doesn't mean staggering around with 400 pounds on your back. If pure strength were that important to speed, our fastest Olympians would be shot-putters. Instead of brute force, speed-sport competitors need explosive power. This is best achieved by alternating two types of weight-training—heavy weights (at 80–85 per cent of maximum lifting capacity) and light weights (30–40 per cent effort).

Select eight–10 exercises which emphasize different parts of your body. Repeat each exercise eight to 15 times during off-season training and 15–50 times in pre-season and in-season workouts.

For athletes using specialized equipment, repetitions should be done at high speed.

Aerobics—slow continuous running for 30–60 minutes. Aerobic work builds cardiovascular endurance. The higher your aerobic capacity, the less susceptible you are to fatigue and the quicker you recover from strenuous effort. It's extremely important for racquetball players to develop this area. In a long, touch game or a tie-breaker the win will

go to the person with the best aerobic background.

Time means more than mileage in aerobic training. You can jog as slowly as you like, but your heart must exercise for a minimum of 30 minutes. If you run a great two miles in 10 minutes and then have to crawl home, you've wasted your workout (unless you're considering a track career).

For aerobics, the heart should work at a 60–85 per cent effort. To compute that, subtract your age from 220, then subtract your resting heart rate from the answer. Next take 60% of that figure and add your resting heart rate to the answer. Repeat the calculation, using 85% instead of 60%.

This math formula sounds more complicated than it is. For example, a 34-year-old athlete with a resting heart rate of 72 should be:

$$\begin{array}{r} 220 \\ -34 \\ \hline 186 \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{r} 186 \\ -72 \\ \hline 114 \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{r} 114 \\ \times .60 \\ \hline 68.40 \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{r} 68.40 \\ + 72 \\ \hline 140.40 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 114 \\ \times .85 \\ \hline 96.90 \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{r} 116.90 \\ + 72 \\ \hline 188.90 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 1112 \\ \hline 116.90 \end{array}$$

The aerobic heart rate should be between 140–189.

During a 30–60 minute run, this 34-year-old should check his heart rate every ten minutes. If it rises above 189 he should walk until it goes down. But if it falls below 140 he should increase his pace because his heart isn't working hard enough.

(To check your heart rate, take your pulse for 10 seconds and multiply the answer by 6.)

Anaerobics—sprint work.

Kidger has devised a special speed drill for racquetball players. Athletes run five yards in a straight line, then reverse direction and run back to their original starting point. Then they turn and run 10 yards out and back; 15 yards out and back; 20 yards; and finally 25 yards.

This drill is done without stopping, so it involves 150 yards of continuous sprinting and nine 180 degree turns. To develop agility, athletes should alternate turning to left and right.

Speed varies, during different training phases, between 75–100 per cent maximum effort.

This drill can be run on an artificial track (but not on cinders or grass—you'll land on your

nose when you try to turn). It can also be done on a racquetball court. Since a court, even diagonally, is only 15 yards long, you get the proper yardage by running 5-10-15-15-15 yards instead of 5-10-15-20-25 yards.

The most important part of any workout is warm-up. To skip warm-up is to ask for a serious injury. Before starting a daily training session athletes should do:

10-20 minutes slow jogging.

10 minutes easy stretching exercises.

5-8 50-yard 'build-up' runs. In build-ups, each run is slightly faster than the preceding one. The first is almost a jog, while the last is just below full speed. Walk 50 yards between runs.

Breakdown of Kidger's weekly training schedule:

Frequency per week	Skills	Weights	Aerobics	Anaerobics
Off-season	2-3 times	3 times	3 times	2-3 times
Pre-season	5-6	2-3	3	3
In-season	3-5 (not counting tournaments)	1	3	1-2

Off-season: (3 months)

Weights—Begin with medium weights—about 50 per cent effort—and gradually increase to heavy weights—80-85 per cent—by the second month. The last month should consist of two weekly sessions with heavy weights and one with light weights at 30-40 per cent.

Anaerobics—The 150-yard drill should be repeated four times, with a two-minute rest between repetitions. The speed is 75 per cent of maximum effort the first month; 80 per cent the second month; and 85 per cent the third month. Don't get discouraged if you can't handle this workload immediately. It's a tough drill.

Pre-season: (3 months)

Weights—one heavy and two light weight sessions weekly.

Anaerobics—The first month the 150-yard drill should be repeated 4-6 times at 90 per cent speed with 1-2 minutes rest between repetitions.

The second month the drill changes. The yardage drops to 5-10-15 yards (total distance 60 yards) because the athlete is probably competing in tournaments by this time (Anaerobic work shouldn't be done within three days of a tournament because it's too tiring.).

The second month the 60-yard drill is run in two sets of four repetitions (total—eight runs) at 95 per cent speed with 3-5 minutes rest between sets:

4 x 60 yards—30-60 seconds rest after each one.

3-5 minutes rest
4 x 60 yards—30-60 seconds rest.

The third month the 60-yard drill is run in two sets of two repetitions at 100 per cent speed with 3-5 minutes rest between sets:

2 x 60 10-20 seconds rest after first one.

3-5 minutes rest.

2 x 60 yds.—10-20 seconds rest.

(The third month the number of repetitions is reduced because athletes can't run full-out if they're tired.)

In-season: (5 months)

Weights—one weekly strength-maintenance session at 80 per cent effort, but not within four days of competition.

Anaerobics—The 60-yard drill is run in two sets of 2-4 repetitions at 100 per cent speed with 3-5 minutes rest between sets. (Whether you run two or four times per set should depend upon how you feel on a given day, but one should avoid a consistent two-repetition set.)

With this background and Kidger's weekly schedule, you can work out your own training

program organized around your particular time preferences.

Be sure to include at least one day of rest per week. For example, some players schedule rest for the day preceding a tournament and the day afterwards.

With the exception of skills, try not to plan the same activity on two successive days. Lifting weights Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday and running distance Thursday, Friday and Saturday is too tough physiologically.

When weights are included in your program, they should always be done after skills. In any workout, if skills are involved, they should be done first.

To minimize stiffness, particularly after sprinting and weight-training, runners finish their workouts with a "cool-down." This consists of five to 10 minutes of very slow jogging or walking and five minutes of easy stretching exercises.

As an example of program planning, I've worked out a sample weekly training schedule. Naturally, all workouts begin with a warm-up and end with a cool-down.

During pre-season and in-season phases, Thursday-Sunday workouts should be omitted if there is a tournament on the weekend.

Take 10-15 minutes rest between activities in workouts.

	OFF-SEASON	PRE-SEASON	IN-SEASON
Mon.	skills aerobics	skills weights (light) anaerobics	skills anaerobics
Tues.	anaerobics weights	skills aerobics	skills aerobics
Wed.	skills aerobics	skills weights	weights
Thurs.	rest	rest	rest
Fri.	anaerobics weights	skills aerobics	skills aerobics
Sat.	skills aerobics	skills weights (light) anaerobics	skills
Sun.	anaerobics (optional) weights	skills aerobics	aerobics
Mon.	rest	rest	rest
Tues.	Begin schedule again. Because of the two rest days this is actually an 8-day program.		



(Top) When jogging, body relaxation is important. Shoulders are carried low and hands lightly curled, but not clenched. (Bottom) In sprint training, the knees are lifted high and the arms are relaxed.

Top athletes in every area have now recognized the benefits of 'non-specific' training. Figure skaters spend 50 per cent of their time on off-ice work, soccer players go through hours of conditioning away from the field. Racquetball players must do the same.

Racquetball is a fairly new sport. Yesterday's winners could rely on skill and power to carry them successfully through matches. But each month the competition grows fiercer and tournament play more demanding. Tomorrow's winners will be those athletes who are best prepared to meet these increasing physical challenges.

INSTRUCTION

IMPROVE YOUR GAME ON A CHALLENGE COURT

By Martin Houk

Remember the old children's game of King Of The Mountain? Well, if you take that concept and put it in a 20 x 40-foot racquetball court, you have what is called a "challenge court." The challenge court is one of the best ways to improve the level of your play, not to mention a good way of meeting new partners.

There is no real way of "instructing" a player how to play on a challenge court. But the challenge court system in itself is a way of improving one's level of play.

The setup usually works like this: One game is played either to 15 or 21. The winner stays on to face the next player on the list. The loser puts his name at the bottom of the list to await his next turn. The winner of that match stays on and so on. Usually a winner can only stay on a maximum number (usually three to five) of times.

If the list is a short one, the player will be back on the court in no time. If the list is long, the player can study other players and get advice from fellow competitors.

Most clubs set aside certain hours or days for challenge courts. Some clubs, in fact, have separate men's and women's challenge courts, doubles challenge courts and challenge courts for C and novice players.

Among the busiest challenge courts in New York are those at Centre Court in Rockville Centre where, according to the director of the women's program, Ellen Schuerger, 75 to 80 regulars are drawn to the four women's courts on Monday afternoons and Wednesday mornings and the six men's and women's courts on Saturday afternoons.

"We've had a lot of people say they don't know what level they're on," Schuerger says, "so I tell them to come in and try the challenge court and find out."

"The challenge courts have been very, very

successful," says Mike Jones, teaching pro at Royal Racquetball in Coram, N.Y. "I've seen the overall play of members who participate progress just through use of the challenge courts." Royal runs four courts for men on Saturday afternoons and two courts for women on Sundays. As many as 40 to 45 men take part and 20 women.

"It's one of the best ways to improve your game by playing a lot of different opponents, a lot of different styles," says Jones. "The time between matches often is taken up with talk of racquetball. The better players offer advice to the newer ones."

Angelo Catania, a habitue of the challenge court at Unique Courts in Bethpage, N.Y., agreed on its value in improving play. "Some players I've seen have improved one hundred per cent in a couple of weeks or a month by playing on the challenge court," he says. Catania, a former paddleball player, said he has been playing racquetball less than a year. He attributes his own improvement partly to regular appearances on the challenge court.

But he denies that having to play some of the poorer players weakens his own game. "I don't feel as though it throws your game off," he said. "It bothers some of the other players, but I've seen some real turnarounds by players who weren't so good the first time. It forces you to play your best all the time. And I like that image of being on the court all the time, keeping the other players from knocking me off."

Another regular at Unique is Chris D'Antonio, who finds it helpful in preparing for tournament play. "Many times, on the challenge court, you won't know your opponent so you try to feel him out at the beginning, just like in a tournament," says D'Antonio. "You try different serves and try to find their weak spots. It can only help because you get a variety of players, instead of the same player over and over in a regular game."



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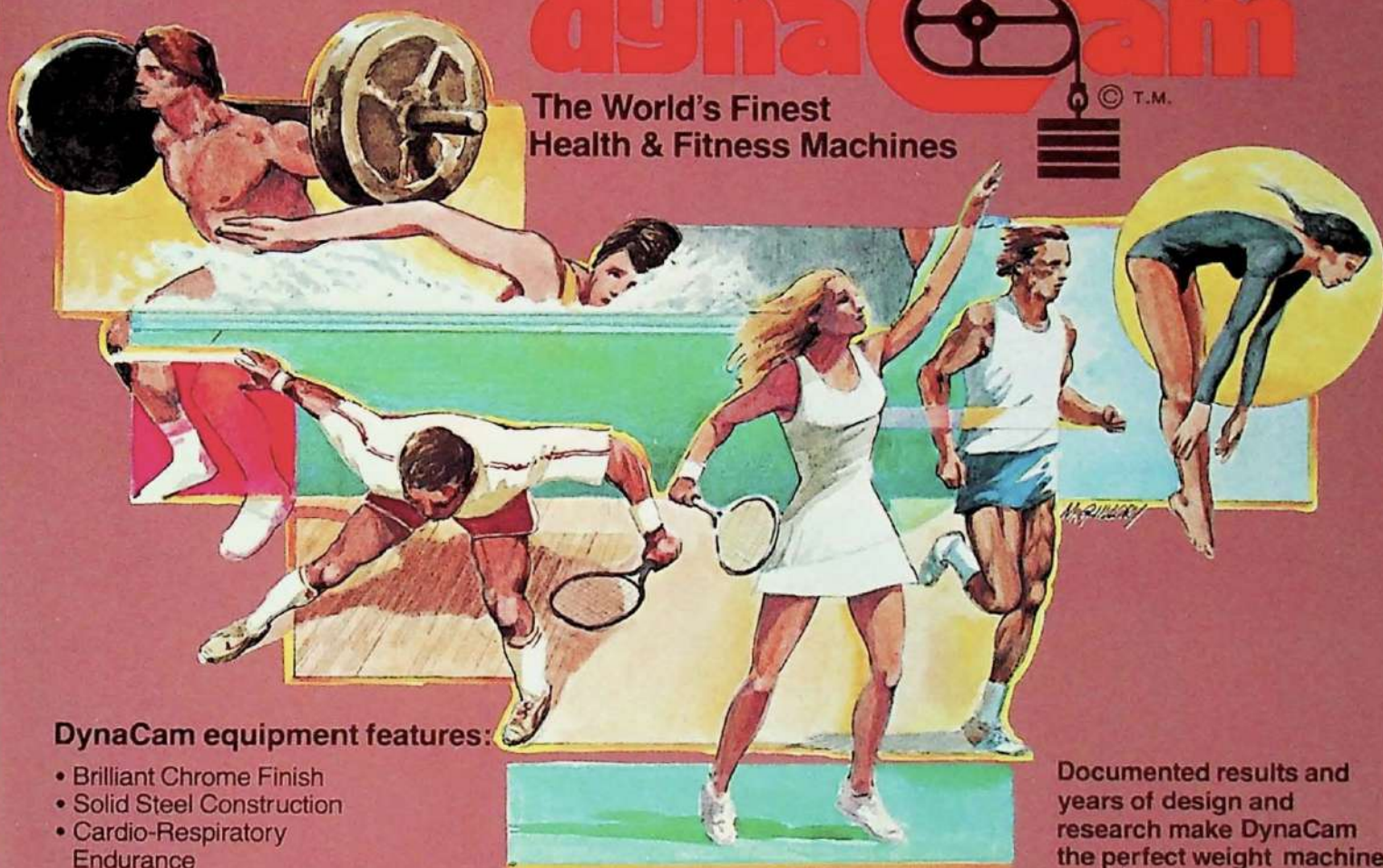
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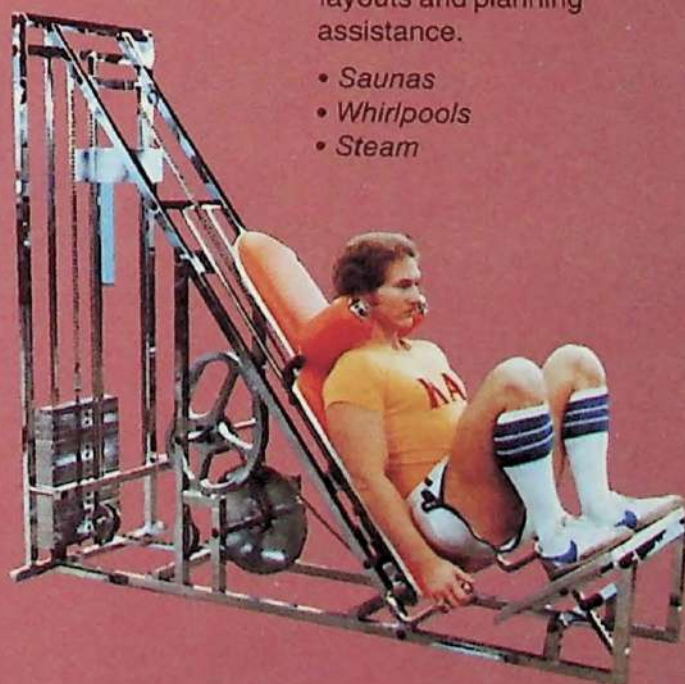
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As the ball drops, Rita Hoff steps toward the front wall and contacts the ball in the vicinity of the lead foot. The "power" comes from a combination of things — the forward momentum of the body, the forward movement of the hips and shoulders, the proper arm action (leading with the elbow) and the snapping of the wrist.

By Rita Hoff

(First of a two-part series)

There's no denying that the direction racquetball is headed today is toward power, power and more power. Veterans such as Marty Hogan and my Ektelon teammate Jerry Hilecher as well as up-and-comers such as Scott Hawkins and John Eggerman all serve hard, low drives, kill the ball every chance they get and, in general, try to blast each other out of their tennies.

Marci Greer, Shannon Wright and Lynn Adams are using the same formula in women's pro matches and it all is filtering down into amateur tournaments as well.

I've always been comfortable hitting the ball hard and that has always been an element of my game. But I know that it isn't something that comes easy for a lot of the gals. Still, there is no reason why it shouldn't.

Hitting a racquetball hard isn't simply a question of having big muscles. It's true that the guys generally have an advantage in the power department because of their greater bulk and orientation toward football, weightlifting and other muscle-building activities.

But brute strength is far less important than technique when it comes to generating power in your racquetball shots. Most of the game's powerhitters—male as well as female—are of only average size and many are truly slight of build. From the physical standpoint, there is nothing to keep anyone from learning to shoot the ball harder.

So who cares? Well, being able to rip the ball will make all of your shots more effective, assuming that you don't sacrifice accuracy in the process. It just stands to reason that any passing shot, for example, that goes by your opponent at a faster pace will be that much more difficult for her to retrieve.

Likewise, the lower you hit your kills, pinches or whatever, the more effective they will be. That requires not only racquet control, but also the ability to hit the ball straight into the front wall instead of just blooming it forward.

Putting power into your shots also has a positive impact on your game style, but we'll get into that next time.

As for the racquetball stroke itself, I find that most people are under the mistaken impression that power comes from the arm. Maybe it does in tennis or some other sport which uses a stiff arm but, in racquetball, power is a function not only of the swing of the arm, but also the forward momentum of the body and the forward "snap" of the hips, shoulders and—most important of all—the wrist.

It's obvious that the power developed by your racquet arm—regardless of how muscular it is—is relatively small in comparison to that which can be generated by using the mass of your whole body.

To take advantage of all these power sources, however, requires the synchroniza-

tion of their movements; that is, timing. The wrist is so singularly important because it is the focal point for all this power.

Your body's forward momentum, the snap of the hips and shoulders and the swing of the arm are all translated through the wrist and accentuate the snap of the wrist itself at that instant when your racquet contacts the ball.

Now, because power to the ball is a function of the weight of the object which strikes it and the speed of that object, you can increase your power with a heavier racquet which is what a lot of the guys do. There are other racquet factors involved too (e.g. stiffness).

Unfortunately, the weight of your racquet also tends to decrease the speed with which you can get it around and speed is a far more important component of power than mass. That's why the new graphite racquets have become so popular.

Maximizing your racquet's head speed, then, is your principal goal. I'm sorry to say, though, that simply buying a new racquet isn't the way to attain it. Neither are there any magic tricks or shortcuts to becoming a power player.

The sad truth is that it takes practice, so let's take a look at what we should be practicing. I think that, for the sake of simplicity, we can just concentrate on the typical forehand stroke. The mechanics of the backhand stroke are basically the same after adjustments have been made for the different angle of the racquet face on that side.

Gritting your teeth and swinging as hard as you can will not, in itself, put more power into your stroke. You need that coordination I mentioned earlier and, for that, it is better to be relaxed but efficient rather than putting forth a giant effort. Technique is the key.

For optimum power, you always want to be stepping forward toward the ball and the direction you want it to go—the front wall. This is the first movement in your stroke and it flows naturally out of good positioning.

As you are stepping in, your shoulders and hips snap forward as your arm swings down. Since your arm is of considerably less mass than your hips and shoulders and can move much faster, it follows them.

Your body's rotation actually helps pull your arm down like a whip and all of these movements must, of course, be done in a coordinated, well-timed fashion so that they contribute to rather than take away from the effectiveness of each other.

Imagine, for example, your arm first swinging down followed by the snap of your hips and shoulders. Neither does anything for the other.

During this time, your wrist has been cocked back but, as the racquet face comes into contact with the ball, it too snaps further, accelerating the head of the racquet and translating all of the power of your other movements into the

ball. Remember to keep a good grip on your racquet.

Just where you should contact the ball depends on the shot, but it is always in the vicinity of the front foot. If you are shooting straight ahead, contact is made a fraction of an inch behind the foot so that the ball can be caught and whipped.

For a side-wall-front-wall roll shot, the point of contact is a little farther back, while, for a crosscourt shot, it is a little farther forward. You have to adjust to your individual body style, but you can feel when you have good solid contact.

In all cases, though, a racquetball shot is a whipping action of the racquet head so that it snaps like the end of a whip at the point of contact. It is not an even-paced push. In other words, the arm accelerates up to the point of contact when it begins to decelerate, transferring all of its momentum to the racquet head which continues to accelerate right through the ball.

Clear as mud, right? It's difficult to put into words but easier to feel once you get on the court with a racquet in your hand. Too often, though, we forget to pay attention to what is happening once we get out there.

That's the reason for all this elaboration: To make you be aware of what is going on during your stroke as well as prove the point that brawn isn't the only factor involved in generating power.

A good exercise which will help drive this home is to stand in the service zone with your shoulders squared off on the front wall and practice hitting forehands using only a minimal swing of your arm but an exaggerated snap in your wrist. No control but you see the value of the wrist snap.

Then add arm swing for a few shots followed by shots with body rotation from the normal stance facing the side wall. Next, try the stroke with its usual step in. Notice that body rotation is facilitated by the step and that, in fact, all of the movements work best when they are done together.

Now, so far we have been talking about a racquetball stroke in a test tube. During a game, you don't always have the luxury of setting up properly, heading forward or, in some situations, even taking a full arm swing.

That's okay. Just being able to hit a good forehand when you are able to set up properly will pick up a few points for you and correct body mechanics still provide a good foundation for your shots in less than ideal circumstances.

The degree to which you are able to incorporate the elements we have been talking about into your stroke will determine its success in good times or bad. Execution of those hard shots is, after all, what separates the good players from the mediocre.

Next month: Power-game Strategy.

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HOW TO PICK YOUR OWN PERSONAL COACH

By Sheryl Ambler

One of life's greatest dividing lines is the slim margin that separates winning and losing—success and failure—being the *best* or just being another player who never quite lived up to potential.

The saddest scene in sports—or in life—is seeing someone with outstanding natural gifts fail to maximize those talents and fall short of expectations. Conversely, there's no more thrilling or rewarding moment than when an "underdog" plays beyond pure physical skills and realizes more than what was anticipated "on paper"—the "upset" that destroys form. Anyone who watched our hockey team beat the Russians at Lake Placid in the Winter Olympics can visualize that all too rare moment in sports.

Recognizing those "edges" and exploiting them fully to advantage, then, is the challenge we all face in playing better racquetball or being more successful in whatever our chosen fields may be. That is why it's important to consider working with someone else on the finer aspects of your game—a coach who can help identify strengths and weaknesses in your game and those of your opponents; someone who sees particular opportunities or problems you may not have been able to ascertain alone. Put simply, two heads are better than one. And two sets of eyes will see things in the course of practice or game conditions that one set couldn't grasp completely.

Finding just the right person to help you improve your game may not be an easy proposition. There are numerous factors you'll want to evaluate in deciding on someone who can complement your progress.

1. It's absolutely imperative that *you believe* in your coach. Select a person whose knowledge you respect. That doesn't necessarily mean they must be an outstanding player themselves. Matter of fact, in some instances the truly gifted player executes so naturally that he may not be as conscious of *why* something works or doesn't work as someone who's met the frustrations of failure and discovered ways to compensate. It's analogous to the circumstance in major league sports. The superstar player very rarely makes the effective transition to managing or coaching.

2. Make certain the person you're working with *believes in you*. Are they committed to helping you improve? Do they have the time it will require to work with you on a regular



basis? Can they accompany you to tournament stops? Will their attention to your game's development be diverted because they're working with someone else, too?

3. Understand the commitment you must make to your coach in return. Respect their input and put it into practice. Listen. Give new ideas and strategy maximum effort. Ask questions. Analyze what works best for you and then implement a plan of action.

4. Divide relative responsibilities. Your coach can aid greatly your overall development as a player in game situations by observing positions and responses you can't normally see in the course of play. He can spot technical aspects that need extra attention and insist on the discipline necessary to work on them. An effective coach is your *partner* off the court. He should be able to mentally chart your progress—in practice and during a match—and spot potential openings in your opponent's play you can capitalize on.

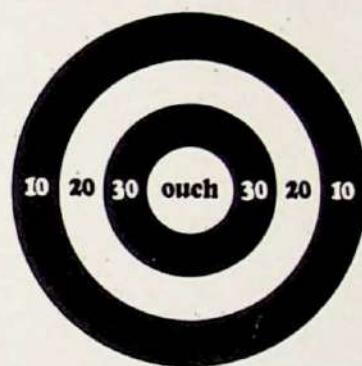
5. Set goals together and agree on a timetable for achieving them. Whether your aim is the National Championship or being tops on

the C ladder at your club, you will need a road-map for success. Write your goals down. Visualize yourself reaching each plateau in your overall game plan. Always have a greater goal laid out as you overcome each step in your growth as a player.

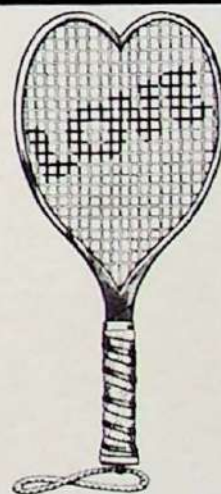
6. Most importantly, your coach should be someone who's interested in your personal development as much as he or she wants you to succeed as a player. He or she should supplement you attitudinally as well as assist with the technical aspects of your game. Knowing when to cajole, when to reason, when to reinforce any action or mental response, and when to criticize constructively are all intangible qualities that are instrumental to a solid player-coach relationship.

All other things being equal, two minds working together will beat one brain ten out of ten. The rewards are commensurate with the commitment you make to being the best you can possibly be. Sharing the accomplishments that result from the mutual efforts of you and your coach will be one of the most satisfying experiences either of you will know.

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By David Fleetwood

Racquetball is not any different than other sports in one respect: To be successful, you have to learn to adapt. There is no pie-in-the-sky racquetball shot that is going to see you through every situation, not even my old favorite, the passing shot.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to pass some players, either because of their great anticipation, exceptional quickness or longer reach. For whatever reason, there are just some players who are able to move over and cut off the normal passing shot. Since they will usually be in front of you when you hit it, that can be a disaster.

The answer? Adapt. Widen the angle on your passes. Those extra couple of inches can be all you need to get the ball around and past your opponent. We are speaking, of course, about crosscourt wide-angle passes, not down-the-line passes.

The wide-angle pass, like a good kill shot or pinch, can be a rally ender. In fact, it generally has a higher chance of success than those shots.

When properly executed, the pass—forehand or backhand—sinks like a stone into one of the rear corners as close to the juncture of walls and floor as possible.

A potential point winner, the pass drives for the corner fast and low, straight from the front wall. At the very least, it should take your opponent scurrying into the backcourt, off balance.

The circumstances under which you should hit a wide-angle pass are identical to those for the normal pass. For example, never hit a pass when your opponent is in backcourt because that is where the ball will land. It is not even a good idea to hit a pass any time your opponent is behind you. Pinch it into a front corner instead.

However, if both you and your opponent are together in midcourt or forecourt, pass the ball by him. Anytime your opponent is in front of you, you are in a particularly good position to pass the ball because you have a better view of him.

Unfortunately, that is no guarantee he won't dig it out. That's where the couple of extra inches a wide-angle pass gives you can make a big difference.

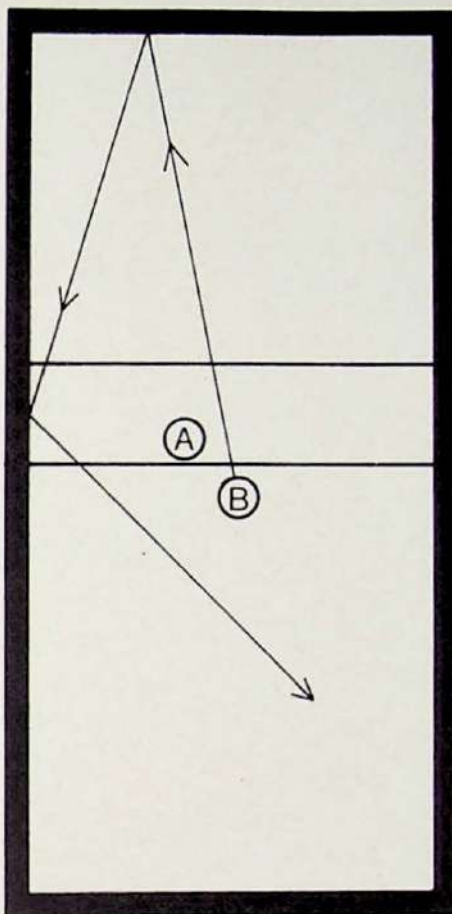
If the normal pass is a straight fast ball from front wall to rear corner, the wide-angle pass is a curve ball and, like baseball's curve pitch, the wide-angle pass is just a little harder to execute.

Instead of aiming the shot straight for one of the rear corners, angle it so that the ball comes off the front wall and strikes the side wall parallel to your opponent. Keep it low on the front wall and the ball may even crack out on the side wall. Otherwise, it will still rebound behind your opponent and into the backcourt.

As in the case of the normal pass, your opponent will be chasing the wide-angle into the backcourt while trying to get a shot off to the front wall.

To be sure, you will find it difficult to put the ball at the correct point on the side wall. The angle of contact with the front wall will always be changing as you move around the court. You can expect a certain degree of error with the ball landing too far forward or too far behind your opponent.

If you are going to make a mistake in your shot placement, though, it is better to choose the second alternative. If the ball strikes the side wall too far forward, it will angle toward the middle of the court, giving your opponent a good chance to cut it off.



A proper wide-angle passing shot should come off the front wall and strike the side wall at a point equal with your opponent.

If hit farther back on the side wall, there won't be that much harm done as long as the ball isn't also left up so that it comes off the back wall too. That would give him time to run it down.

Unquestionably, this shot will take some practice. Get on the court alone and just hit the shot from a variety of spots to a pre-selected point near the side wall. Don't expect to pick it up right away.

From the standpoint of game strategy, begin with your normal passing shots since those are easier to master. If you find, though, that your opponent is able to move over and cut them off, widen the angle.

Don't forget to mix your shots to balance your attack. Don't go to a pass or a wide-angle pass every time a passing situation presents itself or your opponent will begin to anticipate your shots. Throw in a down-the-line, a ceiling ball or whatever other shot is appropriate. If your opponent is falling back to cover the pass, a pinch or kill will keep him honest.

Learn to adapt. Remember, your brain is the most effective weapon you have on the court.

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Hogan Works for this Win

By Ben Kalb

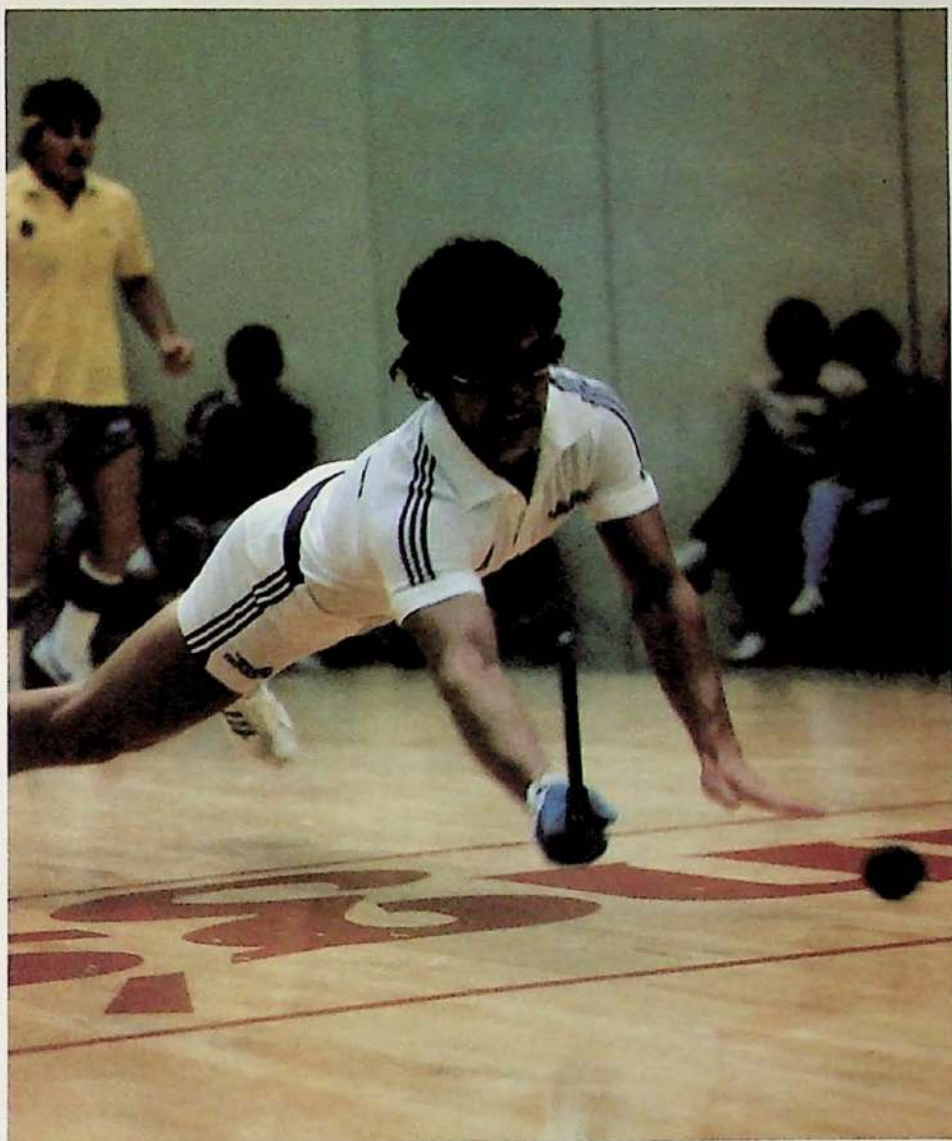
Marty Hogan lost a game in the first round to a relative unknown, was down match point in the semifinals and had to make a comeback in the finals befitting of a national champion. Tournaments usually don't come this hard for him. "I like these tournaments handed to me," said Hogan. "But this one I definitely earned my money."

The \$4,500 Hogan had to "earn" came in the King's/Bank of Newport Classic at King's Court in Westminister, Calif., one of the regular stops on the Seamco-Leach pro tour.

Hogan is still the top player on the tour but the gap seems to be closing between him and a few of the other players. The days when he could coast through a tourney with a minimum of effort seems to be over. Dave Peck, whom Hogan beat in the King's/Bank of Newport finals, is number two on the tour and on the verge of challenging Hogan's supremacy. Mike Yellen, who came within one point of defeating Marty in the semis, is also to be reckoned with as is veteran Charlie Brumfield, who beat Hogan in another tourney this season using a slower ball.

"I can beat anybody anytime I want as long as I maintain good intensity," says Hogan. "But that has been my problem. My intensity and my concentration are not as good as last year or the year before. My mind has been on other things. That's why this tourney was good for me. The tough matches woke me up."

Hogan's first-round match was against qualifier Dan Factor, who drew the crowd response of "Who?" Hogan easily won the first game but semi-clowned around in the second game and was down 20-14 before eventually losing 21-20. The two were knotted 3-3 in the tiebreaker before Hogan won 11-4.



Photos by David M. King

Marty Hogan (top) did a lot of diving and sweating on the way to a \$4,500 payday in the King's/Bank of Newport Classic. (Left) Things get crowded in center court in semifinal match between Charlie Brumfield and Dave Peck. (Above) Peck's backhand hits a leaping Brumfield in their match won by Peck in a tiebreaker.

Hogan



Photos by David M. King



Things didn't always go so easy for Hogan. There were times he had to psych himself up (top), times when he almost ran into defeat against Mike Yellen in the semis (middle) and times when shots missed badly (bottom).

Marty Hogan has Dave Peck out of position for a pinch shot and then a passing shot in finals of King's/Bank of Newport Classic in Westminster, California.



Hogan defeated Steve Serot, 21-19, 21-17, in the second round and then defeated Ben Koltun, 21-13, 21-8, in the quarters.

His semifinal match was against Yellen, who had given Marty his toughest match of last season on the same court. In their match last year, Yellen defeated Hogan 21-6 in the second game and had an 8-0 lead in the tiebreaker before losing 11-9. This year it was almost an instant replay.

Hogan led 5-0 in the first game before things were knotted 8-8. The two were also tied at 10, 12 and 13 before Hogan took a 17-13 advantage. Yellen caught him at 19 and won the last two points on a backhand pinch and a passing shot.

The second game was no contest. Hogan drove out to a 15-6 lead and won 21-10, setting the stage for the tiebreaker.

Yellen led 8-2, before Hogan began chipping away. To dismiss it in one single sentence by saying that Hogan eventually tied it at 8-8 is to do it injustice. Hogan sweated, cursed, and in general had to work hard for those six points. But for all the effort he made in those six points, there was very little effort on the ensuing two skips and Yellen took a 10-8 advantage, setting up match point.

On the next serve, Hogan hit a passing shot that Yellen couldn't reach, possibly because Hogan was in his way. It could or could not have been called a hinder but referee Dan Bertolucci decided against Yellen's plea on this one, giving Hogan the serve. Hogan scored the next two points, the last on a passing shot down the forehand wall which Yellen couldn't quite get to, and earned his spot in the finals.

Peck's road to the showdown with Hogan was not as rough going until he reached the semis against Brumfield. Peck defeated Steve Chase, 21-7, 21-10, in the first round, Jerry Zuckerman, 21-7, 21-10, in the second round and Craig McCoy, 21-7, 17-21, 11-1, in the quarters, setting up his first-ever match with Brumfield.

Brumfield broke a 14-14 tie in the first game and won 21-15. Peck broke a 10-10 tie in the second game, made it 16-10 and 18-13 before holding on 21-17.

Brumfield led 4-0 in the tiebreaker but Peck took over and led 5-4 before winning 11-5.

"I was in low gear in the first game and then I decided to play my own game," said Peck. "Guys like Brumfield try and twist your mind. It takes you time to get to them."

Although the Peck-Hogan final was not as exciting as the two semifinal matches, the crowd of 500 still saw some top-flight racquetball... when things finally got underway.

The match started about 75 minutes late. Hogan thought it had a 2 p.m. scheduling time as with most of the other finals but due to tight plane schedules, it was moved up to noon. Hogan had to be found at his hotel and rushed over to the club.

Fans were looking forward to the confrontation. Peck had won the previous week's tournament in San Francisco and had the momentum. Hogan did not play in San Francisco due to his participation in World Superstars in The Bahamas. "This may be the equalizer for Peck," said one player.

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A lack of mental preparation may have been the reason Hogan started out so poorly. "I never played so bad," said Hogan. "My mind has been on other things."

Peck led 7-0, 12-1 and 18-6 before Hogan put on a charge. Silky Sullivan would have been proud of. "I'll win this, no sweat," said Hogan to the crowd at 18-6. Hogan pulled even at 18 and went ahead 20-18. Peck tied it at 20-20 on a passing shot and a skip off a lob serve. Hogan then scored the decider on an ace.

"Anytime a player is down 18-6 and loses he has to say a few things to himself," said Hogan.

Results

FIRST ROUND: Hogan d. Factor 21-18, 20-21, 11-4; Serot d. Morrow 21-19, 16-21, 11-1; Hawkins d. Wagner 20-21, 21-11, 11-8; Koltun d. Williams 21-16, 21-16; Yellen d. Bolan 21-13, 21-13; Bowman d. Myers 21-18, 21-13; Levine d. Meyers 21-10, 21-6; Cohen d. Bledsoe 21-13, 21-17; Hilecher d. Harper 21-13, 21-19; Fleetwood d. Egerman 21-12, 21-16; Brumfield d. Mondry 21-4, 21-4; Thomas d. Christensen 21-9, 12-21, 11-10; Strandemo d. Harnett 21-14, 21-10; McCoy d. Berbarett 21-17, 21-10; Zuckerman d. Keeley 21-8, 21-4; Peck d. Chase 21-7, 21-10.

SECOND ROUND: Hogan d. Serot 21-19, 21-17; Koltun d. Hawkins 14-21, 21-7, 11-1; Yellen d. Bowman 21-14, 21-17; Fleetwood d. Hilecher 21-10, 21-20; Brumfield d. Thomas 21-9, 9-21, 11-5; McCoy d. Stran-

Peck controlled the second game, driving out to a 17-4 lead and winning 21-8. "I must have been thinking about the weather in El Paso or something in that first game," said Peck. "I played too cautious and you don't win playing cautious. But I didn't let it get to me in the second game."

The tiebreaker, however, was another matter. Hogan came out smoking and won 11-0. "I'm one step closer," said Peck, who took home \$2,500 for his second-place finish. "This time I got to a tiebreaker with him."

"I'm learning from experience. You take these things one step at a time. He's tough, but not invincible. Next time I have to be tougher."

demo 21-14, 21-12; Peck d. Zuckerman 21-7, 21-10 (losers get \$300).

QUARTER-FINALS: Hogan d. Koltun 21-13, 21-8; Yellen d. Cohen 21-8, 21-18; Brumfield d. Fleetwood 21-19, 21-2; Peck d. McCoy 21-7, 17-21, 11-1 (losers get \$750).

SEMI-FINALS: Hogan d. Yellen 19-21, 21-10, 11-10; Peck d. Brumfield 15-21, 21-17, 11-5 (losers get \$1,400).

FINALS: Hogan (\$4,500) d. Peck (\$2,500) 21-20, 8-21, 11-0.

Other Results

Men's Open—Mike Levine def. Greg Peck, 21-11, 20-21, 11-3.

Men's Seniors—Dr. Bud Muehleisen def. Bill Schmidtke, 21-7, 21-15.

Women's Open—Kippi Bishop def. Laura Martino, 21-19, 21-19.

TOURNAMENTS



Seamco Classic

Fourth-seeded Mike Yellen of Southfield, Mich., upset top-seeded Marty Hogan of San Diego, 21-16, 21-11 to win the \$15,000 Seamco Classic at the Playoff Racquetball Club and Handball Club in Beverly, Mass.

Yellen, who had never previously beaten Hogan, registered his first—ever tournament win on the National Racquetball Club Pro-Am Tour, which is co-sponsored by Leach Industries and Seamco Sporting Goods.

"I've been saying all year I've felt as if I've been playing better and better," said Yellen after collecting his first place check for \$4,500. "I'm glad I finally made this step. Now maybe I've made some believers out there."

Yellen beat Beaver Wickham, Lindsay Myers, Don Thomas and Dave Peck before Hogan.

Yellen led 8-2 in the first game before

Hogan cut it to 8-6. The two kept it close until Hogan took a 15-13 lead. At that point Yellen assumed control, scoring streaks of five and three points against just one service break.

In that first game, Yellen scored two aces and Hogan failed to return five other serves.

The second game was close until about the midway point. Hogan led 10-9 before Yellen tied it. The service was traded twice at that point. At 11-10, Yellen ran off 10 points, interrupted only by three service breaks and one point.

In that streak, Yellen scored on three kill shots, a pinch right, a pass right, an ace, an unreturned serve and three other Hogan errors, including a match-ending forehand.

"It wasn't his serve," maintained Hogan, who gave up a total of 14 points on the serve. "My whole problem was a serious lack of intensity. I've never lost to Mike, but I've got to remember to take each match by itself, not by what's gone on before."

In the semifinals, played on a right-wall glass court before a picked gallery, Hogan crushed Davey Bledsoe 21-9, 20-21, 11-1. Yellen and Peck hooked up in another grueling match with Yellen winning 21-19, 10-21, 11-8.

Results:

Second Round: Hogan d. Zuckerman 21-20, 21-18; Brumfield d. Levine 21-10, 21-10; Bledsoe d. Koltun 21-9, 16-21, 11-7; Cohen d. Hilecher 21-17, 21-15; Yellen d. Myers 21-20, 21-11; Thomas d. McCoy 21-10, 21-5; Strandemo d. Morrow 21-9, 21-10; Peck d. Christensen 21-16, 16-21, 11-5

Quarter-finals: Hogan d. Brumfield 21-17, 18-21, 11-0; Bledsoe d. Cohen 21-17, 21-3; Yellen d. Thomas 21-12, 21-13; Peck d. Strandemo 21-11, 21-8

Semi-finals: Hogan d. Bledsoe 21-9, 20-21, 11-1; Yellen d. Peck 21-19, 10-21, 11-8.

Finals: Yellen d. Hogan 21-16, 21-11



(Opposite page) Marty Hogan flails at a backhand in Seamco Classic finals against Mike Yellen in Boston won by Yellen. (Above) Yellen shoots one past a jumping Dave Peck in semifinals; Hogan and Yellen get close in center court during finals.

Ektelon/Perrier

Monte Huber, Victor Neiderhoffer and Tim McAuliffe were among the regional winners who advanced into the National open finals of

the Ektelon/Perrier Championships in Los Angeles.

Huber won the Denver regional, Neiderhoffer defeated Ruben Gonzalez in the New



Victor Neiderhoffer hits an overhead against Ruben Gonzalez in New York regional finals of Ektelon-Perrier Championships. Neiderhoffer won.

Photo by Paul Spinelli

TOURNAMENTS

York regional and McAuliffe took top honors Miami.

Other open winners included Bob Deuster (Chicago), John Amatulli (Cleveland), Paul Bakken (Minneapolis) and Larry Fox (Detroit).

Deuster beat Jack Neuman in the finals.

Women's open champions included Barb Alweiss (Chicago), teenager Stacey Fletcher (Detroit), Barb Tennessen (Minneapolis), Brenda Poe (Miami) and Cindy Baxeter (Cleveland). Alweiss defeated Caprice Behner in the finals.

Open doubles teams who qualified for the finals included Gil Schmidt-Larry Jakinovich (Detroit), Bakken-Hart Johnson (Minneapolis), Tom Travers-Jerry Davis (Cleveland), Bruce Brookens-Ed Creagh (Denver), Mike Fatolitis-Sergio Gonzales (Miami) and Glenn Gibellina-Stan Moskwa (Chicago).

Catalina West

By Tom Reinman

Dave Peck defeated third seeded Jerry Hilecher, 21-13, 11-21, 11-9 to win the \$15,000 Catalina West Racquetball Classic at the Telegraph Hill Club in San Francisco.

The \$4,500 win was Peck's second of the season on the National Racquetball Pro-Am tour which is co-sponsored by Leach Industries and Seamco Sporting Goods.

Peck, of El Paso, ranked second on the NRC computer, was the tournament's top seed since top-ranked Marty Hogan was competing in the World Superstars in the Bahamas on the same dates.

To win, Peck had to beat Bobby Bolan in the first round, qualifier Jeff Bowman in the round of 16, Mark Morrow in the quarterfinals, seventh-seeded Mike Yellen in the semifinals and Hilecher.

Meanwhile, Hilecher was busy with Steve Serot in the first round, qualifier Scott Hawkins in the 32s, eighth-seeded Charlie Brumfield in the quarters, and sixth-seeded Don Thomas in the semis, 21-17, 21-8.

The Peck-Yellen semifinal match took two hours, twenty-five minutes, 45 minutes of which were spent in the tiebreaker.

In the first game, Peck led 18-9 and 20-14. "At that point," said Peck, "I started thinking, 'This thing is wrapped up,' instead of 'Let's wrap this thing up right now.' There's a difference."

Yellen must have noticed the difference because of the next seven straight points which he scored, five came on Peck's errors.

Peck won the second game handily. After trailing 7-3, he ticked off 10 straight interrupted only by one service break. Of the 10 points, only three came on errors while the other seven came in typical Peck fashion—well placed shots, setting up passes, mixed with a few nailed rollouts and an ace.

There were seven lead changes in the

tiebreaker. Yellen scored an ace on a drive to the left to tie it at nine, but then skipped a plum in the service zone. That was about all Peck needed. Yellen skipped a sidewall-frontwall attempt from the backcourt and finally Peck nailed a setup frontwall-sidewall for the 11-9 win.

"This is just another step up," said Peck after his first win over Yellen. "This was such a big win. Beating Mike for the first time, coming back, and especially after giving up the lead in the first game."

Earlier that afternoon Hilecher had a much easier time of it with Thomas.

Thomas led 8-3, but Hilecher came back to lead 9-8 with only one break. After Thomas led 12-9, Hilecher came back to lead 14-12 with only one break. After Thomas led 17-15, Hilecher came back to win with only two breaks.

That set up Peck vs. Hilecher. The crowd, easily the most vocal and partisan the pros have played for this season, was solidly with Peck, thanks largely to his on-court light-hearted yet determined approach to the game. But Hilecher had a small but fiercely loyal following of family and friends.

Peck opened the championship match by giving a clinic to the packed house and Jerry Hilecher. He led 11-1 on: A backhand from 39 feet, a pass down the right line, another deep backhand, another pass right, a skipped return of a drive serve to the forehand, an ace

driven right, another pass right, an unforced error, a sidewall-frontwall in the left corner, a backhand rollout and a backhand into the left corner.

Hilecher came back from 13-6 to 13-12 on a couple of aces and good gets as his father bellowed "Yes, Sir! Keep that pressure on him, baby." But Peck regained the serve on a passing shot and went to 18-12 with only one break. The wind came shortly thereafter.

In the second game, Peck led 9-5 but Hilecher got hot and after trading serves at that point, Hilecher's famed forehand gave him a 12-9 lead. Then, at 12-10, things got serious.

Hilecher charged a forehand setup in the zone and accidentally nailed Peck in the head with his racquet. Peck was assessed an avoidable hinder. That set off the normally affable Texan, and that earned him a technical.

That again set off Peck and he and Hilecher rapped the ball at each other with their racquets. That earned them both technicals.

But while Hilecher continued to score points in bunches, Peck's concentration diminished, and he managed only four more while Hilecher evened the match.

By the time the tiebreaker got under way, Peck was wearing his third shirt and the crowd was almost as hot. Hilecher led 4-1, then Peck led 6-4. More crowd hysterics. Serves were traded, more pulses pounding. And then the offense in Hilecher died.

It took almost another 20 minutes from that

Challenge Match

John Egerman gets ready with a backhand shot against a high-jumping Dave Peck in special challenge match at The Courthouse in Boise, Ida. Peck won before an overflow crowd, 21-17, 21-20.



Photo by Drew Stoddard

point on. Hilecher earned the serve seven more times, but could score only one point. Peck, not exactly on fire, eventually scored the final four points on offensive shots to win 21-13, 11-21, 11-9.

"The win over Yellen was a biggie and so was this," said a relieved Peck. "Hilecher's so tough. He's quick, and everybody knows about his serve and his forehand. I'm glad that one's over, believe me."

Results

QUARTER-FINALS: Peck d. Morrow 21-13, 21-8; Yellen d. Strandemo 8-21, 21-12, 11-9; Hilecher d. Brumfield 21-11, 21-9; Thomas d. Meyers 21-11, 21-16

SEMI-FINALS: Peck d. Yellen 20-21, 21-13, 11-9; Hilecher d. Thomas 21-17, 21-8.

FINALS: Peck d. Hilecher 21-13, 11-21, 11-9.

Groundhog Classic

Top-seeded Sarah Green of Memphis won the \$300 first prize by easily defeating Sharon Fanning of Memphis, 21-2, 21-12, in the women's open of the 1980 Okolona Groundhog Classic at Okolona Racquetball Club in Louisville, KY.

To reach the finals Green defeated Lu Ann Gifford, 21-14, 21-1 and Fanning upset second-seeded Barbara Larrain, 21-9, 21-7. Larrain defeated Gifford for third place.

In the men's open, Bob Dabney of Louisville defeated Mike Sipes of Cincinnati for the \$300 first prize.

Top seeded Mike Zeitman fell to Sipes, 19-21, 21-16, 11-9, in the semis and Dabney defeated Bill Bauer, 21-13, 21-11. Zeitman won the third place playoff.

Steve Miller and Mary Pidgeon were B winners, Ken Adams and Laurel Hecht won the C divisions, Wally Oyler and Becky Durrett took top novice honors, Jon Fleischaker won the seniors, Leigh Jones took the masters and Steve Bednar was juniors champ.

Etc.

- Randy Lau defeated Woody Cox and Dancetta Feary defeated Lorna Nalvai in the men's and women's finals of the AARA Hawaii State Open Championships at the Oahu Athletic Club. Owen Lovell and Norman Akau took third in the men's competition and Barbara Seff placed third in the women's division.

- Tom Rall defeated John Kydd, 17-21, 21-19, 11-5, to win the men's singles division of the second annual Grand Prix Championships at the Family Fitness Center in Tacoma, Wash. Sid Williams and Dale Reese won the doubles over Kirk and Javier Figueroa, 21-13, 21-2. Williams then teamed with Sandy Hawkins to win the mixed doubles title over Rall and Lee Jew, 21-18, 18-21, 11-9.

- Glenn Allen defeated Kent Allison by injury default and Geneva Allen defeated Taki Taffany, 21-16, 21-6, to win the open divisions of the George Washington Championships at Makimano Gym on Okinawa. Allison defeated George Heagerty, 21-9, 21-14, and Glenn Allen defeated Rick Rangel, 21-12, 21-7, in the men's semis. Taffany defeated Shari Hodson, 15-3, 15-9 and Allen defeated Val Maita, 9-21, 21-17, 11-3, in the women's semifinals. Over 100 players entered the tourney.

- Jack Roudebush defeated Kim Drake, 21-11, 20-21, 11-3 in the men's open of the AARA Indiana State Championships at Racquetball of Greenbriar in Indianapolis. Dana Cornblath won the women's A round robin with Kay Kuhfeld second.

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Most people think heart disease happens only in the elderly.



It happens in children as well. Things like rheumatic heart disease and congenital heart defects. Each year, nearly one million Americans of all ages die of heart disease and stroke. And 20,000 of them die from childhood heart diseases.

The American Heart Association is fighting to reduce early death and disability from heart disease and stroke with research, professional and public education, and community service programs.

But more needs to be done.

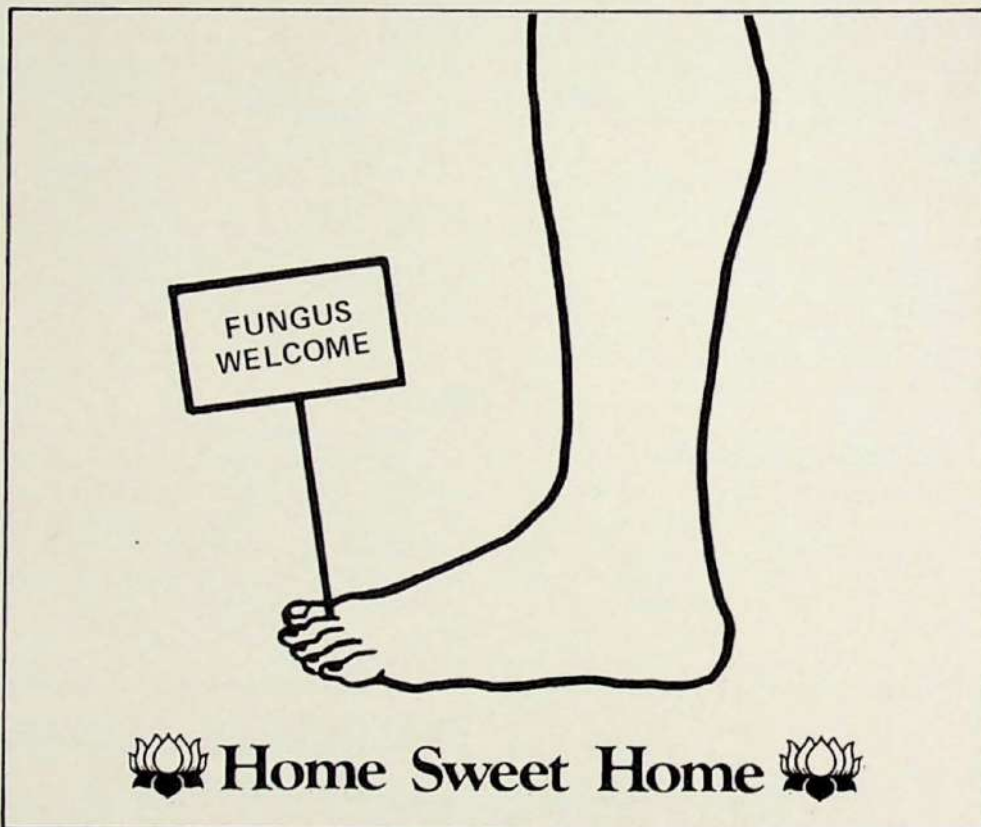
You can help us save young lives by sending your dollars today to your local Heart Association, listed in your telephone directory.

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R_x FOR WINNING

SKIN SENSE



By Garry Bruce Gewirtzman, M.D.

Editor's Note: The author is a board certified dermatologist in private practice in Plantation, Fla.

One can easily understand the increasing popularity of racquetball. It provides exercise and relaxation, two necessary ingredients for physical and mental well-being. Unfortunately, the incidence of skin problems related to racquetball has grown with the sport's popularity. Almost all these problems, whether major or minor, can be avoided without decreasing the enjoyment of the game. A few simple precautions will assure comfortable play.

Almost nothing will slow down a player's game as much as painful feet. Abused feet will rebel and fail to propel you as desired. The most frequent complaints regarding feet are blisters and fungal infections and simple precautions will reduce the likelihood of their occurrence.

Wearing two pairs of clean socks reduces the frictional forces responsible for many blisters. For players who are especially prone to

blisters, many topical "skin tougheners" are available over-the-counter.

Common shower facilities increase the risk of contact with fungal spores, the source of athlete's foot. Other factors which favor fungal growth are dampness and warmth. Once a fungus makes contact with your feet, it feels right at home. It has all the creature comforts any fungus seeks—warmth and dampness.

Several preventive measures may save severe discomfort. Wearing foot thongs or clogs while showering may reduce the likelihood of coming in contact with fungal spores left by a previous player. Even if a fungus finds your foot, it may not lead to infection if you make the environment inhospitable. Powder and dry your feet. Put on a fresh pair of socks, not the ones which you wore to the club. These efforts should be rewarded by healthier, more comfortable feet.

Volumes have been written about common acne, also known as acne vulgaris. It is beyond the scope of this article to discuss the many theories of causation. However, one aggravating factor, the wearing of a sweatband on the forehead should be discussed. Retention of sweat can be a source of skin irritation. People already with complexion problems

may find acne flaring in the area of the band. A parallel situation is often seen under the chin strap of football players. If your hair style or rate of sweating necessitates the wearing of such a band, change to a clean dry band frequently. Cleansing with a convenient astringent pad between changes is beneficial.

Irritation of the skin in the groin is a recurrent problem for many players. Bacteria, fungi, and yeast, seeking a damp, warm, dark environment as they did on the feet, rapidly take up residence on the skin of the groin. Treatment requires identification of the offending organism, and is best left to a physician. However, simple measures will prevent most of the infections from ever beginning. Clean clothing, meticulous drying, and powdering of the area reduce the incidence of infections. If an infection does occur, self medication may cause increasing irritation and exacerbation of symptoms. Dermatitis, inflammation of the skin, frequently results from the application of improper ointments or creams. A frequent irritant is topically applied vitamin E. Application of this vitamin is discouraged on cracked or previously inflamed skin areas.

A universal phenomenon seen daily in every racquetball club is the ecchymosis (black and blue mark). This is induced by a high velocity projectile, the racquetball, striking an immobile object, the human body. It occurs most frequently when your opponent rips his forearm into a plum ball which has rebounded off the back wall. You are usually six to 10 feet in front of him and only a fraction of a second away from instant pain. You let out a monstrous yell at the moment of contact. For the next few days a characteristic battle wound serves as a reminder of the incident. This mark is unmistakable. The central portion appears almost normal, while the periphery is a most colorful array of rainbow colors. The ball has pushed blood out of the central ruptured small vessels towards the outer border. The remaining colors at the edge are subsequent to blood pigment deposition.

Prevention of this skin problem is most difficult. It requires a mutual respect between opponents for safety. It is better to cry hinder, than to cry ouch. These injuries will still occur among the friendliest of competitors. Fortunately, the large majority of bruises are self-healing and minor.

Numerous ancillary activities are available at most clubs. The most frequently misused facility relating to skin disorders is the whirlpool. After a vigorous workout, the whirlpool is a great source of comfort, but it may also be a source of discomfort if abused. Reputable clubs monitor water temperature, but the length of time spent in the tub is left to the discretion of the participant. Use common sense to avoid a thermal burn. Do not spend more than five minutes soaking unless previous experience has shown you to have good tolerance to such heat.

How would a doctor recommend you work out?

The first thing a doctor would tell you to do is warm up properly. That's because warming up helps increase your flexibility and range of motion and can even help reduce the risk of injuries. And as an added benefit, the right warm up can help you perform better.

So far, we may not have told you anything you didn't already know. But now comes the interesting part.

A majority of doctors we surveyed would recommend methyl salicylate as an important part of your warm-up program. And methyl salicylate is the key ingredient in Mentholatum Deep Heating® Rub. So to help you warm up properly, work in Mentholatum Deep Heating before you work out.

In the same survey, a majority of doctors said they would recommend methyl salicylate to help relieve sore muscles. Which means you should work in Mentholatum Deep Heating after you work out.

So whether you work out with weights or a ball and a bat or a racket or a racquet or your own two legs, work in Mentholatum Deep Heating before and after. Because when you work out, it works.

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FASHION RAC



Chip led the ladies on a hike around the park in his Kyle Jensen burgundy terry zippered front jacket made of 60 per cent polyester and 40 per cent cotton. Comes with pocket on the sleeve (\$40). Matching warmup pants (\$27). Melanie wears another outfit from the Kyle Jensen collection also made of poly/cotton combo. She has a three-quarter length navy blue pullover jacket with a pocket on the three-quarter length sleeve (\$35). Matching warmup pants (\$27).

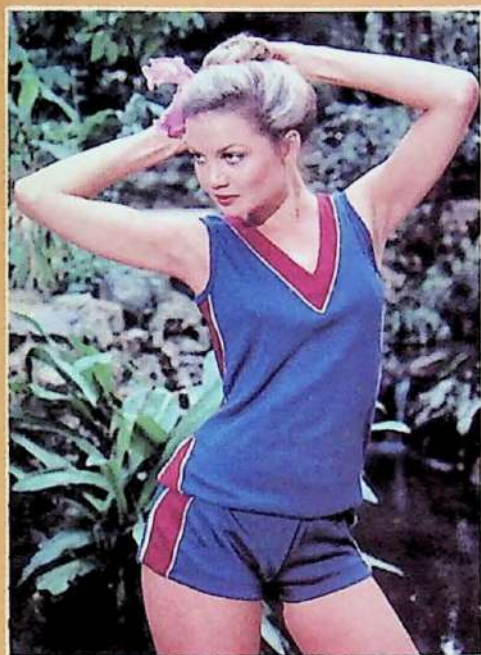
It was an envious afternoon for Chip Mercier. He first asked to referee a cutthroat racquetball match between three contestants from the Miss California beauty pageant and then he was asked to join them on a picnic and hike through a local park.

For the afternoon, Chip chose KYLE JENSEN ACTIONWEAR, a division of KORI OF CALIFORNIA. The ladies — Melanie Thomas, Laura Meyers and Kelly Bailey — were dressed in outfits by KORI.



Although part of the Kyle Jensen collection for men, Melanie decided this creme-colored terry warmup suit was suited for her taste. The pullover jacket comes with pocket on the three-quarter length sleeve. Made of 60 per cent polyester and 40 per cent cotton (\$35). Matching bottoms (\$27).

Fashion coordinated and directed by David Chow. Makeup and hair by Denise Snell.

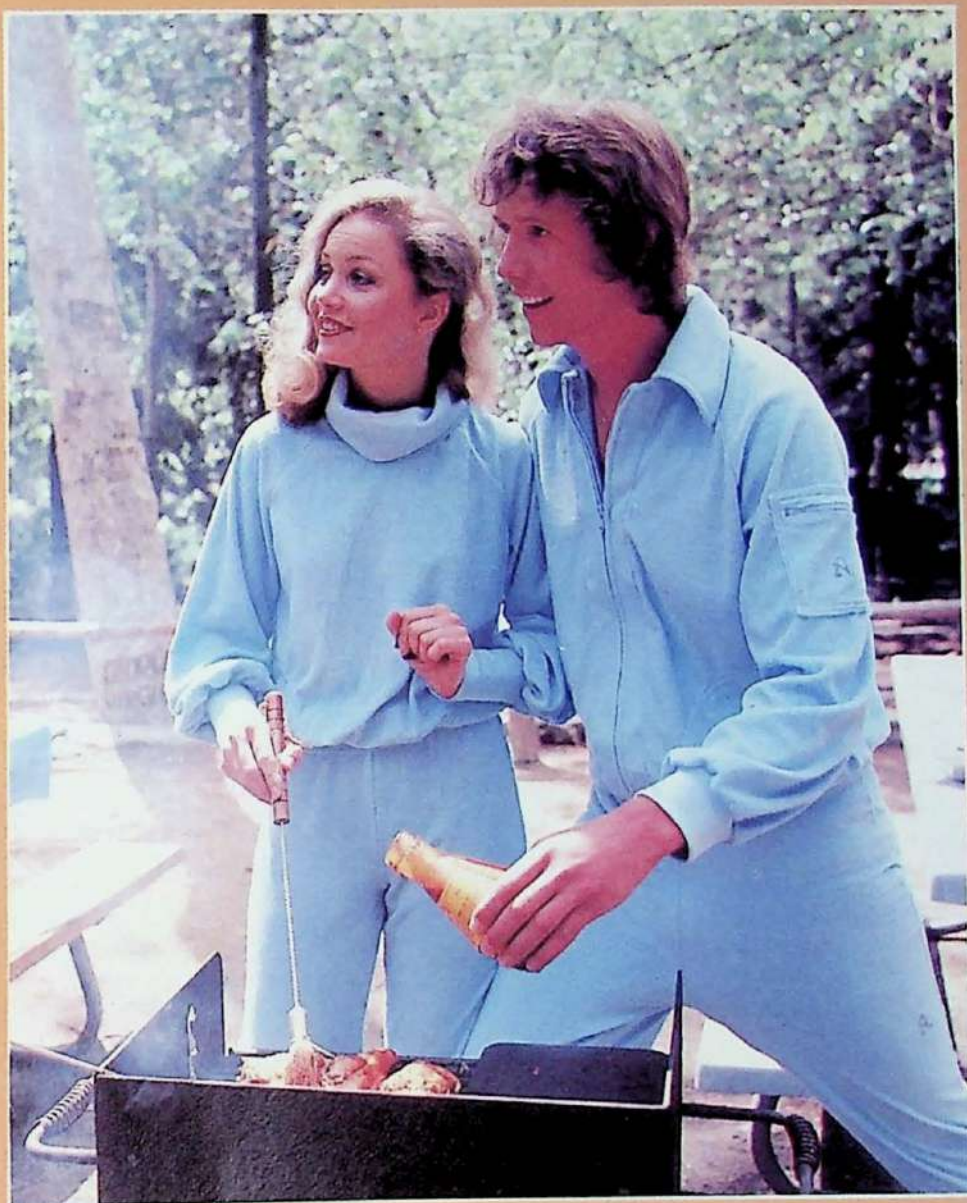


Kelly does her playing in Kori's navy blue two-piece 50 per cent poly, 50 per cent cotton interlock outfit. Top is V-neck. Comes with contrasting red piping on neck, sleeves and sides (\$30).

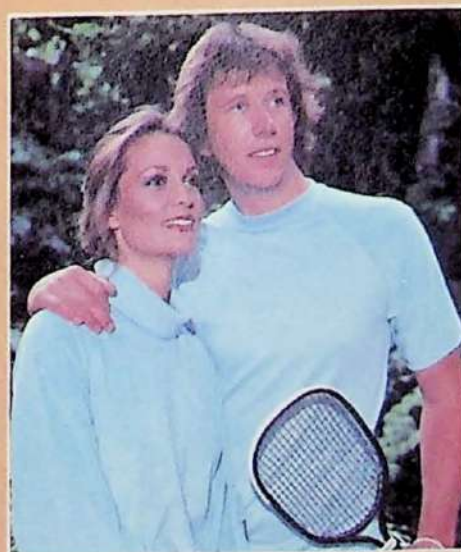
Photos by Ed Ikuta



Laura looks smart in a one-piece sleeveless full length burgundy terry jumpsuit made of 60 per cent polyester and 40 per cent cotton. Comes with back pocket (\$46).



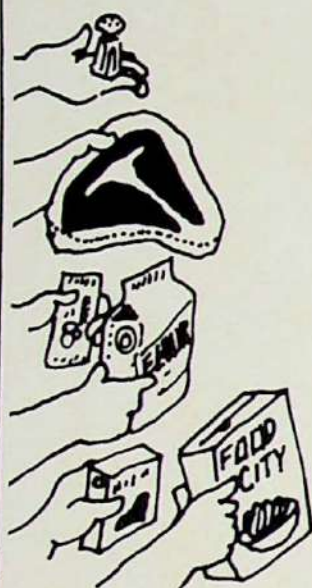
Chip stopped for a rest in a powder blue Kyle Jensen zip-front terry warmup jacket. Comes with pocket on the sleeve (\$40). Matching warmup pants, also a Poly/cotton combo (\$27). Kelly matches Chip in her fashionable terry cowl neck warmup top (\$36) and straight-leg pants (\$26).



When not officiating matches between beauty contest contestants, Chip does his racquetball playing in a Kyle Jensen poly/cotton interlock T-shirt (\$22) and matching powder blue shorts (\$13.50).

Short Shots

Nutritional Guidelines



In following up our two-part "Eating To Win" series in the May, 1980 issue, nutritionists from the Sports Connection in Santa Monica, Calif. have come up with a set of nutritional guidelines.

1. Eliminate sugar and artificial sweeteners from your diet.
2. Eliminate all processed foods.
3. Eliminate all white flour products.
4. Eat all foods in as close to the natural state as possible.
5. Diet should be predominantly raw fruits, raw or steamed vegetables, seeds, nuts, and small amounts of fish, chicken and dairy products.
6. Try to eliminate beef, pork, and lamb whenever possible.
7. Do not overeat and avoid drinking fluids with meals.
8. Limit your fatty and oily foods (butter, margarine, etc.).
9. NO SALT.
10. Eat slowly. Masticate fully.
11. Avoid concentrated calorie foods (cakes, cookies, candy).

12. Never use canned when you can use frozen. Never use frozen when you can use fresh.
13. Don't mix fruits and vegetables if possible.
14. Do not eat large meals before retiring.
15. Avoid all junk food.
16. Avoid all fried foods.
17. If you must cook—bake, broil, or steam your food.
18. Avoid coffee, alcohol, and tea (except herb teas).
19. Avoid soft drinks, canned drinks, and pasteurized juices. Fresh pressed juices are best.
20. Read all labels before eating.
21. Avoid all breakfast cereals that contain sugar, and/or preservatives.
22. Avoid milk in large quantities unless on a weight gaining diet.
23. Do not take vitamins on an empty stomach.

We are still searching for a person who has successfully adhered to this list.

Need A Partner?

Having trouble finding a court? Can't get the court time you want? Well, a group calling itself "Racquet Mates" has a unique concept they have already put into use in the San Fernando Valley, a suburb of Los Angeles.

According to founder Mark Williams, Racquet Mates sets up games with fellow club members and then sets up court time for them.

"Instead of joining clubs, people will join us," says Williams.

That idea may not sit well with some club owners but in actuality, it could be a benefit to them. It helps sell unused court time.

At this point in time it takes a \$50 fee to join the club. The player then buys five hours (or more) of court time from Racquet Mates, who, in turn, buy the available time from the club. Right now they have tie-ins with over a half-dozen clubs.

"We set it up because some people have strange working hours and can't set up racquetball times a week ahead of time," said Williams. "We can set things up the same day."

Racquet Mates (12111 Strathern St., Suite 104, North Hollywood, Calif.) also is planning tournaments and parties for members, thereby adding a social flavor to it also.

Still For Sale

The Coleman Company out of Wichita, Kan. announced it has terminated its letter of intent to purchase Ektelon under which Coleman was to acquire all the company's stock.

According to a spokesman for Coleman, the termination resulted when both parties could not reach a final agreement.

According to a spokesman for Ektelon, the company is still up for sale "with a number of buyers interested."

Hogan Third In "World"

Racquetball pro Marty Hogan placed third in the made-for-television World Superstars competition in Freeport, Grand Bahamas.

Hogan, who placed fifth in the recent United States Superstars competition, was the top U.S. finisher in the World event, finishing ahead of such athletes as Heisman Trophy winner Charles White and pro football players Russ Francis and Joe Theismann.

Hogan won the tennis event, finished third in rowing, soccer kick, swimming and the obstacle course race and fourth in the 100-yard dash—for a total of 26 points.

Canadian soccer player Brian Budd won the competition for the third straight year with 51 points. British hurdler Brian Sherwood took second with 34 points.

Women's Nationals

Since the split with the National Racquetball Club, the Women's Professional Racquetball Association has been scratching its way in hopes of holding a few events this year and organizing a complete tour next season.

But the one thing missing was The Nationals. If there were to be no more women's events for the 79-80 tour season, no one could claim to be the women's national champion.

"We had to have one," said one of the women players. "Even if it meant playing for nothing. There has to be someone we call the national champion."

Well, the women will get their title. The WPRA Women's National Championships will be held June 19-22 at Killshot Ltd. in Bloomingdale, Ill., a suburb of Chicago. Prize money will total over \$10,000.

Shannon Wright won the championship in 1977 and '78. Karin Walton won last year.

"It would have been an empty year if we didn't hold a Nationals," said Dan Seaton, WPRA Commissioner.

Celebrity Challenges

The calls have been coming in from Oregon, Ohio, Iowa, Washington, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Indiana and other states in response to Racquetball Illustrated's celebrity challenge match setup.

Following the magazine's first match in Idaho in January, calls have been coming in and other matches have been scheduled.

So, to repeat, for information on available celebrities and fees, call Racquetball Illustrated editor Ben Kalb at (213) 467-1300.



Made For Television

Although the major television networks have yet to discover racquetball, the public and cable systems are, indeed, giving fans a chance to see the sport.

ESPN, the cable network based out of Bristol, Conn., televised 12 racquetball segments from last year's CBC International Racquetball tournament from Winnipeg, Canada.

The tourney included matches featuring such players as Marty Hogan, Rich Wagner, Dave Peck, Charlie Brumfield, Heather McKay and Janell Marriott.

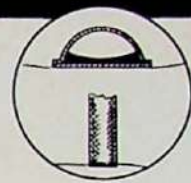
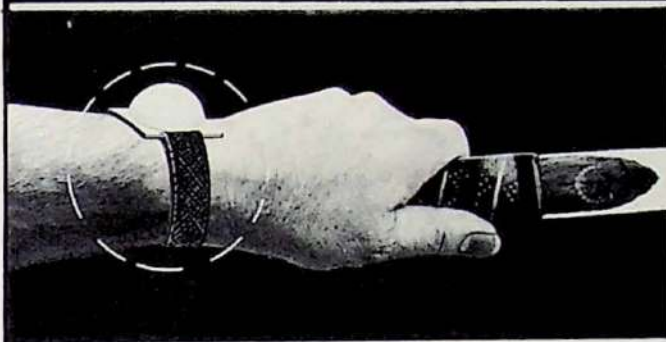
Later this year, the public system is expected to televise the Boise Cascade Pro-Am from Idaho, possibly live.

The recent St. Jude Pro-Am from Anaheim, Calif. was taped for television but, according to an ESPN official, the production wasn't good enough to sell to them. "Their main camera was in the wrong position. You couldn't even see the right corner of the court," he said. "If they changed the camera position it would have been better."

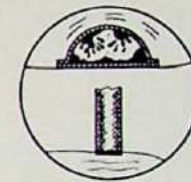
Unless ESPN gets the demand to cover a racquetball event themselves, they will continue with their policy of reviewing good local productions with an eye toward buying the best ones.

For information contact Bill Cleary, ESPN vice president of programming, or Joe Valerio, director of program planning.

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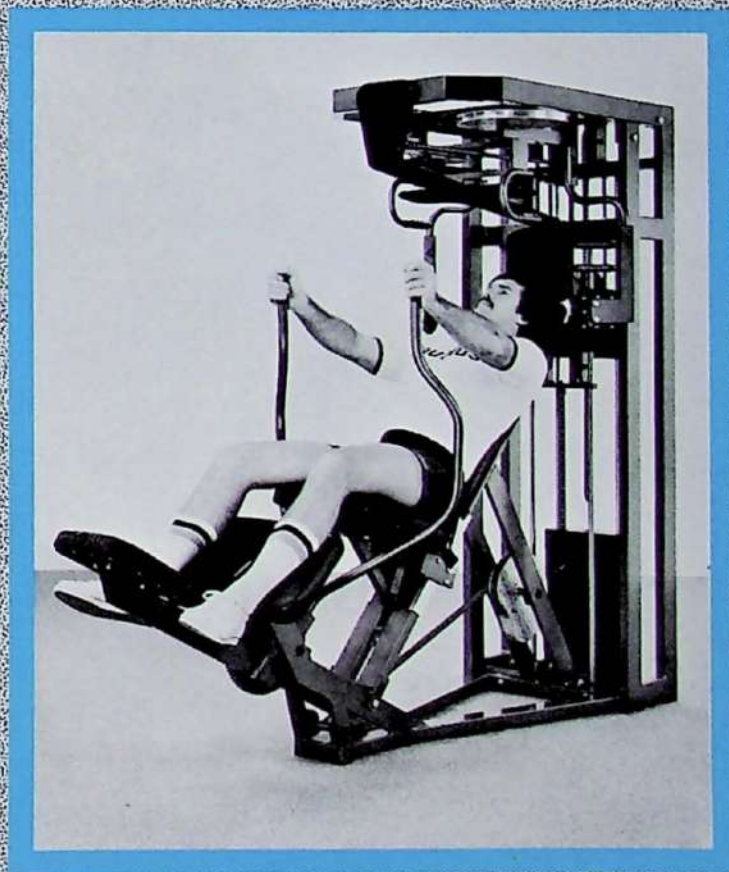
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