

National Racquetball®

Vol. 12 No. 12 December, 1983

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Vol. 12 No. 12 December, 1983 \$2.00

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On the cover . . .

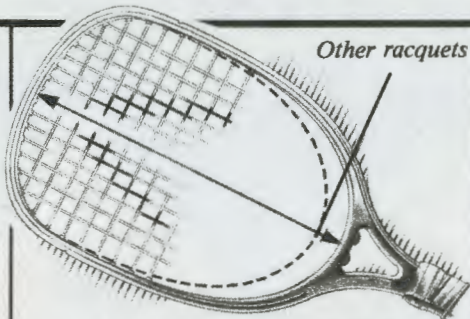
Marty Hogan's grimace says a great deal
about the on-court problems he encountered
during the 1982-83 season. And although
he's off to a good start this year, many,
including author Charlie Garfinkel, believe
Hogan can improve his game. Garfinkel, one
of the game's most respected observers,
offers Hogan some suggestions.

—photo by Arthur Shay

Next issue . . .

Mike Yellen details his trip to Europe,
APRO's Chuck Sheftel does the same on his
visit to the Orient, Carole George reports
from Costa Rica and we'll have an abun-
dance of information on the pro game, both
men and women, plus a National Racquetball
Reader Participation Survey. Don't miss it!

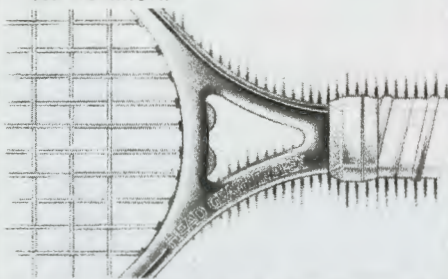
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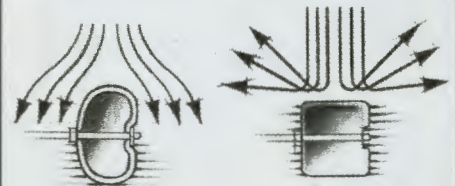
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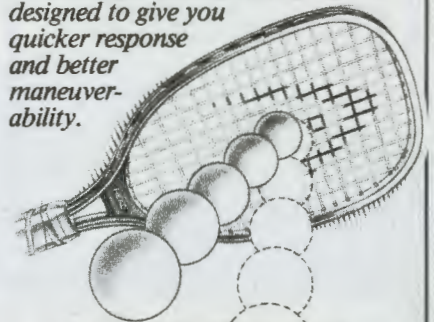


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From The Editor . . .

Numbers Game



How many racquetball players are there?

I wish I had a nickel for every time I've been asked this question. And having been guilty in the past of "overenthusiastically projecting" the number of players, I think it's about time to set the record straight.

I have received dozens of calls in recent months from research firms, public relations companies, advertising agencies, manufacturers and associations — all wanting to know the *real* number of players.

So here it is: *Seven and a-half million*. No more.

Before I prove the above statement I'd like to comment on the myths. Understand that few people in the business end of the racquetball industry (club owners, manufacturers, consultants) believe there are many more than 7.5 million. But oh, how those outside the industry can throw around numbers.

Racquetball's numbers game began in 1976 when the A.C. Nielson Company (of television ratings fame) included racquetball in their tri-annual study of sports participation. Nielson measured 3.9 million players in 1976 and those of us in the racquetball industry at the time raced to shout this figure from the mountaintops.

Problem was, the figure was wrong. What Nielson considered a racquetball player really turned out to be more *awareness* than participation. It rapidly became common knowledge that if you cut the Nielson figure in half you'd have a much more accurate *gauge* of the number of players.

Three years later Nielson tagged racquetball with their now-famous 10.6 million figure. By this time there were hundreds of racquetball clubs in North America and racquetball was experiencing it's now-famous supergrowth period. Who cared if there weren't really 10.6 million? After all, in another year or so there probably will be more, right?

When the recession hit and the growth slowed it became imperative that we as an industry truly get a handle on precisely how many participants our sport had. In 1982 Nielson came out with their 12.4 million figure but nobody, by then, was fooled. Most observers used the by then general guideline of 50 percent of Nielson, or 6.2 million players.

(It should be pointed out that while I don't agree with the Nielson numbers

per se, I believe the Nielson reports have validity.)

(Since they have been consistent in each report by measuring in exactly the same way, it follows that even if the numbers are wrong, the trends are right. Thus, I accept the Nielson percentages, meaning that from 1976 to 1979 the number of participants increased by an incredible 172 percent! From 1979 to 1982 the growth slowed to a more realistic 17 percent, no 172, but solid nevertheless.)

Earlier I promised to prove my contention that there are 7.5 million players. Here's the breakdown:

- 2,000 commercial facilities with racquetball averaging 1,500 players per facility (they don't) equals *3 million*;
- 500 YMCA's with racquetball courts averaging 2,000 players per facility (they don't) equals *1 million*;
- 250 JCC's with racquetball courts averaging 2,000 players per facility (they don't) equals *500,000*;
- An undetermined number of schools and universities for which I'll grant a generous *1.5 million*;
- An undetermined number of park district, public parks, hotels and miscellaneous for another generous *250,000*.
- A strong core of players in the military for which I'll grant you another *150,000*.

As you can see all that adds up to a more than generous 6.5 million. I'll give you another million 'cause I'm a nice guy (the Leve factor) and that gives you 7.5 million.

If there are more, where are they? ●

Chuck Lane



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Letters

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Women Pros

No, I am not getting paid to write this. No, I am not anyone's cousin or brother. It's just that when I see something genuinely good take place, I want to comment on it.

I've been playing racquetball for about two years, am in my late 30's and my nearly nine-year-old son Kevin has been playing just about as long.

Racquetball has become Kevin's "goal in life." It outweighs soccer, baseball and all the others. And, he's better at it than the others. The logical result is that when he's 13 or 14 he'll be playing A or Open and will blow old Dad right off the court.

Recently the Women's Professional Racquetball Association (WPRA) had a tournament which was hosted at our club, the Racquethouse Parkaire in Marietta, GA., Kevin's home away from

home. Not being a shy lad, Kevin finagled his way to position of towel boy for the pros. And he was good at it.

All they had to do was pause for a moment, look his way, and he was through the door out there mopping up in a flash. Sometimes his friend Josh helped him.

Kevin was there Thursday; he was there Friday; he was there Saturday; and finally, he was there on Sunday. The kid didn't eat anything but potato chips for the four days, but, how often does one get the chance to chit-chat with the pros?

The long and the short of it was that by Sunday afternoon most of the players knew Kevin and they were "buddies." Besides continuous conversation off the court, the pros gave Kevin tips, answering at least 37,000 questions, and just "made his day," four days in a row.

Lynn Adams gave him a glove; Terri Gilreath gave him a shirt with her name across the back; Heather McKay (after losing, no less) gave him her racquet (slightly cracked—but it didn't matter); and the finale came when Lynn Adams gave him her huge first place trophy to keep for her. Kevin was overwhelmed,

and all smiles. He did, however, have the composure to thank her.

I was very sorry that such things couldn't be witnessed by more than the 50 or so people who were there. Professional racquetball deserves better and professional racquetball players, even more so, deserve better. I know the impression this event made on my son, my wife and me. And it will be a lasting one, thanks to some gracious lady professionals and some fine ambassadors of the sport.

If Lynn or Terri should read this, Kevin says, "hi, I promise to write soon and tell you about school, my pets and how my game is coming along."

Philip Carnes
Doraville, GA

The ladies have class, there's no doubt of that, and they've proved it again.

—ED.

Home Court

Dear Editor:

Thank you for the article on the court in my house. A lot of my friends and relatives want copies of it and the only one I have is my subscription copy.

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Could you please send me five or 10 copies of the October issue?

I received a lot of feedback on the story—calls from all over the country and letters from people with court building problems. As a result I am writing a follow up article which I will have to you in a month or so.

Thank you again.

Lou Cotton
Sorento, IL.

Copies on their way, Lou.—Ed.

Tammy Hajjar

Dear Editor:

I've been meaning to send you a note... thank you for publishing the "Extra!" about Tammy Hajjar and the USA Team Tour for Cystic Fibrosis. It was great!

The latest clipping All Sport has received found the group in Dallas with more than \$30,000 raised for CF. They have had incredible weather (as you can imagine, this year)—torrential rains in the spring, tornadoes, unbearable heat, even a small earthquake in California. But they are carrying on.

I also wanted to let you know that we had very good results from our advertising in *National Racquetball* for Dave Peck Camps. That was quite a good article about Dave in the *September* issue; I could see his injury was major when he was at the club, but I had no idea it was that serious.

I was excited to see your venture onto the newsstands. Best of luck with it.

Shaileen Kopec
Poughkeepsie, NY

Thanks for the update, Shaileen. Buy lots of copies on the newsstand.—ED.

Bye, Bye Beardie!

Dear Editor:

Thanks!

All of us at The Court House appreciate the sacrifice that you have made by shaving your beard and moustache in an attempt to restore the racquetball business to the levels it enjoyed prior to the time that you grew the beard.

If, in fact, this unselfish act succeeds, and all of those racquetball players return to create that marvelous flurry of

activity that existed in the 70's, I will be delighted to personally pay for each razor blade it takes to keep that facial hair off.

I am enclosing a new pack of Gillette blades to help insure that you continue to seek the solution to the problem.

I hope you will once again have the difficulty you used to have getting a court at one of The Court Houses.

Best regards.

John S. Wineman, Jr.
Highland Park, IL

Thanks John! But what am I supposed to do with the shaving cream? —Ed.

Splat Splat! Plop Plop!

Dear Editor:

You have heard about the "splat" shot. I have developed and finally perfected (after years of practice) a brand new shot that I call the "plop".

To execute the *plop*, you hit the ball with the same motion used in serving a tennis ball. When done properly, the ball hits 1/16th of an inch above the floor where the side wall meets the front wall and just lays there.

HEALTH

How Tough are Your Eyes?

Not tough enough. Laboratory tests show that some eyeguards will allow a racquetball to contact the eyeball even when properly worn.

Chairman of the Canadian Standards Association Committee on Eye Protection, Dr. Easterbrook talked with NR.*



"It has been proven that any open eyeguard on the market can be penetrated by a racquetball traveling at only 50 miles per hour and the average beginning player hits the ball over 70 mph."

"Polycarbonates are by far the best impact resistant material we have for eye

* National Racquetball May '82

protection. They're even better than industrial safety thickness plastic (known as CR-39). Street wear plastic, as normal glasses, does break," says Easterbrook.

In his opinion, *"Anybody who plays racquetball without eyeguards is nuts, to put it another way, there is more energy in a racquetball traveling at high speed than there is in a bullet."*

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It is much easier to do the *plop*, if you smear a lot of glue on the ball.

Al Freedman
Voorhees, NJ

Very funny. —ED.

Paddleball

Dear Editor:

Your feature article "*Born Again... Paddleball*," by Randy Hice in the *October* issue was really enjoyable and interesting. However, I was absolutely amazed as I read through the article, reading the names of Hogan, Keeley, Brumfield, Muehleisen, Fox, Kasalo, and Mitchell as National Paddleball Champions, that there was no mention of Val Valenciano.

Valenciano, holder of eight State Open Division Championships and nine National Open Division Championships, won both the National Singles and Doubles crowns in 1978. At age 39, Val won both the National Seniors Singles and Doubles Championships in 1983.

It takes five letters across the back of the shirt to spell the name of the King of Racquetball: H-O-G-A-N; it takes only three letters to spell the name of the King of Paddies: V-A-L.

Larry Gordon
Grand Blanc, MI

Well said, Larry! Thanks for truly giving credit where credit is due.

Lynn's Opinion

Dear Editor:

Here! Here! Lynn Adams!

Your article in the *October* issue was not only informative, but totally true. The media's obvious neglect of the women's pro tour is sad and inexcusable. Thank you for setting the record straight.

How gracious of you to mention Vicki Panzeri's tournament victories... even at your own expense. You're a model example to all of us.

Laurie McCormick
Youngstown, OH

The Front Corners

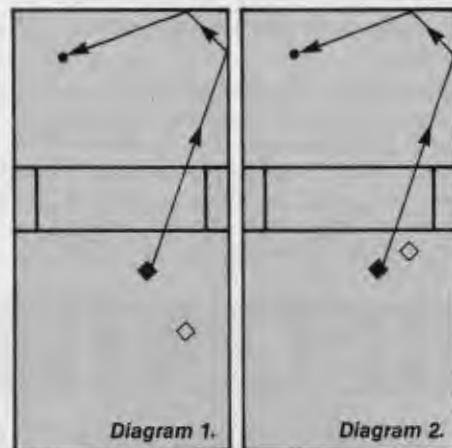
Dear Editor:

I read with interest your instructional article entitled "*Playing The Front Corners*" in the *August* issue. I have been teaching racquetball for several years

and I have made a point of introducing that shot to beginners. I would like to comment on Allen Ascher's article because I have found the shot to be more effective when played a bit differently.

Mr. Ascher encourages the player to make the shot to the front left corner when his opponent is in the right rear corner (after returning a forehand serve) because that's the "point furthest from the opponent."

I have found that the angle advantage of the corner kill shot or pinch is much greater when you hit the side wall first (*Diagram 1*). With this in mind, the rule of thumb should be to hit the side wall *closest* to your opponent, not the furthest away.



Even if the shot is not perfect (and a smart shot is always "what is my best shot if the execution is *not* perfect") it is very effective. If your opponent is in front of you (*Diagram 2*), the path of the ball to the side wall handcuffs him temporarily, thereby making it an effective shot even though he is not in the backcourt.

One of the reasons I enjoy racquetball so much, and love to teach it, is it can be a *thinking* game, not necessarily a muscle game. I'd place my money on brains over brawn any day!

Kalo Heldt
Vacaville, CA

Mike Yellen would love you, Kalo!—ED.

National Racquetball Magazine
1800 Pickwick Ave.,
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EXTRA!

'84 IRSA Convention/Trade Show Set

The 1984 International Racquet Sports Association (IRSA) National Convention and Trade Show is progressing rapidly toward its February 16-21 dates. The Convention, which annually attracts 700-800 racquet and multisport club owners and developers from throughout the nation and Canada, will be held at the New Orleans Hilton and Towers the week prior to Mardi Gras.

A sampling of the approximately 65 topics that will be presented by more than 140 speakers includes: "Facts and Figures Survey," in which the results of IRSA's annual industry data study will be revealed; "Selling Corporate Mem-

berships," "Fall Marketing Techniques," "Swimming Pool Cost and Design," "Computer Capabilities," "The Racquet Club of the Future," "Club Food and Beverage," plus many more topics dealing with specific areas of programming. Of particular interest to developers will be "Financing or Refinancing" and "Increasing Revenue Through Better Design and Construction."

"The Convention will be packed with information," noted John McCarthy, IRSA executive director. "As in the past, participating clubs will most likely want to send three, four or more representatives in order to

get the most out of it."

The Trade Show portion of the Convention is a two-day affair featuring more than 100 companies in 150+ booth spaces. The 1983 trade show was heavily represented by exercise equipment, computers, sun tanning beds, racquet sports products and a variety of other categories. More of the same is anticipated this year.

"The Trade Show is an attractive activity to those manufacturers who desire to reach the club owner," McCarthy said. "If the company's product is one that the owner makes the buying decision on, then our show is the proper one."

The IRSA National Convention is the only time during the year when owners of commercial racquet sports/fitness clubs congregate in the same place and time for the purpose of comparing notes, exchanging ideas, and generally working together to improve their profitability.

In addition to the series of speakers and panels, the Convention will feature round table discussions and many social functions.

For further information on IRSA, the Convention or Trade Show, call (617) 734-8000, or write IRSA, 112 Cypress St., Brookline, MA 02146.

Playboy Covers Racquetball by Shay

Racquetball received what may be its single, largest exposure as a sport in November, with a major story in that month's issue of *Playboy* magazine.

Despite dozens of PBS and cable telecasts and countless magazine articles, none of the previous public relations efforts surrounding racquetball has reached as many as the 4.25 million monthly *Playboy* readers.

The article, "High-Voltage Racquetball" was authored by Arthur Shay, *National*

Racquetball's photographic consultant and nationally-recognized photographer, author and columnist. Shay is also a Master's National Racquetball Champion and author of over six racquetball titles.

The bulk of Shay's racquetball literature is in the form of instructional material, beginning with his photographic and editing work on *Inside Racquetball* by Chuck Leve,

the first instructional racquetball book, published in

1973 by Regnery. In the 10 intervening years Shay has written or collaborated on racquetball instructional books with Marty Hogan, Jean Sauser, Charlie Brumfield, Chuck Sheftel and Terry Fancher.

The *Playboy* feature continues the Shay instructional saga, this time with personal interviews embellishing the points and historical anecdotes driving them home.

According to *Playboy's* *Playbill* column, Shay "pro-

vides the tips that make for upward mobility (in your skill level.)"

Shay, a seven time per week player, convinced *Playboy* to run a major racquetball feature earlier this year and his manuscript was planned for a fall release to coincide with the current season.

So, in case you missed the November issue of *Playboy*, tell your wife you want to pick up a copy to read about racquetball. Sure.

Marty Hogan: 6 Ways To Improve His Game

by Charlie Garfinkel

'Hogan hasn't adapted to the two basic changes in competitive racquetball: slower balls and 11 point games.'

My first introduction to Marty Hogan occurred in Louisville, KY one year at a pro tournament. I almost stepped on the little brat. Then barely 16, the diminutive Hogan was one obnoxious character. Nearly taller than his racquet, Hogan's sweat socks appeared to be attached to his shorts. And his on-court temperament and needling of opponents was infantile, to put it mildly.

But oh, could he hit the ball! I refereed the Hogan-Charlie Brumfield match during that tournament and I saw the legendary Brumfield clown his way to a first game victory over this little kid who hit every ball as hard as he could. Brumfield, and the entire gallery for that matter, was amazed to see this mere stripling win the second game.

Although Brumfield won the third game handily, it was obvious to all who witnessed the match that Hogan was going to be a superstar of the highest order, barring injury.

Of course, Marty went on to become the greatest racquetball player ever to lace up sneakers. Yet after seven years of domination, Hogan the Great lost his number one ranking in 1983—a demise that was not a complete surprise.

The prior year, although Hogan won the coveted, year-end DP Leach National Championships, Dave Peck out-pointed him in the race to the number one rank. And while some controversy surrounded the question of "Who's number 1?" the truth remains that Hogan needed to do a lot of explaining and statistic-stretching to make his claim to the position.

This season most recently past was another story. His name was Mike Yellen, the new and undisputed national champion, who had an extraordinary season. Yellen beat Hogan four out of the five times they met in tournament play; Yellen won all three of the major national titles (Ektelon, DP Leach, Catalina); and Yellen, during the

toughest part of the season, strung together five consecutive tournament victories.

Yellen's excellent play will make him a tough competitor to unseat from that number one position this season. However, if there's one thing anybody in racquetball has learned over the years, it's to never count out Marty Hogan.

I have watched Hogan play for over 10 years now, including six times during the past year. I believe Marty has the capability to regain his top spot, but in order to do so he will have to make some definite changes and additions to his game.

At the risk of being presumptuous, here's what Marty needs to do.

'He must want it more because if he doesn't he won't get it.'



1) Concentrate

Over the years Hogan used to joke that he couldn't "get up" for his matches. In many instances he was correct. Seemingly, he could almost name the score in his matches. In the late 70's and early 80's it was not unusual for Hogan to win a match 21-14, 15-21, 11-1.

Ah, but that was yesteryear. The ramifications of the change two years ago to 11 point games, three out of five for the match, are just now becoming fully understood. And the 11-pointers have had a definite, negative impact on Marty Hogan.

In a 21 point game there's lots of time to come back. You can get down early, regroup and come blazing back. You don't have that luxury in an 11 point game. Thus, Hogan can't afford the mental lapses, the lackadaisical play that often permeates his game. Being down 8-1 in all 11 point game is a lot different than being down 14-3 in a 21 pointer.

Although Hogan still likes to give the impression during his matches that he can "turn it on" whenever he wants to, in truth those days are gone forever. The competition is just too tough. During the "Hogan Era" Marty elevated the skill level at the top of racquetball's ladder immensely. But it's now been seven years and others in the game have been able to climb that ladder.

In addition, when he does try to play with a laissez faire attitude when ahead, Marty often winds up losing the match when he can't get back in gear again.

At last year's Ektelon Nationals, in what may have been the most awesome display of power racquetball ever seen, Hogan obliterated the very talented John Egerman 11-0, 11-0 in the first two games of their quarter-final match. Marty continued the consecutive point streak to 24 by taking a 2-0 third game lead, until Egerman finally scored a point.



'Hogan's drive serve, as great as it is, has become extremely predictable.'

Predictably, Hogan started clowning around. Although he won the match in four games (8-11, 11-2), he never approached the level of play he had shown in the first two games.

The next day against Richard Wagner, Hogan lost in five games. His lapses from the day before continued. When he was good, he was great. When he was bad, he was atrocious. His concentration continually wavered throughout the match. And, when he reached the fifth game, Wagner completely outplayed him, despite all kinds of attempts by Marty to get the juices flowing.

Solution

Hogan must realize (if only by match scores from tournaments over the past few years) that there are too many

players capable of defeating him if he's not completely concentrating. When Marty feels his concentration wavering, he must force himself to push even harder. He must want it more because if he doesn't he won't get it.

In this regard, Hogan needs to utilize his time outs to better advantage. He should try to determine what he is doing wrong and what his opponent is doing right. He should then make the necessary adjustments.

When his opponent has a lead, Marty has to stop acting like it's no big deal, that all he has to do is start playing and he'll turn it around. He has to realize that he can't do that in an 11 point game. Further, every top player is out to get him every time he steps on the court. Nobody gives in any more.

2) Serve Better

Hogan has fallen into a serving pattern. It's no secret and every player in the pro game knows it. Marty'll serve three or four hard drives to the left and then switch to one to the right. I think that Hogan's drive serve, as great as it is, has become extremely predictable. As a result, Hogan's serving effectiveness has plummeted.

Why? For one, Marty almost never varies where he stands in the service zone. He generally takes a position toward the right side wall and by not moving around he makes it fairly easy for a sharp opponent to "read" his serve.

Further, if one observes closely, Hogan's percentage of actual first serves that are good is really quite low, except for an occasional hot streak. He then relies on a medium lob for his second serve—merely putting the ball in play.

Solution

The easiest and most important change would be for Marty to alter his position frequently when serving. By standing and serving in different areas of the service box, he will be hitting his serves (even if they are all the same serve) at many different angles. Because of his devastating power, his opponents will be off balance.

By regaining the upper hand on the serve, Hogan's killer instinct, when working, won't allow opponents to get into the game. I also feel that Marty should begin mixing in hard Z serves as a good first serve now and then.

As for his second serve Marty should be more aggressive in trying to place his opponents in a defensive position. He should utilize a high lob that pins the receiver deep in the corners. On occasion he should attempt a hard Z or even a drive. Although he may double fault once in a while, he'll be amazed at the high percentage of serves that he'll get in. And he'll get weak returns on these.

3) Forget The Continental Grip

Marty Hogan, like many players, uses one grip for both forehand and backhand. There is very little, if any, change when moving from one stroke

to the other. This grip, also prevalent in tennis and squash, is called the Continental grip and Hogan should air mail it to another continent.

Although the Continental is great for powerful and low backhands, the problem with it is that the racquet face remains slightly open on the forehand side, causing the ball to stay up. Therefore, it is extremely difficult to hit consistently low shots on the forehand side. This is especially true of pinch shots that rebound toward center court.

It's often been said that Hogan has a better backhand than forehand and many astute performers have played his forehand with good success. The reason that Marty's forehand doesn't measure up to his backhand is the Continental grip.

Solution

All Marty has to do is move his hand slightly to the right and his grip for the forehand would be proper. This would cause the ball to be flat against the strings on impact resulting in shots that will consistently stay low as they head for kill shot territory.

4) Bend His Knees

There has been a complete circle traveled by the strategy of what to do when the ball comes off the back wall. Years ago (late 60's, early to mid 70's) a ball off the back wall was considered an absolute set-up, a real plum. Players like Brumfield, Steve Keeley, Bill Schmidtke and Steve Serot made careers out of shooting the ball off the back wall.

When the lively ball era came on the scene toward the late 70's (and with it the emergence of Hogan) back wall play changed drastically. Instead of rolling out kill shots being hit off the back wall the "hit everything as hard as you can" syndrome in vogue at the time found players, including Hogan, just ripping back wall shots as hard as they could. The pass/kill became the back wall shot — go for the kill but leave your margin of error on the high side so if the ball isn't down you might still win on a pass.

Thus the fundamental back wall kill shot stroke left many players, Hogan

included. Now that the racquetballs in use today are back down to a manageable speed, the back wall is once again becoming an offensive set up situation.

Watching Hogan take shots off the back wall on his forehand side is baffling. Instead of rolling the ball flat, he often hits it a foot high on the front wall. Marty hasn't made the adjustment from the raw power back wall game to the fundamental, kill shot back wall game.

You can see it when he hits the ball — he stands nearly erect as he attempts

to shoot the ball. Any novice player in the country can tell you that you need to bend your knees when you hit that back wall kill. Whether it is due to lack of concentration or cockiness due to the supposed simplicity of the shot, only Marty knows.

Solution

The answer is an easy one. On back wall set ups, especially on the forehand side, he should bend his knees and stay as low to the floor as possible. Here Marty should take a page from Schmidtke's two-time national title-winning style. Bill used to literally

'The reason Marty's forehand doesn't measure up to his backhand is the Continental grip.'



come off the court with bloody knuckles from getting so low to the floor for his forehand kills.

5) Keep His Cool

It has long and often been said that Marty Hogan is one of the fairest, if not the fairest competitor in all of professional racquetball. However, during the past two seasons, because of improved play on the part of his opponents and sporadic periods of poor play on his part, Hogan has been experiencing the new (for him) sensation of losing.

The to-be expected frustration associated with not being able to perform to the level that he expects from himself, has (whether Marty realizes it or not) led to more outbursts of temper from him than ever before.

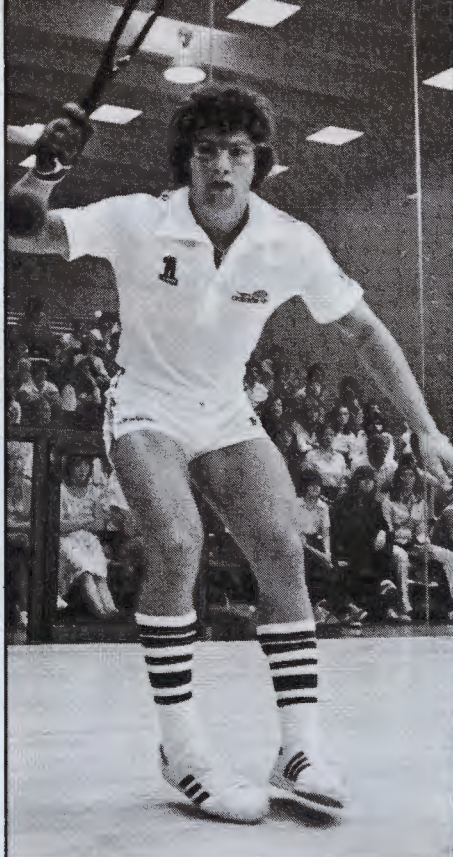
In particular, he has become furious with referee's decisions that don't go his way. This, I feel, causes him to disintegrate even further, with often one or two points being further lost before he regains his composure. In 11 point games, nobody can afford to give away points, not even Hogan.

And, when he misses shots that are obvious putaways, his frustration is nearly always vocal and animated — evident to everyone.

Solution

Like any pro racquetball player, Hogan gets some good calls and some bad calls — no different than anyone else. Marty has to learn to forget the referee's calls, good or bad. He must understand that the referee is trying to do the optimum job that he can. And there's no referee alive who can call a top professional match and not miss a few calls. It's inevitable.

Therefore, Marty should play through these situations as if they didn't happen. It will keep his temper cooled down and allow him to concentrate on what's important, namely executing his shots and carrying out his strategy.



— Photos by Arthur Shay

'Any novice player in the country can tell you that you need to bend your knees when you hit that back wall kill.'

And when he misses an easy shot (we all do — even the great ones) he should do the same thing. Forget it and go on to the next rally.

6) Play A More Controlled Game

No one has ever been able to make the impossible shot like Hogan. Over the years Marty has awed gallery after gallery with seemingly low percentage shots. Out of position, pinned in deep court, even with the scoreboard putting him on the edge of defeat, Hogan always seemed to be able to respond with that unbelievable splat, the 39 foot backhand roll out or that perfect ace — leaving his opponent devastated.

And while I don't literally keep a count on this statistic, I truly believe that Marty is making fewer and fewer of these type of shots. Not that his skills

have diminished in any way. Rather, by virtue of the the slower racquetballs being used in today's pro game, these low percentage shots are just difficult to execute.

Solution

Marty needs to play a more controlled game. He should go to the ceiling more often than he does. The ceiling game is one of Marty's strong points and his patience will pay off.

He doesn't need to kill every ball. Strong passing shots, even well-placed around-the-wall balls would reduce his errors, especially when he's out of position.

* * *

I know that Hogan may or may not follow any of my suggestions. He may not even agree that there's any problem in his game. He may feel he just needs to try harder and he'll recapture the lost magic.

Generally speaking, Hogan's main problem is that he hasn't adapted to the two basic changes in competitive racquetball of the past few years: slower balls and 11 point games. Perhaps this is the most amazing factor of all because Hogan has long been billed as a player whose brains were equal to his brawn.

It's my opinion that Marty'd better make the needed adjustments because after he does, he still won't have an easy time regaining his number one position. The main reason for that consists of 10 letters: M-i-k-e Y-e-l-l-e-n. ●

'He has become furious with referee's decisions. This causes him to disintegrate even further.'

'Racquetball Is Not My Whole Life'

But Martha McDonald Is Sure To Make Room For It



She was just one of the many faces pressed hard against the upper side wall glass, peering down at the four finalists in the women's doubles championship match at the WPRA Nationals last May. On the court, Lynn Adams and Teri Gilreath were trading forehand rips with Vicki Panzeri and Bonnie Stoll. In the gallery, already eliminated, was Martha McDonald.

The usual spectator comments echoed through the Glass Court Racquet & Swim Club's bar/lounge, the location from which McDonald and the others were viewing the action surrounded by the yogurt, fruit, juices and beer that served as player hospitality.

"Nice Shot," says one. "Bad call!" screams another. "Hinder!" yells a third. McDonald is more contemplative than exuberant. She studies the action rather than watches it. You sense she yearns to trade places with any of the four in the court.

"This is the way most tournaments come to an end," she said glancing toward the window. "By this time most of the girls have lost. We just like to sit and watch the better players."

Seated on a dark purple sofa that threatens to suck in any unsuspecting visitor, Martha sits on the edge. Her energy appears boundless. She talks with a sweep of hands; her eyes constantly search the entire room.

She is of Japanese and American parentage, standing a lean 5'4" with short, jet black hair. Discussing all



facets of racquetball from politics to sponsors, she drifts like a magnet, to her children, her husband and her job.

"My life is a little different," she says. "I am married, I have Christopher who's four and Mary, who's two, and I have my own business. Racquetball is not my whole life. I am not a teaching pro, nor have I ever worked in an indoor club."

In fact, Martha is one of the few pro players who has children. She was the first player on the tour to play while pregnant. Peggy Steding raised her children first and then joined the tour. Others are waiting to have children when their playing days are over.

"I grabbed a 20 year proposition but I am going to play racquetball all through it," she said. "A family and small children at this time in my life are a big deal."

Martha plays the WPRA tour because she wants to add something to her life. She is quick to add, however, "I don't come here because I want to knock off everybody!

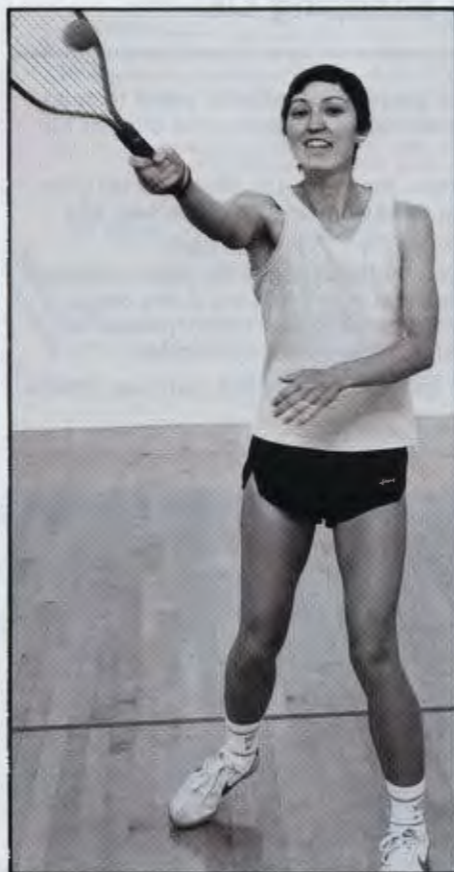
"I am quite satisfied with my ranking (which hovers around 14)," she said with a frank smile. "Sure I have aspirations just like anyone else, but I am realistic. I love the game and I love the competition and I come here with the intention of winning. But I lose. I face that fact and play simply for the joy of it."

However, Martha freely admits satisfaction can also work against her.

"You lose the motivation to try for something better," she says. "It can be a problem."

She acknowledges that to threaten Adams, McKay and others at the top certain changes would have to be made: more practice, more intensive play and most important, more desire — "the eye of the tiger".

"If I were to devote the necessary time to racquetball I need to be number one, something else in my life would suffer," she says. "My marriage, for one; I mean how many strong marriages do you see walking around the female athletic world?"



Martha concedes it takes a certain singlemindedness to have a successful marriage. With her present set up, she prides herself on having "a nice balance of things". She seems more like a juggler, keeping family, business, and racquetball in their proper place.

"Organization, and more than a little help from my husband Greg, that's how I do it," she says "Things get done while I am on tour. The house is cleaner when I get back than when I left!"

Greg and Martha are contract meter readers with the Gainesville Gas Company. They have been in business five years and read over 18,000 meters a month. They employ four college students part-time, but they read the bulk of the meters themselves.

As if 18,000 meters a month weren't enough, Martha daily delivers papers from three to five a.m. She's unhappy that she'll have to give up the paper route when her son starts school.

Delivering papers and an innate sense of mathematics (which comes in handy organizing routes) account for the McDonald touch in meter reading. Their success enables Martha to attend tournaments she otherwise couldn't.

"I have no pressures, no financial strains when I play racquetball," she says. "Nor do I have a nine to five job or any job for that matter that ties me down."

Martha and Greg met Russell Deegan, president of Gainesville Gas, eight years ago while playing outdoor racquetball. Three years later, Deegan asked if they would consider reading his gas meters. Martha credits the job arrangements with her ability to handle the different facets in her life.

"My jobs enable me to have the time and money I need to fulfill my desire to play racquetball," she says. "Since I am away probably once a month, Greg and the kids are forced, probably more than most fathers and children, to be together. They are very close."

"Greg has his own source of fulfillment. Not only is he a top outdoor racquetball player in Florida, but he owns one of the largest comic book collections in the nation. He also goes to two or three comic book conventions a year. That's his passion."

Juggling family, husband, jobs, and racquetball requires flexibility in nighttime as well as daytime schedules. Martha gets eight hours of sleep a night in two shifts, 10 p.m. to 3 a.m. and 5 to 8 a.m. after the paper route. She spends five hours a day reading meters.

Christopher and Mary attend nursery school during meter reading hours. Most nights the McDonald's take a picnic dinner and go off to one of 100+ outdoor racquetball courts in and around Gainesville. Greg and Martha encourage Chris and Mary (even at two years old!) to be active in sports by chasing balls, and playing catch.

"We want our children to be active in athletics," Martha says. "If they excel at some sport I would encourage them to go pro, to be the best they can. But if they don't become interested in sports that's fine too."

As one of the game's veterans (she's been playing racquetball professionally since the tour's second year back in 1976) McDonald affords herself the luxury of reflection on the sport and what it has meant to her life.

"Racquetball was the first sport that appealed to me," she said "There were so many people just learning to play at that time that many friendships were formed."

One of the best friendships (to put it mildly) was the one that developed into marriage. Yes, Martha and Greg met on three wall courts when they were in college. After conquering all her outdoor foes, she turned to the indoor, four wall game for the competition and challenge.

Yet Martha McDonald is very "up front" about the priorities in her life.

"Family comes first," she says. "But I'll always be able to make room for racquetball." ●

National Racquetball's 2nd Annual Ball Guide

Another Exclusive One-Stop Shopping List

Over the years we've seen black racquetballs, purple racquetballs, green racquetballs, even dimpled racquetballs. Today's game has finally settled on blue as *the* color for racquetballs.

The industry has suffered through years of balls that were too slow, too fast, too brittle or too smooth. Today's standard seem to have melded well the fast and slow to equalize the power/control forces.

For easy comparison we have displayed for you on these pages the various racquetballs currently on the market. Most are available at your club, but if any should not be, or if you'd just like further information on a particular brand, please feel free to contact the manufacturers listed at the conclusion of this article.

Our sincere thanks to these companies who generously provided samples, photos and descriptions of their products.



Rollout Bleu by AMF Volt

- Consistent, elastic, constantly improving blue ball
- Superior quality control standards
- "Life" tested (ball blasting against wall to ensure long life)
- Vital areas constantly reviewed: roundness, weight, compression, balance, texture and seam integrity
- Approved by AARA
- Official ball of WPRA
- Packaged two balls per can
- Suggested retail price: \$4.00 per can



Speedflite™ by Ektelon

- Durable, high performance blue ball
- Nearly perfect roundness eliminates erratic wobble or bounce
- New production methods ensure uniformity in weight, diameter, wall thickness and rubber density
- Textured surface to prevent skim or slide
- Approved by AARA
- Provides high speed favored by hard-hitters
- Over-all playing characteristics also produce control game
- Guarantee: If broken before label wears off, will replace free
- Packaged two balls per can



Pinch Shot by General Sportcraft

- Long playing blue ball
- Perfectly round
- Official size and weight
- Approved by AARA
- Standard guarantee
- Consistent bounce
- Packaged two balls per can
- Suggested retail: \$5.00



Yellow Dot™ by Merco-North American Sports Co.

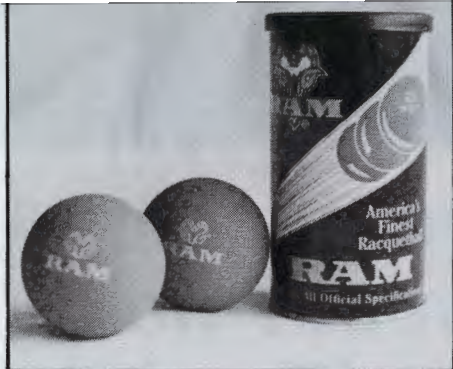
- High quality blue ball
- Manufactured in Australia—assembled in U.S.A.
- Severely tested for three years by top professional players
- Merco experience (number one squash ball manufacturer) and dedication to excellence
- Yellow dot engraved in ball so players will always know which of their balls is the Yellow Dot
- Packaged two balls per can
- Suggested retail price: \$5.00 per can
- Approved by AARA

For further information on any of the balls included in this guide feel free to contact the appropriate manufacturer:

AMF Volt, Inc., 3801 South Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, CA 92704

Ektelon, 8929 Aero Dr., San Diego, CA 92123

General Sportcraft Co., Ltd., 140 Woodbine St., Bergenfield, NJ 07621



Ram Racquetball

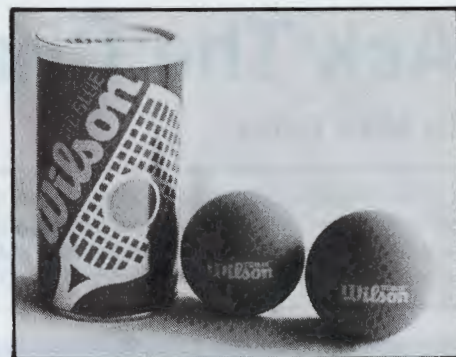
- Precision, high performance blue ball
- Superior durability, true bounce
- Ideal speed and consistent rebound
- Standard guarantee for breakage
- Meets all official specifications
- Packaged one per box or two per can
- Suggested retail: \$1.95/box or \$3.95 per can

Manufactured and distributed by license granted from Ram Golf Corporation to Right Gard Corporation, Montgomeryville, PA.



Ultra-blue by Penn

- Pressureless construction for long, lively consistent play
- Exclusive "Double Performance" guarantee: If ball fails before label is worn off, will replace with two new balls
- Approved by AARA
- Official ball 1982 AARA Regional & National Singles Champions
- Official 1982 ball AARA Regional & National Juniors Championships
- Official ball 1982 AARA National Inter-collegiate Championships
- Official ball of American Professional Racquetball Organization (APRO)
- Packaged two balls per can
- Suggested retail price: \$4.95 per can



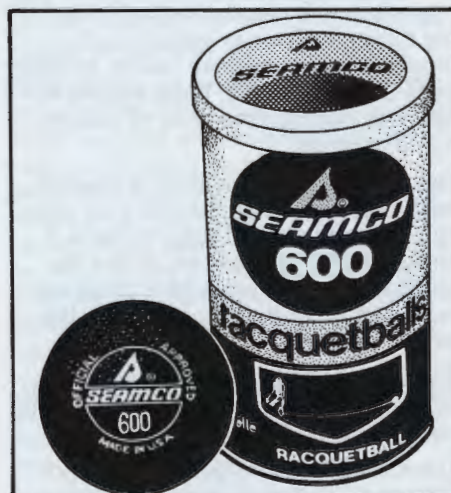
TruBLUE by Wilson

- Lively, consistent bounce
- Long lasting durability
- Play tested nationally by the game's best players
- Medium/fast speed
- Pressureless to retain its bounce in or out of can
- Approved by AARA
- Packaged two balls per can
- Suggested retail: \$5.00



Top-Flite® Blue by Spalding

- Manufactured to exacting specifications
- Consistently lively and durable blue ball
- Pressureless construction
- Uniformity of weight, compression and bounce
- Guarantee: If ball fails before label is worn off, Spalding will replace with new can free of charge
- Packaged two balls per can
- Approved by AARA
- Suggested retail price: \$4.50 per can



Seamco 600

- New, improved formula
- Vivid, pressureless blue ball
- Improved quality for durability, consistency & liveliness
- Approved by AARA
- Premium quality natural and synthetic rubber
- Meets required standards of all associations
- Packaged two balls per can
- Official ball of 1983 AARA National Doubles Championships
- Suggested retail price: \$4.20 per can

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Penn Athletic Products, 200 Mall
Blvd., Monroeville, PA 15146

Right Gard Corporation, Commerce Drive & Stump Rd., Mont-
gomeryville, PA 18936

Spaulding, 425 Meadow St.,
Chicopee, MA 01013

Wilson Sporting Goods, 2233
West St., River Grove, IL 60171 ●

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New Eagle	15.95

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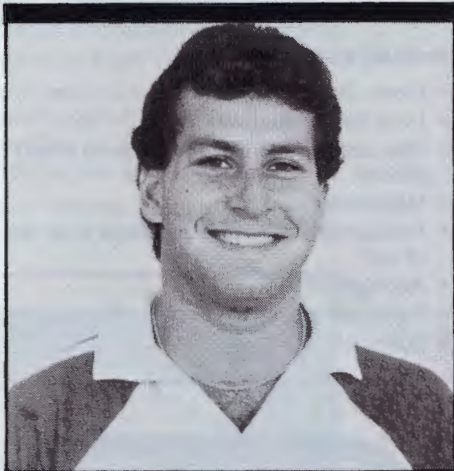
Hours: Mon-Sat. 10 AM—6 PM (PST)



Ask The Champ

by Mike Yellen

Current National Champion Mike Yellen answers questions about improving your game in this ongoing, exclusive series in *National Racquetball*. Readers are encouraged to submit questions to Mike Yellen, c/o *Ask The Champ, National Racquetball*, 1800 Pickwick Ave., Glenview, IL 60025.



Question: You made a point last month to tell us to play squash or run or do other things besides racquetball, that the variety will help our game. But what if I've only got an hour a day to work out? Shouldn't I spend that time on a racquetball court?

Yellen: If racquetball is the game you really enjoy playing, then it's racquetball you should be playing. Once in a while you might consider another activity to help improve your game or break the monotony, if you find your sessions monotonous.

It's a decision that each person has to make on his own. There are many drills, lots of players with equal ability, and many techniques you can use to keep the game lively for you. If all you've got is an hour a day, if you're enjoying yourself and you're not getting mentally tired of racquetball, then by all means, stay on the racquetball court.

I use squash, running and other activities more for mental reasons than physical. With all the racquetball I play and training that I do, I just get mentally fatigued with racquetball from time to time. I've found that if I spend five hours a day on the racquetball court I lose that "eagerness to play" that I need and want when I go into a tournament.

Remember, I can't just call up anybody, make a date, and play hard. The curse

of being as successful as I am is that there's no competition outside tournaments. So, to break or prevent the boredom, I use other activities.

Question: I'm just now getting into tournaments (B level) and I'm finding that the variances in the playability of racquetballs affects my game, particularly my serve. Is this an accepted factor in racquetball? How can I take advantage of the ball being used?

Yellen: The history of racquetball is laden with controversies surrounding the speed of the ball. In the early years, balls were too slow and then most manufacturers overcompensated and the balls became too lively and although a happy medium seems to have been generally found, there are still differences between the balls of today's manufacturers.

The first thing you must do is analyze how a particular ball fits into your overall game and style of play. If you're a serve-and-shoot player, you'll like the quicker balls and you'll have more success with them than you will with the slower ball.

If you're a control player, hitting more lob and off speed you should prefer the balls that tend to be a bit slower.

The idea is to figure out 1) your opponent and his style of play; 2) the particular ball you're playing with and its speed; and 3) which serves will be most effective with that ball against that opponent.

You can hit the same serve with every ball, but because of the speed, you won't necessarily get the same results. In fact, you probably won't. For example, if you're a power hitter, generally the faster ball is best for you. But if you can't control the fast ball and end up hitting all your drive serves off the back wall, you might as well use the slower ball and get those serves in a better position.

The speed of the ball doesn't really affect any of the other serves, other than drives. One ball may "grab" the wall on

hard Z serves, but generally, the biggest difference is the speed the ball reaches the receiver.

Since the Z is not usually hit with 100 percent power, most of the balls will grab the wall on Z's about the same. The amount of grab depends on how hard you hit the Z. The harder you hit it, the more the grab.

Regardless of the ball, try to make the serve work for you so that you are able to stay in control of the rally. That's the key to victory.

Question: We often hear about this diet or that food being the "best" for athletes to eat prior to competition. Do you have any special diet that you use at tournaments?

Yellen: In the weeks prior to competition (tournament preparation) I try to actually eat a little more nutritiously than I do before matches. I like a high protein diet with plenty of vegetables. I personally enjoy fish and chicken meals with salads and always those veggies.

I don't get involved much with vitamins. They just don't make me feel any different with them or without them. I'm not saying they're not good for some people, they just never did anything for me.

A few days before the tournament I'll stick primarily with the same diet, and just add some starch to it. Potatoes, breads and pasta dishes are the natural additions. At the tournament itself, I go heavier on the starch.

Timing is also important. I make sure that no matter what time I play I am finished eating about four hours prior to game time. If it's an afternoon or early evening match, I'll eat a lunch-style meal made up of sandwich (turkey's my favorite), soups, and french fries, perhaps salads instead of soup.

If it's a late night match, and it often is, I'll eat the pre-game meal around 3 or 4 p.m. and I'll stay with a lunch. After the match I'll go out and eat a big dinner. ●

Anticipation: What To Do When You're Not Hitting The Ball

by Jean Sauser



Just as important as putting the ball in the right place to make points is *putting yourself* in the right place when you are not hitting the ball.

Anticipation, the ability to get yourself in the right place at the right time when your opponent takes his shot, is one of the key factors in a winning racquetball game. Proper anticipation gives you a head start in retrieving your opponent's shot and helps you make an effective return.

Lack of anticipation makes you run twice as far to retrieve the ball, requires that you do twice the physical work to stay in the rally and causes you to hit a less effective shot. Similar to the football team that can't execute its game plan because it doesn't control the line of scrimmage, so too a racquetball player can't execute the proper shots if he doesn't get to them in time.

Good anticipation involves watching the ball, noting how your opponent is setting up to return your shots, positioning yourself in good/safe court position to retrieve, and lastly, setting your mind to concentrate on retrieving the ball.

Watching The Ball

You must watch the ball. No matter what you might have heard or seen either personally or from an instructor—you must watch the ball. Therefore, you must wear eyeguards. Real eyeguards—not regular glasses.

If you are a player who has never watched the ball (the arch-typical such player serves, hunches down staring straight ahead toward the front wall, elbows nearly resting on knees, with a gradual backwards shuffling of feet into center court—oblivious to all that is behind him or her) put on some eye protection and begin to have a whole new world of racquetball opened for you. To this point in time you have not played racquetball.

By watching where your shots are going you'll be amazed at how many more shots you can retrieve effectively and how quickly your game begins to improve. Besides that, you'll undoubtedly notice how much *safer* the game will be when you watch the ball. By always knowing where the ball and your opponent are, you can easily avoid collisions and poor positioning that create injury-causing situations.

(The classic injury situation occurs when the server, as described above—hunched over, backing out of the service zone, staring at the front wall—has just hit a serve that caroms around and off the back wall. As the receiver follows the ball *toward* center court, eyes on the ball, he is not aware of the server who is backing out *toward* center court, eyes straight ahead. A collision would be merciful. A head knocked off could be the result. And the "blame," as if anyone cared, would be that of the person not looking at the ball.)

Watching the ball when it is behind you can be learned initially from the serving position. After you've served the ball, step back into center court position. Look over the shoulder to the side of the court you've served to (left shoulder

for left court serve). Turn slightly in the direction of your shot and get ready to go for your opponent's return (*Diagram 1*).

If you've served a good, controlled serve, one that isn't popping wide off the side wall or around and off the back wall, you can easily hold center court position without any fear of being hit. If you should have a slight fear of being hit while watching, I recommend holding your racquet face in front of your own face while your opponent hits the ball.

If you've hit a poor serve, one that misses the corner and pops out to the center of the court, then you must step aside and give your opponent room for his shot (*Diagram 2*). To anticipate the return of this shot, you must carefully watch your opponent.

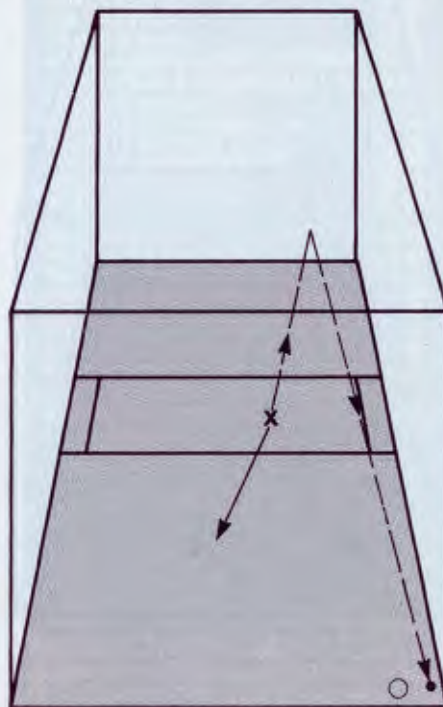


Diagram 1. When you place your serve in the back corner of the court, you can safely and effectively maintain center court position.

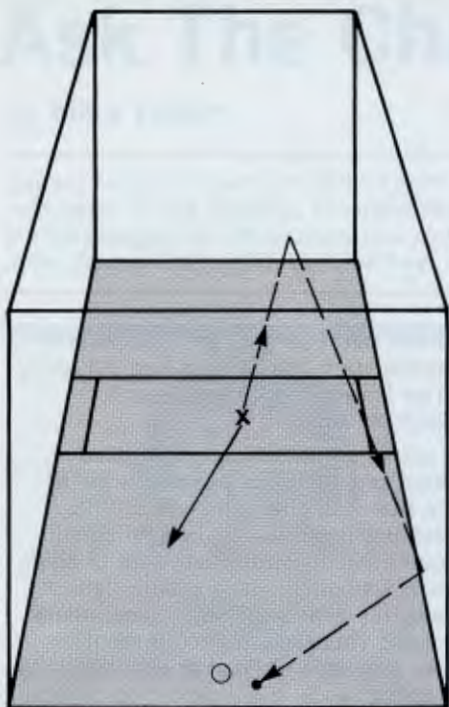


Diagram 2. If your serve contacts the side wall early and pops out to center of deep court, it's best to give your opponent room for his shot.

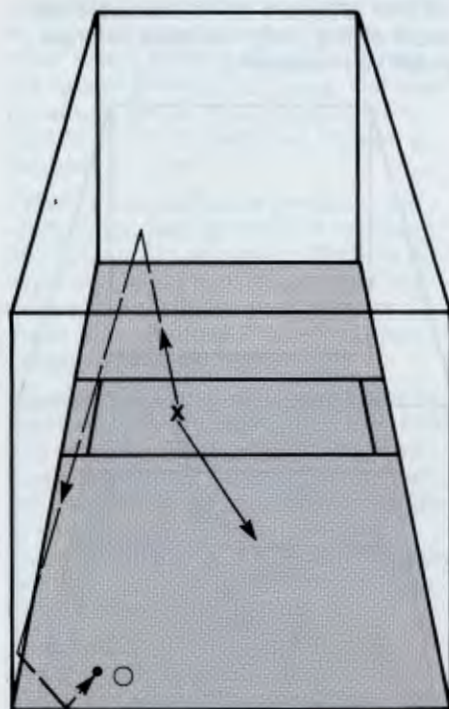


Diagram 3. If your serve to the backhand pops around the backhand corner, and your opponent elects to return it with his backhand, you should step to the forehand side of the center court.

For example, if you're serving to the backhand side of the court and your opponent slides back away from the back corner and hits a backhand, then you would slide over to the right of center court and give him room for his shot down the left line (*Diagram 3*).

This maneuver is not only safe for you (you won't get hit) it gives you a head start toward retrieving the shot. Turn your body and feet to the side of the court your opponent is facing. In fact, if you assume the same basic body position your opponent is taking, you'll find that you are ready to run down the ball.

In the event your opponent comes around out of the backhand corner with a forehand shot (and many beginners or intermediates will "walk around" their backhands to take this shot with their forehand) you must turn and slide over to the left side of the court, which will diminish the chance of your being hit.

Set up your body and feet so that they now face the forehand side of the court. You'll be able to retrieve his shot as it comes to the right side of the court (*Diagram 4*). You are in perfect position to retrieve a down-the-line pass, straight kill or side wall-front wall pinch. And, if he chooses the less likely shots to the backhand side of the court, well, you're already there!

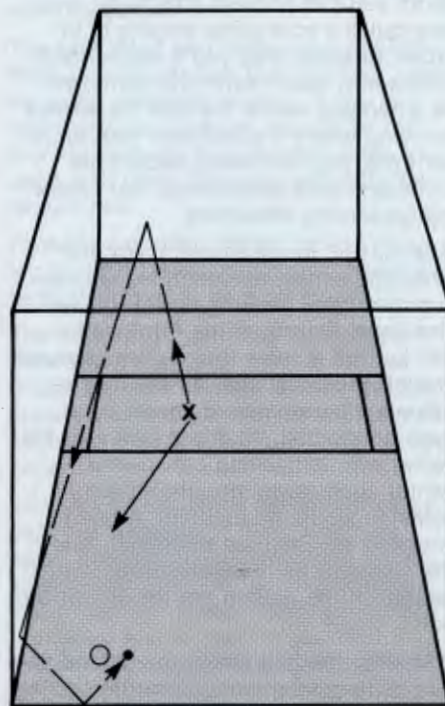


Diagram 4. If your serve to the backhand pops around the backhand corner, and your opponent elects to return it with his forehand, you should step to the backhand side of center court.

For all serve return situations, try not to move up or back too quickly. Wait until you really know where your opponent is hitting the ball. Position yourself just in front of the receiving marks. This way you can run forward to retrieve a kill shot attempt, or move back quickly to retrieve a pass.

Just as these anticipatory positions apply to serving, they also apply to watching shots that place your opponent behind you. If you've driven your opponent behind you with a passing shot, watch and anticipate the ball in the same manner as if you had just served it there.

There will be times when your opponent will be taking shots to the side of you. As he is setting up to shoot, watch the ball and at the same time, move into center court, if you can do so without hindering him.

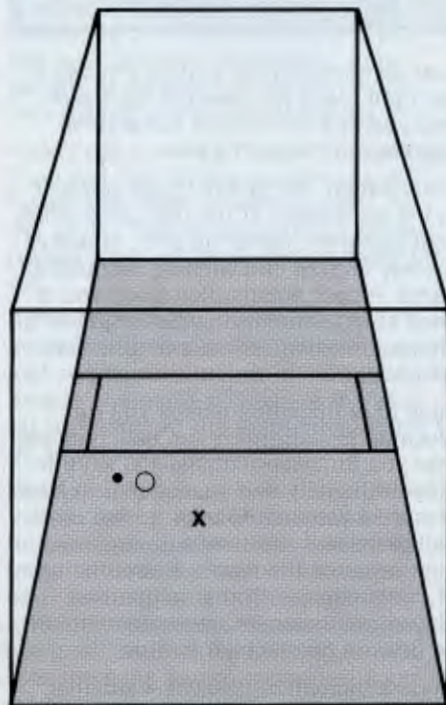


Diagram 5. If your opponent is setting up to shoot on one side of center court, safely position yourself slightly behind him and off center to stay in his blind spot.

The Position Of Your Feet

Your "feetal" position is a very important part of anticipation. There's nothing worse than knowing where the shot is going, beginning to move to it prepared to end the rally, and then find yourself stumbling over your own clod-hoppers. Stay on the balls of your feet, ready to run as you wait for your opponent to hit the ball. If you know a shot is going to a certain side of the court, get your feet pointed in that direction.

Try not to get caught flat-footed with your weight on your heels. This will cause you to move like you're stuck in molasses, especially if the ball is hit toward an unanticipated area.

Concentration

The last step to great anticipation is concentration. Keeping your mind on the rally is as important when you are *not* hitting the ball as when you *are* hitting. Your mental attitude has as much to do with your retrieving/anticipation abilities as your footwork and court positioning.

As you ready yourself to retrieve, visualize yourself retrieving the ball. Have confidence. You're not only going to get his shot, you're going to hit it exactly where you want to... a sure winner. Focus your attention on the general area you think your opponent is hitting the ball to.

If you mentally prepare to set out to run down every ball in the court before a match, you'll find your anticipation that day will be good. If you are mentally afraid that your opponent will control the play, then you won't move around the court confidently or fluidly.

Remember, a racquetball court is small in comparison to other courts of play, like a tennis court or basketball court. There's not nearly as much room to cover. Have this positive attitude that unless your opponent flat rolls out kill after kill, you'll get it and hit a winner off of it!

Learning to anticipate shots properly not only frustrates your opponents ("what do I have to do to hit a winner?") but it increases your skill level. Anticipation makes you faster with less effort. You'll play better singles and doubles when you can not only make your shots, but make it to all your opponent's shots too! ●

When your opponent is setting up in center court in front of you, try to stay in his blind spot. You'll have to stay behind him, but edge up as close to center court as is safely possible (Diagram 5).

Unfortunately, you are out of position in this instance, but it is the best that you can safely and strategically do. Force your opponent to wonder where you are. If you run up in front of him, he'll blow the ball by you for a pass. By playing hide and seek, you may get a mis-hit return from your wondering opponent.

Again, turn your body to the side of the court that your opponent is facing in this situation. You'll be better prepared to retrieve any shot he hits.

Opponent's Body Position

In addition to watching the ball, you should always be noting your opponent's body position as he sets up to hit the ball. Many times a certain body position will tell you exactly what shot your opponent is going to hit.

Notice how his feet are stationed; how he turns his upper body to get ready to shoot; where his shoulders are pointing. This is very important information that will help you prepare to move to the part of the court he's about to hit the ball to. The more observant you can be the better you'll be able to anticipate his shots and thus counter with winning shots of your own.

Once you've determined a body movement that predicts the same shot time and time again, then it's okay to begin to run to cover that shot, but only at the moment you see your opponent's total attention focus on the ball.

Remember! Even though you know where he's going to hit a certain shot, if you start to move to that shot too early, he can change his mind and hit a different shot and catch you running the wrong way. So, the time to run for a shot that you are certain of is when you see your opponent's eye contact and total concentration go to the ball.

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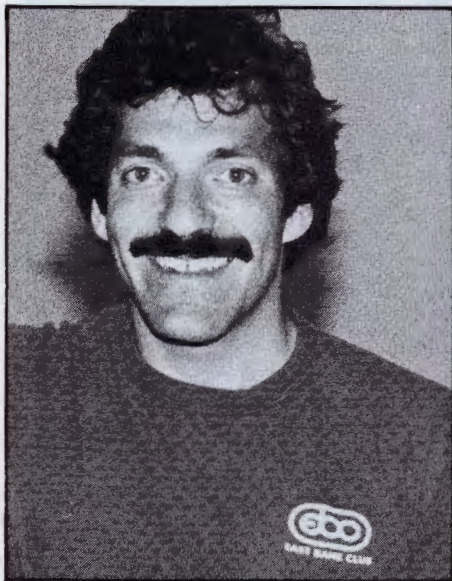
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Steve Mondry's Racquetball Clinic

5 Tips To Better Court Coverage

by Steve Mondry



The Golden Retriever. The Rat. The Flash. The Cockroach.

These are not the respective names of a breed of dog, rodent, comic book hero or insect. Rather, these were or are the actual nicknames given to some of the top professional racquetball players whose quickness afoot and superior court coverage ability highlighted their performances.

No matter what you may have heard elsewhere, racquetball is not a game of killing the ball, but actually a game of *re-killing* the ball. And in order to be able to re-kill the ball, you need to be in the proper position, which is where good fundamentals of court coverage come into play.

Court coverage is an important and often overlooked facet of racquetball. It is so important that you can't afford not to be good at it, and don't think that only those skinny, fast youngsters have the ability to cover the court. If that was the case, Mike Yellen, who probably wouldn't be the fastest kid on your block, could not be one of the best retrievers ever to step into the 20x40 room.

Whether you are skinny, fat, tall or short there are certain areas of concentration that, if developed, will improve your ability to get to the ball. Here then, are five specific ways to improve your court coverage.

1) Watch The Ball

A common misconception in racquetball is the belief that it is safer to watch the front wall than the ball. Somehow people (especially beginners) figure they won't get hit with the ball this way, sort of, what they don't see won't hurt them.

How absurd! That's the same as crossing the street without looking in either direction, in order to avoid getting hit by an oncoming car.

Once you get used to watching the ball at all times (and therefore, buy a good pair of eyeguards and wear them) you should be able to determine the proper position you need to be in when your opponent is hitting his shot.

By taking such position you will feel much safer and more in control of the situation. Remember, look over your shoulder and watch the ball—not the front wall.

And I can't stress enough the importance of eyeguards.

2) Anticipation

When your opponent is hitting the ball you have to be thinking. If you are standing there waiting and wondering and watching the front wall, your flat feet will never be able to take you anywhere near your opponent's shot.

Think! A smart player will most often hit to the open court. And while even a golden retriever knows that, you'd be amazed at how many players don't have an inkling about it. Yes, it's true, most players try to hit the ball away from you!

If, for example, you just returned a shot from the right side of the court, your opponent's next shot will most likely be one of two selections. Either he'll hit pinch kill or a cross court pass.

(Diagram 1).

Now, he knows that and you should know it as well. Therefore, while he is hitting the ball, you should already be moving to the open court to cover his shot.

Diagram 1. Your opponent has two obvious choices: pinch kill right wall - front wall, or cross court pass left. Either way, you should be heading west.

3) Hit and Move to Center Court

Racquetball is a constant struggle for superior court position. If you're returning a shot from deep court you need to move toward center court as quickly as possible. Too many times players hit their shot and stand there waiting to see what will happen.

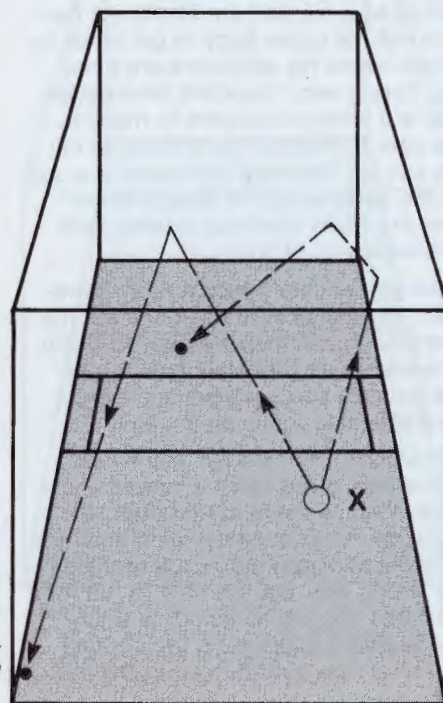
I'll tell you what will happen—you will lose the rally—unless you just rolled off a perfect kill. You stand little chance (a mis-hit by your opponent) to properly defend your opponent's shot if you don't move quickly to center court.

If you do move to center court, all sorts of positive things happen. First, you cut off many angles on your opponent's shots; second, by being on the move, you're likely to reach more shots; third, you're closer to more shots from center court; and fourth, your quickness can catch him off guard and off balance.

All of these things increase your chances of winning the rally. Remember—hit and move. Hit and move.

4) Run Close to the Ground

Have you ever noticed how a baseball base stealer runs? Leading off first base he's in a deep crouch, knees bent,



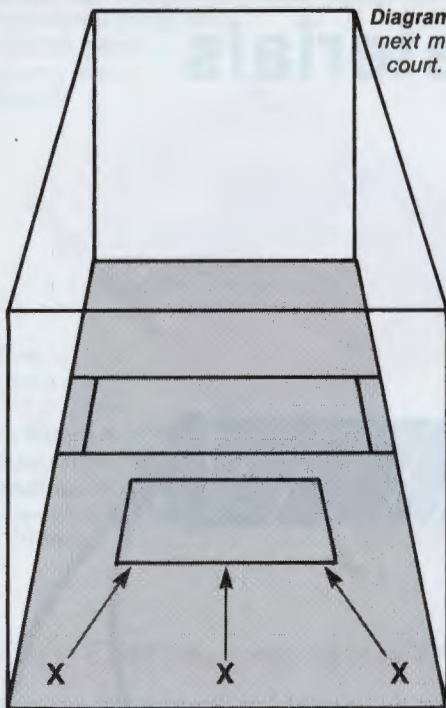


Diagram 2. If you hit from deep court, your next move is to get yourself into center court. Pronto!

So I took a good look at my shoes. Nothing seemed wrong with them. They were mighty comfortable as well as versatile. The grass stains from cutting my lawn hardly showed and the little pockets of dirt left over from the previous night's softball game couldn't hurt anything.

I thought a tennis shoe is a basketball shoe is a gym shoe is a racquetball shoe. What's the difference?

I know now that there is a huge difference. Today's racquetball market offers a wide selection of shoes specifically designed for racquetball. Shoe manufacturers know and understand our game. They recognize the fast starts and stops, the quick changes of movement.

You can't expect to play your best if your shoe soles are as bald as the tires on your '71 Mustang. And dirt in the grooves is even worse.

I recommend doing what the pros do—wear your racquetball shoes only on the racquetball court. If you love the feel, look and odor of tennies so much, then buy a spare pair to change into after your game. In this way you'll always have the best possible shoes on during your matches.

No more slip 'n slide.

* * *

There is no magic secret to good court coverage. It takes effort and knowledge with determination and concentration. Court coverage is one of those racquetball subtleties that can't really be diagrammed. If you put the effort into it, your game will improve. ●

Steve Mondry is head racquetball pro at the East Bank Club, Chicago, a top touring pro for six years and author of numerous instructional articles on racquetball, conditioning and weight training.

weight balanced on his toes, ready to sprint toward second, or dive the opposite direction back to first. The one thing he never is—is standing straight up.

In racquetball, there is no reason not to run close to the ground. Like the base stealer, you'll get a better jump on the ball if you're down low and like the best racquetball players, you'll hit more effective shots if hit from a low position.

The top racquetball pros bend their knees when they hit the ball, especially those shots that call for power or kills. By being close to the ground they can move quickly in any direction with no wasted energy. When they get to the ball, they're ready to rip.

5) Proper Footwear

I remember my first few experiences on the racquetball court. I remember them so well, not because of all the fun I had (lots), nor because of the amazing ease with which I picked up the game (like anyone), nor because I actually worked up a decent sweat in a matter of minutes.

No, I remember my first trips on the court as a slip 'n slide contest. My shoes slipped and I slid all over the court. I wondered why these stupid courts couldn't get swept out now and then, maybe then they wouldn't be so slippery.

As you no doubt have already guessed, my shoes were the problem.

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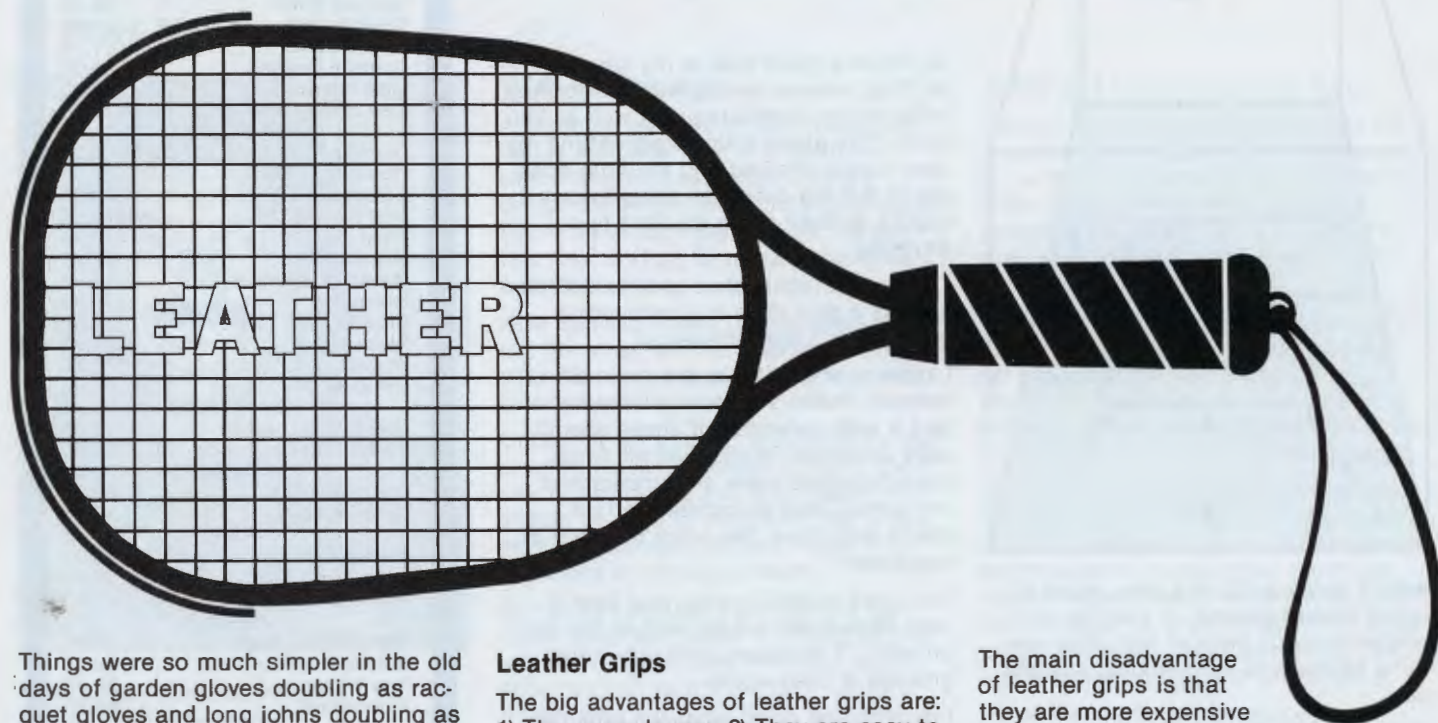
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Getting a Grip on Grip Materials

by Steve Keeley



Things were so much simpler in the old days of garden gloves doubling as racquet gloves and long johns doubling as sweats. Back then - in the late 1960's - the wooden framed racquets weren't too sophisticated, and neither were the players when it came to talking equipment. Ask one of them to compare leather to rubber as a grip material and he'd give you a bovine stare. Leather and rubber grips were not in his vocabulary.

You couldn't blame him though because the grips of the 60's were made of self-applied medical tape, which didn't make for interesting conversation. All the player of that era knew about grips was that the gripped end of the racquet was the one you tried to hold onto when you hit the ball.

Things are different now. Even something as mundane as the racquet grip can be the topic of an hour-long conversation in the locker room. I'll agree that there are a lot of esoteric ins and outs of grips, but let's let the happily frustrated pros worry about them.

This article concentrates on the most basic area of grips: grip material. We are going to examine the two most common materials - leather and rubber - and explore the advantages and disadvantages of each.

Leather Grips

The big advantages of leather grips are: 1) They wear longer; 2) They are easy to regrip; and 3) They grip back better than rubber. By "grip back" I mean that there is a tackiness or slight adhesion between the leather and the hand. This tackiness is even more pronounced if you wear a glove, apparently since dead cowhide is less oily and slick than live human palms.

Note that different glove materials (regular leather, suede, etc.) bring out slightly different grip-back characteristics in the leather grip. Some leather grips are more tacky than others. Raised leather (with tiny holes and bumps in interesting designs throughout the grip) seems tackier than smooth leather (holeless and bumpless).

I'm not insinuating that tackiness is necessarily a desirable trait; some players use leather simply for its longevity and couldn't care less if it grabbed back. But, if you do like the tacky feel then hear this and I'll write it slowly so it sinks in: Leather grips get old in a tackless sort of way. Their grab goes long before the grip wears through.

If, one day, you find that clutching your leather grip is like grabbing an oily doorknob, scrutinize that grip. Is it slick and sooty-colored, and is the "genuine cowhide" label long ago rubbed out? Then it's time to regrip, which I'll explain shortly.

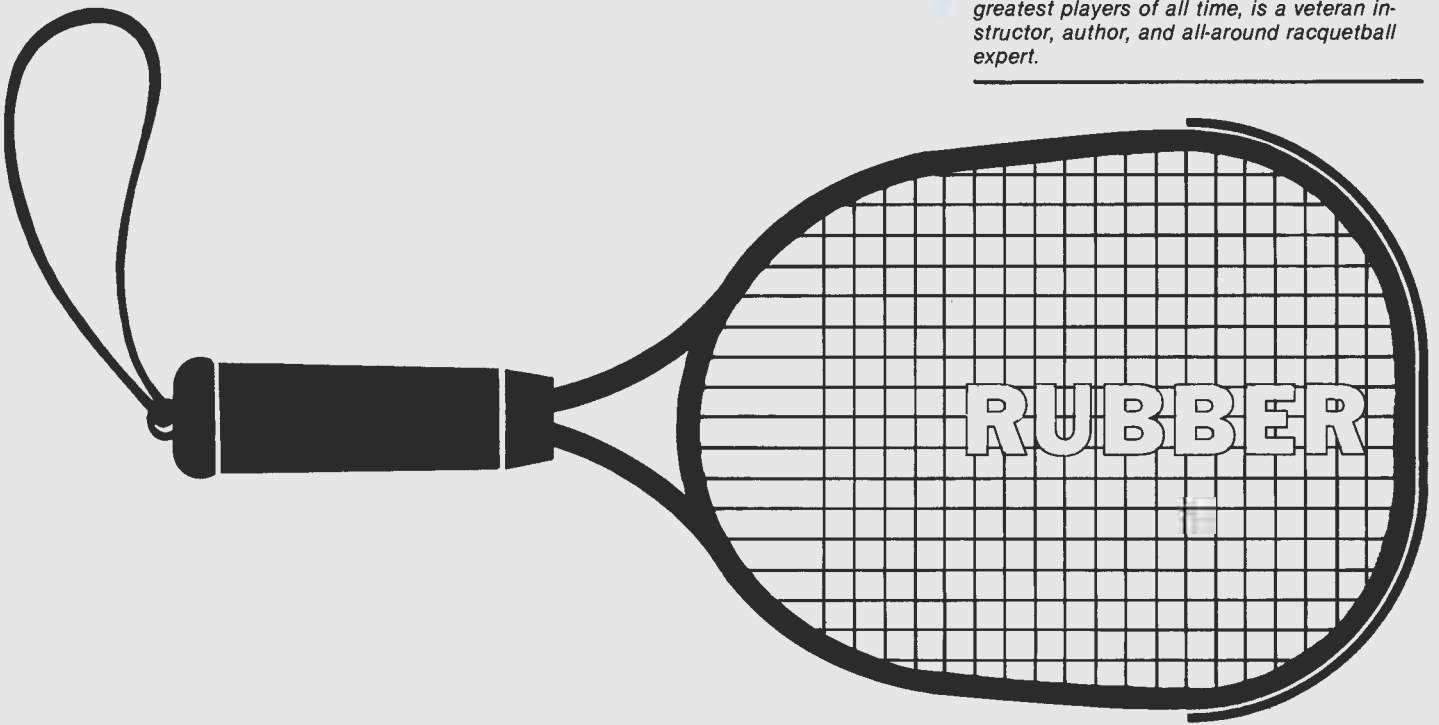
The main disadvantage of leather grips is that they are more expensive than rubber. This can be overlooked in the long run since you'll wear through a few rubber grips for each leather one provided you don't deem it necessary to regrip every few games due to loss of tackiness. One other minor disadvantage is that it is sometimes hard to know if you're buying a "good" leather grip. There are some clues to leather quality to look for in the grip's appearance.

First, a general rule is that excessive decorative designs and fancy ribbing oft-times signals a poorer quality grip. Anyway, what good are sequins and such when covered by your callouses?

Second, there are true leather and synthetic (vinyl) leather. The latter is usually a cheap imitation which is about as tacky as a banana with oily skin, and what tackiness the synthetics do have is quickly lost to moisture.

Don't get me wrong: Not all synthetic grips are shoddy facsimiles. The market is being bombarded with many exotic materials which manufacturers claim really put the hurt to the slippery palm syndrome. I can't vouch for the veracity of these claims since I have used stock leather and rubber grips ever since before most of these new-fangled materials hit the scene.

Steve Keeley, recognized as one of the greatest players of all time, is a veteran instructor, author, and all-around racquetball expert.



I do know that if I were going to use other than a standard leather or rubber grip, I would do some experimenting before regripping my racquet right at tourney time with some fancy sand-paper-leather hybrid. And be careful about the gripping ads you read - the miracle grip that enables you to roll off the first 21 points with no sweat was probably written up by some copywriter who has never dripped sweat in the service box.

Finally, be aware that you can wash your slimy old grip just as you can wash your slimy old glove. Warm water is usually the solution. You know what a bath can do for your grimy body after a few sweaty games of racquetball; it can do the same for your leather grip.

Rubber Grips

Many racquetballers swear by the rubber grip. They often don't know exactly why they prefer this grip material except that it seems to feel better. You'll know it works better for you only after either trying out a friend's racquet or by regripping your own.

The advantage of rubber over leather is singularly (overlooking personal preference) expense. A rubber grip generally costs less than one of its leather sisters. However, economics is an unlikely consideration when the score is 10-10 in the fifth game and your racquet feels like you're holding a greased fish.

How about disadvantages? There are many grip gripes against rubber, at least if you listen to the leather slappers. The most common criticism is that rubber gets slippery as soon as it gets wet. It therefore makes sense that most rubber grippers need to wear gloves. A gloved hand, until the glove gets wet, grasps a wet handle better than a bare hand, and you can replace a wet glove during a time-out but not so with hands.

As a side note, neither sweaty rubber nor sweaty leather is particularly easy to handle with a gloveless hand, yet I appreciate the player who just doesn't feel comfortable putting something between his sensitive fingers and the grip.

Your choices are limited: you can either use a mini-towel tucked in your shorts (which I did for years), or call a time-out and try to stop sweating (which I've tried, unsuccessfully, for years). A more valid criticism aimed against rubber grips is that they wear faster than leather, especially if you wear a glove and switch your grip from forehand to backhand.

Finally, there is the grubby grip. Sooner or later, if you play enough, your rubber grip will start to get slippery and stay that way despite how hard you clench your hand. The symptoms here are constant racquet twisting (assuming you have ruled out other reasons for grip slippage such as a loose grip, an improper size handle or a too headlight racquet) and/or an unsure grasp on the handle.

Not to worry, it's just the grubby grip. Most rubber grips lend themselves to washing just as well as leather. Make the water comfortably warm and you can even add a dash of soap. Press dry with a towel and you're all set to grip securely again.

A final note is that there are two types of rubber grips: a softer sponge rubber and a harder rubber. The pros and cons of each are straightforward.

The softer sponge wears and tears more easily but has an advantage in that it squeezes in a little when you grab it. Because of this give, the softer rubber is easier to hold on to when wet than the harder rubber.

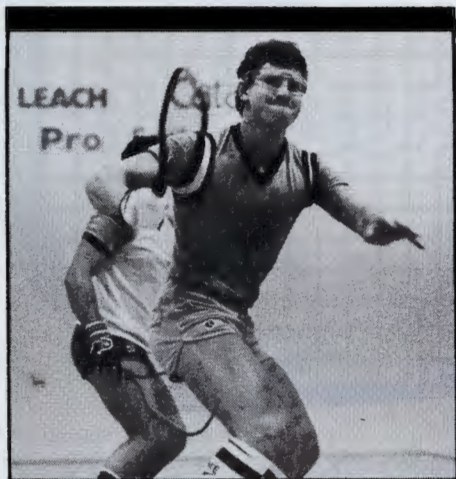
There has to be something good about the hard rubber or they wouldn't make 'em, I guess. The only thing I can come up with is durability; some hards will even outlive leather. I don't mean to come down too severely on the harder rubbers because then you might not even consider them. Go ahead and give them a try if for some reason you don't like leather and you don't like the squeeze-in give of soft sponge rubber.

Those are the advantages and disadvantages of leather and rubber grips. The important thing which I hope you retain after finishing this article is what I've suggested: Try out everything before deciding on anything. ●

The Hogan Way

by Marty Hogan

Five time National Champion Marty Hogan answers questions about his game and how to improve your game in this ongoing, exclusive series in *National Racquetball*. Readers are encouraged to submit questions to: Marty Hogan, c/o The Hogan Way, *National Racquetball*, 1800 Pickwick Ave., Glenview, IL 60025.



Question: A lot of people tell me that the back wall is supposed to be my friend. Some friend! Can you suggest any drills that will help me improve my back wall game?

Hogan: The best way to improve your back wall play during practice sessions is to get on the court alone and create situations that are similar to what you'll see during a real game.

Remember that there are three types of back wall shots, shots that come straight off the back wall without having hit a side wall; shots that hit the side wall, then the back wall; and shots that hit the back wall, then the side wall. You're going to have to practice all of them.

I would start by practicing the straight in-and-out back wall shot. Start with your forehand from the deep left corner of the court and bounce the ball into the back wall. When it rebounds back toward you, use your normal forehand stroke to make contact. After at least 10 of these shots, take a few steps toward the opposite side wall and do 10 more, still with your forehand. Then continue this pattern until you have covered the entire width of the back wall.

Next start against the right side wall with your backhand (we're assuming all players are right handed) and again

toss the ball into the back wall on one bounce and hit your backhand into the front wall at least 10 times. Continue your "march" to the opposite side wall so that you have hit at least 50 back wall shots with both strokes.

Remember that you have the flexibility to practice a variety of shots from these drills. Hit straight in kills, passes, pinches or whatever you want, as long as you strive for repetition.

To practice hitting an effective side wall/back wall shot I recommend that you actually hit the front wall first with a high shot so the ball hits the side wall in deep court and caroms around and off the back wall. This will create a game-type situation in which you will run back, set up, and take your back wall shot.

Again, practice this with your forehand and your backhand and from both sides of the court, hitting a variety of shots. No two shots in a racquetball match are exactly the same, with speed of ball, position of opponent, and your position all creating different factors. The more you practice the better you'll get.

For the shot that hits the back wall first, then the side wall, it's a bit more difficult to practice. You must stand about five feet out from the deep corner and toss the ball so that it bounces, strikes the back wall, then the side wall and pops out toward you. You must toss this with a hard toss, because in most game situations this shot will have a great deal of speed on it.

Question: When I play in tournaments (local B) I never know quite what to do and what to look for when I warm-up prior to my match. Do you have a ritual that you go through every time? What should I be looking for in my opponent's warm-up to help my strategy?

Hogan: I definitely have a ritual for warming up. It begins in the locker room where I do a lot of stretching exercise to make sure that I'm as limber as possible. I like to stretch my entire body so that I've just broken a sweat or am about to when I go into the court.

You can never be too warmed up, not only to help avoid injury, but also to help you get immediately into the match.

Once on the court I start by hitting forehands fairly easily about waist high. I don't come out and start ripping the ball, nor do I begin by hitting kill shots. I try to build a grade for myself in which I progressively start hitting the ball harder and lower.

I'll stand in deep court and hit the full range of forehand shots and when my forehand is fairly loosened up I'll switch to the backhand on the left side of the court. I generally take eight to 10 minutes with my forehand and five to eight minutes with my backhand.

The next phase is hitting the ball at game pace. It's showtime and I try a variety of shots hit hard to make sure that I'm ready to play. A common mistake that players make is not taking the necessary warm up time. If you believe you can use the first three or four points of the game to get loose, you'll most likely find yourself behind and/or injured as a result.

There are a lot of things you can learn about your opponent's game by watching him warm up. Of course, it's not all that easy since you should be warming up at the same time. However, there are things to look for that can help you plot strategy if your opponent's a stranger.

First, look for tendencies or lack of them. If a player spends a lot of time practicing forehand down-the-line drives, you can be reasonably certain you're going to see some. By the same token, if you don't see him hitting backhands off the back wall, it could be he's trying to hide a weakness and you should probe this area as soon as possible.

Basically, though, my philosophy is to play my style regardless of who my opponent is. I want to concentrate on my game, my shots, my skills and no matter who I'm playing, no matter what the score, I'm going to play my game. ●

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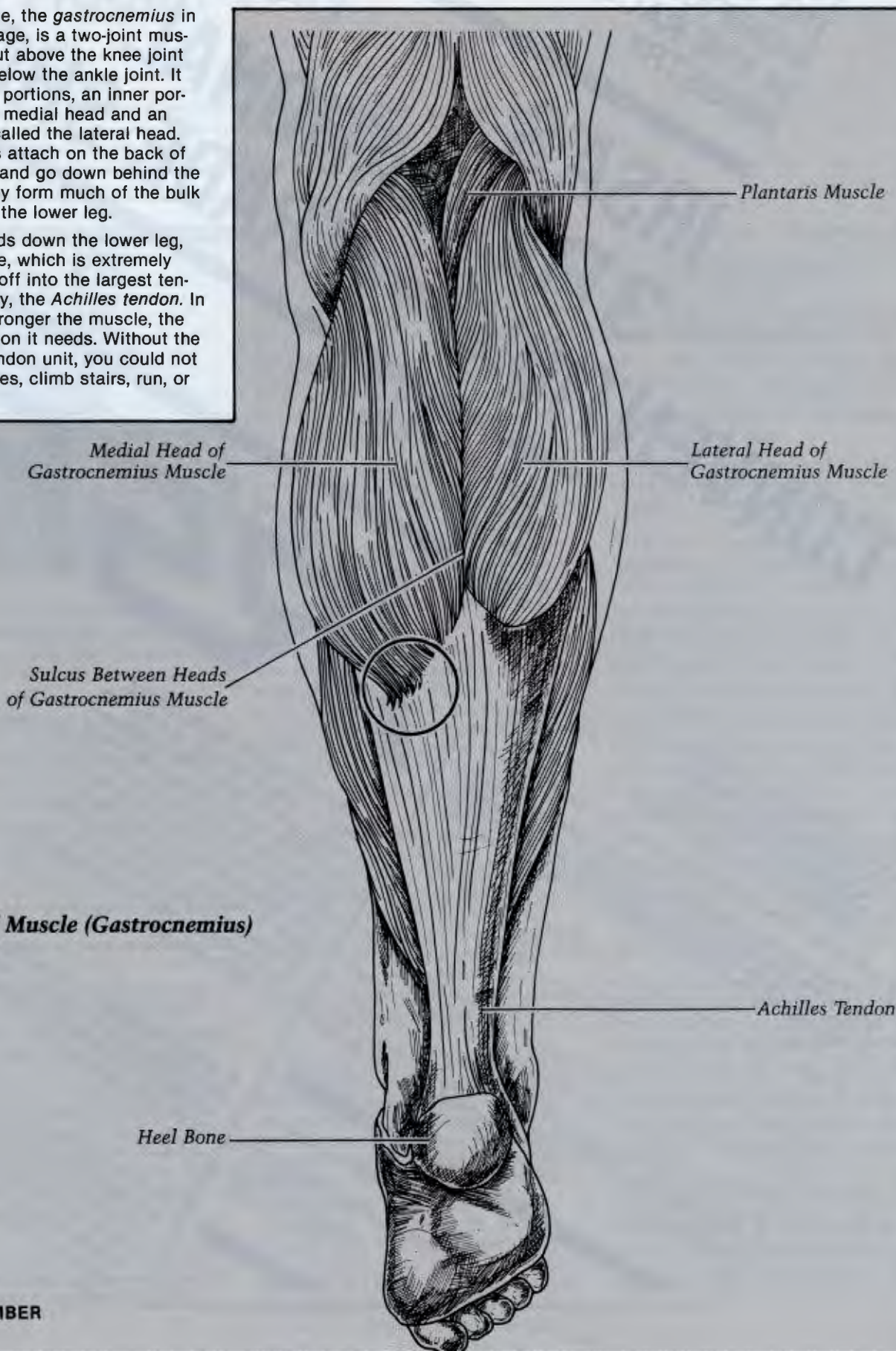
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The Lower Leg

by William Southmayd, M.D., and Marshall Hoffman

The calf muscle, the *gastrocnemius* in medical language, is a two-joint muscle. It starts out above the knee joint and ends up below the ankle joint. It has two major portions, an inner portion called the medial head and an outer portion called the lateral head. These portions attach on the back of the thighbone and go down behind the knee joint. They form much of the bulk of the back of the lower leg.

About two-thirds down the lower leg, the calf muscle, which is extremely strong, stems off into the largest tendon in the body, the *Achilles tendon*. In general, the stronger the muscle, the larger the tendon it needs. Without the calf muscle-tendon unit, you could not rise on your toes, climb stairs, run, or walk.



The Calf Muscle (*Gastrocnemius*)

The weakest portion of the muscle-tendon unit is where the meat of the muscle attaches to the tendon. We call this the musculotendinous junction. This has been demonstrated experimentally by hanging weights on calf muscles of rabbits; they tear first at the musculotendinous junction. The tendon itself will not tear unless it has been weakened by a scalpel cut.

Calf Muscle Strain

Causes

A *calf strain* is a ripping away of the inner portion of the muscle from its tendon attachment. It is caused by putting your calf muscle under too much pressure. Most running athletes—players of baseball, football, basketball, racquetball, and soccer—are the victims of calf strains.

The worst calf strain I have ever treated was in a 28-year-old tennis player. He started up to the net to return a drop shot. The quick forward acceleration and upward tilting of the foot caused him to put great pressure on his calf muscle. He felt it “go twang” and feared his calf had ripped apart.

About 80 percent of the calf muscle strains occur in athletes and fitness buffs who are more than 30 years old. The reason is not clear. But I do not see these strains in 18-year-olds.

Diagnosis And Treatment

There is no secret about this diagnosis. You feel immediately disabled and have an intuitive feeling that something has happened to your calf. For the first 20 to 30 minutes there is very little pain only because the calf is “in shock.” It is numb. During the first three hours, swelling, pain, and muscle spasm all set in. Many large blood vessels are ripped and blood pours into the local area.

Stop exercising, or you will only aggravate the injury. Use RICE immediately. Do not wait for the swelling and pain. The ice, compression, and elevation will minimize the swelling and the healing period will be shortened. Untreated, the swelling will continue over the first 24 to 48 hours. A black-and-blue area often develops.

I have treated some athletes with gigantically swollen calves—sometimes two inches larger than the opposite calf. With this much swelling, I worry about clots forming in the leg veins. The clots, called thrombophlebitis, can travel to your lung and kill you.

Injury Prevention

“Many sports injuries can be prevented,” says Earl Hoerner, clinical professor of rehabilitation at Tufts University and coauthor of *Sports Injuries—the Unthwarted Epidemic*.

“Most injured athletes and fitness buffs reach a barrier where their bodies can no longer compensate for the lack of flexibility or the muscle imbalance; at that point the injury occurs. If they were properly assessed before they started their exercise program, many of these overuse injuries might be avoided.”

I ask you to use crutches for the first few days to take the pressure off the calf muscle. After 48 hours of RICE, start heat applications.

The body can heal this injury only so fast because it involves a large muscle mass. In 90 percent of the cases, it will be two to three weeks before you will be able to jog successfully. It takes that long for a solid scar tissue to form. After you are able to jog pain-free, you should allow an additional week of conditioning before you run or exercise full out, including long-distance running, multiple sprints, and calf strengthening exercises. If you return suddenly to full activity, you may rip the calf again and be laid up for many

more weeks. In total, it requires four to six weeks for complete healing of this injury.

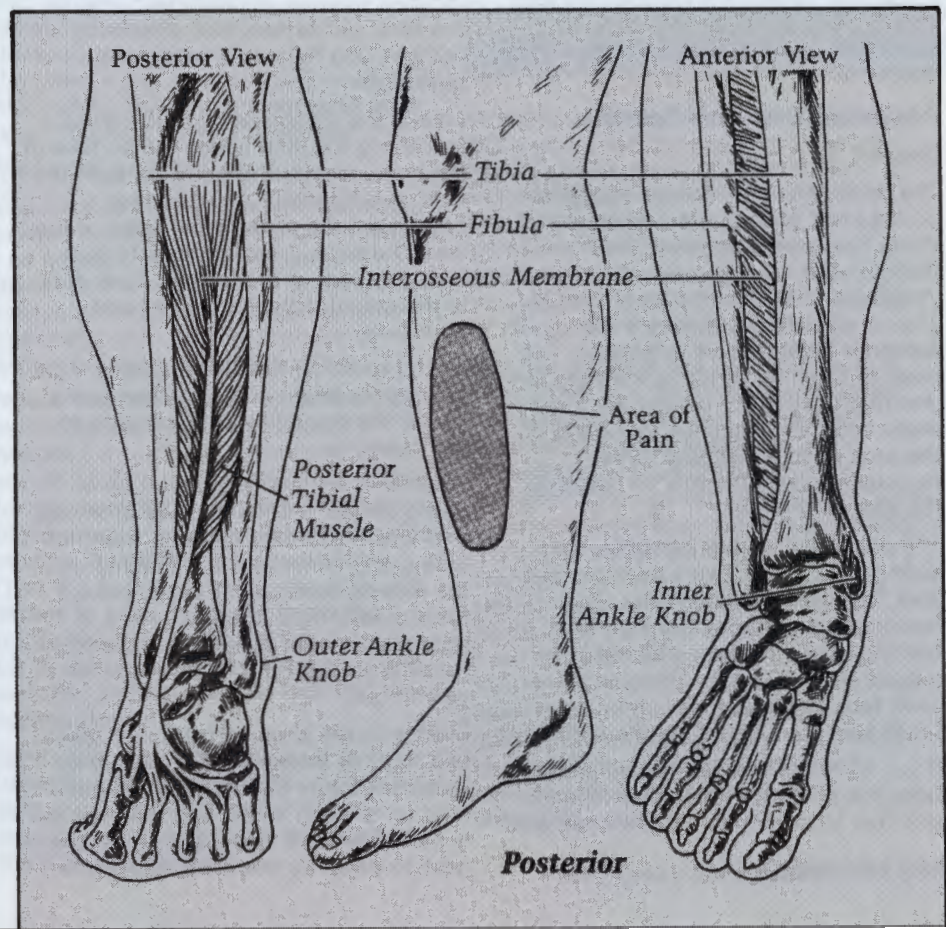
Once the scar tissue heals the rip in the muscle, it is as strong as normal. However, scar tissue is not as elastic as normal muscle, so you must stretch out your calf carefully before sports. Use the same stretches as for the Achilles tendon—wall push-ups and the heel stretch board.

Sometimes, a calf muscle strain is mistaken for a plantaris tendon rupture. The plantaris muscle and its tendon is a small muscle in the back of the leg which is a remnant of early man. Twenty percent of us do not have one.

The plantaris tendon is approximately one one-hundredth the size of the Achilles tendon. Any popping or injury to its muscle or tendon could not possibly cause the tremendous swelling and pain caused by the calf muscle strain.

Shin Splints

A *shin splint* is a catch-all term used by coaches, trainers, and some physicians to describe an aching pain on the front of your lower leg. Shin splints occur most frequently to runners and running



backs, but almost any running athlete is a candidate for this condition.

Shin splints are an early season phenomenon. They happen mainly when your legs are out of shape. When I was a student at Harvard in the early sixties, about 20 percent of the crew got shin splints. The reason: The coach had the oarsmen run up and down the 110 stairs at Harvard Stadium.

There are four separate reasons why you develop pain in the foreleg.

1. A sprain or rip to the posterior tibial muscle which originates in the back of your lower leg bone and holds your arch up. About 75 percent of shin pain is due to overuse of this muscle.
2. An inflammation of the bone covering of the lower leg bone. This is called tibial periostitis. This is about one-tenth as common as posterior tibial problems.
3. Anterior compartment syndrome is a painful condition brought on by an interruption of the blood supply to the three muscles of the front of the lower leg.
4. Tibial stress fracture, which is a crack to the lower leg bone.

These four conditions induce pain with activity; they go away with rest. The pain is all centered within an area of an inch or two.

Posterior Tibial Shin Splints

Causes

The *posterior tibial muscle* originates on the back of the lower leg bone (the tibia). Feel your shin bone, the bone in front of your lower leg. As you move your hand to the inner part of your leg, you can feel the point where the posterior tibial muscle originates. The meat of the muscle forms a strong tendon that goes down behind the inner ankle knob and attaches to the top of the arch of your foot (the tarsal navicular bone). This tendon holds up the arch of the foot.

The pain results from overuse—the stress of exercise. Every time you put your foot down, the posterior tibial muscle strains to hold up your arch. In running a mile, you are stressing the muscle 50 to 70 times per minute for each foot, because that is how many times your foot is striking the surface.

If you have flat feet (excessive pronation), the posterior tibial muscle-tendon unit has to work much harder than with

a well-developed foot arch. I tell patients that having a flat foot is like having a gnome down on your foot pulling constantly on your posterior tibial tendon as you run or exercise. The stress pulls directly up to the origin of the muscle on the back of the tibia. If you have a flat foot, the muscle attachment can tear away from the tibia bone. Ninety percent of the time, the separation from the bone occurs gradually, but the symptoms intensify over time.

Diagnosis And Treatment

In the first bout, the pain from a posterior tibial shin splint starts two to three hours after you stop exercising. It is a dull soreness, and results from the tearing of the muscle fiber. Subsequently, the pain starts as soon as you begin exercising.

The best treatment is rest. Stop running or exercising for a week.

Ice the point of tenderness twice a day for 20 minutes, for two days. Then, start heat treatments twice a day. Take six to eight aspirin each day to lessen the inflammation.

Start exercises to stretch and strengthen the posterior tibial muscles. To strengthen these muscles, do toe raises. To stretch them, either use an inclined plane or do wall push-ups. If the rest, ice, aspirin, and stretching do not give you relief in a week, see a physician.

I make the diagnosis by touch. First, I feel along the shin bone. The surface of the bone, which is directly beneath the skin, is not tender. As I bring my fingers around to the inner edge of the bone, however, I find a three- to four-inch segment of tenderness. This spot is the origin of the posterior tibial muscle.

Next, I examine the foot anatomy. I am looking for fallen arches, which is the key to the diagnosis in 95 percent of the cases.

Treatment involves the use of an orthotic device, a custom-made arch support which prevents the arch from flattening and eliminates the tugging on the muscle attachment at the bone. I favor a semi-rigid orthotic device. A rigid plastic arch support is uncomfortable. Wear the orthotic device in all your shoes.

Even with the shoe correction, it takes two to three weeks for the muscle attachment injury to heal. Stop all running for another week, and then run only half-speed and half-distance for the next 10 days. By this time, healing is

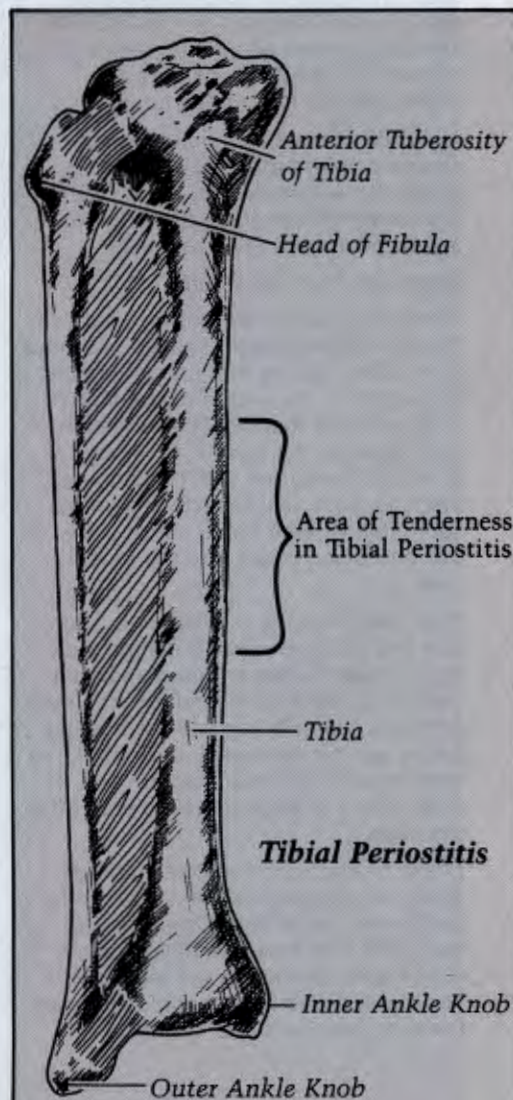
complete and you can return to full sports activities. With the proper arch support correction, you should never suffer this disorder again.

Tibial Periostitis

Causes

A second form of shin splint, *tibial periostitis*, is also common in running athletes and is due to an irritation of the covering of the lower leg bone (the periosteum). In certain individuals, the force of the foot hitting a very hard running surface transmits irritation to the front of the shin bones. This, in turn, irritates the covering of the bone and produces pain.

Although it has never been proven, it seems likely to me that there are small areas of bleeding under the covering itself. Tibial periostitis will probably never be totally understood because it is never necessary to biopsy the bone covering and examine it.



This type of shin splint comes on in the same way as the posterior tibial shin splint. It hurts in approximately the same location and is aggravated by running. Often, you can run through the pain for several weeks, but it will intensify. Finally, it becomes so intense you must curtail your sports activities.

Tibial periostitis is only one-tenth as common as the posterior tibial shin splint. I have never been able to link any disorder—flat feet, bowed legs, or an inverted heel bone—with the onset of this problem, but it seems more common in those runners who are doing long-distance events and running on hard surfaces such as asphalt.

Diagnosis And Treatment

The diagnosis is based on touch. The tender area lies directly beneath the skin on the front portion of the shin bone, the anterior surface of the tibia. The tenderness starts about three inches above ankle level and extends for two to three inches. Often, I can feel a slight swelling and fullness under the skin on top of the bone. This point will be sensitive to pressure. The key to diagnosis of an inflamed bone covering is that it is tender right on the bone as I push through the skin.

The best treatment is to stop running and other sports activities for seven days. This removes the pounding that has created the problem. Next, the irritated area should be iced for 20 minutes twice each day for two days. For the inflammation, take two aspirin with each meal for seven days. If the aspirin and ice do not relieve the pain, I prescribe stronger anti-inflammatory medication taken orally. There is no other treatment.

I like to take x-rays of both lower leg bones. For this condition, these x-rays are standard practice. I take them to be sure I am not dealing with a stress fracture (which I will discuss in the next section).

After the inflamed bone covering quiets down, you may return to sports. It is important to restart running or exercising on a soft surface, such as a grassy field or a composition track. For the first week, your workout should be one-fourth of your normal activities. You should then increase to half a workout for the next week and allow one month to return to full activities. Be sure to wear good athletic shoes with plenty of shock absorption in the heel.

Anterior Compartment Syndrome

Causes

A third form of shin splint, the *anterior compartment syndrome*, is a condition involving the three muscles that lie directly beside the lower leg bone on the front of your leg. These powerful muscles—the anterior tibial, the extensor hallucis longus, and extensor digitorum longus—fill out the contour of the front of your lower leg and lie between the two lower leg bones. Their tendons cross the ankle joint and continue down onto the foot. They allow you to bring your foot up toward your shin and bring your toes up off the ground.

Anterior compartment syndrome stems from your anatomy. The muscles which they involve occupy a box formed by the lower leg bones with a fascial covering over them. As they are put to hard use in exercise, the muscles swell with blood. The amount of swelling differs among athletes.

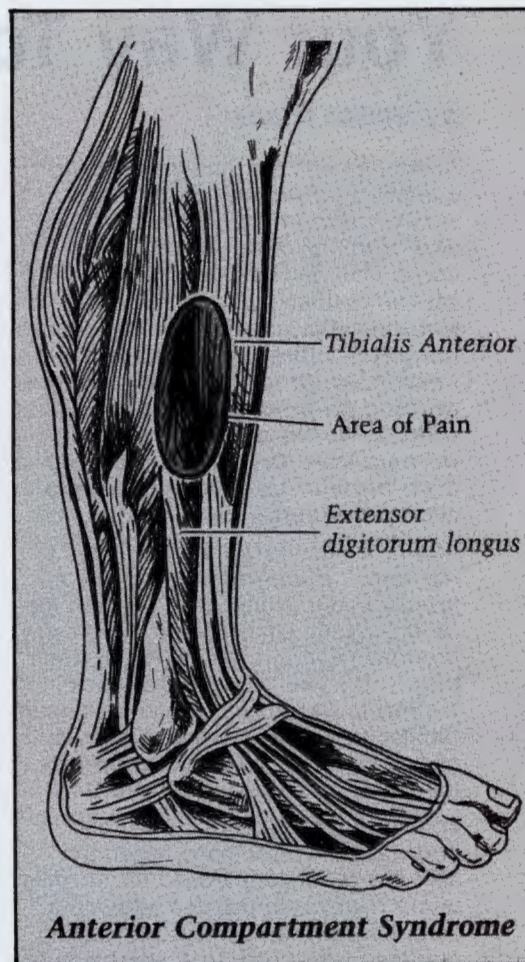
The problem arises when the box containing the muscles pushes back against the swelling. As the swelling increases, the pressure in the box increases and the blood flow to the muscle is restricted. This leads to a relative starvation of the muscles, which produces pain in the muscle itself. Because this pain occurs in the front of the lower leg, it is often diagnosed as a shin splint. This is the same kind of pain produced by a heart attack.

Diagnosis And Treatment

You know that you have anterior compartment syndrome by the pain located just beside the shin bone area. The discomfort increases with running. It comes on at about the same distance each time. But, it takes a physician to accurately diagnose the problem.

Milder degrees of anterior compartment syndromes can be "run through"; however, if you have severe pain, you should stop running. Allow 10 minutes for the swelling to decrease and for the blood supply to reestablish itself in the muscle. Begin running again slowly. Over the next few weeks, the difficulty seems to pass away. Ice down the front of both lower legs after running for 20 minutes. The ice diminishes the swelling and makes your legs feel more comfortable.

Alteration of the running shoe or changing the running surface does not help this problem. Fortunately, the muscles seem to be able to adjust to the training over time.



In sports medicine centers throughout the country, actual pressure measurements can be made in the compartment to gauge tightness. It is done by injecting a special needle into the compartment. Normal pressure in the compartment is 35 millimeters of mercury; any reading above 50 to 60 millimeters of mercury is considered abnormal.

In a few athletes, the pain will not subside. These are the most severe cases and constitute only one percent of all anterior compartment syndrome conditions. In such patients, I do a fasciotomy (to cut into the fascia). This is nothing more than surgically opening the box in which the muscles live. Through a short incision, I use a long pair of scissors to make a slit in the fascia over the front of the compartment. This is just beneath the skin. A fasciotomy requires hospitalization only overnight and the rehabilitation is very quick. In three weeks, you can be back to full activity. This operation is extremely effective, safe, and gives predictably good results. ●

Cruise Your Way To Racquetball Enjoyment

by Victor Block

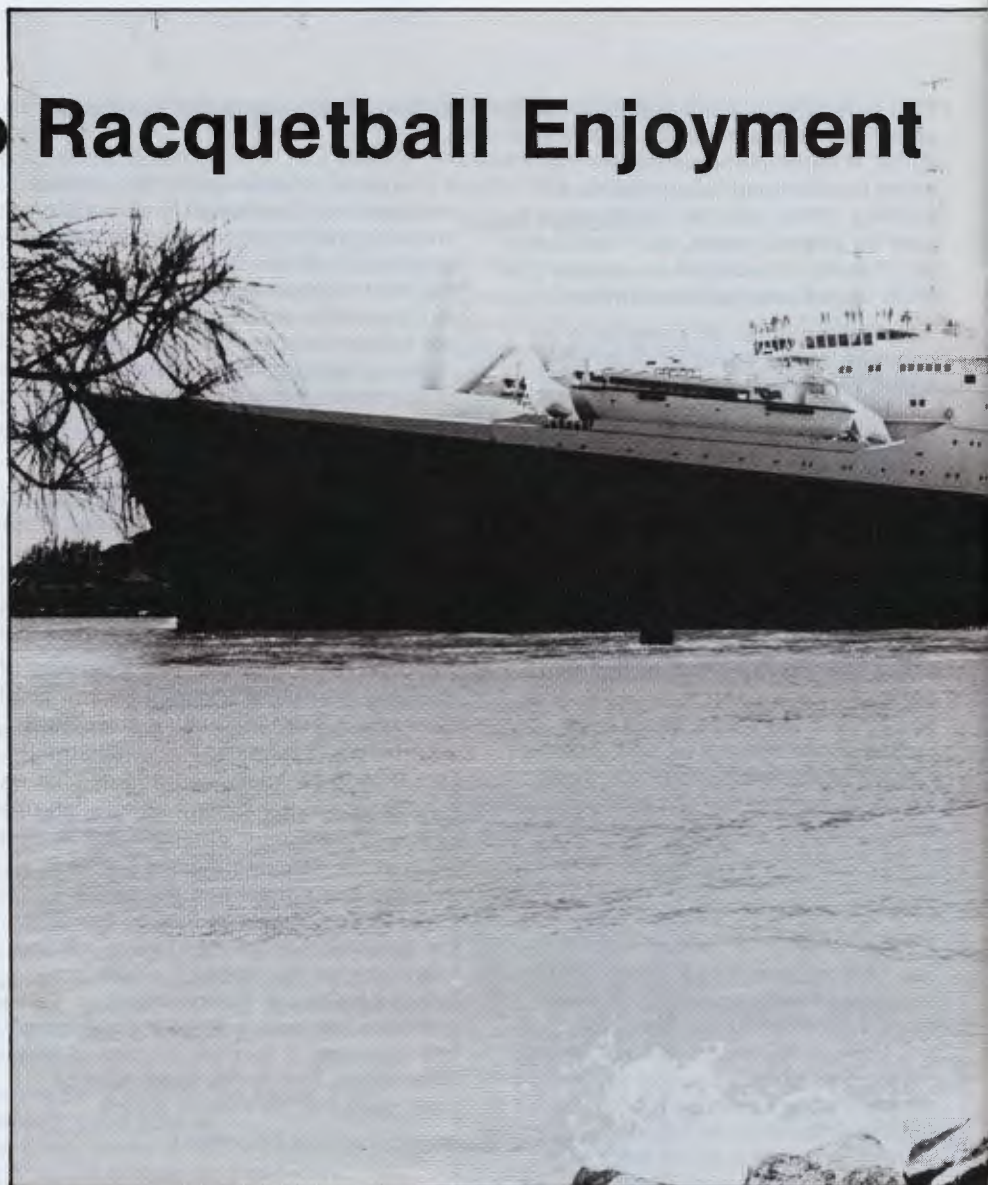
Seeking to end the third game of racquetball after winning the first two, Dick Goodman hit a down-the-line service return, followed up with a front corner shot and quickly ended the rally with an overhead drive. Then, complimenting his wife Karen on the improvement in her play, he suggested a swim in the indoor pool before dinner—deciding the air was a bit cool to use either of the two outdoor pools that were available. On the way, the Goodmans made a stop to arrange for a racquetball lesson the following day.

After a refreshing dip, they returned to their room, changed for dinner and enjoyed a seven course meal beneath the 30-foot crystal chandelier in the lavishly decorated Leeward Dining Room. Then they tried a few hands of blackjack in the Monte Carlo casino before taking in the floor show at Checkers nightclub, and a few turns on the dance floor to the music of the 16-piece band.

Following a good night's sleep and breakfast, the Goodmans began the next day by jogging around the 1/6 mile track. Then Karen pedaled away on a stationary bike and enjoyed a relaxing massage, while Dick took advantage of the weight lifting equipment and used a rowing machine.

This could describe a typical visit to many a leading resort. And indeed, the Goodmans had at their disposal a variety of activities, entertainment and outstanding food that rival those at top resorts. What made their use of the racquetball court and other facilities *different* is the fact that they were aboard the largest—and one of the most luxurious—passenger cruise ship in the world.

Norwegian Caribbean Lines' *S/S Norway* formerly was the *S.S. France*, known in its day on the high seas for luxurious decor and service. NCL spent more than \$100 million to purchase and refit the grand old ship more in keeping with contemporary styles and tastes. And, with the availability of a racquetball court and other recreational facilities, an eye to attracting active passengers.



Many people have an image of cruise ships as geared primarily to relatively elderly passengers to whom a game of shuffleboard, or a good book and a deck chair, is the maximum amount of activity in which they are interested. In recent years, the reality has left this image behind, as more younger adults, and families, realize that cruising has much to offer. As a result, many ships now carry a mixed passenger list that ranges from the very young to the very old. The *S/S Norway*, with its "Fit with Fun" program, has the reputation of attracting many youthful, active passengers.

Racquetball is part of the ship's fun and fitness offerings. The court is of the outside, three-wall variety, with a safety fence at the rear to stop any balls that get past the players. Located on the top deck of the ship, it is open

to the weather and therefore is subject to the vagaries of occasional squalls. For the most part, however, the weather poses no problem.

While the shipline suggests that serious players bring their own equipment on cruises, racquets are available on board. Lessons may be arranged with the fitness coordinators on the ship. Best of all, there's no extra charge for lessons or the use of loan equipment.

For the racquetball player interested in combining the availability of a court with an ocean cruise, the *S/S Norway* provides an excellent introduction to cruising for first-timers and an extra-special experience for those who have been at sea before. The *Norway*, the flagship of Norwegian Caribbean Lines, is over 1,000 feet long, and carries a total of up to 2,000 passengers and a crew of more than 800. Staterooms range from inside berths with upper



The S/S Norway where all your racquetball dreams come true.

dance floor. One deck below, the Monte Carlo Room offers blackjack, roulette, craps tables and dime-to-silver dollar slot machines. For those so inclined, a dozen bars are scattered throughout the ship.

Passengers more interested in enjoying a bit of physical activity and staying in shape also will find that the facilities leave little wanting. They include the jogging track and a basketball/volleyball court, as well as golf putting and driving areas and a skeet shooting range. On the Dolphin deck is the health club, with the indoor swimming pool, a fully equipped gymnasium with universal apparatus, massage salon and sauna. Classes that are conducted for passengers range from aerobics and calisthenics to swimnastics.

During the winter, the *Norway* offers week-long Caribbean cruises embarking from Miami, with stops at St. Thomas in the U.S. Virgin Islands, and at Nassau and one of the outlying "Family Islands" in The Bahamas. Fares cover a broad range—\$1,095-\$2,710 per person (double occupancy), depending upon the type of accommodations chosen. With all meals, activities and other extras included, a bit of simple

This photo, taken from the front wall, shows the netting that keeps balls and players from an unwanted swim overboard.

and lower beds, shower and television (every cabin has color TV) to grand suites consisting of a living, dining and double bedroom, two full baths, stereo TV and refrigerator. Meals of European, American and other specialties are available in two luxurious indoor dining rooms, while casual buffets are served at The Great Outdoors Restaurant overlooking one of the open air swimming pools. There are six elevators—necessary in a ship with 17 floors!

Entertainment ranges from full-scale productions of Broadway shows and Las Vegas-type reviews to performances by such headliners as Rita Moreno, the Fifth Dimension and Vic Damone. In addition to Checkers nightclub, night life is available at Dazzles Disco, distinguished by flashing lights and a glass floor, and Club Internationale, with soft music and an intimate





After your workout cool off like this.

arithmetic translates those prices—particularly at the lower end of the scale—into a good value. Adding to the attraction is the fact that the price includes free round-trip air fare from more than 80 U.S. cities, and greatly reduced fares from more than three dozen others; as part of Norwegian Caribbean Lines' "Cloud 9" fly-free program. Also included are transfers between the airport and ship and, for flights from some cities, overnight or day hotel accommodations in Miami at no extra charge.

Next summer and fall, the *Norway* for the first time will offer European cruises. After sailing to England and Amsterdam, she'll embark on a series of 7 and 14-night cruises to the North Cape, through Norwegian fjords and to the cities of Oslo, Gothenburg, Copenhagen and Hamburg. "Cloud 9" air/sea packages will offer reduced transAtlantic air fares at savings up to hundreds of dollars.

Additional information about cruises aboard the S/S *Norway* is available from travel agents or by calling toll-free 1-800-327-7030 (in Florida, 1-800-432-9696). If you have taken a cruise before but missed your racquetball practice or play, you might well be interested in a vacation trip aboard the *Norway*. If you never have cruised, the world's largest and one of its most luxurious passenger ships would be a good place to start—especially with the added bonus of a racquetball court. ●

Victor Block is a free-lance travel writer for newspapers, newsletters and magazines; a state editor for Fodor's Guidebooks, and a member of the Society of American Travel Writers. When not on the go researching travel articles, he lives in Washington, DC.

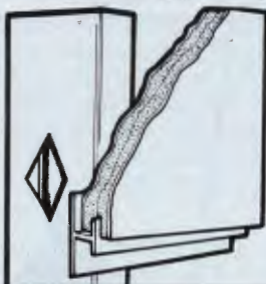


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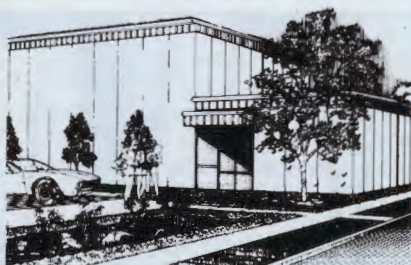
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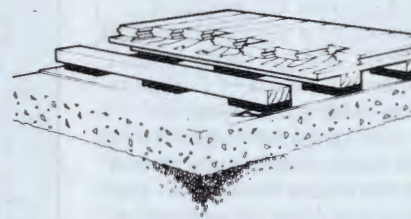
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McKay Axes Adams in Auburn

by Sandy Genelius

Perhaps it was the full moon shining brightly over Auburn, MA, . . . or perhaps someone got up on the wrong side of the bed . . . or perhaps someone walked under a ladder. Any way you slice it, there was definitely something in the air during the Budweiser Light Pro Racquetball Classic at the Auburn Racquet and Health Club on October 21-23.

Five upsets highlighted the 16-player draw, the most notable Sunday's finals featuring top-ranked Lynn Adams and current number two Heather McKay, who upset her younger rival, 21-12, 21-17, 21-23, 22-24, 15-13, in one of the most closely contested matches the two have ever played.

The final confrontation provided all the thrills one would anticipate when the two titans of a sport collide. The standing-room-only crowd excitedly anticipated the showdown with the knowledge that McKay and her 26-year-old opponent have met in 14 championship matches over the last two seasons. Their head-to-head record stands at 9-5 in Adams' favor. The California native emerged the victor most recently on September 4th in the \$10,000 kick-off event of the 1983-84 tour at the Racquethouse in Atlanta.

With the first game tied at 6-6, McKay hit a pinch to go on top and remain there for the rest of the game. Her lateral court movement allowed her to reach virtually all of the passing shots attempted by Adams. Not only did McKay reach these balls, but she responded with textbook pinches and kill shots to keep Adams continually off-balance and not permit her to settle into a rhythm. Several uncharacteristic errors by Adams allowed McKay to take advantage and score consistently.

Although the score of the second game was closer than the first, the script was similar. McKay's impeccable serving in both games proved to be too strong for Adams to counter. Heather raced to an 8-1 lead in game two on a perfectly executed overhead kill. Adams, fighting to stay in the match, hit a forehand rollout and a pass to pull to within three points at 16-13. With the score 19-15 in McKay's favor, Adams called a time-out. She returned to the court to hit a backhand kill shot and once again pull to within three points. An Adams' skip and two wide-angle pinches by McKay, one each from the forehand and backhand sides, closed out the game at 21-17.

"I felt tense and rushed throughout the first two games," said Adams. "I gave Heather some set-ups and she was very precise with her shots, which put more pressure on me. Although I'm used to the pressure and to someone that good being able to take advantage of my errors, I just couldn't establish a rhythm."

The Lynn Adams who took the court for games three and four was a visibly more determined player. She admitted that being down by two games brought out the competitiveness in her character. *"I came out determined not to give anything away. I felt that I still had some control over the direction the match would take and that I could almost will certain things to happen, although that state of mind can only take you so far."*

This renewed intensity took Lynn as far as was necessary to pull out the next two games by 23-21 and 24-22 margins. Playing more aggressively and relying on her waterbug quickness, she began killing the ball and diving more often than usual.

McKay tried to counter with quick serves but her passing shots, which carried her to victory in the first two games, seemed to lose some of their effectiveness. Game three was tied 10 times, the last time on a missed overhead by McKay at 20-21, which leveled the score. Adams hit a backhand pass to reach game point and McKay promptly called a time-out. Both players remained on the court for the break, Adams meditating in the corner and McKay pacing in the back court. Adams then cracked a backhand pinch when play resumed to win the game after having had three match points on McKay.

The fourth game was a see-saw battle equally as close as the previous one. The score was knotted a total of 11 times, including at 18, 19, 20, 21 and 22. The tempo and texture was similar to game three and some dazzling points were played to the delight of the enthralled crowd, with each player having two match points. Adams finally hit three consecutive pinches while down 21-22 to claim the game and send the match into the fifth-set tie-breaker which, under WPRA rules, is played to 15 points. At this juncture, neither player appeared to clearly have the momentum swinging in her favor due to the closeness of the games.

McKay admitted her displeasure with her play in the third and fourth games. *"I was serving and playing extremely well in the first two games, which may have made me feel a bit overconfident heading into the third. To Lynn's credit, she tightened up her game and played more aggressively in the third and fourth."*

"I think my competitiveness and determination got me through those games," stated Adams. "During the break before the tie-breaker, I told myself that I was at least even now. I tried to wipe all four games from my mind because I had struggled throughout. I felt lucky to have reached a tie-breaker situation."

After a five-minute intermission, the two women took the court, both with looks of intense concentration on their faces. McKay surged to a 4-1 lead on two Adams' skips. Adams leveled at 4-all on two McKay skips and then hit consecutive wide-angle forehand pinches to pull ahead by two. The lead changed hands two more times before McKay hit a forehand pinch to take a one-point lead at 12-11.

After Adams' next shot hit her, she called a time-out to try to regain her composure. She won the next point on a backhand pinch to pull to within one point at 13-12, but McKay countered with a wide-angle forehand pinch to arrive at match point, 14-12. The same shot from Adams brought her to within one point of leveling the score for the sixth time in the game but a carbon-copy shot by McKay finally sealed the victory.

"I was not pleased overall with my play in the match because I changed my play after the first two games," said McKay. "I'm just glad I was able to stay with Lynn and play well enough to win the tie-breaker." Their season series is now deadlocked at one victory apiece.

The semi-finals were more predictable than the final as McKay disposed of Joyce Jackson in a 21-11, 21-13, 21-11 contest. The Norman, OK, resident played a very strong tournament, however, by claiming two upsets in her first two matches and improving her WPRA ranking to 11, the highest position she has ever achieved.

Jackson eliminated seventh-ranked Janell Marriott in the first round 18-21,

Tournament Results

Hogan Captures Davison, MI; Cohen Surprises In Amarillo

21-16, 21-19, 21-18. She then dumped Jennifer Harding, the WPRA's then-11th-ranked player in a fifth-set tie-breaker, 21-19, 16-21, 14-21, 21-16, 15-9. Joyce attributed her vastly improved play to a weight loss she achieved over the summer, improved concentration, and less of an emphasis on the crowd and officiating.

The other semi-final pitted Adams against Vicki Panzeri, the only player to have a winning record against Lynn during the 1982-83 season, having claimed two victories in their three meetings. Panzeri, who won the AMF Voit Most Improved Player award for her impressive ledger last year, could not get untracked against Adams this time, however.

"My arm felt fatigued but I think it was due to my lack of play over the summer," she said. "My drive serve was working well but I missed several opportunities. Because I am beginning to practice more, though, I now feel that I deserve to beat the players ahead of me in the rankings. I know that I will if I am patient on the court."

Other upsets in Auburn included a hard-fought battle between fourth-ranked Laura Martino and Harding. The match saw Harding rebound from a 0-2 game deficit to even the match by 14-21, 20-22, 21-12 and 21-19 scores, and then pull out the tie-breaker, 15-11.

In addition to Jackson's upset of Harding, the quarter-finals saw Adams trounce Marci Greer 21-8, 21-11, 21-13; Panzeri subdue Rita Hoff Scott 21-11, 21-10, 21-14; and McKay rout Stacey Fletcher 21-11, 21-18, 21-15.

The tour moved to Vancouver, British Columbia, for the \$10,000 third annual Pro-Am Canadian Open Racquetball Classic at the Supreme Court Racquetball Club. ●

Budweiser Light Classic

Auburn, MA, October 21-23, 1983
Auburn Racquet & Health Club

First Round: Adams d. McKinney 21-18, 21-19, 21-7; Greer d. O'Brien 21-16, 24-22, 21-11; Hoff-Scott d. Gilreath 21-17, 21-19, 13-21, 24-22; Panzeri d. Stoll 21-12, 21-12, 13-21, 22-20; Harding d. Martino 14-21, 20-22, 21-12, 21-19, 15-11; Jackson d. Marriott 18-21, 21-16, 21-19, 21-18; Fletcher d. Lynch 21-11, 21-16, 21-11; McKay d. Alvarado 21-17, 21-9, 21-12.

Quarter-finals: Adams d. Greer 21-8, 21-11, 21-13; Panzeri d. Hoff-Scott 21-11, 21-10, 21-14; Jackson d. Harding 21-19, 16-21, 14-21, 21-16, 15-9; McKay d. Fletcher 21-11, 21-18, 21-15.

Semi-finals: Adams d. Panzeri 21-11, 21-18, 21-15; McKay d. Jackson 21-11, 21-13, 21-11.

Finals: McKay d. Adams 21-12, 21-17, 21-23, 22-24, 15-13.

Marty Hogan got off to a good start in the 1983-84 season by stopping defending national champ Mike Yellen in the final of the Natural Light Open September 1-4 in Davison, MI. The championship match score was 11-1, 4-11, 5-11, 11-10, 11-9 in one of the most thrilling of the many battles pitting these two arch-rivals.

Yellen was a point away from a fifth straight win over the five time champ, serving at 10-7 in game four, ahead two games to one. But to the tune of surprising cheers from Yellen's home town fans (who obviously wanted a fifth game) Marty regained the serve and scored four quick points to send the match to the fifth, which he won with a patented backhand splat.

For Hogan it was another \$4,000 in first place money in this \$15,000 event, the first major tournament of the season for the men, in a season where major events seem to be few and far between.

In the semi-finals, Yellen eliminated Gregg Peck, whose brother Dave bypassed the event while his leg recuperation continued. Gregg, a great player in his own right, took game one by storm against Yellen (11-1) but was unable to follow up, as Mike grabbed the trip to the finals 11-7, 11-4, 11-10.

Hogan reached the championship round with a hard earned 11-2, 11-4, 9-11, 8-11, 11-8 victory over Ruben Gonzalez who continues his rise to the upper echelons of the men's pro game.

The only surprise quarter-finalist was Mike Levine who upset third seed Bret Harnett in the round of 16. Levine was unable to ride the momentum as he was stopped by Gonzalez 5-11, 11-0, 11-9, 11-8. In other quarter-final action, Yellen was pressed to a tough five games by former amateur national champ Ed Andrews 5-11, 11-8 8-11, 11-3, 11-9; Peck easily stopped Jerry Hilecher 11-6, 11-6, 11-9; and Hogan blitzed Don Thomas 11-10, 11-5, 11-6. ●

Results

Round of 16: Yellen d. Hawkes 5-11, 11-9, 11-4, 9-11, 11-1; Andrews d. Swain 11-7, 3-11, 11-3, 11-4; Hilecher d. Sell 11-2, 11-9, 8-11, 8-11, 11-1; Peck d. Koltun 7-11, 11-9, 11-5, 3-11, 11-2; Levine d. Harnett 6-11, 11-3, 11-5, 4-11; Gonzalez d. Newman 11-9, 7-11, 11-5, 2-11, 11-5; Thomas d. Cohen 11-6, 9-11, 11-3, 11-2; Hogan d. Mitchell 5-11, 11-3, 11-2, 11-5.

Quarter-finals: Yellen d. Andrews 5-11, 11-8, 8-11, 11-3, 11-9; Peck d. Hilecher 11-6, 11-6, 11-9; Gonzalez d. Levine 5-11, 11-0, 11-9, 11-8; Hogan d. Thomas 11-10, 11-5, 11-6.

Semi-finals: Yellen d. Peck 1-11, 11-7, 11-4, 11-10; Hogan d. Gonzalez 11-2, 11-4, 9-11, 8-11, 11-8.

Finals: Hogan d. Yellen 11-1, 4-11, 5-11, 11-10, 11-9.

★ ★ ★

Doug Cohen shocked the full gallery at Ultimate Courts in Amarillo, TX to capture the \$10,000 Ring Championship, by defeating Marty Hogan in the semi-finals and then Jerry Hilecher in the finals.

Hogan, who admitted that his significant appearance fee may have had a negative effect on his performance, was never a true match for the aggressive Cohen in the semi's.

Hilecher stopped Dave Peck, making his first tournament appearance after a serious leg injury, in the other semi-final. Peck, obviously not yet 100 percent, still showed flashes of the brilliance that had him in the number one spot in racquetball's rankings just 18 months ago.

Full report with scores and photos next month. ●

WPRA Rankings
(as of October 25, 1983)

Ranking	Player	Points
1.	Lynn Adams	284.13
2.	Heather McKay	283.50
3.	Shannon Wright Hamilton	196.88
4.	Laura Martino	120.88
5.	Vicki Panzeri	112.46
6.	Terri Gilreath	96.50
7.	Marci Greer	77.75
8.	Janell Marriott	75.57
9.	Peggy Gardner	62.50
10.	Jennifer Harding	53.38
11.	Joyce Jackson	50.00
12.	Caryn McKinney	45.57
13.	Stacey Fletcher	38.38
14.	Brenda Poe-Barrett	38.33
15.	Heather Stupp	34.67
16.	Francine Davis	31.63
17.	Bonnie Stoll	29.00
18.	Diane Bullard	28.93
19.	Martha McDonald	25.63
20.	Rita Hoff Scott	23.33
21.	Gail Woods	23.00
22.	Barbara Maltby	22.50
23.	Carol Pranka	20.50
24.	Jean Sausser	19.33

Tournament Results

New Jersey

First Annual East Coast Casino Team
Championship
Tilton Racquetball Club & Nautilus Club
Pleasantville, NJ, March 15-18
Sponsor: Ektelon
Directors: Bruce Willson, Joe Pagliei

Men's A

1st—Abreu, Caesars; 2nd—McComb,
Bally Park Place; 3rd—Juliano, Golden Nugget

Men's B

1st—Puhalski, Golden Nugget; 2nd—Quigley, Harrah's;
3rd—Tripician, Caesars Regency

Men's C

1st—Houhouis, Tropicana; 2nd—Guferson, Golden Nugget;
3rd—Bowland, Golden Nugget

Men's Novice

1st—Danner, Tropicana; 2nd—Merlino, Harrah's; 3rd
—Doran, Bally Park Place

Men's A Doubles

1st—Juliano/Cessen, Golden Nugget; 2nd—Finlay/Lanzen-
dorn, Harrah's; 3rd—Werber/Abreu, Caesars Regency

Men's B Doubles

1st—Puhaski/Bosland, Golden Nugget; 2nd—Boynnton/
Rivin, Caesars Regency; 3rd—Quigley/Buch, Harrah's

Men's C Doubles

1st—Guferson/Dickson, Golden Nugget; 2nd—Namoff/Rigot,
Harrah's; 3rd—DeMaio/Reilly, Caesars Regency

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Third Place

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Men's Open

Quarter-finals: Young d. Cook, 15-7, 15-0; Barrett d. Hotten-
stein, 15-12, 9-15, 11-5; Montague d. Stemp, 15-5, 15-10;
Ginter d. Garabedian, 15-13, 15-13

Semi-finals: Young d. Barrett, 6-15, 15-3, 11-8; Ginter d.
Montague, 5-15, 15-3, 11-8

Finals: Young d. Ginter, 12-15, 15-5, 11-6

Men's A

Quarter-finals: Cooper d. Stigura, 15-7, 15-12; Johnson d.
McElhery, 15-9, 15-6; Hindo d. Schadler, forfeit; McKinney d.
Martinez, 15-12, 15-7

Semi-finals: Johnson d. Cooper, 15-8, 15-14; McKinney d.
Hindo, 15-6, 15-5

Finals: McKinney d. Johnson, 15-2, 15-11

Men's B

Quarter-finals: Ashworth d. Faddis, 15-6, 15-9; Lewis d.
Hendricks, 15-1, 15-4; Kunz d. Mayre, 15-13, 10-15, 11-9;
Deegan d. Loesel, 13-15, 15-11, 11-4

Semi-finals: Lewis d. Ashworth, 15-14, 15-11; Kunz d.
Deegan, 15-2, 15-4

Finals: Lewis d. Kunz, 15-9, 15-5

Men's C

Quarter-finals: Mulroy d. Kovack, 15-14, 15-12; Steinkershner
d. Kiraly, 15-12, 8-15, 11-5; Dubovsky d. Kerr, 14-15, 15-4,
11-9; Lounsbury d. Hunt, 15-4, 15-14

Semi-finals: Steinkershner d. Mulroy, 15-13, 15-2; Dubovsky
d. Lounsbury, 11-15, 15-11, 11-3

Finals: Dubovsky d. Steinkershner, 14-15, 15-4, 11-5

Women's Open A

1st — Fischl; 2nd — Latini; 3rd — Gatarz; 4th — Reuben

Women's B-C

1st — Tratnik; 2nd — Guidon; 3rd — Hess; 4th — Seebold

Women's Novice

Quarter-finals: Piskerla d. Montgomery, 15-3, 15-0; Reitman
d. Wolf, 15-10, 15-5; Turnquest d. Placek, 15-3, 15-0; Seebold
d. Rydzy, 15-13, 8-15, 11-8

Semi-finals: Piskerla d. Reitman, 15-6, 15-0; Turnquest d.
Seebold, 15-6, 15-1

Finals: Turnquest d. Piskula

Minnesota

4th Annual Summer Invitational
Southview Racquetball and Health Club
W. St. Paul, MN, July 15-17
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Men's Pro

Semi-finals: Bakken d. Ikier, Ferris d. Kauss

Finals: Ferris d. Bakken; Third: Ikier d. Kauss

Men's A

Semi-finals: Wright d. Landgren, Carson d. Black

Finals: Wright d. Carson

Men's B

Semi-finals: Bohrer d. Cassada, McCallum d. Danov

Finals: Bohrer d. McCallum

Men's C

Semi-finals: Butzer d. Hanna, Brown d. Sokola

Finals: Butzer d. Brown

Women's B

Semi-finals: Goblish d. Tabar, Luce d. Warec

Finals: Luce d. Warec

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Men's Open Doubles

Bakken/Johnson d. Erickson/Rosland

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Men's Open

1st — Charlie Nichols; 2nd — Joe Porta; 3rd — Dan O'Brian; 4th — David Brett-Williams

Quarter-finalists: Paul Owens, James Walden, Mike Modekin-son, Matt St. Lawrence

Women's Open

1st — Julie Ginsburg; 2nd — Barbara Simmons; 3rd — Janet Wahs; 4th — Connie Whitaker

Quarter-finalists: Marea Armantrout, Jessica Crist, Linda Der-rick, Jamie Lamoreux

Men's A

1st — Matt St. Lawrence; 2nd — David Brett-Williams; 3rd — John Scargle; 4th — Scott Thompson

Quarter-finalists: Joe Didonato, Paul Welch, David Schwartz, Eugene Eua

Men's B

1st — Paul Welch; 2nd — Dale Gordon; 3rd — R. Ramey; 4th — Don Morrow

Quarter-finalists: Wade Wiesman, Brady Smith, T. Didonato, R. Tallafiero

Men's C

1st — Robbie Walden; 2nd — Paul Hatcher; 3rd — Mike Bauer; 4th — Dale Root

Quarter-finalists: Steve Motycua, Bob White, Tom Daugherty, Roy Terepka

Women's B

1st — Terri Losano; 2nd — Terri Losano; 3rd — Nancy White; 4th — Tina Blowers

Quarter-finalists: Amy Marme, Tracy Fillmore, Stacey Thomp-son, Teresa Kaufman

Women's C

1st — Tina Blowers; 2nd — Tracey Fillmore; 3rd — Debbie Wilson; 4th — S. Anderson

Quarter-finalists: Barbie Owens, Mary Ellen Byrne, Elaine Xynidis, Michelle Dorsey

Men's Novice

1st — Tim Rose; 2nd — Jason Waggoner; 3rd — Trent Han-cock; 4th — Larry Powell

Women's Novice

1st — Amy Simonetta; 2nd — Carol Santangelo; Jan Chap-man; 4th — Elaine Xynidis

Men's 30+

1st — Bob Riley; 2nd — Gene Owens; 3rd — Phil Skaliotis; 4th — John Hatcher

Men's 40+

1st — Bob Riley; 2nd — Steve Xynidis; 3rd — Bill Hogue; 4th — James Scott

Men's 50+

1st — Don Woodington; 2nd — West Burquest; 3rd — Bob Holzworth; 4th Bob White

Juniors 12 & Under

1st — Robbie Walden; 2nd — Trent Tornabene; 3rd — Jason Waggoner; 4th — John Jackson

Men's Open Doubles

1st — C. Nichols/M. Modgkinson; 2nd — P. Taunton/P. Taunton; 3rd — Porta/O'Brien; 4th — Hatcher/Godwin

Men's B Doubles

1st — S. Thompson/M. Moore; 2nd — M. St. Lawrence/P. Welch; 3rd — Rumsey/Woodington; 4th — Morrell/Adams

Mixed Doubles

1st — D. Clement/J. Ginsburg; 2nd — C. Nichols/J. Schmidt; 3rd — Scott/Lamoreux; 4th — Skaliotis/Armantrout

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Directors: Don Kriete, Scott Nelsen**Men's Open**

Semi-finals: Frank d. Mekelburg, 15-9, 15-11; Latimer d. Conley, 15-7, 15-8

Finals: Frank d. Latimer, 15-9, 3-15, 15-6

Semi-finals: Hatton d. Flores, 9-15, 15-7, 15-12; Morton d. Wall, 15-10, 15-7

Finals: Morton d. Hatton, 15-7, 15-5

Men's A

Semi-finals: McGownd d. Barber, 15-8, 15-7; Saffer d. Sailors, 15-10, 15-2

Finals: Saffer d. McGownd, 13-15, 15-5, 15-2

Men's B

Semi-finals: Kenney d. Kroneberger, 15-12, 15-8; Dutton d. Sander, 15-6, 15-2

Finals: Dutton d. Kenney, 15-8, 15-10

Men's C

Semi-finals: Rodriguez d. Thomas, 15-3, 15-5; Grant d. Sprague, 15-3, 15-2

Finals: Grant d. Rodriguez, 15-12, 14-15, 15-6

Women's B

Semi-finals: Miller d. Williams, 15-10, 15-2; Rocci d. Rund, 15-4, 15-4

Finals: Rocci d. Miller, 15-7, 15-5

Women's C

Semi-finals: Henderson d. Fox, 15-8, 15-3; Bright d. Ryan, 15-7, 15-2

Finals: Bright d. Henderson, 15-5, 15-12

Open Doubles

Semi-finals: Nelsen/Mekelburg d. Latimer/Flores, 15-9, 15-8; Harkless/Kriete d. Frank/Conley, 15-4, 3-15, 15-5

Finals: Nelsen/Mekelburg d. Harkless/Kriete, 10-15, 15-12, 15-13

Indiana

Indiana State Junior Championships
Richmond Racquetball Club
Richmond, IN, August 26-28, 1983
Sponsors: DP Leach, Ektelon, & Richmond
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Boy's 8 & Under: Sherward d. Hornaday

Boy's 10 & Under: Davis d. Quigg

Boy's 12 & Under: Sanford d. Schad

Boy's 14 & Under: Boss d. LeSeure

Boy's 16 & Under: Mikulla d. McNutt

Boy's 18 & Under: Christenson d. Rollins

Girls 8 & Under: Woods d. Anderson

Girls 10 & Under: Stapleton d. Boss

Girls 12 & Under: LeSeure d. Stapleton

Girls 14 & Under: Withrow d. Darnell

Oregon

1983 State Fair Tournament
Courthouse Fitness Centers
Salem, OR, September 1-4

Men's Pro-Open

1st — Larson; 2nd — Dunn; 3rd — Scott; 4th — Bent

Men's A

1st — Illicki; 2nd — Miller; 3rd — Peterson; 4th — Garcia

Men's B

1st — Tom O'Reilly; 2nd — Bilusak; 3rd — Felke; 4th — Baker

Men's C

1st — Saboe; 2nd — Vela; 3rd — Dotson; 4th — Koehn

Men's D

1st — Mayorga; 2nd — Salsbery; 3rd — Koch; 4th — Lundin

Women's A

1st — Poehlman; 2nd — Hyne; 3rd — Kerth; 4th — Lenz

Women's B

1st — Lacount; 2nd — Hedrick; 3rd — Geyman; 4th — Patron

Women's C

1st — Nkecht; 2nd — Casey; 3rd — Sherman; 4th — Wallace

Women's D/Novice

1st — Birrer; 2nd — Kurz; 3rd — Quackenbush; 4th — Pruett

Men's Seniors 35+

1st — Wallace; 2nd — Jahn; 3rd — Matteson; 4th — Baker

Men's Masters 40+

1st — Harris; 2nd — Howard; 3rd — Birrer; 4th — Renolds

Men's Beginner

1st — Shriver; 2nd — Blumenkron

Men's Pro-Open Doubles

1st — Larson/Marcus; 2nd — Boyce/Rasmussen; 3rd — Scott/Bent; 4th — Westwood/Mariani

Men's A/B/C Doubles

1st — Thompson/Barney; 2nd — Camus/Oberkamper; 3rd — Paddock/Martin; 4th — Becker/Miller

Men's Veterans Doubles

1st — Breckenridge/Westwood; 2nd — Bone/Gardner; 3rd — Fitzwater/Gaynor; 4th — Lood/Becker

Mixed Doubles

1st — Chamberlin/Ryan; 2nd — Egesdahl/Jones

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What The Pros Don't Tell You

by Phil Simborg

They teach you the right way to hold the racquet and how and why to hit the ball and high and low percentage shots, and center court strategy and all that. But there are things the average player wants to know that the teaching pros just don't teach.

This is true of most instructors—in virtually all sports. A big part of the problem is that the people who do the teaching are generally far better athletes than those who take the lessons, and their personal goals for what they want to accomplish on the court are far different.

Believe it or not—most of us *don't want* to be able to execute our shots perfectly! To do that, we'd have to give up too many other things in our lives and spend hours and hours on the court working on our shots.

Most of us have far better jobs than the teaching pro anyway, and we wouldn't want to trade places with him or her (or even most touring pros for that matter).

What most of us really want to learn is how to beat the friends we regularly play with. Or how to handle Jack's drive serve. Or how come I can't seem to win the critical points at the end of the game? Or why can't I hit good serves?

Even if the pro is able to change my swing and really raise my level of play, say from a C player to a B or A player, there's still going to be plenty of people out there who can beat me—some will even beat me badly. And I'll still have shortcomings in my game that would require even more work to improve for they would be the subtleties of the game.

What the pros, articles and books don't generally teach is how can I do better given my current level of ability and physical skills? All they know how to do is show me how to imitate the swings and strategies of the top touring pros.

What racquetball needs is someone (or two or more) who knows what our mental and physical capacity is, and can instruct us on the basis of knowing how much confidence we have in each specific shot and strategy we generally use.

Where can you find such a teacher? *Look in the mirror!* If you would just give some careful thought to what you are doing, you will improve your own game.

You don't have to be an expert to realize that you've skipped in your last five backhand kill shot attempts. You don't have to be a genius to figure out that you'll do better if you stop trying for that shot for a while and go for a pass or ceiling shot instead. But you *do* have to *think* in order to realize that that is what's happening and that is what you should do.

And that's the whole point of my opinion. You can enjoy your game more and play better at any given level just by taking the time—before, during and after your game—to think about the strengths and weaknesses of both you and your opponent.

And isn't that what you really want to do when you play any sport . . . maximize your pleasure? I'm not talking to those of you who want to become a pro. And I'm not saying you won't get some enjoyment and satisfaction from learning how to hit better kill shots, serves, etc. But all that is far less important than learning how to make the most of the skills you currently possess.

This mental awareness applies to much more than just shot selection. Maybe you'll realize that you are losing because you are physically tired, and if you're smart, you'll slow the game down between rallies, call some time outs, and go for more kill shots and other shots which tend to end the rally sooner . . . either way.

Or maybe you'll figure out that your opponent is getting all your pinch and kill attempts because he's doing such a good job of getting into the front court early. Of course, this tells you to hit more passing and ceiling shots.

Your mental process might even take on more esoteric qualities. Many people like to employ self-hypnosis, T-M, yoga, projecting, hyping-up, mysticism and even prayer to help them play at their best. I don't care what you use as long as it works for you. What happens to work for me is believing that I don't need any of those things as long as I keep reminding myself to analyze what's going on on the court.

The only thought-process I reject (and I know I'm bucking some famous racquet sports theorists) is the idea that you should make your mind a blank and just react and "go with the flow." Certainly your mind and body must react almost without conscious thought if you have to change direction in the middle of a rally and make a quick get in the corner. But the only time I believe totally clearing your mind is an advantage is when you go to sleep or wish to meditate . . . not in the middle of an activity.

All it takes is the realization that thinking can help you enjoy your game more and help you improve at your given ability level. And you won't find the particular paths to this kind of improvement in most articles and books written by the teaching pros.

You can, and should, do it yourself. And that's the truth. Phbtt! ●

Phil Simborg is a member of the AARA National Rules Committee, former publisher of Racquetball Today, accomplished referee on the professional level and avid racquetballer besides.

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