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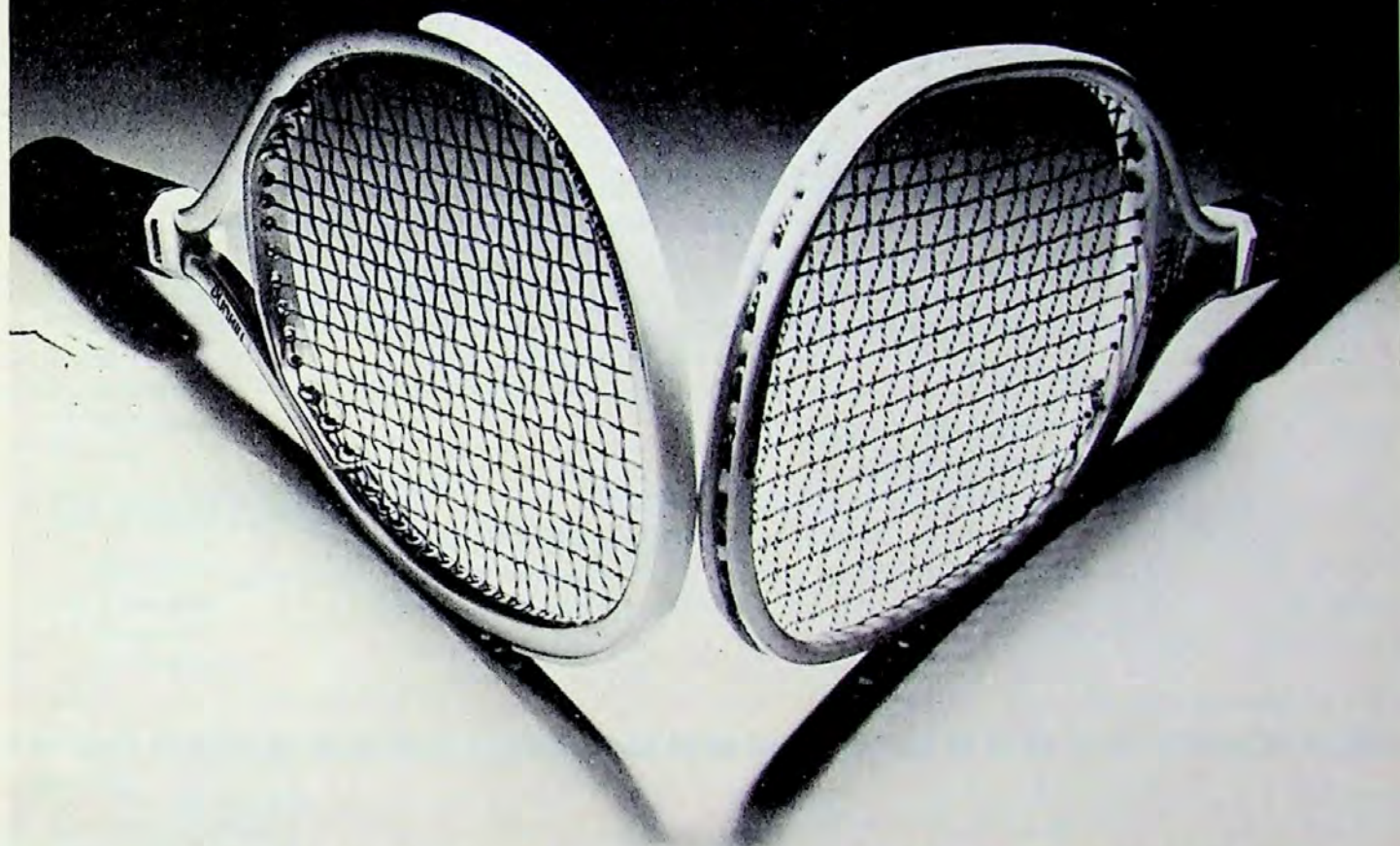
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RACQUETBALL

ILLUSTRATED

December, 1979

Vol. 2, No. 5

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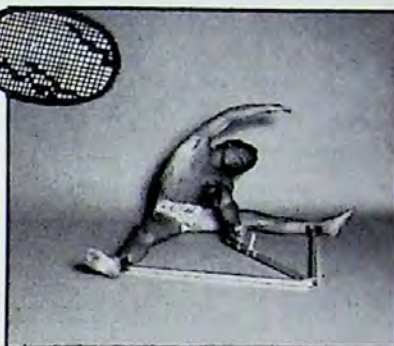
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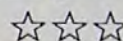
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UP FRONT



Garp's All Wet

Racquetball is seemingly one of many sports that doesn't fit into "The World According to Garp."

In the best-seller novel by John Irving, Garp philosophizes, "I do not care for balls. The ball stands between the athlete and exercise. So do hockey pucks and badminton birdies — and skates, like skis, intrude between the body and the ground. And when one further removes one's body from the contest by an extension device such as a racquet, a bat or a stick, all purity of movement, strength and focus is lost."

Garp's preference was wrestling but because of his taste for the "personal aesthetic," he seemingly would also favor running and swimming.

That leaves out baseball, football, basketball, tennis and racquetball, among others.

Garp worshipers will probably get some argument about their stance on sports which use racquets and balls. Racquetball players, for one, would convince the Garpies that there is still a personal aesthetic to hitting the perfect kill shot.

And there is no way to convince Marty Hogan, Mike Yellen or Shannon Wright that there is a lack of movement, strength and focus in playing racquetball.

But what would create the most controversy is Garp's statement that the ball stands between the athlete and exercise. The implication is that one gets more exercise from non ball-playing sports.

Jogging and swimming, undeniably, offer a great deal of physical exercise but no more than a hard game of racquetball. And, this doesn't even take into account the boredom factor, which weighs heavy against "personal aesthetic" sports.

"I can play three or four hours of racquetball and not even be tired when I'm done. But I usually get tired after about a half hour of jogging," says one doctor. "This is not because of lack of stamina. It's because of boredom. In racquetball you are chasing after something. With jogging, your mind isn't amused or stimulated."

Which brings us to a story in this issue.

Corporation executives know the mental value of racquetball. That is why they have allocated extra time for their employees to play the game. Companies say that taking a "racquetball for lunch" break in the middle of the day helps the employee have a more active mind the rest of the day.

"If anybody is playing racquetball, it's not considered goofing off," says one executive in our story on "Racquetball For Lunch."

"Two hour lunches are frowned upon but an hour for racquetball and thirty to forty minutes for lunch is approved of, if not encouraged."

Tied into that story is another story in our magazine this issue titled "Coping With Stress." It gives insight into how vigorous exercise, such as a hard game of racquetball, is an essential part of reducing stress.

In this issue we also offer a four-part series on "Racquetball In The Rockies." The stories, written by four different writers, give an atmospheric look at four distinct towns.

Aspen, they say, is like a little New York. Steamboat Springs is cowboy oriented. Vail is for tourists. Denver is one of the fastest growing cities in the country and one of the most sports-minded.

The "Rockies" section is part of a continuing series whereupon we focus on a different city or area and how racquetball relates to it. So far we have covered Las Vegas, New York City and Chicago.

The stories on The Rockies offer more than just a look at the places to play racquetball. The writers were informed that the town's atmosphere, whether good or bad, slow or fast, or big or small, were of prime importance for the stories.

We think you'll find four unique and interesting stories.

Also in this issue is a feature on the comedians who play the game, a funny interview with comedian Buddy Hackett, and our special Holiday Gift Guide featuring a few unique items that are good choices for that special racquetball player.

Our instruction section is highlighted by Jay Jones tips on strategy, Janell Marriott's footwork drills and Davey Bledsoe's story on watching your opponent.

We had planned to do a story, for Garp's sake, on how to play racquetball without a racquet or ball but, alas, we couldn't find a writer interested.

Ben Kalb
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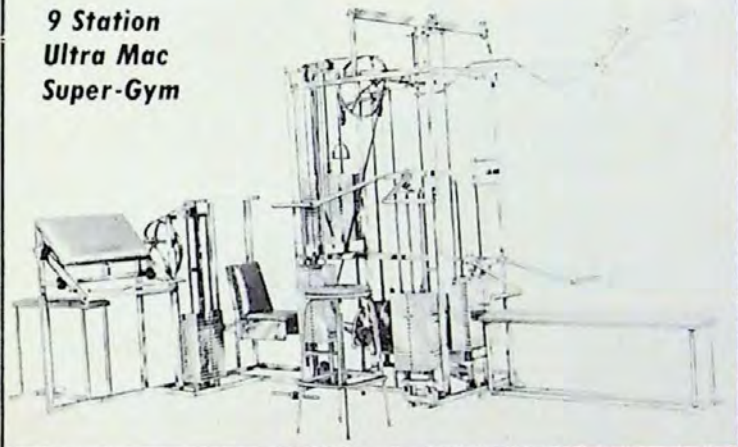
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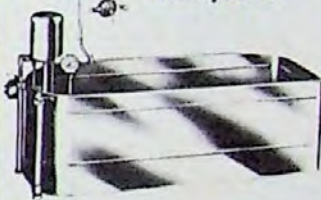
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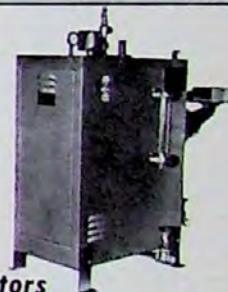
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Ball Guide

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I totally enjoyed the "first annual ball guide" and I felt the comments from the pros were well thought out.

I commend a publication that is geared for the public and not the advertisers or the industry honchos. I realize that you have to cater to them to a certain extent but please keep up your objective policy.

Next year when you come out with your second annual ball guide, I hope you even go a step further and rate the balls top to bottom.

Betty Purcell
Berkeley, Calif.

Lack of Humor

There is one thing missing from your publication. There are not enough cartoons or humor.

I usually don't buy a magazine because of cartoons but it always added a little flavor to a publication.

Stuart January
Beloit, Wisc.

Editor's Note: Next issue look for a humor piece dealing with how Mark Twain would have viewed the game. Racquetball Illustrated is also seeking a regular feature cartoonist, a person who will have a regular monthly spot in the magazine.

Color Photos

After seeing color photos of celebrities I was glad you finally made the transition to color action photos of the pro tournaments.

That color shot of Marty Hogan and Mike Yellen on your story on The Nationals in the October issue was excellent. Please give us more color coverage of the pros.

Todd Baxter, Jr.
College Park, Md.

Nationals Coverage

I want to congratulate you on the coverage of The Nationals. The story was excellent. It's a pleasure to see a story written with a lot of atmosphere and quotes instead of just a bunch of scores.

The photos were also outstanding. I

can see your photographer has had some experience shooting action.

Francine Lathrop
Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.

Editor's Note: Our photographer, Dave King, has had experience shooting action. He was a former sports photographer for the Los Angeles Herald Examiner. More of King's action racquetball photos were recently seen in the Saturday Evening Post.

Art Director

As a former art director for two trade magazines I want to commend your art director on a fine job with Racquetball Illustrated. His graphics and design have really added a lot to an already fine publication.

Sandra Morton
Torrance, Calif.

Sportsmassage

One of the most informative articles I have read was your feature on Sportsmassage.

It gave an insight into the muscles that take the most abuse during a game. I have cut out that article and put

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it on my bulletin board at home.

My wife and I use it as an educational resource after we play a hard match. I usually give my wife a massage and then she gives me one about once a week after our match.

Andrew Diamond
Marina del Rey, Calif.

Colorful Cover

Great cover shot. I was totally stunned at seeing Ruth Buzzi on your

cover surrounded by all those racquetballs. It was a clever idea and a very colorful one. Please give us more of that.

Richard Watson
Southfield, Mich.

Debra Jo Fan

Thanks a million for running the article on Debra Jo Fondren in your August edition.

Being a consistent racquetball player

for the last six years, I strongly agree with her philosophy that racquetball relieves a lot of tension.

I also feel very strongly about a person who takes pride in her self as well as her body.

This may sound unusual but every time I get ready to play a tourney I meditate to music. I found it helps my game tremendously.

Chris Morris
Honolulu, Hawaii

Madison Avenue

In reference to an article in the April issue of RACQUETBALL ILLUSTRATED entitled "Racquetball on Madison Avenue," it was stated that Cadillac and Coors beer were using racquetball players in their print media ads.

Since I read that article I have been looking for these ads but have been unable to find them. Please advise me as to the publications these ads are printed in.

Cecil H. Reid
Birmingham, Ala

Editor's Note:

A reprint of the Cadillac ad appeared in the article in question. Coors has two ads making reference to racquetball. We have no advance notice of what publications these ads appear in. That comes from the respective advertising agencies. Since the article was run, other products such as Sego and Johnson and Johnson's shampoo have used racquetball for media advertising.

Cover to Cover

Your magazine is the very first one I've ever read cover to cover. Every single one of your articles in the August issue was extremely interesting. I know your magazine will be one I look forward to every month.

Debbie Pontz
Lancaster, Pa.

Z Serves

I would like to thank you for the wonderfully explicit article on 'Z' serves by Jean Sausser and would like to see more articles on improving one's strategies in the future issues of this magazine.

Sausser's article is a scrutinizingly intelligent one on a very important and essential level of the game. Following her comments and advice on 'Z' serving improved my serve enormously. I thank Ms. Sausser for her intelligible and practical advice.

Susan Wachter
Santa Monica, Calif.

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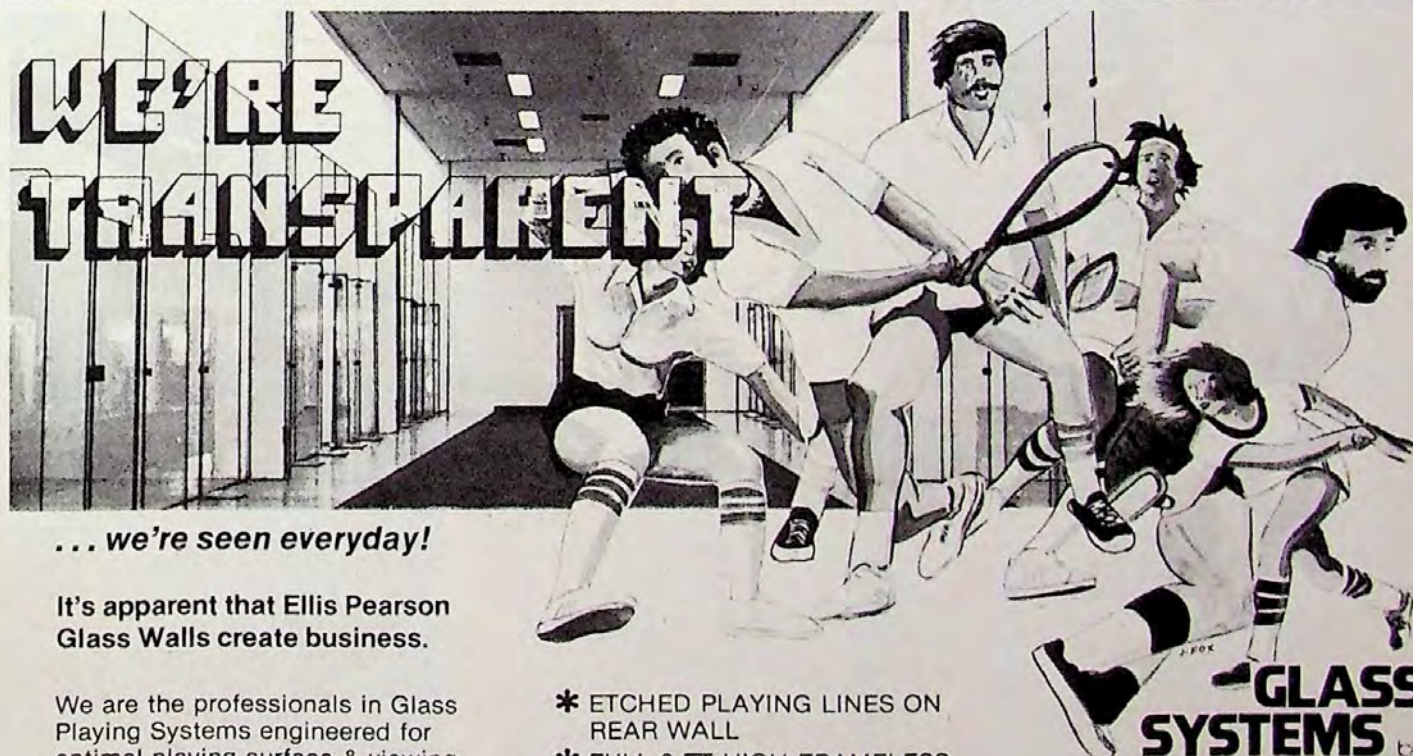
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PLAYERS



Chicago Bears fullback Robin Earl.

More Celebrities Playing The Game

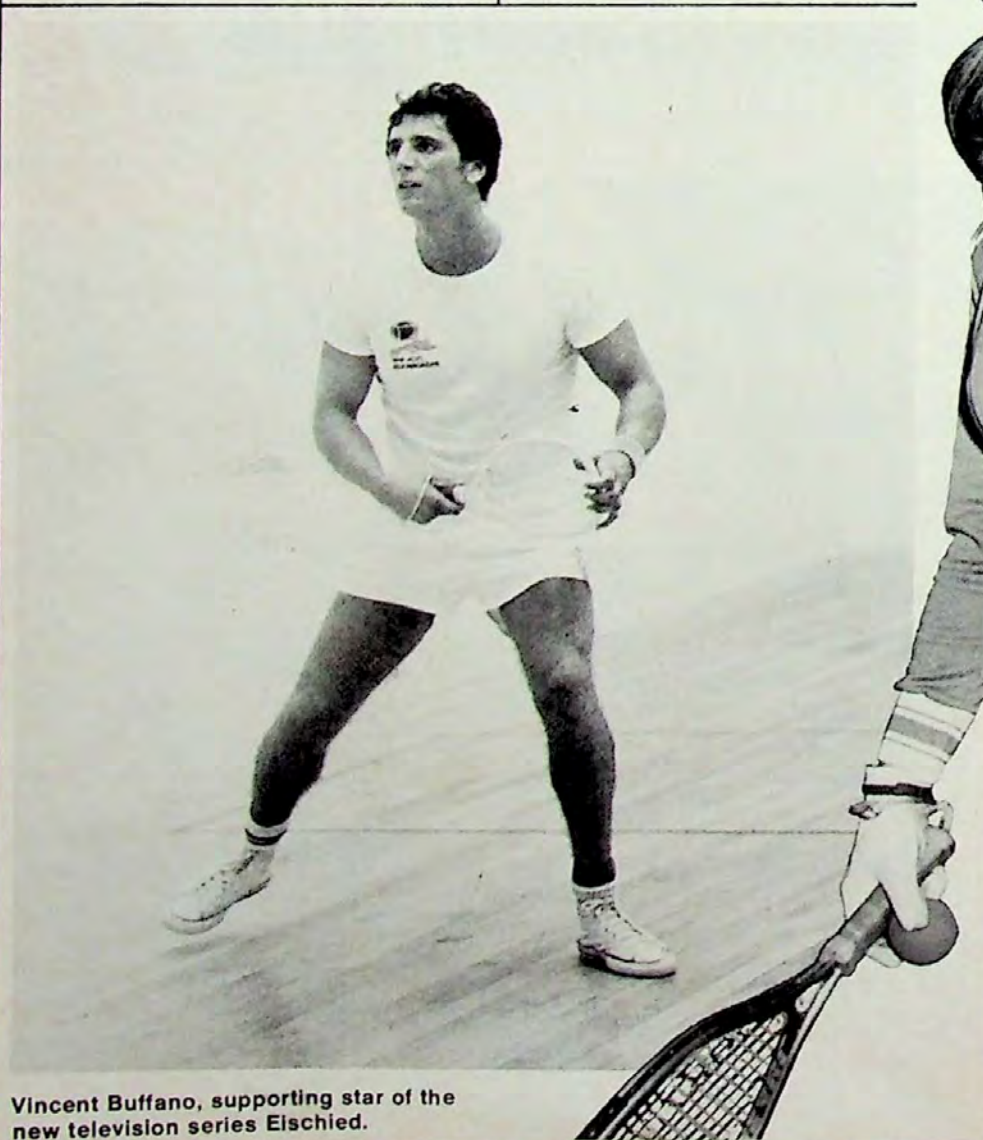
Celebrity racquetball tournaments and exhibitions are becoming as popular today as the celebrity tennis exhibitions of a few years ago.

From the West to the Midwest to the Atlantic Coast, more racquetball clubs are setting up celebrity matches as extra attractions to their regular tournaments.

Says one club general manager: "It's a good way to introduce people to the game and it's a good way to have your members mingle with famous people."

The photos on these pages were taken as part of AMF Voit/Self Magazine tourneys in Bloomington, Ill. (Killshot) and Anaheim, Calif. (Sports Gallery).

Photos by Dave King, Steve Schatzberg and Tom Fitzgerald



Vincent Buffano, supporting star of the new television series Elschied.



Lindsey Bloom, former Miss USA and co-star of the movie H.O.T.S.



Former pro football player Ed Marinaro flanked by Brianne Leary (left) of CHiPs and Los Angeles Aztecs (North American

Soccer League) cheerleader Rebecca Hayes.



NBA basketball player Gail Goodrich.



Former high jump world record holder Dwight Stones.

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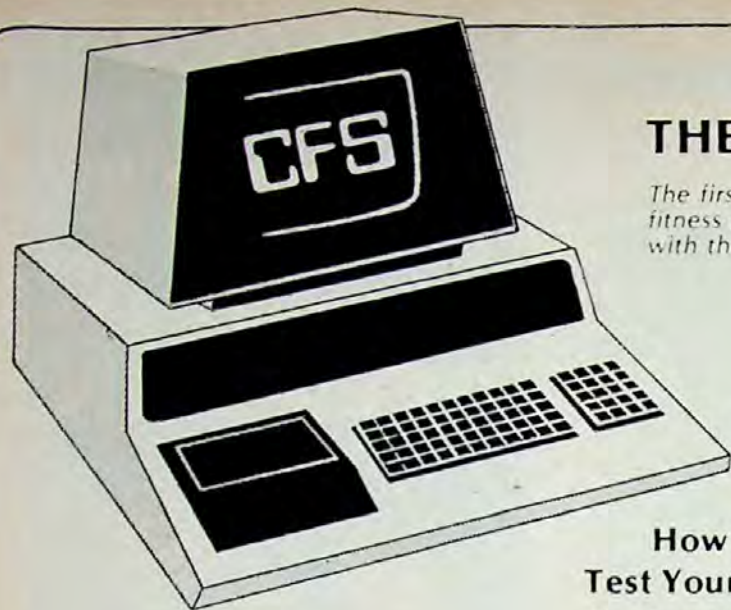
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THE COMPUTERIZED FITNESS SYSTEM

The first computerized Fitness System that gives you fitness tests, provides a fitness prescription, and follows your members progress while providing you with the industry's ultimate edge against competition.

Your Best Employee

The fitness conscious adult has now come to expect more from the health and sporting club. They want a well designed fitness program... A program that will increase their cardiovascular health and reduce their risk for heart attacks. They want a program that will reduce that body fat and trim up those sagging muscles. But before you can give them such a program they have to know how fit they are.

The major thrust of the health and sporting club industry is the setting up of fitness programs for its members. But fitness testing, the prescription of programs and the follow-up take a great deal of time and expertise. The club manager is no longer expected to just handle sales and organization now he's being asked to be an expert in exercise physiology. And in most cases, this is impossible.

But now your members can have their fitness tested in five separate categories by a computer. Which computer will then tell them what kind of shape they're really in. More than this, the Computerized Fitness System will provide a prescription which is personalized for each member. And then the computer will keep track of their progress and help your members to continue their program in your club.

Perhaps the best feature of the Computerized Fitness System is as a sales and promotion tool. Clubs that have the ability to give testing, prescribe programs and help their members continue with the help of the computer have a distinct advantage over their competitors.

When you consider what it costs to have an employee to handle fitness programs, the Computerized Fitness System is an unbelievable asset. You could have the foremost authority in health and fitness but people go to the club that has the Computerized Fitness System.

How the Computer Test Your Members Fitness

The Computerized Fitness system is the culmination of software developed by TOMAR Fitness Systems and hardware from Commodore. There are seven tests that the computer runs on each of your members. They involve cardiovascular fitness, body fat levels, a risk factor analysis for heart disease, two tests for muscular function and two tests of flexibility.

All the tests are conducted with the Computerized Fitness System and are fun for your members. For the test of cardiovascular fitness, the computer has your member stand up and down for three minutes while monitoring his heart rate. For body fat levels it has them get pinched. For the risk factor analysis, it asks questions. And in the tests for muscular function and flexibility, the computer has your member perform simple yet exacting exercise movements.

The tests that the computer gives are from the most recent investigations on fitness and health and are easy to take. Your member follows simple instructions and touches his toes, pinches his stomach or does whatever the computer asks. And these tests have been geared for the whole family but primarily for the adult member.

• BODY COMPOSITION •

NAME: John Franklin

ANALYSIS

HEIGHT: 5 FT. 9 IN

WEIGHT: 210 LBS.

LEAN WEIGHT: 140 LBS.

LEAN BODY WEIGHT: 170 LBS.

RELATIVE FAT: 19%

IDEAL WEIGHT: 200 LBS.

You need to lose 10 pounds.

The computer prints out precise information on body composition.

How the Computer Interprets Tests and Prescribes A Fitness Program

After your member has taken the tests he will be provided with a "Personal Fitness Program." This provides a hard copy of the results of the tests he has just taken. It also interprets his test scores. It'll tell him exactly how he did and what it means. He will then be given a prescription based on his ability to exercise. He'll be told how to take his heart rate and you will provide the type of exercise. Whether you offer weight training or racquetball, jogging or tennis, the prescription will fit right in with your program and your facilities.

The prescription will also explain the MET scoring system. This allows your member to keep track of his progress. A MET, very simply is a unit of energy. When the body is at rest the body uses a certain amount of oxygen. This level is deemed as 1 MET. As your member becomes more active his body uses more oxygen. Based on test scores your member is given a weekly MET point level to reach. It makes the intangibles of exercise tangible. It gets them going and keeps them going.

More importantly, it allows them to participate in any type of exercise that you and your facility offer. It makes your program a better one.

A Sales And Promotion Tool

As a sales and promotion tool the Computerized Fitness System will attract prospective members. Consider what your club is in business for. You want to promote health and fitness. You make promises to trim your members up and to show them how to stay fit. The Computerized Fitness System will bring in prospective members because you will have shown them how far advanced you are in the science of fitness. Clubs that have the ability to give testing for a small fee or as a promotional move to help the member begin and continue his program with the use of a computer have a distinct advantage over their competitors. And if the computer is not in use as your fitness director it will control inventory, reserve court space and play a variety of games.

Due to recent advances in Computer technology the Computerized Fitness System is very inexpensive. It can pay for itself with the first week. But if having a "computer" appears to be an extra expense, consider what the cost of an employee to do this testing would be. Consider the number of members who will join just because of your "Computerized Fitness System." Consider your competition. They'll be using the system soon enough. When you consider the advantages of having the Computerized Fitness System in your clubs also consider the disadvantages of not having it.

To order your COMPUTERIZED FITNESS SYSTEM, send \$1495.00 (Florida residents please add 4% sales tax) to the address below or credit card buyers may call.

• RISK FACTOR ANALYSIS •

1. How many hours do you sleep each night?

A. 4-6 B. 7-8 C. 9-12

> C

YOUR ANALYSIS

Sorry, you rate poorly. Most people sleep between 7 and 8 hours a night. Those people are the most healthy. Those sleeping 9 hours or more have the most illnesses. But those sleeping 6 hours or less have the poorest health. Get more rest.

The computer analyzes your members risk of heart disease.

• COURT RESERVATIONS •	
8:00	8:30
COURT 1	COURT 2
STEVE CHARLTON	DAVE DARREN
COURT 3	COURT 4
HENRY POOL	MIKE WHITE
COURT 5	COURT 6
DAN RILEY	BILL ATKINS

The computer will give you instant access to court reservations and much more.

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HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE



RACQUETBALL IN LIGHTS!

You can light up your club or living room with "Racquetball in Neon" from Racquetball Warehouse (PO Box 3749, Los Angeles, Calif.), **\$149.**



PRESSURIZER!

Keep those racquetballs from going dead with the "Racquetball Saver" pressurizer from Gexco, Inc. (Orange County, Calif.), **\$9.50.**

When the holiday season approaches, one problem facing almost everyone is the inevitable gift list.

Having picked up **RACQUETBALL ILLUSTRATED**, we can assume you probably have friends or relatives who also play racquetball.

We therefore offer a "Gift Guide."

Most of the gifts chosen for the "Gift Guide" are indirectly related to racquetball.

Last year most of the gifts in our guide were the basics — racquets, balls, shoes, accessories, etc. This year we have assumed most people already have a racquet. And if not, one can check our annual **Racquet Guide** (June, 1979).

One other note: Some of the items in the "Gift Guide" are obviously not exclusive. Other companies make similar items which also make appropriate gifts.

As in all consumer-oriented guides, we advise you to shop around.



Racquet Club "Match Set"

with soap, cologne, after shave from English Leather, \$10.

Racquetball Gift Pack

Voit, two cans of balls plus mug or necklace, \$10.95.

"Psyche-Out Shirt"

with your favorite face or "Psyche-Out Gearbag" from Crowd Grabbers (PO Box 600059, North Miami Beach, Fla.). Each \$8.



Racquetball Fanatics by

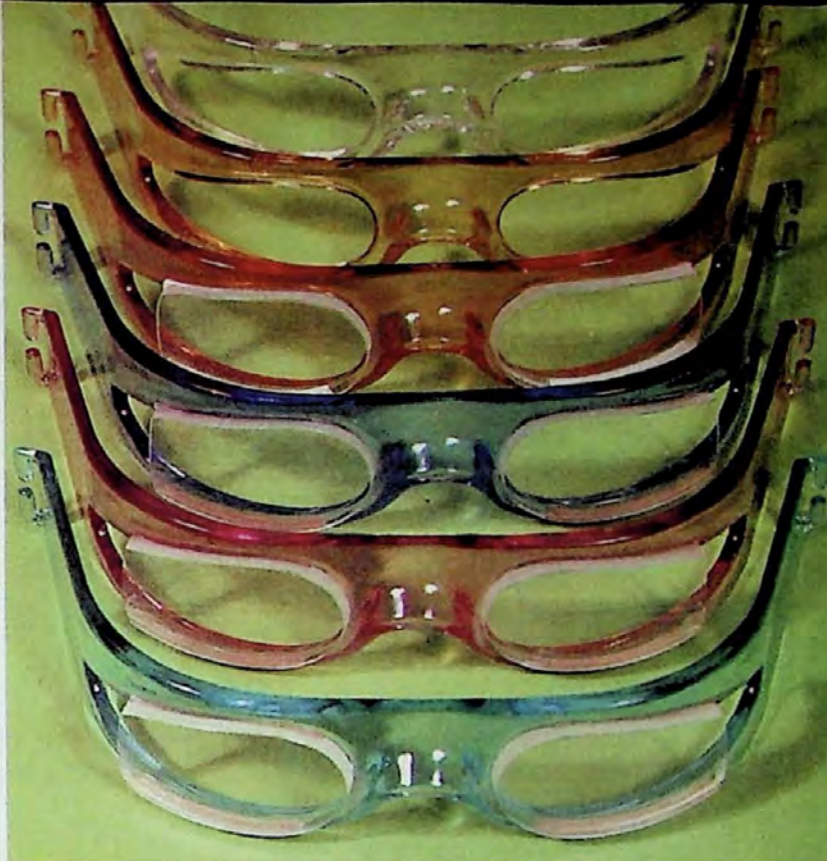
Crosswinds Corp. (Fenton, Mo.), \$1.



"The Massage Works" hand massage (with four attachments) by Conair, \$20.

JEWELRY!

Jewelry items are always popular and several companies have a variety of items to offer. Shown here: Gold vermeil on silver racquetball racquet pendant (chain not included) with imported lapis lazuli ball, **\$49** from James Collection (Boulder, Colo.). Also available in 14-k gold (**\$135**) and sterling silver (**\$43**); "Racquetteer" key chain, Lowell Sigmund, Inc. (624 Venice Blvd., Venice, Calif.). **\$3**.



EYEGUARDS!

Protective wear for the eyes is a gift many players could be thankful for. Shown here: Rainbo (Lloyd Distributors, Calabasas, Calif.) Prescription All-Sport Eyeguard. Non-prescription price, **\$5.95**. Prescription price varies, consult eye care specialist. Racquetball companies and others such as Solari, Pro-Tec (by Saranac) and Bausch & Lomb make equally outstanding eyeguards.



SOX AND GLOVES!

Everybody needs athletic sox and several sportswear companies manufacture them. Shown here: Enduro over-the-calf athletic sox by Jobst (Toledo, Ohio), **\$7**. Mid-calf sox **\$4**.

Gloves are probably the most used and replaced racquetball accessory. Several companies make outstanding gloves. Shown here: The Other Glove by Point West, **\$10.95** and suede deerskin glove by W & W Sports, Spring Valley, N.Y. **\$12-15**. Other Glove manufacturers include Saranac, Champion, and SAI.



GIFT GUIDE



EXERCISE EQUIPMENT!

Several companies offer exercise and conditioning products — everything from weights to mini-gyms. Shown here: Lifeline (Madison, Wisc.) Isokinetic Exerciser, **\$19.50-\$23.95** and jump rope, **\$4.95**; Nautilus (DeLand, Fla.) Dynamate, **\$29.95**.



SPORTSWEAR!

Fashion such as shirts, shorts and warm-up suits are always popular holiday items. Shown here: Blue warm-up suit by Ektelon, **\$70**. Other sportswear companies also make outstanding fashion items.



BOOKS!

There are many instruction and information books available related to racquetball. Shown here: Sports Illustrated Racquetball, Victor I. Spear, J.B.

Lippincott Co., New York, **\$5.95**; Racquetball Where To Play USA, Susan McShirley, S.R.M. Press, Los Angeles, **\$7.95**.



BAGS!

Almost all racquetball companies make warm-up or carry-all bags. Here we have shown sample bags from Vittert (\$12.50), Aldila (\$15) and Head (\$19.95).

The items on these pages are meant to be shown as samples. Other manufacturers make similar products.

Most of the items are available at your local pro shop, sporting goods store or department store.

For further information on racquets, balls, accessories and shoes, consult Racquetball Illustrated's annual guides for these products.

And, of course, we recommend you shop around. Compare products and compare prices.

The staff of Racquetball Illustrated wishes you a happy holiday season.



The Editors

Healthy hearts do it better

A healthy heart can help you enjoy your life to its fullest, and longest. People with healthy hearts can look better, feel better and do more than those with heart disease.

Help your heart give you a healthy life. Don't start smoking, or, if you already do, give it up. Eat a well-balanced diet and watch your intake of fatty, fried and high-cholesterol foods. Exercise regularly, and have your blood pressure checked. If it's high, follow your doctor's orders for treatment.

We want you to get the most out of life, and do it with a healthy heart.

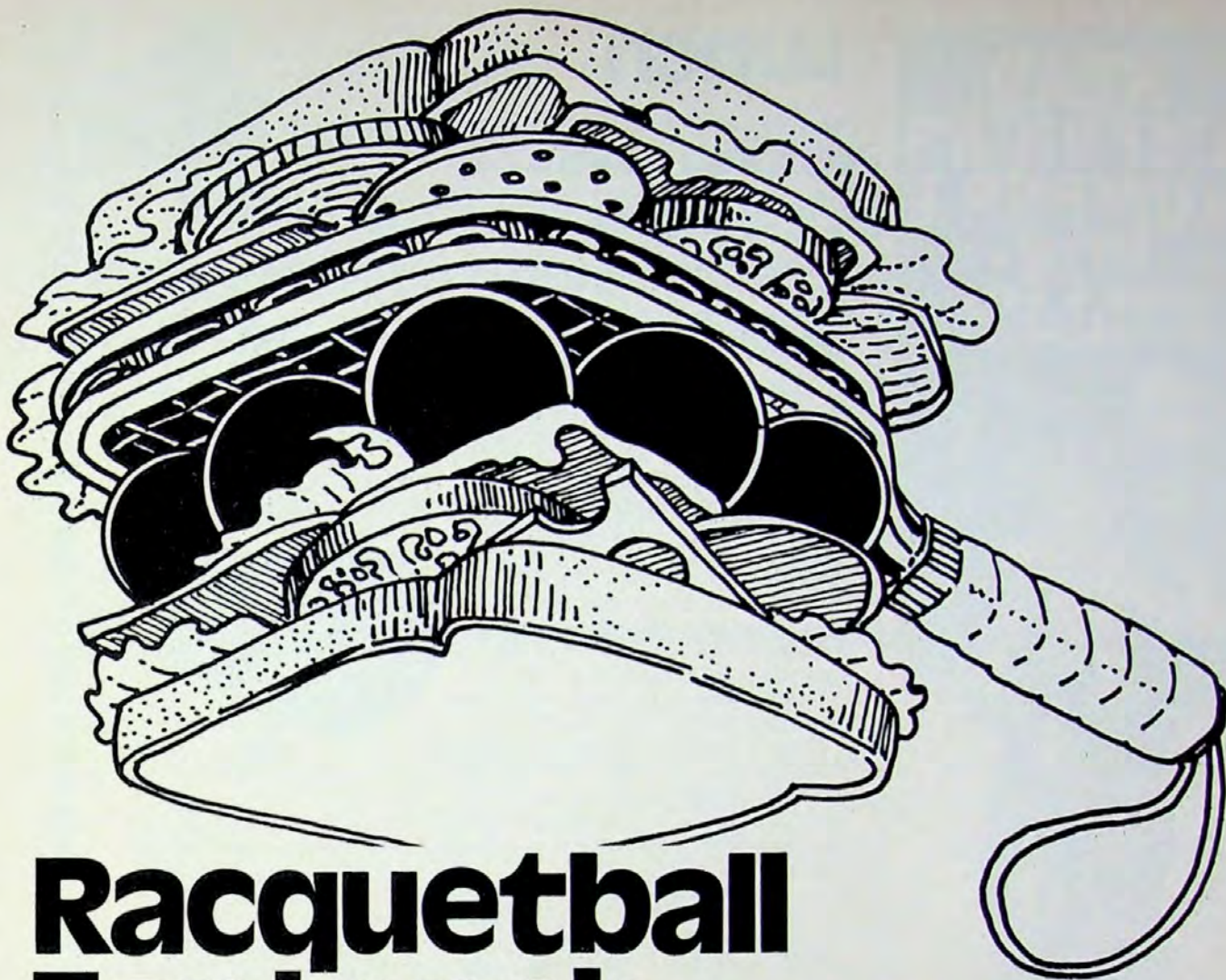
Please give generously to the American Heart Association

WE'RE FIGHTING FOR YOUR LIFE

A close-up photograph of a woman's back and right arm. She is wearing a white, ribbed, sleeveless top. On her upper right arm, there is a tattoo that reads "INDESTRUCTIBLE" in a bold, red, sans-serif font, with a yellow lightning bolt graphic underneath the text. She is also wearing a silver chain bracelet on her right wrist, which features a heart-shaped charm and a circular charm with a grid pattern. Her right hand is clenched into a fist. The background is dark and out of focus.

INDESTRUCTIBLE

RACQUETBALL CLUB MILIBRA
401 Glenneyre St./Suite 105/Laguna Hills, CA 92651 (714) 497-4871



Racquetball For Lunch

Executives and employees substitute racquets for cocktails.

By Carole Kaiser

There's a new alternative to lunch that's a sure cure for indigestion and even beats the cost of the Blue Plate Special. You may soon see it advertised on an employee's desk at high noon: "Out To Racquetball."

The 10th floor of the Occidental Insurance headquarters in Los Angeles contains a gym with two racquetball courts that are busier during lunch than the executive dining room. Even in films like "THE BETSY", you can see actor Robert Duvall playing a mid-day game in a customized court that exists solely for the executives of a major Detroit auto manufacturer.

High class eateries are not exactly losing money because of this recent burst of popularity, but more men and women are playing racquetball at lunch instead of milling over 1.5 cocktails and soggy chef's salads. Attorneys are keeping racquets in the trunks of their cars and making excuses for prolonging cases in jurisdictions where "courts are close by." A psychiatrist calls it

therapy for the therapist and one executive proclaims it has reinstated his fidelity for his wife. Whatever the allure, the popularity of racquetball at lunch time is infectious...and healthy.

The time element is almost perfect. Logistics permitting, within an hour and twenty minutes one can play, shower, dress and be back at his or her desk with pen and phone in hand. Enticed by a Jekyll/Hyde persona, a person knows when they enter a court that they'll leave behind most of what they've brought with them. The stress is alleviated, the mind unnerved, the blood circulated and the attitude turned inside-out. Says an Orange County executive of Warmington Developers, "If anybody is playing racquetball it's not considered goofing off. Two hour lunches are frowned upon but an hour for racquetball and thirty to forty minutes for lunch is approved of, if not encouraged."

At present, the majority of mid-day players must rely on a local club. Whether around the corner or fifteen minutes away, it becomes their haven.

Some even fight for a court the way they'd fight for a reservation at their favorite restaurant. Corporate memberships are almost as popular as family memberships and can sometimes be bought at a discount. Registration seems to be highest with attorneys and doctors, two of the higher-stressed professions. Film studios (20th Century Fox), beauty establishments (Vidal Sassoon) and stockbrokers are not far behind. The attendance is so high during mid-day hours that if one were in need of some free medical advice or legal representation...a court could be the best place to find it.

One can even take advantage of President Carter's 1978 Revenue Act which supports that "club dues would remain deductible as a business expense if a taxpayer can establish that the club was primarily used to further his trade or business."

One interesting club catering to this fancy is the Commerce Club located in the Commerce Office Complex in West Los Angeles. Owned by R & B De-

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Lunch

velopment and managed by Bob Doyle, the club consists of two courts and approximately 250 members. Originally designed solely for men's handball, the club regrettably shows its exclusivity acknowledging "Men Only." Memberships include members of the Los Angeles Rams, dozens of corporate executives, comedian George Carlin and a few unassuming priests.

Because of the intimacy of the club, Doyle is often placed in the role of confessor (The priests come to play, not work.). He blushes over the influence he has over these important men. "I'll always get through to these guys on the phone when I'm calling to confirm their afternoon court. It's as if they plan their sanity around it," says Doyle. Snapping, irritable, the cogs of their minds almost visible, Doyle says many members are on edge when they arrive. The doctors leave their "beepers" in his care while the priests shed their clerical robes. Then in a hypnotic type state they disappear into their "padless cell."

"There's no hookey going on here," Doyle assures. "It's like medicine. The intense concentration the game demands sharpens the decision making process and the physicalness gets their blood pumping again. It's compact and energizing, like Granola bars."

Aside from the club's function, there is a fast growing perspective about the mid-day match that has infiltrated the corporate structure. It traces back to 1974 when the President's Council on Fitness and Sports met with a small group of physical fitness directors who ran employee health fitness programs, and encouraged them to set up exercise programs.

Now, five years later, the A.A.F.D.B.I. (American Association of Fitness Directors in Business and Industry) contains over 800 members and has eight regional representatives. Keith Fogle, Fitness Program Director for Prudential Insurance Company of America, is acting president of the association. There are two courts at the offices in Newark, N.J. "We strive to create an increased awareness of the importance for developing and maintaining a high level of physical, emotional and mental health among employees," says Fogle. "If people are beginning to exercise because it's the popular thing to do, we feel it is up to us to give them a true rationale for physical fitness programs and explain the physiological changes and expected benefits of exercise on the job." Racquetball is a major part of this program.

Some of the larger corporations across the country have included racquet courts in their expansive complexes. Xerox Corp. in Leesburg, Va.

has a \$3 million dollar facility that contains two squash and two racquetball courts. Weyerhaeuser Company in Tacoma, Wash. boasts the same. Exxon Oil, Occidental, Pepsico, Boeing... the list goes on. "About one-third of our employees use the courts," says a spokesman for Xerox. "We even set up in-house tournaments."

The A.A.F.D.B.I. feels obligated to stimulate active research and to compile and disseminate research information regarding health effects of exercise. Companies designed to aid and refine these studies range from Fitness Systems, Inc. in Los Angeles to the Self Development Association of Richfield, Conn.

Two UCLA Graduate Students in Management, David Ulrich and Ken Shepherd, are in the process of developing a monograph that will prove the impact of fitness programs and "the relation between exercise and managerial performance." Never before examined, they plan to present their findings at the A.A.F.D.B.I. Annual Conference in Colorado Springs. Their matrix should have enormous impact on the growth of exercise availability for all employees, whether in-house or club oriented.

Supports of this mid-day exercise mania cover a wide spectrum. The Los Angeles Fire Department is a good start. Almost one-third of the cities stations contain racquetball/handball courts. Following a stringent program designed by James Barnard of UCLA, racquetball has become an intricate part of every fireman's daily routine. "A fireman must respond within 60 seconds of an alert," Inspector Ed Reed says. "For many of the men, the speed and accuracy of racquetball, any time of the day, is an asset to this perfection."

The area of California with the highest influx of in-house facilities seems to be Orange County. Here the investment has been made by employer for fitness programs and equipment geared with the employees health in mind. But this catered convenience comes with a high price tag.

The companies that offer this service consist mainly of construction and building firms where costs are minimal due to job experience, industrial locations and cheaper material costs. Joe Teddy of Designers and Developers, builders of custom racquet courts, informed most business inquiries that the average custom court runs around \$40,000. With figures like these the demand from private employers are few and far between. "Anyway," Teddy says, "why would they want their employee playing racquetball when they should be doing their job?" A typical reaction that until recently was the accepted rule.

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Lunch

Arnel Development, a residential and commercial building firm, built their court several years ago, complete with gallery, sauna, showers, weight room, kitchen and washer and dryer. George Argyros, president and resolute pursuer of the game, says he built the court for "pure enjoyment and availability." Little did he know when doing so that its availability would heighten every employee's health record and insure a harder working staff. Jean Turak, one of

the companies controllers, confides she's lost weight and admits it provided her with a true incentive to stay with the firm. "By taking the kinks out, the competition in the office is less and everyone is far more congenial," says Turak.

Karl Sprouse, associate controller, notes that "if the court wasn't here I'd be away from my desk a lot more." The majority consensus at the company is that even though the extended break at lunch time may not increase the quantity of working hours, it definitely increases the quality of performance. These employees may have the use of

the courts for free, but at the same time they are saving their employer the cost of slack manpower.

Jim Warmington, President of Warmington Developers, is another pioneering provider of the sport. Their headquarters in Irvine, Calif. showcase two courts, jacuzzi, sauna, weight room, kitchen, complete intercom system and key privileges for weekend use. Warmington designed the building with the courts a definite focal point. An old handball player from college days and a racquetball partisan for the past three years, he religiously plays every day. Afterwards, it's a roast beef sandwich at his desk.

"I forget everything," he says. "I may take some frustration out on the ball for the first few points but if you continue with that attitude, you'll never win a game. After five, six points it's only the game for me...no more business." Encouraging anyone who can afford to do it, Warmington proudly says, "it's the best thing we've ever done for our staff. They're healthier, happier and harder workers for it. We're even thinking of starting up some competition between other companies that have in-house courts."

A good in-house competitor for Warmington to consider might be Bob Jacobson, President of R. J. Software Systems in La Mesa, Calif. A supplier of accounting programs for computers, Jacobson goes one step further when providing his employees with the sport. He insures their safety by educating them first.

Their two custom "computer key system" courts (operable 24 hours) were constructed a little over a year ago. They service 100 employees who are "let off work whenever they want to play the game and participate in clinics." Ektelon recently put on a clinic at the company with players Marci Greer and Hope Weisbach. Dick Dent, physical therapy trainer for the San Diego Padres, acts as the company's consultant, supervising and supporting clinics such as these along with other health oriented lectures.

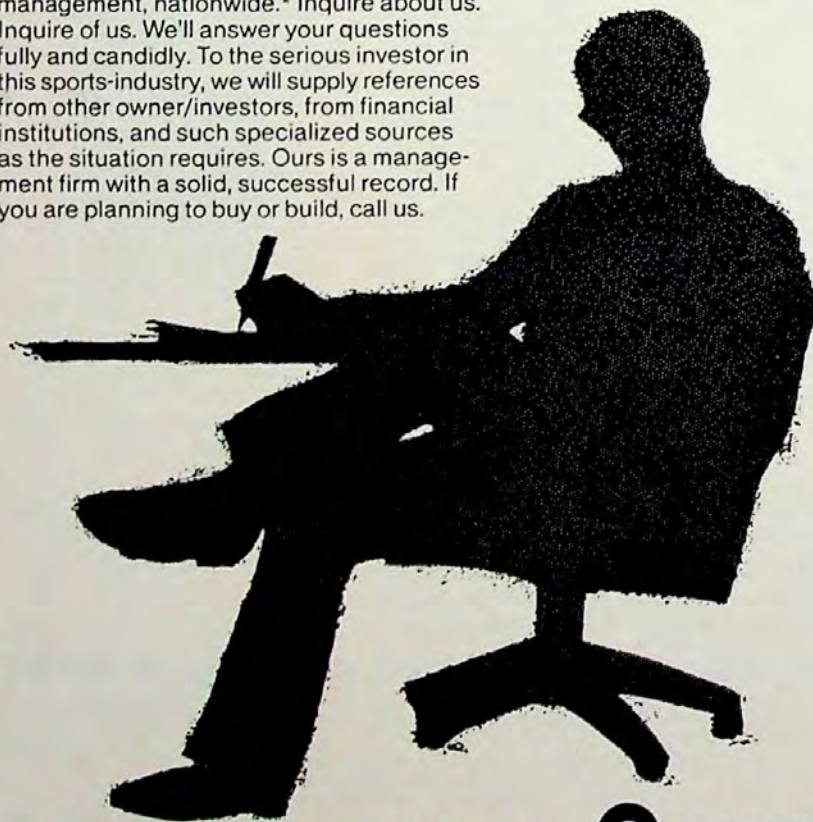
"Racquetball has done away with that alienation, enabling everyone to meet and play a friendly game whenever they feel the need for release," says R. J. Software Systems spokeswoman Celeste Colter.

Most executives use "racquetball for lunch" to keep from getting stale or fatigued for that late afternoon conference or deal. A phone conversation in one executive's office sums it up.

"My mind is working overtime right now and I know I'll be able to make a clearer decision if I give it a break," says the executive to the caller. "Can we pick up this conversation after I play a quick game of racquetball?"

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THE COMEDIANS

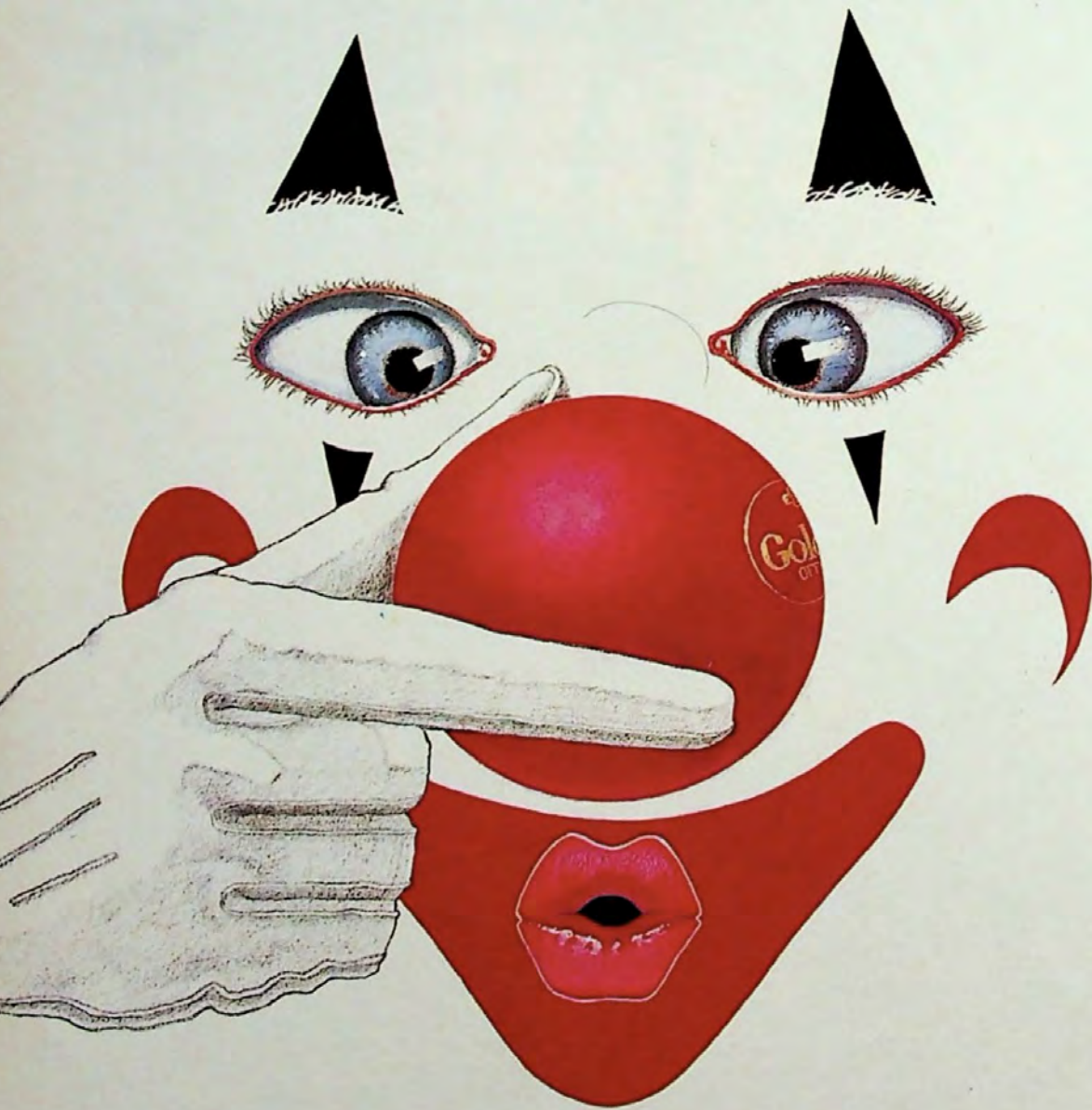


Illustration by Jeff Weekley

By Kathe Brockman Tracy

Most comedians claim they never take anything seriously, but when it comes to racquetball, Geoff Altman, Tom Dreesen, David Letterman, and Jimmy (J.J.) Walker find it's no laughing matter.

"Funny? Racquetball? There's nothing funny about racquetball," says Letterman, pounding his fist on the table in mock anger. Letterman, who has hosted Johnny Carson's Tonight Show several times and has the inside track as Carson's replacement when he finally leaves the show, proved his point at a recent benefit tournament in Santa Monica, Calif. where he ferociously hounded the ball for close to three hours, winning two of three games. "Racquetball is good exercise. A good game helps me think better afterward," says Letterman.

Fellow comedian, Dreesen, the mastermind behind Letterman's involvement with racquets, says the only thing

funny about racquetball is his own playing ability. "I don't think I'm a good player, maybe a 'C', but I play aggressively. I like a good workout and I like to compete." To benefit from the game, Dreesen, who claims he is a better teacher than player, believes it's important for an aspiring player to take lessons. That way one can avoid cultivating bad habits.

He and Letterman play together twice a week whenever they're both in town. "I used to beat him in the beginning, but now he beats me. The student has excelled the master. I know I'm a better teacher than player. I always say I'm not a racquetball player, and when people see my act, they tell me I'm not a comedian either," says Dreesen.

Though standup comedians seem passive on stage, Dreesen, who has kept audiences laughing for over ten years in hundreds of clubs throughout the U.S., and as an opening act for Sammy Davis, Jr., Vicki Carr, Natalie Cole, and Tony Orlando, among others,

The Comedians who take their racquetball seriously are (clockwise from top left) Jimmy (J.J.) Walker, Tom Dreesen, David Letterman and Jeff Altman.



COMEDIANS

says he establishes control over the audience through directed aggression. "You relax the moment you see you're in control," he says. "You get right to them on a one-on-one basis," which is how the frolicsome foursome—Altman, Dreesen, Letterman, and Walker—like to play their game on the court.

"What do I think about when I'm playing?" says Walker, star of the television series "Good Times." "I think about annihilating my opponent and bringing him to his knees. Now that's fun!"

"Yes, Walker's a very competitive player, and he's developed an interesting court technique of moving around like a large duck," Letterman jokes. Walker considers himself a "B" player, and has been known to crack three racquets while playing.

A standup comedian requires a unique personality, almost as if one were walking a tightrope every night on stage. With the absence of music and props, a comedian is, in a sense, suspended in mid-air in front of an audience that eagerly anticipates laughter as a release for their collective tensions. Such a responsibility can create tensions for the comedian as well, and racquetball, says Altman, who is currently working on a television pilot, feels it is a good tension release. "I build up a lot of excessive gas in my line of work and I like to blow it out on the court. It's a good place to get mad," he says, banging his fist down on the table in mock anger.

The newer comedians, says Dreesen, are more prone to athletics than the older more established ones. "But not all comedians are athletic," he says. Adds Letterman, "Comedians are a sedentary folk not prone to racquetball or any other sport."

Dreesen relates the time he was performing with Sammy Davis, Jr. in Las Vegas. Dreesen, who frequently jogs, was running around the hotel complex under the watchful eye of Davis. "I was minding my own business and getting some exercise in the morning to start off my day, and every time I passed Davis, he shook his head at me," Dreesen recalls. "When I came around the corner the next time, he was gone. I rounded the building one more time, turned the corner, and Davis suddenly jumped out at me from behind the bushes, and said, 'you gonna die.' He scared the devil out of me." Dreesen laughs and shakes his head. "About the only exercise Sammy Davis gets is yawning."

Standup comedy requires one to remain in shape. "Exercising rids you of tensions and it definitely helps your performance," says Dreesen. "Racquetball is a terrific way to rid yourself

of pre-performance anxieties so you can mellow out before you go on stage. Letterman and I sometimes play right before he goes on the Tonight Show and when he walks out before the audience he's relaxed and collected."

Dreesen plays a lot of sports—softball (he even has a weekend softball tournament named after his honor in his hometown Harvey, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago which he ceremoniously attends every year), basketball, billiards, bowling, tennis, golf, and, of course, racquetball. Dreesen is the only one in his family who plays racquetball. His wife took lessons but is not an avid player. His 11-year-old daughter prefers baseball and soccer. "She's a liberated girl for her age," says Dreesen.

Dreesen taught Letterman how to play racquetball four and a half years ago in the days when they weren't so busy with their careers. "But, thank God, we're busy now," he says. "I'm on the road a lot these days, so I don't get

to play as much as I'd like to." Dreesen is currently booked up through 1980 and is working on a possible television series as well.

Standup comics, says Dreesen, are hypochondriacs, always worrying about their health. "What we do requires good health. We work night after night in club after club, coming up with new material, and we have to look good. California living, of course, brings out the importance of looking physically well. Californians expose more of their bodies because they wear less clothing, and it's important to look healthy. Our work is strenuous, in and out of airplanes and clubs. I don't drink, I don't smoke, and I don't take pills, but I do play racquetball," says Dreesen.

When Dreesen is out of town, Letter-

David Letterman has hosted "The Tonight Show" several times and has the inside track as Johnny Carson's replacement when Carson finally leaves the show.



Photo courtesy NBC



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COMEDIANS

man matches wits with Altman. The play two or three times a week. "We're pretty closely matched in skill with each other," says Letterman. They also developed a game in which the ball can bounce twice and the score is kept to 100.

"We also developed 'dance racquetball' where you dance while you play. It's played on a rubber court with steel balls, so you don't have too many shots," Altman says with a deadpan look.

"But joking aside," says Letterman, "racquetball is a dead serious game when you work up a healthy sweat. It gets the toxins out of your body."

Dreesen prefers to serve from the side and admits he has a tendency to overkill, going for the power shots instead of finesse shots. "I'm too aggressive. I attack when I shouldn't, but I guess that goes back to my childhood days growing up in Chicago."



J.J. Walker: "I think about annihilating my opponent and bringing him to his knees."

Letterman keeps a cool head while playing. He watches the ball and hits strategically to the left and right to keep his opponent scurrying around the court. Down nine points in one celebrity tourney game, he came back to beat his opponent.

Perhaps the most competitive of the four comedians is Walker. "He's a very competitive player," says Dreesen. "Why, I've even seen him beat old ladies walking across the street just to win."

None of the comedians include jokes about racquetball in their acts yet, though Altman occasionally attempts one. "The two racquetballs went into a bar..." he starts, then stops when laughter breaks out. "See? It's already a joke."

"Racquetball's no joking matter," chides Letterman. "Yeah, we only take the rest of life as a joke," says Dreesen.

"Concentration is the key to good playing," says Letterman. "But sometimes when you've got a performance on your mind, you tend to space out and lose track of the score. Still, it's a vigorous game and playing helps relieve tension. It gets your mind off other things too, even if you can't concentrate wholly."

Altman, Dreesen, and Letterman keep in close touch with each other,

20 QUESTIONS WITH

BUDDY HACKETT

When not performing at the Sahara Hotel in Las Vegas, comedian Buddy Hackett spends a lot of his free time exercising. He plays a lot of tennis, and in the winter he moves to Aspen to ski and recently he took up racquetball.

Arriving at The Sports Connection in Santa Monica, Calif. for his photo session, Hackett mingled with the exercise instructors, told a few jokes and had our photographer laughing so much we wondered if the photos would come out in focus.

Hackett recently turned down a comedy photo session (on skiing) for Playboy Magazine. But agreed to spend an hour or so with RACQUETBALL ILLUSTRATED for a cover photo session and interview. One reason for his interest in racquetball is because his daughter, Ivy, works at the International Athletic Club in Denver.

Photos by David M. King

1. RBI: What are your first impressions of racquetball?

BH: My first impression is that I wish I started taking up the game many years ago. At 55 years of age it's a very new game for me to start playing.

2. RBI: What have you noticed about the game?

BH: There's one thing wrong with it. There are too many walls. I like a game that when you hit the ball hard it goes over the fence and you don't see it no more. That's my favorite. In racquetball, those balls keep flying at you from every way. You get very nervous.

3. RBI: Did you notice anything else about racquetball?

BH: Yes. In 10 or 15 minutes you can get enough of a workout to last you two and a half years. As opposed to tennis where you run a lot, you stop short a lot, then you wait a lot. And when you play doubles (in tennis) you sometimes get no exercise at all. You put on a shirt for nothing.



Buddy Hackett: "There is one thing wrong with this game. There are too many walls."

participating in benefit tournaments together as well as arranging matches among themselves. Dreesen originally contacted Letterman about playing in the racquetball tourney to benefit cancer research while Altman, who wrestled in high school, claims he was enticed into participating on the grounds he thought it was a celebrity wrestling tournament. "I came here to wrestle," he explains, flexing his muscles.

"Hollywood is so aware of which entertainers are in town, especially those who are willing to do benefits. I feel if an entertainer has the time, he should make himself available for such causes," says Dreesen.

All four of the comedians have performed in numerous benefits. "I like benefits. I think benefits make the world go around," says Letterman. "I've been rehabilitated through benefits," says Altman.

There seems to be a lot of benefit through participating in benefits, especially if it happens to be a racquetball benefit prior to a performance.

"One of the 10 biggest fears of man is said to be getting out in front of an audience," says Dreesen. "Racquetball is a terrific way to get rid of that fear and frustration. You wear yourself out so you don't have the energy to expend on being anxious."

And that's no joke.



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20 QUESTIONS

4. RBI: What other sports do you play?

BH: I play tennis a lot and I'm a skier. I've been skiing 34 years. That's my main sport. I ski all winter long. I start Thanksgiving and ski right through Easter. I move to Aspen all winter and stay there.

5. RBI: What sports did you play when you were younger?

BH: Work. I played work. That's all I did was work. We were very poor and I had to support myself and help support my family.

6. RBI: Didn't you take up boxing for a while?

BH: I was a boxer because it was the only thing I could get paid for. I used to get paid three dollars to box.

7. RBI: Did you consider yourself a pretty good boxer?

BH: I guess all kids consider themselves pretty good. But I never considered going pro. I was too little and too heavy for my height (5-foot-6).

8. RBI: Any other sports?

BH: I was on the football team in high school (Brooklyn) and I never got in a game in four years. The coach wouldn't trust me to put me in a game. He said he just didn't know what I would do.

9. RBI: Aren't you retired?

BH: I am retired.

10. RBI: But you still perform?

BH: Yeah, but I don't worry about it. When you're not retired, you worry about it. You call the maitre'd and see how many people are in the nightclub and you worry if it's not sold out and you worry about doing well in the off-season and all that. I used to do two shows a night. Now I only do one and to do one for me is like vacation time. I can do one a night in my sleep.

11. RBI: How often do you perform now?

BH: 10 weeks a year, one week at a time. Las Vegas and Atlantic City.

12. RBI: That's all you want to do is 10 weeks?

BH: No, I want to get down to 4-7 weeks.

13. RBI: Was there one thing that happened in your career that separated you from success and anonymity or stardom and being a nobody?

BH: There was no one thing. I'm just better than the ones who didn't make it. I'm just a very funny guy. There was no way I could not be a big hit.

14. RBI: Did you have to study comedy or acting?

BH: I never had to work at it. I never had to study. I'm a natural actor. I went

to acting school when I was 11 years old and the guy said I did everything so natural.

15. RBI: When not performing, how do you spend your time?

BH: Well, I have a clinic at my house for all guys who go to psychiatrists. Banana heads, they are. And there is nothing wrong with them except that they earn too much money. They don't have to worry about spending their money, so they begin to worry that they have nothing to worry about. If they don't hang out with me for an hour or two a day, then they have to hang out with a psychiatrist for five hours a day.

16. RBI: We know you recently went to China. Do you like to travel a lot?

BH: My wife loves to travel and she takes me along. I don't know why. A lot of times there's no bellman at these places, so that's why I'm there.

17. RBI: Have you ever considered owning a racquetball club?

BH: I never buy anything where the inventory is smaller than a tractor. You come here and the band-aids get lost and the balls get lost and the towels get lost. I was vice president of Del Webb Hotels for seven years and I really had enough. It's tough to please the public on stage and off. It's a lot easier on stage.

18. RBI: Is there a different approach to today's comedian and yesterday's comedian?

BH: It's no different. There are just different types of comedians, that's all. It's easier to be a comedian today than yesterday. The language is much freer. You can say and do anything you want on stage.

19. RBI: What are your immediate plans besides performing in Las Vegas and Atlantic City.

BH: Movies. I'm going to be making two movies. One is "Mark of Zorro" with George Hamilton and the other is "Theresa." That one will be filmed in Canada with an 11-year-old girl named Donna Bleeth. Theresa is about a little girl who lives in an orphanage and wants so much to be in show business. I play an old bum living in a theatre, who once was in show business. And somehow we get together.

20. RBI: Since you only perform 7-10 weeks a year, do you get bored with so much free time?

BH: No. I have to reflect a lot because I'm old. I think about the olden times. I have a good time. I relive a lot of precious moments and I forget about a lot of bad ones.

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FOOTWORK DRILLS



By Janell Marriott

There is no such thing as an instant champion. You don't just add racquet and win a pro tournament. To win a professional tournament, or even one in your own backyard, it takes a lot of practice.

That practice comes not only from shots but from positioning. Being at the right place at the right time. You are going to get a better shot if you can anticipate where the ball will be going.

One way to learn positioning is by footwork drills. These drills get you to

move your feet. You have to keep moving in racquetball. If you stop, you lose. As my friend, Dave Glander of the Aspen Athletic Club says, "You gotta keep dancing."

In addition to footwork and positioning, these drills are a great conditioner.

The first drill is called the "Star Drill." This is one of the best racquetball conditioners around. I think this is a better conditioner for a racquetball player than a six-mile run.

For this one you need four objects. They can be racquetballs or crumpled pieces of newspaper. It is better to

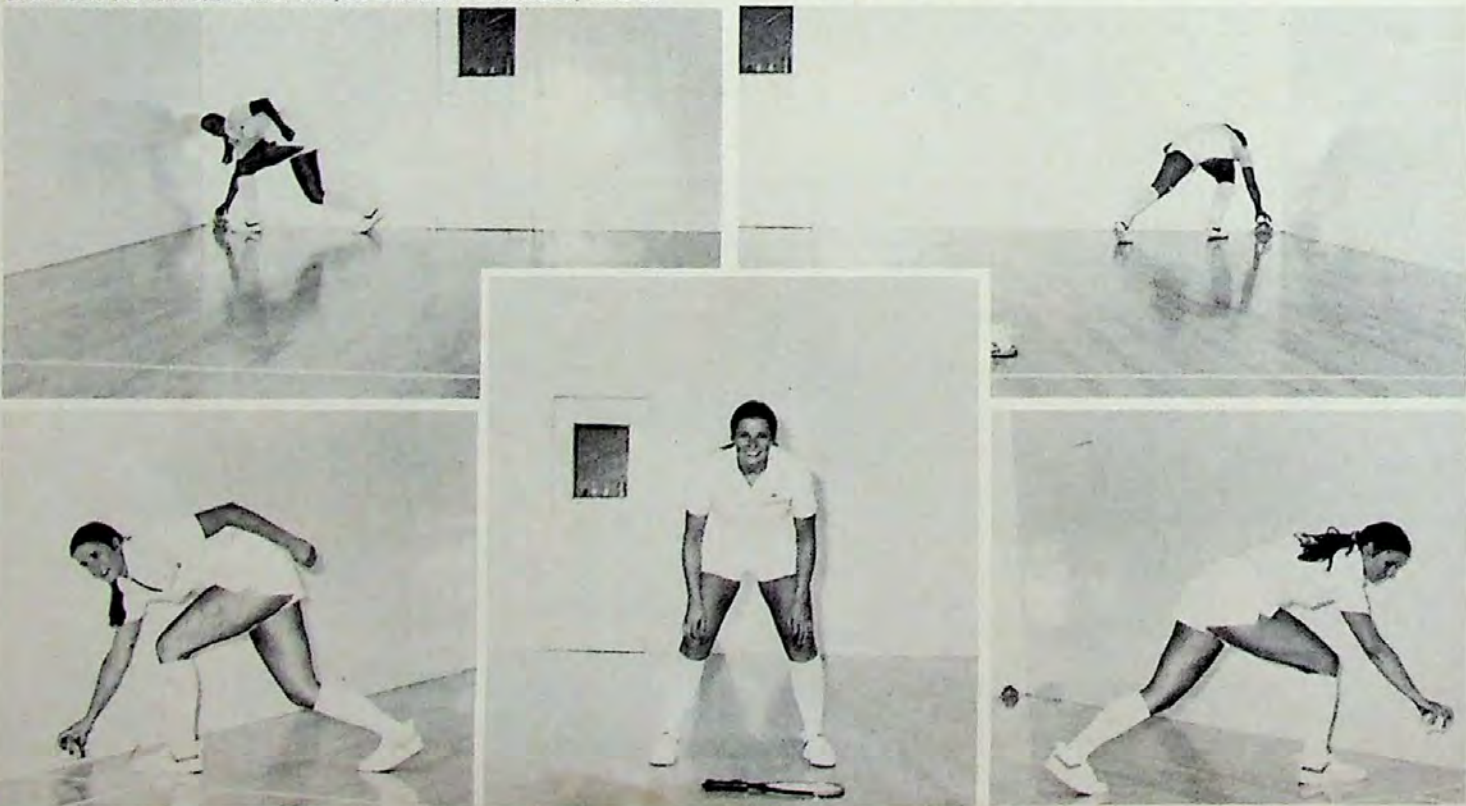
have someone with you—a "drill instructor" who can give you "orders." But that is not mandatory. You can easily do this one solo.

Place one piece of paper in each of the back corners and one piece of paper on each side of the wall right behind the short line. You should start the drill just behind the short line or what one would consider a center court position.

The drill instructor then instructs you on which direction to head for. The object is to pick up each piece of paper and return with it to the center.

Under the direction of Aspen Athletic Club athletic director Dave Glander, Janell Marriott demonstrates footwork and conditioning drill. She starts from center and, at Glander's command, runs to

each corner to pick up crumpled paper. Note how stance is same as if she were hitting the ball.



Let's say you have been instructed to go to the left side of the court, a backhand shot for a right-handed player. You take your crossover step—right foot over left—just like in a regular game and start moving toward the side wall. As you get to the paper and pick it up, your feet should be set in the position you would normally be swinging in. For a backhand shot, your right foot should be stepping out as you reach for the paper.

The same thing for the backhand corner shot. You lead with your right foot (stepping your right foot over your left) and run as fast as you can to the corner. You don't want to take a bunch of little steps. You want to stride to those corners, pick up the paper, crossover gain and haul back to center court.

Normally, you also want to keep your upper body or eyes toward the front wall. When you are playing, the ball is coming off the front wall, so that is the direction you should be looking. This drill can help you look in one direction while moving in another.

Your drill instructor can mix it up, changing corners on you, so you can't anticipate which way to move and cheat a little bit. It teaches you how to react quickly to the ball.

You should be moving as fast as you can. In a game you have to be moving quickly. As I said, this is a great conditioner. It's kind of like a short wind sprint. I know of one squash player who does it 30 times a day.

To change the drill from a conditioner to actual game conditions, you can take racquet in hand and instead of picking up papers, take a swing when you get to the proper point.

That's the way I like it best. I like to swing because that's what you are actually doing in a game.

I use this drill at my clinics. It is especially helpful for people who need help on their foot movement. A lot of times you have to teach people foot movement on the court even before you teach them how to hit the ball.

This is also good to get people's hearts pumping, because some players have a tendency to loaf on the court.

Racquetball is a stop and go sport. You need this type of drill for racquetball more than you need a marathon run. Any type of sprint conditioning or even jumping rope, is great for racquetball.

This drill is great for improving your quickness. You have to stop and start and change directions, exactly the movements in a racquetball game.

The second drill is called the "Shuttle



Another conditioning and footwork drill finds Marriott starting from back wall, running to gather paper, returning to place paper on racquet and then running back to pick up second paper, and so on.

Run." It's used a lot in basketball also. You place four pieces of crumpled papers a few feet apart from each other. The first piece should be at the front wall and the last around the short line.

You start from the back wall, run, pick up one piece of paper and return to the back wall. You then run back to pick up the second piece of paper, and so on. Do it twice and then take a short rest.

This can actually be done two ways. You can sprint it as a good conditioner or you can shuffle sideways without crossing your feet. The second way is great to simulate back wall shots where you have to slide along with the ball, or slide into position on the court.

This is also a great drill for improving your quickness because you are forced to change direction every time.

The third drill we can focus on is a "Back Wall Drill." Your partner hits a ball off the front wall hard enough to make it rebound off the back wall. You then follow the ball into the back wall as you would do in a regular game and then catch it at knee level as it's coming off the wall before it bounces.

Your partner can vary the heights or speed of the ball to simulate game conditions.

You should start in center court, about halfway between the short line and the back wall. You should be shuffling toward the back wall and then

Another drill has Glander serving ball which will rebound off back wall. Marriott follows ball into back wall for a step or two and then



shuffling toward the spot where you will catch the ball.

Don't use your racquet in this one. You want to take the pressure off of having to hit the ball and thinking about the way to hold your racquet and getting your elbow bent and all that. This drill is designed for feet positioning and timing.

You can catch the ball with either two hands or one. With one hand, use the hand opposite the one you would normally hold your racquet in. I usually have my students use two hands because it is easier to catch. In that respect, the ball should be caught at the center of the body or at a point where you will be hitting the ball under game conditions.

The question then comes up from some beginners as to why they should have to move all the way to the back wall when the ball will be coming in to them if they just stay at a certain point.

The answer is simple. In a game you won't be standing there, or you shouldn't be standing there waiting. You are not actually running all the way into the back wall, which beginners have a tendency to do.

Instead, you just take a step or two in the direction the ball is headed. Once you see how hard it's going or how fast it's rebounding, you head in the other direction to the spot where you think the ball will land. In effect, you are trying to get ahead of the ball, so you can move directly in line with it to get into the proper position to hit a good shot.

Don't plant your feet and wait for the ball to come to you because often times the ball will be going over your head or way out in front of you. This drill at least makes you move to where the ball will be going. You can vary it by one time catching it on a forehand shot and the next time on a backhand shot.

These are three pretty good drills for footwork. I recommend you try them before a game and, I think you'll find a great improvement in your positioning on the court. And proper positioning means more points.

shuffles out and catches it. This drill will give player experience in timing without pressure of using racquet.



USING DECEIT TO OVERCOME CONCEIT

By Jennifer Harding and
Jean Sauser
(Second of a series)

Anyone who wants to win a match against a more powerful hitter will have to find ways to make up for that shortcoming in power, and there is no better place to start than in the service zone.

Last time, we talked about the overall strategy which can be used by a woman to beat a man or, for that matter, anyone to beat a more powerful player.

If you find yourself on the wrong end of a power advantage, you can be sure that your opponent is conscious of that fact too. Confident of his greater strength, he will try to kill half his shots and drive the other half down your throat.

Overcome this conceit of power with deceit: Outthink him. Service is your golden opportunity. It is the one time during any rally when you have undisputed control over the action.

You have an opportunity to "ace" your opponent or, at least, elicit such a weak return that you can go for a point winner on your next shot.

The secret to winning serves is to reduce the amount of time your opponent has to react to the ball and get set for his shot. His ability to return is in direct proportion to the amount of time he has available after first figuring out where the ball is headed.

Power hitters like Marty Hogan or our Ektelon teammate Jerry Hilecher minimize this reaction time by simply blasting the ball faster than the eye can move.

Those of us of lesser strength have to concentrate more on deception to keep an opponent guessing about the ball's destination right up to the last possible moment.



That is not to say that you shouldn't put as much speed on your serves as possible, though. Don't be content to just lob the ball into play on the assumption that you don't have the power to "ace" your opponent.

You can, in fact, take advantage of your service edge and get the ball by your opponent by serving deceptively

Jean Sauser demonstrates a typical approach to serving, maintaining body movements for different serves while only changing the angle of the racquet face. The middle photo shows how she can confuse her opponent, who doesn't know whether the serve will be a forehand drive or a Z to the backhand. By contacting the ball a little later (bottom) Jean can plan either a drive to the backhand or a Z to the forehand.

and putting a medium pace on the ball.

Your first deceptive technique — one which can and should be mastered by players at every level — is camouflage.

Often times, a player will telegraph his serves by always hitting the same serve from the same spot in the box or changing the way he approaches the ball for different serves. An alert opponent will pick up on, for example, the way you angle your shoulders toward the front-wall-side-wall seam during your Z-serves or the fact that you always serve your drives from the middle of the box. If that happens, forget about scoring on your serves.

There are only four basic serves in racquetball: The drive, lob, garbage and Z-serve. You should be able to serve each of them from all positions in the server's box and approach all of them in exactly the same way.

As for approach, many players simply stand near the short line with feet together and step into the ball, hitting it off their lead foot as they serve. Others rock back and then forward as they take that step, gaining greater momentum for a power stroke. Still others practically run up to the ball as they hit it.

From the standpoint of deception, there is one approach which we have found helpful. Stand with the heel of your front foot touching the toe of your back foot. Take your first step toward the front wall with your back foot and then drive into the ball with your front foot.

This gives you power off that back foot and enables you to turn your shoulders toward the front-wall-side-wall seam during your serve, rather than before it. It's important to have your shoulders lined up correctly for a good Z, but it would give the serve

away if done before the serve is begun.

Whether you choose this approach or one of the others is not really important, though. What is important is that you find one that you are comfortable with and that you always execute in exactly the same way.

While you want to approach all your serves in exactly the same way, you don't want to always dish up the same serve or stand in the same spot. If you become predictable, the battle is half lost because your opponent will soon be able to anticipate your every move.

Keep him mentally off-balance by mixing up your serves and by hitting them from different spots in the box. You should follow a service strategy that involves deception and plays to your opponent's weaknesses.

This, of course, is not easy. It requires concentration and racquet control and that means plenty of practice between matches. Likewise, your service strategy will change from opponent to opponent and you'll have to figure each out for yourself. After all, that's what the thinking game is all about. There are some general guidelines, though, which you can follow.

Most people have a preferred spot from which to serve. For many, it's the middle of the server's box because that enables them to immediately capture the center court position. Sometimes, righthanders serve from slightly to the right of middle, hoping for a wider angle which gives the ball more chance of cracking out from the floor seam. Lefthanders, of course, move to the other side of middle.

An alternate approach to serving, which makes it easier to disguise a serve, is to take an initial step behind your lead foot before stepping into the ball.

It's okay to serve from your favorite spot for most of your serves, but not all of them. Move around enough to present your opponent with a variety of attacks and just one more variable to clutter up his mind.

Start off the first game of the match with your best serve to be on the safe side. You will probably want to start off in your favorite service spot as well, but throw in an occasional change of position and/or serve. You should be looking for the serve or spot to which your opponent is most susceptible and which is "on" for you this game.

As your confidence and accuracy build, start "working" your opponent. For instance, the drive serve to his backhand — a power hitter's number one weapon — is a good first serve to start off any rally.

Begin with, say, three consecutive drives to his backhand, keeping them as hard and low as possible. Try to get him to lean to that side and then zing one to his forehand without changing anything about your serve except the angle of the racquet face. Make sure that forehand shot is right on because any serve to an opponent's forehand is flirting with a kill return.

You may want to try the same series again but change position on the fourth serve, or change position and zing the same hard drive to his backhand. You may want to intersperse a change-of-pace ball such as the lob, garbage or Z-serve.

An opponent who has been blistered by drives often overreacts on these slower balls and, in his attempt to blast them, misses. You may even find that your opponent is particularly susceptible to these soft serves. Many players who can handle the hard, fast stuff all day long get twisted up when faced with a high lob to their backhand corner or the crazy path a Z-serve follows.

For this type of player, you may want to reverse your whole strategy and intersperse your soft serves with drives instead of the other way around.

As you can see, the possibilities of change in pace, position and service combinations are endless. Always be aware of what your opponent is doing in a match, that is, his habits.

Likewise, be conscious of your own habits, your own strengths and especially your weaknesses. Take advantage of your service edge and follow your game plan.

Above all, concentrate on what you are doing. If you can't overpower an opponent, you better be able to outthink him.



Watching Your Opponent

By Davey Bledsoe

Most beginners wonder why it is harder for them to get to an opponent's shot. The answer is not that the opponent has hit an unreachable shot. It's just that the beginning player never bothers to anticipate where the opponent's next shot will be going.

Most beginners run and face the front wall after a shot and react to an opponent's shot only after it has hit the front wall. This is a good way to lose.

One key to winning is the ability to read an opponent. That doesn't mean taking a wild guess at where the opponent's shot will be going but an educated guess.



By watching your opponent you can usually tell what type of shot he or she will be taking. Here Davey Bledsoe's opponent can tell by the shoulders whether he will be hitting a ceiling shot (top) or a drive.

Most beginners do not utilize what I call lapse time. That is, the time it takes after the ball comes off your racquet, then hits the opponent's racquet and then hits the front wall. Most beginners use that time to turn around and face the front wall. Well, don't. Utilize that time to see what your opponent is going to do and then set yourself up into position for your next shot.

As soon as the ball comes off your racquet, you should look back at your opponent, read what the opponent is going to do, and then set up accordingly.

A lot of people are afraid to turn around and watch the opponent for fear of getting hit with the ball. That's a good reason to get a pair of protective glasses. The glasses give you the "courage" to look at your opponent, which is what you should be doing.

To get into position to watch your opponent, stand on an imaginary diagonal line in center court. The line is like a V. The bottom part of the V is just behind the short line and the diagonal sides are in the direction of each of the back corners.

Shuffle back on the diagonal line to the side your opponent is about to hit on. Then watch what your opponent is about to do.

There are two key things to watch for — your opponent's feet and shoulder movements.



Had the opponent looked she would have seen what type of drive shot Bledsoe is attempting. If the lead foot and body angle is facing the side wall (top), the drive will most likely come down the line. If the lead foot and body is facing more toward the front wall, chances are it will be a cross-court passing shot.

If the shoulder is rotating, the opponent is going for a passing shot or a kill shot. In other words, the shoulder is dropping. If the shoulder is going up, chances are the shot will be toward the ceiling.

If the feet are facing the side wall and the body is facing more toward the side wall, chances are the opponent is trying a down the line shot. If the opponent's feet are facing more toward the front wall and the body is in an open stance (facing the front wall), chances look good for a cross-court passing shot.

You can discourage a cross court shot just by staying on your diagonal line. By cutting off a portion of the court, you almost force your opponent to go down the line. You still have to give your opponent a clear shot, so you can't cut off too much of the court.

A player has the means to determine the direction of the ball and even the angle of the shot. This, in effect, should indicate what type of shot your opponent will be taking.

And if you know what type of shot your opponent is going to hit, half your problem is solved. So why make things harder on yourself by blindly facing the front wall and then guessing where it will go.

In other words, why gamble when someone is tipping you off to a sure thing.

Backhand Mechanics

By Davey Bledsoe

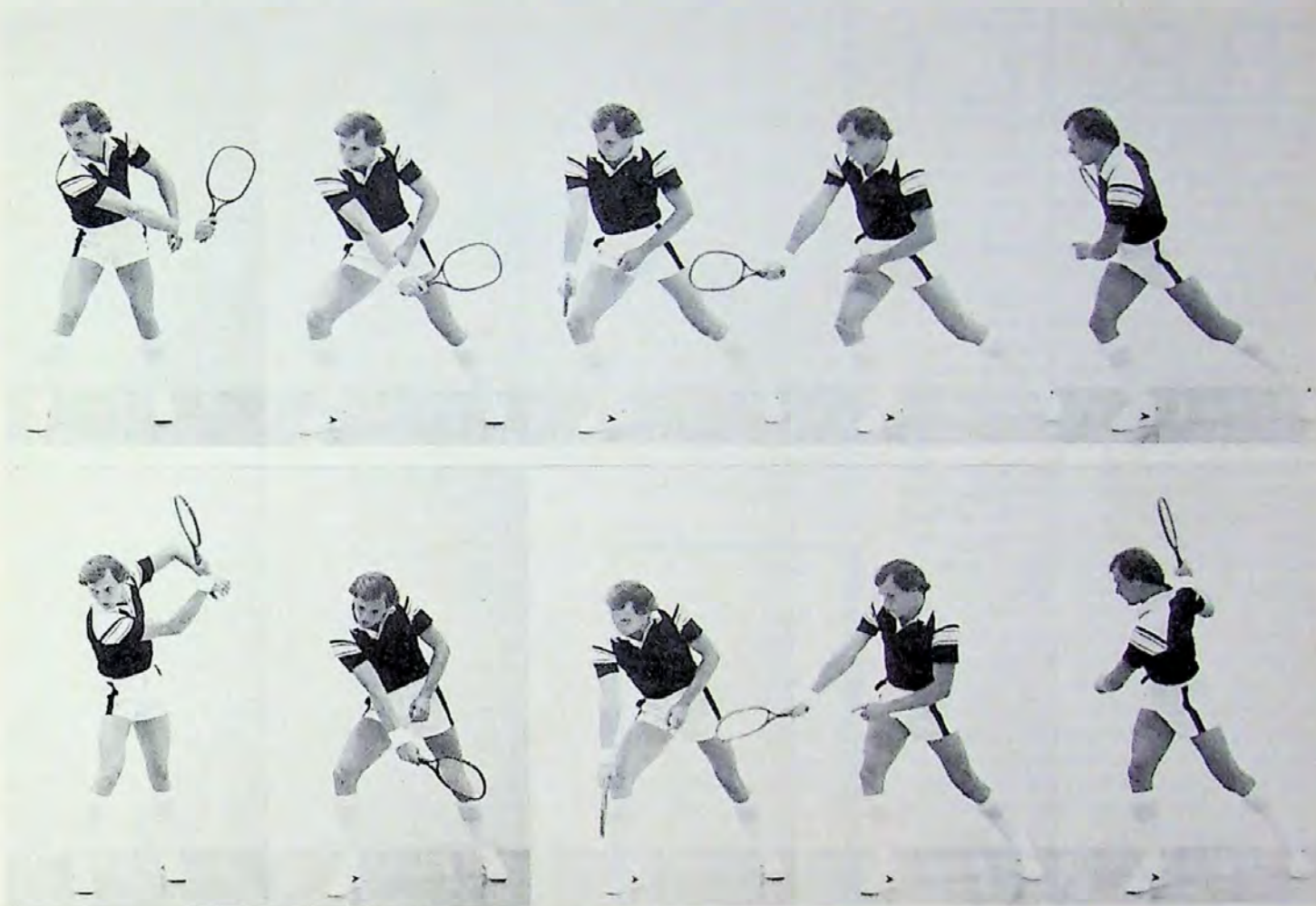
This article will not be going into the proper way to hit a backhand shot. It will discuss, basically, the mechanics of the backhand stroke.

The purpose of this article is to acquaint the beginning and intermediate player with the two styles of backhand and to offer my opinion as to which one should be used.

There are two types of backhand swings — the traditional vs. the modern style, or to put it in other terms, the solid foundation backhand as opposed to the power backhand.

I personally recommend the traditional, solid foundation backhand to all intermediates. As most people who fol-

The traditional solid-foundation backhand that Davey Bledsoe advises intermediates to use offers less chance of error. The backswing starts lower than shoulder height and the racquet motion comes around at a fairly straight line.



The power swing, used by advance players, offers more chance for error. Note how the backswing starts above the head and the racquet swings through in an up-and-down (pendulum) motion. There is only a split second with this swing to hit the ball flat.

low the game know, Marty Hogan uses a power backhand, and he wins most of his matches. Naturally, people conclude that if Hogan does it, it must be the right way. Wrong.

Hogan, like many pros, uses that power backhand. But it is an advanced stroke, one that takes a lot of practice, one that has very little margin for error. The traditional backhand is a safer approach for the intermediate player. It is one that is easier to control. It should be learned properly before attempting to go off into more advanced techniques.

There are three basic positions to each of the two backhands, and I will briefly describe them. In the power backhand, the arm starts high. In the traditional position, the arm begins lower, below shoulder level. The power

swing on point of contact is a downward swing and the traditional swing is on a straight level plane.

This second position — the one at contact — is relatively equal, although the angle of the racquet is slightly different. On a power swing, the swing is down and the wrist is turned slightly downward. On a traditional swing, the wrist is cocked up or flexed up, so the racquetball face is moving around the body, not underneath.

The power swing is a pendulum motion. With this type of swing you are more apt to mishit the ball. There is only a split second in this swing where the ball is contacted squarely. With a traditional swing, your racquet is kept square longer, which gives you a better chance to make contact with the ball.

The final phase of the stroke is the

follow through. With a pendulum swing, it is up in the air. With a traditional swing, it is leveled out.

The power swing, if it were to be placed on a graph, would show an up-down-up motion whereas the traditional swing would show pretty much a straight line.

Geometry dictates that the quickest way to two points is a straight line. And may I add that the straight line way is also the most accurate way.

A beginner or intermediate player should strive for that control first before getting into the fancy strokes of an advanced player. It must be remembered that even the advanced player did not start out at an advanced level. A solid foundation of traditional strokes had to be laid first before more innovative strokes could be learned.

PERCENTAGE SHOT SELECTION

By Jay Jones

Only three things can happen when you attempt to kill the ball: (1) You can hit the kill perfectly. (2) Your attempted kill goes in higher than expected. (3) You can skip the ball. In racquetball these are what I call the "Big Three." Know and understand them well.

I would venture to say that if you were lying at the rear of the court 40 feet from the front wall with a rifle, you could not put eight out of 10 bullets in a close pattern one-quarter inch from the floor. Yet we attempt to do it with a racquet and ball. How often does anyone hit the perfect kill? I feel a good "A" player will hit the perfect kill one-third of the time. It is important that you honestly evaluate your game at your level of play.

When you attempt kills and the ball strikes the front wall higher than you anticipated, it probably means that I will be making the next shot from an easy 15-20 feet. This increases the likelihood that my shot will be a perfect kill. If your shot selection is poor, you automatically raise my percentages. A thought

Three things can happen if you try and kill the ball from backcourt and two of them will give Jay Jones points. If the opponent skips, Jones has done absolutely no work

that goes through my head at this moment is the control player saying to the shooter, "Hurry up and lose, I'm almost to 21." I feel that a good "A" player will hit his attempted kill too high one-third of the time.

You should never skip the ball. It's what I call the ultimate sin. It is the same thing as spotting points. You are giving away points without making me hit the ball. Try taking a pad and pencil and keep count of the skip balls between two players who you feel are on your level of play. Then compare the number of skip balls to the final score.

I consider Mike Yellen the best control player today. Recently, at a tournament, I counted the number of skips he had during one game. It was a grand total of zero. Then I counted Charlie Brumfield's skips. Known at one time as "Mr. Control," Brum had a total of 13 skips in one game. Brumfield has changed his game style from control to shooting. That just might be one of the reasons why Yellen is ranked considerably higher than Brumfield or myself.

There is a proper time to shoot. That's when you have the capability of killing

and gets an easy point. If the opponent hits high, Jones has an easy center court return for a sure point. If you roll it out, you don't get a point, only a chance to serve.

the ball eight out of 10 times. Percentage, percentage, percentage.

From 38 feet deep in the court, when your racquet meets the ball, for every one-fourth inch error you make at that point, the ball will be off target by three feet when it reaches the front wall. In other words, if your racquet turns in your hand just a quarter inch, the ball will be off target by three feet by the time it hits the front wall. So the deeper you are in the court when you hit the ball, the lower your percentages of hitting a perfect kill. This is another reason why shot selection and shot placement are so important.

Taking "the ultimate sin" into consideration, I feel that a good "A" player will skip the ball one-third of the time.

Notice how I keep referring to a good "A" player. If you are not a top "A" player, then your percentages must be less. Give your game an honest evaluation.

Service return is probably the most critical time in the game. You have to figure that I am going to give you the toughest serve I can and then step back into the best possible position...center court. You, on the other hand, are in the absolute worst position. Moving toward your weak backhand, forty foot from the target, and in a corner, yet you still think you can hit "the perfect kill" eight out of ten times. Dumb, dumb, dumb. Now, let's talk about the Big Three:

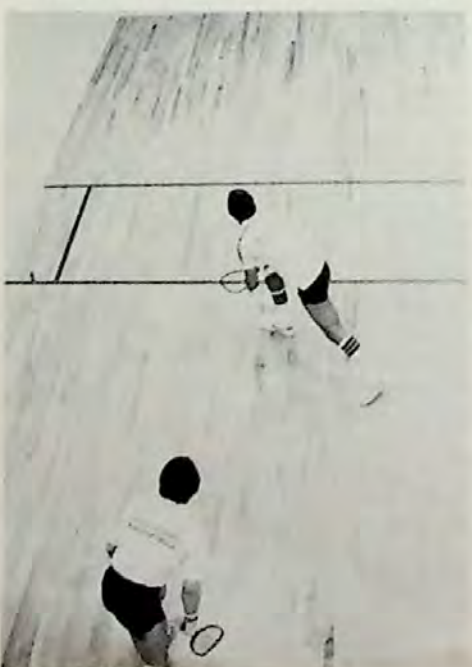
- 1) Skip ball $\frac{1}{3}$ of the time
- 2) "High kill" $\frac{1}{3}$ of the time
- 3) Perfect kill $\frac{1}{3}$ of the time

There's not much to say about the skip except "Point." If you're going to hit the floor 13 times from this position, why didn't you come on the court and spot me 13 points so we can get on with the game? I'm not going to get much of a workout standing here in center court not having to hit the ball. I might as well go to sleep.

The "slightly high kill" gives me a relatively easy 15-20 foot shot. It doesn't even have to be that good of a re-kill for me. After all, look at your court position. Another easy point for me.

Well, you finally hit the "perfect kill." Side out! NO POINTS! I got two before you got your perfect kill. Now I'll just play smart and get the serve back and get two more points...etc, etc, etc. At the end of the game my calculator tells me that I have approximately two-thirds more points than you.

It is my opinion that eight out of ten service returns should be to the ceiling. "Wrong," you say. Let me remind you of that absolute perfect position I'm in,





It is Jones' philosophy that most service returns should be to the ceiling. That will reverse the court positions with the server moving to the backcourt and the opponent moving to center court.

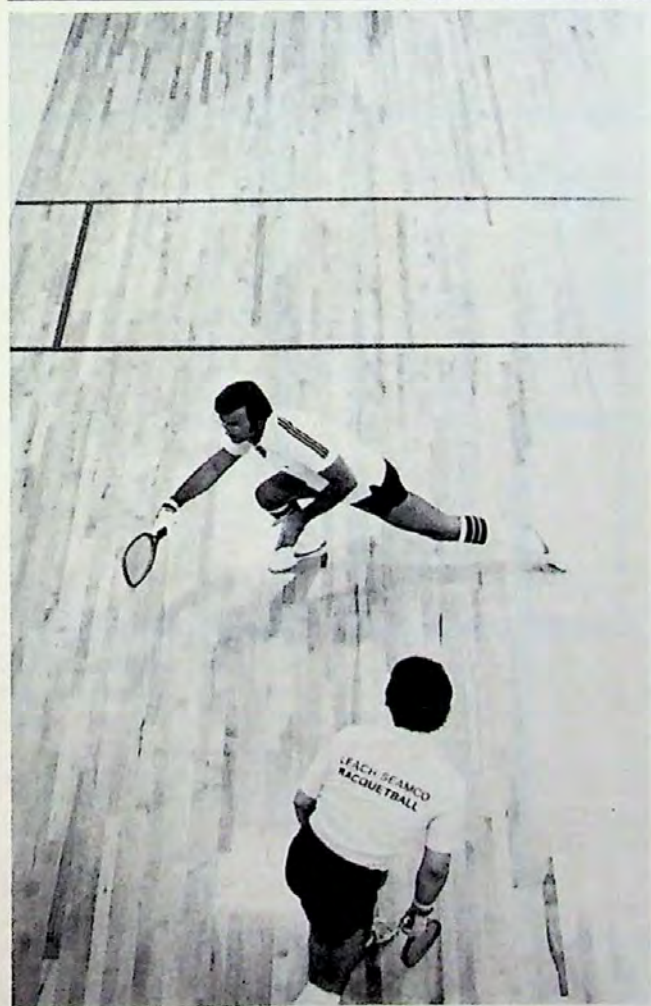
and that terrible position you're in. One ceiling ball reverses that situation.

Now you're hoping I'll attempt a perfect kill now that two-thirds of the "big three" are in *your* favor. If I don't, you should stay on the ceiling until I make a mistake and set you up. Then, once again you must select the proper shot depending on where I set you up. You should feel comfortable with the ceiling game. After all, you can perfect this shot on the court by yourself, as you can with most other shots.

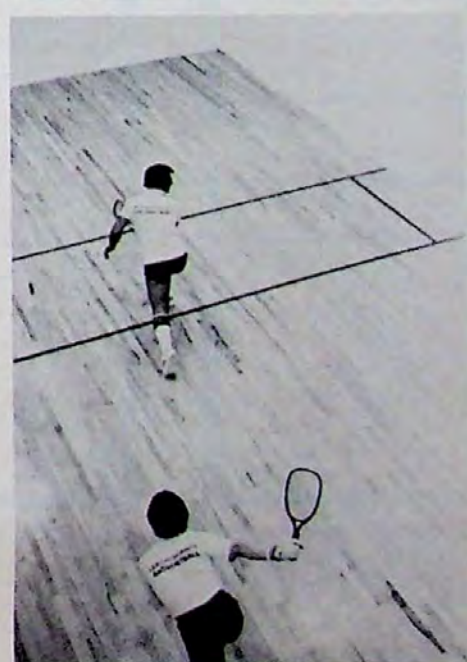
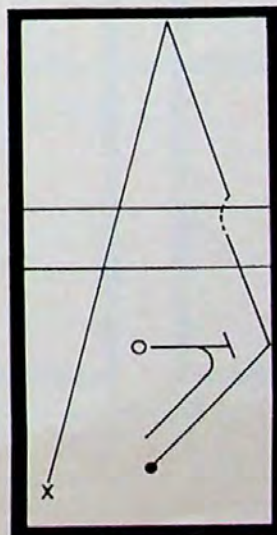
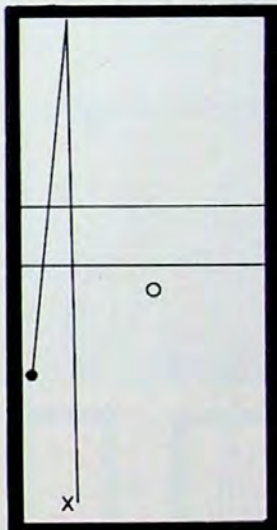
So what about the other two times when it looks like you could hit that perfect kill? Answer: You pass. A couple of those waist-high pass shots could drop down for kills. Then again you may win the serve with a clean pass. There is a lot more room for error with a pass shot. If you do make an error, then I still have to make my return from the back corner on a dead run? That's much better than you giving me a skip or an easy set-up.

The passing shot should be hit two-thirds of the time down the backhand side. The ball should strike the front wall waist high or so, depending on how hard the ball is hit and on how lively the ball is. If the ball is going back and coming off the back wall, you are obviously hitting the ball too hard for the liveliness of it. Stay off the side wall with this pass.

The angle-pass to the forehand side



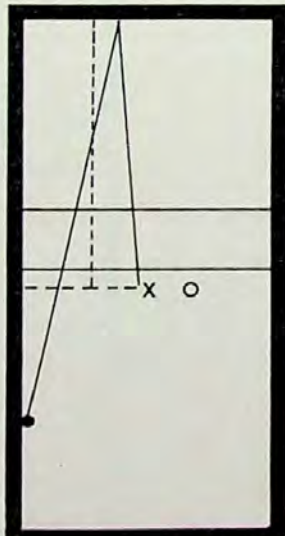
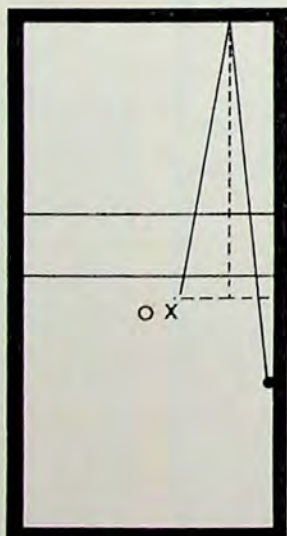
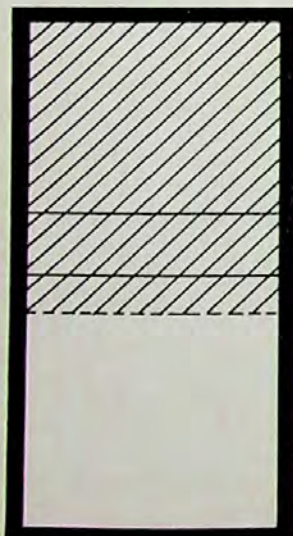
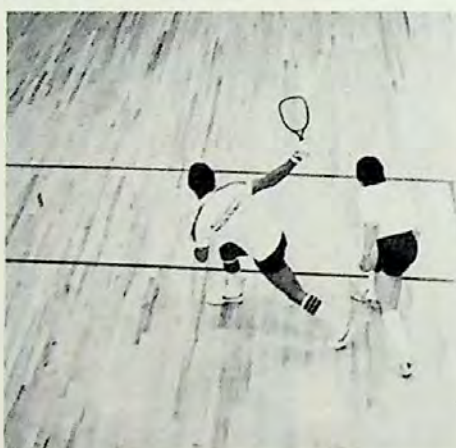
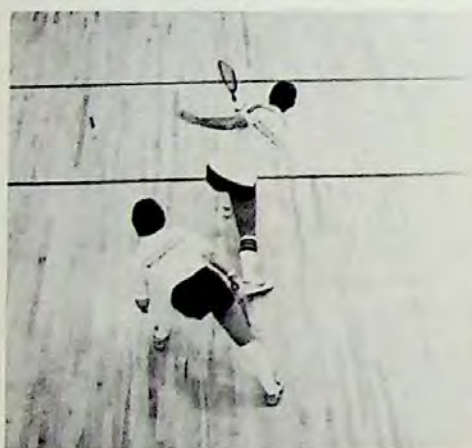
Jones recommends that an alternate to the ceiling shot is a down-the-line shot past the opponent's backhand or an angle-pass to the forehand side.



INSTRUCTION

When you have a setup for the kill shot with your opponent by your side, go for a down the line shot. That way, if you miss your kill, you still come up with a passing shot.

If your opponent is behind you, the best spot to kill is straight ahead. If the opponent sets up to your right, go for a backhand kill.



You should make your own imaginary kill zone depending on your ability. From the front wall to about five feet behind the service line is the primary kill zone. As you get more proficient, your kill zone goes deeper. Your placement area for a setup

can be made by visualizing half the distance from the ball to the side wall, and then drawing an imaginary line to the front wall. In other words, the spot is not directly in front of you but at a slight angle.

should be hit one-third of the time. The ball should strike the front wall 10 inches to the right of center and chest high. Coming off the front wall it should bounce at the service lines and strike the side wall waist high directly to the right of me in center court. I only have time for one lunge and should not be able to reach the ball. I will have to turn and chase it. Even if you hit this pass too hard and/or too high, I'm going to end up in the backhand corner on a dead run using my backhand... and forty feet from my target.

Now, let's talk more about that "Perfect Kill." I know you thought we'd never get to it. I have another theory. I'm full of them. In order to make your passing game work, you must have a kill game. And in order to make your kill game work, you must have a passing game. Reason: If you attempt to kill everything, I'm going to play close to the front wall and pick up a lot of your not-so-perfect kills, therefore intimidating your kill game. You'll probably do one of two things. Try to shoot lower and end up skipping more balls. Stop shooting altogether. If you do either of these, you'll probably lose. On the other hand, if I take center court too close to the service lines you have me set up for easy passes. After you've passed me a couple of times, I'll begin to play you deeper waiting for the pass. At that point you should initiate your kill game. Remember, you cannot pass a person who is playing deep in the court. Another good rule: If I'm in front of you, get me out. That means pass or ceiling. The pass is more offensive and you may score due to my inability to get to the ball. The ceiling ball is more defensive as I am sure to at least get to it. A good pass is more difficult to hit than a good ceiling ball.

You should make your own imaginary kill zone depending on your ability. Start with five feet behind the service line. Attempt your kill shot whenever set up from this point forward to the front wall. This I will refer to as the primary kill zone. As your percentage of kills becomes eight out of ten, move your imaginary line back another five feet. If you're set up in the secondary, you might want to remember my rule: "If he's in front of you, get him out."

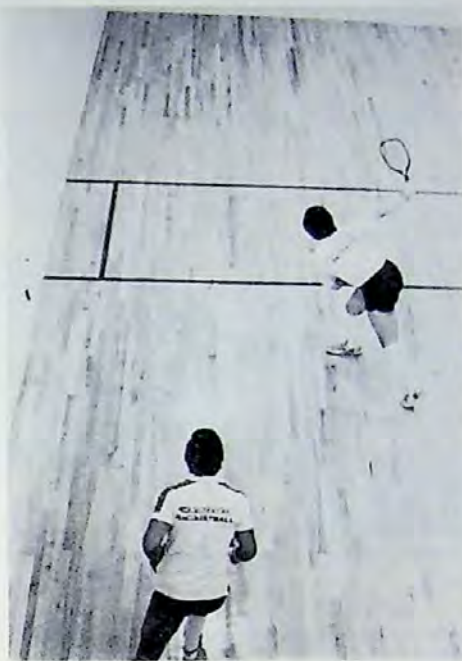
If you have a couple of choices. First, you can visualize half the distance from the ball to the right wall, then draw an imaginary line to the front wall and kill your ball just to the left of that spot.

Reason: "The Big Three."

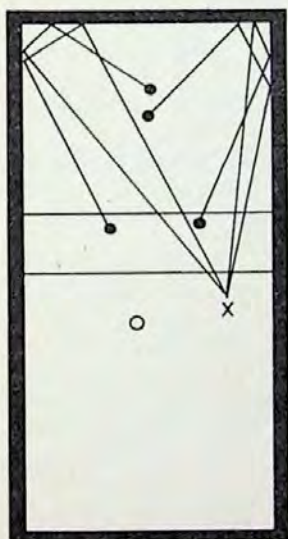
If you hit the perfect kill, you have no-



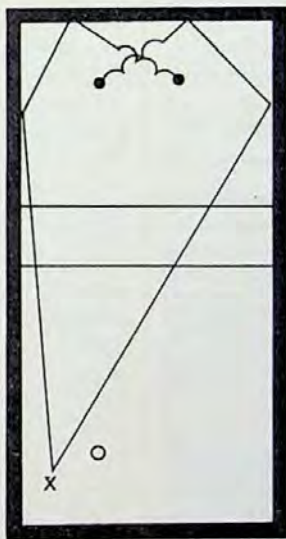
If both players are deep, playing a ceiling game, one can mix things up by going for a pinch shot. If one player is too deep, the



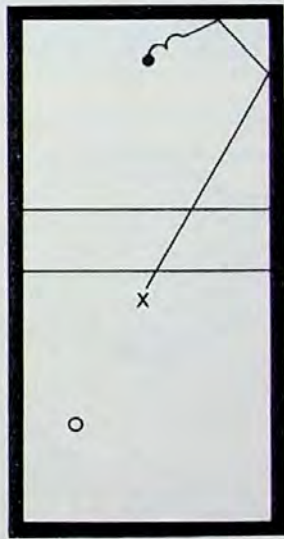
one with center court positioning can probably score a point with a pinch shot.



Pinch shots are not recommended if both players are in the center court. Note how they come back right to center court.



You can pinch if both players are deep or you are in center court and your opponent is deep.



thing to worry about. If the kill is "higher than expected," it could be a pass. Two of the big three are in your favor. I would suggest when you have this set-up, that you shoot down the line two-thirds of the time. It's only natural for me to anticipate that you will hit the ball to the open area. This placement should be your primary choice. The second choice: A secondary shot from this position would be to the other side. The rules are exactly the same for this spot on the backhand side.

If you are set up in the center of the court there are a few tricks you may want to remember. From the center with me directly behind you, the best spot to kill would be straight ahead. I won't be able to see where the ball went, and the best I can hope for is a hinder if you hit higher than expected and it comes back to you. By the way it is not a visual hinder because I chose to line up behind you in center court. But, if the ball is still up and I could have gotten to it, it would be a hinder.

If I take position to your left on this set-up, you should use your forehand, therefore using what I call a "butt-block." (The word block does not mean it's a hinder.) Once again measure the distance from the ball to the right wall and take half of it. Kill just left of the center. Reason: "The Big Three." If you kill it, fine. But if it comes out higher than expected, it's a pass...two-thirds greater chance of winning the rally.

If I commit to your right side, you would want to use your backhand. Measure, take half, shoot. It won't take long before things like this become automatic. I sometimes refer to this as "killing the passing angle." Any kill spot is good as long as it's a good pass when the ball comes off the wall higher than anticipated. A very important point to remember here is that the side walls are your enemy. If you have misjudged your kill shot and it comes off higher than expected, it usually comes off the side wall back to where I am able to get my racquet on it. Don't overcompensate by trying to hit the ball away from me.

I know you are confused as to why I don't recommend shooting the corners like you always do. Reason? "The Big Three." You'll have to assume that the first day on the racquetball court I learned to go to the center like everyone else. If you shoot the corners and skip it one-third of the time, and one-third of the time the ball goes in higher than anticipated, it will give me an easy setup and always in front court. The next time you're on a court alone, try hitting the ball into the corners just a little on the high side. Use any combination you wish, front wall then side wall, side wall then front wall, then cross-court side wall to front, then cross-court front wall-side. Take special notice that the ball always feeds to within one step of center court, where I am. I really feel there are only two times when you should shoot the corners. When I am very deep in the court and when you know confidently you can kill the ball eight out of ten times.

There are going to be times that you just cannot resist that 38-foot backhand or that overhead kill. If you must do it once in a while, I suggest you train yourself to always be aware of who has the serve. At least if you have the serve when this irresistible urge hits you, all you will have lost is the serve, no points. So, what I am saying is, if you must hit a couple of low-percentage shots, make sure it is *only* when you have the serve.

DENVER

Racquetball
growing like crazy

By Dorothy B. Mauk

Most people dub Denver the Mile High City because of its 5,200-foot altitude. Sports insiders, however, will tell you another reason for the nickname nowadays is the height to which racquetball enthusiasm has soared in the rarified air of Colorado's eye-pleasing, capital metropolis.

"It's growing like crazy here," says 20-year-old Court Club Central pro Dirk Douglas.

"There's probably close to 15,000 playing the game in the Denver area alone," estimates Ron Hermanson of the Central YMCA.

"A year ago at this time, I was eking out a living as a racquetball instructor. Now I'm racquetball coordinator!" says John Foust at Cherry Creek Sporting House. "Even four years ago, I would never have thought it would be like this. And it's still changing."

Adds Colorado Court Sports co-owner Diane Hanna: "Some of our members live at the club. What they did before they joined, I don't know. I think they even wonder."

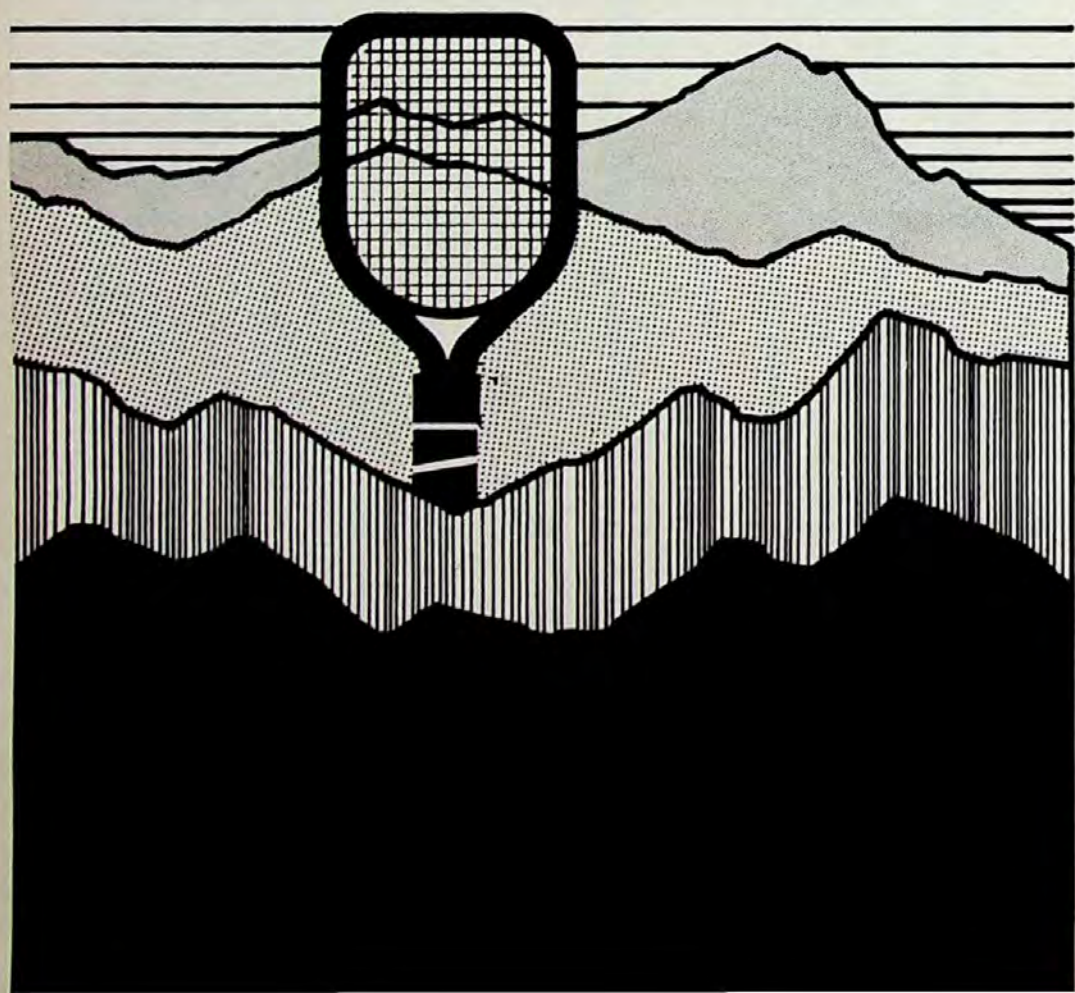
Denver's new cadre of racquetball pros, most of whom learned their trade on the job, are hard-pressed for enough superlatives to adequately portray what's happened to their favorite sport in their favorite city.

"Racquetball has grown six-fold here in the last two years," says Jack O'Connor, athletic director at Tennis World's Racquet World. He should know. He's the stepson of Colorado Racquetball Association founder and first president, John Mooney, who pioneered the sport in Colorado Springs.

A posh, private club, which early this year changed its name and its image from a year-round, indoor-outdoor tennis facility to an all-purpose health and fitness center, Tennis World's Racquet World epitomizes the belated awakening taking place on the plains just east of the majestic Rockies. What O'Connor's "six-fold" assertion delineates, of course, is the six-year mushrooming of an even dozen racquetball courts — seven at the Central Y, three at the downtown Denver Athletic Club and two at the Jewish Community Center — into a metropolitan area count of 190. Most of the increase has been recorded since 1977.

Racquetball is not unlike most new

Racquetball in the ROCKIES





sports which filter up to Denver some two years after their initial East or West Coast debut. Bursting out of St. Louis in the early 1970s, the sport rolled directly over the lofty peaks to San Diego, where the major equipment manufacturers were located, and then drifted slowly back across the Continental Divide to be embraced like the Prodigal Son.

Denver is a city where "Orange Crush" means selling out 75,000 seats for Denver Bronco football games as well as a waiting list of 20,000 prospective season ticket holders.

Denver is a city where the Nuggets have the best attendance record in the National Basketball Association.

Denver is a city which serves as the gateway to a skiing paradise, annually insuring tourism as one of the state's major industries.

Denver is a sports town and racquetball ranks right up there in popularity.

The reception was conservative in 1973 when construction mogul Ron Blanding erected Court Club Central on the southern fringe of Denver's diagonal downtown grid and attempted to inspire harried inner-city businessmen to a new measure of physical fitness.

Although initially spartan, by comparison with the city's health emporiums, the pioneering eight-court facility undoubtedly was the impetus to subsequent development. It laid the groundwork for a solid system of amateur tournament play.

The club since has undergone a facelift and now houses 17 courts, a gymnasium and indoor jogging track, but still attracts a predominately business-oriented, mostly male clientele.

Gaining recognition for the sport during those early years were the well-

publicized game-day matches between Nuggets president and general manager Carl Scheer and former coach Larry Brown, who used Central's gymnasium as a practice site for the team.

Masterminded by former Denver Athletic Club tyro Rick Schliebe, the equally modest Montebello Sporting House made its debut in the heart of the industrial area northeast of the city in 1975. At the time, its primary asset was an indoor tennis court.

Both the location and concept were premature. That the club survived is a tribute to the unwavering faith of its chain of persevering managers. Today, with six racquetball courts plus one outdoor and two indoor tennis courts, trade is brisk.

Expanding his horizons, Schliebe opened the more elaborate Denver Sporting House in the white collar, high-income Denver Technological Center southeast of Denver in 1977 — and then waited for the inevitable urban sprawl. With more than 2,000 families moving into the Denver area monthly, he didn't have to wait long.

Promoting "total fitness," the 15-court Tech Center facility boasted a full-time staff physician and pushed health foods in its snack bar.

It also introduced professional racquetball to Denver, showcasing the tour's top male and female stars for two years in a row. The first tournament was memorable for its use of the glass end of the gallery court as a front wall in a setup guaranteeing visual loss of the ball in a sea of spectators.

Schliebe subsequently announced plans and broke ground for the luxurious Cherry Creek Sporting House, the first of Denver's so-called "total environment" health castles, but bowed out before construction was completed to organize his own consulting firm and club partnership.

Only a couple of years have elapsed since David Johnson graduated from the University of Denver with six years' worth of bachelor's and master's degrees in real estate and business finance. Backed by a family-owned construction firm in Minneapolis, the precocious mini-tycoon bought into what is now a three-man corporation. Both of the other partners are headquartered in La Jolla.

In addition to Cherry Creek and the family-oriented, 1,350-member Denver Tech Center complex, the trio owns Sporting Houses at Newport Beach, Calif., Las Vegas and Atlanta.

Cherry Creek added 21 racquetball and two squash courts to the heart of Denver's condominium-apartment district, but more importantly, it set a standard for lavishness and completeness that would lead the Queen City of the Plains to prominence within a year as one of the racquetball showplaces of the nation.

The casually elegant, \$5.5 million, four-acre complex opened in early 1978 with a swinging singles membership of nearly 2,000.

Denver's first full-service health shrine, featuring 200 standing and hanging vines and ferns as a complement to the skylighted, natural-finish, wood paneling of the massive main lobby, magnifies the lifestyle of its members. Included among its non-court attractions are indoor and kidney-shaped outdoor swimming pools, sand-pit and hardwood volleyball courts; gymnasium with gymnastics area, indoor track and weight room, and a parquet-floored public lounge and restaurant-bar adjacent to a pair of glass-walled courts — one of which is reserved exclusively for women. Smoking is permitted in the public areas only.

"We have really catered to women equally with men," the 26-year-old Johnson says. "Our spa area for women is one of the most luxurious in the nation. We spent \$150,000 for just the tile, which is all imported from France. And the lockers are made of oak."

Other creature comforts easing the pain of exercise are a sound-deadening wall covering in the gym, pull-cords in the steam rooms for intermittent cold showers, background music, free towels, shampoo, body lotions, razors and shaving cream, a full-time masseuse and sun room with sun lamps for pessimists who don't believe sun actually shines in Denver at least 300 days a year.

"We cater to the junior exec. We're not a family club," says Foust. The median age of Denver's population is 26.4. About 70 percent of the happy hedonists at Cherry Creek are in the

25-35 age bracket with a 60-40 men to women ratio.

Adding sparkle to the distaff contingent are pro tour members Kathy Williams and Sally Murphy, who make their home in Denver during the off-season.

By the end of the year, Blanding, not to be outdone, had constructed and opened a counterpart to Cherry Creek in the northwest suburb of Arvada. Blanding's showplace has 19 indoor and four three-wall (outdoor) racquetball courts. Three of the indoor ones have gallery seating. Two are challenge courts. One has glass on two sides.

Colorado Athletic Club replicates all of Cherry Creek's amenities in more spacious surroundings and adds 11 outdoor tennis courts, four of which are lighted, and an outdoor basketball court. This was the site of a pro racquetball shop in 1979 and the practice home for the Nuggets and their opponents.

"I think we've really pulled out all the stops here. I don't think there's been anything done second class," says athletic director Chris White. "The challenge is to keep the programming first class, too."

"Because of our completeness, we appeal to a different type of person. We're more of a country club type of operation. If you have what Denverites call 'an active lifestyle,' there are lots of ways to scratch that itch."

"It's difficult to categorize people," says White. "We're seeing a lot of second-generation athletes, people with \$50,000-\$75,000 incomes sporting 40-inch waistlines. They discover racquetball is a kick from the beginning. For them, it's sort of a renaissance."

Not surprisingly, CAC membership already has vaulted to the 3,800-4,000 plateau.

Schliebe, meanwhile, with a new set of partners radiating like spokes on a wheel around San Diego real estate developer Jeffere Van Liew, again was making plans for a grand opening, this time in the heart of downtown Denver. The odyssey of Denver racquetball had come full circle, back to the place of its birth.

With 87,500 downtown office workers, 62,500 of whom are within a five-block radius, the International Athletic Club threw open its doors August 1 with more than 1,900 individuals and 200 companies on its computerized membership roll. Petro-Lewis alone purchased 100 corporate memberships.

The \$2 million "lifestyle center," spanning 60,000 square feet of leased space on four full and two half-floors in a 3.5 million Van Liew office building project, has 22 racquetball and two squash courts.

Included are eight glass-walled units

with overlooking mezzanine, the area's only camera-equipped instruction court and only extra-width doubles court.

The initial personnel list contained 54 full and part-time employees — which says something about the scope of the services.

Quality oozes from every inch of the earthtone, "executive-look" layout, from the large, color television sets and shoe shine service in the locker room lounges to the rooftop sundeck and basketball court overlooking the ever-growing skyline of a vibrant city with aspirations of becoming the energy capital of the nation.

Vice president Dan Isaacson readily admits that the IAC which has a 70-30 ratio of men to women, is designed to cater to time-restricted businessmen and celebrities via extras such as an on-court paging system, sports medicine clinic with part-time physical therapist and a computerized court reservation and check-in system believed to be a first in the nation for racquetball.

"We spent \$40,000 on audiovisual equipment (terminals) alone and \$50,000-\$60,000 on leasing," Isaacson says, "but it's already started to really ease some things for us."

"We can make reservations up to seven days in advance automatically in the computer. When a person walks into the club and looks at the readout (which covers 1½ hours), he can see what court he's on. He also can tell if someone he may need to see is on another court."

The computer stores health data and skill-level records for all members, so players can be matched by printouts. Pro shop and restaurant inventories are other everyday functions.

Although the total-environment sports castles dominate the scene, racquetball isn't all show in Denver by a long shot. Numerous recreation districts have constructed courts in the last three years. Most of the colleges have them, as do three suburban YMCAs. The DAC and JCC have both doubled their facilities, and for the short-term visitor, there is the athletic club in the Executive Tower Inn, open to hotel guests as well as the public.

Even the Denver Broncos have two courts at their main offices. Dave Preston, Rob Lytle, Norris Weese, Randy Gradishar, Joe Rizzo, Bob Swenson, Jim Jensen, Jim Turner and John Grant all play and defensive coordinator Joe Collier was the 1977 DAC champion. Turner is the Class CC state champion!

"Collier's a smart player," quips Foust. "He doesn't do anything special. He plays racquetball just like he coaches."

Slipping in unnoticed from St. Louis, where they were weaned on racquet-

ball, brothers Don and Richard Hanna quietly opened a 10-court, Alpine-styled establishment in another corner of Arvada in May, 1978.

Operating the unpretentious, but well-designed facility with their wives, Donna and Diane, the 30-ish Hannas have an avid family clientele of approximately 450. They note with justifiable pride that Court Sports members (of whom Turner is one) aren't "just a number" and that their women players exceed the nationwide average of 40 per cent.

"We're sort of a small club, people know each other," says Don Hanna. "All over the country, they're going towards smaller clubs. Other cities have one gigantic club. Here there are several."

"I think we'll see more with 15 courts or better. I don't know whether or not Denverites go for it. It was just the precedent that was set. It dominated what the rest of the market was going to do. We won't know if it was a mistake for two or three years. Each club has some-



The glass tournament court at the Colorado Athletic Club.



The Cherry Creek Sporting House is known for its beautiful greenery.



Restaurant area overlooking two glass courts at the downtown International Athletic Club.

Photos by John Faust

thing to offer. Whether or not they'll maintain that clientele remains to be seen."

Which leaves only the Denver Parks and Recreation Department. The city has one lone court at the new Martin Luther King Community Center in integrated Park Hill, but a spokeswoman says the city budget hasn't provided for more.

"We just get lots of calls. They've taken an upswing in the last six months. I wish I could offer them more hope," she says.

"We keep telling ourselves these clubs aren't going to make it, but they succeed," says the YMCA's Herman-son. "We've seen a tremendous turn-over here. We had a good program two years ago but all those people have gone to private clubs."

"This is a unique population," says Hanna. "I think people here are much more physical-fitness conscious. I think they move to Denver, go to the mountains, become more nature-oriented. Before long, they find themselves really in that groove with everybody else. A lot of people who have taken it up are long-time joggers, who are finding that jogging isn't that exciting, and they don't want to go into competitive running. This gives them the same amount of physical exertion. The ski group and racquetball group are the same, too. Both are a physically oriented, competitive group. Off-season, they like to play because it really keeps them in shape to ski."

But O'Connor thinks Denver is still more of a social racquetball town right now.

"It's still a recreational sport for most," he says. "There are so many other things to do, so people don't pursue it as a full-time sport."

Will the enthusiasm continue? The consensus is yes, without a doubt, because of the ease with which the game can be learned. Opinion is divided, though, on whether there's already a saturation of clubs.

The Sporting Houses apparently think so. They've tabled their plans for a west side outlet.

Kansas oilman-rancher Orman Balzer doesn't think so. He and his partners plan to open a 12-court establishment in the barren east side suburb of Aurora next spring, and two other projects are on the drawing board.

"Denver is real rich as far as mental attitudes go," says Balzer's 21-year-old marketing manager, Cathy Naffziger. "In Illinois, people like to see it before they get it, they want to know what it's going to do for them. People here are so eager to be a part of something like this. Denver seems like a young town. There aren't many fuddy duddys around."



ASPEN

Money Is God and the Racquetball Players are Stuck on the Mountain

By Ben Kalb

If Aspen builds a university within its city limits, the school colors should be green and white. Green like money, white like snow.

Money is God in Aspen. Snow is King. Everything else is like a servant.

It's around if you need it.

That includes racquetball.

Racquetball takes a back seat to skiing in Aspen. Everything but money takes a back seat to skiing in Aspen.

About six years ago Aspen was full of ski bums. They were people who worked as waitresses, dishwashers and bus boys for cash to live on. They didn't care how little cash it was as long as that season ski pass went with it. They were much like the surfing bums of Hawaii, who would spend days surfing and sunning and evenings waiting on tables. Ambition was a word used by those who had it. Ski bums and surf bums never let it enter their vocabulary.

Now, Aspen has changed. The ski bums have all but vanished. Oh, there are some around but because of the

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high cost of living, most don't return for a second winter. Or if they do, they live out of town and commute in. Or room together four or more to a house.

The real estate prices have turned Aspen into a place for the wealthy. Aspen's prices even make Los Angeles a bargain by comparison. Condominiums at a complex called The Gant sold for \$50-75,000 six years ago and are now selling for \$500,000 and up. Little shacks, which people pass off as houses, are selling for \$250,000.

And not many season ski passes are given out free. Since Twentieth Century Fox bought the Aspen Ski Corp. for a reported \$40 million (thanks mainly to Star Wars), fees have gone up and freebies have gone down.

They say Aspen is for the "beautiful people" and to a large extent that is true. But there are just as many people around who come to Aspen because the media have built it up as a place to be seen. Aspen is one big disco. It has glitter, drugs, sex and the tag "in."

"There are a lot of people who come here," says Dave Glander, athletic director of the Aspen Athletic Club,

"who are only here because their father paid their way. The father didn't want the son around the family business because the son was an idiot, so he gave him money and sent him off. The son chose Aspen because there are people of the same mentality to play with."

Most things happen in Aspen in the winter. The population during the non-winter months is roughly 8-10,000. That jumps to 35-50,000 during ski season. Summer is a good time for store sales. Prices go down. In fact, some stores even close for the summer.

One store owner hangs a sign on his storefront after ski season that says, "Gone Fishing. Be Back In The Fall. P.S. Have A Nice Summer." Another storefront sign announces, "Summer hours — approximately late morning to approximately early afternoon."

Because of the emphasis on skiing in the winter and the beautiful sunny days of summer which are ideal for tennis, hiking, swimming or bike riding, racquetball takes a back seat to other sports in Aspen.

There are 20 racquetball courts in town. The Aspen Athletic Club has two, the Aspen Club has 14 and the City built four outdoor courts in a local park.

"Right now that's probably sufficient for Aspen," says Dick Screen, assistant athletic director of the Aspen Athletic Club.

It is sufficient because there are very few hard-core racquetball players in town. There are probably only 20 or so players who play the game on a regular basis, meaning three to five times a week.

"People here have so many things going on that we are just developing a hard-core," says Glander. "We have some of the old die-hards who played handball 100 years ago and they helped the other people get started into racquetball."

The Aspen Athletic Club, completed in December, 1976, is located in the basement of a four-story office building. The building and athletic club are owned by four businessmen. "We knew we would have space in the basement. The city at that time didn't allow underground parking and it was not feasible for little stores, so we planned the athletic club into the building," says Jim Daggs, one of the owners. "It was definitely something that was needed and wanted."

The club contains two racquetball courts, a squash court, lap pool, sauna, jacuzzi, cold plunge, solar room, small weight room, exercise room, small pro shop, lounge area and massage area run by a masseur named Conan, who some consider the best in the West and who when not giving massages performs belly dancing shows at all-women parties.

Glander and Screen run the show at the Aspen Athletic Club. They run it like Butch Cassidy and The Sundance Kid. They are the wildest, wackiest and most imaginative athletic directors around. They have a knack for getting people involved in the club's activities.

If it's not their entertaining co-ed exercises classes complete with "Blues Brothers" hats, disco music and an unusual array of exercises, it's Wallyball (volleyball on a racquetball court) on Wednesday nights, water basketball or a game of squash using racquetball racquets.

"I want to have happy club members," says Glander. "I want people to be proud of this club."

Glander is the quiet one. He is a former two-time Colorado state racquetball singles champion. He is also an outstanding skier and squash player and, although he doesn't publicize this, he was an outstanding boxer. In 1972, he made the United States Olympic boxing team in the 145-pound division by upsetting highly publicized convict Bobby Hunter in the Olympic Trials. Unfortunately for Glander he never actually participated in the Munich Games, having suffered an injury during pre-

Cobblestone mall in Aspen offers quaint boutiques and walking advertisements.



Aspen Athletic Club



The Aspen Club



Olympic competition in Poland. Glander was raised in Minnesota but moved to Colorado after his Olympic career to demonstrate ski equipment. He then became athletic director of the Storm Meadows Athletic Club in Steamboat Springs prior to moving to Aspen. He, like many others in Aspen, has made a killing in the real estate market. "I make good money for an uneducated jock," says Glander. "Not because I'm bright but because I was in the right place at the right time."

Glander is not your typical Aspenite, if there is such a thing as a typical Aspenite. He is not into the high-class fashion scene, or being seen at the right restaurants or discos. He is low key, down to earth. "The club is my life," says Glander. "I know the names of all my members. I stay here because I can do my own thing."

Glander's partner, Screen, is the most energetic person in Aspen. His enthusiasm automatically spreads to those around him.

Born in Massachusetts, Screen, the son of a bank vice president, was one of those all-around jocks at Springfield College, a physical education oriented school in New England. He came out to Aspen for a skiing vacation a couple of years ago and stayed.

Screen is so hyper he says he only sleeps three hours a night. He is one of those people who can eat and eat without gaining any weight. That is probably due to the enormous amount of calories he loses because of continuous exercise. He says he eats so often he sometimes gets up in the middle of the night to fix himself a gourmet meal of peanut butter, potato chips and beer.

The players who play at the Aspen Athletic Club are for the most part be-

ginners or intermediates. "The average Aspen player doesn't play in tournaments," says Screen. "He plays for recreation."

Although Screen says the average Aspenite does not play in tournaments, he was surprised to find over 100 players had signed up for the club's winter tournament. The large entry list was so unexpected, matches had to be played at 3 a.m. to make sure things finished on schedule.

The Aspen Athletic Club has a membership role of about 400, or about 800 less than the Aspen Club, located two miles away.

The Aspen Club opened in December, 1977 with eight racquetball courts. The club added six more recently, including a glass exhibition court which will seat about 200, but two of the courts are pretty much out of use. One court is used for storage and the other is filled with ping-pong tables.

Of the Aspen Club's 1,200 members, it is hard to tell how many joined for racquetball. The club is geared for tennis and most of the memberships are sold because of the tennis facilities.

The Aspen Club is located in a picturesque setting up Independence Pass. It is spread out over several acres and features all the modern weight equipment, indoor and outdoor tennis courts, pool, jacuzzi, sauna, lounge and a jogging trail that runs near a nudist camp. But that's not the only "bare" which can be seen. There are also a few real bears out there for your running pleasure.

The Aspen Club and the Aspen Athletic Club offer a contrast in atmosphere. The comparisons parallel two of the more popular discos in town — Andre's and The Paragon.

Andre's, like the Aspen Club, is plush and expensive. But at the same time it comes across as sterile. The decor is fancy and the people dress to impress. And when people are out to impress, they are not real. They put on their "cool" look. A lot of people are there to play but just as many are there to be seen or to socialize.

"I've heard people say we have a snobby atmosphere and the Athletic Club has a friendlier atmosphere but I disagree," says Aspen Club general manager Millard Kelley. "They have a smaller group of people there, so it's probably easier to get to know everybody."

The Aspen Athletic Club, like The Paragon, has a more casual atmosphere than the Aspen Club. The facilities aren't as fancy and even Glander admits he wishes there was room for a couple more courts but the people are more down to earth. Nobody will check out what you are wearing on the court. Nobody is out to play the cool role. People are there to do as opposed to a place where you are there to be seen.

With the addition of the new exhibition court, Kelley says the Aspen Club will try to attract some of the top pros for exhibitions, clinics and possibly even tournaments.

The Aspen Athletic Club occasionally has some of the top pros drop in for a clinic or exhibition. Jerry Hilecher played a few matches with Glander earlier in the year and Janell Marriott and Kathy Williams put on an excellent (sponsored partly by Seamco) racquetball camp there during the summer.

This year's camp ran four weeks, with different groups coming in a week at a time. The camp surprisingly draws many out of staters. In fact, one week's camp roster was almost exclusively made up of people from Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Illinois and Michigan. Very few locals sign up.

"The local lives here to ski but after a few years of skiing he needs a change of pace or something else to keep in shape," says Marriott. "That's when he takes up racquetball."

Both of the racquetball clubs are relatively empty during the summer. It is easy to get a court. In the winter it is easy to get a court during the day when most people are either working or skiing but there are some times when you need reservations almost a week in advance.

"After people get off the slopes a lot of people come in to sit in the whirlpool," says Screen. "And from about 4-8 p.m. the courts are filled."

Aspen, of course, also has its set of celebrities to brag about. Singers John Denver and Claudine Longet live there year round and both have played rac-

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quetball at both clubs. Longest, in fact, is ranked on the women's A challenge ladder in tennis and racquetball at the Aspen Club.

Other people who have used either of the two clubs' facilities at one time or another include singer Jimmy Buffet, actor Jack Nicholson, comedians Buddy Hackett and Steve Martin and 1979 Playboy Playmate of the Year Monique St. Pierre.

Celebrities are part of what Aspen is about. It has been described as a mini-New York in that it is cosmopolitan. It has also been described as a mini-Beverly Hills with an endless stream of fashion shops, fancy restaurants and trend shops.

Aspen is New Yorkish in that it caters to a diversified group of people and it is culturally oriented what with the annual Ballet West and the Aspen Music Festival. It is Beverly Hills-ish in that there are some very attractive stores. But the similarities end there.

New York people are aware of current events, politics and sports. They are rushing to get places. Aspen is an escape. "An adult Disneyland," says Glander. Newspaper sales are small and nobody is rushing to get anywhere but the ski slopes. In Beverly Hills, people dress to the hilt to go shopping or eat lunch. In Aspen, although Gucci has made its mark, people dress casual, even grubby.

"True," says Pam Varley of KSNO radio station. "But people spend a tremendous amount of time and money to look casual."

One thing everybody agrees on is that Aspen has changed.

"There is a different kind of people here today," says Chris Cassatt, photographer for the Aspen Times. "Ten years ago this was a sleepy town. It was nice and slow. Now it's more cosmopolitan and people are more money conscious. I'm amazed at the money floating around."

To give you an idea of the high cost of living in Aspen, racquetball racquets which retail for \$45-50 in most cities, sell for \$65 at the clubs.

"The town changed when the jet set moved in," says Screen. "That made Aspen very popular. Then every single 25-40 who thought he or she was studly or beautiful came in."

"If you play your cards right, you can make it in this town," says Kelley. "If you come here, you better be good at what you can do because there is a lot of competition."

"I'm sure a lot of people come here for drugs and sex but there are more who come here for the beauty of the mountains, the culture and the small town atmosphere," says Gay Daggs, wife of AAC co-owner Jim Daggs.

"The city and county are well aware of the housing problems here and the community is addressing itself to those problems," says Jim Daggs. "There are no magical solutions yet but they are working on them."

So how do you sum up the typical Aspenite? You can't, so don't try. "There's not an average person in Aspen," says Glander. "This place is a melting pot."

And as for racquetball in Aspen? It has a ways to go. Nothing will ever get top billing over skiing. So, maybe the



Racquetball pro Janell Marriott flanked by Aspen Athletic Club athletic directors, Dick Screen and Dave Glander.

only thing left to do is plan racquetball-skiing clinics and camps as package deals in the winter. Or maybe someone should just build a racquetball club on top of Aspen Mountain.

R

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS

That Down-home Country Flavor

By David M. King

This is no flatland town. It is tucked into a small valley just 26 miles west of The Great Divide. This is no big city town. It has a population of about 4,000 and no parking meters. This is no downstream town. In fact, it is on the upper reaches of the Yampa River, which has its beginnings approximately 40 miles south in the heart of the Rocky Mountains.

Steamboat Springs is 165 miles northwest of Denver, about four hours by car. Originally, the town was named Medicine Springs but was changed by the first settlers because of the sound of a spring's blow hole that reminded





them of the sound of a Mississippi paddle wheeler.

Not your usual resort town in the Rockies, Steamboat considers itself a year round community because of its resources. Until 10-15 years ago the major industry was cattle ranching and that still is a main source of town income today. But with the energy crisis, this seemingly small tourist town has grown from a population of a little over 2,000 in 1975 to 4,400 in 1979, not counting tourists.

One resident put it this way: "The ski area is big but with the energy crisis the reason the town is booming is the mining and the year round employment." New mines and a new power plant started to bring people and keep people here year round. Last summer, 300 condominium units were built. Single family dwellings have sprung up so fast that town officials do not even have an accurate count for the past year.

The year round tourist trade comes from the same basic areas — California, the Midwest (particularly Illinois) and Texas. During the summer the draw is hunting, camping, and fishing. Just a few miles into the Routt National Forest near Rabbit Ears Pass an angler can find some of the best fishing Colorado has to offer. Many of the small mountain lakes are not on any map and would require an hour or so hiking through volcanic canyons past a snow-drift or two, even in August, to catch na-

tive brook, cutthroat, or rainbow trout.

During the winter much of the trade comes from Texas to ski. Posters scattered around town show skiers jumping over cattle with the lettering "Ski Texas" or skiers with cowboy hats on in a fast down hill run.

The residents of Steamboat Springs consider themselves a little more down home country than their counterparts in Vail and Aspen. Most consider Vail and Aspen more cosmopolitan, catering to the winter social crowd, or the artist community in the summer. Steamboat Springs is down home to the point that all but one of the 14 "night spots" plays modern and country western music. The 15th plays disco. As one local resident put it, "Yeah, we have one disco in town with the lights and all that stuff, but not that many people use it."

The ski area of Steamboat is about four miles south of town in an area called Storm Meadows, known by the locals as "The Mountain."

"The Mountain" is the center of most of the sporting activity for Steamboat Springs, according to Jim Asher, owner of the Storm Meadows Athletic Club. "Since taking over, the club membership has gone from about 170 to 600 local members," says Asher. Asher's club is adjacent to the slopes, overlooking two ski runs. The club has four racquetball courts, and four tennis courts, two indoors. "This is no Los Angeles or Denver," says Asher. "With a town of 4,400 people we feel that is about the correct size, although we are expanding. The growth of the tourist part of our business here is spectacular and the skiing part is the same way." More ski runs and ski lifts are being added.

Racquetball has gained in popularity in this mountain town, stealing some of the limelight from the winter sports.

"Fall and winter are our busy seasons for racquetball," says Asher. "Our busy season begins in October and goes through the winter. The people who live and work here are our basic clientele. They don't ski every day of the week. Some people get the picture that a person who lives in a ski resort area has unlimited time to ski. All these people work some awfully long hours, and by these people I'm talking about waiters, bartenders, maids, the ski patrol, etc. These people love to play racquetball to relax. Like I said, it's purely a winter sport here."

Summer being the slack season, Asher and the club management have instituted several handball and racquetball camps. These camps are well attended by many local residents as well as participants from across the country.

This year the club hosted former national champion Davey Bledsoe (co-

sponsored by Wilson) to teach several one week sessions on the basics of racquetball. The camp was attended by players from Chicago, El Paso, Tex., Nebraska, and other parts of the country. The participants ranged from the beginner to those who have played for several years or more. And one player had a unique reason for participating in the camp.

Greg Wiggins is a 25-year-old senior at Colorado State University, who attended the Bledsoe camp to fulfill a requirement of his major before graduating. "I'm in the university's commercial sports concentration for physical education and an internship is required in my senior year," says Wiggins. "The internship involves taking the summer or fall semester off to spend time at an athletic club learning all the aspects of management and business."

"I have been doing my internship here at the club all summer because I wanted to get involved in racquetball and to fulfill a racquetball requirement in my major," says Wiggins. But there's an irony to it, he says. "They don't have racquetball at Colorado State, and yet it is required in our major. The university has handball facilities but they do not allow us to take racquets onto the courts." Wiggins chose Steamboat Springs because "racquetball is such a growing thing with clubs popping up all over the country and there is a good chance that after I graduate I may end up in a club like this."

Despite the fast growth Steamboat Springs is experiencing, it still has that small town western flavor. Driving through town, a traveler will encounter only four stop lights along the 12 intersections on Main Street.

The people take pride in the town and boast of the fact that they are a year-round community. Although the winter skiing is important, the town's people think they could subsist without it because of their natural resources. Another point of pride for the town is the lack of fast food chains. Only one exists — a "southern" chicken take-out establishment that was built several years ago. In place of these fast food places are 41 restaurants, one of which is the "four-star" rated Gallery. A diner can look out over the ski slopes and on any given summer evening he or she can see hang gliders floating down from the top of the mountains or sky divers gently falling through the sky, landing at the bottom of one of the ski runs. The viewer can also look down from his position halfway up the slopes and see horseback riders winding their way up the mountain and into the woods. All this under a photographic setting as the sun makes its way over the western side of the Rocky Mountains.



Davey Bledsoe giving instruction at annual racquetball camp.



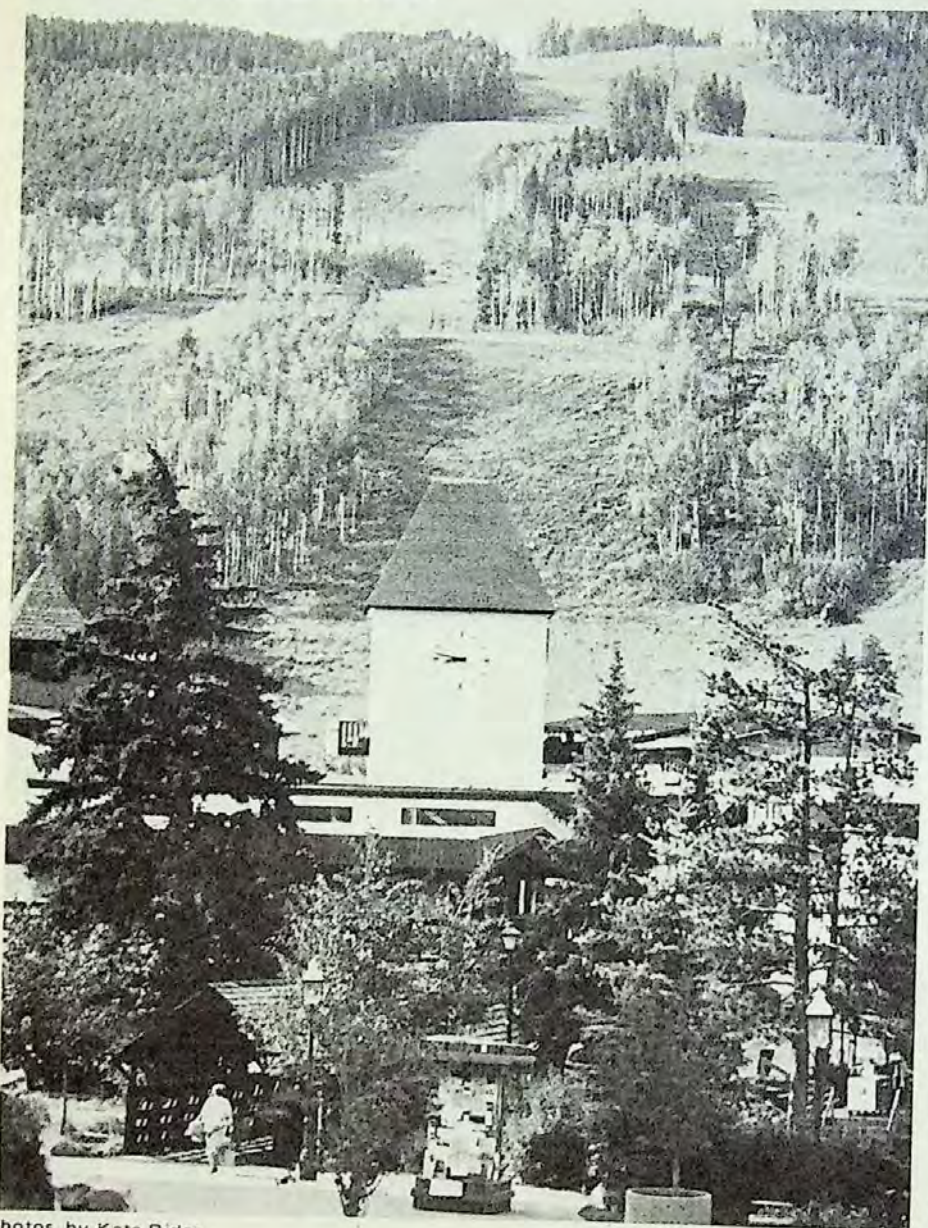
Storm Meadows Athletic Club at Steamboat.

Photos by David M. King



VAIL

More than just a ski resort



Photos by Kate Rider

By Doug Quat

As recently as 1962, the Gore Creek Valley in Colorado was primarily farmland which contained only a smattering of human life. Except for a lot of wildlife, the valley was just a quiet, beautifully natural area, mostly untouched by mankind. But this wilderness, 100 miles west of Denver, had a special quality and a special mountain, and a small group of men had the foresight to realize that this valley could be made into something more than another resort area. Choosing to alter the natural beauty of the surrounding terrain as little as possible, these men worked diligently to create what is now Vail

Mountain and The Town of Vail.

Originally planned as a ski resort, Vail almost immediately grew into something more. Although over one million skiers carved turns on Vail Mountain during the winter of 1978-9, skiing isn't the only popular sport in town. Cycling, golf, running, hiking, camping, tennis, and softball are among the numerous activities that keep Vail's 8000 locals occupied and healthy. As one long time resident put it, "A person can't help but be active here. The climate and surroundings breed athletics."

But in the past year and a half racquetball has been added to the list of Vail's popular sports.

As most resort towns go, Vail is uni-

que. Its uniqueness stems not just from the fact that it's gone from wilderness to a rapidly expanding valley in the past seventeen years, but also from the people who are such a vital part of the town and who have contributed so strongly to help make Vail what it is today. The typical local is in his or her early twenties to early thirties, college-educated, fun-loving, and athletic. Most of them originally came to Vail to enjoy themselves for a few years and especially to ski. Upon arrival in town, they would find a modest place to live in, uncover either a night job or a job with Vail Associates (entitling them to a season's ski pass) and spend most of their free time on the slopes. As the years went on, these people discovered that many other activities could be enjoyed in Vail. The town was not just a wintertime resort any longer.

This thought occurred to Pepi Gramshammer, former world champion ski racer who had come to Vail during the early days of its formation. Along with architect Fitzhugh Scott, Gramshammer believed that an athletic club, with racquetball as its major activity, would flourish in Vail.

After much research and planning, The Vail Athletic Club was opened in the spring of 1978. Housed downstairs in the Vail Athletic Club Hotel, the club offers health facilities and the town's only squash court in addition to its six racquetball courts. "We felt that it was time that Vail had a club," said Gramshammer. "Racquetball is a fast and exciting sport, a game that the young people would want to play. Vail is a sports-minded town and racquetball has fit in very well, especially in wintertime. People in town like to stay active; workers who get an hour off for lunch in the winter don't have enough time to ski, but they can fit in a couple of games of racquetball."

Although the Vail Athletic Club is the center of racquetball activity in town, the Vail Racquet Club also has one court. Both clubs are private, however, leaving the unfortunate racquetball playing tourist without a place in town to play. As Gramshammer put it, "We felt that the town's people could support a club without outside help. It is too small of a place to open to outsiders, and the members who pay good money wouldn't get what they are paying for." The Athletic Club's membership has now ballooned to over 700, about 400 of whom play racquetball.

Many of the members enjoy a hour of hard racquetball after a day of skiing, especially the ski instructors. After spending an entire day on the mountain teaching screaming kids or battling the elements, the opportunity to get out on the courts and smash a few is just what is needed. "In Vail, racquetball is a

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natural complement to skiing" says instructor Dave Heifleigh. "One is played on a court of ice and snow while the other is played on a flat slope of board and white-walled sky. One requires a uniform consisting of three or four layers of clothing, the other needs only shorts, T-shirt and sneakers. After having to teach all day and not be able to express myself on the slopes, it's nice to be able to do it out on the courts with no holds barred."

During the winter, the busiest times at the club, conveniently located less than a five minute walk from the mountain, occur from about 4-7 p.m., just after the slopes close for the day. In the summer the people tend to spend more time enjoying the outdoors, so the club and the courts tend to get less activity than they do during the colder months. But on rainy days, members flock to the club.

In a town such as Vail where people come primarily to enjoy themselves, the evenings are a time to relax and then party it up. After the mountain closes, skiers will often end up at a couple of the bars on Bridge Street in the center of town. This usually leads to a leisurely dinner at one of the numerous restaurants in town, and that is often followed by a night on the town expending whatever energy is left in their by-then tired bodies.

The nightlife has something for everyone, from disco to country-western swing. Most of the tourists tend to venture to the discos, where dancing bodies fly like ceiling shots, but many locals and those on low budget vacations prefer the live music and rowdy atmosphere at Garton's and The Red Lion.

But, surprisingly, racquetball does not often lead to much social interaction outside of the courts. Says one local, "After working or skiing all day long and then playing an hour or two of racquetball, I just don't have enough energy to go out and party."

Since energy is number one on most people's priority list in the winter, many of them will go home and relax at night after an hour of racquetball, saving their excess energy for some early morning powder runs in the back bowls. Late night activities are more prevalent in the summer since people can spend more time recovering from the previous night's activities by sleeping later. More people can be seen out later than in the winter, but again most social activity does not center around racquetball. Occasionally, some players will head out for a few after a rough match, but most twosomes tend to go their separate ways upon finishing.

Racquetball in Vail is not a singles-oriented sport. Since most players in

town are very competitive, a guy will rarely play with a girl. Most players tend to hit with others close to their own ability; even a majority of the C players at the club can beat the best woman player. Socializing can be found most anywhere else in town, but in a competitive place such as the club, it's usually athletics before social activity.

This past summer, the Steve Strandemo AMF/Head Racquetball Camp made its first appearance in Vail at the Vail Athletic Club. Attesting to the rising popularity of the game in town, 88 men and women took part in two one-week sessions. Campers came from all over the country and their abilities ranged from beginner to expert. Strandemo's reputation as a top teacher of the game certainly had much to do with the large number of players registered, but the area and the town itself also did their share to bring these people to Vail. Some players came from as far away as New York and Florida. These campers could have attended the Strandemo camp at Seven Springs, Pa., much closer to their respective homes, but decided that it was worth it to dig deeper into their savings accounts to come all the way out to Vail.

Most people expressed pleasure with the camp, and were also quite taken with Vail. As one girl from Minnesota stated, "I knew that Strandemo was the best, and I figured that I'd get good instruction wherever I went. But learning from Steve and being able to do it in a place like Vail is an added bonus, and it was definitely worth the extra few dollars to come here." The success of the camp was much greater than anticipated, so much so that Steve and the club have already begun discussing the possibility of having a three or four week camp next summer.

As most everyone knows, Vail has been the retreat of former President Jerry Ford. An avid skier and golfer, Ford manages to spend about three weeks in the winter and at least a month in the summer enjoying his leisure time.

Vail has lately become a very popular vacation spot for celebrities, with such well known people as Clint East-

wood, Robert Redford, Jack Nicklaus, and Pierre Trudeau spending a few winters on Vail Mountain. Ford brings many more into town through his annual golf tournament, a two-day affair of fun held in early summer. Although Ford is a member of The Vail Athletic Club, he is not yet a racquetball player. He, however, recently spent some time with Strandemo, talking about racquetball and its increasing popularity nationwide. A majority of the Secret Service agents who stay with Ford are racquetball players. Despite their overbearing



Racquetball pro Steve Strandemo and Vail's most famous resident, former President Gerald Ford.

size on the courts, the agents are, for the most part, quick and agile.

Celebrities who come into town have special access to the club, but as far as big names go only tennis star Rod Laver and musician Kenny Loggins, as well as the President's children, have managed to play racquetball while in town. Ford's influence on the town is minimal. He prefers to keep a low profile now that he is a private citizen. "He's just a regular guy who happened to be President of the United States," says one of his Secret Service men.

The Vail area, which has boomed since the first buildings went up in 1962, is now growing faster than ever. What used to be primarily a ski town has become much more than that today. Residential areas have gone up to the east and west, and the population of the valley has doubled in the past five years.

With the new Beaver Creek Ski Area, located only seven miles to the west of Vail, the valley is expanding fast. And the sport of racquetball is expanding right along with it. New court complexes are being added to at least two of the hotels in town and to two of the condominium complexes currently under construction, in addition to some which will complement Beaver Creek. When completed, this will nearly triple the number of courts in the Vail area.

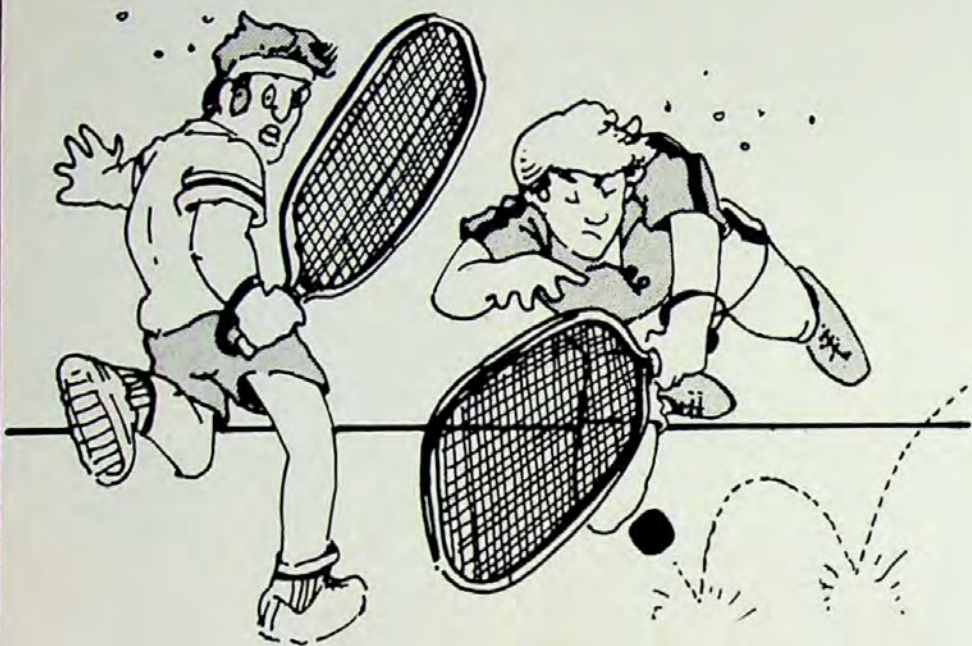
Like the town itself, racquetball has a bright future in Vail.



Vail Athletic Club

Short Shots

Wake Up, Time



Racquetball fanatics are wondering where Time Magazine is getting its reporters and researchers these days.

In a recent issue of Time, a story was carried in the "economy and business" section relating to the decline in the tennis boom and the increase in the number of participants in other racquet sports.

The story went on to talk about how major tennis facilities were converting some of their courts to racquetball.

The story said racquetball is a game "that employs a bigger racquet and a slower ball."

A bigger racquet and a slower ball? A slower ball, perhaps, depending on which balls are compared. But since when do racquetball players use a bigger racquet?

The next thing you know Time Magazine will be reporting that Marty Hogan has reached agreement to play with a Prince tennis racquet.

Corporate Name Change

Craig Hall, chairman of Sports Illustrated Court Clubs, Inc., announced that Sports Illustrated Court Clubs has acquired the 18 per cent of the company's common stock which previously was held by Time, Inc. Hall said the company plans to change the corporate name to Standard Court Players Corporation.

The 14 individual racquetball clubs now operated by the company will be given options to drop their use of the Sports Illustrated Court Clubs name and to terminate a 4 per cent royalty fee payable to Time, Inc. for using the name. Future clubs will operate under a new name and will not be required to pay the royalty fee under the current license agreement.

Despite the transfer of stock and the name change, Time, Inc. remains an

investor in the corporation, holding non-voting shares. Hall said he recently invested an additional \$500,000 in preferred stock to provide for continued growth and expansion.

In related transactions, Time, Inc. has purchased two racquetball clubs under construction plus certain other assets from the company making their total investment approximately \$4.8 million, and has signed seven year contracts with Standard Court Players for the management of the two clubs. The clubs are in Needham, Mass. and Highland, Indiana.

Hall announced that the company began construction on a 10-court racquetball club in Bay City, Michigan. After its completion, scheduled for late 1979, the company will operate 17 racquetball clubs containing a total of 215 courts.

Leve Leaves USRA

Chuck Leve has left his position as National Director of the United States Racquetball Association to take a post as Executive Director of the National Court Clubs Association (NCCA).

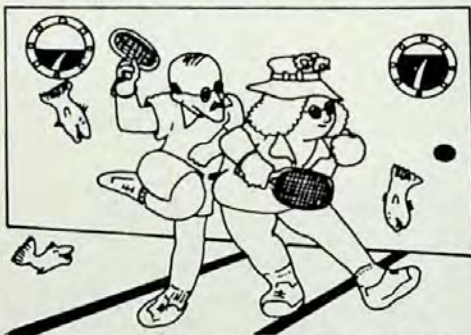
"It was a good opportunity for me," said Leve. "The NCCA needs to have a stronger voice and the position gives me a little more personal freedom."

One rumor had it that Leve had a falling out over salary demands with USRA President Robert Kendler but he denies it. "I could have stayed here another 50 years if I wanted," says Leve.

Leve admits he won't be in the "limelight" as much but he says that won't bother him. "It was one of the things I considered before I made the move but I intend to make the NCCA position a visible one. I won't be quietly moving from one association to another."

One ironic thing about the move is that it was Leve's father, Mort, who originally founded the NCCA prior to his initiation of court club management seminars.

Racquetball At Sea



In a recent issue of RACQUETBALL ILLUSTRATED, actor Ted Lange, who plays the bartender on the "Love Boat" television series, half-jokingly mentioned how he was waiting for the day when a cruise ship would build a racquetball court.

It seems now that Lange's wish is right over the next wave.

Carnival Cruise Lines, which specializes in tours to the Caribbean, reportedly is building a ship which will, indeed, have a racquetball court on board.

The boat is expected to be finished by early 1981.

"I think they decided to go with racquetball because they could never finish a game of volleyball," said a spokesperson for Carnival. "People kept hitting the balls overboard."

R_x FOR WINNING

Where Are The Courts?

Palm Springs (Calif.) may be the place to go if you are part of a three-Rolls Royce family or want to play a different golf course every week without hitting off the same tee twice but as far as racquetball players are concerned, the place is the pits.

According to the Palm Springs Chamber of Commerce there are no racquetball courts in town.

"We get calls all the time and I have to tell them 'I'm sorry we don't have any place to play,'" says a spokeswoman for the Chamber of Commerce. "I must get at least two or three calls a day asking about racquetball."

With such phone interest, it seems natural for somebody to take that step and build a club. But so far, no one has done it. "There has been a lot of talk about building a club but then nothing happens," says the Chamber of Commerce. The Olympic Golf and Racquet Club has made tentative plans to add a couple of courts but no completion date has been announced.

Perhaps, it's the high cost of land that discourages builders from coming in but then again with all the money rolling around Palm Springs, the cost factor shouldn't be a problem.

With a population of 33,400 that jumps to over 55,000 during some months, you'd figure the city fathers would talk to some of their residents about adding a racquetball club.

Somebody there must get tired of golf.

TV Instructional Series

A six-part beginning instruction series will be seen on public broadcasting stations around the country.

"We are hoping to reach 200 cities around the country," says Kent Johnson, who served as director for the series.

Touring pros Rich Wagner and Karin Walton provided the instruction for the series. They were each paid \$2,000 for a week's work.

Part one of the series will go over the basics — rules, equipment, racquet grip, etc. Part two talks about the forehand and backhand. Part three is serve and service return. Part four is basic shot selection and part five deals with advanced shot selection. Part six is strategy.

Filming took place at the Sports Gallery in Anaheim, Calif. The series was produced by KOCE-TV of Huntington Beach, Calif.



Coping with STRESS

By Sandra Segal

The diseases we most fear—cancer, heart attacks, respiratory diseases, peptic ulcers, arthritis—have a common denominator. They are all at least partly caused by stress. According to standard medical textbooks, stress has a role in 50 to 80 per cent of all diseases which now threaten us. One might say that stress-linked diseases are the modern day black plague, replacing infectious diseases as the major health problem of the decade.

There are, unfortunately, no vaccines for stress. But there are ways to minimize the weakening and destructive effects which stress has on your system. Relaxation exercises, such as meditation and biofeedback training, and a conscious change of lifestyle to avoid the "hurry sickness" of modern life are important. However, many researchers believe that a regular program of vigorous exercise may be the essential part of an anti-stress regimen.

For the average healthy person, regular workouts on the racquetball court may give you all the exercise you need

to help you combat stress. In fact, some racquetball-playing doctors feel that this sport has an edge over other stress-reducing activities. Dr. Norman Bobes, an internist in Beverly Hills, prescribes 45-minute racquetball sessions three times a week to many of his patients. According to Dr. Bobes, racquetball has the advantage of allowing even an amateur player to get a good workout in a relatively short period of time. The large number of racquetball clubs makes the sport accessible to most people in proximity and cost, and the club atmosphere can provide the incentive for maintaining an exercise program. Dr. Victor Spear of Illinois, author of *How to Win at Racquetball*, agrees that racquetball is a superior way to reduce tension. "Racquetball is tremendously strenuous, and the more strenuous the exercise, the more relief from tension you'll get," he said. "Tennis is like a walk in the park in comparison."

To understand how racquetball helps reduce the harmful effects of stress, you must first understand the nature of stress. In simple terms, a stressor is anything our bodies perceive as a threat. We are still programmed to react to fear-evoking stimuli much as our ancestors did in the wilds. When they came upon a ravening tiger or a warring tribe, they had an automatic "fight or flight" response. Their breathing quickened, their pulse raced, their

blood pressure increased, and a spurt of the stress hormones, adrenaline and noradrenaline, released the sugar and fatty acids which the muscles use for work. This unthinking reaction gave our Neanderthal forefathers and mothers the extra energy they needed to fight for their lives or flee to safety.

Your body also has these energizing responses. However, modern day stressors are more apt to be yelling bosses, fighting children, or reckless

drivers than a raging mastodon or even a particularly vicious looking doberman. And although you may feel like remedying one of these situations with a sledge hammer, you will probably try to control your aggression, and respond in a non-physical way. Since your body cannot burn off the extra energy it has produced, it may stay in a state of high arousal for long periods of time. This continuing tension leads to the development of high blood pres-

sure, migraine headaches, ulcers, and the full range of debilitating stress-linked disorders.

Since many situations do require additional alertness, concentration, or energy, a certain amount of the stress reaction is healthy and normal. It is only when you overreact, by feeling stressed by even minor irritations in your daily life, or by being unable to quickly achieve a state of calm, that stress becomes counter-productive, and health problems arise.

The feeling of constant tenseness is one of the first warning signs that you are overreacting to stress. Other symptoms include irritability or depression throughout the day, difficulty in concentrating, general fatigue, inability to relax, grinding your teeth at night, or chronic diarrhea. In tense situations, people who overreact to stress may find their hands and feet are unusually cold, their heart is pounding, they are short of breath, have tight stomach muscles or aching shoulder and back muscles. All these signs are danger signs. They indicate that your body is being overloaded by the "fight or flight" response, and is not quickly returning to its normal physiological balance.

How can a vigorous game of racquetball combat this problem of excessive stress? First, the physical exertion and friendly competition provide a socially acceptable way of releasing aggression. Dr. Bobes, who first noted the stress-reducing effects of exercise when working as a flight surgeon in Viet Nam, said, "Racquetball can be a therapeutic experience. Most of us don't deal with our anger. If we're lucky, we can deal with it in professional therapy. But all of us have an opportunity to get rid of our angry energies and frustrations on a physical level, and that's just as good."

Along with dissipating anger, a good game of racquetball will help to dissipate the fatty acids and sugars which accumulate in the body during the "fight or flight" response. If these fatty acids are not burned off by a spurt of physical exertion, they can be deposited in the walls of your blood vessels, where they may form the basis of atherosclerosis and coronary disease.

One of the acids which is burned up by exercise is lactic acid, which researchers believe helps produce a state of extreme anxiety. Since exercise speeds up the rate at which lactic acid is removed from the blood stream, the exercise provided by racquetball may actually work as a tranquilizer, keeping you calmer through the next stressful situation. In his research on subjects

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R FOR WINNING

aged 52 to 88 at USC's Andrus Gerontology Center, Dr. Herbert A. DeVries found that a fifteen minute walk was more relaxing than a single dose of a common tranquilizer.

Finally, the general conditioning provided by regular racquetball sessions is invaluable in combatting the effects of stress. Dr. Hans Selye, the father of modern stress research, first noted the importance of this aspect of exercise in his experiments on rats. He found that when under-exercised laboratory rats were continuously exposed to stressors such as loud noises, electric shocks, and blinking lights, they would die within a month. But rats which had been exercised on a treadmill until they had reached their top physical form were able to tolerate the stress and survive.

To be effective in reducing stress, however, racquetball must not become a stressor itself by being played with an intensely competitive drive. Friendly competition is healthy and enjoyable. However, when each game becomes a threat to your sense of self worth, and you are spending excessive amounts of time on the courts, racquetball may well have become a source of tension in your life, rather than a release from tension. "The pressure of performance actually produces stress," Dr. Bobes says. "Racquetball should provide time for you to get away from your daily competitive effort. Playing seven days a week has no more of a conditioning effect than playing three days a week, and is merely a sign of compulsive competition."

Dr. Bobes has a technique he uses for reducing his own competitive instincts on the courts. "I look for players who are novices, and play to teach them rather than beat them. When I want to be pushed, I'll play with someone much better than I am. I know I won't win, but I'll get a good workout and learn some humility."

Playing racquetball can definitely become an important way of coping with stress and improving the quality of your life. By regularly working out, either with racquetball or some other vigorous sport, by eating healthy foods, and by trying to attain a relaxed, accepting attitude rather than a striving, competitive one, you may find you have made significant improvements in your mental and physiological health. But in playing your game it is important to remember Dr. Bobes' warning, "Winning should not mean earning the winning score, but winning for yourself and your life."



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FASHION RAC

It was late morning at Newport Bayview Yacht Club in Newport Beach, Calif. when the four racquetball players decided for a little sun tanning session and lunch on the yacht prior to their late-afternoon doubles match.

Wearing the latest in fashion from EKTELON were racquetball players Lisa Kalison, Carol Lazar, Ramona Newman and Ron Moss.

Ektelon's new line features some of the smartest-looking fashion on court. Offered is a wide variety of designs and styles.

Lisa talks over strategy with Ron in a crossover style V-neck tournament shirt with matching stylized sleeve cuffs. **\$14.** Matching shorts with elastic waist and vertical seam in side panels retail for **\$12.** Ron tries on his collared competition shirt, white with blue and yellow striping. **\$18.** Matching shorts, also a polyester-cotton combination, feature racing stripe down side and key pocket. **\$13.**



Photos by David King

Yacht furnished courtesy of Orange County's newest premiere club, Newport Bayview Yacht Club.

EKTELON

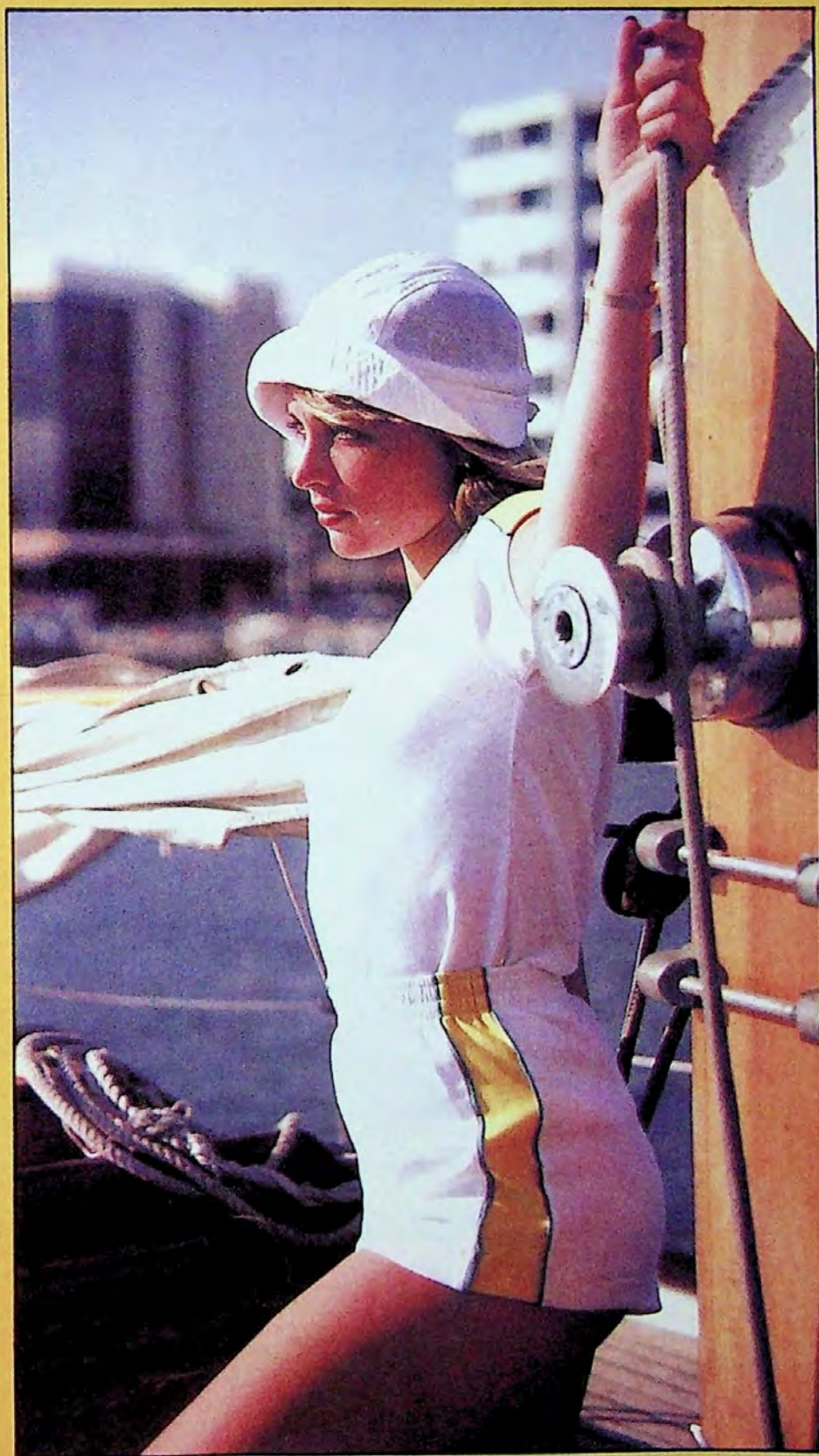


Lisa Kalison, who is a Playboy bunny at the Los Angeles Playboy Club, likes to hit her kill shots in a white Ektelon action shirt with smart-looking green and yellow piping. The polyester-cotton shirt sells for **\$16**. Her matching shorts made of the same material sell for **\$13**.



Ron Moss, singer and bass player for the popular singing group "Player," hits the court in Ektelon's blue collared shirt with contrasting piping. Collar flares out and shirt features bottom side vents. **\$18**. Shorts have piping down side and key pocket. Made of 65 per cent polyester and 35 per cent cotton, the shorts retail for **\$13**.

Ramona Newman likes hers with a crew neck with contrasting inserted side panel. Featured in white with yellow paneling and blue trim, it sells for **\$13**. Matching pants, also made of polyester-cotton, retail for **\$12**.

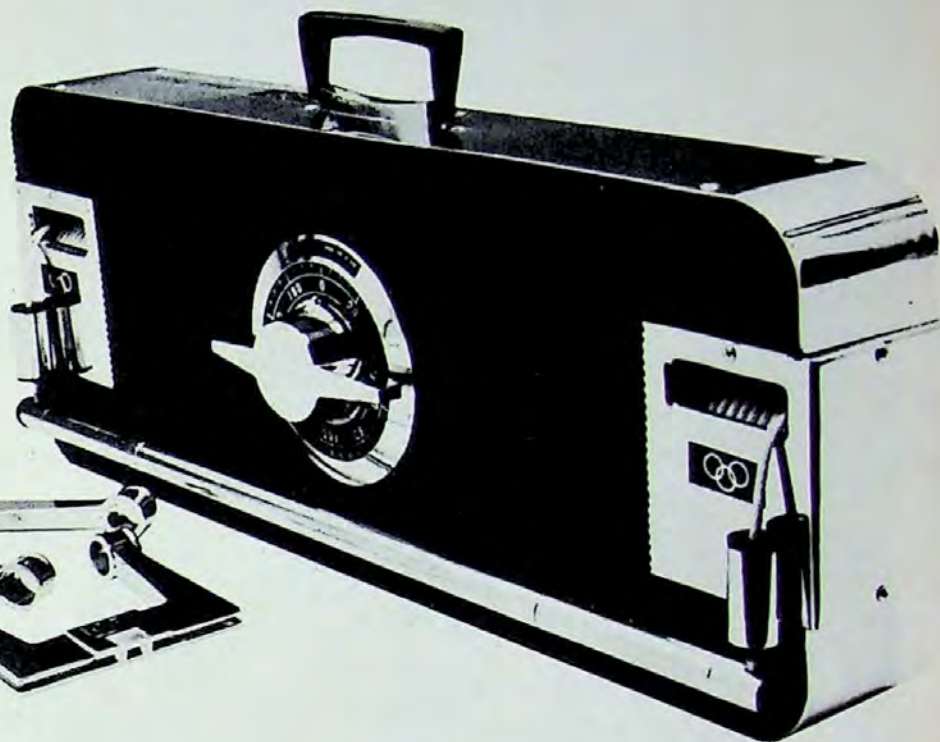


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Carol Lazar looks sporty in her green terry fleeced 100 per cent acrylic warm-up suit featuring contrasting yellow and white piping across the shoulder, down the sleeve and across the chest. Pants feature an elastic waistband and outside back pocket. The legs are flared. Retail price \$70.

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TOURNAMENTS

AMF Voit/Self Magazine (Los Angeles)

For Shannon Wright it was the same old story and for Craig McCoy it was the start of what he hopes to be a regular happening.

Wright defeated Peggy Gardner, 21-6, 21-8, to win the women's open and McCoy defeated Rich Wagner, 12-21, 21-18, 11-8, to win the men's open of the AMF Voit-Self Magazine Classic at the beautiful Sports Gallery in Anaheim, a rock's throw from Anaheim Stadium.

It was McCoy's first victory as a professional. He has won several amateur tournaments, placed high in most of last season's pro tourneys (he made it to the semifinals of the Nationals) but this was his first pro victory.

Wagner drove out to 13-5 and 15-6 leads in the first game and coasted in. McCoy had 12-4 and 18-9 leads in the

second game before Wagner cut it to 20-17. Then an ace off a Z serve to the backhand won the second game for McCoy.

Wagner took a 1-0 lead in the tie-breaker before skipping three shots in a row. McCoy led 5-1 but Wagner knotted it at 5-5. It was tied 7-7 before McCoy outscored Wagner 4-1 the rest of the way.

To reach the finals, McCoy defeated Bill Hildebrand, 21-12, 19-21, 11-6 and Wagner topped Mike Zeitman, 21-16, 21-6. Hildebrand earned his spot in the semis by upsetting Lindsay Myers, 8-21, 21-19, 11-10.

Wright had very little problem with Gardner. Her toughest match came in the semifinals, defeating Lynn Adams, 21-15, 21-17. Gardner reached the fi-

Rich Wagner was often kept off-balance by Craig McCoy (below) in the men's finals of the AMF Voit-Self Magazine tournament at The Sports Gallery in Anaheim, Calif., and McCoy went on to win the match in a tie-breaker. Shannon Wright (at right) gets set to roll one out against Lynn Adams in the women's semifinals. Wright defeated Adams and then coasted past Peggy Gardner in the finals. Bud Muehleisen (bottom right) beat Jerry Conine in the senior division finals.



Photos by David M. King





Mike Zeitman swings hard in semifinal match against Rich Wagner in Voit-Self tourney. Wagner won match but lost to Craig McCoy in finals.

nals with a 21-18, 21-3 victory over Kippi Bishop.

Wright was seeded second behind Karin Walton in the tourney but Walton pulled out of competition at the last minute.

In the men's senior divisions, Bud Muehleisen defeated Jerry Conine, 21-4, 21-7 for first place. Muehleisen's toughest match came in the quarters in which he edged Scott McComas, 21-20, 21-16.

Linda Siau won the women's senior title with a 21-11, 21-16, victory over Dave Doeher, Ann Young defeated Jeanette Mendoza, 21-14, 21-4, in the women's B finals. Joe Peinado defeated Larry Mendoza, 21-13, 21-20, in the men's C finals and Deirdre Gossick won the women's C with a 21-5, 21-15 triumph over Linda Ganske.

The tournament attracted over 450 competitors with the top eight finishers taking home prizes from American Airlines, AMF Voit, Bagel Nosh, Conair, Danskin, Hitachi, Johnson and Johnson, Jovan, Racquetball Illustrated, Robert Bruce, Rollei, Self Magazine and Tred 2.

Quarterfinalists qualified for the Voit-Self Nationals to be held in Las Vegas in December.

USRA Juniors

By Jeannie Matsumoto

Arizona was the scene of one of the hottest racquetball matchups of the year. It didn't occur, as might be expected, at the NRC National Championships in Tempe, but at the USRA National Junior Championships a couple of months later in Tucson.

Admittedly, the caliber of junior play is below that of their older brothers and sisters. What the juniors lack in finesse, though, they more than make up for in emotional intensity.

The 1979 National Juniors had the excitement of a high school homecoming week and was climaxed by a heartstopping finale between John Egerman of Boise, Ida., and Doug Cohen of St. Louis, Mo.

It was the second time in as many months that this pair had met to decide a national championship and is probably just a preview of many exciting matches between the two in the future. Egerman, the 1979 International

Racquetball Association (IRA) national singles champion, had been expected to take home the IRA 17-and-under national junior title as well.

Cohen upset those plans, though, in a three-game match in Memphis. That put a little more drama in the Tucson match.

Both players quickly put away their pre-finals opponents. For most racquetballers their age, the appearance of the name "Cohen" or "Egerman" on the tournament schedule next to their own has become what is known as a "tough draw." These two are in a class by themselves.

In the quarters, Egerman let Craig Doud of El Cajon, Calif., get to 20 in their first game before beating him. He then took the second game 21-11. He then beat his friend Paul Bakken of Fergus Falls, Minn., 21-11, 21-8 in the semis.

Meanwhile, at the other end of the draw, Cohen was taking out Mike George of Great Falls, Mont., 21-7, 21-16 in the quarters and plucky Sergio

Gonzales of Miami, Fla., 21-4, 21-7 in the semis.

Cohen and Egerman provided spectators with a seesaw finals match few will forget. It went back and forth in the first game with Egerman winning a 21-20 decision. Then Cohen dug in his heels and wrestled a 21-14 victory away from the Idaho State champ in the second.

Conventional wisdom would say that Cohen had the momentum and the advantage going into game three, but Egerman jumped out to a quick two points and led most of the way before it was tied 8-8.

Egerman had Cohen in trouble a half dozen times, but the tough youngster, who plays out of the famous St. Louis JCCA, stayed alive with some impossible saves and equally impressive shots. He pulled even with Egerman at 10 and captured the serve. Then it was Egerman's turn to get tough.

It took about 20 minutes of service trading and time outs to get that final point. The suspense was so great that it seemed like an eternity before Egerman

put away his last championship winning kill.

The biggest surprise of the tournament was that four-time juniors national champ Linda Hogan of St. Louis watched the girls' 17-and-under finals from the bleachers. She was taken out in the semis by a heretofore unknown player from Appleton, Wisc., Sheryl Krause.

After winning 21-8 in the first game, Hogan looked like she would roll over Krause as she had with so many other opponents. But Krause surprised Hogan 21-14 in the second game, and hammered out a very tough 11-9 win in the tiebreaker.

In the finals, Krause lost to Liz Alvarado of El Paso, Texas, a tennis convert, 21-16, 21-16. Alvarado was one member of a powerhouse El Paso contingent which did very well at the tournament and included, among others, Luis Miranda, Ray Navarro and Greg Peck, brother of pro player Dave Peck.

Peck was the victim of the second biggest upset of the tournament in the boys' 15-and-under category when he bowed to Brett Harnett of Las Vegas, Nev., 21-17, 21-11 in the finals.

Playing in his first national tournament, Harnett surprised veteran junior players John Amatulli of Shreveville, Ind., 21-6, 21-12 in the quarters and Mike Levine of Rochester, N.Y., 21-17, 21-12 in the semis.

Navarro fared better in the boys' 13-and-under category. After beating Todd O'Neil of South Burlington, Vt., 21-11, 21-12 in the quarters and Miranda 21-13, 21-16 in the semis, Navarro captured his first national championship with a 21-10, 21-16 decision over Scott Brechon of Rockford, Ill.

In another final, Lynn Wojcik of Tucson beat Bobbie Brennan of Frankfort, Ky., 21-19, 21-14 for the girls' 14-and-under championship. Wojcik, a familiar name in juniors racquetball, beat Tina Heath of Chicago, Ill., 21-14, 21-14 in the semis and Gina Donner of Kansas City 21-4, 21-9 in the quarters.

Los Angeles Open

Don Thomas' upset streak fell one short.

After defeating Davey Bledsoe in the second round, Mike Yellen in the quarterfinals and Dave Peck in the semifinals, Arizonan Don Thomas lost to Craig McCoy, 21-16, 21-13, in the finals of the 1979 Los Angeles Open at Racquetball West.

Shannon Wright won the women's

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TOURNAMENTS

competition over Lynn Adams, 21-16, 21-7.

The finals were watched by a crowd of over 100, including singer John Denver who had flown in from Aspen and took time off from a new album he is making.

Thomas edged Bledsoe 21-20 in the first game and destroyed him 21-5 in the second. Against Yellen, Thomas lost the first 21-13, won the second by the same score and then took the tie-breaker, 11-6.

In the semis, Peck and Thomas were knotted at 18 before Peck skipped two backhands and missed a backhand plum. Thomas won the second game 21-13. Peck had advanced to the semis by beating defending champ Lindsay Myers, 11-0 in the tiebreaker.

McCoy defeated Rich Wagner, 21-17, 9-21, 11-5 in the quarterfinals and then stunned Charlie Brumfield, 21-8, 21-17, to earn the spot in the finals.

In the women's competition, Wright



Shannon Wright dives to pick up shot hit by Lynn Adams in finals of Los Angeles Open. Wright won in two games.

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Don Thomas looks more like a fencer or a ballet dancer in the above photo but he played like a racquetball player well enough to finish second in the L.A. Open where he lost to Craig McCoy in the finals.

advanced to the finals with wins over Vicki Panzeri in the quarterfinals and Marci Greer in the semis. Adams upset defending national champion Karin Walton in the quarters and then defeated Sarah Green in the semifinals. Green had beaten Jennifer Harding and Greer defeated Rita Hoff in the quarterfinals.

McCoy collected \$2,000 and Thomas picked up a check for \$1,000. Wright won \$1,500 and Adams took \$800 to the bank.

Roger Ehren won senior open singles, J. Streim took the masters division, Jim Doyle won men's A singles, Bruce Radford teamed with Laura Martino in the mixed doubles competition



Photos by David M. King

and the team of Hawkins-Gibbs won the open doubles.

The tourney was sponsored by AMF Voit, Tred 2 shoes and Good Sport shampoo.

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• Omega Sports, the St. Louis-based racquetball company, is sponsoring 14

tournaments nationwide this fall with partial proceeds going to the American Cancer Society.

• Wendell Talaber defeated Charlie Carosella in the men's open competition of the Daffy Open tournament in Tacoma, Wash. Steve Katz won top honors in senior singles, and Medrice Coluccio took the intermediate women's title.

• Mike Yellen defeated Ben Koltun, 21-13, 21-16 and Rita Hoff defeated Judy Thompson, 21-12, 21-6, in the finals of the Ektelon-Natural Light tournament at the Davison (Mich.) Racquet Club. Yellen took home \$2,000 in prize money and Koltun picked up a check for \$1,200. Hoff won \$1,000 and Thompson collected \$600.

• Glenda Young defeated Sue Carrow, 21-13, 21-10, to win the fourth annual Keebler Women's Open at The Court House in Northbrook, Ill. Bev Franks won the senior division with a 21-20, 21-11, decision over Hope Schwartz. Colleen Shields won the A Division with a 21-11, 21-10 win over Linda Schwartz.

• Kirk Williams defeated Jon Woodard, 21-9, 21-9, to win the second annual San Fernando Valley-Seamco Open at the West Valley Courthouse in Canoga Park, Calif. Williams won \$200 and Woodard collected \$100. Wayne Treloggen defeated Jay Streim in Men's B competition and Dee Gossick won the women's B division with a victory over Chris Aguilera.

• Bob Krasny defeated Salvador Madrigal to win top honors in the Men's A competition of the Autumn Classic at the Sports Connection in Santa Monica, Calif. Sharon Flegal defeated Marci Reynolds in Women's A play. Other winners were Bo Radford, Dave Schaffer, Wiss Nemerson and Nancy Gillette.

• Craig McCoy and Lynn Adams won the open divisions of the third annual Joust Open at Kings Court in Westminster, Calif. McCoy then teamed with Jay Jones for the doubles title.

The 1979-80 Leach/Seamco pro racquetball tour schedule:

Nov. 14-18, Jack-In-The-Box Classic, Phoenix. Dec. 13-16, Tanner-Coca Cola Classic, Memphis. Jan. 31-Feb. 2, Tournament of Champions, Miami. Feb. 20-24, Coors Classic, Denver. Mar. 19-23, Catalina Classic, Los Angeles. April 16-20, Seamco Classic, New York. May 15-18, Dial/Seamco Classic, site to be announced. June 1-7, Colgate Nationals, Las Vegas.

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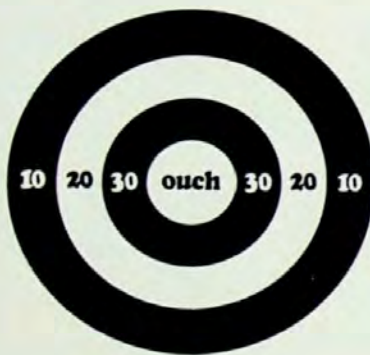
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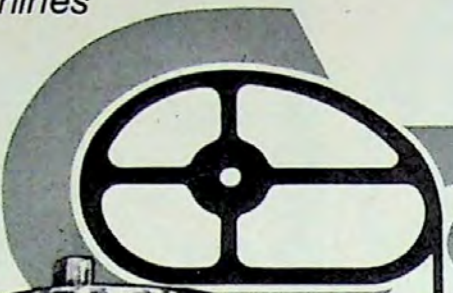
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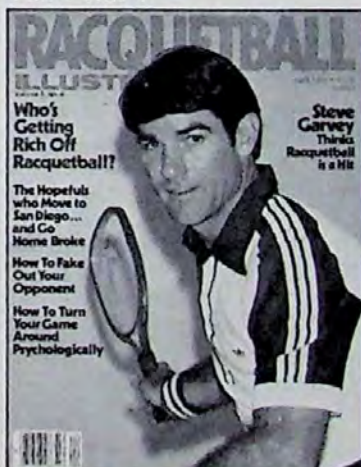
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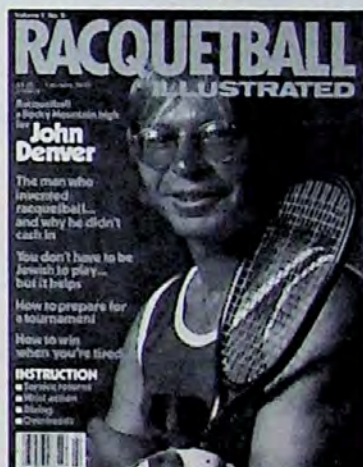
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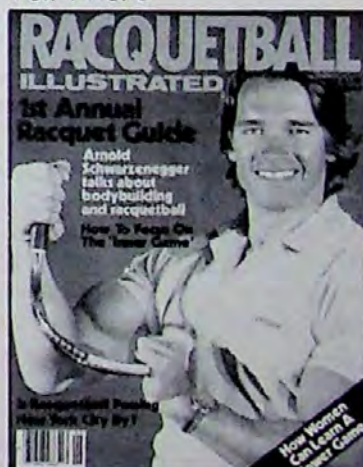
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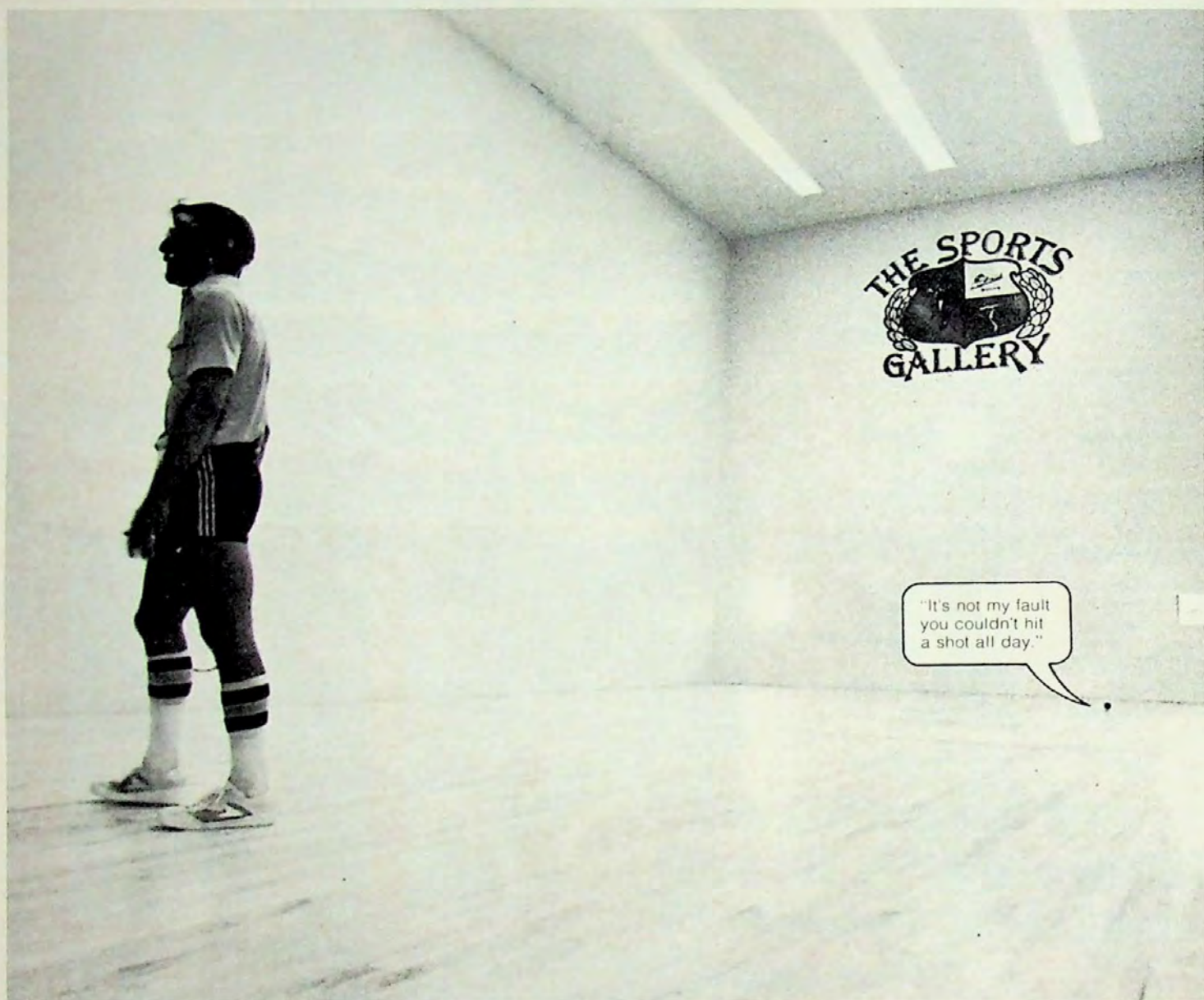


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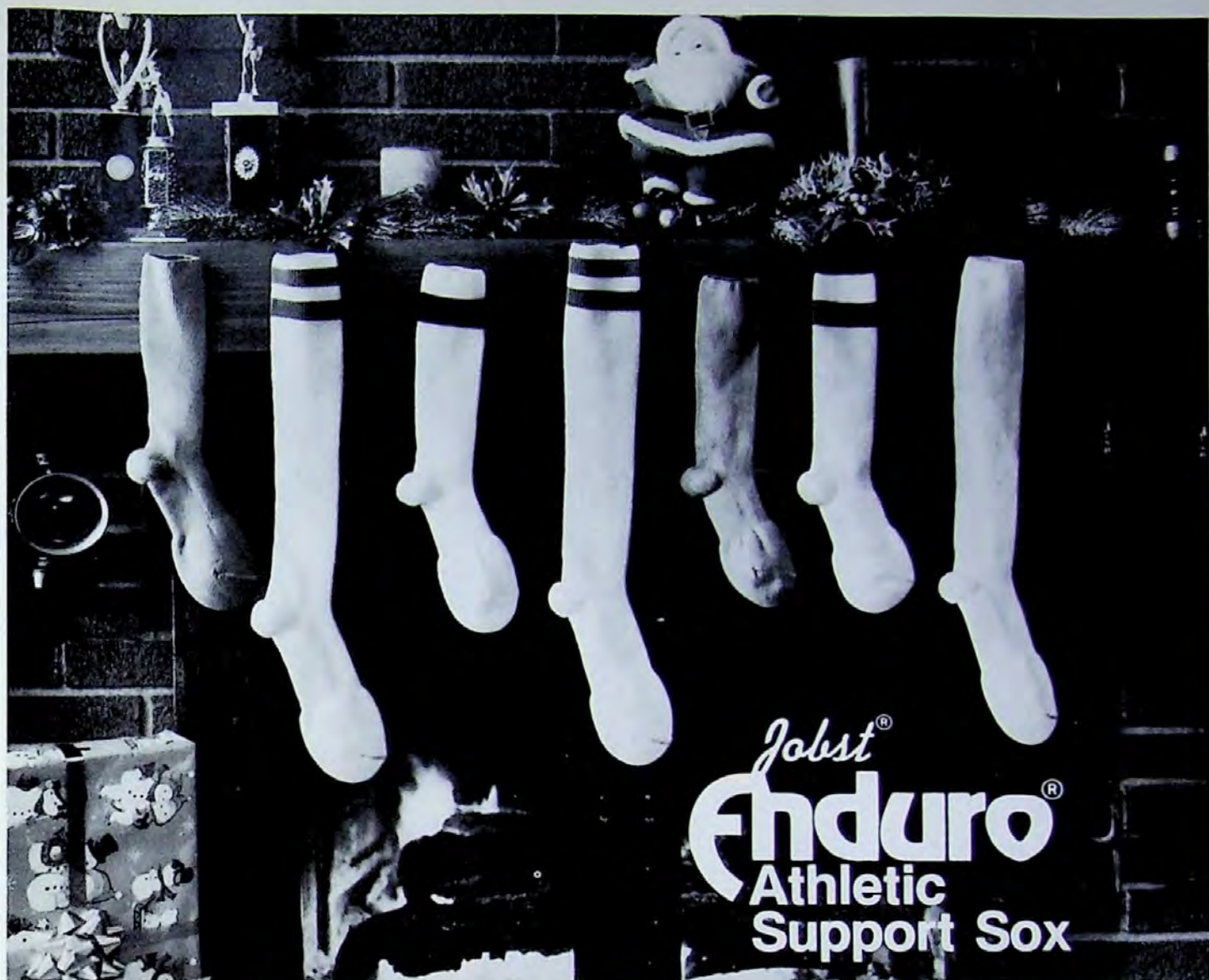
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**If you think
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is the only test of
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racquetball,
you should know
about speed and
flight.**

**The new Ektelon
SpeedFlite™
Racquetball.**

The SpeedFlite has the best bounce in racquetball. It's non-pressurized for a longer-lasting bounce, rounder for a more consistent bounce, and has an extra-rough surface for a truer bounce. Your game keeps its rhythm. Your serves hug the corners. Your kill shots stay down.

But for perfect playability, a racquetball needs more than the right bounce.

The SpeedFlite has the ideal speed — not too fast, not too slow — for crisp responses off the walls and effortless ceiling shots.

The SpeedFlite also has unique flight characteristics. Wall thickness and roundness are controlled to within .010 inch. This eliminates in-flight wobbles and erratic rebounds.

And naturally, the SpeedFlite is backed with a strong replacement offer. If the ball breaks before the long-lasting label wears off, Ektelon will replace it free.

So next time you buy racquetballs, look for more than perfect bounce. Look for perfect speed and flight, too. The new SpeedFlite from Ektelon.

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*Research results available from Ektelon.
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