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**STATE OF
THE SPORT**
**What Is
the Outlook
for Racquetball
in 1981?**

**How to BEAT a
LEFT-HANDED
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**How to Take
GOOD
RACQUETBALL
PHOTOS**


**Lou Grant's
ROBERT
WALDEN**
Covers the Courts



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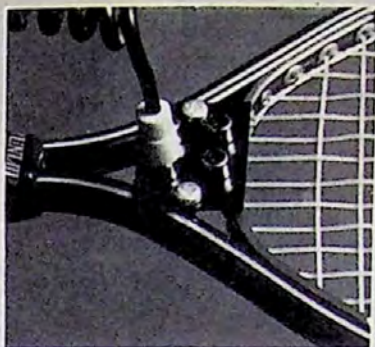
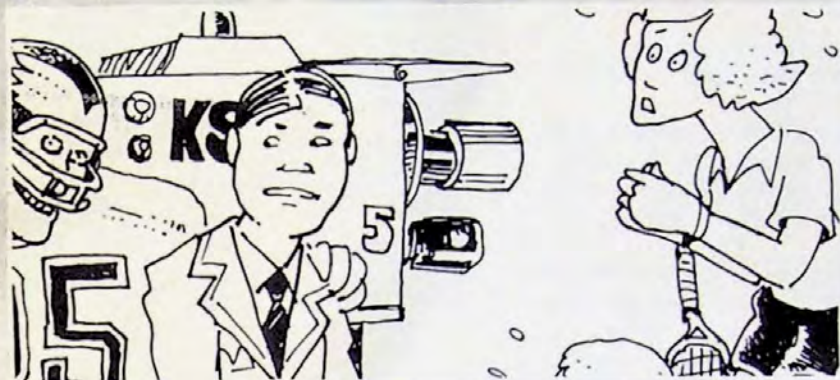
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January 1981

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Cover photo by David M. King
Outfit courtesy of Jockey



New Rating System

With the new year upon us and with scoring changes being considered, and with the emergence of the men's Professional Racquetball Association, it is time to give the public a real racquetball rating system.

Until now, the men's rankings have been determined by the National Racquetball Club, the overseer of the pro tour and the only group that has actively kept records of the pro events.

The trouble with the system, however, is that the NRC includes only the events it sanctions. It eliminates several important tournaments—almost as if they didn't exist—in which all pros are eligible to compete.

Granted, last season there were some invitational events such as the Eklelon-Perrier tourney and several Leach Invitationals which can't be counted. However, there were also some open tournaments such as the March of Dimes event in El Paso, Tex., the Minolta Pro-Am in Modesto, Calif., the St. Jude tourney in Anaheim, Calif., and the Boise-Cascade Pro-Am in Boise, Ida. last season, which could have and should have been included in overall national rankings.

The NRC, of course, would like to see all events come under its direction but that is just not possible, considering that some tournament promoters want tie-ins with ball companies other than Seamco, that some tournament promoters want to use other scoring systems, or that some tournament sponsors just want to remain independent of politics.

Now that the PRA has been formed, and presumably will be sanctioning its own events in the future, it is time for the group to initiate its own rating system.

The Women's Professional Racquetball Association, which broke off from the NRC last year, has devised its own rating system, and there have been no complaints. In fact, the group has even been smart enough to publicly release the rankings every month.

The logistics of the men's rating system is up to the PRA but whatever system it finally decides on, it should encompass all open pro events, not just eight or nine over the course of a year.

To start the new year, *Racquetball Illustrated* has added two new departments to its pages, or actually we have revised one department and added a second.

Our Club News section has a new look beginning this month. Instead of announcing new clubs, which as time goes by become fewer and fewer, we are going to report on clubs already in existence—one each from the South, Midwest, East and West.

The clubs will be selected exclusively from the *Racquetball Illustrated* club directory.

We are not interested in reporting on how many saunas are available, how much the membership fees are, or the hours the nursery is open. We are interested in providing the atmosphere of each club.

Our other addition will be concerned with college news and it will surface beginning next month. We will be contacting various universities throughout the country and running results of their matches as well as other interesting developments related to college programs.

Ben Kalb

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Hilecher Story

Thank you for the lovely article about our son Jerry. The pictures were a fantastic piece of photography and the article was so well written, as is your whole magazine.

It is the most unprejudiced magazine on racquetball out and we always look forward to receiving each issue.

And how funny he should become the bride instead of the bridesmaid right after the article came out.

Anne and Dan Hilecher
Chesterfield, Mo.

Green Article

I thoroughly enjoyed your article on Sarah Green. Most magazines wouldn't print an article about someone who has done what she had done against the WPRA.

From what I gather, she is a strong-willed player and I for one would like to see that in almost every woman racquetball player.

I enjoy your articles about how women have gained rank in the pro setting. I imagine if you keep on writing articles about women in racquetball, then you will gain more avid women readers for your magazine.

P. Reynolds
Univ. of Maryland
(Munich
Campus)
Munich, Germany

Cheating

Congratulations on your recent article on "cheating." I've been playing the same fellow for the last four months and didn't realize that he had been taking advantage of me until I read the story. We have been playing for a beer a game.

Also how about putting more pretty celebrities on the cover? It gives me inspiration to win.

Steve Kaufman
Los Angeles, Calif.

Editor's note: We're sure your playing partner will be glad to read that you have called him a cheater. As for "pretty celebrities," see next month's cover.

Centerfold

I really enjoy your magazine. Through your articles on instruction I have improved my game from novice to C level in five months. So for that I must say thank you.

However, there is one area of your coverage that I am displeased with. What I and my fellow players are looking for is a centerfold.

Glenn Monday
Los Angeles, Calif.

Editor's note: We would like to run a centerfold also but so far none of the touring pros—male or female—have agreed to pose nude for us.

Fashion Rac

I love your magazine. It has many interesting articles, but I have one complaint. Featured in your Fashion Rac articles are many attractive outfits. But you neglect to mention where they can be bought.

Many of us here in New York are fashion conscious, and we would like to purchase these outfits but we don't know how.

Catherine Lo Verde
Brooklyn, New York

Editor's note: Fashion companies never supply a complete list of stores they sell to and even if they did, magazines never have the space to print such information. It is up to the company to place an ad supplying the information or it is up to you to inform your favorite pro shop or store you are interested in buying these outfits and they will probably order one for you.

Profiles In Courage

We truly enjoyed your "Profiles in Courage II" on Denver's Mike Lawrence in the September issue. We consider Mike a close personal friend off the court as well as a remarkably determined competitor on the court.

With the help of all the people at the International Athletic Club and the good folks at Ektelon, Mike has shown a courage and will to live that is an inspiration to all of us.

Many thanks for making his story known.

Peter M. Grant
David C. Kelley
David C. Sloan
Denver, Colo.

Visual Awareness

Why was Peter Wright's instruction article in your November issue titled "Visual Awareness For The Woman Player"?

Doesn't Wright realize that men play also have visual awareness problems?

Connie Tratner
Sherman Oaks, Calif.

Eyeguards

My hat is off to Wilt Chamberlain for wearing eyeguards on the cover of your magazine.

Most celebrities are too ego oriented to wear eyeguards for fear of spoiling their image.

Chamberlain looks like a real racquetball player in the photos. I hope the rest of your celebrity people follow his lead.

And one other note: Beautiful picture on Playmate Debra Jo Fondren and pro Jay Jones who was playing while holding a teddy bear in his hand.

Ralph Turner
Houston, Tex.

Cover Complaint

This is another one of those fanatic RBI cover complaint letters.

I play the game and I read your magazine but not until last month (September) was I proud to display the magazine in my office.

The cover of Marty Hogan was impressive and commanded attention. Visitors to the office routinely picked up RBI and read through it.

Somewhat I cannot find it in my heart as a serious player to display a magazine with a fat comedian, a clothed playmate (God forbid), a musclebound weightlifter, or a guy that deserves and gets no respect on its cover.

Give us more real action shots on the cover and you'll get more exposure.

Leon Jarrett
Phoenix, Ariz.

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PLAYERS

Covering The Covers

This month's Players section reviews some of *Racquetball Illustrated's* cover subjects for 1980.

All photos—taken by head photographer David King—were previously unpublished.

The 1980 cover roster: Richard Hatch of *Battlestar Galactica* (January), actress Elke Sommer and husband-writer Joe Hyams (February), Dick Van Patten of *Eight Is Enough* (March), comedian David Letterman (April), Catherine Bach of *Dukes of Hazzard* (May), Charlene Tilton of *Dallas* (June), Gary Coleman, Todd Bridges and Dana Plato of *Different Strokes* (July), Gary Sandy of *WKRP In Cincinnati* (August), touring pro Marty Hogan (September), comedian Rodney Dangerfield (October), former pro basketball player Will Chamberlain (November) and Andy Kaufman of *Taxi* (December).



Catherine Bach



Elke Sommer



Rodney Dangerfield



David Letterman



Wilt Chamberlain



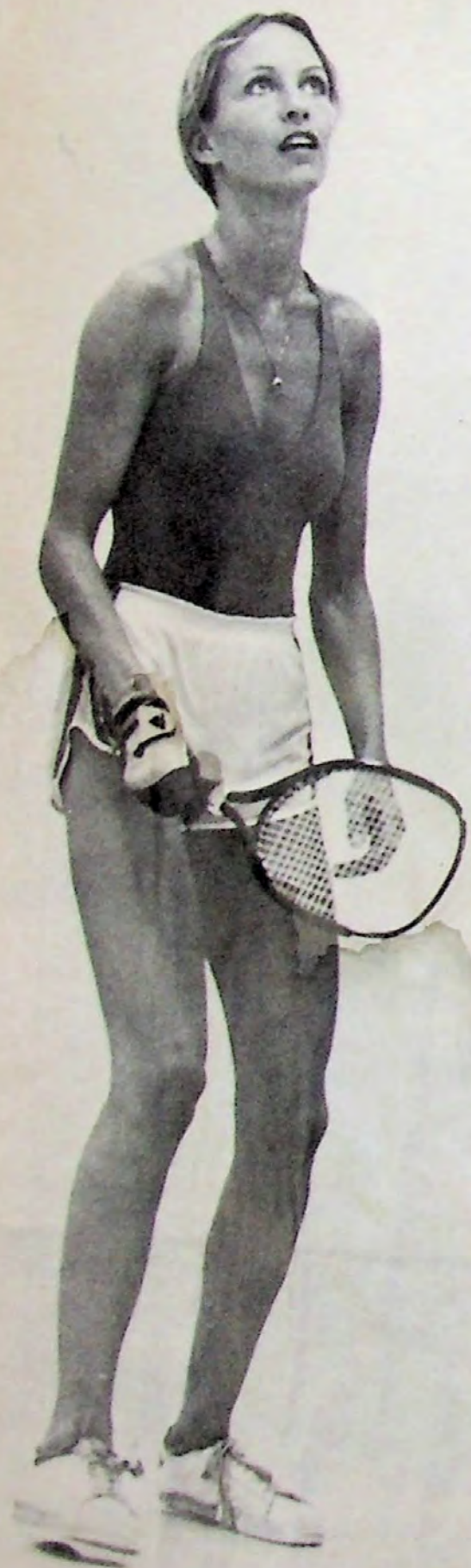
Andy Kaufman



Charlene Tilton



Gary Coleman



Robert Walden, who plays Joe Rossi on *The Lou Grant Show*, gets a lesson in racquetball from Schulyer Johnson at The Sports Connection in Santa Monica, Calif.

Robert Walden Covers the Courts

By Mathew Tekulsky

NEWS ITEM: *Actors Strike Enters Third Week*

Actor Robert Walden, who has been nominated for two Emmy Awards for his portrayal of reporter Joe Rossi on *Lou Grant*, walks into a racquetball club uncharacteristically with a 12-day old beard. He is about to pose for some photos on the racquetball court but he seems to be more concerned with the stalemate on the actors' strike.

(Editor's note: *The actors' strike was settled and television and movie production has resumed.*)

"The beard is a symbolic sign of protest," says Walden. "People see me. I'm highly visible and they can judge how long the strike has been going on by my beard.

"It's just a way of measuring time. Seasons are very subtle in Southern California. Nine years could be 10 hours. I don't think it looks good on me, but . . ."

But, for now, it was racquetball. It would be Walden's first time playing indoors after several tries on outdoor courts in New York.

"You have to understand that on the lower east side of Manhattan anybody seen in shorts would be subject to severe heckling," says Walden. "You weren't seen in shorts unless you were on a basketball floor."

Although a stranger to the indoor racquetball court, Walden is no stranger to sports. In high school he was catcher on his baseball team, a diver on the swimming team and a member of the basketball and wrestling teams.

"Wrestling is the most exhausting of any sport I've ever played," says Walden. "Hockey comes after that. I learned to play hockey too late, fortunately too late or maybe I'd still be doing it."

And what about racquetball?

"It's excruciatingly exhausting," says Walden. "It seems like a perfect sport for me except for my aggressiveness. Outdoors I would dive for the ball on concrete with racquets whizzing by my nose.

"I wondered what would ever happen if I took this sport up seriously. It might jeopardize my career. I think a racquet in the face would be unfortunate for the show. That and running into the walls. So I'm losing my indoor racquetball virginity right here with your magazine. Everyone has to lose it sometime, somewhere."

But if it weren't racquetball that kept Walden



Photos by David M. King

out of *Lou Grant*, it could possibly have been the strike. "Actors are living, breathing organisms," says Walden. "The product we are selling is not an inanimate object. It is a live thing that can be used up and exhausted. Athletes are in that situation but they have an incredibly strong players union."

The major issue for the actors dealt with compensation for performing on cable or pay television as well as on video cassettes and video discs. "Within 10 years, all television will be going that way. There are going to be series made for pay TV, not only movies. Within five years you can expect to see a movie make more money than *Jaws* did but it will be shown in one night instead of over a period of time.

"Take a look at what Sugar Ray Leonard and Roberto Duran got for one fight. Can you imagine what a really big television or movie star would garner for a big show? I think it

would be over one hundred million dollars. You know how many people tune in to a hot show? About 40 million sets. If there's only 20 million sets at five dollars a set, you've got a hundred million dollars. And I'm even bad at math."

According to Walden, the strike is really for the lesser-known actors. "It's not for the Restwoods," says Walden, using a combination of (Burt) Reynolds and (Clint) Eastwood to get his point across. "These people make their own deals. The public only knows 1,500 or 2,000 actors who are somewhat solvent or have a good career going. They don't know the 63,000 others who don't make much of a living. I guess it's a matter of the older brother in the family trying to protect the younger tykes."

"Eighty per cent of the Screen Actors Guild makes under three thousand dollars a year. They need something to sustain themselves between jobs because they don't work often. Somewhere in that group are the Henry Winklers, Ed Asners, Carroll O'Connors or Alan Aldas of tomorrow."

Walden figures the strike cost the nation a lot of money, not just the community of Los Angeles. "The producers estimate it was costing \$40 million a week. Frankly, I think that's a conservative estimate. I don't think they take into account the ripple effect on the nation. Look how many people were out of work. I'm talking about crew, secretaries, caterers, drivers, etc. The studio was locked tight, shut. Closed. The gross national product will probably be down a billion dollars a month from the ripple effect."

Walden is actually one of the lucky ones. He has a regular part on a weekly series that has hit big—*Lou Grant*. But does he think the show is an accurate portrayal of the news media?

"I think it's as close as a series has ever come," he says. "It's not a one-shot thing or a movie where, perhaps, you could be more accurate. We take dramatic license here and there and we oversimplify at times and it pontificates at times. But it entertains and informs in a way that very few shows do. I think it does it in a superior fashion and I'm proud to be associated with what it attempts to do."

Like his character, Walden is also a writer. He has had writing assignments from the *New York Times*, *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* and the *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*. He interviewed himself for *US* magazine and he covered the Democratic national convention for the *San Francisco Examiner*. He prefers features or human interest stories ranging in the past from a social consciousness piece about an Indian group in Utah to a piece on the "soul" of an actor to one on the difference between working in the "theatre" in New York and the "industry" in Hollywood.

"I have one foot in both camps now," says Walden. "The interviewer and the interviewee. I'm sensitive to the damage a misquote can do or a quote out of context, or phrases out of context. I'm probably more sensitive than most people now that I'm on the other side, so I'm usually more careful."



Walden: "I can see where it's going to take four months of dedication and practice until I can really play this game."



Photo courtesy MTM Productions

Walden and other cast members of *The Lou Grant Show*, which was delayed in filming this season due to the actors strike.

Walden thinks the nightly news is the "most fascinating show on television" and the members of the print media are the most important writers around today. "The press is God. They are the checks and balances in our system today. That's what I think. When it comes to the gossip stuff, that's another area. That's as mercenary as the press gets and as irresponsible as they get. That is the bottom of what I would call writers. That doesn't mean that people working in these areas aren't going to be important writers. Gossip pays more and you have to survive."

Walden was given the opportunity of writing his own story for *Racquetball Illustrated* but he had already accepted another newspaper writing assignment and couldn't find the time to

handle both. But he still wants to further his writing career. "I want to learn, to grow, to become better, become versatile and to some day become respected for writing. I ultimately would like to write short stories, a novel, a screenplay. I would like to explore writing in every area."

"I want to do it all—writing, directing, acting, teaching. You get bored if you only do one thing."

After the shooting session was completed, Walden stayed on the court an extra half-hour to play. "I loved it. The lady I was playing with was helpful. She gave me a lot of tips about playing off the back wall."

"I can see where it's going to take three or four months of dedication and practice until I

can really play this game. It's not that easy a game if you want to be good at it."

"The real photograph we should have gotten was when I was sitting collapsed on the floor. That's an exhausting game. I never sweat that much playing tennis."

Walden stayed at the club—The Sports Connection in Santa Monica, Calif.—another hour to watch some men "who really knew how to play."

After they were finished he observed, "You need finesse in this game more than strength. There seems to be an economy of movement. There was no mad dashing all over the place. They knew how to anticipate the walls and the ball. I could learn to love this game. I just wonder if there's enough air in those rooms." **R**

RACQUETBALL IN EL PASO

Thanks to Dave Peck, Sun City has become the hub of junior champions.

By John Laird

El Paso, Texas is to racquetball what Taiwan is to Little League baseball: A maxi-dynasty of mini-champions.

"When I'm out on the road," claims pro star Dave Peck, "people don't talk about El Paso being MY hometown. They always talk about El Paso being the home of all those tough junior players."

In the last three years, El Paso has emerged as the undisputed hub of championship junior racquetball. While the sun had been shining on the Franklin Mountains all but 33 of the last 6,043 days, child prodigies had been indoors almost as frequently, perfecting Z-serves and grinning at roll-outs.

The Sun City's racquetball reputation was best manifested in recent national tournaments, where seven representatives won seven championships, three runnerup titles and one quarterfinal berth.

Or at the last Texas state tournament, where all four semifinalists in Boys 13 Singles were El Pasoans.

Or at a recent pro stop in Omaha, where 17-year-old Gregg Peck, Dave's younger brother, toppled legendary Marty Hogan in the semifinals.

The roots of this adolescent empire can be traced back to 1977 when a general surgeon and his "scrub tech" were lathering up at Providence Memorial Hospital. Dr. Carlos Miranda and Dave Peck turned their idle chatter to racquetball.

"Dr. Miranda said he knew I was a pretty good racquetball player and asked me if I would work with his three children," Peck recalls. "I took one look at those three kids on the court and started to wonder.

"Louis was an 11-year-old klutz. Carlos couldn't swing. Adriana had no concept of good court play," Peck continues. "Now, they're the class of the country. Shows you what I know about analyzing kids."

Carlos, 14, is the defending 13-under doubles champion; Louis won the 13 singles and doubles titles while Adriana was taking the 10-under singles crown after winning state crowns in both the 10 and 13 age groups.

As the Miranda miracle unfolded, perhaps Carlos overcame the most adversity. His greatest adversary was his own bulk, but daily drills last summer quickly carved 20 pounds off his young frame. Now, he roams the court with more-than-adequate agility, not to mention newfound confidence in his own willpower. Millions of frantic, portly Americans should be so diligent.

Dave Peck, at 5-foot-10, 190 pounds, the pro tour's current answer to the Incredible Hulk, first put El Paso on the national junior racquetball charts in 1978 with a doubles crown and a singles runnerup showing.

Last year, Navarro arrived with a 13 singles championship, only to improve on such lofty credentials with singles AND doubles titles this year.

El Paso's youngest national champion is Alma Fuentes, who captured the 10-under crown this year.

No one individual can be credited with El Paso's rapid development of national-class junior racquetball players, but Dave Peck has undoubtedly served as the greatest influence. Not only does Peck exist as a homegrown pro idol for El Paso youngsters, but he devotes about 40 percent of his time to local instruction.

Peck joined the pro tour in 1978 and



Top: Aerial view of El Paso, Texas. Above: Touring Pro Dave Peck.



Photo by Luis Villalobos

quickly boosted his number 27 ranking to the number 8 spot with earnings of \$12,000, advancing to the quarterfinals at the Nationals. Last season, Peck finished third behind Hogan and Mike Yellen with \$24,000. His consistency was reflected in a pro record 61 game wins in nine tournaments.

"I used to spend about 60 percent of my time teaching and I wish I still could," Peck points out, "but the tour is taking up more and more time. Travel is a real butt-kicker. Fortunately, El Paso serves as a good sanctuary for me after a pro stop. I come home and relax, get back into teaching and re-establish



my own training routine."

El Paso realtor John Hellard, one of the first of the top local racquetball players, was instrumental in grooming Peck to top pro status. Peck is returning the favor by teaching the new wave of El Paso juniors. He serves as Director of Racquetball for the Supreme Court's facilities on each side of the Franklins. Joe Wittenbrink, Supreme Court pro, joins Peck as a master craftsman in his work with young racquetball hopefuls.

Racquetball's tremendous national growth has been exemplified by soaring popularity of the sport in El Paso, where courts are

likened to rain: lots of fun, but in short supply. Two years ago, the Supreme Court opened its first East location with nine courts, then crossed the mountain range that bisects the city and built nine more courts at the West extension.

More than half the action on the six courts at the downtown YMCA involves handball, whereas racquets are wielded in about 90 percent of the Supreme Court matches.

Elsewhere in El Paso, there are two courts at the Y's Northeast branch, two at the Ft. Bliss military installation for more than 20,000 potential players, two at the local interna-

tional Spa Fitness Center and four indoor courts at the University of Texas at El Paso. Four more courts are on the school's drawing board.

Thus, while the Supreme Court's two locations have more than doubled El Paso's court availability, there are still just 34 indoor courts to serve El Paso's 450,000-plus population.

However, the crying need for more courts has not dampened the development of junior talent. "The recognition gained in national tournaments has been the impetus to top-quality junior play," explains Bill Dunham, Supreme Court president. "It also enhances

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EL PASO



Above: The Mirandas—Adriana, Louis and Carlos. Right: Raymond Navarro.

the family aspect of racquetball. Parents notice the accomplishments of our junior players and they see the sport as an excellent, competitive outlet for youths."

And, as Dave Peck adds, "These junior players aren't out on the streets smokin' pot and throwin' rocks. This isn't to say they WOULD be if it weren't for racquetball. They're all great kids. You can't point to any one racquetball technique as being typical' of the El Paso junior players, like saying they're all quick or hard-hitters.

"The only trait they all have in common is an intangible willingness to work hard. They start out in group lessons, then concentrate on individual instruction and, finally, make it all count with endless hours of practice and competition."

The benefits of national recognition transcend mere popularity. "You wouldn't believe the confidence that these junior players have developed," Peck adds. "Confidence not just in their athletic ability, but in their potential as human beings. They come home from the Nationals and you just can't put a price tag on the look on their faces. Friends patting them on the back. Community involvement. You see a pride in them that can only come from great success."

Gregg Peck stands as the most promising of El Paso's juniors. He ranks among the top 16 pros in earnings this season, but diverts his winnings to a scholarship fund in order to retain his amateur status. "It's just a matter of a short time before he (Gregg) turns pro," says Dave. "And that might be around the first of the year. Everything I've accomplished as a pro, he's going to surpass. Gregg's that good.



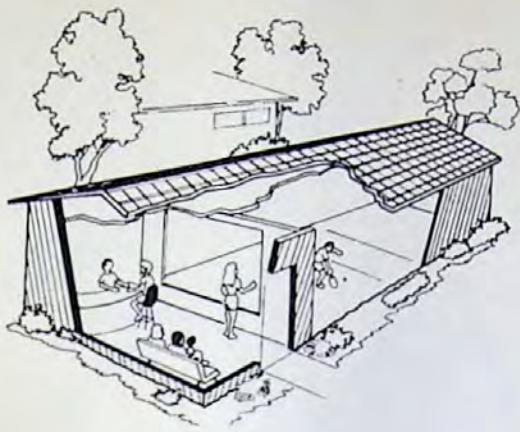
He started when he was 12 whereas I started when I was a freshman in college. Man, if I'd started at 12, nobody could touch me now."

If they were to play 10 matches, Dave concedes, Gregg would "probably win about four, but he's getting so much better so quickly. He proved his potential by beating Marty Hogan. It was an interesting match in Omaha, because I think Marty remembered playing on the tour when he was 15 and he was whipping all the older pros back then.

"Against Gregg, though, it was a reversal of roles, the 17-year-old upsetting the greatest player ever in the game. Sorta' deja vu. I really think that reversal of roles, Marty remembering when he was in Gregg's position years ago, had Marty freaked out in his match against Gregg."

Behind Gregg Peck on the tenure chart is Navarro, who is already competing in Open Division tournaments at the ripe old age of 15.

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Navarro in the 13 age group. To wit: at the 1980 state tournament in February at San Antonio, there was some question as to the eventual 13 singles champion, but no dispute as to his hometown once the tournament reached the semifinals. Louis and Carlos Miranda joined Steve and Edmond Fuentes in the all-El Paso semis before Louis emerged as the Texas titlist.

"It's obvious what that kind of domination can do to inspire a junior racquetball player," Dave Peck points out. "They look around and

see nobody but El Paso kids in the state semis and they know the work has paid off. It creates pressure, sure, knowing you've got a strong heritage to uphold, but it does wonders for the confidence too, just knowing you're from El Paso."

Just to mention "El Paso" rings an inspirational bell for players beyond the junior division too. "We've got pro players coming in here all the time to work on their games," Peck explains, "for two reasons. They know they'll have a good time and they know we


work hard on our games. Some pros train in El Paso for awhile because we've got the reputation for hard work."

El Paso's reputation, paralleled by racquetball's rising popularity, in effect rescued Dave Peck from his own "drifting" adolescence. "Hell, I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life," says Peck, who was a wrestler and linebacker in high school. "I was really unsure of myself. Racquetball's arrival as a pro sport was just unbelievably good timing for me. Now, I'm making a good living (\$100,000-plus this year in earnings, endorsements and fees) and I've got something to be proud of.

"I guess it's like guys who don't want to do anything but surf or rollerskate. All I ever want to do is play racquetball and teach. If there weren't a dime to be made in racquetball, well, I guess I'd still be a racquetball bum. It's too much fun. Working for a living scares me to death, you could say."

Peck's enthusiasm is highly contagious in El Paso. It has rubbed off on the Miranda family and it serves as the dynasty's cornerstone.

"Team racquetball," as it were... not necessarily in the format of competition, but in spirit.

This dynasty feeds on its own momentum. Apparently, an embroidered "El Paso" on the sweats works much like pinstripes in Yankee Stadium. It's easier to perform on the national level with a collection of confident cohorts huddled at courtside to provide encouragement... and polish their own hardware. 

Junior Racquetball Champions

1978

DAVE PECK—USRA national doubles champion; runnerup, singles.

1979

RAYMOND NAVARRO—USRA 13-under singles champion.

1980

ALMA FUENTES—USRA 10-under singles champion.

ADRIANA MIRANDA—AARA 10-under singles runnerup.

LOUIS MIRANDA—AARA 13-under singles, doubles champion.

CARLOS MIRANDA—AARA 13-under doubles champion.

RAYMOND NAVARRO—AARA 15-under doubles runnerup.

GREGG PECK—USRA 17-under doubles champion; singles quarterfinalist.

HOW BIOMECHANICS RELATES TO RACQUETBALL

By Jacob Rosselli and
Richard Wade

What is it like to hit the perfect shot? Can you visualize it? Your eyes are focusing on the ball as it comes toward you on a bounce off the back wall. A plum, they say. The back foot is planted ready to step in for the picture perfect rollout. As you move into the ball, you stride out low with your front foot, knees bent. Your back foot begins to press from the toes with a force that sends a chain reaction to the hips, back and shoulders, elbow, wrist, fingers and racquet. Contact. Point.

Is it possible to hit the perfect shot every time? Can one mechanically learn to rollout the ball? Can another force—one not human—teach you the perfect stroke?

Enter biomechanics.

"Biomechanics applies the principles of engineering to life and to motion, analyzing the movement of life forms. It is a science that explores motion," says Dr. Louis Yocum, director of the Biomechanics Laboratory at Centinela Hospital in Inglewood, Calif. and an associate director of the National Health Institute. "Biomechanics uses techniques to analyze patterns of body movement, the timing of the body and the force that results from the movement."

Yocum has worked with professional athletes, most notably those on the Los Angeles Rams and Los Angeles Dodgers, and is a racquetball player himself. "Biomechanics relates not only to racquetball but to all sports," he says. "We deal mostly with highly professional athletes from every sport who wish to improve their performance."

"For example, if a baseball pitcher has been losing velocity or speed on his pitching, through biomechanics we can find out if he is doing anything different or if some of his joints are not moving at full rotation."

So the question comes up about racquetball. Can you teach the player how to hit the perfect shot all the time? Can an average pro through biomechanics suddenly be

transformed into another Marty Hogan? The answer is no.

"Presently, all we can do is diagnose the strengths and weaknesses in a player's motion," says Dr. Yocum. "Biomechanics is not ready to be the teacher but a good diagnosis in the hands of a competent coach can do wonders. I suppose when an athlete is made

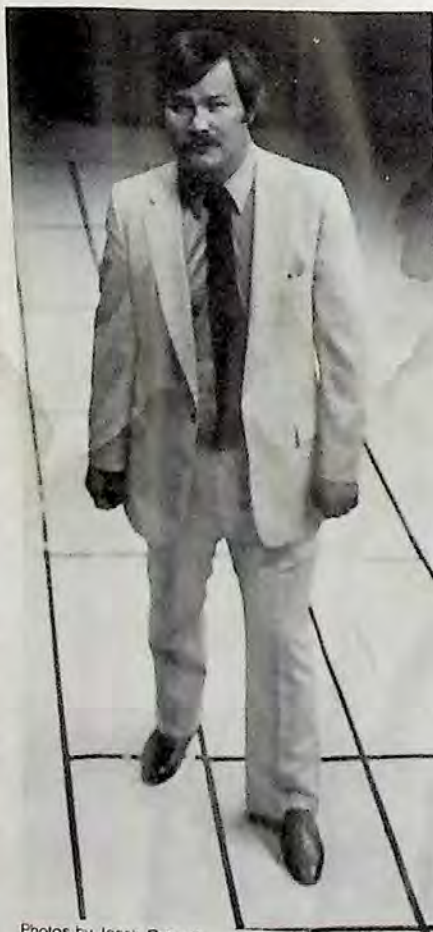
aware of his present limitations retraining is much easier."

Yocum goes on to explain the procedures of biomechanics. "Our lab has a great deal of equipment that helps us measure body movements in minute detail," he says. "There are three basic modalities—high speed photography, force plates and electromyograms—all of which are independent and interdependent."

So how would one go about diagnosing a forehand or backhand swing? "We would ask the athlete to demonstrate his swing," says Yocum. "Then we would take high speed photographs from three angles simultaneously, front, side and overhead. The motion is photographed between 200 and 500 frames per second. This film is later projected into an instrument called the Digitizer. The film is visible on a small glass screen and is moved frame by frame. A measuring arm on the Digitizer, called the cursor, calculates the angles of the joints and the rotation of the joints during that particular movement. The range of motion is analyzed and the information goes into a computer data bank for cross comparison purposes."

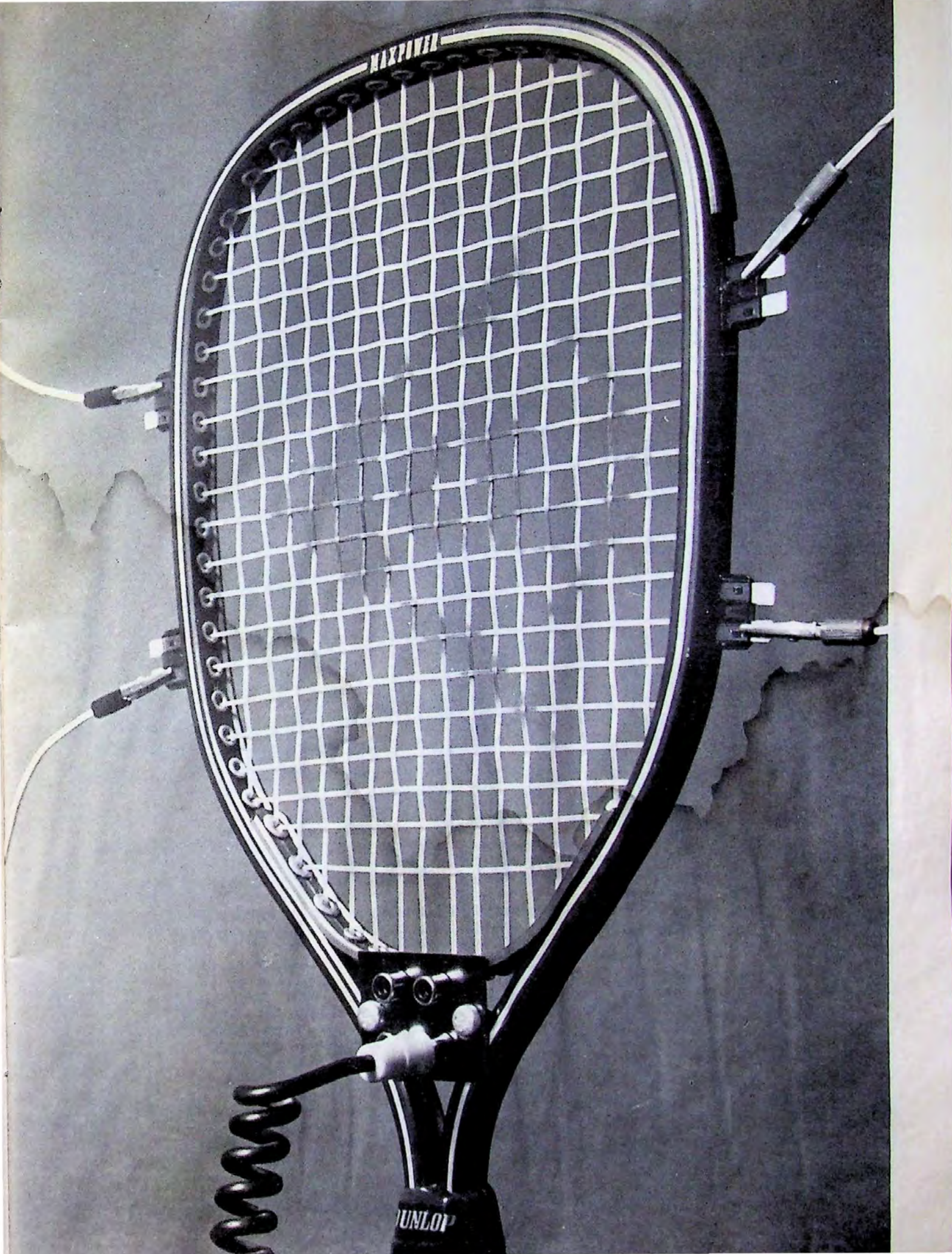
But the process does not stop there. "There are force plates built into the floor," Yocum points out three connecting rows of rectangles outlined in black on the floor. "These plates are used to measure the force applied in any direction—compression as well as sheer force. Sheer force is either forward or sideways motion. Torque, twisting force, can also be estimated. These force plates are made up of a very complex crystal system."

Another part of the measuring is done by the Foot Switch Telemetry System. "It consists of an insole which is placed in the athlete's shoe. It monitors foot movements. It measures single limb support time (how long an athlete stands on one foot), and the double support time (how long he stands on both feet), the stride length (how far he steps), cadence (how many steps per minute) and



Photos by Jacob Rosselli

Dr. Louis Yocum stands on the force plates used to measure force applied in any direction.



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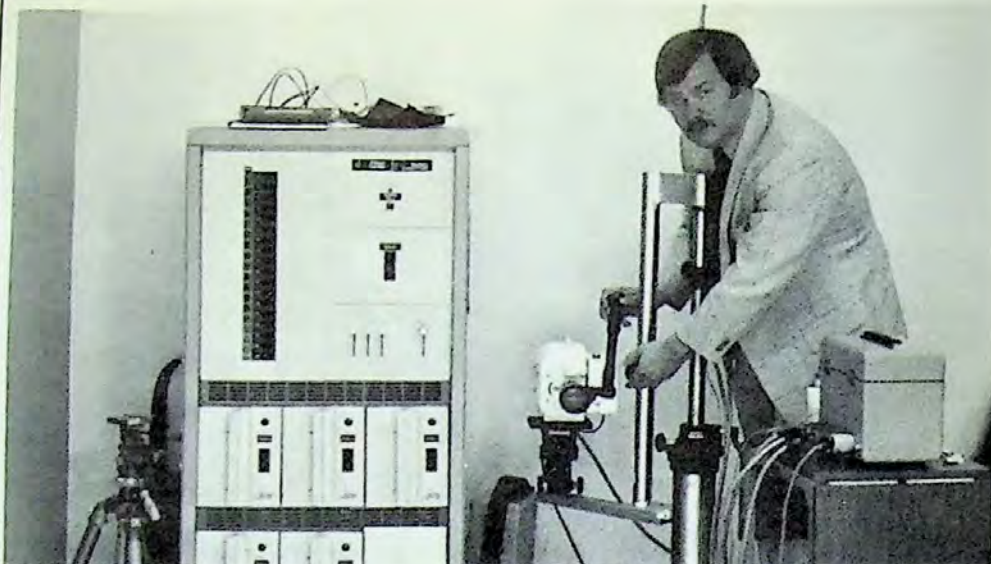
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BIOMECHANICS



Yocum, who has worked with many professional athletes, shows the 16mm projector (top) and the Viscorder control panel in his Biomechanics Lab in Inglewood, Calif.

velocity (meters per minute). The insole transmits all this information into the antenna system on the wall.

"The antenna relays all its information into a Viscorder which records all the measurements on F.M. tape, like a tape recorder, and gives a printed readout as well.

"Also electromyograms are taken by surface electrodes which are applied to the body of the athlete during the test. These electrodes monitor muscle activity, knowing when the muscles are at work or when they are at rest. This information is also transmitted to the antenna from a belt around the athlete's waist."

All the data from the various pieces of equipment then are transmitted into a computer for eventual comparison.

And what can be learned from the comparison of data?

"Well, for example, by comparing hundreds of racquetball players we would determine what is a normal forehand and back-

hand and how a better player differs from an average player.

"But realistically we would need to have a data bank on many racquetball players before we could begin to diagnose for any particular movements such as the forehand and backhand."

One of the future goals of Dr. Yocum and the Biomechanics Laboratory is to get all the relevant data on various sports, including racquetball.

"We are interested in all sports and in the future we hope to have a film and data library showing the norms for each sport, demonstrated by the best athlete in each field."

So, in getting back to that perfect shot, it really has more to do with perfect player execution. Biomechanics can't transform you into the perfect player but it can show you your movements in relation to what is considered the ultimate or best movement. With the correct use of this knowledge comes greater chances for success.



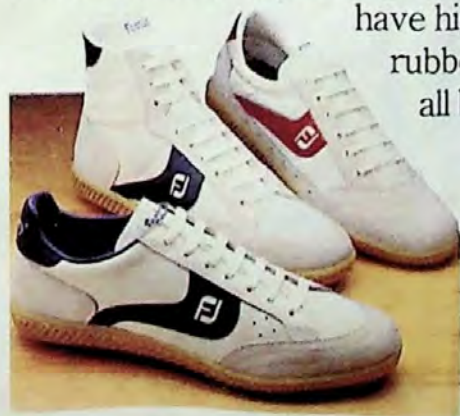
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TUFFS. THE TOUGHEST SHOES IN RACQUETBALL.



NOT A LAUGHING MATTER

By Mathew Tekulsky

At a recent celebrity racquetball tournament, autograph seekers had gathered around such actors as Patrick Duffy of *Dallas*, Carroll O'Connor of *Archie Bunker's Place* and Ed Asner of *Lou Grant*. Off to the side, surrounded only by the janitor and some guy pouring coffee, was comedian Jeff Altman, who is best known for a short-lived television series called *Pink Lady and Jeff*. "Well, I know you guys have been meaning to do a major story on me for some time now," said Altman. "I guess you have already done ones on everybody else here."

Altman took up racquetball a few years ago at the urging of fellow comedian Tim Thomerson, who had a part in *The Associates* television series. Later on he would play regularly with comedians David Letterman, Tom Dreesen and Jimmy Walker.

One might think that when comedians get together on the court, you have one funny comment after another. But with Altman the opposite is true. He is serious when he gets on the court. In fact, one time he was so upset at a shot he had missed, he banged his racquet against the wall and put a hole in it.

"I have a terrible temper," says Altman. "One of the things that has always been a problem for me has been my temper in sports. Dave (Letterman) used to be afraid I was going to come over and smack him after I missed a shot. I think that etched its way into our play and we don't play as much any more. But he lives in New York now, so that also has something to do with it."

It is easy to see that Altman takes his racquetball seriously. "When you play any sport, you're out there to win," he says. Which brings up another interesting question. Do comedians take life more seriously than other people or are they always happy-go-lucky?

"I think it's funny how everybody says that comedians are generally depressed or how comedians are happier than most people," says Altman. "Comedians are like plumbers, or electricians or garbage men. They're like anybody else. Some are happy. Some aren't

Jeff Altman may be funny on stage or while being interviewed but on court he turns serious.



Photo courtesy NBC
Jeff Altman with the singing group Pink Lady in last season's NBC television series.

happy. Some are depressed. Some are . . ."

"Generally sicker than most other people," chimed in a young woman friend who was passing by.

"Yes, generally we are sicker than most," repeated Altman without breaking stride.

Altman classifies his racquetball prowess in the "C" division category. "Racquetball has become, because of the game's fast pace, a popular hobby in Southern California. It keeps you in shape."

O'Connor walked by Altman and the two waved at each other. "Carroll is very close friends with my wife (actress Leslie Ackerman) and me. I'm still amazed I know someone like him. I mean, six or seven years ago I was back in Syracuse—hooray for Syracuse—New York, sitting on my thumb. Now, I'm out here sitting on my thumb."

But Altman realizes that in order to achieve stardom he had to trade Syracuse for Los Angeles. "It's a fantasyland out here," he says. "It's the entertainment business and sunshine all the time. It's not like the rest of the country. I came out here wanting what's here, and now I find I miss a lot of traditional things in life. I recently bought a house in a residential neighborhood. That's been reassuring. I'm married. There's some traditionalness to that. But, in general, Southern California can be a real distortion of what is real for the rest of the country."

So, what does he miss about traditional New York?

"I miss the crazy things," says Altman. "I grew up in upstate New York and I went to college. I was going to be a lawyer. We would go out on Friday nights and get drunk and stand up in barrooms and entertain. Now I do that for a living."

"Upstate New York is very pretty. Kind of laid back. Rolling hills and such . . ."

After making the move from New York to Los Angeles, Altman entertained at the Magic Castle, a local magicians' club. Eventually, he traded in his deck of cards for a comedy routine and began playing at the local comedy spots. Later he went into acting, appearing a few times on *Dukes of Hazzard* before getting his own NBC series, *Pink Lady and Jeff*. It didn't last long.

"That was a big failure," says Altman. "It was a tremendous failure but I had fun doing it. Now I'm with ABC and I'm going to do some sort of project for them in the future, probably a half-hour situation comedy."

Altman assessed the problem with his *Pink Lady* show.

"Pink Lady was a singing group. Two Japanese girls who Fred Silverman (NBC President) thought would become big stars. The problem was they really couldn't speak English well enough and didn't understand the culture well enough to convince the rest of the country of who they were. It was kind of a hard problem to do a show like that."

Altman played the host of the show. "I was the one in charge of things," he says. "It was

NOT A LAUGHING MATTER

like Tony Orlando and Dawn. I did some funny stuff on the show. Sid Caesar was one of the semi-regulars, and working with him was a real thrill for me."

Altman's train of thought is momentarily halted when an attractive girl walks by. "There's my trainer. We should get a few words with her. An interview."

The girl walks over and Altman says, "This is my head trainer and a girl who several times has made me very sexually excited." He laughs and pauses. "This is the prettiest girl here today with the exception of my wife. I have a little thing going on here with this lady. This won't be printed, will it? I'm kidding. I'm kidding. I'm totally kidding."

Altman was asked about his future, aside from his plans with ABC. "I want to be happy in my life. That's it. To feel safe in my life. Not to be the world's greatest star but to be known

for what I do. I want to be considered funny as a stand-up comedian and a comedy actor, and to have a good relationship with my wife, a good family, a sense of household.

"The important things in life are not how much money you make or how famous you are. It takes a long time to learn that. Those things ultimately will not make you happy. A certain amount of personal success makes you happy.

"It is important to be satisfied with, and to be confident in who you are as a human being. It is important for a human being to have experienced life, not be a zombie, not to be overwhelmed by a single group or a single way of thinking, and yet to believe that you have some reality about what's going on, to feel that you have some insight into people, and that you know what you're talking about."

But as quickly as he got serious, Altman

turned to his other side when another pretty racquetball player walked by.

"This is my coach," he says. "I worked with this young lady in 1966. She made me the man I am today."

The girl, who didn't know Altman, looks back while still walking. "I hope I was good," she says.

"Absolutely," he says.

Altman's comedy routine includes several impressions, one of the best of which is his Richard Nixon character. It was Nixon that came up next.

"In the article you can say that all of a sudden, Jeff Altman went crazy. He became Richard Nixon. That he began entertaining people beyond belief." Then in a Nixon voice, Altman says, "This is Richard Nixon. Let me say, of course, I'm so horny right now, I could eat the tail lights off a dump truck."

Altman seems to be friendly. He talks to anybody within earshot of him, which is quite a contrast to most people who tend to ignore people they aren't familiar with.

"We're all animals and two animals don't immediately get intimate with each other," says Altman. "You don't immediately walk up to a person and say, 'Here, let me tell you about the greatest conflict I've ever had in my life.' You don't pour the inside of your body out in the first five minutes with someone you meet. But I think the world is opening up. I think, generally, more people are talking about their feelings. There's an expansion going on in this country about feelings and consciousness."

Is this related to coming of age in the Sixties?

"A little bit," says Altman. "The Sixties movement helped. It helped make a black man talk to a white man more easily. I see the world improving. I'm an optimist in terms of mankind. I see the day when there will be no more wars and very little prejudice. I think in the next one hundred years you'll see a lot of changes in this world. I think you'll see the earth be rid of disease. You'll see almost everyone who wants to living to the age of about eighty-five or ninety. I think you'll see population control. I think you'll see technology replacing some jobs and sort of a California physical consciousness overtaking the world. The kind of things where man doesn't forget about his body. I think that's going to become more and more popular. I think people are reinforced when they feel good about themselves. I think there are certain things man does that makes him feel good. Those things are keeping himself fit, mentally and physically; having a good relationship with his friends; having close friends; having a close spouse, girlfriend or boyfriend.

And does racquetball have a place in Altman's world of the future?

"Yes," he says. "I think racquetball is part of the consciousness of America saying, 'We need to stay fit,' and this is one of the easiest and most interesting ways to do it. Absolutely."



Altman sometimes plays racquetball with his wife, actress Leslie Ackerman, who played on last season's television series, *Skag*.

The State of the Sport

By Sandra Segal

Hardcore racquetball players may be too involved with their game to notice that some racquetball dilettantes have left their courts; that the pro shops are not quite as full of tempting new racquets, balls, and fashions; and that new court clubs are no longer appearing on every corner. However, the manufacturers, court club owners, and player associations are becoming painfully aware that racquetball's runaway growth rate is slowing to a walk. And as the chill of the 1980 recession begins to fade, they are considering what to do to turn things around.

Most surveys of the racquetball marketplace indicate that the market will eventually reach a limited-growth stage. Eric Evans, who advises builders of racquetball and multi-use recreational facilities for Laventhol and Horwath of Houston, one of the largest real estate consulting firms in the country, says, "The national trend for racquetball is a slowing growth rate. The growth will start to level off to five or six per cent by 1985, though the Southwest and second-tier cities (those with a population of under a million) should continue growing through 1985."

Nancy Shalick, marketing research coordinator for AMF Voit, agrees that the racquetball market has stabilized, and is doubtful that even the South provides much hope for growth. "The market is settling around eight million players," she says. "If there's going to be any growth, it will come in the South, but my gut feeling is that this area will never catch up. Racquetball has been taken up by well-edu-

Racquetball has its own "catch 22": The game won't be televised until it has a national audience and it won't have a national audience until it's on television.

cated professional people of the Northeast. The South is more rural, and has different demographics and attitudes."

In analyzing current court building trends, Chuck Leve, the executive director of the National Court Clubs Association, sees a general leveling. "There's been a decline in building in the last 12 to 18 months. This is partly due to high interest rates. However, it is also due to the saturation of urban areas in the country, as in Southern California, Chicago, St. Louis and New Jersey. It's clear that we're no longer in a position where we can open our doors and the money rolls in."

The retailers of racquetball equipment are also feeling the pinch. A survey of 125 retailers operating 714 units conducted by *Sporting Goods Business* in 1979 showed that the average retailer had a sales increase of 14 per cent. Bob Carr, the editor of the trade publication, explains, "Over one quarter of the sample had no increase or decrease. That means there's no guaranteed yearly increase left in the racquetball market. Also, some of the increase in dollar sales was caused by inflation."

Sebastian DiCasoli, the market research coordinator for the Sporting Goods Manu-

facturing Association, which includes AMF Voit, Ektelon, Seamco, and Omega among its members, agrees with this analysis. "Racquetball is maturing, and it's beyond its growth stage. It's like tennis 10 to 12 years ago. Racquetball won't fall off quite as rapidly, but we'll definitely see a decrease in the growth rate."

Is there any cure for this decline in growth? While it's possible that this problem is just the normal maturity phase of a sport, many people prefer to believe that a good dose of television will cure racquetball's sluggishness. The racquetball manufacturers, often the first to be affected by changes in the marketplace, are among those who see television as a possible panacea for the decline of racquetball growth areas.

Many smaller manufacturers have already disappeared or left the racquetball business. American Lightning Blue Racquetballs, RSI Racquets, Sunset Racquets, and Alon Sports have dropped out of sight. Aldila, a former racquet manufacturer, is now directing all of its energy into the golf and tennis markets. Grafaloy and Kennex are manufacturing racquets which will be marketed under the labels of larger manufacturers. T.A.P. will be manufacturing racquet bags for other company labels.

The large manufacturers, while not being badly hurt by the current market conditions, are adjusting themselves to the slowing growth rate. Bob Larsen, the merchandising manager for AMF Voit, says, "The racquetball market is plateauing, and this will definitely affect us. We can't spend on promotion like we have last year when our market share doubled. We have to scrutinize everything, our inventories,

The State of the Sport

promotions, tournaments, exhibitions, and reduce where we can. I'm not saying that we'll move from 200 contract players to 100, but changes of that sort are in the works.

"We see the sport settling with a viable number of participants, perhaps in the 10 or 11 million range. Until racquetball hits television or some other medium of mass exposure, it will probably stay in that range."

Barry Marassi, the national sales manager for Ektelon, says, "The economy is having a negative effect on the growth rate of racquetball. Last year's growth slowed substantially. However, since there is a high turnover rate among racquetball players, we expect to have a market of 40 per cent new players each year." Armen Keteyian, a public relations director of the Phillips Organization, which directs the promotional efforts of Ektelon, explained how they are changing their market strategy. "We're narrowing our pro sponsorship. Most of our resources are going into television," he says. "It's expensive to keep pros playing across the country when the return on investment is not high. If we get racquetball on television, we can instantly expose the sport to an enormous market."

Ektelon is making a concerted effort to get this extended television coverage. A three-hour version of the 1979 Ektelon-Perrier finals has been shown on PBS. Now the Phillips Organization has made the film into a one-hour show, complete with commentary, vignettes from the awards party, and interviews with

participants before and after the matches. The matches themselves have been carefully edited to keep the ball visible. Frank Pace, a promotional director of the Phillips Organization and a producer of the show, is now trying to get the show aired on independent stations after an original syndication deal fell through. He explains, "We give the one-hour show to syndicators who will try to sell it to different stations in each city. If all goes well, independent stations around the country should air the show during a Saturday or Sunday afternoon this winter."

Pace says this step is important in getting racquetball on network television. "To prove racquetball has a draw, it has to get on television," he says. "So you beg, borrow, do whatever you can to get it on. Once it's got a track record, you can show the networks that it's a winner. Assuming we get good ratings, we take the numbers to the networks and say, 'You said it wouldn't draw, but it did.' Then the networks might put 20 minutes on ABC's *Wide World of Sports* or CBS' *Sports Spectacular*. If that doesn't draw, you'll probably never see racquetball on television again. If it does, they might expand the television time to 45 minutes or an hour."

Pace is not overly optimistic about racquetball's television possibilities. "Oh racquetball will eventually be on television—maybe only once," he laughs wryly. "In any event, the networks will probably never televise more than the top two tournaments each year."

Although the player organizations prefer to focus on the advances they are making in obtaining sponsors, essentially they seem to agree with the manufacturers' view that only television can give racquetball another spurt of growth.

Dan Bertolucci, executive director of the National Racquetball Club, asserts that membership in the United States Racquetball Association has actually increased to the point where they will be able to give amateur players more attention. "We are splitting the amateur nationals from the pro championships," he says. "In the past, the pro tour existed together with the amateur competition. This year, we have enough numbers to warrant splitting the tournaments. This will afford the amateurs more coverage. The amateurs need recognition. They get lost in the shuffle because people want to watch the pros."

Despite these advances, Bertolucci agrees that television is vital to racquetball's development. "The bottom line is that we need television to make a difference in the growth of racquetball. It's not necessarily true that the networks aren't interested. We're talking to networks, as well as PBS and cable, and they have shown an active interest in putting racquetball productions on television."

Bertolucci believes this may be a long struggle. "It can't be done overnight, and it might take three to five years before we achieve our goal. But the future of racquetball depends on attracting major sponsors and sponsorship dollars, and television will have an active role in causing it to happen."

Dan Seaton, the commissioner of the Women's Professional Racquetball Association, is more interested in the growth of the WPRA than in the slowdown in racquetball. He explains, "There's a lot of excitement in supporting women now. Two years ago women played for a total of \$30,000 to \$40,000 in a year. Last year they played for \$73,000, and this year they'll play for \$125,000 to \$200,000."

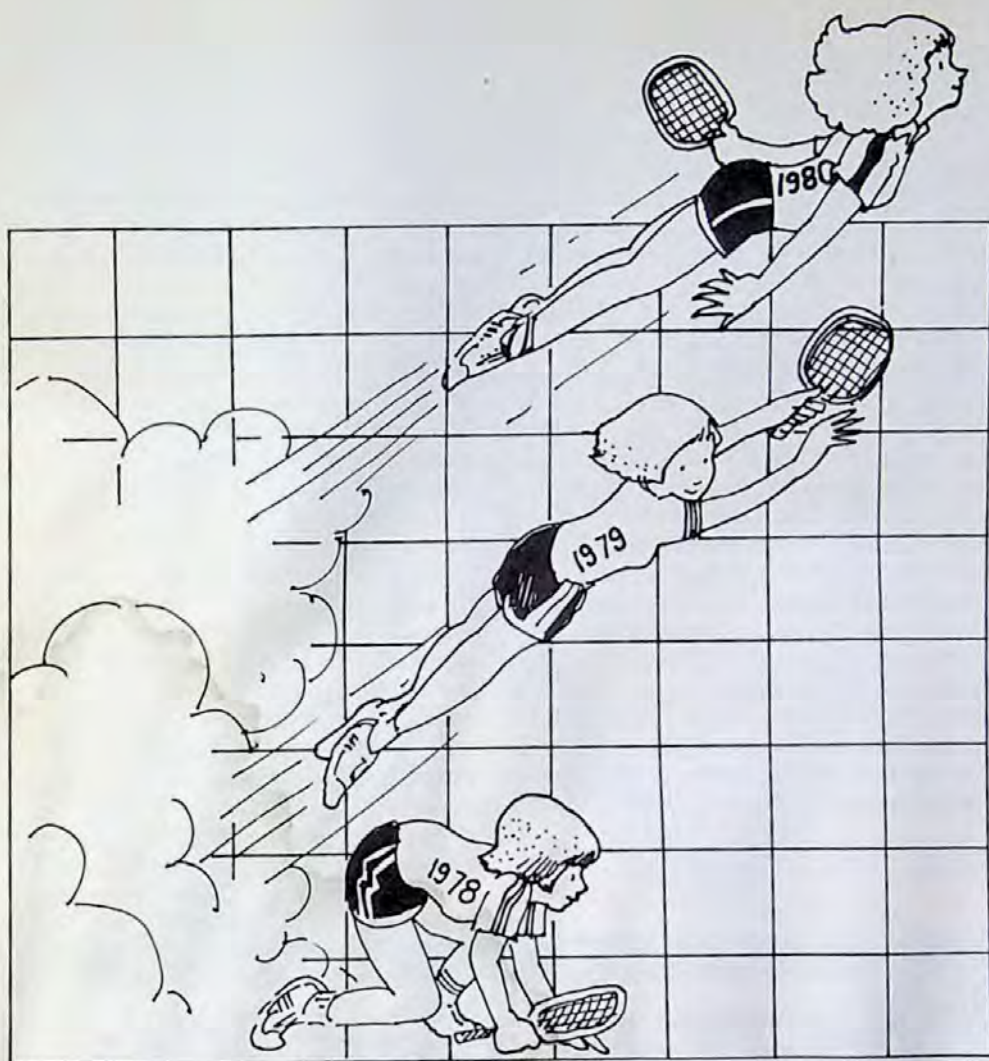
"Within the next one to two years, the women will have acquired an umbrella sponsor who has the capability and desire to sponsor an entire tour. This will make the continuity of the tour better, and make it easier to follow."

Pro Janell Mariott shares this optimistic view. "For women pros, things have never been better. We're playing for more money and we have as many pro stops. Any decline in interest hasn't really affected women because they didn't have much to begin with. Now they're getting their share."

However, Seaton insists that ultimately the pros need television. "With television, we can be successful. Without it, we can never grow to the status of tennis or golf. Television will also affect the speed of the growth in the amateur ranks."

Seaton says that the WPRA is trying to solve some of the problems which have kept racquetball off television. "There needs to be a breakthrough," he says. "The ball has to slow





down and we have to develop a new scoring system to hold the interest of the fans, making shorter, faster games with more emphasis on rallies. We need various guidelines for conduct, discipline, and dress code, so that we'll have a tour that's free of squabbling. The WPRA is doing a lot of things along those lines."

According to Dave Peck, one of the top 16 male pros who make up the new Professional Racquetball Association, his organization is working towards similar ends. "If the game doesn't get on television, it will plateau out," he says. "To help get the game on television, the PRA will be active in developing a new scoring system, court etiquette, getting a ball with the proper speed, and trying to make the game more exciting."

"With the development of the PRA, it will also be easier to get sponsors to look at the sport. Since we can guarantee that the top players will appear at a tournament, we can get more sponsors and make the tournaments more efficient. This development will help get the game on television."

Racquetball has already had some television exposure. In addition to a number of airings on PBS stations, the 24-hour all-sports cable television station, ESPN, has been tele-

vising a small amount of racquetball for two years. However, racquetball seems to have generated little excitement on cable. George Gallup, the vice president of programming for ESPN, explains that while they broadcast about nine hours of racquetball in 1980, they have no current plans to expand this programming in the near future. "One of our problems is that it is difficult for us to measure our audience for each show, so we don't know how popular racquetball actually is," he explains. "However, it is difficult to see the ball, and I understand what the networks complain about. We'll continue to broadcast some racquetball, because we program 24 hours a day and we need a lot of product."

Meanwhile, the networks remain insistent that they have little or no interest in televising racquetball. Jay Rosenstein, director of press relations for CBS sports, claims that the game is too fast for television. "The programmers tell me that the power, angle, and speed of the game are lost in the television lens because of the perspective the camera must take. The game just doesn't translate in the camera. It's the same problem as with platform tennis and jai alai."

Dick Auerbach, NBC's director of sports programming, agrees that the speed of the

game is an inherent problem. He also pinpoints another problem, saying, "Even though racquetball is a growing sport, it still has a very specialized viewer. Only the person who plays the game would watch it on a consistent basis."

Diane Collins, coordinator of program planning for ABC's *Wide World of Sports*, says, "I love racquetball and I try to be an advocate on television. But there is only one thing that would get racquetball on television. The game would have to be so popular nationwide that we would have a built-in audience. Right now we have to think in terms of developing an audience, and until new video techniques for filming the game come along, we just can't consider it."

The lack of a large audience has always been seen as racquetball's "catch 22": The game won't be televised until it has a national audience, and it won't have a national audience until it is on television. The manufacturers and player organizations are trying to break the television barrier first. However, Luke St. Onge, executive director of the American Amateur Racquetball Association, thinks that all of these organizations are attacking the problem from the wrong direction. He is convinced that racquetball must first develop a national audience through grassroots promotion. "In the last years, the sport grew by osmosis, by word of mouth," he says. "At that time, no promotion was needed. That type of growth is gone, except perhaps in parts of the South, Midwest, and in cities of 100,000 or less."

"Now we have to reach that huge market of potential racquetball players that hasn't been touched yet. In the United States Tennis Association, out of 120,000 members, 80 per cent are junior players. In racquetball, less than four per cent are juniors. That whole junior area has not been developed, not even touched. We've tried to develop players who feed into the court clubs and buy the racquets. Now everyone else will have to get off their rear ends and start promoting racquetball."

St. Onge believes that everyone involved in the sport will have to use their marketing dollars to reach the local amateur players. "This is the only way to make racquetball grow," he says. "People who think they can fall back on television are falling back on a myth."

Some manufacturers have been starting to follow the AARA's lead. St. Onge says, "We've entered into an agreement with Penn and another manufacturer to fund a state racquetball championship at the intercollegiate level, one that will lead to a national competition. We are also developing a scholarship fund to establish an independent foundation for needy students who want to play racquetball at college."

Court club owners have also begun to realize that they must develop new players and keep their current members happy in order to keep their clubs full. NCCA's Leve notes that many clubs have started offering more facilities and better programs. "Clubs without ex-

The State of the Sport

tensive amenities are vulnerable to more complete facilities that aren't dependent on racquetball, but also have tennis, steam and sauna, a bar and a lounge. These types of clubs can bring a wider base of people into the clubs."

This is a common pattern in the growth of recreational facilities. Eric Evans observes, "The unsophisticated court clubs, or first generation facilities, educate the public to racquetball. But those clubs which did not do a thorough market study may have underbuilt their facilities. This would create a void which can be filled by a more sophisticated club."

Many of the businesses which quickly built large chains of first generation racquetball courts are now either selling their facilities or giving them a health-club orientation. Wallbangers Court Clubs, once one of the largest of the racquetball chains with 13 facilities in California, is now in the process of selling its clubs to individual investors. Jerry Sweeney, the president of Wallbangers, says "When we started building clubs, it was a high risk venture. But now the business is changing to the point where the key is to manage the facility as efficiently as possible. A second wave of investors is coming in, because the psychology of the original developers is just not right for operating on-going facilities. The second wave investor will probably remove four to six of the

courts and add more health club amenities so that the racquetball will be just one more amenity."

One such second wave investor is Steve Gilmore, who purchased a Wallbanger club in Castro Valley, California. He is converting it into a "total concept" facility. "What we're offering is a fitness center with racquetball," Gilmore explains. "It will have a sports injury clinic, a juice bar, a television and weight room. We're also planning a lot of activities, such as CPR, dry land skiing, and backpacking classes."

Conversion of these clubs will not be inexpensive. Bob Boyle, vice president of a Family Fitness Center chain, which bought five of the defunct Wallbangers, says, "It's costing us \$300,000 per club to convert. It's a problem getting the money, but it's less of a problem than getting no revenue from your business."

Sports Illustrated Court Clubs is another large chain now divesting itself of clubs. Once called the "McDonalds of racquetball courts," it planned to develop 35 clubs across the country. Only 16 clubs were ever built, and the company is now beginning to sell these. John McClury, the vice president of operations, explains, "We needed a chain of 30 to 35 clubs to be profitable. We cannot grow for a lot of reasons, such as the spiraling cost of money and the general overbuilding of courts. So far

we have leased or sold six clubs, and will continue to do so as long as it's profitable to the investors."

McClury thinks the problems court owners are now having is in part caused by the ease of entry into the court building business. "It used to be that anyone who built a club could instantly make money without much effort. It was easy to get money from the banks to build a court, so everyone started building. Some investors even built court clubs for a tax loss. So the numbers of courts soon superseded the number of players."

"The business is now more management intensive. The emphasis now has to be in programming. In our remaining courts, we are trying to keep our members involved in the club with such programs as dancersize, kinder-dance, and better promotions through newsletters and newspapers. To be successful, you will definitely need to promote the club and offer better services."

Even in the pockets where racquetball is still growing, such as in the smaller cities in the Midwest, court club owners are learning from the mistakes made in other parts of the country and emphasizing programming and a health club orientation.

South Haven, for example, is a small unincorporated city between Valparaiso and Portage in northwest Indiana. Although there are only about 52,000 people in a five mile radius, there are five construction sites for court clubs in the general area. Donald Cochran is a shareholder in PND Enterprises, Inc., which is building the Racquet Barré, one of these competing courts. He says, "We'll attract our members by offering more than racquetball courts—a nice lounge, weight room, snack bar, and jogging track. We also intend to have more programs with qualified instructors to bring in the whole family."

Wheatland, Wyo., with a population of 6,500, is so small that Carl Breure Jr., the owner of the newly built Wheatland Court Club jokes, "Both city limit signs are on the same stick." Even though Wheatland, with its three neighboring communities, has a combined population of 20,000, Breure knows the area is considered marginal for a club. "We're only having three courts," he says, "And with promotion and programming we feel it'll work. We're going to show the kids movies, have barbecues, wine and cheese parties, and float trips down the Colorado. We know we need to keep people in our courts."

Keeping people in the courts and getting more of them involved in racquetball is definitely the program for 1981. The different groups involved in the sport are pursuing a number of tactics to help stimulate the sport's growth. Yet, for the most part, these efforts are uncoordinated, and seem unlikely to generate either a television breakthrough or a massive grassroots racquetball campaign in 1981. As St. Onge comments, "The current politics of the sport are negative to its overall expansion. We need more leadership to start really developing racquetball."

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
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STRETCHING FOR RACQUETBALL

By John E. Beaulieu

*Editor's note: The author has a masters degree in special education from the University of Colorado and is pursuing a Ph.D. from the University of Oregon. He has worked with the Portland Trailblazers of the National Basketball Association. This is excerpted from the book *Stretching For All Sports*, John E. Beaulieu, The Athletic Press, Pasadena, Calif., 1980.*

Proper execution of the stretching exercises is necessary for achieving success. The exercises are simple to perform, however, some precautions are necessary. If not done correctly these exercises can result in injury to the muscles. The following section contains considerations and instructions for executing static stretching exercises.

1. It takes time to make a large degree of progress with stretching exercises. The athlete should be mentally prepared for this.

2. Select the simple exercises to begin

stretching a muscle group. The muscles must be conditioned slowly to greater degrees of stretch. This is the safest approach to achieving a larger degree of flexibility. The first few exercises within each muscle group section in this chapter are the easiest to perform.

3. Be sure to warm-up the muscles gradually before doing any stretching exercises. Whenever possible, wear sweats to help keep the muscles warm.

4. These exercises are done slowly with no jerking or bouncing movements. One should move into the stretching position slowly, continuing until a good amount of stretch on the muscles is felt. **ONE SHOULD NOT STRETCH TO THE POINT OF PAIN.**

5. After reaching a good stretch position, hold that position. It should be held 10-15 seconds at first and gradually, over a period of weeks, the time should be increased to 45-60 seconds.

6. The muscles being stretched should be as relaxed as possible. Concentrate on relaxing the muscles when they are being stretched.

7. Both sides of the body should be stretched.

8. When a stretching exercise is completed, release the body slowly from the position. This is important when doing passive exercises. Sudden releases can be uncomfortable and sometimes painful.

9. Daily stretching is important in achieving good gains in flexibility.

10. Stretching exercises are not meant to be competitive. One should not compare his progress to that of other athletes. Trying too hard can lead to injury and result in the loss of any gains made.

To warm up for these exercises, jog lightly for five minutes, or do 30 four-count jumping jacks or jump rope for five minutes.

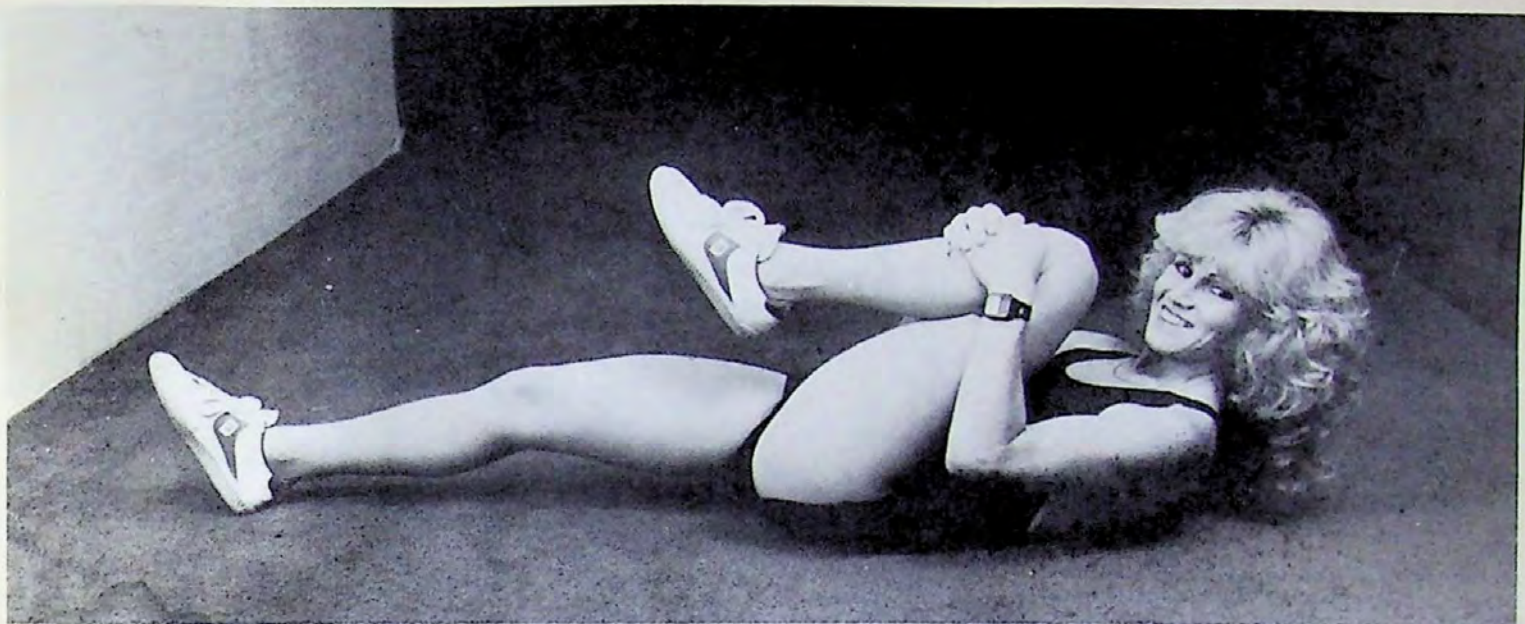
Do the exercises in the order shown, and hold each position for 30-60 seconds. Move into position gently. No bouncing or jerking. The stretch position should have a tight feeling but never pain.



1
Lower back—With legs crossed, lower body to floor. Keep elbows in front of knees.



2
Quadriceps—Grab left foot with right hand and pull left foot toward buttocks.



3
Hamstrings—Pull knee to chest and raise head to the knee.



4
Abdomen—Push upper torso back with arms. Push head back as far as it will go.



5
Hips—With legs crossed and arms out, turn body.



6
Shoulders—Put elbow behind head and gently pull toward center of back.

INSTRUCTION



7
Lower Leg—Lean on wall with back foot and head up. Slowly bend arms and lower body toward wall.



8
Groin—Put feet together and pull heels toward groin. Move body forward.



9
Quadriceps—Assume position on back with knee up and leg pulled to side. Raise and lower knee.



10
Hamstrings—Grab ankle and pull body forward.



11
Back—Rock back and forth 8-10 times.



12
Back—Bring legs over head. Extend legs out. Use hands for balance.



13
Hips—Cross left leg over right and lean right arm against left leg. Push on leg with arm and twist body. Turn head to rear.



14
Shoulders—Reach down with one hand behind shoulders. Bring other hand up, palm out, and grab fingers.



15
Shoulders—Interlock fingers behind back. Have partner raise arms slowly.



16
Groin—Raise toes of right leg and slowly slide away from body.

Editor's Note: Demonstrating exercises are Nancy Sattler, instructor at the Sports Connection in Santa Monica, Calif. and Kathy Hall, instructor at the Beverly Hills YMCA.

HOW TO PLAY A LEFTY

By Craig McCoy
with Carol George

Let's face it, there just aren't that many left-handers running around. If you are a lefty, you have an advantage on the racquetball court. You're used to playing the majority, but they're not used to playing against you.

Even I was once a member of the majority. I played right-handed the first year or two after I picked up racquetball. But then I broke my right arm and had to wear a cast which went all the way up to my shoulder and was bent at the elbow like an "L." I was young and enthusiastic about racquetball back then, when it was still a game for me and not a job. So I started playing left-handed the day after I got the cast put on. That cast stayed on for two months and then it took another month or two for my right arm to recuperate. But I kept playing left-handed.

I don't think I consciously decided to stay a lefty because of any concrete reason. I just never switched back to my right hand. I don't know why, but I can tell you now, as someone who has been on both sides of the fence, that there are definite advantages of being a lefty in racquetball.

For me, it means that I am the only left-hander in the top 16 on the men's pro tour. Bruce Christensen, Steve Mondry, and Steve Serot are all left-handed and ranked somewhere between 17 and 32, but I very rarely meet another lefty on the court. Jennifer Harding had the same advantage for several years, and now Bonnie Stoll has replaced her as the only lefty in the top 10 on the women's pro tour.

I can't really think of any disadvantages of being left-handed. It is just as much of an adjustment for me to play a lefty, but, then again, if you are left-handed, that means one less lefty you'll have to face.

Playing left-handed is especially advantageous among the amateur ranks. I watched a friend of mine who was playing in the novice division of a tournament, and he didn't even realize until after the first game that his opponent was left-handed. He had been puzzled by how this guy was able to put away all of his serves to the left side.

So a lefty in the novice, "C," or sometimes even in the "B" division will have an edge in the beginning of a match before her or his opponent even realizes the player is left-handed. This could be worth six or seven easy points unless the righty is a much better player than the lefty, or is aware that everything is reversed.



Even if a righty realizes that his or her opponent is left-handed early in the first game, and has only lost a point or two on serves to the left, it will still mean a switch in serves and strategy. This kind of mental exercise is better done before a match and off the court, it has to be a disadvantage to have to make the switch once the match is already in progress.

So for those of you who are the majority—amateur and/or right-handed—let me explain how to make the adjustments which are necessary when playing a lefty.

I was brought up on a control game, so I usually move the serve around anyway. That means I am able to deliver effective serves to the right side as well as the left, but against a righty I will serve most of my serves to the left side. Therefore, when I play a lefty, I already know how to serve to the right. I just have to remind myself to do it more often.

One of the easiest serves to hit to the right side is a Z because the natural Z for a right-hander is to the right already. No adjustment is necessary. A lefty who is serving the reverse Z against another lefty will usually telegraph the serve because a lefty uses a different movement and usually stands off to one side of the court.

I suggest that you practice hitting a variety of serves from several positions between the service lines. You should try to use the same motion and contact point. It's possible to keep the step movement, body movement, and swing identical for every serve. The only thing you vary is the face of the racquet.

This is done for the same reason that a pitcher practices making all his pitches look

identical up until the moment of release. The batter has less time to react because sliders, curves, knuckle balls, and curve balls all look the same until it's almost too late. Keep your opponent guessing. Then you can throw in some of your favorite serves to the right and get away with it. It will still be a surprise attack, regardless of whether it's to the forehand or backhand.

Often, when a righty plays a lefty, he or she becomes so obsessed with the fact that the opponent is left-handed that the righty overcompensates and hits everything to the right. Not only does this become easy for the lefty to anticipate, it can also prevent the righty from hitting the smartest shot for that particular situation.

I've seen some players who have pinned a lefty to the right wall and who still return the ball to the right. The righty seems to think that a lefty possesses a greater imbalance between forehand and backhand than any other player. Besides, if your opponent can't get to a ball, he or she can't return it regardless if it's to the forehand or not.

However, you will want to hit most of your shots to the lefty's backhand. This requires a reevaluation of your favorite shots. Ordinarily when returning a serve to your backhand, you will go down the line. But when playing a lefty, you should adjust and go cross court to the lefty's backhand instead.

About the only shot which a righty usually hits to the right is a kill shot to the right corner with the forehand. This is an excellent shot against any player, but is especially excellent against a lefty. Whatever shot selection you make, be sure to allow yourself a couple of variations at least, so your shots don't become too predictable.

Some people have even accused me of putting a different spin on the ball so that they have to compensate for that also. I know that in tennis a lefty such as John McEnroe does put a different spin on the ball than a righty such as Jimmy Connors would, but they both hit the same basic shots. But spin isn't a major factor in racquetball, so I won't belabor this point.

I have noticed that more room is given in a singles match between a lefty and a righty than in a match between two righties. I think the lefty throws the other player off-balance. A righty may not expect the follow-through in the opposite direction. Therefore, if a righty crowds in on a lefty's backhand, it's more likely to result in a follow-through to the face.

You must also be on guard for the pseudo-lefty. This is one of those members of the minority who possesses a stronger backhand than forehand. If you are playing a righty with a particularly strong backhand, you should also apply all of the above, just as if you were playing a lefty.

The one person who comes to my mind as an exception is Steve Serot. Serot has worked on his forehand lately, but I would still bet that

his backhand is stronger. He not only was more accurate with his backhand, he hit the ball harder backhand than most people do forehand.

But Serot is a lefty. Because his backhand is stronger than his forehand you just play him as you would any other righty. Easy. Any of us can do that. But it probably takes longer for players to realize that they should play their opponent's forehand than it does to realize a player is left-handed. You can imagine the confusion of someone playing Serot who first realized he was left-handed and then realized that his backhand was stronger. By that time, after the player had made two adjustments mid-match, it was all over and Serot had won again. But in all the years that Steve and I have both been on the pro tour, I've only played him twice, once in 1975 and again in 1978. So far we've split, one apiece.

So it's not that often that I'll meet a lefty in a tournament, except in doubles. For some reason you never think there are any lefties in the tournament until you watch the doubles. Then it seems like they are coming out of the walls. Another advantage of being left-handed is that you're in big demand as a doubles partner. Of course you have to like doubles or else this isn't an advantage.

For those who do like doubles, you're in great shape. Assuming you're playing the left side against a righty who fits the rule, your forehand is probably going to be a lot stronger than the backhand of your opponent.

A lefty-righty team is ideal in doubles because it has strength for hits on both walls. The only weakness would be when the ball comes down the middle. Since the ball is coming to both players' backhands, the players could become confused over whose turn it is to hit. But an experienced team will know when to call the balls. Then a player may have enough time to move around and hit the ball with his or her forehand, even if the ball is in center court.

As the left-side player, you need to be in pretty good shape. The opposing team will still hit most of the balls to you, even if they are to your forehand. This just emphasizes what I've been saying all along. All of us have conditioned ourselves to hit the majority of shots to the left.

When a lefty-righty team meets a righty-righty team the strategy is simple. Concentrate on the player who is playing the left side, even though that is the player with the stronger backhand. Get that poor man or woman running up to cover the pinch in the right corner, and then backing up to retrieve the ceiling balls and passes. The player on the right is doing his or her share, but not playing very much. Eventually either the player on the left becomes exhausted and misses shots or the right-side player becomes impatient, starts stealing shots, and the teamwork breaks down. Either way you've got the advantage as the lefty-righty team.

DIVING



By Dave Fleetwood

Most of you have read racquetball instructional where writers end their in-depth analysis by saying you can't expect to master a shot unless you work at it.

In most cases, that's true. But in racquetball, there is one aspect of the game that doesn't physically or fundamentally lend itself to practice—diving for a shot.

Diving for a racquetball is an action/reaction type of thing. You don't plan it. It just happens. Usually, you're caught off guard, or off balance and the only chance you have to keep the ball in play is to hit the floor and hope for the best.

This is not the type of situation one really wants to practice. I mean, floor burns and scraped knees aren't bad in competition, but by yourself on a court somewhere?

However, diving can be an important part of your game. As either of my Ektelon teammates, Mike Yellen or Dave Peck will tell you, it can make a difference in who collects checks and who doesn't.

Although you may have to dive occasionally, if you're diving a lot, something is definitely wrong with your game. You're giving your opponent too many setup shots, you're getting caught in no man's land in front court, or you're just plain out of position.

But if your positioning is correct and you have to hit the hardwood, there are certain points to remember.

1. A diving shot is defensive. You are trying to stay in the point or game. That means that almost all the time, your goal is to get the ball to the ceiling. That will allow you time to recover.

In rare instances—within 10 feet or so of the front wall—you may want to try for a kill. This decision depends on your skill level, the speed of the shot, and how dangerously you want to live.

2. The shot itself is not difficult, only, at times, painful. The most important point is to keep your racquet hand up and out in front of you. The racquet face should be up to help get the ball to the ceiling, the racquet out in front to get the ball more quickly.

3. Since court floors aren't known for their sliding surfaces, when you dive, try to land on your chest, not on your knees. Use your free hand to balance your body and keep up off the floor as much as possible.

4. The next question is, "When do I dive?" For my money, as little as possible. Somebody like Jerry Hilecher or Steve Serot has made a career out of going to the floor. And while Jerry is still playing well, Serot's decision to play every ball all out hurt his career.

Don't dive if the score is 0-0, 3-2, or 6-5 in the first or second game to 21. Dive when it's 9-9 in the tiebreaker, or 17-15 with the game on the line.

The reason I say this is, as mentioned before, the danger of injuries. I've seen many players dislocate a shoulder or break a wrist sliding into a side wall. Davey Bledsoe once received a concussion after hitting a wall. After all, many times the head is the first thing that makes contact.

5. Once you have made the decision to dive, you can't rest on the floor (as much as you would like to). You have to spring up, find the ball, and prepare to play your opponent's next shot (often a kill). A common mistake made by most players is to congratulate themselves on a dive shot well hit and then turn around to face a point that's just about over. Remember, react!

6. The final two things that can help you with diving (without practicing) are anticipation and agility. As you mature as a player, a sixth sense develops which lets you almost anticipate when you're going to have to hit the floor to return a certain shot. Don't waste time thinking too long. Do it. Then scramble to your feet.

Agility exercises will help in your diving and recovery time. Skipping rope, running drills within the court, anything that improves quickness and coordination will help.

All that's really left then, is to win the game. Because if you have to dive during a game, it's always nice to see your opponent going down when it's over.



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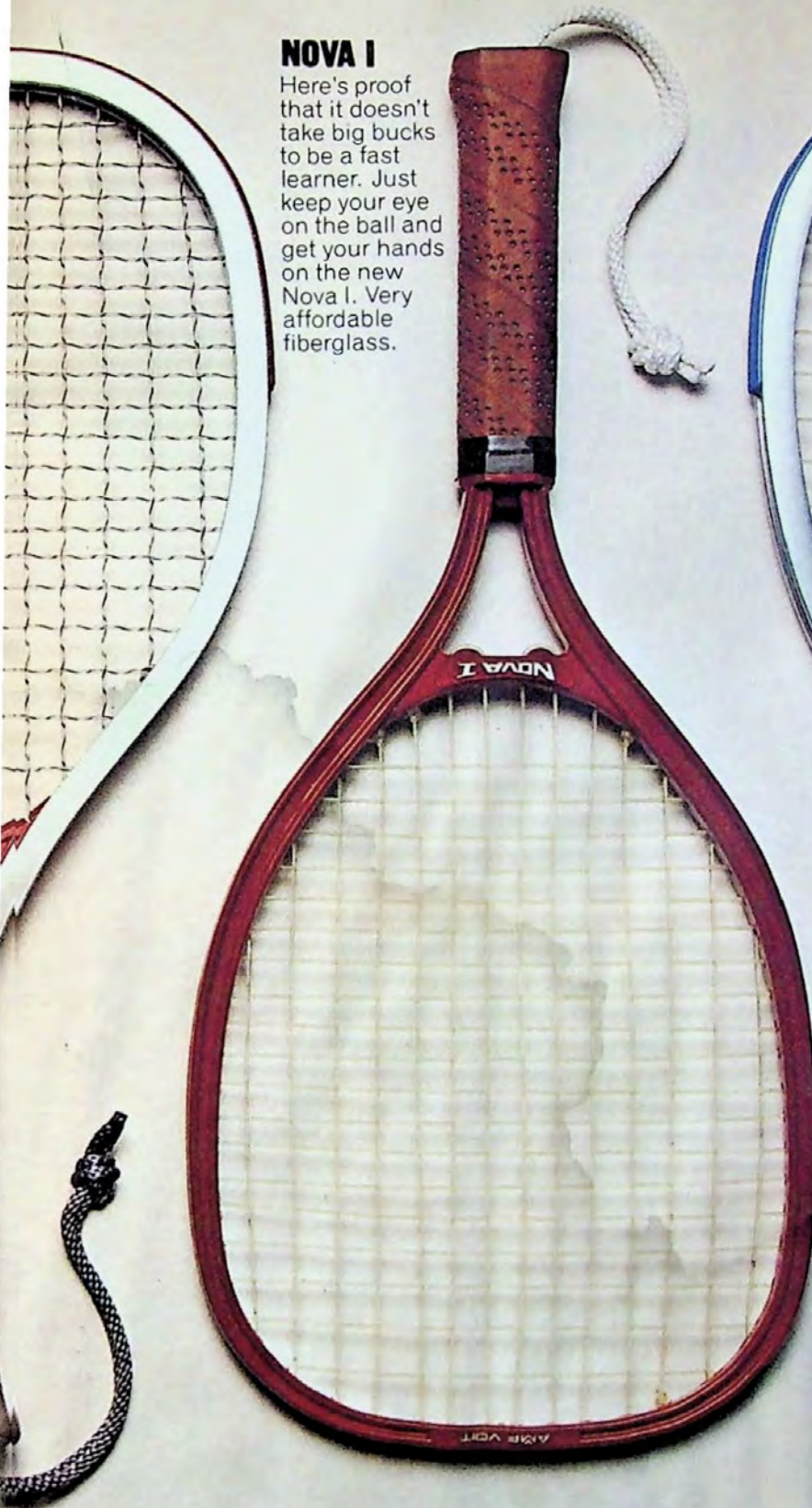
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FOREHAND MECHANICS

By Toni Hudson

Editor's note: The article is reprinted from RACQUETBALL FOR WOMEN by Toni Hudson, Jack Scagnetti, Vince Rondone, 1980, Melvin Powers Wilshire Book Co., North Hollywood, Calif.

Having the proper grip in racquetball will allow maximum power and control. The incorrect grip will hold you back in achieving both these experiences.

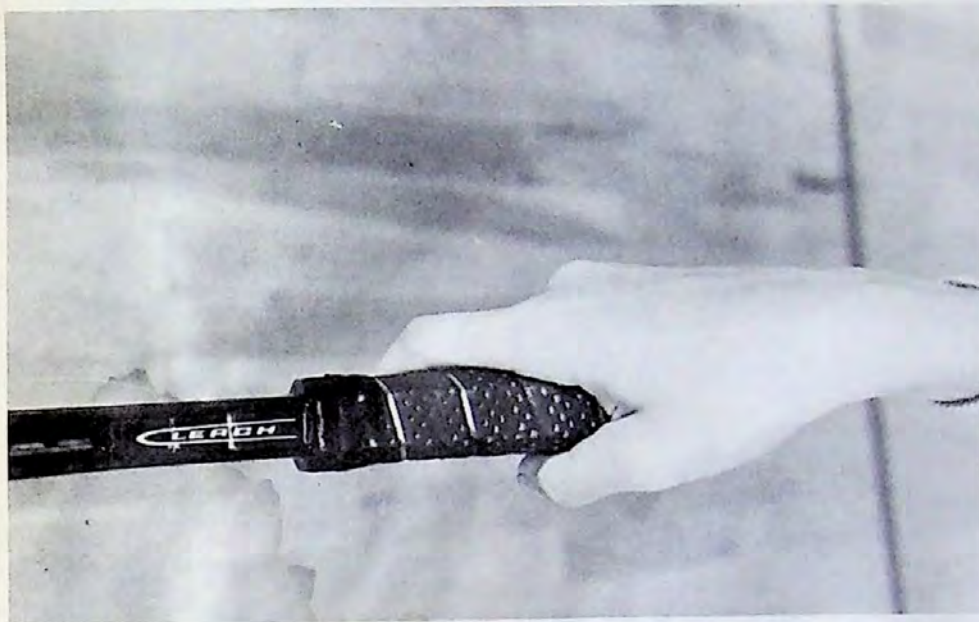
To help you understand what is being said and what is illustrated, have your racquet in hand while trying to utilize what is given.

Before I go into telling you the proper grip, I want to explain why I am giving you the *universal grip* instead of a forehand grip and a backhand grip. Because of the fast pace in racquetball, changing from forehand to backhand in the middle of a rally is more hazardous than helpful. You want to be able to concentrate on



In basic forehand stroke, racquet is held up near ear with wrist cocked, knees slightly bent and weight on back foot. Step forward with wrist still cocked and elbow coming through first. Butt of racquet should face front wall. Keep eye on the ball and snap wrist at point of contact. Weight, of course, has shifted to the front leg. Follow-through should be full.

Proper grip for a forehand stroke has the forefinger in a trigger-like position with the thumb a "second finger" position on the handle. The thumb and forefinger should form a "V."



strategy and shot selection, rather than the thought, "is my grip right for this shot or that shot?" Use the universal grip for your forehand and your backhand. It will help you create maximum power and control, and keep your mind off of one more thing during play.

Start by holding your racquet with your free hand at the throat, taking your playing hand, open palm, up against the strings (with racquet perpendicular to the floor) and slide your playing hand down to the handle, gripping just like you would to give a handshake, leaving your forefinger in a trigger-like position and giving your thumb a second "finger" position on the handle. Your handshake position should give you a V-like juncture on the handle (using your thumb and forefinger). Looking from the top, this V should be in a direct line with the middle of the handle.

Make sure that in finding your grip you avoid common mistakes. The most common error is what we call the fist grip. It is the first thing that comes to mind when attempting to swing for the first time. Racquetball is fast and the ball is hit a lot harder than beginners do in any other racquet sport. So the attempt is to grip the racquet so tightly that your fist is clenched, like you were going to slug somebody. This clenched fist limits your wrist action (and wrist



INSTRUCTION

action is what will give you power and control), so just loosen up your grip so you are shaking hands with your racquet and not choking it to death.

Other mistakes are gripping too high (near the throat, like ping pong) and gripping too low (near the butt, called eagle claw). These two adjustments are the easiest to change, so try and grip the handle about an inch to half an inch from the bottom. The butt of the handle should go against the heel of your hand.

When gripping your racquet too high, like a ping pong paddle, you eliminate your power for more control, and when you choose the eagle-claw grip, you create a longer racquet which gives you more whipping in your stroke for added power and very little control. With these facts in mind, it makes sense to grip your racquet as suggested, in the middle, and you will have 50 per cent power and 50 per cent control.

There are three basic steps in comprising the forehand stroke, so grasp your racquet with the correct grip and you are ready to swing. Perform the following without using the ball:

1. READY POSITION. This is the position your body should be in before committing to stroke any ball. Your entire body should face the right side of the court (if you are a south-paw you should face the left side). Your racquet should be up by your right ear, with a cocked wrist (about a 90-degree angle). Knees are bent, weight is on the balls of your feet at all times, but in this instance the weight should be on the ball of only your back foot (the closest to the back wall) and your eyes on the ball.

2. ACTUAL STROKE AND CONTACT. In your ready position, step forward with your front foot, in a direct line with your backfoot, with your toe pointing slightly in the direction you're hitting the ball. Swing your racquet through with your elbow in the lead, leaving your wrist still cocked.

Your stroke should be on a parallel line with the floor, contacting the ball somewhere between the knee and the foot; up until you actually contact the ball, your wrist should be cocked at all times. This allows maximum power because the more distance the wrist has to travel to hit the ball, the more whipping action there will be.

3. THE FOLLOW-THROUGH. When contacting the ball, you don't just stop at the point of contact; you should have a follow-through which keeps the ball's momentum going and your accuracy at a high percentage level. At point of contact, your racquet face should be parallel with the front and back walls, (or perpendicular to the floor) and your weight should now be transferred over to your front foot, for added power, keeping your eyes on the ball at all times. Snap your wrist through bringing your racquet up to your left ear, in a pendulum type motion. It resembles the motion of a free-



A good exercise for the proper stroke is to take a racquetball and throw it sidearm—baseball style—to the front wall. Again note the elbow, the knees and the follow through.

swinging pendulum weight on a grandfather clock.

Now that we have tried the stroke broken down into three separate steps, let's put them all together in a check-list fashion. This time use a ball in the process.

1. a) Racquet up
- b) Knees bent
- c) Weight back
- d) Wrist cocked
- e) Eyes on the ball
2. f) Step forward
- g) Wrist still cocked
- h) Swing down with elbow first
- i) Contact the ball in a parallel motion to the floor somewhere between the knee and foot

3. j) Transfer weight to front foot
- k) Hit the ball with your wrist snapping
- l) Follow through with racquet up by opposite ear
- m) Wrist bent in a 90-degree angle on follow-through
- n) Eyes still on the ball

Practice this, on the court by yourself, and you will always have this form whenever you go to set up for a shot during a game situation. Remember, you want your stroke as smooth as possible, so think of the pendulum on the grandfather clock. This will help on accuracy and the percentage of the shots you attempt will improve.

PLAYING THE ANGLES

By Jennifer Harding

In racquetball, court strategy and court position are always spoken in the same breath. In most cases, if you could talk a little longer the words "playing the angles" would find their way out of your mouth.

Racquetball is really a course in geometry. In a rectangular box 20 feet wide, 20 feet high and 40 feet long, figuring out where a speeding ball will bounce off the wall is really a matter of mathematics.

Now I know some of you smart alecks are saying, "Yeah, for my next match, I'm going to bring a pencil, piece of paper and protractor on the court. That should really help me win." The truth is, many players put themselves at an extreme disadvantage by not understanding the basics of a bouncing ball.

The obvious key to controlling a rectangular court is staying in the middle—maintaining the all-important center court position. For those new to the game, center court position is defined as one or two steps behind the short service line and a step or two to either side.

From there, you can cut off passing shots and retrieve down-the-line passes. It also allows for maximum visibility of the game's angles, particularly, side-wall, front-wall and side-wall, front-wall, side-wall shots.

One of the most common mistakes in "playing the angles" often happens on those side-wall, front-wall, side-wall shots. Instead of anticipating where the shot will land and moving to get there, many beginners will follow the ball around the walls, swinging wildly as it passes by.

Proper racquetball technique stresses a solid stance when racquetball contact is made. If you're chasing three-wall shots, your stroke is suffering a basic illness.

In another instance, many beginners or intermediate players try to scoop two-wall balls that have either buried themselves in a corner of the backcourt or stayed very close to the back wall.

The technique here is not to rush in and flail away, but to watch the flight of the ball and get around it. By that I mean, if a ball hits deep off the sidewall and angles into the corner, don't try to hit it on the fly. Wait, watch the angle, get around the ball, then hit your shot.

Many players make the mistake of freezing when they see two and three-sided shots. Their first movement seems to come after the shot is finished. They react, instead of acting.

To play the angles you have to move your feet. Don't rush around, but stay loose, gauge the shot, then move to a probable point of racquet impact.

To many, impact on angle shots is another



problem. They hit shots too close to their body, or in baseball talk, they get jammed. The reason is they can't calculate quickly enough where the ball might land. More often than not they overadjust, going too far into the ball. That shortens their stroke and cuts down on the offensive action they can take.

How do you know where the ball is going to land? If players knew that, there wouldn't be much fun to racquetball. But the best angle players, like my Ektelon teammate Mike Yellen, have done it over the years with practice.

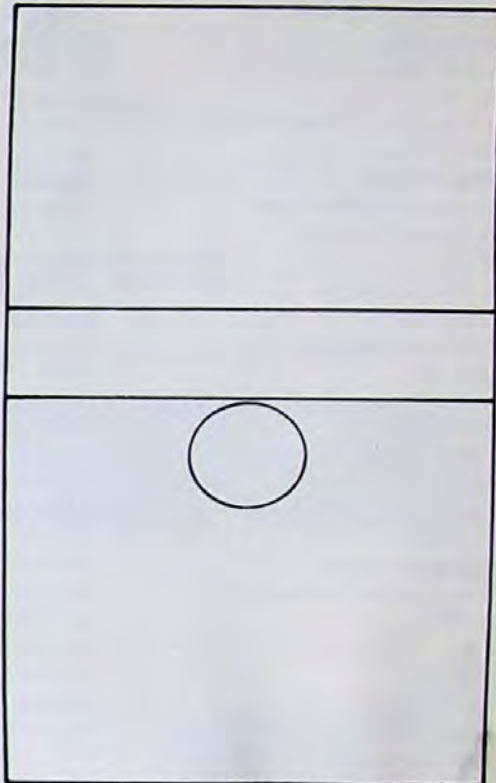
When you get on a court by yourself, spend 20 minutes with geometrics. Hit balls into the corners. See which way they angle off. Play the side walls. Notice that by changing your shot angle from the backcourt, you open or close your front wall possibilities.

For example, the closer you are to the side-wall, the more acute the angle. To hit a shot off front wall center, you're going to have to angle a shot very close to your body. If you plan to pinch the close corner, the ball must hit close—within one or two feet—of the front wall.

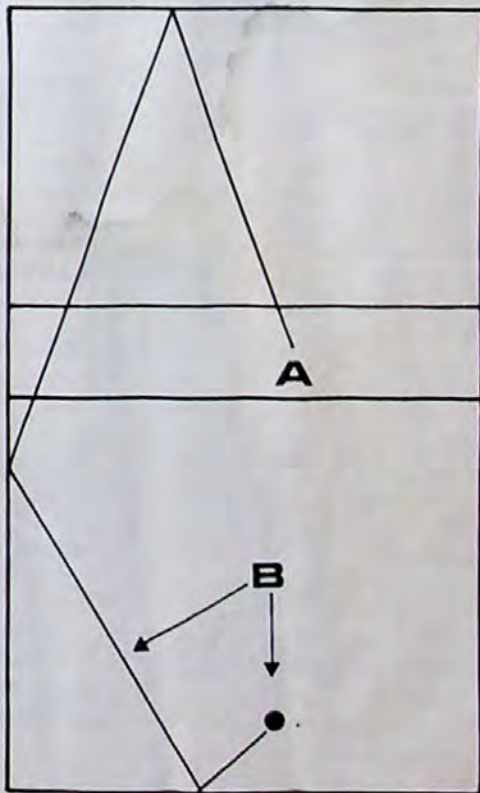
Playing the angles off the serve is a subject well-covered in other instructionals. Since three-wall serves are illegal, your adjustment comes from taking shots off the sidewall.

The key once again is anticipation. Don't lock into the flight of the ball. See the serve, then adjust your feet and shot to make solid contact towards the front of your body.

Angles, like geometry, take time to learn. But once you understand the basics—and practice them—your game could take a 180 degree turn for the better.



The key to controlling the rectangular court is the center court position.



On shots that hit two or more walls, it is advised not to start chasing the ball. In this situation, player B can either cut off the shot before it hits the back wall or pivot around and set up for a shot after it comes off the back wall.

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FASHION RAC



This wasn't going to be one of those racquetball doubles matches in which you just got in the car and drove three blocks to the local club. For models Hope Tilton, Lisa Williams, Amy L. Rohee, and Rieneke, this was to be a jet-setting trip on a Western Airlines flight to Hawaii.

And since the players were to be flying off for their match, no better outfits to take along than WINGZ OF CALIFORNIA.

Fashion coordinated and directed by David Chow

Photography by Ed Ikuta

Location courtesy Western Airlines

Shoes furnished by Footjoy

Racquetball bags courtesy of Leach

Racquets by Omega

Gloves courtesy of Champion

◀

Ready to fly off in Wingz active sportswear are Rieneke, Amy, and Lisa. Rieneke is wearing a long gray shag terry warmup suit made of 60 percent polyester and 40 percent rayon. Accenting stripes down side of pants. **\$54**. Amy is flying high in her velour warmup suit made of 80 percent cotton and 20 percent polyester. Wine with cream inserts. **\$85**. Lisa has an orange (with white insets) suit made of 60 percent polyester and 40 percent cotton. **\$48**.

▶

Rieneke is alone at the controls in Wingz long gray shag terry raglan top with accenting red stripes made of 60 percent polyester and 40 percent rayon. **\$23**. Matching terry vented shorts. **\$10.50**.



Hope does her playing in a light blue v-neck top made of a poly/cotton interlock, **\$12**, and nap vented shorts made of 60 percent polyester and 40 percent cotton terry. **\$10**. Lisa looks smart in her long gray shag terry tank set made of 60 percent polyester and 40 percent cotton. Comes with accenting stripes. **\$23**. Amy has on a long-sleeve v-neck multi-colored velour top made of 80 percent cotton and 20 percent polyester. **\$28.50**.



Hope is all set to go in Wingz long gray shag terry top and shorts made of polyester and rayon. Top **\$23**, shorts **\$10.50**. Lisa prefers a first-class ride in a royal blue v-neck velour pullover top (long-sleeve) made of 80 percent cotton. **\$28.50**. Velour vented shorts **\$16**. Amy has on the 100 percent acrylic fleece long-sleeve v-neck top in a yellow and red design. **\$23**. Fleece shorts **\$11.50**.

HOW TO TAKE RACQUETBALL PHOTOS

By David M. King

Editor's note: Racquetball Illustrated photo editor David M. King is a former sports photographer for the Los Angeles Herald Examiner.

Every sport played by modern man is photographed, sometimes well and often times not so well, and racquetball is no exception. One can attend a tournament at a local club or the yearly National Championships and find someone there shooting the action.

Photographing sports action can often be as fun as actual participation in that sport and

is probably the reason you will always find someone in the gallery or next to the glass wall trying to capture the action on film. And just as often, someone in the gallery with a camera who has a friend or relative on the court will ask that person next to the glass, "What setting are you using?", "What film should I use?", or "Where can I get a good shot of the action?"

The answers to these questions can be found with only a little technical preparation and some common sense.

Obtaining good sports action most often depends upon anticipation of peak action—diving for a shot, bumping into the opponent,

or running into the wall. Understanding the sport is a great help. In racquetball, ask yourself where most of the action is played. The answer is center court just a few feet behind the serving line. This should be your central focus point.

The key word is anticipation. Action photographers need to develop "instinct" for catching the peak action.

Although most of the action takes place at this center court location, be prepared for unexpected action which may occur anywhere on the court. To be prepared for this you must continually focus your lens for that moment of peak action you will shoot.

Continued on page 46



WITH THE GREATEST OF EASE



Photos by David M. King

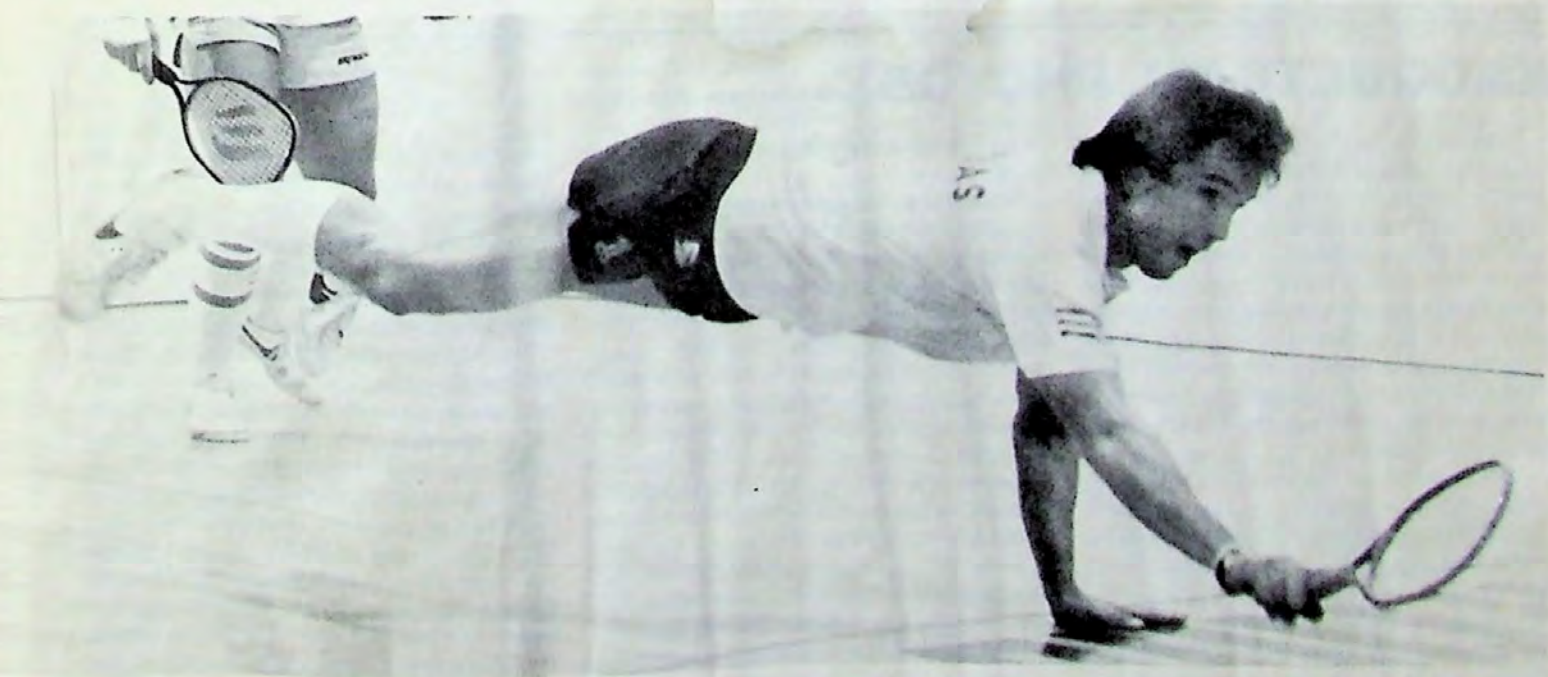
When things are close
And tension mounts
Money is on the line
Every point counts

You reach for the shots
You don't care about your hair
A point will make the difference
You must fly through the air

Guts and determination
Those are the keys
That is why it is the winners
Who can fly with the greatest of ease

WITH THE GREATEST OF EASE







RACQUETBALL PHOTOS Continued from page 42

If you are taking photos for yourself, for the club, or for a publication that is planning a story on a tournament, remember all the action does not take place on the court. Be aware of the player's wife chewing her nails, the player's mother screaming on the sidelines, the couple playing backgammon in the gallery during competition, or the competitors discussing strategy with their coaches. These types of shots always add depth to a story or to the walls that display photos in most of the clubs.

When shooting racquetball, the person with a camera will encounter many different shooting locations, the most difficult of which is the balcony overlooking the court. There are not many good points for shooting from this location but when you have to, remember not to focus on the floor because your subject will be about three to four feet out of

focus. From this position always focus on the head.

Glass wall courts always present better circumstances for shooting from side, front, and back walls during play. A few courts around the country provide camera holes in the front wall as a convenience for television and still photographers that ask to use them.

Most sports photography now is done with 35mm equipment because of its availability, ease in handling, and price. The next question that is most asked is, "What brand is recommended?" The answer is the one that you feel will fill the need. The camera body is used as a box to hold the film.

One piece of equipment, the motordrive, is not essential but helpful. The primary use of the "motor" is to advance the film automatically, so the photographer won't spend extra time advancing the film by hand, which will

take the camera away from the eye. Racquetball very seldom provides the chance for a sequence series of photos but the action is fast and the next great photo may be missed while you take the camera from your eye to advance the film. One drawback to the motordrive is that it will cause you to use a lot of film.

The next item that a photographer should be concerned with is the lens. The average lens purchased with a camera is the 50mm but, if you have become involved in photography you might need other lenses.

The type of lens will vary depending on the location that you have chosen to take your photos. As a rule of thumb, good average coverage of the court can be had by using an 85mm, 105mm, or 135mm lens, although the wide angle lenses such as the 24mm, 28mm, and 35mm have their uses as well as the longer ones up to the 200mm.

If you are planning on purchasing a lens for shooting racquetball, a good recommendation is to buy the one that is fast or rather one that is rated at $f/1.4$, $f/1.8$, or $f/2.8$, because lenses at this speed have a brighter viewing area that will help in the subdued light that you might encounter on the court. It will also help in the continual focusing the photographer has to do. A slower lens will cause the viewing area to be darker through the lens and cause the worry of constant focusing that is needed to capture the precise action.

The different locations that are available at the different courts and the position of the photographer will determine the appropriate lens that is to be used.

Shooting from a photo window at the front wall or from the front corner of one of the side glass walls you might need anything from 85mm to 200mm—the 85mm for overall coverage and the 200mm for the tight close-up shots that you will find in the sporting magazines. Use a 24mm to the 50mm from the back wall for the unusual photos that could occur when the player turns for the shot off the back wall, or lunges for a missed ball.

Another question concerns "What flash do I use?" and the answer is none. If you try to use a flash through the plexiglass walls it will be like trying to take your own portrait in a mirror with a flash. All you will get is a photograph of your flash reflecting off the glass. Any other use of a flash unit would be disruptive to the players, causing momentary loss of concentration.

And now the answer to the question most asked a photographer besides "What's the score?" That is the question of "What film do I use?"

Black and white film buffs should use a fast film with an ASA rating of 400 but one that the photographer, in most cases, will need to rate at ASA 800 because of the dim lighting existing on most courts. Court lighting will vary from club to club and a meter reading has to be taken in each case. There is no standard exposure upon which the photographer can rely.

Kodak Tri-x is the most popular fast film for shooting in these dimly-lit situations, because Tri-x offers a better contrast with the final prints that might need to go into a publication. Other films tend to be lower in contrast and compound the problem of flat court lighting caused by the white walls and wood floor. If your final prints are to be used to decorate a wall or to go into a player's scrapbook, you may want to use some "flatter" films. The result will be a more pleasing photo for display but not magazine reproduction.

Many photographers now are doing their own developing in their own darkrooms, and if you are one, you will not want to find the right developer by trial and error since many rolls of film will be ruined before you hit upon the developer that is correct for you. Without looking at all of the black and white film developers, here are three that will serve the purpose. But the final decision is left up to you.

D-76, which is an all purpose developer with a good contrast range, can be used to



Pro tournaments usually attract a number of photographers, amateur and professional.

develop your film rated at ASA 400 or ASA 800. Film will need to be developed longer at the 800 rating. The D-76 is what might be recommended if your photos need more contrast.

Acufine is a good developer to give you fine grain qualities if you have to rate your film ASA 800 or even higher to ASA 1200. Acufine's instructions do not have a development time for rating film at less than ASA 1200 but with a little experimenting the range can be found. This developer might be good for photographs that will be on display. It is a fine grain developer and you don't need a lot of grain in photos that are being blown up to 8x10 or even 11x14.

Diafine is another fine grain, high speed developer, and along with Acufine has a shorter development time than D-76. Diafine gives a somewhat flatter contrast negative, but seems to produce more detail in shadow areas with film that has to be pushed at higher rating. This developer would be the one recommended for developing film action that will be displayed on the club walls.

For the photographer who does not have a darkroom to develop the film, don't give up hope. You will have to do a little searching for a private or "custom" lab to have your "pushed" film developed because your local drug store, or the little house in the middle of the shopping center parking lot does not specialize in developing film that has been rated higher than its intended use marked on the box. Most custom labs will charge a little more than their standard price for developing to push your film to the rating that you have exposed it.

Color film has become very popular when shooting racquetball and is as easily shot as black and white film. If you decide that you want to shoot color slides, one of two films is recommended. Again, as with black and white, you will want a fast film but one that is balanced to the light that is available at the club. Most clubs have installed the quartz vapor lights and you need to use an outdoor type film that is balanced for this type of light. Kodak Ektachrome 400 daylight film is the

most recommended for this type of situation because for a small extra charge the Kodak lab will provide Extra Special Processing (ESP) and will push your slide film to an ASA rating of 800. There are other outdoor type slide films available but the photographer will have to find a private lab that will push the development.

On a few occasions when a club does not use the quartz type of lights but instead uses a fluorescent type of lighting or a tungsten type you will want to use an indoor film. Kodak Ektachrome 160 Professional Film would be a good choice. This slide film has an ASA rating of 200 and by using the same Kodak ESP mentioned earlier the film can be rated and pushed to ASA 400.

In photographing racquetball, as in shooting other sports, the primary goal is to freeze the action on film. The mistake often made of not freezing the action, the swing of the racquet, or the rapid movement of the players is caused by not shooting with a fast shutter speed.

The slowest recommended shutter speed is $1/250$ of a second which in most instances will freeze the action for you. By using this speed on your shutter and rating your film at ASA 400 or ASA 800 your f-stop setting on your lens, in most cases, will be in the area of $f/1.8$, $f/2.8$, or $f/4$, and in these f-stop ranges the depth of field is very shallow. This causes many photos to be out of focus if the photographer is not constantly focusing the lens on the players.

Always be sure of the correct exposure. If you are not, take a meter reading on the court. Don't make the mistake of pointing the camera at the white walls because the walls will reflect more light than the players, causing you to underexpose your film by about 2 f-stops.

Walk onto the court before play begins and obtain your correct light reading by pointing the camera at your hand and getting a good exposure from your skin.

One final tip: This sport is not geared for instamatic camera buffs. Leave those for family gatherings.

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TOTAL BREATHING

Editor's Note: This is reprinted from the book *TOTAL BREATHING*, copyright 1980 by Philip Smith. Reprinted by permission of McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York.

By Philip Smith

The four main types of breathing are defined by the respirator muscles used. They are *high breathing*, *mid breathing*, *low breathing*, and *total breathing*.

High breathing, unfortunately, is one of the most prevalent forms of breathing. Most of us are high breathers, especially if we have sedentary occupations. Whenever we sit or lean over our desk to work, the chest and stomach area tend to collapse in, thus preventing the full inflation of the entire lung area. A high breather characteristically breathes in a quick and shallow fashion in an attempt to provide the lungs with sufficient oxygen.

The old saying that doing something the wrong way takes more effort than doing it the right way is especially applicable in the case of high breathers. High breathing requires a great deal more effort to supply the body with enough oxygen than breathing properly and deeply. High breathing concentrates the inhalations in the upper chest area, which holds the smallest amount of air. This of course means poor oxygenation for the body. Breathing in this manner lifts only the upper ribs and not the most important muscle in the respiration process, the diaphragm. By breathing with just the upper chest, a great deal of stale air tends to accumulate in the rest of the lungs. Aside from inhibiting the intake of oxygen, the lungs may begin to atrophy by losing much of their important elasticity. With improper ventilation one greatly increases one's susceptibility to contagious diseases and upper respiratory complications.

Demonstrate for yourself the inadequacies of high breathing. Standing or sitting erect, first raise your shoulders and collarbone and then inhale. Another method is to sit at your desk and lean forward as if reading or writing. Now inhale. In both examples you will find that you can breathe only as far down as your upper breast. The breath seems suddenly to stop short while the rest of your lungs remain unfilled. You can clearly see and feel how limited a method of respiration high breathing is. Later, when you learn the method of total breathing, you might want to compare the differences in oxygen intake and lung

expansion with high breathing. You will never return to insufficient breathing again.

Mid breathing is only a slight improvement over high breathing in terms of the amount of oxygen taken into the body. In addition to the top part of the lungs used in high breathing, mid breathing extends the breath down to the midsection in the area of the ribs. To demonstrate mid breathing, lift the entire rib cage, then inhale. You will feel the breath reach further down to the base of the rib section. Also notice that as you lifted the rib cage upward the stomach was slightly pulled in.

When the doctor tells you to "take a deep breath" and you breathe all the way to your stomach, you are practicing low breathing. Even though the lungs are employed far more extensively in low breathing than in any of the other forms of breathing, they are far from being completely filled with vital and necessary oxygen.

Total breathing is the most complete form of breathing. It fills the lungs to their maximum and uses every respiratory muscle. Total breathing employs all aspects of the previous three forms of breathing and then some. Not only are the chest and ribs lifted but also the intercostal muscles expand the ribs outward, providing a large space in which the lungs can be inflated to their maximum. To complete the fullness of this breath, the diaphragm enlarges further outward and pulls the lower ribs downward, which allows the very bottom part of the lungs, the largest and least used part of the lungs, to be filled completely with fresh air. As you can see, every possible cubic centimeter is used, along with a large percentage of chest, rib, and stomach muscles.

Total breathing will form the basis for the majority of our breathing work because of its complete use of the respiratory muscles and then any benefits that are derived from the increased oxygen intake and carbon dioxide release. By using total breathing in our various breathing programs we will be providing our lungs with a substantial oxygen base, ridding the body of toxins and supplying increased amounts of oxygen to every cell in our body.

Practice the following instructions for the total breath until it becomes an automatic way of breathing. Throughout the book we will show you how to put this method of breathing to your best use. You will discover through the practice of this one exercise how much breathing can affect your health and well-being.

Total Breath

1. Inhale slowly through the nose, directly aiming the breath about two inches below the belly button. This will fill the *lower* part of the lungs with air. As soon as you do this your stomach will begin to bulge out like a balloon.

2. As you continue the breath, fill the rest of the stomach area, then expand the rib section outward to the sides and fill the mid-section of the chest with air.

3. Finally, let the breath fill the uppermost part of the lungs by lifting up the chest area and letting it expand outward and to the side. The entire process should take about five seconds.

4. Now hold your breath for five seconds. Eventually with practice you should hold the breath for ten seconds to give the lungs a good chance to use and absorb all the oxygen.

5. To exhale, follow the process used for inhalation. Begin by gently contracting the lower stomach first. This will push out the air in the lowest part of the lungs that automatically carry with it the remaining air. As the lower lungs empty themselves of their air, the rib section will slowly deflate, followed by the upper chest. The exhalation should be done as slowly as the inhalation. Pause for a second or two before beginning the next inhalation.

Surprisingly, few athletes are aware of the important relationship between breath and performance. It is extremely rare that a coach will provide breathing exercises and techniques as part of an overall training program. Most people assume that their breathing will follow or at least keep up with their athletic performance. Even though the heart rate, circulation and the rate of respiration automatically increase with exertion, this natural response may not be enough to provide that extra push of strength when needed.

Probably more than any other factor, proper breathing is crucial to success in sports. During sports, oxygen serves as the body's major source of fuel. Our oxygen requirements increase at least tenfold during any physical exertion. This means that every cell in your body is in need of extra nutrients, more energy and increased metabolic exchange. The entire body is under pressure to keep all systems operating at maximum potential. Inadequate supplies of oxygen from improper breathing can seriously interfere with strength, endurance, flexibility, and concentration. Training, skill, and coordination can quickly be rendered useless if the body is not receiving

Continued on page 61

Short Shots



Up To The Top

The expression, "racquetball has reached its peak," now takes on a different meaning.

Actor Tim Culbertson will become the first person to take a racquetball racquet to the top of Mt. Everest, the highest mountain in the world at 29,028 feet. Culbertson, who has been seen as the Salem Man on highway billboards and in a recent movie with Richard Pryor, will be joining 10 other

Americans in an attempt to climb the mountain.

An avid mountain climber (as well as a snake trainer), Culbertson has climbed several other mountains, including California's Mt. Whitney.

Mt. Everest, located in the Himalayas outside of Nepal, has only been climbed by three Americans. Sir Edmund Hilary, the first to scale the mountain, was a New Zealander.

Certified Instructor

Most racquetball instructors are skilled players but that doesn't necessarily mean they are skilled teachers.

It is that theory that brought into play the American Professional Racquetball Organization (APRO), a group which says its function is to "develop, train, certify and maintain reputable and knowledgeable teaching professionals."

To become APRO-certified, it will cost you a minimum of \$50 and as much as \$90. Membership is \$35. The certification test is \$15. There is also a \$40 clinic, which is recommended as a good preparation for the testing.

Membership entitles teachers to instructional manuals, quarterly newsletters, a job bureau, access to a national rating system, a t-shirt with APRO logo, a certificate and a membership card.

Testing centers are set up regionally. Players can be designated "recognized teachers," "instructors," or "professionals." A player can always upgrade his or her credential at a later date.

According to APRO coordinator Nancy Taylor, there are close to 300 teaching pros certified by APRO with more being added regularly. The current certified instructors perform the clinics and tests for the would-be teacher.

For further information contact APRO at 730 Pine St., Deerfield, Ill. 60015. APRO President is Chuck Sheffel.

The Longest Game

Randy Cohen started a friendly game of racquetball at 10:00 one Saturday morning, September 27. The game wasn't finished until 8:00 in the evening—on October 7, ten and a half days later. This 250 hours of continuous play made it the

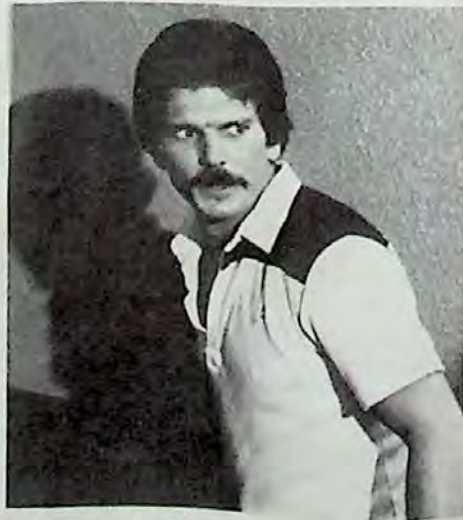


Photo by Milo Muslin

world's longest racquetball game, breaking the old racquetball marathon record by 10 hours.

This recordbreaking feat took place at the Rollout Racquetball Club in Northridge, Ca., as a benefit for the St. Jude Children's Hospital in Memphis, Tenn. The benefit raised over \$5,000, with more pledges still being collected.

Cohen, a sales representative for Marc Phillippe Jeans in Los Angeles, trained for two and a half months before the marathon. "I ran six to ten miles per day, and I ate right," he says. "And I normally play five to six hours of racquetball each evening."

The rules of the marathon are as follows: The player can take five minutes off per hour, and these minutes can accumulate over the course of the marathon. He can also take two minutes off after every 21-point game. Cohen says, "I went the first 65 hours straight, taking just the two minutes, and then I had five and a half hours of rest. But out of the 250 hours, I only slept 18."

During the marathon, Cohen found he was occasionally losing his moorings. After the third day out, he began asking, "Where am I?" "A club member told me, 'We're here at the club,'" Cohen relates. "No we're not," I said. "We're in Kansas City, Missouri." That's what was going on

in my head. I've never been there in my life."

Cohen also began to hallucinate that the walls of the racquetball court were curving in. "It took me a couple of hours to get used to that," he says. "You know, the balls bounce differently off curved walls."

After completing the marathon, Cohen was happy to find he had suffered no ill effects. "There was nothing wrong with me physically," he says. "I didn't hurt during the marathon and I don't hurt now. A doctor would check me everyday. They were amazed that everything in my body stayed the same." Though Cohen attributes his good health to "dirty living," it is more likely due to his athletic past. He played minor league baseball in the Dodgers, Orioles, and Giants organizations, from 1968 to 1974, and has been involved in a wide variety of sports—tennis, softball, running, football, etc.—on an amateur basis.

Cohen says that this experience merely confirmed his opinion that racquetball is the greatest sport. "I definitely would do a marathon again. And I certainly wasn't soured on racquetball," he says. "I finished on a Tuesday, and the following Friday I entered a club tournament." Unfortunately, Cohen lost in the first round. "The walls started curving in on me again," he admits.

\$14 Million Suit

Touring pro Marty Hogan and Leach Industries officer Charlie Drake have filed suit in San Diego, Calif. against pro Davey Bledsoe for libel. The suit asks for damages of \$14 million.

The suit stems from an article (Aug. 1980) appearing in *Racquetball Today*, a monthly tabloid newspaper out of Posen, Ill., which carried the headline "Bledsoe Blasts Mishandled Tours."

"I was almost forced to file a lawsuit. I was given no choice," said Drake. "If I didn't file a lawsuit, management (The Liggett Group) would always wonder why I didn't."

Drake also said the article "jeopardized his ability to negotiate on Marty's behalf" and that it limited his role in "soliciting sponsors" for the pro tour.

"The tour is fragile," said Drake. "If you read an article from a source (Bledsoe) reported to be somebody on the inside, then there leaves confusion in sponsors' minds. The confidence of those people is crucial."

Bledsoe declined to comment but it is known that he has retained an attorney. Sources close to the situation indicate there may be an out-of-court settlement.

Racquetball In Paradise



The 1980-81 NRC men's pro racquetball tour moves to Honolulu, Hawaii January 14-18, 1981 for the \$15,000 Catalina Classic.

The tourney will be held in the \$12 million Honolulu Club, located near Blaisdell Arena.

"The people in Hawaii have a keen appreciation for things done well and I know they are looking forward to seeing some quality racquetball," says Dave Glander, athletic director for the club. "The pros have been here before in fragments but this is the first time for a regular tour stop."

Although more of a "players club" with 15 courts, Glander says some portable seating will be set up on the two glass courts for spectators.

The Honolulu Club is part of an eight-story facility, which includes three restaurants ("The Good Earth," "Fridays," and the "Honolulu Club Restaurant"), a multi-purpose room for exercise classes, a bar/lounge which will seat over 200, an extensive weight equipment facility, and all the usual amenities.

Shorter Shots

Kennedy-Levy and Associates, a promotion firm based out of New York specializing in women's sports promotions, has signed an exclusive contract with the Women's Professional Racquetball Association. Kennedy-Levy will be looking for an umbrella sponsor for the women's pro tour...

Olympian, manufacturers of racquetball equipment with a main office in San Diego, Calif., has expanded its operations to Canada under the trade name Olympian Canada. President of the Canadian company is R. John Springer and offices will be located in Montreal, Calgary and Vancouver...

Steve Strandemo, Charlie Brumfield and Mike Yellen were elected to the board of directors of the newly formed Professional Racquetball Association (PRA). Organization-by-laws prohibit more than one player sponsored by any racquetball manufacturer from being voted to the board. Strandemo is sponsored by Head, Brumfield is with Leach and Yellen is signed with Ektelon...

John Beaulieu, author of the book *Stretching for All Sports*, has come up with a stretching chart poster which can be obtained for three dollars from P.O. Box 3288-R, Eugene, Ore., 97403.

CLUB NEWS

Editor's note: Beginning this month, our club news section will feature one club from each region of the country—West, Midwest, East, South. Clubs will be selected from the

Racquetball Illustrated Club Directory. For Club Directory listing information write Racquetball Illustrated, 7011 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood, Calif. 90028.



Metro Racquet Club Phoenix, Arizona

The focus is on women at the Metro Racquet Club, according to club owner Carole Weitzel. "We get a large number of singles and families, but we aim a lot of our programs at the housewife who can keep the courts occupied during daytime hours," she says.

The activities director, Carol Nalevanko, has developed a wide range of activities for women, including many daytime league

events, challenge matches, and round robin "fun days." The club pro, Moria Winter, also has a special interest in helping women.

The club does not schedule many tournaments, however. "Tournaments don't go over well," Weitzel explains. "The majority of our members play for fun."

In line with this fun approach, the club offers a variety of entertainment particularly designed to interest women and families. These include talent shows, pot lucks, and different holiday events. Recently the club presented a fashion show, using club members as models.

Metro Racquetball Club has been attracting its non-competitive racquetball fans since it opened in June 1977 with 10 racquetball courts, six tennis courts, a Universal weight room, sauna, and jacuzzi. Although this past summer has been less active than normal due to the economic situation in the area, Weitzel says that Phoenix usually escapes the slowdown which affects most racquetball clubs in the summer. "Most people want to get away from the 107 to 120 degree heat in the summer," she says. "And an air conditioned racquetball court is a good place to go."

Bentley Club and Courts Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

If you have a sports-related injury in Harrisburg, Pa., you may be rushed—not to a hospital—but to the Bentley Club and Courts, which has a complete sports medicine facility. "We have a physical therapist on the staff and two doctors who act in an advisory capacity," explains James Spooner, owner of the club. "We are equipped to handle all aspects of sports medicine, including intensive rehabilitation. Since none of the hospitals around here have such an advanced clinic, we do a lot of outside work,

especially for insurance companies."

Despite the advantages of this service for the sprain- and strain-prone racquetball player, Spooner says that most members are more appreciative of the club's many other features including eight racquetball courts, a complete dining room and cocktail lounge, and Nautilus equipment. John Friend, the club pro, is on hand to use his skills as both a racquetball expert and a former school teacher to coach club members. The club also provides an Olympic-size swimming pool, a reminder of Bentley Club's origin as a swim club. Spooner transformed the pools into courts in 1975, thus producing one of the first racquetball court clubs in the East.

Since only one other club has opened in the immediate area, this two million dollar, six-acre facility still has little competition. "There may be a leveling off of racquetball, but it hasn't made much of a difference here," says Spooner.

To promote the interest in racquetball, the club sponsors two open tournaments each year, one in February and one in August. Each tournament draws approximately 200 people from all over the East Coast. Despite the fierce tournament competition, Spooner describes his typical club member as "not very competitive." He explains, "They just like to come in and play every once in a while."

Kendall Racquetball and Health Club Miami, Florida

Dominick Parlapiano, manager of the Kendall Racquetball and Health Club, thinks it's great that Miami lags six months behind the rest of the country. "Though nationally the racquetball peak has come and passed," Parlapiano says, "We're still in a great growth period."

The club has been enjoying the racquetball boom since its opening in December, 1978. It's a full service facility, with 11 courts, a Nautilus fitness center, a health club, a restaurant, and a pro shop.

The club's latest offering is a new club pro, Alan Cohen, who took the place of Tim McAuliffe, the previous pro, who left to become a stock broker. "Tim was probably the best player in the area," says Parlapiano. "But Alan is the better teacher."

Parlapiano reports that the club's most successful activity is their Sunday brunch, which is followed by an active session of drinking beer, eating popcorn, and watching football on television. However, racquetball spirit is also high, and the club sponsored an extremely successful tournament for the Muscular Dystrophy Foundation last year. "In three days of the tournament we had three to four thousand people passing through, and we raised \$10,000," he says. The club plans to sponsor another such event in February, 1981, and expects to raise \$15,000 at this one.

Ann Arbor Court Club Ann Arbor, Michigan

Racquetball enthusiasts suffering from insomnia might consider moving to Ann Arbor, Mich., where they could play away their anxieties at the Ann Arbor Court Club until 4 a.m. "There's an awful lot of night owls in this town," says Bob Hanna, the manager and owner. "It's not uncommon to need a reservation after midnight. At 2:00 a.m. we're still going strong. In fact, we have a 50 to 60 per cent occupancy rate at those hours."

To fill its 13 courts, the Ann Arbor Court Club must draw their early morning players away from 99 other courts within a 10-mile radius. Under these circumstances, it's lucky that Hanna believes "competition is good for you." To meet the competition, the club offers such amenities as a sauna, whirlpool, complete women's exercise program, Nautilus machines, and a teaching staff drawn from the city's best players. A regular pizza, beer, and racquetball party is particularly appreciated by the members. Hanna also speeds up club operations with the help of "Big Brother"—a computer programmed to take care of court reservations, memberships, league

standings, and all other club business.

In order to widen his potential market, Hanna has opened his courts to paddleball as well as racquetball players. The two sports coexist peacefully. In fact, the club has hosted the National Paddleball Doubles Championships, as well as semi-annual racquetball tournaments which draw over 150 participants from the Michigan area.



Although Hanna's efforts have made him successful in a highly competitive area, there is one thing he can't compete against—the University of Michigan's home football games. "We have zero occupancy when they play. You just can't compete with 105,000 people who want to watch their team win," he complains. What does Hanna do at these times? "I sit back, relax, and turn on the football game, of course."

Etc.

- Athletic Clubs International, developer and general partner of the International Athletic Club of Denver, has announced development of a satellite facility in suburban Aurora, Colo. The club will be part of a business-hotel-convention center and will feature 12 racquetball courts, two squash courts, indoor running track, gym and Nautilus area, lap pool, Don The Beachcomber restaurant, office buildings and a 300-room hotel. Construction will begin January, 1981.

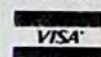
- Spaulding Racquetball Clubs, Inc., have agreed to manage the 9-court Castle Oak racquetball facility in St. Louis.

- Eastern Oregon Sports (Ontario) junior team defeated Tri-Mountain Athletic Club's (La Grande) junior team, 9-0, in duel competition at the La Grande club.



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TOURNAMENTS



Don Thomas has Mike Yellen trapped in backcourt for an easy point in finals of Coors Grand Prix I in Omaha, Neb. Yellen won the match, 21-13, 21-7.

Photos by Grant LeDuc

Coors Grand Prix

By Tom Morrow

It was a tournament of surprises from beginning to end—starting with a series of upsets and ending with a new number one seed for professional racquetball.

Mike Yellen of Southfield, Mich., defeated Don Thomas of Mesa, Az., 21-13, 21-7, in the final round of the Coors Racquetball Grand Prix I tournament at Sports Courts in Omaha, Neb., to take the \$4,500 first prize money and the nation's number one ranking.

Yellen, 20, downed Mike Levine, Ben Koltun, Steve Strandemo and Rich Wagner before meeting Thomas in the final round of the National Racquetball Club's second tour stop. The tournament was the first in a series of Coors Grand Prix of Racquetball events.

Yellen's emergence as the number one pro

came as a surprise but he has been close on the heels of Marty Hogan for quite some time.

The real surprise came from the outstanding play of young players such as Gregg Peck, Bobby Bolan, Gary Berberet, Kyle Kamalu, Scott Hawkins and John Eggerman.

Biggest shock of the event was 17-year-old Peck who handily defeated 11th-seeded Dave Bledsoe in the first round, 7th-seeded Craig McCoy in the second round and top-seeded Marty Hogan in the quarterfinals.

Dan Bertolucci, executive director for the NRC and referee for the Hogan-Peck quarterfinal match, said it was probably one of the "most exciting and best-played racquetball matches I've seen yet."

Peck, who is a senior at Irving High School in El Paso, Tex., beat Hogan at his own game—power racquetball. Younger brother of fourth-seeded Dave Peck, Gregg played Hogan close, almost shot-for-shot, winning in

a tie-breaker, 21-14, 20-21, 11-10.

Thomas continued to play solid racquetball in his continuing rise to the top of the professional ranks. Seeded fifth going into Omaha, Thomas downed Ross Harvey, a stubborn Kamalu; long-time playing partner and friend Bolan and young Peck in the semifinal round. Gregg did not play the caliber of ball against Thomas that he had played the night before against Hogan. Thomas, who is known as one of the hardest working players on the tour, put the youngster away rather quickly, 21-10, 21-3, for the chance to meet Yellen in the finals.

Rich Wagner of San Diego began to show some of his old form of last season by upsetting third-seeded Jerry Hilecher in the quarterfinal round. Hilecher made quick work of Wagner in the first game of the match (21-3), but the 26-year-old native of St. Louis began skipping the ball and Wagner took

advantage and the match 3-21, 21-10, 11-2.

It was a different story for Wagner in the semifinal round and Thomas in the final round as they seemed to buckle under to the cool, consistent play of Yellen. Although Wagner and Thomas showed sparks of top playing form in their respective matches with racquetball's new top seed, neither were able to keep up as the 20-year-old Yellen defeated them both in two games.

"I try to play each match the best I know how," said Yellen. "The preparation for competition is all in the workouts. You can't prepare for a tournament at the tournament. You are there to perform and you must prepare for that performance in advance.

"You can bet Marty will be coming back strong to try and regain his number one seed but I'm going to work even harder to see that he doesn't."

Hogan actually predicted his own demise. In an interview with an Omaha television reporter, he said, "It's not the fellas I've been playing with these past few years who have me worried. I know them and their style of play. It's the 16- and 17-year-old players who have me worried."

"Quite a few of the younger players are beginning to catch up with Marty," Yellen said. "These young guys are hungry for the glory and recognition he's had these past four years."

1st Round

Marty Hogan d. Dave Fleetwood 20-21, 21-8, 11-5; Keith Dunlap d. Mark Morrow 20-21, 21-11, 11-4; Gregg Peck d. Dave Bledsoe 21-9, 21-12; Craig McCoy d. Jerry Zuckerman 12-21, 21-14, 11-2; Don Thomas d. Ross Harvey 21-12, 21-15; Kyle Kamalu d. Steve Serot 21-9, 21-8; Bob Bolan d. Charlie Brumfield 21-8, 21-16; Gary Berberet d. Dave Peck 17-21, 21-5, 11-4; Jerry Hilecher d. Larry Meyers 21-8, 21-15; Bruce Christiansen d. Beaver Wickham 21-7, 21-13; Rich Wagner d. Dan Factor 21-5, 19-21, 11-6; Scott Hawkins d. Lindsay Myers 6-21, 21-20, 11-7; John Egerman d. Doug Cohen 21-10, 16-21, 11-6; Steve Strandemo d. Dennis McDowell 21-15, 16-21, 11-5;

Ben Koltun d. Ken Kaihlanen 21-19, 21-16; Mike Yellen d. Mike Levine 21-6, 21-15.

2nd Round

Hogan d. Dunlap 21-13, 21-14; G. Peck d. McCoy 21-13, 21-17; Thomas d. Kamalu 12-21, 21-20, 11-4; Bolan d. Berberet 21-20, 11-21, 11-9; Hilecher d. Christiansen 21-8, 21-3; Wagner d. Hawkins 21-15, 18-21, 11-10; Standemo d. Egerman 21-15, 21-11; Yellen d. Koltun 17-21, 21-8, 11-6.

Quarterfinals

G. Peck d. Hogan 21-14, 20-21, 11-10; Thomas d. Bolan 21-19, 18-21, 11-6; Wagner d. Hilecher 3-21, 21-10, 11-2; Yellen d. Strandemo 21-14, 21-15.

Semi Finals

Thomas d. G. Peck 21-10, 21-3; Yellen d. Wagner 21-18, 21-13.

Finals

Yellen d. Thomas 21-13, 21-7.

National Mixed Doubles

The doubles team of Dr. Bud Muehleisen of San Diego, Calif. and Lynn Adams of Costa Mesa, Calif. survived a three-way tie to win the \$30,000 National Mixed Doubles Championships at Winning Walls Racquetball Club in Port Chester, N.Y. This first tournament devoted exclusively to mixed doubles was co-sponsored by AMF Voit, Inc. and AMF Head, Inc.

Since only seven teams entered the pro division, play was conducted on a round robin basis.

In the first game of the round robin semis, Muehleisen/Adams were defeated by the team of Lindsay Myers, Vancouver, B.C., and Vicki Panzeri.

Myers/Panzeri next lost to the team of Dave Peck of El Paso, Tex. and Shannon Wright of Las Vegas, Nev.

Peck/Wright then lost to Muehleisen/Adams, 15-9, 15-7.

Since all three teams had logged 1-1 records in the round robin semis, there existed a three-way tie for first place.

A provision had been made that in a tie situation, the winner would become the team with the fewest points scored against them.

Thus, Muehleisen/Adams took first place, Peck/Wright became runners-up, Myers/Panzeri took third and Steve Mondry and Marci Greer took fourth seats.

Fifth were Mark Malowitz and Peggy Steding and Steve Keeley teamed with Bonnie Stoll for sixth.

Muehleisen/Adams each received a new Harley-Davidson motorcycle valued at over \$5,000.

Runners-up Peck/Wright each earned an Alcott Sunfish sailboat, with semi and quarter-finalist winners collecting their choices of



Yellen goes off-balance to score point against Thomas in match that elevated Mike to the number one spot on the pro tour.

TOURNAMENTS



Photos courtesy AMF Voit

James Casclo gets set to hit ball while partner Linda Kennedy moves to get out of the way in open division finals against Ruben Gonzalez and Melanie Taylor in AMF Mixed Doubles Nationals in New York. Gonzalez and Taylor won. Right: Lindsay Myers, Dave Peck and Shannon Wright are bunched up while watching Vicki Panzari shoot a passing shot down the line in pro division match. Peck/Wright won match but Dr. Bud Muehleisen and Lynn Adams took first in the tournament.

Cartoon by Tony Saltzman



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In open division championship play, the team of Ruben Gonzalez, New York, and Melanie Taylor, Montclair, N.J., defeated runners-up James Cascio and Linda Kennedy, 4-11, 11-3, 11-1, 11-0. The winners

won sailboats.

B Division champs were Sam Barrera and Debbie Pallas, both of Bronx, N.Y., who beat Michael Clifford and Karen Kimmerling, 3-11, 11-1, 11-7, 9-11, 11-7.

In the C/Novice Division, Peter Franceschi

of Scarsdale, N.Y. and Carrie Montalbano, Yonkers, N.Y. topped Richard and Joyce Greenwald.

A total of 165 teams entered the tournament. Over 1,500 spectators were on hand over the three days of play.

Southern Cal Grand Prix

Steve Lerner, a teenager from Riverside, Calif., upset top-seeded Bruce Radford, 21-19, 21-9, to win the men's open division of the Southern California Grand Prix put on by Creative Tournaments at the Del-Amo All Pro Athletic Club in Torrance, Calif.

Radford drove out to a 6-3 lead in the first game and Lerner rallied for a 16-10 advantage. Lerner led 20-16 before Radford closed the gap to one point before Lerner put it away. Lerner, who was seeded sixth, led 9-1 in the second game and coasted in.

Lerner defeated Dan Masari, 21-8, 21-5, and Radford topped John Mack, 1-11, 21-14, in the semis.

Cindy Moore defeated Elly Hertz, 21-13, 21-13, in the women's open. Moore, who stuck to lob serves to offset the power of Hertz, overcame a 9-0 deficit in the first game



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Cindy Moore gets set for a backhand shot against Elly Hertz in women's finals of the Southern California Grand Prix won by Moore. Left: Steve Lerner won the men's open over Bruce Radford.



before taking charge at 13-12. Moore was up 8-0 in the second game but Hertz led 13-11 before Moore ran it out.

Hertz defeated Mary Rawle, 20-21, 21-15, 11-2, and Moore defeated Michele Busacca, 21-14, 21-19, in the semis.

Mike Bell-Irving won the men's B with an 18-21, 21-14, 11-9 decision over Wayne Treloggen. Treloggen had a 9-1 lead in the decider. Eileen Hegel defeated Susan Richards, 8-21, 21-11, 11-5, in the women's B finale.

Bill Fearing won the men's seniors with a 21-7, 21-1 decision over Jerry Conine and Joy Desantis won the women's seniors with a 21-7, 21-7 victory over Joanne Kennedy. Lee

Pretner took the men's masters with a 6-21, 21-12, 11-3 win over Jay Strem.

Keith Fleming and Ken Garrigus won the men's doubles by defeating Masari and Mack, 12-21, 21-15, 11-8 and Radford teamed with Hertz to win the mixed doubles.

Other winners were Jeff Conine and Robbin Honeycutt (C singles), Paul DeJesus-Sue MacInnis (B mixed doubles), Jeff Conine-Phil Brooks (men's B doubles), Han-Yothers (men's C doubles), Verner-Honeycutt (C mixed doubles).

Tourney sponsors included Penn, R Company Sportswear, Squincher, Banana Boat tanning cream and *Racquetball Illustrated*.

WPRA By Carole George

Heather McKay of Toronto defeated Marci Greer of San Diego, 21-5, 21-16, in the finals of the WPRA's Escondido, Calif. tourney, and regained her number one ranking. McKay had some trouble disposing of Lynn Adams in the semis. She led 11-10 in both games before winning 21-10, 21-12. Adams, the third-ranked woman player in the nation, has lost to McKay in nearly every tournament she has entered. "Lynn's sick of meeting me in the semis, I can tell you that," McKay laughed.

Marci Greer showed an unusually strong game, defeating Shannon Wright in the semis, 10-21, 21-18, and 11-5. "I found that Marci is much more consistent now than the

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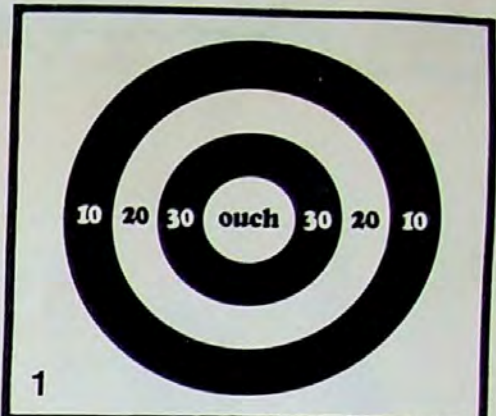
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Photo by Carol George

Heather McKay gets set to roll one out against Marci Greer in finals of WPRO event in Escondido, Calif. McKay won 21-5, 21-16.

first time I played her in Tempe, Ariz. last year. She used to be either hot or cold. But this time I felt she had good steady games all the way through the tournament, and that's what got her to the finals," said McKay.

Wright took her loss in the semis well. "I just didn't get up for this tournament and I'm glad to be going home," she said. Her lack of mental toughness was apparent in the opening rounds, where she usually puts her opponents away with record speed. However,

Hope Weisbach was able to score 19 and 14, Sheryl Ambler reached double figures in both games, and Rita Hoff lost 21-16, 21-8 in the quarters.

In the other quarter-final matches, Greer played her best against fifth-ranked Sarah Green, defeating her 21-8, 21-13. Adams took out Bonnie Stoll of Connecticut, who recently jumped into the top 10. Fran Davis of New Jersey raised her ranking by meeting McKay in the quarters. This time the score of

21-6, 21-13 was more respectable for Davis than the last time the two played in Newport Beach, Calif.

In the first round, the current WPRO national amateur champion, Laura Martino, defeated Karin Walton-Trent in a seesaw match, 9-21, 21-12, 11-5. Martino then lost 21-18, 6-21, 11-9 to Stoll.

Also in the first round Mary Dee defeated Peggy Steding, 21-17, 21-16.

Eighteen-year-old Brenda Poe of Florida defended her top seed in the amateurs by defeating San Diego's Vicki Ross 11-4 in the tie-breaker.

Larry Meyers defeated Ed Andrews in the men's open.

Greer, who had taken full responsibility for organizing the tournament, remarked, "This was a good experience for me, but I don't think I'd want to do the whole thing again. I have to forget everything else and just concentrate on my racquetball game."

Etc.

● Greg Maloley of Massachusetts defeated Jeff McDowell of Illinois, 21-17, 21-10, to win the National Court Clubs Association (NCCA) national amateur tourney at the Glass Court Club in Lombard, Ill. Janet Ceglinski won the women's round robin.

● Lindsay Myers defeated Wayne Bowes, 21-18, 13-21, 11-10 and Heather McKay topped Dena Rassenti, 21-6, 21-10, to win the 10th annual Klondike Canadian Open championships in Edmonton, Alberta. Bowes teamed with Bob Daku for the men's open doubles crown and Rassenti teamed with Heather Stupp for the women's doubles title.

● Dino Owens defeated Larry Fuller, 21-10, 21-15 and Linda Schulte topped Ann Wooten, 21-2, 21-5, to win the King's tourney at King's Court in Amarillo, Tex. Bob Lindsay and Mike Jennings won the "A" doubles and Candy Smith teamed with Doris Reed for the women's title.

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substantial amounts of oxygen.

During sports, we have increased fuel requirements in order to supply the energy and meet the needs of physical stress. Every part of the body is being pushed to meet the requirements of physical exertion. With the body working at peak capacity, it is especially crucial that it be thoroughly oxygenated.

With this increase in physical activity, the body generates added amounts of carbon dioxide. Carbon dioxide is a waste product that, if not immediately disposed of through proper breathing, begins to build up in the bloodstream. This leaves less room for the incoming fresh oxygen that is so vitally needed. With more carbon dioxide and less oxygen in the body, fatigue quickly sets in. The presence of too much carbon dioxide can also lead to physical complications. As the toxins accumulate the athlete may find himself having problems with tendons, wrists, elbows, knees and ankles—the most important body parts for sports performance.

Coordination is one of the most important requirements for success in sports. During a play we are usually so caught up in where our hands should be, how hard to hit the ball, when to speed up and when to slow down that we are unable to unify our actions. Rhythmic breathing can set the basic pace with which we coordinate every movement for improved efficiency, impact and, ultimately, winning. Instead of worrying about ten things at once—where the opponent is standing, how fast to run or when to jump—all you do is breathe. The body and the game then take care of themselves. Each movement follows the next in graceful succession. By timing your movements with your breath you develop an integrated approach to sports. Concentration then becomes easy and focused. All of the distractions that usually arise during sports disappear with each breath.

Tennis/Racquetball

In tennis and racquetball, power and concentration can mean a successful backhand and forehand. Proper breathing should be used throughout the game to insure correct form and prevent fatigue. Many times during athletics, players are so concerned with winning that they retain their breath instead of fully exhaling.

For any shot you should inhale the total breath as the arm moves backward in preparation for the swing. Do not fill the lungs so completely that the body becomes stiff because of an inflated rib cage. A normal breath will do. Smoothly exhale as you swing. This will enable you to focus your body and mind on the shot. As soon as you hit the ball, finish the exhalation in a single huff through an open mouth. This will give your hit more power and will force you to concentrate on the hit itself. Then close the mouth, inhale and prepare for the next shot. If your lung capacity is sufficiently developed and your game of tennis or racquetball is fast enough, you should be able to time your breathing pattern with your swings.



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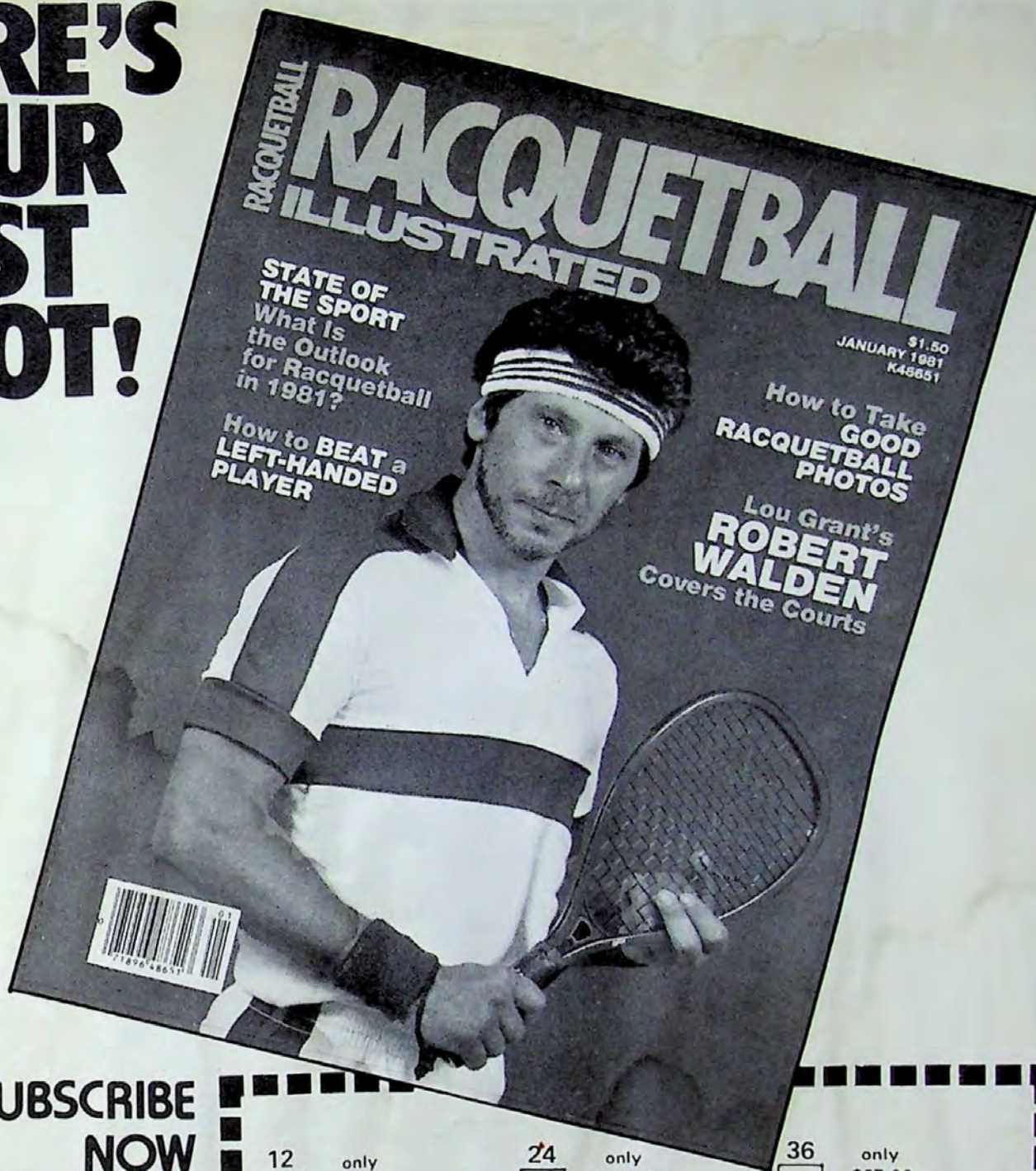
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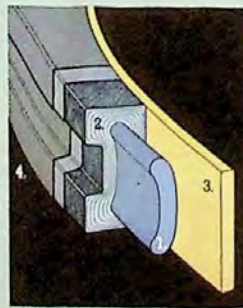
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