



New Hampshire Racquetball Association's

Rollout

The USAR Affiliate in New Hampshire • December 2004

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Upcoming Events

November

Seacoast Shootout
Gold's Gym, Portsmouth, NH
November 19 - 21, 2004

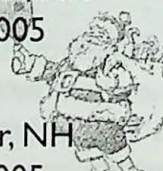
December

New Hampshire State Doubles
NAC, Nashua, NH
December 3 - 5, 2004

January

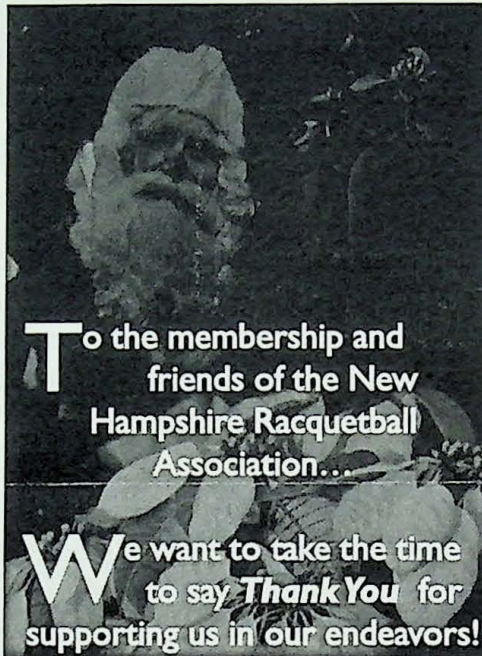
B/C Challenge
GBAC, Newmarket, NH
January 14 - 16, 2005

Mitch Nathanson
EHSC, Manchester, NH
January 28 - 30, 2005



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Message from the President



To the membership and friends of the New Hampshire Racquetball Association...

We want to take the time to say **Thank You** for supporting us in our endeavors!

This past year and we hope to make 2005 even more special.

We wish each of you and your families happiness, health and good fortune in the

New year. Savor the time you have with your family while you have it.

Happy Holidays,

Kelley, Tony, Chris, Ron B, Ron Bye, Suzanne

Equipment Demonstrations

Would you be interested in having a Demo Night at your club?

The NHRA is doing Demo Nights and would be more than happy to come to your club in the evening, usually 6 to 8 PM.

Members would have a chance to try out any racquet, (Ektelon, Wilson, E-

Force, Head or Pro Kennex). How many of you have bought a racquet without ever really testing it or any of the others?**continued on page 3**



2003-2004
NHRA Board

Kelley Beane

Tony Bruzzese

Chris Zalegowski

John Varrill

Suzanne Gale

Ron Bouchard

Mike Normand

Ron Bye

Newsletter Editor
Stacey Bruzzese
The Final Details



Take lessons first!

An important consideration in drilling is whether you are practicing with correct form. If not, all you're doing is reinforcing poor form when you practice. So I strongly recommend at least a few lessons to improve swing technique. You'll get more attention if you take lessons as an individual, but one of the best 3 day racquetball camps is Fran Davis racquetball camp. Anyway, a lot of the technique stuff is completely unintuitive so taking lessons is the fastest way to get good and avoid lifelong bad habits.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

RECORD BREAKING DOUGHNUT?!

On behalf of the NHRA, we would like to congratulate Tom Christy of Concord for receiving his 25th doughnut a couple weeks back at the Executive Health & Sports Center courtesy of Chris Zalegowski. When asked about this unique accomplishment all Tom had to say was: "Chris is my daddy!"



Tom is planning a New England wide doughnut tour this season starting at the Capitol Open and continuing on to NH State Doubles, Mitch Nathanson, NH State Single and the Green Mountain Open with the premise being to promote his new book "How to take a doughnut like a man!" (Due out in January 2005)

Congrats Tom on this amazing accomplishment! You should take pride in knowing it will without a doubt be a record that will never be accomplished by any other player.

SMOOTHIE OPERATOR



The state of New Hampshire has recently declared a state of emergency based on a shortage of smoothies. Due to the severity of this claim, the NHRA took it upon themselves to research this mysterious and bizarre phenomenon. After days of research, we discovered that Dennis Vallaincourt opened a challenge to all players that whoever can beat him, he will buy them a smoothie. It has gotten so bad that friends close to the situation have hinted that he is looking to Canada now to provide him the necessary ingredients to pay off what he owes.

We please ask that you do not contact Dennis for a game at this point because as of right now, there is a 3 month waiting list. Who knew NH had so many smoothie drinkers? If you want to help Dennis become an honorary member of a smoothie club, please contact the NHRA with more information.

Equipment Demos Cont'd



from front page... We will have representatives there who can give you the scoop on any racquet. Try one or try them all. See how hard you hit the ball with our Radar Gun. We'll also have discounts on any equipment along with great deals on your USRA renewals.

There will also be goggles, gloves, and shoes on display for your inspection. There is no charge for these events.

The NHRA has already had Demos at Great Bay in Newmarket, UNH, The Works in Somersworth, Nashua Athletic Club and the Executive Health Club. The Great Bay Demo was the first of the season and had a lot of players looking to replace their equipment for the upcoming season. This was the third consecutive year that we have had a Demo at Great Bay. All of them have been met with a great deal of enthusiasm. Our thanks to Jean Lerch for setting it up again this year.

At UNH we got to see some of the hockey players from the Nationally ranked UNH Hockey team play racquetball. We all agreed that they must be better hockey players than racquetball players although they



were entertaining. We had about 40 people stop by to talk to us and try out the racquets. Intramural Director David Leach was so pleased with this Demo that he invited back for a second one later in the season. Pat Sims organized the Works which also was very successful with 30 or more people stopping to look and test. Pat is also this month's Spotlight Player - Congratulations Pat!

Our most recent Demo was held at the Nashua Athletic club and was the most attended Demo we've held. Kudos go out to Dick and Carmen Dyer for their efforts in organizing this one. These Demos bring the members in to the club for a fun night of activities, so why not give it a shot. To schedule a Demo simply e-mail Ron Bouchard at ronboo@comcast.net.

NH PLAYERS RANKED IN THE TOP 10 NATIONALLY

Scott Reiff
Men's Open, #4(T)

Chris Zalegowski
Men's Open, #4(T);
Men's 30+, #5

Greg West
Men's C, #10

David Lynch
Men's Novice, #1(T)

Mitch Milewski
Men's 60+, #3

Matt Keddie
Boy's 14-, #2

Pat Sims
Women's A, #3

Deb Irvine
Women's A, #10

Teresa LaBrie
Women's B, #2(T)

Jean Lerch
Women's C, #2

Jane Scobi
Women's D, #4

Kim Roy
Women's D, #5(T)

Jolene Sullivan:
Women's D, #5(T)

Martha Robinson:
Women's D, #7

Eliza Gettel
Women's Novice, #2;
Girl's 14-, #9(T)

Sarah Keddie
Girl's 10-, #4

Lauren Lydon
Girl's 10-, #9



The Value of Coaching • Ron Bye



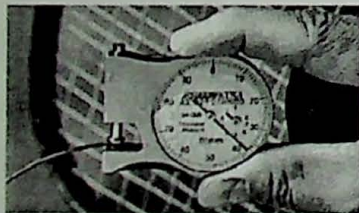
Have you ever considered getting some coaching to improve your game? I have now been playing competitively for a few years and I would so strongly encourage anyone to seek out some good coaching. It is nearly impossible to fully analyze and evaluate your own game, you simply can't be playing and see all that you do or fail to do to improve your game. I have been very fortunate and gotten some of the best coaching available and I can't begin to tell you how much that has benefited my game. Several years ago I began to develop tendonitis and knew it was a result of swing mechanics but could not determine what was going wrong. That was probably what pushed me to seek coaching most. In addition, my game had pretty much become static with little or no continued improvement. I decided it was time to seek professional help and scheduled to meet with Kelley Beane (she does not have "Ph.D." or "Md." after her name... however she probably should based on the psychological and physiological services she provided). Within literally minutes she had determined the root cause of my tendonitis and after making the changes in my backhand swing and the **continued on page 9**

STRING GAUGE: The Basic Choice • Steve Crandall

By Steve Crandall
Vice President, Sales & Marketing
Ashaway Racket String

The most important variable in racquetball string is its gauge, also known as diameter or thickness. Tournament players may boast about using super-responsive 18-gauge string, but what does that mean, and how does string gauge affect play?

String gauge is designated numerically, with thicker strings having lower numbers, as shown in the table:



RACQUET STRING DIAMETERS

Gauge	Diameter Range (mm)
15	1.41 - 1.49
15L	1.33 - 1.41
16	1.26 - 1.34

17	1.16 - 1.26
18	1.06 - 1.16

The gauge designations were originally based on standard industrial wire gauge sizes, but as manufacturers began developing racquet string in a variety of different sizes, the industry agreed that the numbers would represent a range of allowable diameters, rather than a single, exact size. All

consumer string packaging indicates the size at least as a gauge designation: some packages include the diameter in millimeters as well.

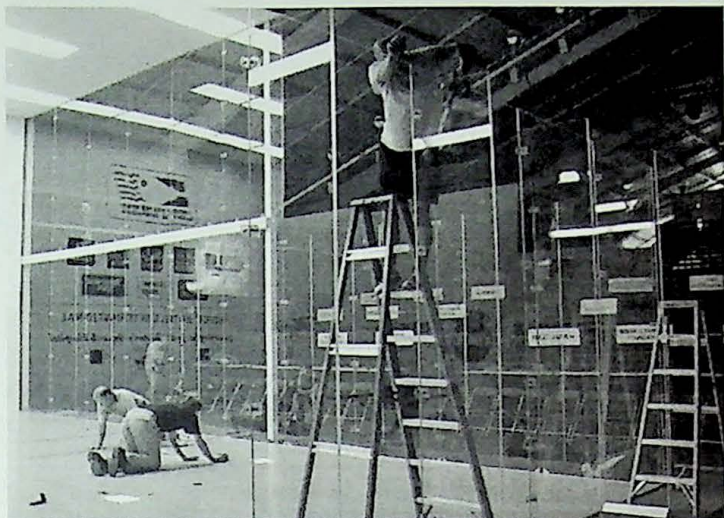
The "L" in the 15L gauge stands for "light." Note how 15L and 16 gauge overlap, so that diameters of 1.33 mm and 1.34 mm can be properly called either one. Within that overlap, the only difference is a question of marketing.

A note of caution: if you're going to measure string thickness with a wire gauge or a micrometer, make sure you do it with the string off the racquet, under no tension -- in other words, before the racquet is strung. Thickness decreases when a string is stretched at 25 lb. to 50 lb. of tension, and a reading taken under those conditions can be misleading.

As you would suspect, thick and thin strings perform differently in the racquet. No one size is best for all players. Different playing styles lead players to choose different combinations of performance characteristics. We'll take up just one of the properties here -- that of durability.

Thick string lasts longer than thin string. Assuming that two strings are made of the same materials, and use the same construction, ...**continued on page 11**





For my second year in a row, I have taken a week's vacation to fly to Memphis and work for the US Open in the media department. I have always been curious about what it takes to run a "Grand Slam" type of event – I've been watching the tennis slams on TV for as long as I can remember and have always wanted to be there, to saturate myself in a sport I love for a whole week. Watching the best players in the world competing for the biggest trophy of the year is something every sports fan dreams of – racquetball fans get the added bonus of how close the elite players are to their fan base. It doesn't matter what kind of pass you have – the pros wander around all week and love to talk to their fans.

I've found that the absolute best days for racquetball are Thursday and Friday during the early rounds. The biggest names will play on the portable glass show court, but only one top-ranked player can be the marquee match at one time, so all of the other athletes play their early round matches on the back courts, 4 of them lined up side by side. You can sit in bleachers that are only a few feet away from

the glass-backed courts and see Cliff Swain, Jason Manino, Rocky Carson, Derek Robinson, Shane Vanderson, Alvaro Beltran and everyone else battle it out in adjacent courts. They are playing matches against the lower-ranked top 20 pros or qualifiers that have won 2 qualifying matches just to get into the main draw.

Come back on Friday and see the winners of those men's matches go at it again, and also check out Rhonda Rajsich, Christie Van Hees, Kim Russell, Kristen Walsh and all of the women doing the same thing. If you want to see Kane Waselenchuk or Cheryl Gudinas play, you'll have to go to the show court, but the great thing is that they kept playing until Sunday. So by skipping their early round decimations, I was able to watch some really exciting matches. I saw Cliff Swain dismantle 3 opponents in 2 days in brutal fashion, then watched Alvaro Beltran self-destruct against qualifier Kyle Veenstra. Lots of great juniors playing as well – little-known Paola Longoria Lopez defeated both Adrienne Fisher and Susy Acosta in succession on those back courts before being shown the door by Rhonda

Rajsich. Interesting side note: during her post-match speech, an unfazed Paola stated she had a great experience playing Rhonda, and that next year Rhonda would be on the losing end. Strong words from a 15 year old girl! Paola is a 3-time Junior Mexican World Champion, but no one saw these upsets coming, for a teenager to defeat the #6 and #11 players back to back.

The behind the scenes action is pretty interesting too – there are press interns from the University of Memphis following the top players all week, watching their matches, getting interviews and getting their releases into as many media outlets as possible. The event's website is hopping too, with match updates, pictures, live radio broadcast (this year featured John Ellis as the play-by-play commentator) and interviews with all of the players. Actually setting up the event itself



is a huge undertaking – prior to the influx of pro and amateur player matches starting on Wednesday (in addition to the pro matches there were ~750 amateur players playing tournaments spread **continued on page 8.....**



2004 CAPITOL OPEN

Nov. 5th - 7th at the Racquet Club of Concord

			3rd	4th
	Scott Reiff, NH	Jaime Boucher, NH	Alok Mehta, MA	Mike Keddie, NH
	Gary Walsh, NH	Tom Christy, NH	Dan Story, NH	Jon Dyer, NH
	Greg West, NH	Bob Burgess, NH	Carl Hassum, NH	Fahid Abidi, NH
	John Lynch, NH	James Dammann, NH	Paul Judice, RI	Russ McCumber, VT
MENS D	Paul Judice, RI	Russ McCumber, VT	John Pepin, NH	Venkatesh Natarajan, NH
MENS C	Alok Mehta, MA	Ralph Grillone, MA	Bruce McCumber, VT	
MENS B	Paul Wallace, NH	Phil Robbins, NH	John Varrill, NH	Jack Beneway, MA
WOMENS B	Jolene Sullivan, NH	Jane McClung, NH	Suzanne Gale, NH	Judy Lafrance-Foote, NH
WOMENS C	Cathy Doucet, NH	Jodi Grillone, MA	Tia Merrill, NH	Shelli Boucher, NH
MENS OPEN	Alok Mehta, MA	Jaime Boucher, NH	Mike Keddie, NH	Scott Robinson, NH
DOUBLES	Paul Wallace, NH	Dave Ryan, NH	Phil Robbins, NH	John Varrill, NH
MENS A	Jon Dyer, NH	Gary Walsh, NH	Marco Labonte, NH	Norm Boucher, NH
DOUBLES	Paul Pierce, MA	Tom Christy, NH	Dick Dyer, NH	Dave Fortin, NH
MENS B/C	Justin Dyer, NH	Andy Karwocki, NH	John Lynch, NH	Ron Bouchard, NH
DOUBLES	Greg West, NH	Bill Taranovich, NH	Ed Gauntt, NH	John Acampora, NH
WOMENS A	Cindy Aldous, NH	Ana Veiga, NH	Ruth Lugar, NH	Shelli Boucher, NH
DOUBLES	Carmen Dyer, NH	Patty Thomas-Danos, MA	Tia Merrill, NH	Chris Sabbow, NH
MIXED A	Marco Labonte, NH	Murray Aldous, NH	Paul Pierce, MA	Dan Story, NH
DOUBLES	Ana Veiga, NH	Cindy Aldous, NH	Carmen Dyer, NH	Judy Lafrance-Foote, NH
MIXED B/	Ron Bouchard, NH	Tim Lugar, NH	Bobby Sullivan, NH	Dave Laliberte, NH
C DOUBLES	Pat Bouchard, NH	Ruth Lugar, NH	Jolene Sullivan, NH	Cathy Doucet, NH

Racquetball - History Lesson



Did you know that racquetball is believed to be a melange of handball and squash, two popular sports? It is an indoor game played in a special enclosed court.

This game is credited to have been devised and developed in the United States of America by Joe Sobek, a tennis professional from Connecticut, in the year 1949. He had been dreaming passionately to develop a sport, which was easy to understand and play and at the same time fast paced. He combined handball and squash and realized his passion. The racquet used in racquetball is light and short compared to the one used in tennis. The ball used is of the size of the one employed in tennis, but it is a hollow rubber ball. The rules are almost similar to that of handball

and squash. There are singles (two opposing players), doubles (two opposing sets of players), and cutthroat (not played in tournaments) in which 3 players take part. You have to score 15 points to win a game and two games are played in a match. In the event of a "draw" i.e., each player scoring a game, a tiebreaker consisting of 11 points is instituted to decide who the winner is! The popularity and growth of racquetball has been exponential during 1970's. It was all the more liked by younger generations not merely for the fun and frolic, nor even because of its simplicity, but mainly because of the fitness fad raging then. During 1980's it was recorded to be one of the sports that was in great demand.

This article was taken from learnracquetball.com

JUSTIN OPEN XI

Nashua Athletic Club (Oct.. 22nd - 24th, 2004)

	<i>1st</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd - Tie</i>	<i>3rd - Tie</i>
Men's Open	Chris Zalegowski, NH	Joe Palazzo, RI	Frank Gibson, MA	Matt Moccia, MA
Men's Elite	Russ Palazzo, CT	Alok Mehta, NH	Mike Patalano, RI	Jeff Morse, NH
Men's A	Kevin Rodenberg, NH	Chris Fuller, MA	Ron Dellagatta, NH	Jim Mohahan, NH
Men's B	Lee Monks, MA	Greg West, NH	Jon-Craig Chisholm, MA	Ryan Hunter, MA
Men's C	Cass Buckley, NH	Robert Ferriera, MA	Andy Gersten, NH	Greg Labrie, NH
Men's D	Chris Adams, NH	David Fisher, NH	Jon Lewis, MA	Larry Barrett, NH
Men's 35+	Jim Grant, MA	Alok Nehta, MA	George Rogers, NH	Ralph Grillone, MA
Men's 45+	Paul Wallace, NH	Phil Robbins, NH	Steve Provins, NH	
Men's 55+	Jack Beneway, MA	Mitch Milewski, NH	Brandt Pace, NH	John Patalano, RI
Women's Open	Heather Dunn, MA	Janet Kurucz, RI	Paula Truman, ME	Roz Petronelli, MA
Women's A	Gail Valuk, RI	Kim Skerry, RI	Deb Irvine, NH	Pat Sims, ME
Women's B	Jolene Sullivan, NH	Judy Lafrance-Foote, NH	Sharon Shapiro, NH	Courtney Chisholm, MA
Women's C	Ceci Carpenter, NH	Courtney Chisholm, MA	Martha Robinson, NH	Lauren Patalano, RI
Women's D	Jodi Grillone, MA	Martha Robinson, NH	Lisa Walker, NH	Kara Stearns, MA
Men's Open Doubles	Joe Palazzo, RI	Fred Calabrese, NH	<p>MEN'S PRO SINGLES</p> <p>Justin Wallace handily defeats Jerome Jackson in the finals</p> <p>MEN'S PRO DOUBLES</p> <p>Justin Wallace & Marco Labonte beat up on Greg West & Jerome Jackson</p> <p>MIXED PRO DOUBLES</p> <p>Justin Wallace & Heather Dunn squeak out a spirited win over "Peggy" Beane & Chris Zalegowski</p>	
	Russ Palazzo, CT	Josh Messina, MA		
Men's A Doubles	Paul Pierce, MA	Jon Dyer, NH		
	John Patalano, RI	George Rogers, NH		
Men's B/C Doubles	Joe Richards, NH	Rich Nevius, MA		
	Greg West, NH	John Schneider, NH		
Women's A Doubles	Gail Valuk, RI	Carmen Dyer, NH		
	Kim Skerry, RI	Cindy Aldous, NH		
Mixed Open Doubles	Roz Petronelli, MA	Marsha Kazarosian, MA		
	Dave Barnes, RI	Mike Pettoruto, MA		
Mixed A Doubles	Carmen Dyer, NH	Ana Veiga, NH		
	Paul Pierce, MA	Dick Dyer, NH		

National Spotlight....Cont'd

continued from page 5...across 4 facilities), the location for the whole event is right on top of a tennis court. The court is covered up, the rented bleachers and the portable glass courts are assembled over the course of several days, vendor booths are erected and the entire space is completely transformed for racquetball.



If you are on the staff, the latest you are allowed to arrive is Monday, even though play doesn't begin until Wednesday, because it takes a lot of work to get everything set up.

I flew in Monday

afternoon and stayed until the following Monday morning. Every waking moment was spent working, watching great matches, playing my own amateur matches, socializing at the parties with pros and fans alike. Doug Ganim, the man in charge of this event, goes to great lengths to ensure that all participants have the opportunity to enjoy themselves at several different events, including a huge banquet with all of the players, pro and amateurs alike, on Saturday. It is a chaotic, racquetball-

saturated week that I'd recommend to anyone with a little extra vacation time around the Thanksgiving holiday.

Come Sunday, most of the staff is pretty tired from all of the late nights (many people work from ~7:00 am until at least 11 or 12 p.m.), but everyone was excited for this year's finals. The men's final featured Kane Waselenchuk, who

had breezed through every opponent in straight games, vs. Cliff Swain, who battled against Jason Mannino in the QF and had an all-out 5-game war with Jack Huzcek in the semis. Kane is simply playing on another level, much like Tiger Woods did in his first few years of pro golf, and he put a beating on Cliff, 4, 1 and 0. The women's final was more competitive, as the crowd cheered Rhonda Rajsich on, hoping to see someone defeat the unflappable Cheryl Gudinas. Cheryl has a way of bringing out the errors in any player's game, and went on to take her 2nd US Open title.



As exciting as the racquetball was all week,

my thoughts on a sleepy plane ride home were of the wonderful people that I got to spend time with, people that I only get to see once or twice a year. That's perhaps the best thing about the US Open – the combination of top-notch racquetball with the warm friendships made and reconnected in Memphis each year. If you have never been to the US Open, you should start making plans for next year, it's an experience worth having at least once!

How to take the ball off the back wall when a defensive lob is hit too hard

To make great shots off the back wall, always start very close to the back wall (get to the back wall early and touch the back wall with your non-racquet hand), then shuffle forward to one step behind where you think the ball will land, and quickly shuffle/adjust your position to the ball as it moves towards the front wall. This way, you are hitting the ball in front of you and stepping into your shot. Don't guess where the ball will come off the back wall and plant your feet there before the ball hits the back wall! This will prevent you from stepping into the ball and if you guess wrong, you'll have an awkward swing reaching for the ball.

Bend down pretty low trying to get your shoulders coiled up, and lower than and behind the ball before you swing. This will help you swing level.

Defensive lobs are often hit too hard so this shot really comes in handy. After some practice, it's surprisingly easy to do.



The Holiday Spirit • Tony Bruzzese

Well the holidays are finally upon us, a time to reflect on the past year. This is the time of year to spend with family and friends enjoying the company and catching up on the week's events. Sound like every weekend at a racquetball tournament? Just walk by any crowd, the bar, or the tournament desk and you can hear friends catching up from the week's events. Seems like everyone knows one another! This is the one constant that I have seen over the many years I have played racquetball. The tournaments are not just athletic events to see who is best on a given weekend they are also social events. Most players will hang out either in the common area or in the bar and talk about what is happening on the weekend. Some have players have become not just competitors but good friends and the tournaments are a time to catch up from the busy workweek. Over the years many friendships have been forged from racquetball with many of them lasting for years. I am very fortunate and blessed from the friendships I have made over the years from playing racquetball. As I look back on my years of playing this game I have seen many players come and go, but many are still around from my first days of playing and it is wonderful to sit and talk with them. How often in life do you find a place to go and play and feel at home? Racquetball has been wonderful time in my life and I look forward to seeing my two wonderful children on the courts experiencing the same joy that this game has given to me through the friendship I have made. So when you sit this holiday season thinking about all the good that has come to you this year remember the good times at these tournaments and you just might put another racquetball smile on your face.

Happy holidays from the Bruzzese's, Tony, Stacey, Hannah, and Joey!

The Value of Coaching...cont'd

continued from page 4...subsequent drills and practice, my tendonitis is GONE and I have not had a single problem since. She also began working with me to build on my strengths in the game and has made such differences in my game I am now playing at a level I never dreamed possible for me. That coaching has brought me a better understanding of the game, shot selection, swing mechanics, strategy, added shots to my repertoire, changed my serve as well as given a much broader serve selection and just improved my game in every aspect. I have since attended a couple "weekend camps" of intensive training with Kelly & Cheryl Guidinas and Fran Davis & Cliff Swain. These people have the incredible ability not only in their personal playing, but to recognize others difficulties AND TEACH the correct form and approach in a way which WORKS. I strongly credit these folks with adding TWO full skill divisions to my playing ability. I absolutely never would have attained that level of play on my own playing club level matches and leagues. Good coaching, in my opinion, will build on your strengths and change your game in such subtle ways you won't even know how they are changing you.



Do you really think about strategy, shot selection, do you have a game plan BEFORE you enter the court, can you change your game strategy in mid-game/match, do you KNOW what went wrong or right in that last match, do you know your opponents strengths and weaknesses? A coach will be able to help you with all these things and more! This game is NOT just physical, in-fact may be as much or more MENTAL and again a coach can improve the mental aspect of your game. The moral of the story is, if you sincerely desire to improve your game to bring you to the next level or just to enjoy the game more, GET HELP!! It is a small investment with HUGE results! If you need help finding a coach in your area, contact the NHRA and we will certainly help you find someone to help.



NHRA Spotlight Player • Pat Sims



Name: Pat Sims
Age: 48
Club Affiliation: The Works, Somersworth
Playing Since: 1984
Level: A

Racquetball began for me in September of 1984. A friend of mine played with me every Tuesday night for several months. I then met a group of women which I have been playing with at the Works for 18 plus years. During that time a friend gave the group informal lessons weekly developing competitiveness I have never lost.

I love competing. My favorite part of the game is the thrill of competing and my lob serve which has become my trade mark throughout the racquetball community. Although singles is my first love I enjoy the social aspect of doubles.

I still remember the first tournament I entered. There was a sickness in my stomach that wouldn't let go. It was a tournament at the Works. I was playing in the D division. You guessed it, the tournament jitters were so bad I lost my first match and swore I would never play competitive racquetball again.

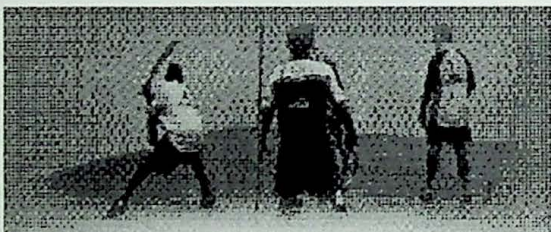
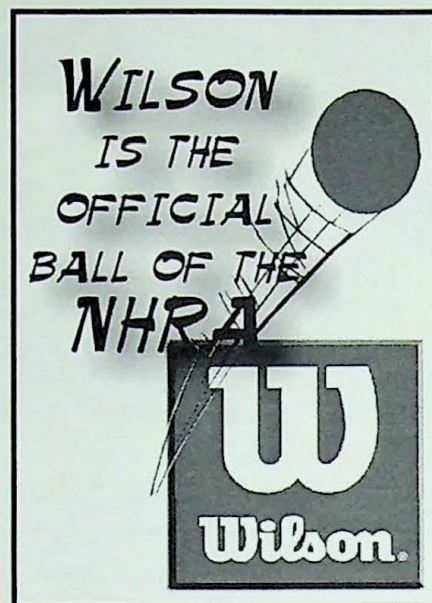
How times have changed. My husband and I have played in tournaments throughout New England as well as Georgia, North & South Carolina, Tennessee, and Alabama sometimes driving more than seven hours to compete in various states on the east coast.

I have tried to give back to the sport the values which racquetball has given to me. I pass on my love of the game which has driven me through out the years by encouraging others to play in tournaments, ladders, mixers, leagues and to compete and gain confidence in their game. While on the staff at the works my husband and I implemented a Junior Program promoting sportsmanship, basic fundamentals


and the rules of the game.

Other than my family, racquetball was a huge part of my life through a very difficult time. In 1996 I was diagnosed with Hodgkin's disease. While undergoing chemotherapy and radiation racquetball gave me the will power to be strong. The women I still play with to-

day were there three times a week playing with me to help keep me strong both mentally and physically. While still in remission I will always remember the racquetball family which helped me forge forward. As you can see there have been many ways that racquetball has helped me through the years and I would like to continue seeing racquetball grow as a sport both competitively and socially



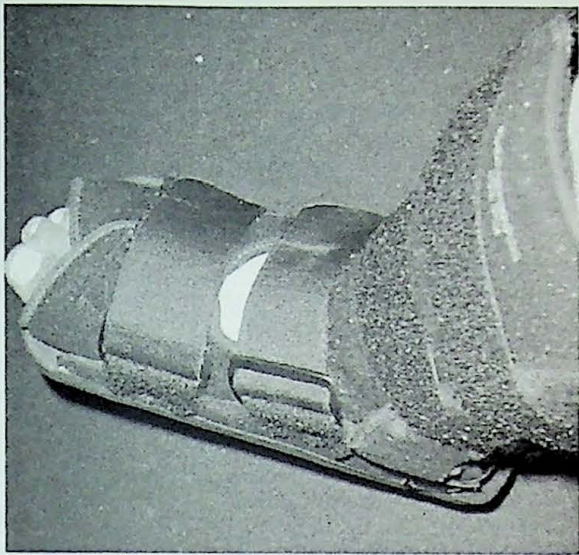
Would you like to nominate a player for the NHRA Spotlight Player of the quarter?



We are looking for racquetball players who are outstanding both on and off the court, love the game of racquetball and give back to the sport.

To nominate your favorite athlete contact us at info@theofficialball.com with the name of the individual and their club affiliation.

Coping With Injuries • Kelley Beane



do, and most of us are, then you know that the physical pain you feel is very small compared to the emotional pain of not being able to compete. You lose your sense of identity, with all the hours you have put into your sport, it starts to define who you are, both emotionally and socially. You start to lose your self esteem, it is such a thrill to win a tournament, or play a great match, that recog-

nition strokes your self esteem. An injury also limits your ability to cope with stress. Nothing like going in to hit a few racquetballs, or going for a run to let off some steam. It's a great way to channel your frustrations of the day.

Here are some great ways to help cope with being an injured athlete, I hope this helps.

- Be Sad – Allow yourself to feel the loss
- Deal With It ! – No “could of” “should of”
- Set New Goals – Be realistic, you may have to start over.
- Good Attitude – Can speed up the healing process (this one is hard!)
- Follow MD advice- They know what they are doing.
- Workout- Keep the rest of your body in shape, easier to come back.
- Support Team – Surround yourself with great people.
- Be Patient – Toughest one of all, but it will be worth it, don't rush the healing process.

I hope this helps all of the injured warriors out there, it sure has helped me!

You've played racquetball longer than you can remember. You have passion. Then the unthinkable happens. You feel some pain – it comes on slowly-you hope its nothing, so you ignore it and push through it. Maybe you took a little time off, but then decided it was time to see the doctor. He confirms the fact that you are injured.

If you are serious about what you

String gauge...Continued

continued from page 4... the thinner one will break more easily. Simple, huh? This doesn't necessarily apply if you're comparing a thin, premium-quality string with a thick junk string, but as a rule of thumb, it's pretty reliable.

There are two main causes of string breakage. The first is notching. As you hit the ball, the cross strings (or “crosses” -- the shorter, “horizontal” ones) are pounded against the main strings (or “mains” -- the longer, “vertical” ones) several hundred times in the course of a game. The crosses slowly cut notches into the mains, and eventually they cut right through. Obviously, a thicker string will stand up to deeper notching before it breaks. By the way, it's almost always the mains that break first.

The second major cause of breakage is over-

stretching, which can occur during a particularly hard or off-center killshot. This is especially so if you hit the ball near the head of the frame instead of in the sweet spot. The string wants to stretch equally on both sides of the ball, and on a mis-hit, there's not much string to work with on one side: it tries to stretch too much, and it breaks.

So, is a thicker string necessarily preferable? Of course not. Durability is just one desirable characteristic. Thinner strings, for example, give a player better response. There's also power, cost, control, “feel,” and a few others properties to consider and balance against one another when you're replacing your strings. We'll get to all of these in future columns.

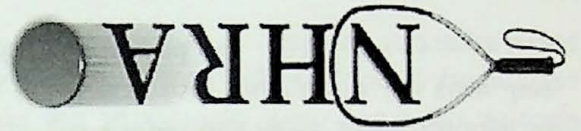
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The New Hampshire Racquetball Association



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December

Sunday	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3 NH State Doubles, NAC, Nashua, NH Gib Smith Memorial, Racquet's Edge, Essex, Jct, VT CT Blizzard Open, Downtown H&R, New Haven, CT	4
5	6	7	8	9	10 Portland Open, Portland M&E, Portland, ME	11
12	13	14	15	16	17 IRF JUNIOR WORLDS, San Luis Potosi, Mexico	18
19 IRF JUNIOR WORLDS, San Luis Potosi, Mexico	20 Luis Potosi, Mexico	21 Mexico	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

January

Sunday	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14 B/C Challenge, GBAC, Newmarket, NH	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28 Mitch Nathanson Classic, Exec, Manchest & NAC, Nashua	29
30	31					

February

Sunday	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18 NHRRA Doubles Challenge, Exec, Manchester, NH	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28					

March

Sunday	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4 NH State Singles Executive, Manchester NH Vermont State Singles & Doubles, Racquet's Edge, Essex, Jct, VT	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25 NH Granite State Cup, Nashua, NH	26
27	28	29	30	31		