

National Racquetball

Vol. 13 • No. 11
November, 1984
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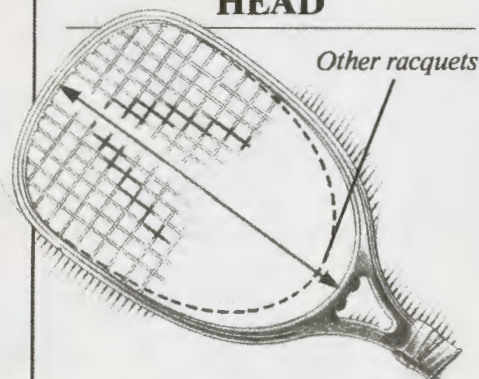
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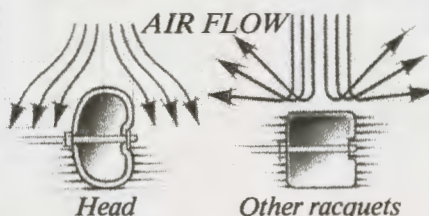
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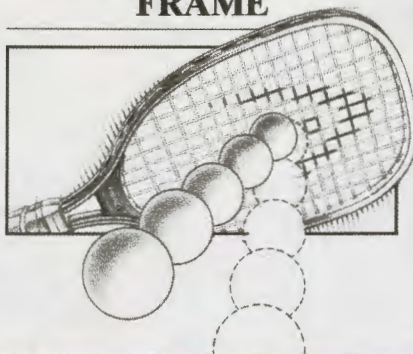
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On the cover . . .

Rodney Rollout, one of the many creations
of Dr. Frank Hajcak and Tricia Garwood,
adorns their Christmas tree and likely could
adorn yours. For a step-by-step "instruc-
tional" on how you can create Rodney and
his six friends, turn to page 10.

Next month . . .

Feature on Jay Schwartz, winner of many a
racquetball title in the 35+ age category,
and Robert MacDonald, President of ITT Life
Insurance, begin the issue, which will also
be highlighted by a special article on the
history of racquetballs and NR's first book
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From The Editor . . .

**Of Fun
And Such**



It had been nearly four months since I'd been on the court. No, I didn't leave racquetball for bodybuilding. No, I didn't decide to make jogging my new career. I didn't even decide to go into the suntan business.

Actually I had pulled a leg muscle playing softball during the summer and was now brave enough to give a try at regaining my tough as nails mediocre B game. How much would I have lost in the four months? Would I be tentative on the court? Would I re-injure myself?

In other words, would I have fun?

I had missed the fun. I missed frolicking among the hinders against my friends/foes. I missed those pinpoint pinch kills off the frame which I smugly called splat kills. And I really missed the post-game adult beverages.

★ ★ ★

I walked into the 20x40 box and mentally was surprised at how bright the 120 footcandles were. *"They must've cleaned the lights,"* I thought.

The leg felt pretty good. I was confident that my lightning-quick reflexes were capable of covering side wall-to-side wall, although I soon learned that wasn't the case. I did experience a twinge here and there when going all out to cover kills, but since I rarely was able to cover one, this didn't amount to much of a problem.

My opponent was not sympathetic. I guess he didn't enjoy paying 5 bucks an hour to watch me warm up for 20 minutes of his playing time. *"Next time go ride the stationary bike, lift a weight or two, do some jumping jacks and come in here ready to play,"* he growled.

★ ★ ★

"We'll play to 15," said my opponent. *"Two out of three."*

"Why 15?" I asked, wondering if we, the last protectors of 21 point games, had fallen to the heathens who threatened the last outposts of our empire. All during my brief sabbatical.

"Because you took so much time warming up, we can't get two games to 21 finished in an hour," he said.

"What about the tie-breaker? It's only 11 points."

"There won't be any tie-breaker."

"Oh."

You know, it's amazing how much your body can hurt if you're not in shape. Your lungs ache, your legs feel like lead, the sweat, because there's too much of it, burns your eyes. Why do I love it so?

My opponent hit a hard Z serve to my backhand. It hit perfectly in the crotch of the back wall and left side wall, zip-ping directly back toward the front wall, along the side wall. I never got my racquet on it. Hell, I never swung!

"Nice serve," I mumbled grudgingly.

He hit the same serve again. Same result. This time I didn't compliment him.

It was obvious my opponent had worked on his serves in my absence. And I certainly couldn't blame the racquet, which was new, because I hadn't hit the ball yet. And my eyeguards hadn't nearly begun to fog up—that didn't usually occur until mid-way through the second game.

I lost the first game, 15-7. Actually I didn't lose it. My opponent won it. In retrospect I played fairly well. No re-injury. Three kills, two purposely, one accidental. A few skips, but only on tough shots. Biggest problem was leaving him set ups. Must keep the ball down the line.

★ ★ ★

It's 12-10 my favor, game two. I want a split bad. The seven-minutes-to-go bell has just rung. It's time to push. My serve. Here comes my toughest hard Z to the backhand. Goin' for ace territory. Oh no! My serve hit the side wall first. I never got it back, 15-12 with the wrong guy winning again.

★ ★ ★

And all I could think about as we left the court was how I wished it were next week a ready, because *this is fun!*

Chuck Line

Letters



Colombo Reigns

Dear Editor:

Your article on the AARA National Singles (*August issue*) was confusing in one particular area, namely, the Men's 50+ division. Within the body of your story (page 43) you incorrectly stated that Bob Folsom won this division of play. Not so! The winner was Pat Colombo.

And while you did correctly state that Colombo won the tournament on page 44 in the listing of division winners, etc., you still did a disservice to Colombo, one of the great racquetball players of all time in the older age categories.

Folsom may have beaten Muehleisen, but Colombo beat Folsom.

Marshall Leavitt
Houston, TX

Juniors In Clubs

Dear Editor:

I read with great interest your article "From the Editor" in the *September* issue.

I have worked at a racquet club for almost three years. At the time I started, there was no program for the kids. Being a mother first, and racquetball addict second, I also was concerned about the sports' future. I implemented our first junior program in January of '82. Since that time, our youth program has grown to over 65 participants! We have an age span of four years old (yes, I said four!) through 16.

My question is this: Would it be possible to receive an outline of the program for juniors that is patterned after Little League baseball? It would be nice to start off the season with some new, fresh ideas!

Any information pertaining to junior play would be greatly appreciated! Thank you!!

Julie Craig
Supreme Court and Health Spa
Superior, WI

P.S. I enjoy each issue very much!

Thanks for the kind words, Julie. The information you requested is en route.
—Ed.

Juniors In Clubs, Part II

Dear Editor:

I just read your "From The Editor" column ("Kids Go Home") in the *September* issue. At first I thought that I wrote the article. Those are exactly my sentiments that you expressed in your article.

I am 41 years old, started to play about 10 years ago and developed into a good club player. I've even won A and Senior tournaments, not because of technique, but with hustle and endurance.

This is where I get angry. At our club here in Spokane there aren't any young kids whipping us older guys. Here you've got a club with nearly 3,000 members and no "hot-shot" youngsters!

This Fall I'm going to start a juniors program because I have three kids ranging in ages from three to nine and I think that by showing them the proper way to go at a sport like racquetball will develop them into life-long players.

So I guess the reason I'm writing is to congratulate you on your stand and to ask for any information you might have

to start up and succeed at putting together a junior program. I would appreciate any help.

Bob Stoyko
Spokane, WA

Y's And Kids

Dear Editor:

In your editorial, "Kids Go Home," asking who is providing the leadership in youth racquetball, you overlooked the obvious. The organization that is best suited to providing leadership in all youth sports is also picking up in racquetball. That organization is your local YMCA.

In our year-round program, youths from 7-13 are taught the rules, techniques, and skills, and then have a great time playing "no bounce" racquetball. As they become proficient shot makers, they progress to two-bounce rules.

A two-bounce player, against experienced no-bounce player can make a super match! The emphasis, as with all YMCA youth sports, is on participation, learning, and most importantly, fun!

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minimal rates (\$1 an hour). Some of the youths playing have outstanding forehand and backhand techniques. We are in no hurry to advance them to regular rules, because this will shorten the rallies and diminish the fun.

I have no desire to produce another David or Andy Gross. My only desire is that they learn the game properly now, and hopefully continue playing and enjoying the game as they grow older.

I encourage parents, who want their children to learn racquetball, in a wholesome and positive environment, to seek out their local YMCA. If the Y hasn't started a program yet, encourage it, and maybe even volunteer to run it. Remember, fun is the key to a successful youth program. If you develop a future pro, fine, but hopefully you'll develop a few hundred future B players!

Bruce Patnoudes
Ottawa, IL YMCA

Yellen Disappoints Her

Dear Editor:

I was very disappointed to read Mike Yellen's response (*September* issue) to

the individual who wanted to know if the server is obligated to give the receiver the cross court lane on the serve return. The reader had wondered if this was an avoidable hinder.

I know how frustrating this can be. It is enough to make one lose interest in racquetball, particularly at the lower levels where people do not have the same range of shot selection that the pros have.

I learned a great deal about the game from two top notch people (player/instructors). One of these was Steve Strandemo, the other a high open player at one club I attend. Both informed me that this situation is an avoidable hinder.

This is particularly relevant when the server hits a drive or Z which either wraps or kicks in off the side wall. This is a bad serve, a set up for the receiver. The server is obligated to pay for it by backing well out of the way to open the cross court lane.

To not be allowed to hit cross court is not only unfair to the receiver, but also very limiting, making the receiver's return predictable. The situation should indeed be an avoidable hinder. I feel

you could do more to acknowledge this. I also hope you print this letter.

When I began playing tournaments, the aforementioned circumstance and the screen serve all but drove me out of the game. Since then I've come a long way but I still don't have the wonderful splat shot you describe.

Andrea Schwartz
Westchester, IL

Eyeguard Photos

Dear Editor:

In your *February, 1984* issue, you proposed that closed eyeguards should be mandatory apparel for all tournament play. I thoroughly agree with your mandate, but I would further advocate that closed eyeguards should be worn at all times in all forms of play—from warm-up court practice to intensive tournament play.

Looking through *National Racquetball* issues from December, 1983 to May, 1984, I seriously wonder if you have eyes in the back of your head. Or perhaps you feel that eyes are invincible? I counted up every one of the non-advertising racquetball photographs or



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pictures that showed racquetball players in action and placed them in one of two categories: pictures showing players who had on protective eye wear, versus pictures showing players who had not worn any form of protective eye wear.

I'm sorry to say that *National Racquetball* failed this vision test miserably! The 19:38 or 1:2 ratio (first number represents those pictures showing players who had worn protective eye wear, second number represents those pictures showing players who had not worn protective eye wear) is blindingly bad!

Why don't you make a policy to show only those racquetball players who have eyeguards on? For your photo sessions, you could even supply the player with an eyeguard. All of your magazine's show racquetball players serve as role models. To be just like my racquetball idols, I should throw in my eyeguard! It's nothing but an ugly piece of polycarbonate anyway!

Sharon Brodbelt
Timonium, MD

Every year we wrestle with this problem and every year we come to the same

conclusion: sound journalism and our subscriber's right to read full and comprehensive articles are our top priorities. As much as we enjoy our soapbox role, we can let it interfere with our primary function.—Ed.

Choosing A Club

Dear Editor:

I enjoyed Jean Sausser's article, "How To Choose A Club" in your September issue. Next time, you might want to add that if you are a racquetball player, check to see if the club is an ARHS participating club because if they are, through the player performance rating system and game handicapping there will be a variety of programs for players at all levels.

If you would like more information on the system, drop me a note or give us a call toll free at 1-800-328-8322, extension 533.

Patrick J. McGlone
American Racquetball Handicap System
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Junior Coverage

Dear Editor:

I am writing this letter both as the parent of a junior who has worked very hard to excel at her chosen sport, racquetball, and as Junior Regional Commissioner of New York and New Jersey.

I was very disappointed in your article on the Junior Nationals (September issue). In the past your articles on National level tournaments covered all events, even if the mention was only a few phrases. It was an unfortunate oversight that no mention was made of the 12, 10 and 8-year-old groups. Though most adults may tend to overlook (ignore) them, they work at and practice their racquetball as hard and as often as their seniors. Not only am I disappointed at their being ignored, the same sentiments have been voiced to me by other parents and of course, the young participants.

The serious participants in all sports, regardless of age, strive for recognition. Ignoring them is potentially demotivating, while recognition by name for those who are successful will not only encourage them to strive for higher

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goals, but can also motivate others to achieve some success. I believe that for racquetball to continue its growth and remain popular we must do all we can to not only encourage our youthful competitors to remain, but also continually attract new young players.

John Charbonneau
Sound Beach, NY

While the top finishers in every division were included in the article's listing of winners, it's true that every division was not given in-depth coverage. Space in the magazine and one reporter covering 22 divisions all happening at once is the problem.—Ed.

A Red Blob

Dear Chuck:

As you know, I am an old *Life* and *Sports Illustrated* photographer who has had over 1,000 covers published—about 60 of them on my favorite magazine, *National Racquetball*.

Imagine my dismay when I saw my fine, bright color slide of the fabulous Jeannie Sauser appear on your *October, 1984 issue* as a washed out red blob of color.

Investigating, I found that the only way a good slide can be made into a bad cover illustration involves two operations—separating the slide into offset plates, and then printing. Whereas at first I thought the fault lay with you and your fine staff, it is of some small comfort to me to learn that you are blameless. I can't imagine how this same printing operation goofed the black-and-white picture that went with the otherwise fine story in the new fitness section.

I know your standards and those of publisher Hugh Morgan to be the highest. Regrettably, thousands of your readers who follow my by-line will now think that I lost the ol' eye. Tell 'em it ain't so by printing this letter.

By the way, if you pay the culprit for that "job," you're crazy.

Arthur Shay
Photographic Consultant to
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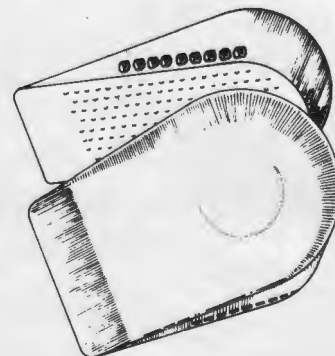
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**RAY
HIGHTOWER'S
RACQUETBALL**

Feature

Or . . . A Racquetball's Second Life

The Reincarnation Of Rodney Rollout

by Dr. Frank Hajcak and Tricia Garwood

I pushed the door to my son's room closed. It rebounded into my backside. Three blue balls dribbled out. *#% ! I picked them up and tossed them in a box with 50 of their kind. My wife, Tricia, called from our bedroom, "How did these balls get in with my sweaters?" Those used racquetballs turn up everywhere.

They wear out quickly enough on the court. However, their retirement is endless. It's hard to throw away something that looks like it's still useful. But for what? Even kids can't lose them fast enough to prevent overpopulation.

When I found that ball in the fridge behind the mayonnaise . . . enough was enough! I marched through the house in search of the doomed. Amidst the foraging I gathered other useless junk: like bent paper clips, broken shuttle cocks, rusty cabinet catches and pieces of yarn. Tricia anxiously doublechecked to make sure nothing useful was being tossed. Greg insisted on checking for his favorite tidbits. I demanded that it all go and went off to sulk.

There followed periods of silence punctuated by laughter. I eyed the two of them suspiciously. Tricia had drawn a face on one of the balls. An old spool of thread served as a hat, paper clips as legs. "Reincarnation," she said as I struggled to preserve my frown.

All three of us spent a pleasant evening creating all sorts of cute "junk" creatures. Since then we found that many other avid racquetball players are reluctant to discard these blue spheres which served so well on the court. They are also enthusiastic about finding new life for these dead balls.

These creatures are surprisingly simple to make. Adults and youngsters love them. The pleasure and satisfaction of creating treasures from trash is unlimited. Furthermore, these decorated balls can generate enthusiasm in your club. (More about that later).



Before you begin there are three creative guidelines we'd like you to note. They will help maximize your enjoyment.

Rules: There are none. It's literally impossible to make a mistake. Your creature or object does not have to be symmetrical or realistic. A one-eyed creature is every bit as good as a two or three-eyed fellow. A glass bead makes a fine companion eye for one made of a nut, sequin or button. The more asymmetric and incongruent your component parts, the funnier your finished product.

Imagination: This is the key ingredient. As we demonstrated in our book, *Expanding Creative Imagination*, everyone has an abundance of imagination. A racquetball and shuttlecock dipped in white paint can make an excellent light bulb. Dipped in multi-colors—a hot air balloon. Painting it all silver and adding an antennae or two turns it into a satellite. Just give your mind some freedom.

Never Criticize: Criticism is the death of creativity. Everyone's ideas are equally valid. So give yourself or youngster plenty of room to experiment. Be non-judgmental in the imagination department. Positive, not negative, comments foster creative development.

Step I: Preparation

Begin as we did. Rummage through the house for all the useless treasures you never get around to tossing but know you should. Check the garage for bent or rusty nails, carpet tacks, old paint, batteries, etc. The desk for paper clips, thumb tacks, etc. The bathroom medicine chest for old bottle caps, empty rolls from adhesive tape, etc., etc., etc. Anything and everything. You never know what will make a good eye, nose or whatchamacallit.

Step II: Assembly

Think of something you'd like to make. Then using glue (white or epoxy), pins and wires assemble your creation. Use the entire ball as a body, head, balloon



or some part of a contraption. Or cut the ball into smaller pieces. You can use an "x-acto" knife or large scissors. Designs can be simple or complex depending on interest and ability. Our favorite, Rodney Rollout, took several hours.

Needlenose pliers are handy for sticking pins, etc. into the racquetballs.

When you want to use a paper clip or other blunt object, prepare the way with an open, heavy duty safety pin. Twist it until the pin slides out easily. Insert the paper clip with pliers if necessary.

Step III: Display

If you want to hang your creation (for example on a Christmas Tree) insert a glass bead pin on the top of your ball. Tie thread to it and *voila!* If you prefer to use your creation as a knick-knack, glue a piece of cork or small strip of wood to the base. This will prevent rolling. So will legs if they're appropriate to your assemblage.

Step IV: Stand Back And Admire!

So there you have the recipe for hours of family or personal fun. It's a great way to alleviate stress, anxiety and to give vent to the artist we all have hidden inside. Does the fun stop here? Absolutely not! Soon your home will be filled with dozens of little round treasures. Your next test of creativity is to find uses for these creatures.

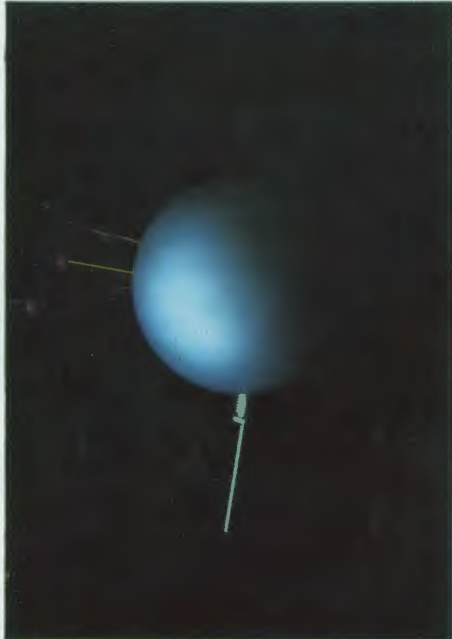
First, tap your own resources. They include gifts for friends, toys for kids and decorations for Christmas trees. You can pack a few away and preserve them for the next holiday season or you can make new ones each year.

If you're short on time or creativity you can just use a plain racquetball as an unbreakable blue Christmas ball. All it takes is a pin and some thread to hang it on the branch. Two or three dozen look surprisingly impressive nestled among the tinsel and lights.

Next, check with your racquetball club. What would your racquetball club want with your little creations? You may be surprised. Here are some uses clubs in the West Chester/Philadelphia area have discovered.

How about a Christmas tree decorating contest? Such a contest was held by the LeMaster Racquetball club in West Chester. It was a smash in which Rodney Rollout was the hands down winner. Best results seem to come from the following format.

Frank Hajcak, Ph.D and Tricia Garwood are clinical therapists. The creation with racquetballs are based on an exercise from their book *Expanding Creative Imagination*, available from the Institute for Human Potential, West Chester, PA.



... Interested members submit their creations by December 15.

... Entries are displayed on the club's Christmas tree or hung from a network of strings above the admission desk.

... Prizes are offered for best creations in several categories. Categories can include:

- funniest
- best by contributor under 12
- most artistic
- most appropriate to the sport
- most realistic
- most creative
- hardest to make

More categories means more club members will feel they have a chance to win and will be willing to put forth the effort.

... Final judgments are made by more than one staff member. This eliminates any possible charges of favoritism or personal bias.

... Prizes are generated within the club from clientel or from the club directly. The club can offer:

- free lunch at the snack bar
- free racquetball lessons
- an aerobics session
- a fitness workout
- free balls from the pro shop
- use of some new facility

... Business members may offer:

- an oil change
- a haircut
- makeup diagnosis
- free groceries
- gift certificates

... Photographs of the winning entries are submitted to the local newspaper. Everyone likes to see their name in print and it's good, free publicity for the club.

Speaking of good publicity and PR work, some clubs charge an entry donation of 50¢ or \$1.00. Proceeds go to buying toys for local needy

youngsters. Other clubs use the fee to give their members a Holiday bash. (Local newspapers love such human interest stories.)

There has been talk at our club that this year the management would like to keep all entrants. What on earth for? They would like to give the decorations away as "almost made it" or consolation prizes for tournaments. Undoubtedly there are many more uses for these blue spheres which have yet to be discovered. And surely imaginative racquetball players will find them.

Let's face it. Those dead racquetballs weren't worth a thing until now. Decorating is so much fun you might even start popping the new cans in pursuit of the ultimate creation.

List of Parts

Balloons: balls dipped in cans of paint, plastic coated wires for string, large headed pin, stuffed monkey.

Sputnik: ball spray painted silver, paper clips, pins with glass bead heads, inflating needle.

Mouse: wire for tail, parts of another ball for ears, glass bead pins for feet, nose, eyes, regular pins for whiskers.

Hot Air Balloon: shuttlecock, ball dipped in paint, toy doll inside.

Porcupine: glass head pins, a cap from a bottle, part of a snap.

Music Listener: soda caps and plastic wire for headphones, inflating needle for nose, slice of old thermos cork for base, map pins for eyes.

Rodney: ping pong ball for head, half of the spool from first aid tape for hat, copper wire for goggles, a cotton ball for hair, plastic crate, electrical wire for arms, hands, racquet and shoelaces, cabinet catches for shoes, protective caps for knitting needles for nose, ears and lips.

Christmas Ornament: (please credit Greg, age 6) large headed glass bead pins. ●

National Racquetball's Gifts & Accessories Guide

Ho! Ho! Ho! What do you give the racquetball player who has everything? You search and search for that special gift that can help the player, but isn't something the player would buy himself. Or you look for the out-of-the-ordinary gift, perhaps something that has little to do specifically with racquetball, but in some way aids your game.

With the aid of some special manufacturing elves, we at *National Racquetball* have organized this *Gifts and Accessories Guide* for the holidays. Look through our wish list to see if you can spot a gift that might make the holidays a little more special for your favorite racquetballer.

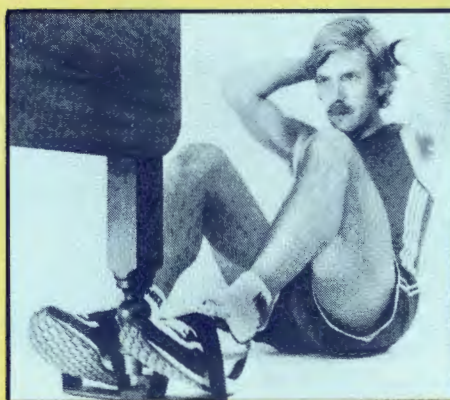
And have a happy holiday season!



First and foremost on the list, should be a **gift subscription to *National Racquetball***. For \$16.00 a year, your favorite player will get all the latest news involving the industry, its leaders, manufacturers, tournament results, fitness and instructional articles that no other racquetball magazine carries.

If your gift receiver is a serious amateur racquetballer, consider making him an AARA member. For \$6.00 a year, **membership in the American Amateur Racquetball Association** entitles the player to National Ranking eligibility, official rule book, manufacturers' discounts, tournament eligibility, and receiving *Racquetball In Review*, the official AARA publication. The AARA sanctions many tournaments throughout the country each year, including the National Singles, National Juniors, and National Doubles, plus hundreds more.

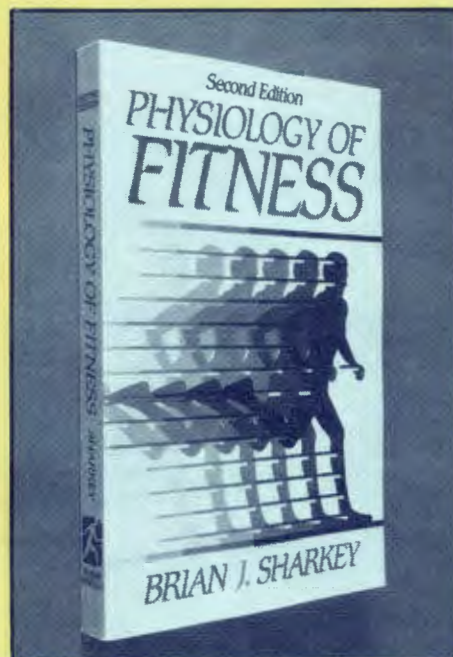
★ ★ ★



And now for something your racquet-toting world traveler can stick into his carry-on luggage—along with his racquet, of course! **The Sit-Up Encourager**, presented by The Research Advantage, Inc., is designed for truly comfortable, bent-leg sit-ups. It slips under the leg of a bed or other piece of furniture and is ready for use! No clamping or assembly required.

Wide loops of soft webbing hold your feet in a relaxed bent-leg position with heels pressed to the floor and insteps restrained. When traveling, this three-ounce helper folds into a space not much larger than a letter and fits into a briefcase.

★ ★ ★



For the racquetballer who enjoys reading, Human Kinetics Publishers, Inc. has released ***The Physiology of Fitness*** by Brian J. Sharkey.

The Physiology of Fitness goes far beyond other fitness books. It's comprehensive, easy to use, and well-written by one of the most foremost authorities on fitness.

It explains the how and why of fitness; not just the "do it!" In it Sharkey provides useful, practical, and accurate information on all aspects of fitness for all kinds of people.

This second edition includes all of the latest information on fitness and health, new views on the causes of obesity, and a revised section on muscular fitness training. As in the first edition, Sharkey also covers aerobic fitness, fitness and weight control, fitness and lifestyle, and other topics pertinent to our fitness-conscious society.

The appendices contain 100 pages which include detailed explanations of muscles, energy, and oxygen; aerobic and muscular fitness tests, programs, and logs; information on caloric intake/expenditure and body composition; health risk analysis and longevity estimates and others. Suggested retail price: \$12.95.

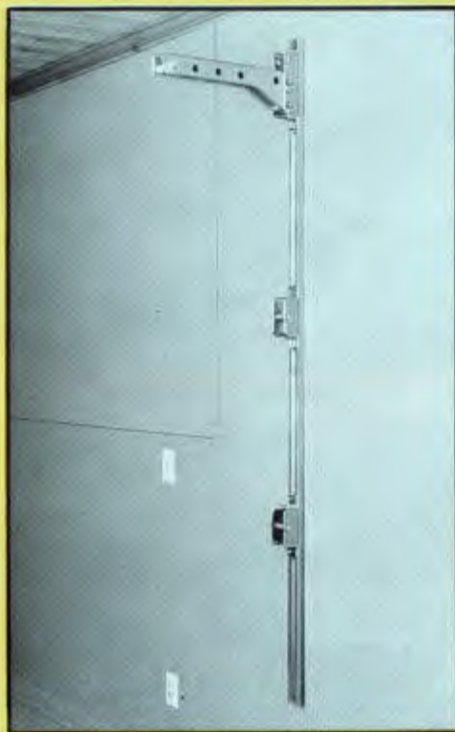
★ ★ ★



Unique Sports Products presents **Fashion Band**, a narrow head band. Packaged one to a poly bag, they come in fashion colors ranging from lavender to pink to basic white.

Very comfortable and practical, the head bands are made of 94% cotton and six percent elastic to absorb sweat and hold your hair in place. Suggested retail price is 89*.

★ ★ ★



Lifeline Pulley System, also introduced by Lifeline, includes a seven-foot, steel, vertical wall channel, adjustable pulley cable that moves over the full length of the wall channel silently enabling change of resistance in seconds and an 18" overhead bracket for upper extremity patterns.

The Lifeline Pulley system is noiseless, space efficient, needs no maintenance, is no mess, and of commercial quality.

It also includes a complete rehabilitation manual and video by Dr. Richard Steadman and the United States Ski Team.

★ ★ ★



Court Specs and **New Court Specs, Jr.** are a lens-less eyeguard with an extra-strong polycarbonate frame. Unique orbital, scalloped protrusions help keep the ball further from eyes than with typical lens-less models. Tapered angle for superior wide-angle vision. Suggested retail price: \$6.95.

★ ★ ★



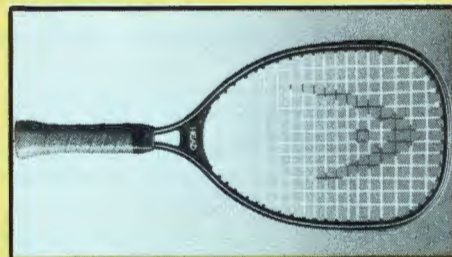
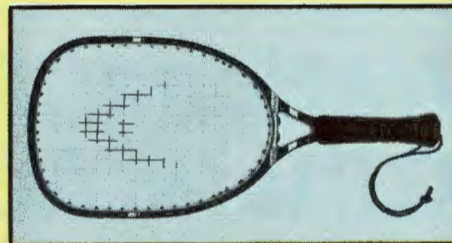
And while you're at the process of completing attire for our racquetballing friend, don't forget to include socks as a gift. Tennis togs announces the introduction of their new triple thick socks, **Cushees**. Cushees are triple thick around the toe and under the foot to the heel. There is a full terry lining in this area and up the back of the sock, to and including the entire top of the sock. They retail for \$4.50 a pair.

★ ★ ★



Soft Grip by Unique Sports Products is a super absorbent, thin grip that has great feel, eliminating the need for a glove.

★ ★ ★



You're sure to score points with your racquetball fan with a top-of-the-line frames from **AMF Head**. Choose from these oversized winners aerodynamically designed to give you more maneuverability and stiffness for great accuracy.

The **Boron/Graphite Impluse** features a unique blend of boron and graphite to give advancing players added control in a stiffer frame. And Impluse's bigger sweet spot means they can get a piece of even the meanest shots. Suggested retail price: \$90.00.

The **Head Vector** racquet is extra stiff, yet lightweight and designed for the advanced player to deliver split-second responsiveness and unerring accuracy. Suggested retail price: \$80.00.

Considered Head's ultimate performance racquet, the **Graphite Apex** boasts the quickest, stiffest, and strongest graphite construction in the line. Suggested retail price: \$145.00.

★ ★ ★



Here comes **The Total Fitness System**, clothing for the active person from Ektelon. Choose from delightfully colored T's, sweat-suits, and warm-ups. Prices range from \$7.00 to \$85.00.

Ektelon suggests stuffing stockings with their **Gloves**. Everything from the finest in soft, ultra-thin leather right down to the most detailed stitching is top grade. There's double-stretch mesh nylon backing and between-finger opening for heat dispersion, durability, and comfort. There's even new, specially placed-leather reinforcements in key areas around the thumb and inside the wristband. Suggested retail price: \$11.99.

Consider your racquetball player safe when

you give the gift of eyeguards this Christmas. Ektelon introduces five varieties including **Court Goggles**, one-piece, wraparound eyeguard. Distortion free, scratch-resistant lenses provide full peripheral vision. Suggested retail price: \$16.95.

New Eye Sentry are lightweight, distortion free lenses which are shatter-resistant provide excellent peripheral vision. Suggested retail price: \$29.95.

Ektelon also introduces **New Deflector**, an advanced one-piece, hingeless wraparound eyeguard. Special venting reduces fogging. Distortion-free, scratch-resistant lenses provide full peripheral vision. Suggested retail price: \$14.95.

— ★ ★ ★ ★



Although most racquetball is played indoors, a few of our southern and western neighbors play in the sunshine. For their Christmas treats, consider a **Terry Visor**, introduced by Tennis Togs. Made of smooth, soft combed cotton, the back strap is wide for comfort, with an ample elastic piece sewn under shirred fabric. They retail for \$3.00 each.

★ ★ ★



A nice stocking stuffer for your favorite female player are **Braided Headbands**, produced by Tennis Togs. Made of stretch cotton terry, they come in a variety of fashion colors including all white, and white with alternating rows of red, navy, pink, light blue, yellow, beige, lavender or peach. They retail for \$3.00.

★ ★ ★



Does your favorite player complain of elbow pain? Stromgren-Scott's new **Model 170 Tennis Elbow Support** might be just the thing he needs. Machine washable, the support provides comfortable, pinpoint pressure on the sore arm tendon. Made of durable Velcor, with foam lining next to the skin for comfort, and foam rubber at pressure points that hold tissues firm.

★ ★ ★



For those racquetballers who need to improve strength, power, flexibility, endurance, etc., Lifeline introduces the **Lifeline Gym**, a portable, two-pound gym that can tone and shape all of the muscle groups in your body in one-fourth the time required by barbells or dead weights.

The secret is full range resistance supplied by the indestructible design that instantly adjusts from three to 350 lbs. of resistance. An illustrated exercise book tells the user how to move from one exercise to another instantly. The inserted door attachment converts the gym into an incredible treadmill and pulley.

Endorsed by top exercise physiologists and used by professional teams, the lifting bar is 27 inches and breaks down in the middle with stainless steel locking pins. It comes neatly packed in its own carrying case or fits into an attache. Suggested retail price: \$39.95.

★ ★ ★



Does your favorite player complain of his or her racquet twisting? **Lil Cincher** was designed to eliminate the "hassle" of that twisting racquet by keeping the thong or tie-string tight. Made of durable polyethelene tubing, it keeps the tension constant without choking. By itself Lil Cincher retails for \$3.95, but as a special introductory offer of \$7.95 includes the Lil Cincher, a Hanes Ringer T-shirt with Lil Cincher imprint, and seven self-improvement pointers for your racquetball game.

★ ★ ★



And now for the Ultimate in gifts: **The Wolff System Sun/24**. With a suggested retail price of \$6,295.00, the WSS/24 is the world's leading tanning system. Twenty-four Bellarium "S" Superlamps provide optimum exposure in just 20 minutes, allowing even the busiest person to acquire a healthy, golden tan.

This model is designed to provide trouble-free response to heavy demand, making it the ultimate gift item. Eight ventilation fans assure customer comfort, even during extended periods of use.

★ ★ ★



The **Lifecycle 5000**, a product of Bally Fitness Products Corporation, is the newest member of Lifecycle Inc.'s advanced generation of aerobic training ergometers. It combines space-age machine dynamics with state-of-the-art computerized electronics to provide individuals at every level of skill and condition with a continually beneficial aerobic conditioning program of just 12-20 minutes daily.

Lifecycle's computer console monitors the user's progress with read-outs on pulse rate, pedal speed and current exercise rate. Heavy duty construction and no-maintenance innards result in Lifecycle 5000's long life expectancy even under the most heavy-use conditions.

★ ★ ★

Can't take your favorite player to the tropics this holiday season? Give the gift of a rich dark tan by giving the **Wolff System Sun/20**.

Designed by Wolff System/SCA for commercial or home application where space is at a premium, or where demand is less continuous. Twenty Bellarium "S" Superlamps provide even tanning and at the inexpensive price of \$3,995.00 it is easily affordable. Four fans are more than sufficient to meet most ventilation requirements.

★ ★ ★



New Sentinel, another eyeguard from Ektelon, is worn over the player's own prescription glasses. Special venting helps prevent fogging. Distortion-free lenses resist scratching and provide full-field vision. Suggested retail price: \$19.95.

★ ★ ★



Wherever your active pursuits take your racquetball fan, Ektelon's new line of **Sport/Travel Bags** will fit right in. Stylish, well-made, and totally functional, there's a complete selection of sizes and styles to choose from. Each made from durable waterproofed nylon in a choice of striking color combinations. Each with "wet" pocket, racquet pocket, extra-strong hardware and zipper pulls, plus reinforced handles and adjustable shoulder strap. Prices range from \$14.95 to \$44.95.

★ ★ ★

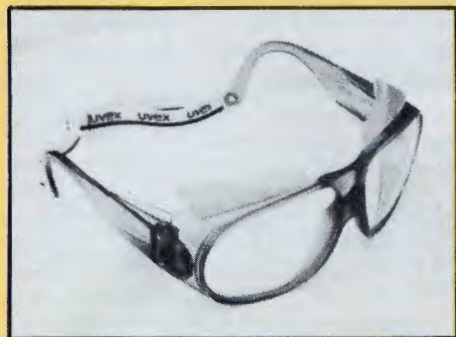


EQ Enterprises, Inc. suggests quality clothing at affordable prices as the perfect gifts! **Attackwear Satin Fleece Warm Up Suit** is 60% nylon, 40% polyester, light weight with colors of white/navy and white/red. Available in sizes XS, S, M, L, XL, the suggested retail price is \$45.00.

Attackwear Socks are thick, high quality socks with the logo in maroon, red, green, navy, light blue, and pink. At \$4.50 a pair or three pair for \$10.00, plus \$1.50 postage and handling, there is a limited quantity available.

Don't forget your racquetball player's eyes. **Attackwear Bausch and Lomb Action Eyes** are available in clear or tortoise shell and cost \$25.95 plus \$1.00 for postage and handling.

★ ★ ★



Sportstyle Eyeguards by Uvex Winter Optical, Inc. is a unique new sports product designed for racquet and other sports where the risk of eye injury exists. This new sports protector uses advanced technology to provide safety and comfort. Lightweight, durable, with an extremely wide field of peripheral vision, the **Sportstyle** has a soft, pliable browguard which gives added protection by absorbing the shock of impact from flying balls, elbows or a misplaced stroke.

★ ★ ★



Domestic Wholesale, Inc., official suppliers of the National Singles, World Championships, and National Juniors tournaments, offers a wide variety of **collared shirts, t-shirts, baseball shirts, v-neck sweaters and sweat-shirts**. Printing and embroidery services or silk screening are available on all their merchandise, with a savings of 40% possible on each order.

★ ★ ★



The Nieman Winder, a new and exciting Exerciser which is a hand, wrist, and forearm piece of equipment, was introduced by Nieman Industries this past summer.

The Winder builds strength and stamina in the hands, wrists, and forearms with a combination of resistances and repetitions for a few minutes each day. Used regularly, it can improve performance in sports, weightlifting, gymnastics, and music instruments where hand and wrist action are important.

The Winder can also be applied for the relief of sedentary arthritic pain or rehabilitative physical therapy. It retails for \$24.95.

★ ★ ★

Special thanks and Happy Holidays to those manufacturers who contributed to this Gifts and Accessories guide:

AMF Head

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Princeton, NJ 08540
609-799-9000

Bally Fitness Products Corporation

10 Thomas Road
Irvine, CA 92714
714-859-1011

Domestic Wholesale Co., Inc.

420 Boston Turnpike
Shrewsbury, MA 01545
617-842-4000

EQ Enterprises

17871 N.E. 19th Avenue
North Miami Beach, FL 33162
305-944-4549

Ektelon

8929 Aero Drive
San Diego, CA 92123
800-854-2958

Human Kinetics Publishers

Box 5076
Champaign, IL 61820
217-351-5076

Lifeline

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608-251-4778

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Smithfield, RI 02917-1896
401-232-1200

Unique Sports Products Inc.

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Atlanta, GA 30341
404-451-2800

Wolff System/SCA

Corporate Headquarters
2875 152nd Ave. N.E.
Redmond, WA 98052
206-881-6065

Bruce Christensen: Coming Back From Cocaine

by Charlie Garfinkel



Bruce Christensen

Bruce Christensen, a 6-2, 185 pound southpaw, literally had the crowds on the edge of their seats, during the 1980 National Professional Championships in Las Vegas. His phenomenal display of drive and Z serves, intermingled with deadly forehands and crisp backhands, was unbelievable.

Although he was known to some spectators, and had done reasonably well on the pro tour (ranked in the top 25), Bruce Christensen wasn't exactly a household word in the world of pro racquetball.

But, after defeating the legendary and wily Charlie Brumfield in the first round, decimating many-time Canadian Champion, Lindsay Myers, in the round of 16, and leading Mike Yellen 8-6 in the quarter-final tie-breaker, everyone knew who he was.

And although Yellen came back to win that match, Christensen had played marvelously. He seemed like a sure fire candidate to make a strong run at the national championship the following year.

But what few knew at the time was that Bruce Christensen had accomplished this remarkable racquetball feat while under the devastating influence of a severe cocaine habit.

"Even though I had played well in the 1980 Nationals, I had hardly practiced before that tournament," Christensen said several months ago. "When I first moved out to San Diego in the summer of 1979, I got into the cocaine habit heavily. I actually thought that it would make me feel and play better."

"Cocaine gave me an altered image of myself. So much so, that I thought that I was Mr. Wonderful. I felt that I could accomplish anything that I wanted to; especially in racquetball."

In essence, even though Christensen had an unbelievable Nationals, he was a physical wreck. Looking much thinner than 185 pounds, his eating habits, on infrequent occasions when he did eat, were extremely poor. He was a tyrant on the court—vulgar, and constantly arguing with his opponent and the referee.

"I was so bad that I'd actually spit on the court," he said. "This was partly due to my terrible temper. However, because of the cocaine I always had a dry taste in my mouth."

When the 1980 national tournament was over, Christensen was the eighth ranked player in the world. When I interviewed him and his father, immediately following that tournament, I was impressed with the seemingly close and warm relationship that they had. But Christensen hasn't talked to his father in over two years.

"My dad and I were once as close as a father and son could be, but I let him down terribly," he says. "I was the only player in the top 10 who didn't have a financial sponsorship from a racquet company. My cocaine habit was so bad, that I didn't care if I had to use my father for money connections or whatever. I'd do anything to get the cocaine."

Christensen, visibly shaken, continued. *"My dad gave me a car, paid my rent while I was in San Diego, and gave me expense money. Consequently, that enabled me to play and travel on the professional racquetball tour. He gave me everything that I wanted. Unfortunately, I never gave him anything back."*

The summer following the 1980 Nationals, Christensen became even more heavily involved with cocaine. He hardly played at all. When the 1980-81 season started, he played in just one tournament.

"I was destroyed by John Eggerman in an early round," he said. "I was so distraught and angry, that I broke all seven of my racquets outside of the building."

Christensen stayed in San Diego for several months, continuing his cocaine habit. Finally, in early 1981, having played virtually no racquetball, he decided to move back to his home in New Hampshire. He played an occasional tournament and performed horribly each time. After six months at home he moved back to San Diego.

"Even though my mom tried to help me while I was home, I felt that I had to get away from my family. I didn't want to embarrass them anymore."

Once he got back to San Diego, he continued the drugs. Not working out at all, he hung out at the beach every day.

"I was so stagnant and fed up with my life that I joined the Marines in July of 1982," he said. "Shortly after joining I went AWOL for 30 days, during which I gambled heavily. I thought that I could win some money to buy more drugs. Of course, I didn't win any."

"When I returned to the base I told them about my drug problem. Although they tried to help me I sneaked cocaine whenever I could during the rest of my service time."

After being discharged in August of 1983, Christensen's cocaine habit shifted into an even higher gear.

"I had reached rock bottom. I remember sitting in a room all by myself. I looked in the mirror and I was disgusted at what I saw," he said. "There was blood coming out of my eyes. I was crying, my face was blotchy. I couldn't eat, and I looked 20 years older than I was. I finally realized that cocaine couldn't fool me anymore. I had to have help immediately."

Christensen's fiancée, Sheryl Longchamps, was instrumental in getting Bruce entered into Beach Hill Farm. It is one of the most effective centers for treating drug users in the eastern United States, located in Dublin, NH, near Christensen's home. *"Sheryl has been my salvation,"* he said. *"When I wanted to quit the center she kept me going. She felt that my problem wasn't that bad and that I could be cured."*

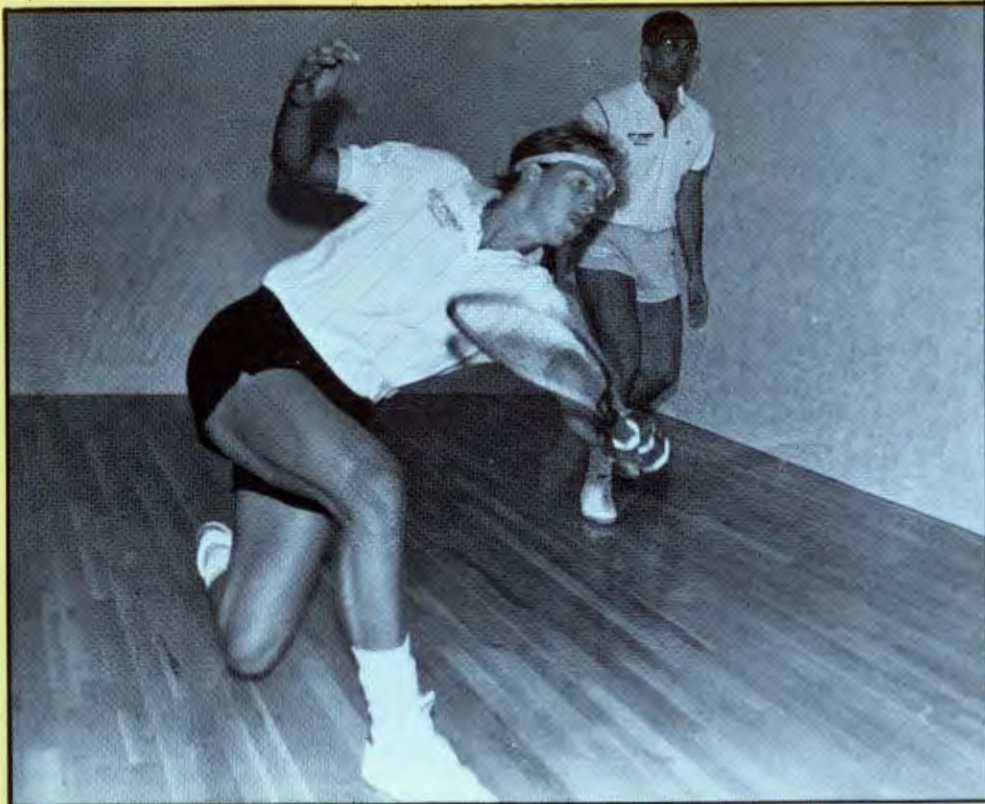
"While I lived there for six months, I went through a lot of counselling. There were also many hours of lectures by noted psychiatrists. When I went one-on-one with the psychiatrists they brought out many things that I never realized before. I started to get in touch with my true feelings about myself and others."

"Although I feel 100% better I can't honestly say that I'll never try it (cocaine) again. The problem really doesn't go away. Each day that goes by that I'm cocaine free, is another major achievement."

As Christensen started to feel better, physically and mentally, his thoughts turned to playing racquetball again. Shortly after leaving the center, he and Sheryl decided to move away from New Hampshire. They wanted a new area, where he'd be free from pressure from his family and friends. Albany, NY became that place. It has proved to be a tremendous blessing.

Upon arriving in Albany several months ago, a friend suggested that Christensen join the popular 21st Point Club, owned by the noted player, coach, and businessman, Vince Wolanin. Christensen, who was working at a local restaurant, took his first pay check and joined the club. He just wanted to play recreationally.

A ferocious forehand reputed to be second only to Marty Hogan's in power is one of many attributes in Christensen's game.



Wolanin, who knew that Christensen had had a problem with drugs, talked to Bruce at length.

"I was very impressed with his sincerity and straightforwardness," said Vince. *"I then suggested that we play a few games. Immediately, even though he hadn't been playing, I noticed how quick his hands were, his fluid stroke, and how incredibly hard he hit the ball."*

"After playing a few games I felt that Bruce could once again be one of the top players in pro racquetball, if he was willing to work hard."

About a week and a half later, another pro at Wolanin's club, Garr Thompson, was scheduled to play in the Ektelon Championships in New Jersey. However, he became sick at the last minute. Wolanin talked Christensen into taking Garr's place.

"Although Bruce had been playing only 10 days, he was improving every day," said Vince. *"I felt that he had a chance to really do well in the tournament."*

"I couldn't believe how nervous I was before my first match," Bruce said.

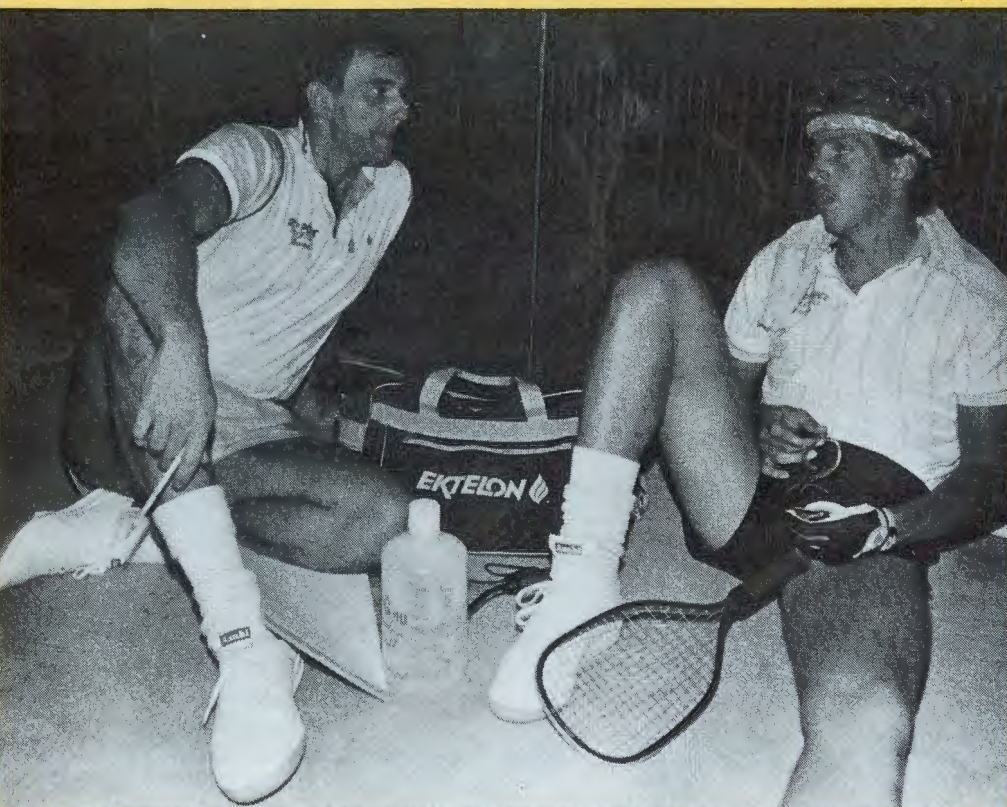
"During the match I didn't feel any mental intensity. It was frustrating, as I knew that I couldn't do what I was capable of."

However, he quickly became the talk of the tournament, as his powerful serve and crushing forehand, led him to a semi-final meeting with Dan Obremski, one of the nation's top amateurs. In a two and a-half hour donnybrook, Obremski won 11-9 in the third game.

"I was more frustrated than upset," said Christensen. *"I had tried to rely just on talent. It wasn't quite good enough. But, I was encouraged by my play. I felt that I had barely lost to one of the nation's best, with only one and a-half weeks of play. I knew that I could become a top playing professional again."*

Immediately after the tournament Wolanin worked out a program for Christensen that included Nautilus, bicycling, agility drills, and basketball. In addition, Wolanin devised mental drills and games that helped Christensen with his on-court thinking. And, he had Bruce playing four to five times weekly.

Christensen and friend/coach Vince Wolanin talk strategy after a workout outside one of the courts at Vince's 21st Point Club, Albany, NY.



—Photos by Jim Gardner

Three weeks after his first tournament Christensen astounded everyone by defeating highly regarded Jim Cascio.

"In the tie-breaker I was down 6-2," said Bruce. "I was white as a ghost. But, I played my heart out. I reached back and won the match. I was extremely pleased to be playing better and better. Not only was my training paying off, but I was enjoying myself again."

This past summer, Christensen defeated nationally-ranked Mike Levine. But the best was yet to come. Shortly after, in July, at the Baltimore pro stop, he defeated Ed Andrews, who had reached the semi-finals of the DP National Championships. Bruce beat him in three straight games. He then lost a hard fought, five game match to Dave Peck.

Wolanin, Christensen's coach and friend, says, *"Bruce just turned 23. I've watched him improve dramatically in just a short time. His serve is generally considered to be the second best in the game. Only Hogan's is faster, and even that's debatable. Bruce's shots, court*

movement, on-court intelligence, and conditioning, are improving every day. I honestly feel that he will be ranked in the top four after this season."

"Ektelon, the leading racquetball company in the world, has recently signed me to a professional contract," said Christensen. "Knowing that they feel that highly about me, has been a tremendous confidence booster. My desire to play and become racquetball's number one player, is all encompassing. Let's face it," he concluded. "I'm a lucky guy. Throughout my drug problem, Sheryl stood beside me, both in the good and bad times. Even when I wanted to give up, she never let me. As for Vince, his confidence in me and willingness to help me, has been the catalyst that makes me strive for perfection." ●

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Heavy Dose Of Intensity At 1st Elite Training Camp

by Linda Catanzaro Boberg

For Bob Wilhelm, Flint, MI and Donna Henry, Novi, MI, the dream of participating in racquetball's first Elite National Training Camp began when they qualified at the AARA National Singles last May. Each took second place in their division, the Men's 30+ and Women's 30+, respectively.

Qualifying for the Camp and getting into the Camp were two different things, so neither Wilhelm nor Henry took any chances. As soon as he reached home from the National Singles, Wilhelm fired off his application. Henry sent hers by express mail and when accepted took a week off work (Ford Motor Company) to attend.

Wilhelm, an artist and club pro at the Davison (MI) Racquet Club, has been working hard on his game for five years. Henry is the fourth ranked woman in Michigan. They both kept diaries of their experiences at racquetball's first-ever Elite Training Camp.

The Camp was overseen by AARA executive director Luke St. Onge, who, in coordination with personnel of the Olympic Training Center (OTC), reigned over 100 athletes from the U.S. and five foreign countries at the picturesque U.S. Olympic headquarters Training Center near Colorado Springs.

"What a thrill to look out and see mountains so tall that the peaks show above the clouds!" exclaimed Henry upon her arrival!

"The thrill of having qualified to be here does not compare with the thrill of actually arriving at the Camp," said Wilhelm. *"For the first time in my career I felt that I was going to learn how to approach my chosen sport as a serious athlete."*

Wilhelm's anticipation of top-notch instruction is not surprising. The lineup of instructors included U.S. Team Coach Ed Martin, fitness expert Keith Calkins (himself an excellent player), APRO veteran instructor and author Lou Fabian and professional players on the Diversified Products staff (Bret Harnett, Jack Newman, Caryn McKinney, Terri Gilreath) along with assistant pros Kathy Gluvna, Sean Moskwa, Harold Lujan and Dave Bennett.

U.S. Olympic Training Center, Colorado Springs, CO, site of the first Racquetball Elite Training Camp.



Of course the racquetball players weren't alone. Athletes from many other sports were on hand to train for their respective endeavors, including representatives of archery, track-and-field, table tennis, hockey, swimming, boxing and soccer.

"And I thought this was going to be a vacation! Some vacation!" said Henry when awakened at about 5:45 a.m. the first day. A half-mile jog and 15 minutes of stretching preceded breakfast.

"I enjoyed the early wake-up calls," said Wilhelm. *"We were at the club by 8 each morning and we didn't stop playing or talking racquetball for five straight days."*

The participants spent much of their mornings watching motivational tapes, listening to presentations on racquetball, nutrition, preventing eye injuries and even drug abuse. There was heavy emphasis on charting.

"After we spent some time critiquing each others' games we went into charting," said Wilhelm. *"It's wonderful. It allows you to analyze other players (you need someone else to chart yourself) and learn their strengths and weaknesses in relation to court positioning. You can then formulate an appropriate game plan."*

The Training Camp was high on intensity, which, in combination with the thin Colorado air, made for some tired players.

"It doesn't seem like we're spending that much time on the court playing," said Henry. *"But even so, I'm really tired after 15 minutes of play. And every night we're in meetings. Tonight it was on concentration—mental games and using mental rehearsal and visualization to improve your physical skills."*

The first week of the Camp was devoted to Open players, or those players who had won their division at the National Singles. (Wilhelm, who finished second, was granted special permission because of jury duty and family scheduling problems.) Juniors were allowed to participate in the second week's camp, while age groups were instructed in the third week.

What did the players like most about the Camp?

"Probably the most beneficial part of the Camp for me was the discussions on motivation and how to use certain techniques to improve your commitment and dedication to racquetball," said Wilhelm. *"As you can tell, the staff did an excellent job on their homework."*

Lou Fabian makes a point during one of his instructional sessions.



"The jog-walk up the mountain was great," said Henry, referring to the seven and a-half mile walk/run through Waldo Canyon. Surrounded by 8,500 feet of mountain elevation, the Canyon run was a nice break in the week's routine. "Unfortunately, I was with a group that got lost. We never did make it to the top, but we covered a good eight or nine miles of hilly terrain nevertheless."

"Now I know what John Denver meant by Rocky Mountain high. You look out over the vast expanse of mountains

and feel exhilarated by the fact that you've climbed under your own power!"

Teamwork was another objective to each week's camp. Throwing 25-30 people together became a lesson in human psychology.

"When everyone attended the first meeting and you told us how we would all become very close—more than we could ever imagine—I must admit that I was skeptical," wrote Kerry Nig-gemyer, who attended the Junior Week, to St. Onge.

"As the week went on and we became closer, a feeling of pride and togetherness fell on me and many others," he added.

The feeling was echoed by Elaine Mardas, who wrote St. Onge, *"By the end of the week, we all felt like one huge family."*

Racquetball has long been criticized for not having developed professional training centers to help stimulate activity and raise the level of skills in the sport. When compared to tennis, racquetball comes off a distance second in this regard.

It was no secret that this first effort for a racquetball elite training camp was

somewhat of a test—one that went very well in most opinions.

"The OTC officials who were dealing with us each week were very impressed with the caliber of people who attended the camp," said St. Onge. "They were judging us by this group to decide if there'd ever be a 'next time.'"

"This was an excellent, professional training camp that emphasizes the need to train and condition for our sport," said Wilhelm. "That is the best accomplishment of this Camp."

"I learned more about my game in the one week than I have in the past two years. But even more importantly, I am once again excited about racquetball. That old feeling—the one you first had when you started playing—that feeling is back!"

"We're all sorry the week is over," said Henry. "But hopefully this is just the first of many racquetball camps, as well as a stepping stone to the Olympics."

"As long as I'm playing and as long as they hold these Camps, I'll be there!" said Wilhelm. "The AARA, the USOTC and everyone involved with this Camp should be commended for their insight into what racquetball needed."

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Intermediates: Use Training Aids To Improve Weaknesses

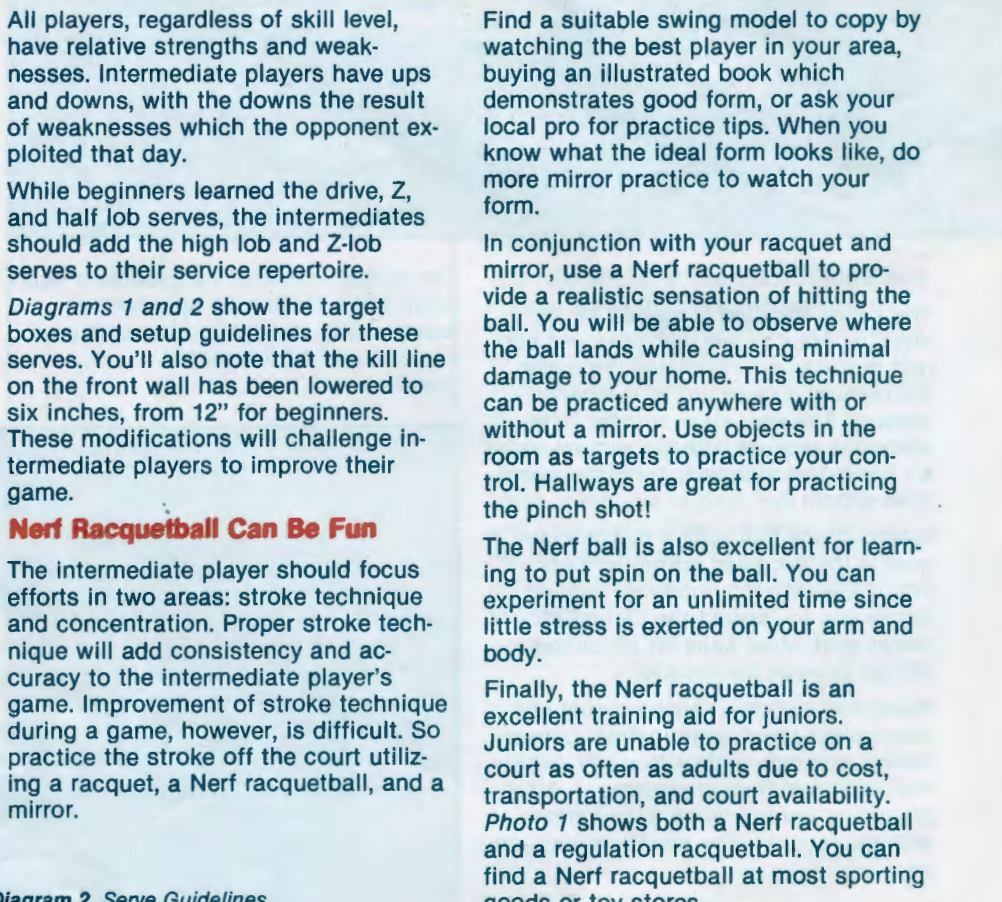


Photo 2. Yellen racquet and standard racquet.



The Yellen Racquet

The Yellen Racquet is named for its inventor, Mike Yellen, two-time and current professional champion. To make the racquet, use an old or inexpensive racquet. Ask your local stringer to re-string the racquet with six vertical and six horizontal strings to form the sweet spot. (Photo 2).

Watching the ball until it hits the racquet is the secret to hitting winners. Practicing with this modified racquet forces you to contact the ball on the sweet spot. Most balls hit off center will go through the racquet.

Practicing with the Yellen racquet will develop eye-hand coordination, concentration, and ball control. You will quickly realize tremendous improvement. After practicing several times, play a game with the racquet. The results will amaze you!

The racquet can also be used as a handicap while playing an opponent of lesser ability. Keep the racquet in your bag and use it for a match warm up.

Don't forget to switch back to your regular racquet before play!

Follow The White Line

Continual improvement of concentration will make you a better player. Concentration is not just watching the ball. You must fix your eye on the ball so nothing else enters your mind. Think of absolute concentration as a camera lens that focuses on a scene. All motion stops when the trigger is released.

This level of concentration is difficult to obtain. The result, however, will be many victories. One technique to practice on the court is focusing your eye on a white line painted on the ball. Use "White-Out" or "Liquid Paper" (Photo 3).

Begin by hitting ceiling balls and focusing your eyes on the white line, not the ball. Try to hit the ball so that the white line does not wobble. If the line wobbles on an angle, return it to a vertical rotation with your racquet swing. This method simulates the camera lens focusing for a picture. Gradually the line will become more defined. When you have accomplished this you will see the ball as floating through mid-air controlled by your mind.

Photo 3. Racquetball painted with 'Liquid Paper' for greater visibility.



Advanced Players: Use Training Aids To Hone Skills

The teaching aids for beginners and intermediates are useful for improvement of specific aspects of your game. The aids may not require formal instruction.

Advanced players should complete their service game by adding the Jam and Overhead serves. They also should lower the kill line to three inches. *Diagrams 3 and 4* show the added front wall targets and floor guidelines for these serves.

The following teaching aids, however, encompass the entire game and require professional assistance, instruction, and evaluation to maximize effectiveness.

The Ball Machine

The use of a ball machine is a priceless tool for refining and perfecting individual skills. The advantages include precise repetition of a setup similar to game conditions, excellent conditioning, and the flexibility to practice virtually every shot in the game.

The ball machine will neither wear out nor become bored. How often have you played a match where your opponent hit a certain shot you could not handle causing you to lose the match? Later, you ask a friend to hit the same shot. If he/she is unable to hit this shot you cannot practice an effective return. One solution is a ball machine!

It will help on serve return as the machine shoots drive and Z-serves at various speeds and angles with little difficulty; back wall practice with straight setups or ceiling ball setups; back wall corner practice; middle court practice—when the machine is behind you; front court retrieval practice.

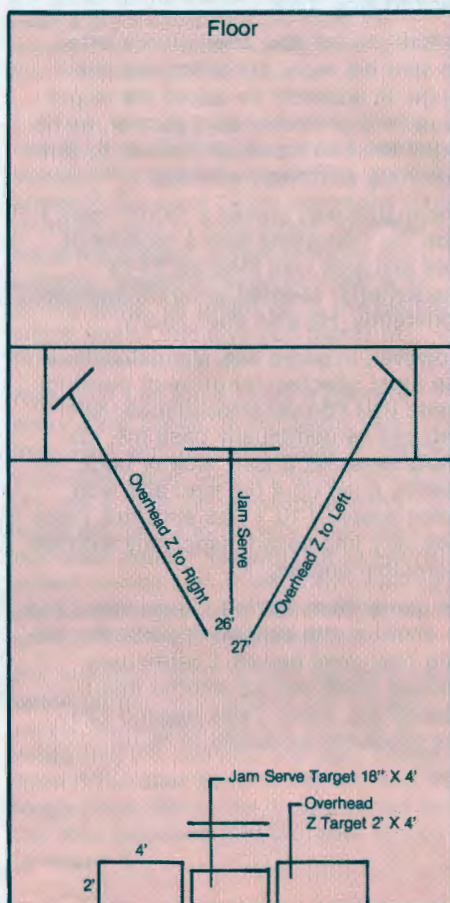
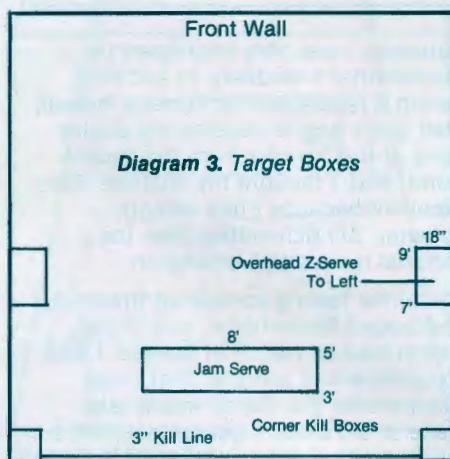


Diagram 4. Serve Guidelines

Video Taping Is A Necessity!

You would be amazed to see yourself playing racquetball on video tape! Video taping is used as a teaching aid in most every sport and racquetball is no exception. However, video taping can be expensive or unavailable.

Viewing video tape is only valuable if you are objective. Two people will not see the same thing in the same way. It may be easier to evaluate someone else since the ego tends to inhibit self-objectivity.

Did you miss a shot or did the opponent hit a shot you could not return? Were you out of position or were you in the correct position and the ball somewhere else? Ask yourself these questions often.

Video taping has three major functions: first, to watch yourself and look for ways to improve your game; second, to watch top players and how they execute specific skills; third, to watch future opponents and look for weaknesses in their game.

The casual player can certainly improve his/her game through the use of a ball machine or a video tape. An alternative to video taping is charting. Charting is an objective evaluation of what occurs on the court.

However, the serious player cannot substantially improve his/her game without the use of both ball machines and video tape. Their importance cannot be overstated. They are simply an indispensable part of the complete game. ●

Charlie Garfinkel's 'Spot' Racquetball

How To Beat The Squash Player

by Charlie Garfinkel

This article continues a monthly series by former top pro Charlie Garfinkel using the "spot" theory of racquetball, which helps improve your game by hitting a specific spot on the wall, which will give the desired effect for the shot. The spot theory also takes into consideration the "spots" on the court occupied by both you and your opponent.



Have you ever played against a racquetball player who was a former squash player?

I know the frustrations you have felt, as I had the unique pleasure (misfortune) of playing Victor Niederhoffer nine years ago. Niederhoffer, then the North American squash champion, had recently defeated the legendary Sharif Khan in the finals of the North American Open.

"I have won six national squash championships and now the North American Open," Niederhoffer told the New York Times. "Being the best squash player in the world, my sphere is very limited. Therefore, I'm going to take up the game of racquetball, a sport that I've never played. To show everyone what a great athlete I am, I'm going to win the national racquetball title four months from now."

Naturally, I was very impressed by Niederhoffer's modesty. In addition, having a reputation for humility myself, I felt that I had to squelch the aspirations of this invader from the squash world. And, I thought my chances were excellent because I had recently defeated Bill Schmidtke, then the national racquetball champion.

Therefore, feeling somewhat frivolous, I challenged Niederhoffer to a \$1,000 winner-take-all match in Buffalo. I was so confident of winning, that I told Niederhoffer the match would take place at 8 o'clock. I guaranteed him a return seat on the nine o'clock flight back to New York.

Before the ink had dried on my letter, he sent his reply, accepting my challenge. In addition, he asked me to get Brumfield or Keeley as a partner, as he didn't want to travel all the way to Buffalo for a worthless workout.

The match was played a month later. I won the first game with a mixture of kills and side wall pinches 21-13. Niederhoffer seemed to be off-balance constantly. He also shot poorly.

However, in game two, Vic unleashed the most spectacular array of passing shots that I'd ever encountered. Not only did he continually pass me, his shots never hit a wall, side or back. He quickly piled up a big lead and won going away 21-10. I was shocked. I was also very impressed, especially with his incredible passes.

As game three started I knew that I had to shoot at the earliest opportunity. Hitting only drive serves, I continually elicited weak service returns that I quickly put away. I was leading 11-1, but Niederhoffer rallied to 16-13.

At this juncture I again hit some well-placed serves that Vic had difficulty returning. I quickly scored the next five points to win the third game 21-13. Although I had won, I was extremely fatigued. I was also very impressed with Niederhoffer's incredible performance after only a month of serious racquetball play.

To prepare for the Nationals which was just a short time away, Niederhoffer added deadly pinch shots and uncanny drop shots to his repertoire. He reached the quarter-finals before losing to Steve Serot.

Niederhoffer continued to play for five more years, maintaining a steady top 20 performance. His battles back east with Reuben "Speedy" Gonzales were the highlights of many a racquetball season in that region.

While Niederhoffer's accomplishments in a short time were truly remarkable, Heather McKay, a 17-time world's squash champion, has surpassed Niederhoffer's mercurial progress. In her first year of playing racquetball, 1979, she won the National Amateur Racquetball Championships.

She also reached the quarter-finals of the professional championships the same year. In 1980 and 1981 she won the national professional championships. She added a third title this past season, just short of her 43rd birthday. And, she still teaches squash five times a week.

How did Niederhoffer and McKay become so racquetball proficient in such a short time?

First, they were both in excellent physical shape.

Second, their eye/hand coordination was tremendous.

Third, their knowledge of where to place the ball was superb.

Fourth, their passing games were nonpareil.

Fifth, their pinch shots and reverse corners were unerring.

Sixth, both players weren't afraid to try different serves and shots, such as the overhead drive serve and kill shot.

Finally, their ability to anticipate and return their opponent's shots was incomparable.

However, Niederhoffer, as good as he was, had two major weaknesses. One was that he didn't hit the ball powerfully enough to defeat the players at the highest level. Secondly, he never developed an outstanding kill shot off the back wall. Niederhoffer's weaknesses are also prevalent in squash player's games at all levels.

Of course, their weaknesses are much more pronounced than Vic's, giving players such as you and I the opportunity to defeat the squash player. But, it isn't easy. You must be able to hit the ball with power yourself, be in excellent condition, and have good anticipation.

Because a converted squash player has such a variety of shots that he can hit with different speeds, you must try to keep him off balance as much as possible. That is why power is so important—the key to defeating the converted squash player.

When serving, the drive is especially effective. Because the ball is traveling at such a fast rate, the squash player's side wall and touch shots are practically nullified. If the ball does ricochet off the back wall, in most instances, you'll still have a good shot at returning the squash player's attempts to kill, since most are unable to roll the ball out flat.

This flaw is due to the squash tin, which keeps squash shots at least 18 inches above the floor. If the shot is hit any lower, it will hit the 17-inch high tin "telltale" that is parallel to the floor.

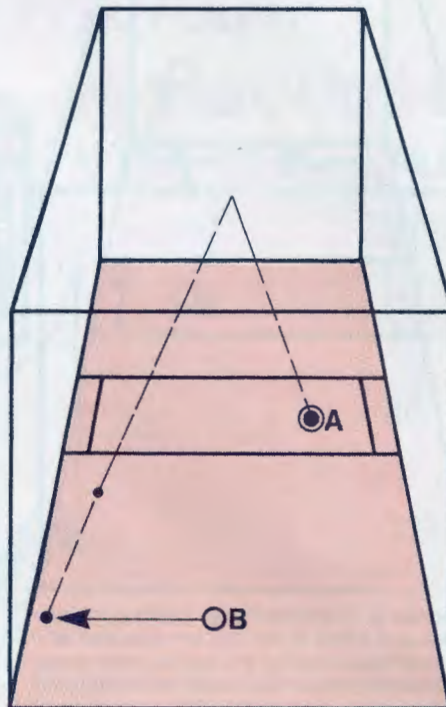


Diagram 1. Move two or three feet over from the center of the service zone to give your serve a wider angle. This will force the squash player to move quickly, making it difficult for him to set up.

For best results I recommend moving two to three feet to the right of center before attempting to serve. The serve's angle of (Diagram 1) will cause the ball to move more in a V-pattern. This will force the squash player to move more quickly—resulting in an outright error. At the worst, he might go to the ceiling which would still give you plenty of time to backpedal and return.

Naturally, you can't score a point on every drive serve. On occasion, you may even encounter difficulty in getting your drive serve over the short line. If you do, a high lob serve for second serve will prove to be very effective. Although squash players like to return slower serves and shots, they often try low percentage shots on return of serves or when the ball is in play.

For instance, when a high lob serve is taken on the backhand of the squash player, he sometimes will attempt to volley (fly) the ball into the right corner. Even if the shot doesn't roll out, and it rarely does, the server is so startled by the shot selection that he never moves to return it.

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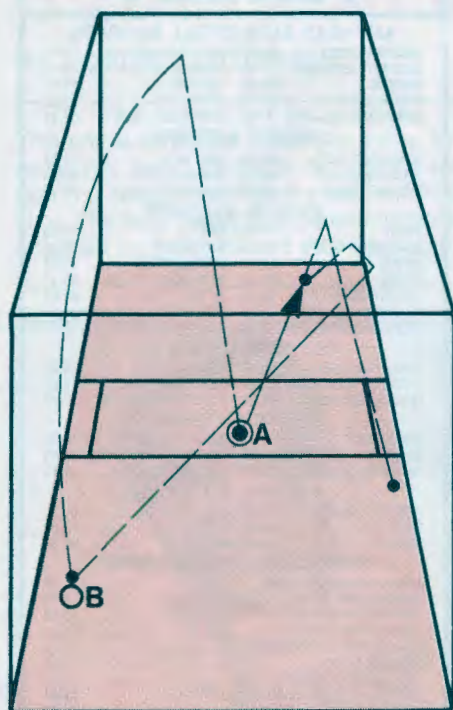


Diagram 2. Player B tries to hit a backhand reverse pinch off a lob serve. Player A anticipates the shot, moves up, and hits the return down the line for a winner.

I suggest watching the receiver closely. As soon as you see that he is attempting this shot, move immediately to the front right corner. You'll find that you have an easy shot to put away straight down the line (*Diagram 2*). The startled squash player will still be standing in back court.

Another return of serve that the squash player likes to hit from the left side of the court, especially with his forehand, is the three-wall overhead. The serve is taken out of the air and hit into the left side wall just past the short line. It then carries to the right side wall-front wall. The anticipation and returning of this shot are the same as shown in *Diagram 2*.

Watch your opponent closely. As soon as you see him hit the shot into the left side wall, move up to the right corner. You can then easily put the ball away straight down the line (*Diagram 3*).

When the ball is in play the squash player loves nothing better than to control the front court. He has an uncanny knack for volleying shots out of the air into the corners for outright winners.

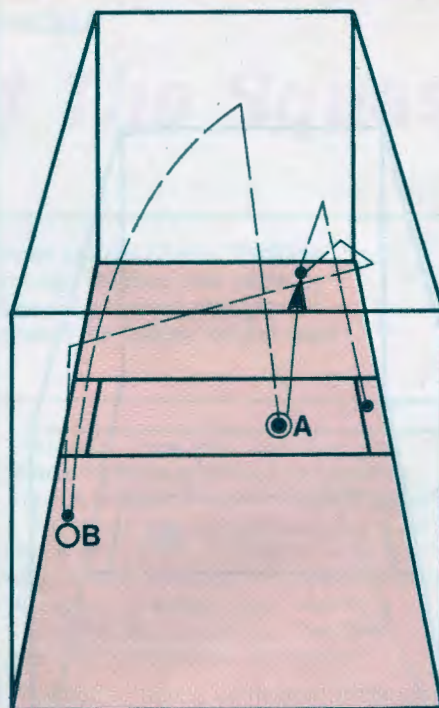


Diagram 3. This time Player B takes the lob serve and drives it into the left side wall with an overhead, causing the ball to travel cross court where Player A is ready to either re-kill or drive the ball down the line.

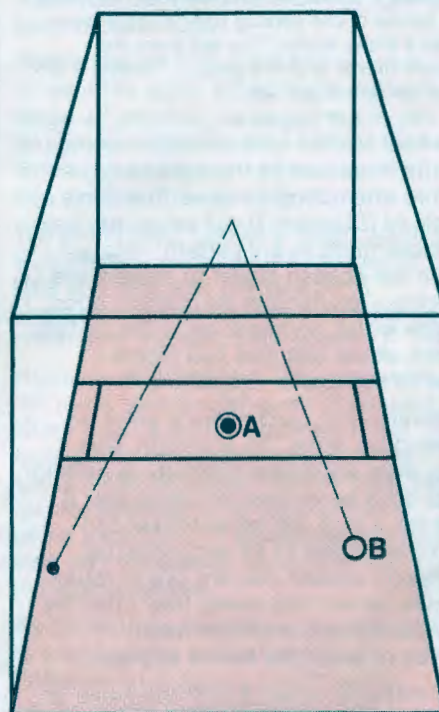


Diagram 4. With the squash player (A) in front of you, be sure to pass cross court, hitting as hard as you can.

Or, when he lets the ball bounce, he scores on an extremely high percentage of pinch and drop shots.

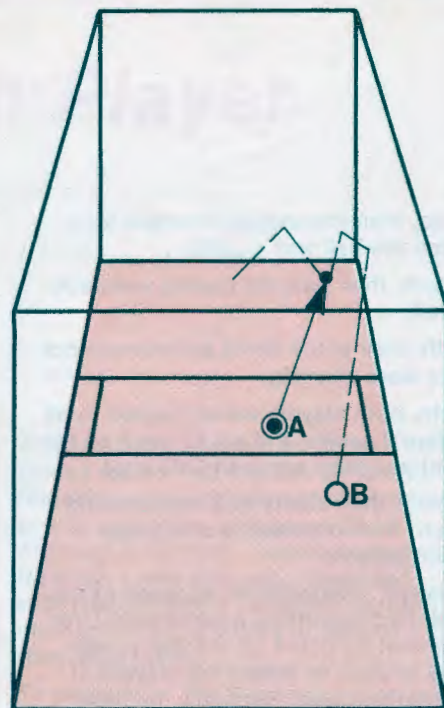


Diagram 5. The squash player (B) shoots a forehand pinch. Player A should anticipate the shot and kill it cross court.

My advice when the squash player is stationed in front of you, is to hit the ball as hard as you can, cross court. But, be sure that you're hitting a passing shot—not a kill shot (*Diagram 4*). Because a squash player has a tremendous variety of shots and touch at his command, any cross court kill shot that is even slightly up, will quickly be put away.

Another outstanding feature of a squash player's game is his seemingly uncanny ability to hit the right shot in a given situation. Of course, this makes him a tougher person to play, even when positioned behind you.

When a squash player is stationed behind his opponent, the tendency is to move toward the front court to cover the anticipated shot. In many instances this is the right move. However, since the squash player has such an outstanding passing game, my advice is to hold your position. By doing this you'll have the passing shots covered. And, if the squash player tried to pinch (*Diagram 5*) you'll still have time to return and re-kill the ball cross court.

Using "spot" racquetball correctly will help you to "squash" the squash player time after time. ●

Mental Practice: Racquetball Without A Racquet Or Ball

by Clifford J. Sherry, Ph.D.



Can you practice racquetball away from the court?

Since the 1930's, there have been more than 100 scientific studies that suggest that you can. You can use your imagination to practice specific skills involved in racquetball while you are waiting in line in a store, "on hold" on the telephone, or any of the other times that you have a few minutes that would otherwise be wasted. If you are willing to follow some simple guidelines, you can actually improve your performance over someone who does not practice in this manner.

Although novices can achieve some improvement with mental practice, it is most effective if you have some experience "doing" racquetball. If you have no experience, you will not know "what" to practice or "how" to practice it. Once you have become familiar with the skills involved with racquetball, it is a good idea to watch an expert "do" the specific skill. If you have a video tape machine, tape the performance and watch it a number of times.

You can learn to do your mental practice anywhere, but it is usually a good idea to learn the procedures in a relatively quiet environment that is free from interruptions and distractions. Many adults have lost the ability to form vivid pictures in the imagination, their "mind's eye." If you are one of these individuals, it may take some practice to regain this skill.

When you are ready for your mental practice, it is a good idea to play some soft, soothing music in the background. This will help focus your attention on your practice. *Do not* engage in mental practice when you are driving a car or working with dangerous machinery, because you may get caught up in your practice and have an accident.

Most experts agree that relatively short practice sessions lead to the most improvement in performance. The optimum length of a practice session is about three minutes. Five trials per session seems to be optimum. A trial is defined as one complete display of a specific skill.

There are at least two ways that you can use to mentally practice a specific skill. The first method might be called *external mental practice*. With this method, you try to get "outside" of your body.

Try to imagine watching yourself in a movie or video tape, making the scene as vivid as possible. Say for example, you want to practice your serve. See yourself on the court. Pick up the ball and bounce it a few times. Do you see yourself? In your "mind's eye" can you move around behind yourself and see what is occurring? Now get ready and serve.

As you visualize the scene, try to do it the way the experts do, because you are not limited to your own innate ability. Watch the results of the serve. Did the ball hit where you intended it to? If so, analyze what you did right and try to repeat. If not, try to determine what you did wrong and correct it. Try doing it in slow motion, etc.

The second method might be called *internal mental practice*. With this method, you try to stay "inside" your body and focus your attention on the sensations that accompany doing the particular skill. In your "mind's eye" how does your hand feel when you bounce the ball? Try to focus your attention on the specific feelings. How does the racquet feel in your hand? Try to imagine what an expert "feels." As you get ready to serve, how does your body feel? Follow particular sensations as you begin and complete your serve.

When you engage in mental practice, try to focus on specific skills. Complete skills can be broken down into their component parts. Remember, you are trying to improve, but in your "mind's eye" you are not limited to your physical ability. In your "mind's eye" you can and should have perfect form.

The more vividly you can "imagine" your improvement, the more likely and the more rapidly it will occur. So practice during those minutes that you normally waste and look for improvement in your game! ●

Clifford J. Sherry, Ph.D is a neurophysiologist specializing in the relationship between brain activity and behavior.

Steve Mondry's Racquetball Clinic

How The Z Ball Can Help You Win

by Steve Mondry



In the early 1970's one of the most exciting new shot developments was the creation of the Z ball, first pushed to prominence by then national champ Charlie Brumfield. While primarily a defensive shot, the Z ball's initial impact was so great that Brumfield rode it to a relatively easy 1972 national title by scoring tons of points with it.

As more and more players became increasingly exposed to the Z ball, it lost much of its original effectiveness. Astute players realized that by merely waiting for the Z ball to travel its path would leave one with a fairly easy shot at the Z ball's final destination.

The Z ball traveled (*Diagram 1*) from deep court to the upper front wall near the side wall, caromed into the side wall, traveled all the way cross court, striking the opposite side wall without hitting the floor. Upon contact at that point, the Z ball would carom out parallel to the back wall.

Players began anticipating the final position of the Z ball, and began putting it away.

But just like the fashion world where styles come and go and then come back again with slight modification, so too has the Z ball made something of a comeback. If used at the proper time, the Z ball can become an important *offensive* weapon in your arsenal.

How To Hit The Z Ball

The Z ball should be hit between waist and shoulder height toward a specific spot on the front wall, approximately three feet down from the ceiling and three feet in from the side wall. Your object is to drive the ball cross court and with enough power to cover its long path.

The result of a properly hit Z ball is to have the ball contact the last side wall about one foot from the back wall as it bounces across the floor parallel to the back wall (*Diagram 1*).

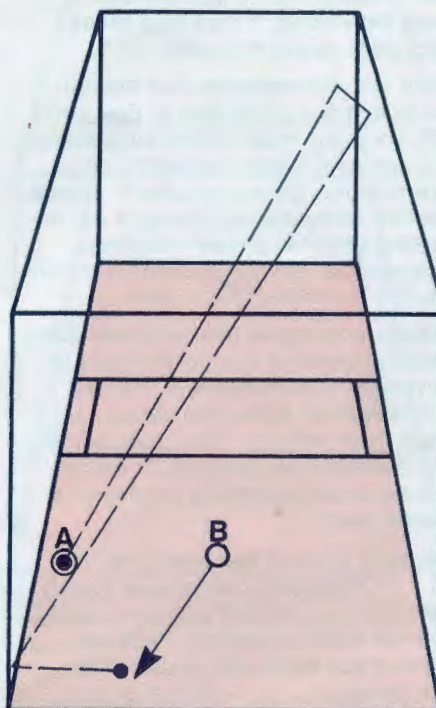


Diagram 1. The Z ball, 1970's version.

When To Hit The Z Ball

The major difference between the original Z ball and the Z's of today is one of shot selection. The *when* to hit the shot becomes the crucial factor. My recommendation is to use the Z ball as an offensive answer to a defensive serve.

More and more of today's players are using the lob serves in order to initiate a ceiling ball rally to avoid the booming serve and shoot game favored by many. It is against this type of serve that the Z ball can be effective—in more than one way.

First, it is a shot not often seen, making the surprise factor meaningful. Second, when hit by rushing the serve, it travels to the opposite portion of the court than what the server expects. Third, it's relatively easy to hit. A bit of practice time on the court alone will soon convince you of this.

But use a bit of caution. Like anything else, you can overdo it. The reason the Z ball is a relatively easy serve return is because it's hit off relatively easy to contact serves. If the server anticipates your desire to hit Z ball serve returns, you can expect to see an abundance of hard drives to both sides.

When used during the rally the Z should be hit from shoulder height and cross court into the proper front wall spot. The striking motion is somewhere between side arm and overhead, so be sure to mix in plenty of overhead drives and passes to keep your opponent guessing.

Whatever Happened To The Z Ball?

There are two reasons that the Z ball almost became obsolete and is virtually obsolete today at the upper echelons of play. First, I think it got a bad rap.

Sometimes perceptions are more real than reality and the perception of the Z ball became all show, but no dough (effectiveness). Players started to tell others that, yes, the Z ball was fun to hit and travelled an unusual path, but actually there were other, better, shots to hit from the same place in the same situations.

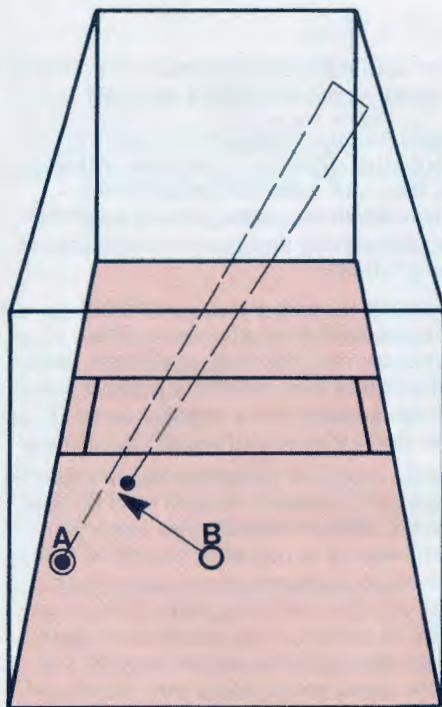


Diagram 2. Cutting off the Z ball. Player B fly kills the Z as it lazily makes its way cross court.

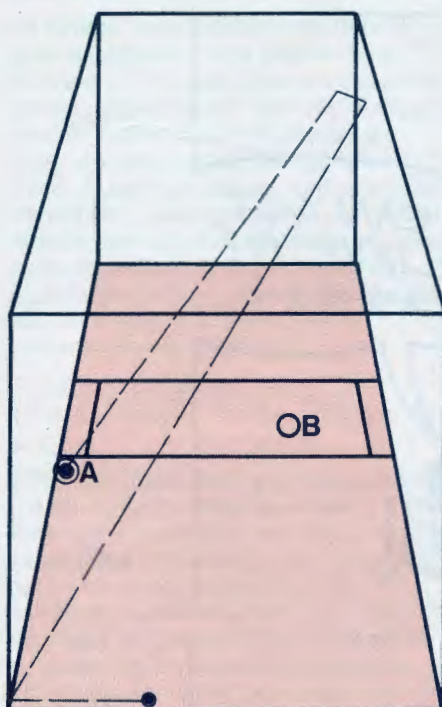


Diagram 3. The "new and improved" Z ball gets there faster.

The second reason the Z ball fell out of favor was the theory behind the shot. Brumfield intended for the Z ball to be a defensive alternative to the ceiling ball, which was occupying much of most matches in boring fashion. The Z, with its relatively wild course, would make for a wonderfully exciting, defensive shot.

Unfortunately, the better players caught on quickly and soon figured out that the Z ball was vulnerable during that long distance from front right to back left (or vice versa) to being taken out of the air (fly) and either killed into the front corner or driven down-the-line (Diagram 2).

The "new" Z ball that we've discussed here still travels that same path, but it makes the trip a lot faster because you're contacting the ball much closer to the front wall. Since your opponent has much less time to react to your shot, it makes it much more difficult to cut off effectively (Diagram 3).

A secondary safeguard is your abundant use of overhead drives to keep your opponent honest. When a player is looking to cut off a shot in mid-court, he's extremely vulnerable to the cross court overhead—in fact, it's almost a sure winner.

So don't forget the Z ball when you're looking for creative shots that can add points to your game. The Z may not be the ultimate but it can be an effective weapon in your arsenal. ●

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Getting More Enjoyment From Your Game

by Jay C. Kimiecik

If you are a racquetball player only seeking more advice on how to hit the backhand kill or when to use the ceiling, you may want to turn the page. I am not going to give you five magical steps to improve your game. You have heard and read it all before.

Racquetball is a difficult game to master and I encourage you to keep practicing and playing, but if you are like me, improvement is a slow process and for some, it may never come (I sometimes wonder if I belong to the latter group).

Many articles and books dealing with racquetball lead us to believe that if we follow their playing tips and pointers, better performance is sure to follow. What these skill-oriented people fail to realize is that there is more to racquetball than improving our backhand. What if we do not get any better? Can we still enjoy playing at the local club three or four times a week?

My answer is a definitive yes! The problem is that there is entirely too much emphasis placed on improving racquetball skills so that we can all become better players and, more importantly, world beaters. Well, not everyone is going to be a world beater but this is no reason why we cannot enjoy ourselves playing (even if we never improve).

This article is about how to enjoy and be satisfied with your game just the way it is. However, do not let me discourage you from trying to get better. You can read this again a few months down the road if you are still missing your forehand kill shot much more often than you would care to think about.

Now, back to point at hand. Here are five enjoyment principles everyone should keep in mind or take with them on the next trip to the courts.

Principal #1: I Do Not Have To Win In Order To Enjoy Myself.

I am not advocating that you should not try to win every time you step on the court. What I am saying is that the focus should be on the attempt to win (process) and not on whether you actually win or lose (product). Do not equate winning with success and losing with failure.

For example, there will come a day when you enter a challenge court and realize you have very little chance of winning against a Dave Peck clone.

Rather than worrying about how badly you are losing you can concentrate on returning serve or hitting accurate ceiling shots (even if they are killed shortly thereafter).

Why torture yourself about the score when you actually may be playing quite well? On the days when you don't win but you play well, you can be a "satisfied loser." You played well, why be dissatisfied because you did not win?

Principle #2: I Do Not Have To Play Well In Order To Enjoy Myself.

I have had much argument from my racquetball friends on this one. After all, they say, how can we enjoy ourselves when our ceiling shots aren't hitting the ceiling and our kill shots are being killed?

I sympathize with these people but disagree with their argument. They somehow feel that their self-worth is a reflection of how well they perform on the racquetball court and of course if they don't play well they cannot win.

Remember, your performance on the court is not related to what kind of person you are. On those days when your performance is not what you think it should be, concentrate on something that you may be doing well. If you can think of nothing—do not despair, think about the calories you are burning off, or the good you're doing your heart and lungs.

You can be a success on the days when your performance is sub-par by



focusing on the positive side of your game. Keep your weaknesses in mind for those rare practice moments. You will be surprised how much more enjoyment this type of thinking will produce.

Principle #3: I Must Be Realistic About My Racquetball Ability To Enjoy Myself.

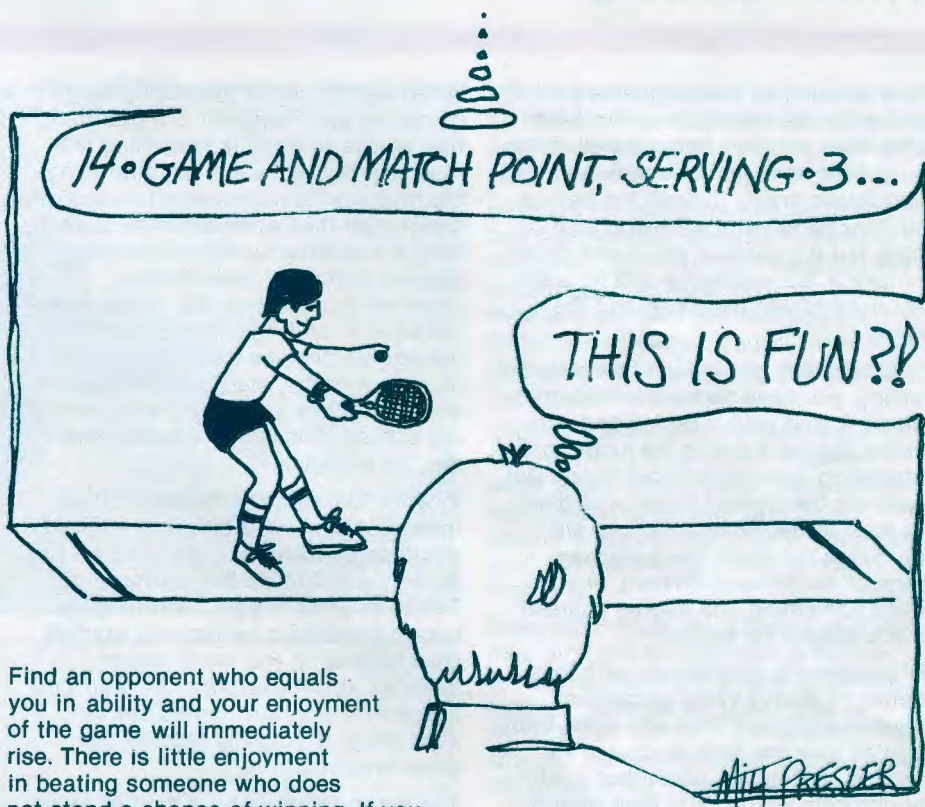
If you want to experience more enjoyment on the court, this principle may be the most important since it affects the first two enjoyment principles. Many of us want to be recognized as "good" racquetball players and tend to overinflate our racquetball image. This "self-made" image is often protected at any cost and unfortunately limits the amount of enjoyment.

For example, a person with an over-inflated image of his ability who loses a match will continually search for excuses to explain the defeat in order to protect this lofty opinion. How many times have you heard the following losing excuses: *I was tired today; I lost my backhand; I just couldn't concentrate; I need a new racquet.*

Of course, these statements may be valid accounts of why players lose. However, if you lost because the other person played better than you, excuses may be hiding the truth. Maybe it's time you reevaluated how good you think you are (perceived ability) in relation to how good you really are (actual ability). Be honest. Understanding your own racquetball ability is a positive step towards more enjoyment because you no longer will have to lie to yourself or your opponent.

Principal #4: I Must Not Underestimate The Importance Of A Compatible Opponent.

Think of a time when you had a most satisfying racquetball experience and a time when you had a very dissatisfying experience. I'm willing to bet my new (and expensive) racquet that the most satisfying occurred when your opponent was as good or maybe even a little better than you and the most dissatisfying was when your opponent was either far better or far worse than you.



Find an opponent who equals you in ability and your enjoyment of the game will immediately rise. There is little enjoyment in beating someone who does not stand a chance of winning. If you are in a situation like this, get out of it or you will find yourself becoming a "dissatisfied winner" and dread going to the courts.

On the other hand, if you are constantly being "blown away" look for an opponent who has a bit less steam. (I am not talking about tournament play where you have no control over your opponent selection.) Even in tournaments, however, the most fun and enjoyment will come when you and your opponent are relatively equal in ability.

Principle #5: I Must Understand What It Means To Compete In Order To Enjoy Myself.

I have touched upon this principle in part in the above sections. However, it is important enough to state it again. As racquetball players, we must realize that striving to win against an able opponent is much more important than whether we actually win or lose.

Do not restrict yourself to always being a "satisfied winner" or a "dissatisfied loser." There is much more to racquetball than winning and losing. To compete means to test your skill against that of another and your enjoyment should be based on that process and not on the outcome.

Lastly, these five principles are much easier read and forgotten than remembered and used. They can, however, give you more enjoyment from your game if adhered to. Again, I do not want to discourage anyone from trying to improve their game (I have been trying for years). Just remember that in the end your enjoyment will be a direct result of your attitude towards yourself and your opponent and not necessarily on how much you improve or how many victories you do or do not notch on your racquet. ●

Stretching for Racquetball

by Keith W. Strandberg

There you are, on the racquetball court, serving for the match. You hit a hard serve, then position yourself well in the court. Your opponent attempts a cross court return, trying to blow the ball by you. You try to cut it off using your angle, but it's obvious you aren't going to make it. So, you lunge and hit a kill shot back to win the game and the match.

If you regularly go through flexibility training, you have no trouble hitting that shot, and your muscles and connective tissues adapt to the lunge easily, responding well and without injury. But, if you are the type of player who does *not* train for flexibility, chances are your lunge fell short (because your range of motion was limited), or you pulled something and injured yourself as you lunged for the ball.

Do you want to play better, with less chance of injury? What racquetball player doesn't, but then why don't more athletes take the time to stretch for practice or a match, when that stretching can help ensure that their performance will be better and safer?

What does stretching and flexibility have to do with racquetball? Plenty. Being flexible means that your muscles will be less likely to tear and pull, and it is easier to put them through their range of motion.

"Range of motion" is the distance that a body part (an arm, a leg, etc.) normally travels through a joint. Many people have limited ranges of motion, because they aren't physically active or they haven't tried to increase their range of motion.

If a muscle is allowed to go through its entire range of motion, it will be able to perform given tasks easier, with less wasted motion, and the movement itself will be more effective, safer and stronger.

For example, if a racquetball player doesn't take much of a swing at a ball, the result is either a skip or a very weak shot. But, when that same player takes a full swing (the equivalent of putting a muscle through its complete range of motion), the ball will be hit much harder and may be a clean winner!

When we talk about increasing range of motion and flexibility, the first thing that comes to mind is stretching the muscles. But, are we really stretching the muscles? *No!* Research has recently concluded that when athletes stretch, they are stretching the connective tissues primarily, and not the muscles themselves. The muscles are encased in and held to the bones by connective tissues (tendons, fascia, tendon sheaths, etc.), and the pulling and resistance you feel when stretching comes from those tissues, and not the muscles.

Twenty years ago, athletes started their practices or their sport without any type of warm up, counting on the activity itself to do the warming up. Ten to five years ago, "warming up" meant stretching before you started. Now, following the most recent theories about exercise, the warm up stage of a workout comes before stretching. It actually readies the body for stretching.

The warm up must be a kind of movement which elevates the inner temperature of the body (the body's *core temperature*), thereby increasing the blood flow to the muscles and making them warmer. This activity should be made up of smooth movements designed to raise the pulse rate and increase the flow of blood in your body. It should last about five minutes. Some activities which can be used to raise the core temperature are walking, slow jogging and bicycling.

Make sure, when doing this "warm up," that you do so moderately. The whole idea is to work the body into it slowly, to let it adjust at its own pace.

Why warm up this way? The goal of any flexibility training program is to increase the range of motion of a given area, and that means permanently lengthening the muscles and connective tissues. The longer the muscles and connective tissues, the easier it is for the body part to move freely.

In stretching, there are three main factors which affect the end result: how hard you push the stretch; how long you hold the stretch, and the temperature of the muscles and connective tissues.

After stretching, you don't want the muscle to snap back to its original shape like a rubber band. Rather, you want the muscle and connective tissues to stay stretched, like pulled taffy. That is the only way to permanently increase flexibility and range of motion.

The way to reach this kind of stretch (clinically called "plastic elongations") is as follows:

- keep the stretching force low . . . don't push too hard!
- the longer the stretch is held, the better . . . don't bounce!
- keep the core temperature high . . . warm up very well!

If the stretching force is high, there is more chance of injury, and more chance of permanent damage. But, if the force is low and you don't push too hard, there is less risk to the muscle and tissues.

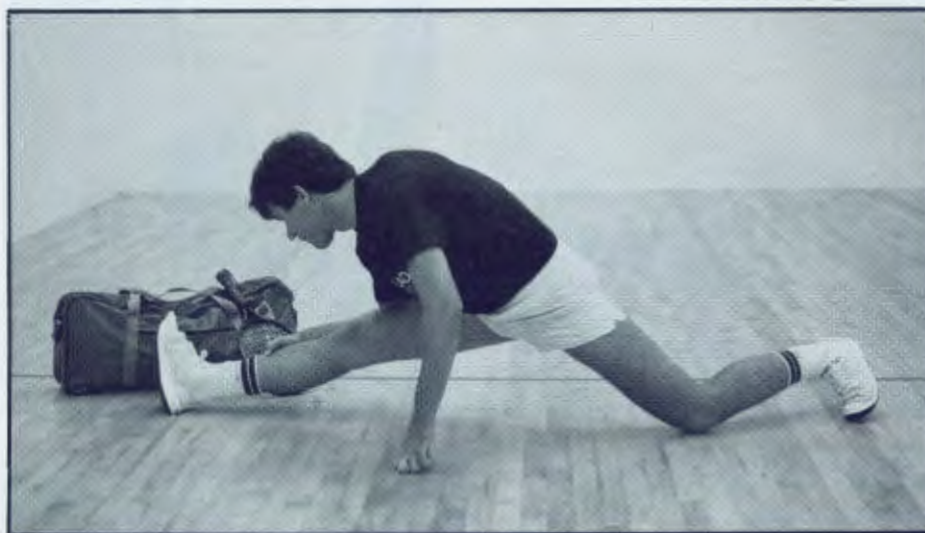
The longer the stretch is held, the easier it is for the muscles and tissues to adapt to their stretched position. Bouncing over a stretch only increases the chance of ripping and pulling.

The lower the core temperature of the area to be stretched, the greater the risk of tearing and/or pulling the tissues. On the other hand, as the tissue temperature increases, stiffness decreases and the tissues are more easily stretched.

More and more professional teams are starting to listen to flexibility coaches and trainers. One such team, the 1983 World Champion Philadelphia 76ers, hired a conditioning coach before their championship season. John Kilbourne was with them from training camp through to the playoffs, taking them through flexibility routines every day in practice.

"We saw a tremendous gain in flexibility through the program, as well as great increases in performance," John said. *"Also, injuries decreased. Last year (1983), we had the lowest number of player games lost due to injury in the history of the 76ers!"*

Kilbourne's program for the 'Sixers includes an eight-minute warm up section, designed to *"increase the blood flow and raise the core temperature of the body. Then we do about 10-15*



minutes of slow stretching." For Kilbourne and the 76ers, flexibility training really paid off!

The Exercises

Stretching muscles, especially when you haven't been stretching regularly, can cause mild pain initially. This pain will be there while you are stretching, and there may also be pain afterward (as much as a day or two later). This is normal, is to be expected, and shouldn't cause any worry. However, if you feel extreme pain, or hear a pop followed by great pain, see a doctor immediately.

When doing any stretching, be aware of the feelings in your body. Too much pain tells you that you are pushing too hard, and that you should lighten up. Moderate force means that you should hold the stretch when you start to feel the pull.

While you are stretching, don't go too fast. Don't try to rush through the stretches—take your time and try to relax the muscles while you stretch. You should enjoy it, and take this quiet time to get your mind together for the sport. The stretching portion itself should (ideally) last about 10-15 minutes.

Most importantly, don't skimp when doing the pre-stretch warm up. Remember, the warmer your muscles are, the easier and better the stretch will be.

Here are six very effective stretching exercises which, when combined with an overall flexibility routine (which you should get from your local pro or instructor), will help you feel and play better, stronger and longer. These exercises are for the legs and lower back, traditional trouble areas.

Chinese split: Start in a standing position, with your feet about shoulder width apart. Slowly allow your legs to separate, keeping your feet on the ground and pointing forward. Go down until you feel the pull, then hold it. (Photo 1)

Front split: From the Chinese split position, turn one foot 45° to the outside on its heel, letting the hips and other foot turn as well. Go down until you feel the pull, keeping the forward knee straight and one hand on each side of the forward leg. Hold it. (Photo 2)



Hurdler's stretch: Sit on the floor with one leg straight out and the other bent and pulled back behind you (your legs should form a 90° angle). From this position, slowly bend over your forward leg and hold this stretch. (Photo 3)

Heel cord stretch: This is an important stretch for any sport involving running or quick movements. Start standing face to a wall. Put both hands on the wall. Slowly, keeping your hips



foreward, begin to move your feet back one at a time. Keep the heels of your feet on the ground while stretching. (Photo 4)

Ankle pull back: Start in the same position as the heel cord stretch. Keeping right hand on the wall, reach back and grab your left ankle with your left hand. Pull the ankle back behind you as high as you can. Repeat with the other leg. (Photo 5)



Trunk to knee curls: Lie on the ground and bring one knee slowly up to your shoulders, curling your shoulders up from the ground. Hold this stretch, then switch legs. [Note: a good variation to this stretch is, after the first stretch, to straighten the leg and hold it (see photo).] Finally, perform this stretch with both knees drawn up to your chest. (Photos 6-8)

These are just a few of the available stretching exercises, and there are many more. Feel free to vary the exercises you do, so that you and your routines don't become boring. But, be careful that the exercises you do are safe and athletically sound. If you have a question about a certain exercise, ask your instructor or club pro.



Make sure that the stretches you do combine to give you an adequate full body flexibility workout. To play at your best, you need a body that is able to perform to its limits. And you can make sure that your body is capable of reaching its limits by warming up and stretching.

STRETCH . . . and watch your game improve! ●

The Fitness Center

What's A Fitness Center Doing In A Magazine Like This?

It seems like just yesterday that I was on the verge of losing my life savings because of a thing called fitness. The year was 1979 and I was a professional racquetball player who had invested every ounce of my time off the court and my money to becoming a small percentage investor/manager of a pure racquetball club.

Upon buying the club, my partner, well known pro Jennifer Harding, and I decided to take out two courts to put in a two-level fitness center. On the lower level we planned a weight room with stationary bikes. Plans for the upper level called for an aerobic exercise room.

We wanted a fitness center in our club because we had been working at a club in Los Angeles called The Sports Connection, the first racquetball/health club in the country. We had become believers in the benefits of fitness for ourselves as professional players and saw how successfully fitness and racquetball could be integrated.

The first thing we did upon purchasing the club was to split responsibilities along the lines of our talent. Jennifer became the financial planner for the club and its projected fitness center expansion. I became its manager/program director responsible for day to day operations.

"Sauser, you're good with people and the members like you," Jennifer assured me. *"I can really do a good job with this project if you can keep the programs going and help sell the whole idea to the members."*

It sounded like a fair deal to me. In fact, until the project started happening, I thought I'd gotten the light end of the work load. As Jennifer buried herself in the back office with paperwork, business problems and architect's meetings, I took my position

at the club front desk to play hero to the members for bringing them this exciting new fitness center.

I soon found out that my end of the deal was the wrong end to be on. The members didn't think too much of our plans. In fact, they hated the idea of taking out two courts. My days soon became a series of complaint sessions at the front desk instead of all the enthusiasm I anticipated.

"What the hell do you two think you are doing? Are you crazy?" One of my less tactful members screamed at me one day. *"I didn't join this club for my health. I just want to play racquetball."*

Undaunted by his attack, I tried to turn his complaint around into a compliment (something all good club managers do for survival). Using myself as an example, I assured him that as a player myself, I had every intention of improving my game off court in the fitness center and that hopefully it would improve my ranking on the pro tour.

His only reply was, *"Well, this is what you get when you have a club that's run by stupid women."*

Remember, the year was 1979. Fitness was a foreign word in racquetball clubs, and I was failing at explaining how beneficial this new fitness center would be for all of us. The members remained focused on the fact that we were losing two courts.

So, as the construction went on through the winter and into the spring of 1980, I tried in vain to win the members' confidence in our decision about the fitness center.

We ran more racquetball programs than ever before to sell the members on the fact that we still cared about the sport.



My staff and I explained to each and every member that we would limit membership to assure that the eight remaining courts would not become overfilled.

The common remark the members made to me about more racquetball programs, limited membership and the benefits of fitness became, *"You just want to get rich, that's all."*

They never knew that getting rich wasn't even in the picture that winter. In fact, it was getting marginal for the club even paying it's bills (fitness center construction and equipment doesn't come cheap). Personally, I was more concerned about debtor's prison than what to do with all the money we were supposedly making.

After seven months of struggle, the Fitness Center opened in April of 1980 to a mixed reception. However, it didn't take long for the members to understand how much it would benefit their health as well as their racquetball games. Exercise classes

Stationary Bikes And Aerobic Fitness For Racquetball

began to fill, and players began to trickle into the weight room to get a fitness evaluation and learn how to use our machines.

It became evident by early Fall of that year that what had once been a calculated risk had turned out to be very successful. In fact, fitness really contributed to the overall enthusiasm of our club.

The quality of racquetball play began to improve. All of a sudden A and B divisions in racquetball tournaments and leagues began to overfill. Fewer injuries occurred. Our players began to develop the strength and stamina that contributed to their increased skill levels.

Instead of hearing complaints about the fitness center, we began hearing how workouts were helping everyone's games.

In addition to player improvement, the member who originally joined the club for the fitness center only began to play racquetball. New players meant new partners and more participation and enthusiasm than ever in our racquetball programs.

In less than six months after the Fitness Center was opened, it became clear that what had once been the largest PR problem of my life had taken off like the 1984 Michael Jackson Victory tour. Adding a fitness center to a racquetball club had been the most difficult project I'd ever been involved with but it had turned out to be the most rewarding too.

Now I'm helping to put a fitness section in a racquetball magazine. Well, it will only be the second time I'm told that I'm crazy. ●

Stationary bikes have a very well-deserved, good reputation. They provide a safe, easily controlled, time-efficient aerobic workout. Used extensively in fitness centers to test and begin racquetball players on aerobic conditioning programs, the bikes provide a good starting base as well as a means to constantly retest yourself to see if you are achieving cardiovascular fitness.

Racquetball players who are overweight, have joint problems or other physical ailments that would prevent them from participation in aerobic exercise classes or from beginning a running program, can profit immensely from the use of stationary bikes. The "weight supportive" nature of the bikes give you a full cardiovascular workout with little or no compressional shock to joints, tendons and ligaments.

The rehabilitative aspects of the stationary bike are also worth considering. Under a doctor's care, heart attack patients or those with heart problems can achieve the best cardiovascular fitness possible. Players coming off back and leg injuries can use them to keep up their stamina for the time they are off the court.

Finally, the simplicity of the workout is probably what attracts most athletes to stationary bikes. Stationary bikes are not limited in use by weather conditions (like outdoor bikes and jogging are). You can watch television, read, or listen to head phones while you use them, or simply engage in conversation with the person next to you as you conduct your workout.

How To Get Started

If you have access to a stationary bike but not to instruction, here's a simple way to get started.

First, you must figure out your resting heart rate. This can be done before you begin on the bike, but an even better time to get your resting heart rate is when you wake up in the morning.

Sit up in bed, place your fingers on the carotid artery (located by your jugular vein and next to the Adam's apple of your neck). Looking at a clock or wristwatch with a second hand and beginning at zero, count the number of beats your heart makes in six seconds. Then multiply that number by 10. For example, if you counted seven beats in six seconds, then your resting heart rate is 70 Beats Per Minute (BPM).

Once you've figured out your resting heart rate, it's time to figure out your training heart rate zone. Remember, for optimum cardiovascular conditioning, your heart rate must be elevated to its training zone (70-85% of your maximum heart rate). This assures that the exercise is aerobic and that body fat can be burned.

To accurately figure out your training heart rate zone, use the following three formulas. They are:

1. *Predicted Maximum Heart Rate*
2. *The Lower Limit of the Training Heart Rate Zone*
3. *The Upper Limit of the Training Heart Rate Zone*

The first formula, for *Predicted Maximum Heart Rate* enables you to figure out the predicted maximum number of beats your heart can possibly make in a minute. It is:

$$205 - (\frac{1}{2} \text{ your age}) = \text{Predicted Maximum Heart Rate}$$

So, for example, if you are 32 years old, your formula would be:

$$205 - 16 = 189 \text{ (your Predicted Maximum Heart Rate)}$$

By figuring your maximum heart rate, you can now use this formula to calculate the *Lower Limit of Your Training Heart Rate Zone*. It is:

$$(\text{Predicted Maximum Heart Rate} - \text{Resting Heart Rate}) \times 70\% + \text{Resting Heart Rate} = \text{The Lower Limit of Your Training Heart Rate Zone.}$$

So, with a resting heart rate of 70 beats per minute and a predicted

maximum heart rate of 189, your formula would be:

$189 - 70 = 119 \times 70\% = 83.3 + 70 = 153.3$ is the *Lower Limit of your Training Heart Rate Zone*.

The formula for calculating the *Upper Limit of Your Training Heart Rate* is identical to the Lower Limit formula except that instead of using 70%, you use 85%. So, the calculation of the *Upper Limit of Your Training Heart Rate* would be:

$189 - 70 = 119 \times 85\% = 101.15 + 70 = 171.15$ is the *Upper Limit of Your Training Heart Rate Zone*.

Now it's time to get on the bike armed with the knowledge of how fast your heart will have to beat to make the time you spend aerobic (contributing to cardiovascular fitness and body fat loss).

Adjust the seat of the bike so that when you sit on it, the front part of your foot reaches the pedal with a slight bend at the knee (when the pedal is in the down position). The handlebar (if possible) should be adjusted so that you can lean slightly forward and grip it with slightly bent arms.

Now it's time to begin pedalling the bike. You'll want to begin by pedalling at a rate of 50-60 *rpms* (revolution the front wheel makes per minute) with minimum tension.

The way you set the tension (or workload) on the bike is to gradually increase it as you go. Most stationary bikes have a meter that tells you what tension you are on as well as *rpms*. On most bikes this tension reading is measured in tension numbers (1,2,3), watts, or *kpm's* (Kilo pound Meters). These units of measure indicate how much effort you have to produce to make the front wheel of the bike go around.

If you are a man, warm up by pedalling the bike at 50 *rpms* on a tension number of 1, or 300 *kpm's* or 50 watts. Then, double the tension after two or three minutes to a tension reading of two, or 600 *kpm's* or 100 watts.

Women can begin at one-half a tension, 25 watts or 150 *kpm's*. Then, after 2 or 3 minutes, double that tension. Again, pedal the bike at 50 *rpms*.

After two minutes, check your heart rate. If it has elevated slightly but is not in your training zone, you can increase your pedalling from 50 to 80 *rpms*. After two minutes at this speed, check your heart rate again. If you are still below the training zone, begin to increase tension.

If you are reading tension numbers, increase one-half every two minutes until you reach your training zone. If you are reading *kpm's*, increase 150 at a time. If you are reading watts, increase 25 every two minutes.

If at any point during this process your heart rate elevates past the training zone, ease up on the tension on the bike until you can achieve and hold your training heart rate zone. Always pedal between 50-80 *rpms*.

Once you've attained your training heart rate zone, pedal the bike at that particular tension and *rpms* for a period of 15 minutes. Upon completion of this phase, don't just stop and get off the bike — it's time to cool

down. This means that gradually, you should release the tension and keep pedalling. This process should go from two to five minutes. It gives your heart a chance to drop from the training zone and back down toward your resting heart rate.

Immediately after you get off the bike, stretch your legs to prevent the muscles from locking up (staying contracted).

Additional notes to a general use of the stationary bike as described above include the following:

1. Make sure you've obtained an okay from your doctor for the use of a stationary bike.
2. Wear shorts and a shirt for the use of the bike (your racquetball outfit is probably best). This assures that you will not get overheated while pedalling.
3. Never wear too many clothes in an effort to "sweat off more pounds"! This old myth is one you still see being carried out by pudgy weekend warriors in an effort to crash off weight at considerable risk to their health.



Fitness Testing With Stationary Bikes

There is no evidence that wearing extra clothes during a workout contributes to more body fat loss. You will lose water weight (that comes back at the drinking fountain) but that is all. The only thing you gain when you overdress for stationary bike work is a health risk of fainting or worse still, a heart attack.

4. Once you've mastered a 15-minute workout on the bike, increase that time by five minutes a week for three weeks. A good conditioning time is 30 minutes (in your training heart rate zone), done three to four times a week. If you want to maximize body fat loss in addition to conditioning, then 45 minutes conditioning time done four to five times a week can do the trick. (Make sure you progress slowly):

5. In relation to racquetball, never conduct a bike workout before you play. When done properly, a stationary bike workout will leave you too drained to play your best. Your legs will feel like lead and the quality of your game will decrease. Instead, play on the days you don't use the bike, or use the bike early in the morning and play in the evening.

6. Always stop the workout if you feel overtired, sick or nauseated. Also stop if your heart starts beating irregularly or too fast. Then see a doctor as soon as possible about what happened. You may have just saved your own life.

7. If you like the bike and the result you get with it on and off the court, arrange for a fitness test and some consultation involving the use of the stationary bike. There are many clubs that offer fitness testing instruction and personal programming on the bike. If your club doesn't, check a local college or for a fitness testing center. You'll be amazed at how much more you can accomplish in the hands of a qualified fitness specialist. ●

Fitness testing on the stationary bike combines instruction with an overall fitness assessment that is personally designed for you. Of the clubs that provide instruction and fitness testing, most use a stationary bike for this purpose. Unfortunately, a few clubs don't have qualified instructors to teach you properly. Here are some guidelines that can prepare you for a formal fitness introduction that you can use to determine if your club is offering a creditable stationary bike/fitness program for you and your racquetball game.

1. *Instructor Qualifications.* A nice body and good looks do not qualify someone for fitness instruction. You have every right to ask the manager of the club what qualifications your instructor has. If the answer you get is a degree in exercise physiology and/or certification from the American College of Sports Medicine, you are on safe ground.

2. *Before The Test.* Your instructor will make out a personal program card for you. (S)he will ask you about your age, take a medical history, take body measurements, calculate a body fat percentage and obtain your preferred activity (racquetball). It is this information that enables the program to be accurately tailored to meet your needs on and off the court.

After the program card is filled out, you'll be given a flexibility test. This shows your current muscular condition and what your potential for injury during exercise might be. Then you'll be given a specific set of flexibility exercises that apply to your workouts and your racquetball game.

Before any activity is begun, your blood pressure will be taken. It will also be taken every time your heart rate is monitored on the bike. This is a safety precaution to determine if you are running the risk of a heart attack or stroke. If at any time before or during the test for that matter, your blood pressure response is abnormal, the test will be terminated immediately and you'll be advised to see your physician.

3. *The Test Itself.* After the preliminaries are out of the way, the instructor will adjust the bike for you and monitor your resting heart rate. Then (s)he will determine what 85% of your *Predicted Maximum Heart Rate* is for you personally.

This is the basis of what's known as a submaximal bike test. It means that the instructor takes your heart rate up to that 85% figure by having you pedal the bike at 50 *rpms* beginning on a low work load (tension). Every two to three minutes, the tension is increased while your heart rate and blood pressure are recorded.

When you hit 85% of your predicted maximum heart rate, the test ends. Of course, the test would end immediately if you are nauseated, dizzy, or indicate signs of pain or extreme discomfort.

The instructor then records at what tension you achieved 85% of your predicted maximum heart rate. These figures are then applied to charts that in turn indicate how aerobically fit you really are. Generally speaking, the higher the tension required to attain 85% of the predicted maximum heart rate, the better your shape.



Your instructor will go through the details of your test results and explain how they are arrived at for you. Don't be surprised if you don't score very high. Most racquetball players who only play for fitness are often surprised to find that they score in the average or below average range.

Keep in mind that the purpose of the test is not to show you how inferior to the rest of the fitness world you are, but to give you a starting point from which you can work your way up.

Once you understand your test results, your instructor can give you a personal workout program involving the bike.

It will help if you think of your bike workouts in terms of *frequency*, *intensity* and *duration*.

By frequency, we mean that the instructor will tell you how many times a week you must use the bike to make your personal program worthwhile.



(S)he'll assign a workload (in this case a combination of tension and rpms) that will assure that your heart is in the training zone while you exercise on the bike. This is known as the *intensity* of your workout.

Lastly, how many minutes you must spend on the bike per visit at the correct intensity determines the *duration* of your workout.

Understanding the *frequency*, *intensity* and *duration* of your bike workout will assure that you don't under use or over use it.

Muscles And Machines Mean A Better Game For You

After you've worked out consistently for three months, you should get tested again. Be aware that if your resting heart rate is lower, you are on the way to cardiovascular fitness and increased aerobic capacity. From there, your instructor can provide you with a more advanced program to continue your overall improvement.

4. Computer Bikes. Computer bikes are the new wave of stationary bikes that is increasing in popularity at clubs as well as in private homes. They vary in levels of sophistication and can be a lot of fun to use.

Like manual bikes, their ultimate goal is aerobic fitness. Unlike manual bikes, they have more accessories to inspire you during your workout.

Many bikes tell you how many calories you'll burn during your workout. Some even monitor your heart rate for you so that you are assured to conduct your workout in the training heart rate zone. By punching in a specific program, the computer console will guide you through a warm up, training interval and cool down on the bike. Your goal then becomes to be able to execute more difficult programs as time goes on to gain your true aerobic capacity.

Computer bikes made for commercial use (in clubs and at home) are specifically designed to be "user friendly." With some instruction (either written or personal), it's easy to learn to operate one.

5. Summary. The safest and easiest way to get in good aerobic shape for racquetball is on the stationary bike. It provides a good learning tool about fitness and can give you the added energy you need to win. ●

Machine weight training is not only proving to be compatible with racquetball, but is fast becoming an indispensable part of the training methods used by today's top tournament finishers.

Young players and pros use weight machines to increase their strength and flexibility on the court. Older players use machines to improve strength and flexibility and then to maintain it. All age groups can count on machine weight training to help prevent injuries and under a doctor's supervision, to actually rehabilitate many injuries—injured in racquetball or otherwise.

In order to understand the benefits of machine weight training, it is good to have a general understanding of how your muscles work and benefit from a weight training program. Then it is important to know how to get started safely and effectively on a program.

First, let's take a look at what happens to your muscles in a weight training situation and how this results over a period of time in the building of muscular strength, endurance and flexibility.

The muscles you are conditioning in weight training are called skeletal muscles. They are made up of muscle fibers. These fibers contain two contractile proteins: actin and myosin. Muscles shorten to produce movement when actin and myosin slide along each other.

This is accomplished by cross bridges that reach out from the myosin to make contact with the actin filaments and pull like the oars on a rowboat. This is, in simple terms, how a muscle contraction is performed.

There are also two types of muscle fibers, fast twitch and slow twitch.

Fast twitch fibers are best suited for short intense effort. Slow twitch fibers contract slower than fast twitch fibers but are more resistant to fatigue.

The percentage you have of each is genetically determined, and cannot be changed. What can be changed through weight training, however, is the strength of the fast twitch muscles to give you a more powerful on-court performance.

There are two types of muscular contractions that occur in machine weight training. They are called concentric and eccentric contractions.

When you lift a weight load, your muscle contracts and shortens as tension develops. This type of contraction is called concentric contraction. Lifting weight by concentric contraction is referred to as the "positive" part of the exercise.

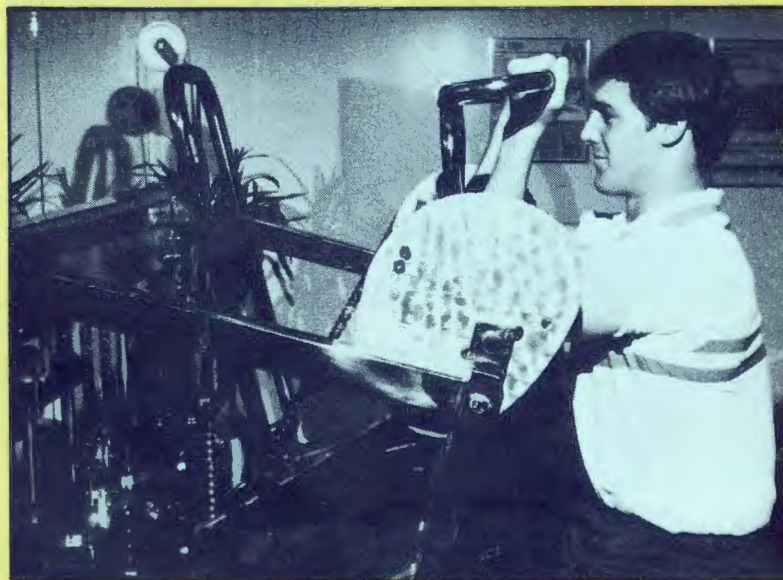
As you let the weight load back down in a controlled manner (not simply letting it drop), your muscle lengthens in what's known as eccentric contraction. This is called the "negative" part of the exercise.

There are two types of conditioning approaches to weight training on machines. One is anaerobic (lifting substantial weight so that your muscles will run out of energy in a short period of time). The other is aerobic (lifting very light weight over long periods of time).

Anaerobic weight training forces your muscle(s) to go through the following cycle until muscular failure (total fatigue) is achieved.

1. The motor nerves that originally told your muscle to contract trigger the release of a high energy compound called ATP (Adenosine Triphosphate).

2. At the same time, CP (Creatine Phosphate) splits to provide energy for the resynthesis of ATP.



3. Glycolysis occurs. That means that glucose stored in the muscles as glycogen (carbohydrates) produces more ATP but at the same time forms lactic acid (which will eventually cause fatigue of the muscles).

The above process is known as anaerobic metabolism and only yields two molecules of ATP. Eventually the lactic acid that is produced during glycolysis causes muscular failure (inability to move the weight any more).

Aerobic weight training adds a fourth step to the process above. Lifting light weight enables the muscles to keep going aerobically. This means that oxygen starts going to the muscles, combines with glycogen to produce more ATP.

Instead of the original two per anaerobic cycle, 38 molecules of ATP are synthesized in the aerobic metabolism process. In addition lactic acid does not accumulate as quickly and muscular fatigue is delayed infinitely longer.

Aerobic machine weight training is known as super-circuit training. This is a relatively new form of weight training that will be covered in future articles.

We are going to focus on anaerobic machine weight training. It builds maximum strength because fast twitch muscle fibers are stressed to their limit and in the 48-hours rest period that accompanies the workout, they repair themselves to come back even stronger than before.

Also, over a period of time (two weeks approximately) the muscles involved become familiar with the exercise. That, combined with strengthening fibers, enables you to perform the exercise with more force than before.

When this happens, strength is built that can be easily translated into more powerful strokes on the court. You'll find yourself with the kind of quick, explosive power that your game may have been lacking previously.

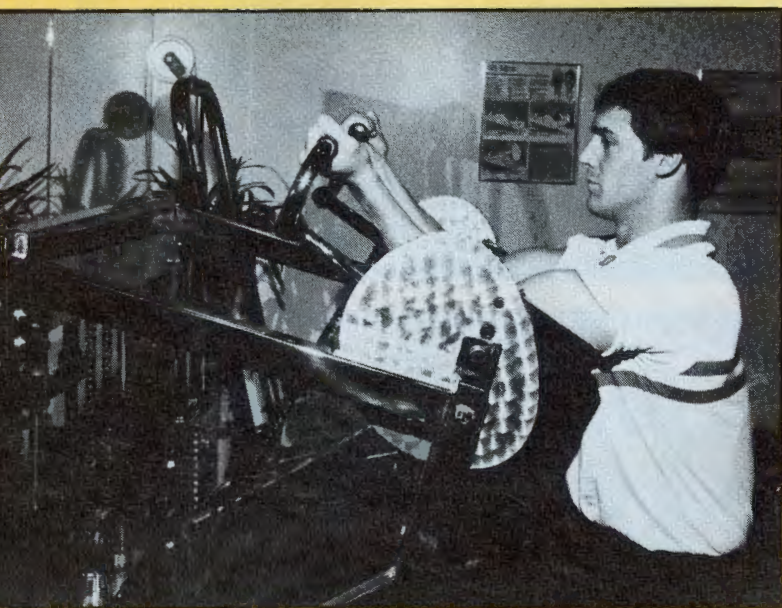
How To Work The Machines

Almost all of the contemporary weight training machines found in clubs and training centers work with stacks of weight that can be set to give you a predetermined weight load.

For the best strength training results, set the weight load so that muscular failure (inability to move the weight anymore) is achieved somewhere between the eighth and 12th repetition. A repetition (rep) is defined as lifting the weight up and lowering it back down to its original position.

The only way you can find the proper weight for achieving muscular failure between 8-12 reps is through trial and error. It's best to begin on the light side (so that at the same time you can practice the form of the exercise), increasing the weight if 12 repetitions are easily accomplished, or decreasing the weight if you can't even perform eight repetitions.

When you lift the weight up (the positive part of the repetition), do so smoothly, at medium to rapid speed.



Then stabilize the weight before lowering it back down.

As you lower the weight down (the negative part of the repetition), do so in a slow, controlled manner. It is this part of the exercise that builds maximum strength so it is important that you resist the weight all the way down as slowly and controlled as possible.

A good mental cue to say to yourself to assure that you are performing both phases correctly would be to say, "up two" on the positive part of the exercise, and "down two, three, four" on the negative part of the exercise.

Most contemporary weight training machines are built with the principle of variable resistance in mind. This means that the machine is designed to keep an even weight load on the muscle through its entire range of motion. This means that your muscles will be contracting against the same amount of weight to provide an even amount of strengthening as well as stretching. Variable resistance, therefore, increases both your flexibility as well as your strength, two very desirable factors in racquetball.

Guidelines For Getting Started

The best way to get started on an effective program is to evaluate yourself first. Again, if your club provides instruction, take advantage of it.

Determine what parts of your game you hope to improve and ask your instructor for a personal improvement program.

If you don't have access to instruction, most clubs provide written information, as do the manufacturers of the machines themselves. Read about the machines you are using and how they can benefit you.

Always keep the following guidelines in mind:

1. *Warm Up First.* Execute slow, static stretching exercises of the muscles and muscle groups you will be working on. This assures that they will stretch through their full range of motion on the machine properly while preventing injury.

2. *Large Muscle Groups First.* Beginning with the largest muscle or muscle group you are working on causes a greater increase in circulation at the beginning of the workout. This warms muscles up faster, improves your cardiovascular system somewhat and slows down overall fatigue to allow you to conduct your training with optimum energy.

3. *Do Only One Set of 8-12 Repetitions.* It is not necessary to rest and repeat 12 reps if you've set the weight load properly. Studies have shown that if you are weight training properly, pushing your muscles to total muscle failure in 8-12 repetitions gives you maximum strength. Why waste time?

Correction

In the October issue, we stated that placing the fingers on the jugular vein located on the side of your neck would give you a pulse you can feel. This is in error. Locating the carotid artery next to the jugular vein and Adam's apple on the side of your neck is what gives you a pulse.

4. *Follow Proper Breathing.* Usually, by breathing naturally, you'll be able to breathe properly while weight training. *Never hold your breath!* This could cause a hernia. Remember to exhale on effort (when you contract your muscles to move the weight) and inhale as your muscles lengthen to return the weight to its original position.

5. *Rest Between Workouts.* At best, perform machine weight training every other day. At least, perform it three times a week. Your body needs time for muscle fibers to repair and increase in size and strength. By not resting, muscle fibers stay worn down, and less strength or size can be built. You'll actually feel weaker and weaker with each workout and be susceptible to injury as well as sacrificing strength.

6. *Don't Play Racquetball After A Weight Workout.* If it's done properly, the weight workout will leave you too tired to compete in racquetball. You'll risk injury at most and a poor game at least by playing after you work out. Even though you might find it desirable to weight train on the days you play (if time is a major consideration), then weight train after a match that isn't too strenuous.

7. *Be Consistent.* Consistency is the key to any success. Don't try to work out at first on every other day. Set more attainable goals for yourself. Start out by training three times a week. As you develop a liking and skill, then you can increase to every other day.

8. *Chart Your Progress.* Keep track of the dates of your workouts, how much weight you are using and how many repetitions you are able to do. By knowing these things, you will be able to increase your weight load when the time is truly right. ●

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If You've Got It — Flaunt It At Arrowwood

by Victor Block

Last August, in response to a question from a *National Racquetball* reader, I recommended a resort and convention center in California where the subscriber's company could hold its annual sales meeting. And where the letter writer and other employees of the firm who play racquetball could enjoy a few games after the business sessions.

That correspondent's request for information, and my reply, underscore a source of outstanding racquetball facilities that often are overlooked by individual players. This is the large number of meeting and convention resorts located throughout the United States that are devoted largely to hosting business get-togethers, meetings of industry and social organizations, and all manner of group gatherings. Many of them also open their doors—and racquetball courts—to guests who visit alone, or with a friend or family members, simply for pleasure.

A case in point—which serves as but one example of similar destinations available in all areas of the country—is Arrowwood of Westchester outside New York City. This is a first-class luxury meeting resort which, during the week, hosts groups ranging from a corporate board of directors seeking a quiet haven for weighing major business decisions to wedding parties; from physicians attending a seminar designed to keep them abreast of the latest medical advances in their specialty field to fellow members of a high school graduating class gathering for their 20th reunion.

On weekends, however, the luxury accommodations and recreational facilities at Arrowwood are opened to individual guests not affiliated with a group activity. And the list of such facilities is impressive, indeed.

Arrowwood, which opened in February 1983, is situated on 114 acres along the New York State-Connecticut border, 23 miles from midtown Manhattan. It is accessible from New York City and the surrounding states by highway or train (via Amtrak or Metro North service to the nearby Rye railroad station).

Arrowwood's 276 guest rooms and suites are set off from the main building in adjoining wings to provide maximum exposure to the countryside surroundings and picturesque views of Arrowwood's own three-acre pond.



The resort has a variety of conference facilities for hosting business sessions. Included are meeting rooms geared to handling groups as small as eight persons and as large as nearly 500; a 120-seat amphitheatre, and an impressive array of state-of-the-art audio/visual and other equipment. The property has 276 guest rooms and suites grouped around the main areas in adjoining wings.

The indoor and outdoor recreational facilities are equally as impressive. Of greatest interest are two, well-cared-for racquetball courts (one with a glass back wall), which ordinarily are not in great demand. Other facilities in the sparkling modern Sports Center include a squash court, two indoor tennis courts, Universal exercise equipment area, an indoor-outdoor swimming pool with a swim-through heat lock, and steam, sauna and massage rooms.

Among outdoor facilities are two lighted tennis courts, platform tennis, a nine-hole golf course, walking and jogging trails, and cross-country bicycling. With winter not far away, cold weather enthusiasts may be interested in the

availability of ice skating on Arrowwood's three-acre pond and cross-country skiing over the rolling fields and wooded trails.

For a relatively small resort, there's a wide selection of dining decors and price ranges. At the top of the list is Mallards, a premier dining room where the silver service, cut crystal and required jacket and tie for men set the atmosphere. The menu combines classically prepared English, American and French dishes, and both food quality and service are first rate. Not surprisingly, this type of setting and food do not come inexpensively.

The main dining room also is attractive, with three meals a day served in a setting that offers views of the surrounding valley and pond. However, selections on the fixed-price dinner menu often are less than imaginative, and the cost is high.

Those seeking simpler, less expensive fare may opt for The Pub, where the casual setting is highlighted by a brick corner fireplace, plank floors and ceiling beams. An entertainment area outfitted with billiard and card tables, and

video games overlooks the dining section. A piano and dance floor set the stage for live entertainment that attracts area residents as well as resort guests. The menu features such selections as a thick open face roast beef sandwich (\$5.75), eight-ounce hamburger (\$6.25), and soup and salad combination (\$5.75). An evening menu that takes effect at 7 p.m. offers pizza by the slice.

Weekend visitors to Arrowwood may enjoy a bountiful brunch that features a seemingly endless selection of hot and cold dishes displayed on a 60-foot-long buffet table. The \$16.50 per adult price (\$9 for children) includes your choice of a Bloody Mary, glass of chilled champagne or mimosa (champagne and orange juice).

Throughout the year, Arrowwood offers relax-and-learn weekend workshops that range from computer instruction and cooking classes to film festivals. The remaining 1984 schedule includes "easy elegant entertaining" cooking weekends (November 2-4 and December 7-9), computer immersion (November 2-4 and December 7-9), and French wines (November 8-10).

Arrowwood's year-round health and recreation facilities include an indoor swimming pool with a swim-through heat lock. Sliding glass doors open to the outdoor pool and patio for summertime enjoyment.



Friday-Saturday night weekend packages from November through next April—including full Saturday breakfast or Sunday brunch, and food service gratuities—cost \$49.50 per person (double occupancy). This rate includes the use of all indoor and outdoor recreational facilities, except for golf greens fees and carts, and massages.

Based upon my stay at Arrowwood, the accommodations and facilities (including racquetball) are first rate, and the cost—for what it includes—is reasonable. For further information or reservations, write Arrowwood of Westchester, Anderson Hill Road, Rye Brook, NY 10573, or call (914) 939-5500.

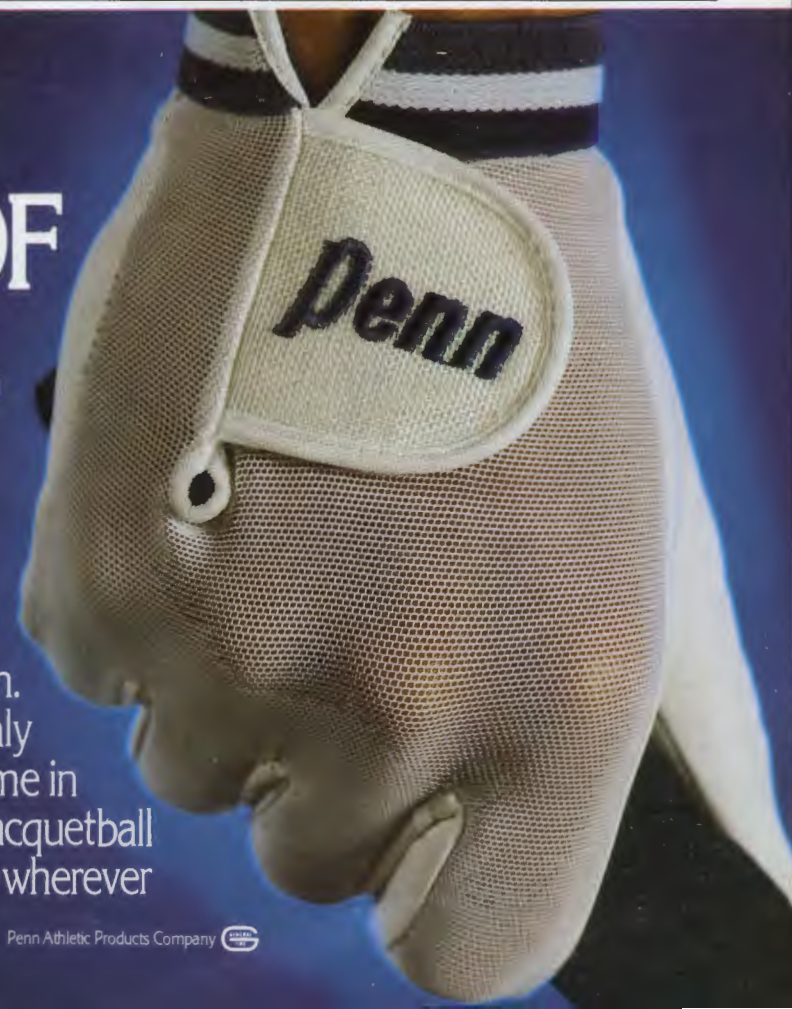
Keep in mind that Arrowwood is just one meeting and convention resort that also serves as a great vacation destination for racquetball players. A check in your area no doubt will turn up a list of others that you might wish to consider for your next getaway weekend or vacation excursion. ●

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

Readers are encouraged to send your racquetball travel questions to Victor Block, c/o National Racquetball, 1800 Pickwick Ave., Glenview, IL 60025.

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EXTRA!

Head Introduces Tech and Training Van On The Road

A new, exciting National program to promote and develop junior racquetball was introduced at the AARA Junior Nationals in Davison, Michigan earlier this year by AMF Head Racquet Sports.

Featuring "The Tech Van," the program will provide a variety of services centralizing around Head's sponsored players. One major emphasis will be to assist in training Head's new *Junior Pro Team*.

The Van is equipped with a video tape system and tape library which will be used as an educational concept to assist the *Junior Pro Team*. Head's National Coach, Steve Strandemo, along with Head's other top professionals will be working throughout the year with the



Junior Pros in becoming the "best they possibly can be" in racquetball.

The Van will travel in each

region within the U.S. focusing on major racquetball events and activities, concluding its season at

Head's Junior Pro Training Center in the early Spring of 1985.

Hogan Set To "Tour America"

The second annual "Marty Hogan Tours America," the most ambitious professional racquetball tour ever assembled, will include more than 30 cities throughout the United States during a six-month period from September, 1984 - February, 1985.

Featuring former six-time national racquetball champion Marty Hogan, the tour is presented by the Marty Hogan Racquetball Division of Pro Kennex and co-sponsored by Leader Eye-guards and Ram Racquetballs.

As with the inaugural "Marty Hogan Tours America" last year, the tour features a variety of personal appearances and demonstrations at racquetball clubs and retail outlets from coast-to-coast. Additionally, the "Hogan Challenge" will permit literally thousands of America's racquetball enthusiasts of all ages to step on the court with Marty Hogan.

Along the way, Hogan, racquetball's only millionaire and the man credited with single-handedly revolutionizing the sport, will pass

along his expertise in an attempt to some how repay a debt to racquetball for which Hogan feels he is personally responsible.

"I get many requests each month to make personal appearances and I believe that I owe it to the game to travel around and honor as many of these requests as possible," Hogan explains. *"It's extremely gratifying to see that the sport is alive and well throughout the country and that several million people are playing racquetball as enthusiastically as they ever have been."*

More than 17,000 spectators witnessed the first Hogan Tour, which whirled through 35 cities in just 68 days. The 1984-85 tour is being protracted over a longer period in order to permit more time in certain markets.

Additional information regarding "Marty Hogan Tours America" and specific locations of Hogan appearances in various cities may be obtained by contacting Pro Kennex at (800) 854-1908 or (619) 271-8390.

Chancellors of Houston Hosts Olympic Fund Raiser

When Mary Lou Retton returns to her Houston training camp, the Olympic facility may be just a bit richer thanks to her home town racquetball club.

When Carl Lewis was collecting four gold metals at the Olympics in Los Angeles, his home town racquetball fans were cheering him on the only "Official" fund raising racquetball tournament for the 1984 Olympiad.

While hundreds of players took turns on the courts and huddling around the television watching the Olympics, the fund raising tournament gathered \$2,500 to send to the U.S. Olympic Committee.

Some of the money will go to Olympic training centers such as the one in Houston where Boris Koroly trains young gymnasts like Mary Lou Retton and Julianne McNamara and some of the money will go to centers like the one in Colorado where the U.S. Racquetball Team trains.

In fact, one of the clubs' regulars missed out on the fund raising tournament because he was attending the first racquetball camp at the training center. Mike Thurmond was glad that his home town was helping to pay the bill for that very rewarding experience.

The Olympic fever ran rampant throughout the three day tournament, sponsored by AMF Head and Penn Racquetball. The tournament ran with the same precision seen in L.A., dropping behind time only once when a few courts backed up for 25 minutes.

The tournament was the brainstorm of club Pro Mark Kessinger: "I wanted to be a part of the 1984 Olympics and since racquetball had just become a Class C sport under the US Olympic Committee and was eligible

for funds, I thought it was time racquetball started footing the bill for some of these Olympic trainees."

The tournament was organized to raise money for the Olympics but at the same time the club wanted to provide the maximum player experience for all the participants in the tournament. The Chancellors' tournament committee swelled from the director and his assistant to over a dozen dedicated volunteers by the time the tournament took place. The club was decorated in red, white and blue banners with helium balloons everywhere. Prizes included racquets and gloves and official Olympic headbands, coffee mugs and hats donated by the U.S. Olympic Committee. The Olympic spirit was everywhere.

For the entire 16 days of the Olympics, the club bar offered 10¢ cokes and drinks for anyone wanting to sit and watch the games on the wide screen TV. Another portable TV was wheeled in to the court lounge where referees split their attention

Loaded with treasure, the his and her team of Tony and Nieves Rivas Indulge in a winner's circle tradition.



between the game they were scoring and the women's volleyball matches on TV.

Trophies were awarded to first, second, third and consolation winners in all divisions with the first, second and third place winners also taking home a gold, silver or bronze ribbon. Everyone approved of the racquetball medals selected to complement the trophies.

The trophies, however, needed no complimenting as the first place trophy measured three feet high and would

not fit in a racquetball bag to be carried home. As the tournament director explained to the novice champion: "It's all down hill from here, you have to play a lot of tournaments before you win another trophy that size."

Over 250 people took part in the fund raising tournament. All entrants were treated to Saturday lunch, the club's 150,000 gallon pool, and other amenities. The entire tournament was an Olympic event in terms of success.

—Mark Kessinger

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Tournament Results

Adams Puts Panzeri On Ice At Anchorage

A surprise attack by the Russians . . . a leak in the Alaska Pipeline . . . an assault by a band of wild huskies. Any of these occurrences might have accomplished what Vicki Panzeri could not, namely, stop the Lynn Adams steamroller at the sixth annual Midnight Sun Pro-Am Racquetball Classic on August 2-5 at the Alaska Athletic Club in Anchorage.

Panzeri, of nearby Seattle, a major racquetball force in her own right and the Women's Professional Racquetball Association's (WPRA) fifth-ranked player, was frozen-cold in the final of the \$6,000 WPRA special event won 21-14, 21-12, 21-6 score by Adams.

Lynn, who finished the 1983-84 season as the second-ranked player, claimed her third consecutive Anchorage title in front of a packed house.

The 27-year-old Costa Mesa, CA native, like any professional athlete worth his or her salt, utilized her own strengths but adjusted to Panzeri's style to chalk

up the victory, her fourth on this year's tour.

"Vicki plays a completely different style of game than I do," commented Adams. "She slows up the pace a lot, and I have to make sure that I don't, in turn, change my own rhythm."

As Adams rhythm is one of constant pressure and speed, it is no wonder that Panzeri had trouble handling Lynn's arsenal of weapons.

The finals match represented Panzeri's first championship appearance of the 1983-84 season. She had earlier notched two semi-final credits in Auburn, MA, and Anaheim, CA, as well as a pair of quarter-final finishes in Atlanta and Bangor, ME. Her number five year-end ranking duplicated her 1982-83 effort.

The Midnight Sun Pro-Am is a WPRA-approved event featuring a single-elimination format in which the round of 16 pits a pro against an amateur player.

In first-round action, Adams dumped Karen Duren, 21-5, 21-8, 21-4; Robin Rodriguez mauled Lynn Meier, 21-4, 21-7, 21-4, in a contest of amateurs;

Jennifer Harding, the WPRA's 15th-ranked player, whizzed past Kathy Wisthoff (who also was the tournament director) 21-3, 21-7, 21-5; Caryn McKinney, the fourth seed, glided to victory over Cathy Gardner, 21-4, 21-7, 21-17; third seed Terri Gilreath hazed Susan Hankins, 21-6, 21-9, 21-8; Marcy Lynch, a quickly-improving 20th on the rankings, flew past Lou Fuzzard, 21-7, 21-3, 21-8; Marci Drexler, winner of all of the major women's amateur titles this year and newly-turned, promising pro, crunched Jan Kilpatrick, 21-14, 21-7, 21-16; and Panzeri moved past Patricia Maguire, 21-5, 21-5, 21-12.

The quarter-finals at the Alaska Athletic Club saw Adams rip Rodriguez, 21-4, 21-12, 21-10; McKinney struggle past Harding, 21-14, 21-17, 18-21, 21-17; Gilreath laminate Lynch, 21-14, 21-17, 21-14; and Panzeri paste Drexler, 24-22, 21-11, 21-18.

In the semi-finals, Adams comfortably defeated McKinney by a 21-14, 21-10, 21-15 score, and Panzeri survived a nip-and-tuck battle with the agile Gilreath to emerge a 21-16, 20-22, 21-17, 21-15 victor. ●

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Tournament Results

New Hampshire

1984 New Hampshire State Singles
Portsmouth Off the Wall & Fitness Club
Portsmouth, NH — Mar. 2-4
Tournament Directors — Steve Marcott & Shieila Devine

Men's Seniors 35 +

1st — Crimm; 2nd — Drouin; 3rd — Smith; 4th — Heguy

Men's Seniors C

1st — Lowell; 2nd — Milewski; 3rd — Bishop; 4th — Coker

Men's Open

1st — Bennett; 2nd — Belanger; 3rd — Kuehl; 4th — Ruggieri

Men's A

1st — Proctor; 2nd — Patten; 3rd — Kratter; 4th — Marcotte

Men's Masters

1st — Drouin; 2nd — Russo; 3rd — Denyon; 4th — LeCompte

Men's B

1st — Fitzgerald; 2nd — Madden; 3rd — Driscoll; 4th — Provins

Men's C

1st — Martes; 2nd — Barclay; 3rd — Berry; 4th — Benson

Men's D

1st — Marcotte; 2nd — Pickersgill; 3rd — Gurley; 4th — Alden

Men's Novice

1st — Hladick; 2nd — Gutowski; 3rd — Wagner; 4th — Perreault

Women's Open

1st — Beaudoin; 2nd — Wilbur; 3rd — Luscher; 4th — Bloom

Women's A

1st — Luscher; 2nd — Baeder; 3rd — Fernley; 4th — Boucher

Women's B

1st — Hain; 2nd — Moline; 3rd — Gainty; 4th — Batson

Indiana

1983-84 INSRA Classic Tour Tournament
Off The Wall Racquetball & Fitness Center
Portage, IN — Mar. 2-4
Tournament Directors — Larry Wackowski & Susan Moran

Men's Masters

Semi-finalists — Cox d. Bushfield, 15-5, 15-11; Robinson d.

Kroeger, 14-15, 15-9, 11-6

Finalists — Cox d. Robinson, 15-12, 15-8

Men's A

Semi-finalists — Christenson d. Bastistatos, 15-6, 15-7; LeSeure d. Sondel, 15-7, 15-10

Finalists — Christenson d. LeSeure, 15-14, 15-14

Men's B

Semi-finalists — Van Natter d. Wildheart, 15-13, 15-6; Kallimani d. Fehsel, 15-6, 11-15, 11-3

Finalists — Kallimani d. Van Natter, 13-15, 15-4, 10-6

Men's C

Semi-finalists — Struck d. Ligocki, 12-15, 15-9, 11-3; Malooley d. Norvell, 15-5, 15-4

Finalists — Malooley d. Struck, 15-12, 15-12

Men's D

Semi-finalists — Barton d. Rynard, 15-11, 13-15, 11-6; Vaerwyck d. Dillard, 11-15, 15-6, 11-4

Finalists — Barton d. Vaerwyck, 15-9, 11-15, 11-6

Women's A

Semi-finalists — Lenburg d. Chaney (forfeit); Martin d. Freeman, 15-9, 15-10

Finalists — Chaney d. Martin, 8-15, 15-5, 11-1

Women's C

Semi-finalists — Julian d. Kroeger, 15-5, 15-2; Julian d. Retzlaff, 15-10, 15-5

Finalists — Julian d. Julian, 15-14, 14-15, 11-10

Men's Open

Semi-finalists — Robbins. D. Wackowski, 15-12, 15-8; Pufahl d. Phillips, 15-10, 7-15, 11-7

Finalists — Pufahl d. Robbins, 15-12, 10-15, 11-1

Washington

Washington State Singles Championships
Turnwater Valley Racquet Club
Olympia, WA — Mar. 2-4
Tournament Director — Jeff Eberle

Seniors Open

1st — Snow; 2nd — Henderson

Men's Masters

1st — Williams; 2nd — Buehler

Men's A

1st — Laury; 2nd — Wilson

Men's Seniors B/C

1st — Hammill; 2nd — Freemantle

Men's B

1st — Storasli; 2nd — Hardan

Women's B

1st — Luce; 2nd — Houser

Men's C

1st — Buehler; 2nd — Docktor

Women's C

1st — Samuels; 2nd — Hawkey

Men's D

1st — Ala; 2nd — Mikkelsen

Oregon

Heart Stuff III
East Side Athletic Club
Milwaukee, OR — Mar. 3-4
Tournament Director — Martha Williams

Pro Mixed Doubles

1st — Anderson/Quinn; 2nd — Allen/Davidson; 3rd — Luchak/Miles

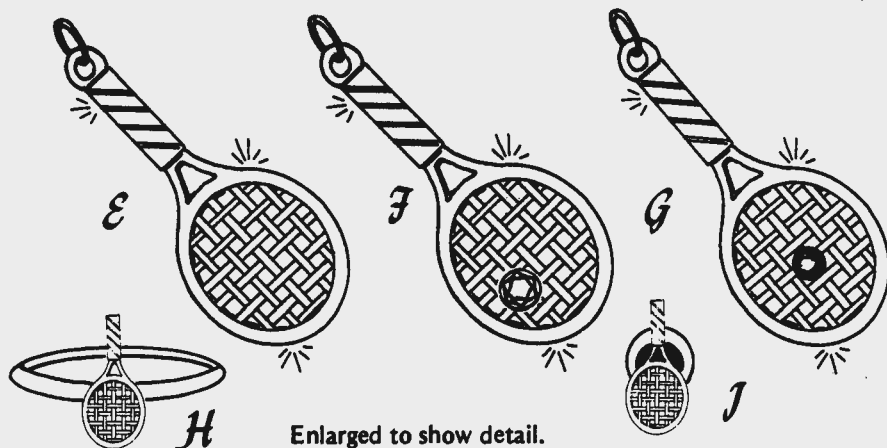
Men's A

Semi-finalists — Allen/Quinn d. Gallagher/Harding;

Krause/Anderson d. Gabriel/Sparks

Finalists — Allen/Quinn d. Krause/Anderson, 15-7, 8-15, 11-7

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Texas

1984 Fourth Annual AARA National Senior
Invitational Singles Tournament
Regency Athletic Club
Cypress, TX — Feb. 24-26

35+

1st — Kunkel; 2nd DeLuca

40+

1st — Thomas; 2nd — Cooper

Oregon

Fifth Annual St. Valentine's Day Massacre
Bay Area Athletic Club
Coos Bay, OR — Feb. 24-26
Tournament Director — Harris Hinden, Bill
Malcolm, John Wisher

Men's Open

1st — Griffith; 2nd — Barry; 3rd — Matheson

Men's A

1st — Barron; 2nd — Turi; 3rd — Bern

Men's B

1st — Garcia; 2nd — Wilson; 3rd — Charitar

Men's C

1st — Hill; 2nd — Bateman; 3rd — Bloesinger

Men's D

1st — Huntington; 2nd — Whitty; 3rd — Sagisi

Men's Seniors

1st — Matheson; 2nd — Chesselet; 3rd — Powell

Men's Masters

1st — Bloesinger; 2nd — Bushong; 3rd — Malcolm

Women's Open/A

1st — Boyer; 2nd — Nguyen; 3rd — Hegenrader

Women's B

1st — Johnson; 2nd — Gallegos; 3rd — Burgess

Women's C

1st — Powell; 2nd — Lopez; 3rd — Burke

Women's D

1st — Dohrman; 2nd — Taylor; 3rd — Gruber

Open Doubles

1st — Griffith/Zunke; 2nd — Brown/Thrush; 3rd —
Whitley/Young

B/C Doubles

1st — Thrush/Zunke; 2nd — Dennis/Martin; 3rd —
Charitar/LeMasson

Mixed Doubles

1st — Boyer/Wilson; 2nd — Nguyen/Kahler; 3rd —
Lopez/Lopez

Kentucky

Louisville Mayor's Cup
L.A.C. Louisville, KY — January

Men's Open

Quarter-finalists — Pinto d. Flieshaker; Dabny d. Heustis;
Brown d. Campbell; Sanford d. Groves

Semi-finalists — Pinto d. Dabney; Sanford d. Brown

Finalists — Pinto d. Sanford

Men's A

Quarter-finalists — McNutt d. Travelstead, 21-9, 21-9;

Whipple d. Clark.; Brown d. Spalding; Crutchfield d. Hogan

Semi-finalists — McNutt d. Whipple; Crutchfield d. Brown

Finalists — McNutt d. Crutchfield

Men's B

Quarter-finalists — Fehribach d. Blakenship; Pontrich d.

Terrell; Jenkins d. Callander; Clark d. Brumleve

Semi-finalists — Fehribach d. Pontrich; Jenkins d. Clark

Finalists — Fehribach d. Jenkins

Men's C

Quarter-finalists — Decker d. Steurer; Spencer d. Lundy;

Stanley d. Koch; McNutt d. Durbin

Semi-finalists — Decker d. Spencer; McNutt d. Stanley

Finalists — Decker d. McNutt

Open Doubles

Semi-finalists — Pinto/Dabney d. Flieshaker/Michels;

Brown/Cooper d. Grover/Campbell

Finalists — Pinto/Dabney d. Cooper/BrownPennsylvania

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New Hampshire

March of Dimes Open
Portsmouth Racquetball Club
Portsmouth, NH — March 6-8

Women's Open Doubles

1st — Bailey/Hatem; 2nd — Bloom/Boyd; 3rd —
Baeder/Knipe; 4th — Lawruk/Gagne

Men's B

1st — Brown; 2nd — Verge; 3rd — Sedor; 4th — Bloom

Men's Novice

1st — Marquis; 2nd — Morris; 3rd — Winders; 4th —
Bostianelli

Women's A

1st — Knipe; 2nd — Ransom; 3rd — Hain; 4th — Baeder

Women's D

1st — Moll; 2nd — Poulin; 3rd — Prudhomme; 4th —
Bellacome

Men's Open Doubles

1st — Toy/Leake; 2nd — Verge/Michel; 3rd — Bloom/Bloom;
4th — DiPalma/Reilly

Men's C

1st — Alger; 2nd — Kimberv; 3rd — LaPointe; 4th — Pullin

Men's Seniors

1st — Heguy; 2nd — Drouin; 3rd — LaLiberte; 4th — Beck

Women's B

1st — Crowley; 2nd — Ciulla; 3rd — Spillane; 4th —
Santomaria

Men's A

1st — Leake; 2nd — Larson; 3rd — Reilly; 4th — Marcotte

Men's D

1st — Cottrell; 2nd — Lane; 3rd — Foster; 4th — Alden

Men's Seniors C

1st — Blischoff; 2nd — LeCompt; 3rd — Chase; 4th —
McDonald

Women's C

1st — Baddeley; 2nd — Annis; 3rd — Smith; 4th — Shain

New Mexico

1st Annual Bud Light Ultimate
Rio Grande Sporting Club
Albuquerque, NM — Mar. 8-11
Tournament Directors — Lyn Hemingway & Neil
Barney, Jr.

Men's Open

Semi-finalists — Pen d. Nolan; Terry d. Navarro
Finalists — Terry d. Peck

Men's A

1st — Walker; 2nd — Stockham

Men's B

1st — Stauffer; 2nd — Davies

Men's C

1st — Hogsett; 2nd — Cannon

Men's D

1st — Kimbrough; 2nd — Meeker

Men's Novice

1st — Aragon; 2nd — Dibble

Men's 50+

1st — Precit; 2nd — Pringle; 3rd — Harvel

Men's 30+

1st — Alvada; 2nd — Adams

Juniors 14 & Under

1st — Lingman

Juniors 18

1st — Stauffer; 2nd — Haworth

Women's Open

Semi-finalists — Wright d. Young; Alvarado d. Corsie
Finalists — Wright d. Alvarado

Women's A

1st — Grady; 2nd — Ortiz

Women's B

1st — Sturm; 2nd — Henderson

Women's C

1st — Sturm; 2nd — Petrie

Women's D

1st — Cannon; 2nd — Baca

Women's Novice

1st — McConnell; 2nd — Bigbi

Women's 30+

1st — Senter; 2nd — Seitz

Connecticut

1984 Connecticut State Championship
Cedar Hill Fitness Center
Newington, CT — Mar. 9-11
Tournament Directors — Colleen Linsky &
Bruce Barit

Men's Open

1st — Eliason; 2nd — Mirek; 3rd — Thiel; 4th — Herjak

Men's A

1st — Cola; 2nd — Kane; 3rd — Whalen; 4th — Renoylds

Men's B

1st — Ames; 2nd — Dardon; 3rd — Palozzo; 4th —
Siemisbski

Men's C

1st — Dardon; 2nd — Leberman; 3rd — Ryan; 4th — Licinsky

Men's D

1st — Frisbie, Jr.; 2nd — Sisco; 3rd — Hebert; 4th — Hillborn

Men's Novice

1st — Signorello; 2nd — Reid; 3rd — Preckler; 4th —
Bankcroft

Men's 30+

1st — Maturah; 2nd — Boccocio; 3rd — Good; 4th —
Dzuibina

Men's 35+

1st — Menedez; 2nd — Meltsner; 3rd — Korn; 4th —
Leiberman

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Let's Sort Out This Hodge Podge

by Mike Osenga

The *September* issue, with its excellent and heavy coverage of clubs, finally pulled from me a letter that has been a long time in the writing.

I guess after reading most of the issue thoroughly, it was a paragraph, or something in your column, that finally triggered the thought.

It's my feeling that what I'm driving at, is at the root of all racquetball's troubles and is starting now to severely restrict its growth.

Frankly, we as a sport, are not very well organized.

It is, I think, that simple and that complex. Start anywhere.

Two racquetball players from different areas of the country get together to play a game. They first have to decide *how many points they're going to play to*. It's not that uncommon. Five games to 11?; two out of three to 15?; and yes you can still find people playing to 21.

Can you imagine squash or tennis players or basketball players or golfers having to first decide on how to keep score?

It's that basic. And it goes much deeper than that.

Take tournaments. Your article points out that the one thing more club players would like to see more of is tournaments. Yet scratch any level of regular tournament player deep enough and you'll get a good 10 minutes about sandbagging.

No sandbagging isn't unique to our sport, but I'll bet you it's a hell of a lot more prevalent than most sports.

Why? There's no national amateur body that governs such things. National? Hell, here in Milwaukee you probably couldn't even get two clubs to agree on rating players. I'd settle for being able to drive one hour from Milwaukee to a tournament and not get blown away by a trophy hunter playing a level or two down. Self-governing pride? Fat chance!

Other sports have handled these problems and survived. Why can't racquetball.

Part, and I emphasize *part*, of the problem was well described in your articles on the diversification of clubs. Many club owners to survive have expanded as you described. And while I'm sure most club owners would argue till they're blue in the face, I'll bet if you took a real close look you'll find that racquetball has been relegated to just another item on the menu and gets, maybe, equal billing with weight lifting, pool parties, and aerobics.

No, I don't yearn for the days of eight courts and vending machine beer. I frankly like the direction my West Allis Club (so well documented in your article) has taken. But with all this expansion, where is the expansion in racquetball opportunities?

I have played for a good number of years and yet the opportunities open to me, as a racquetball player, are just about the same as they were five years ago. Two leagues a week and the odd tournament or two. Yes, the leagues are well run, excellently run, as a matter of fact, but is that all there is?

If you doubt that argument, re-read your column, "*Kids Go Home*." Kids don't sit at the bar, they don't buy the top memberships, and they probably don't spend a lot on equipment.

But it's not just the kids, it's entry level in general. At our last league sign-ups there were long lines for the 3.0 to 3.5 level leagues, average lines for 4.0-4.5 and almost none for 2.0-2.5. Where are the 20-25 year olds getting into the sport?

Instructors? I know a dozen solid racquetball players that could easily give, "*here's the ball, here's the wall*" type lessons. No, they're not Marty Hogan, but they're good enough to develop the interest of curious players. Has anyone asked them? Offered to teach them *how to teach*? Gone out of their way to make special league arrangements for beginners?

What about clinics? A couple of hours on backhands or splats or ceiling shots? I know a number of club owners who will tell you that's been tried, with little interest. It comes down to selling things like this. Throwing a piece of paper on the counter a week or so before and hoping for sign-ups is not salesmanship.

Does anybody out there care or know how to market racquetball? Or is filling the bar the main concern?

Tennis and its facilities have had many of the same problems and have overcome them. Might we not take a look at what they've done and copy some of their programs? I've mentioned some of the areas for starters: sandbagging, national/regional organizations, tournaments, youth developments. Why re-invent the wheel? They've already made the mistakes for us.

You could go on for ever. I'm sure many of the problems the pro tour is facing in simply getting established could be traced to these causes. If I didn't read the agate type of *National Racquetball*, I wouldn't know when a tour stop comes into the Midwest.

We, as a sport, frankly are just not well organized, from top to bottom, from marketing and sales to the technical aspects. We are *really* a hodge podge.

National Racquetball has done such a fine job, in so many areas, couldn't you consider for the 1985 publishing year, a special, dedicated effort, in pulling together the diverse elements of the sport; pros, club owners, regional groups, quasi-national organizations and start to standardize this sport? It would certainly be to your benefit and certainly the sport's.

Otherwise in five years somebody may look down on a court and ask why they need those funny lines for a wallyball court. ●

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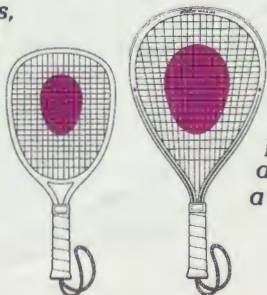
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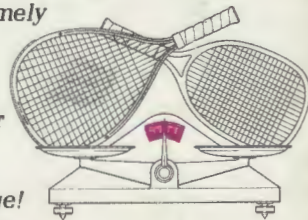
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