

The Magazine of Professional Racquetball

# KILLSHOT

## Racquet Science

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Tips!

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More!

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The challenge of the Presidential Sports Award is to make a commitment to fitness through active and regular participation in sports and fitness activities. Earning the award means that you have put in time and effort to meet the challenge of personal fitness. The Award recognizes this achievement and the fact that you are part of a nationwide effort toward a healthier, more vital America.

Anyone age six or older is eligible to participate in the Presidential Sports Award program. However, the completed fitness log of any participant between the ages of 6-13 must be signed and verified by an adult. In addition, participants over the age of 40 who have not been active on a regular basis are urged to undergo a thorough medical examination before undertaking any physical activity program.

The requirements for the Presidential Sports Award in Racquetball are playing racquetball a minimum of 50 hours with no more than two hours credited to any one day; and the total must include at least 25 matches (2 of 3 games) of singles and/or doubles. Racquetball competitors must wear eye protection. The criteria for the award should be fulfilled within a four month period.

To earn the award, a record must be kept of your participation on a fitness log. When the standards have been met the completed and signed fitness log and \$6.00 per award for United States and APO/FPO delivery (\$8.00 in Canada, \$10 for all other countries - US currency only) should be sent to:

Presidential Sports Award  
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The award will consist of:

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# KILLSHOT

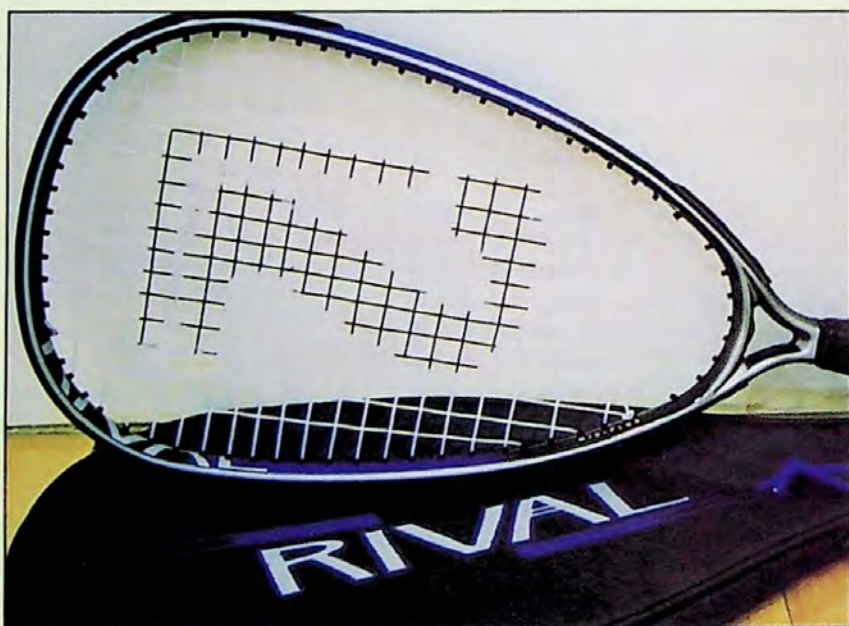
Volume IV, Number 4

- 1 Playin' for the Prez
- 4 Short Serves
- 7 TCB  
Industry News
- 9 Editorial
- 10 Disciplined Practice
- 12 String 'em up
- 13 Letters
- 14 The Survey Says
- 15 Control Through Preparation
- 17 IRT Tour  
Cliff Swain's Traveling All Stars
- 24 Rankings  
VCI Spreadsheet
- 26 At the Tour's Core
- 30 The Names of the Game
- 32 IRT News
- 35 Top Gun
- 36 WPRA  
All that Glitters
- 38 Line Fine Wine
- 41 Racquet Science

The explosive excitement of the pro tour is explored with coverage seven action-packed events. **Page 17** *Cliff Swain's Traveling All Stars.*



Recognizable today as the Commissioner of the IRT, Hank Marcus was at one time a regular on the tour. His signature racquet is highlighted. **Page 30** *The Names of the Game*



Lighter, lighter, lighter. The new frames stress speed and extreme light weights. Lynne Balthazor gives another comprehensive look at what's out there from the manufacturers. **Page 41** *Racquet Science.*

The consistent players that make up the core of the IRT are featured in Aaron Katz' no holds barred look.. **Page 26** *At the Tour's Core.*





# SPEED KILLS.



There are two ways to play racquetball. Fast and way too fast.  
We recommend you play the latter way. Or die trying.



# SHORT SERVES

*Rotator Rehab* in the Instructional Issue was credited to Fran Davis. The by line should have been Kevin Brown and Fran Davis. Sorry for the oversight Kevin.

## The Envelope, Please

Lynne Balthazor's research for her *Racquet Science* article led to some conclusions about the most notable accomplishments of racquet manufacturers this year. Following are her findings:

**Best Name:** Hammer & Sledge Hammer, Wilson

**Best Warranty:** Spalding, two years (graphite)

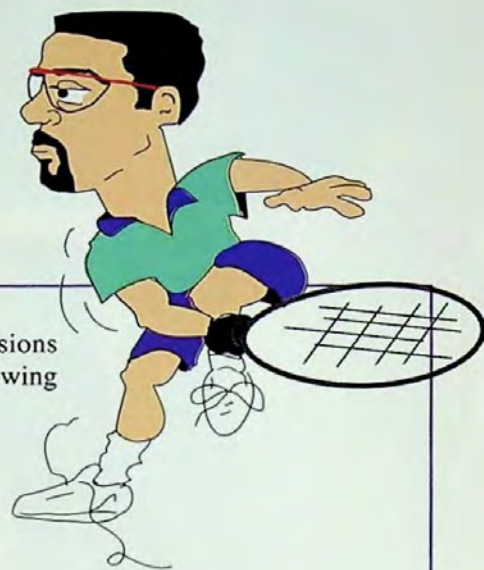
**Best Price Structure:** Estusa

**Lightest Light Racquet:** 175G, Head

**Sharpest New Look:** Ice, Transition

**Most Interesting Profile:** Asymmetric, Pro Kennex

**Most Mid Size Choices:** Ektelon



## I'll Have the Spaghetti and Racquetballs



It's always a welcomed addition to the sport when a non-sporting goods company takes an active interest in promoting the game. As part of a program designed to promote its restaurants in the Phoenix area, *Olive Garden* has committed to sponsoring Phoenix-based Darrin Schenck in professional events nation-wide. The company's partnership with Schenck and the IRT comes in addition to its programs already in place with extensive local tournament sponsorships.

Wonder if he's got any of that *great* salad in his bag?



# Rinse & Spit?

No, this is not a commentary on his profession. Kent Vandehaar of Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin a dentist by trade is also an avid racquetballer by the looks of his license plate. He tells us that this is how a splat shot should be pronounced.

Do you suppose nine out of ten dentists recommend racquetball for their patients who chew gum?



## Norm Blum's Passing Shots

### Full Recovery?

The neighborhood rivalry can resume again. Jason Mannino and Sudsy Monchik were next door neighbors and during the past few years always seemed to be in the finals of most New York tournaments. It was assumed that both would end up on the professional tour and continue their fierce, but friendly battle. But the story book ending faced a detour. While Sudsy started competing on the tour and 1994's prestigious season-ending pro Nationals, Mannino was in a different predicament. In July of 1993 Mannino was involved in a car accident. He suffered three broken bones in his back, a broken pelvis, and some broken ribs. He couldn't walk for five months and spent many months with a wheelchair, a walker, and crutches.

He picked up a racquet for the first time in November and one month later won the 18 and under IRF Juniors World Racquetball Championship. Mannino, who now trains out of San Diego instead of New York, defeated No. 1 seed Shane Wood, 4-15, 15-17, 11-2. "I'm still not 100 per cent, but it feels good to be back out on the courts and competing again. I'll be joining the professional tour in 1995."

### Conine = Media Access

The AARA should require that Jeff Conine

compete in all its national events. Conine, the Florida Marlins standout (when they're playing, that is) has a passion for racquetball. Every tournament Conine plays in results in media attention. Tournament directors don't have to beg the sports director or sports editor to cover the tournament. When Conine competes in a racquetball tournament, the media comes out in droves. It's actually a great story. How many pro athletes can you name that compete in amateur events simply because they love it? Couple that with the fact that he plays mixed doubles with his wife and the story gets even better. And the stories aren't buried in the back of the sports section. It's a front page sports story wherever he goes and the sports directors run a generous spot on the 6-o'clock news. Racquetball can only benefit from such publicity. It gets folks to put down the channel selector and watch racquetball. Once you get people into the building then the sport will sell itself.

### Potpourri

Racquetball lost a great ambassador when Steve Chapman passed away late last year. A Florida state champion in 35 and 40+ divisions, Chapman still competed in tournaments. "I'd schedule my chemo treatments around tournaments. I wanted to be strong for tournaments." Chapman competed five years before he finally lost his battle. He'll be missed.

...Lynn Adams-Clay has made the adjustment to motherhood. She takes her daughter to clinics and it amuses me when I see



diapers sticking out of her racquetball bag...Can you believe Mary Lyons and Susan Morgan Pfahler? Age isn't a deterrent. The 35+ duo finished second at the national doubles and earned a spot on the US team. Even more amazing is the fact that Lyons helped run the tournament and was beyond exhausted...Marty Hogan's first attempt in years for an amateur trophy fell short at the national doubles. Teaming up with Brian Hawkes in the open division, they lost in the quarterfinals, 11-0 in the tiebreaker.



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# Taking Care of Business

## TCB

Industry news  
and announcements



### Ellis Signs

John Ellis, 1993 National Singles champion, two-time National Doubles

champion and 1994 World Doubles champion and full time competitor on the International Racquetball Tour has signed on with two new industry sponsors.

Ellis who plays with Pro Kennex racquets and gloves has added Power Footwear, a division of Bata as well as Active Ankle Systems to his list of sponsors.

Active Ankle, worn by the US Olympic Volleyball team, uses a patented hinge design allowing virtually unlimited ankle flexibility while providing support.

Power Footwear will be offering advisory agreements to other Pro Kennex sponsored players and Spalding sponsored players.



### Adams Signs

Lynn Adams, seven-time National Champion and the winningest woman in racquetball has joined the newly created Wilson Racquetball as manager of education and player development.

San Diego-based Wilson Racquetball is a division of Wilson Racquet Sports and is headed by former Ektelon president Norm Peck. Player promotions manager Terri Graham has also announced the signing of 1994 National Singles Champion Robin Levine, 1994 Olympic Festival Gold Medalist Derek Robinson, 1992 World Champion Chris Cole, 1990 National Amateur Doubles Champion Tim Hansen, nine-time World Armed Forces Champion Barb Faulkenberry, and three-time World Armed Forces Champion Jimmy Lowe.



### Holabird Adds Practice Court

Holabird Sports has announced the opening of a new outlet store in Baltimore with a full line of racquetball, tennis, squash, and other sports equipment and shoes. The new location features an indoor practice court for trying-out new racquetball equipment. The long established mail order dealer's new address is Holabird Sports, 9220 Pulaski Highway, Baltimore, Maryland 21220.

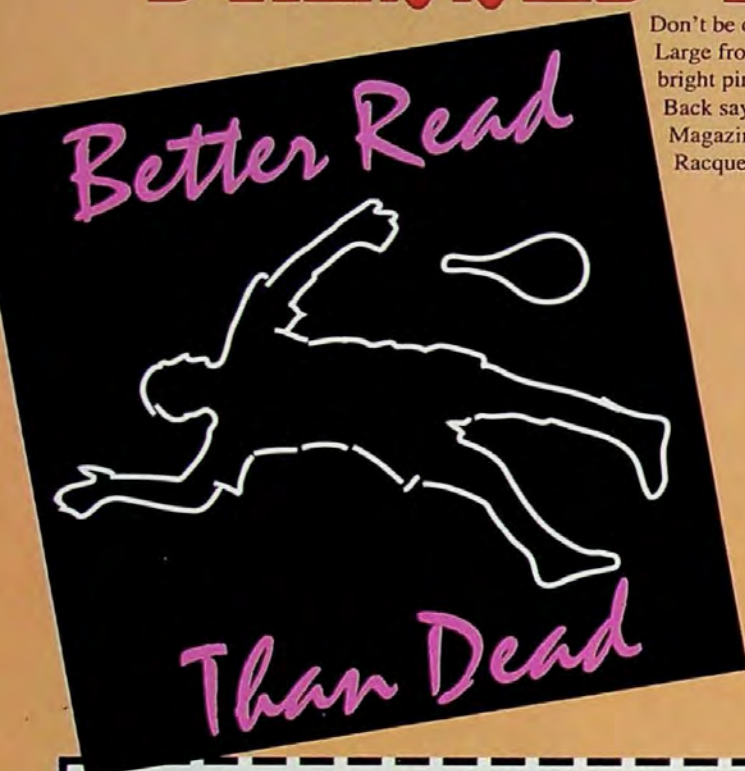


Licensed Courtwear from First Coast Promotions

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**KILLSHOT**  
MAGAZINE

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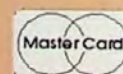
**KILLSHOT** logo, navy blue \$4.95

Shorts (cause it's better than playing in wool pants)

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# The Fundamental Things Apply, As Time Goes By

In 1989 you could buy a copy of *National Racquetball* for \$3.00. Inside you could read about a five-stop men's professional tour. Then *National Racquetball* disappeared. In 1991 we stumbled onto the scene unknown, and in a few of the powerful circles unwelcomed, and attempted to stir things up a little. And stir, we did.

In three months we gave away 150,000 magazines, thousands of dollars worth of ad space and begged, borrowed, and bartered every penny we could generate. We fought with printers, prep houses, ad agencies, mailers and the bank. We trusted some of the wrong people and struck verbal agreements that should have been signed in blood. In 1992 we hit the wall.

In a sense maybe that was the best possible scenario because it forced us to go back to the fundamental things we learned as children. You treat people right and, by and large, they will do the same by you. You give someone his money's worth and most of the time you'll be glad you did. And we made some friends and allies.

Hank Marcus became an invaluable resource; Mark Wentura, Scott Winters, John Weaver, Cecil Albao, Tom Odishoo, Doug Ganim, John Hooghe, Bill Bishop, Joel Lehrer, Joan Kines, John Samuels, Mike Schwartz, Peter Guterman, Bill Bishop, Dr. Everett McCormick, and John Boudman all dealt with us in ways that generated mutual respect.

Our subscribers became more than just names on a mailing label. Larry Ramirez in West Covina checks in from time to time; Marty Bleckman from New York drops us a card occasionally and keeps us on our toes; we hear from a subscriber in a federal prison camp who is turning his life around; we get a letter from a reader who received a head injury and plays **BI RAK IT** as part of his therapy.

Now you can buy a copy of **KILL-SHOT** for \$4.00 and read about a 20+ event IRT scheduls. And the momentum that brought us up from the ashes continues to grow.

Has it been worth it? No need to even ask.

--SQ



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# DISCIPLINED PRACTICE

Seeking “the zone” where training is pleasurable  
and improvement is unavoidable

We benefit from practice on many levels. Practice molds our abilities, enhances our perceptions, strengthens our confidence, improves our physical stamina, and serves as the forum for learning new techniques. That is, it does these things if we stay focussed and open to improvement. Staying open and focussed requires self-discipline. Webster tells us that self-discipline is the planned control

and the training of oneself for development. Well, that's what we want, training for development, so let's take a look at planning this control.

Since maintaining motivation is another area, let's assume that we are all fairly motivated to improve. Two distinct ideas must then come together to successfully plan control and train for improvement. First, we must see practice that leads

to improvement as satisfying, empowering, rewarding, and otherwise positive. Second, this practice must be efficiently organized to make the most of time and effort.

## **Practice as Pleasure!**

Willpower and convincing oneself to practice harder, longer, or more often can only go so far. Real, long-term improvements require a genuine appreciation for the process. Learning to enjoy your accom-

## **Need More Self-Discipline?**

Without self-discipline, there is no basis for sound judgement. You may feel scattered and disorganized. You may have outstanding skills and great potential, but severely lack consistency and confidence. Without a solid understanding of your own abilities in relation to the game, you may make poor choices, or strategically “change horses in mid stream”. The result is frustration and chaos. A high degree of competitiveness or drive for improvement will only exaggerate this frustration. This is the player that can be “pulled-off” his game. This lack of patience usually leads to low-percentage shot attempts and lots of skips.

A player with poor self-discipline is probably just as frustrated with practice attempts as games. In fact he may have given up on solo practice all together. Practice probably seems tedious and boring, but as soon as competition begins, this player immediately recognizes the importance of the practices he has taken lightly or skipped.



## Gone Overboard?

Often a player may feel compelled to over-train, or may become so rigid that he loses the flexibility to respond to the dynamic nature of a match. This player practices so diligently that he becomes trapped into one approach and neglects other aspects of training. The result is usually a very one-sided offense and a predictable response to adversity. Feelings of inadequacy and guilt accompany this type of rigid training and few of these players can live up to perceived expectations or enjoy successes.

plishments then the discipline itself are necessary steps to finding "the zone". At that point, your greater appreciation for your improvements and the realization that the game becomes more fun as you get better replace any negative attributes regarding disciplined practice. You will come to realize that the big wins are sweeter when you enjoy the process of improvement that affords you the wins.

### Get organized!

Regardless of your initial attitude, practice will yield only minimal results if it is not well-planned and organized. One step further, wasted time and effort will keep you from feeling positive about your practice and eventually keep you out of "the zone". Initially, you probably have a fair enough idea of your major weaknesses to prescribe the proper practice routine for yourself (or at least know what needs improvement so that you can seek out the best techniques). As you progress, your weaknesses will become more subtle and thus more difficult to assess and will certainly require some input from your friends, your opponents, and most importantly a qualified coach or teacher. Any time spent on the court will help your game, but substantial improvement only comes about from the smart work that you produce as you learn more about improvement. From this we see that to get the kind of success that most of us like, it is vital to read the instructionals, attend the clinics and camps, and work with the club pros to learn to make the best possible use of practice efforts right from the start. The faster you get started really improving, the more

fun this game is!

Using the checklist provided, make an honest assessment of your strengths and weaknesses in each area. Next (probably with input from a qualified pro) set up blocks of time for exercises and drills to improve in each one. Arrange your blocks of time with practice in your weaker areas at the beginning of your session, working gradually through to your areas of strength. By doing this, you have begun

better planning, plus avoided boredom and tedium by limiting time spent on each component of your game.

Check to see if you tend to lack discipline or go overboard. If either is the case, you should now have some indication as to how to begin to adjust your thinking to get back on the road to improvement. If you can open your mind and focus your efforts, your potential is limited only by the amount of work you choose to commit.

## Checklist for Productive Practice

Check each of these areas in your own game then seek out the best practice techniques to improve them.

- ✓ Stroke Mechanics
- ✓ Court Positioning
- ✓ Shot Selection
- ✓ Serving
- ✓ Returning Serve
- ✓ Cutting Off (open stance) vs. Setting Up
- ✓ Hitting Down-The-Line
- ✓ Hitting Pinches
- ✓ Hitting Ceilings
- ✓ Footwork



# String 'em up

Teaming up with the right stringer can make all the difference in your game

By Ralph Kusche

There is more to your string than just putting it into your racquet. A knowledgeable stringer can do wonders for your racquet and hopefully your game. Your stringer should be asking you questions beyond what gauge and tension you want. Conversely, you need to know more than just gauge and tension. Read on and learn.

Gauge refers to string thickness. The higher the number the thinner the string. Using thinner strings results in greater power, more spin, and less fatigue to the player because of the string's general ability to absorb more ball impact. Conversely, these benefits are offset by decreased durability and tension maintenance. A note about tension guidelines: lower for power and higher for control when all factors are equal, i.e. same racquet, string, tension, etc. Be forewarned, it is impossible to solve control problems if you do not have at least a semblance of a correct stroke regardless of how tight you want your racquet within its design specs. Lower tensions will also reduce the tendency toward string breakage and elbow/wrist problems. If in doubt, go lower. It is more forgiving and tends to expand the sweet spot.

Find a certified racquet technician if one is available in your area. Many claim this certification but, in reality, as of August 1994 there were only 309 of them on a worldwide basis. Many still carry the

older certification designation. Seek this stringer next. Ask to see the certificate. Your stringer should ask questions. How often do you play? Do you break strings often? What is your game style? The stringer should then have at least two

---

**Using thinner strings results in greater power, more spin, and less fatigue to the player because of the string's general ability to absorb more ball impact.**

---

options for you. When you have a broken string, leave it in the racquet. The stringer can glean vital information from how the string broke and why it broke. Ask if the stringer uses a spring type tensioning or constant pull (electronic). There is no particular advantage to either but the constant pull will generally give about a 5% to 10%

firmer stringbed stiffness (tension). If you switch from one type to the other expect some playability differences at first.

Just as there are different racquets for different styles, there are different string constructions. Basically there are two types of string among synthetics: solid core and coreless/multifilament. Natural gut has no good place in racquetball and is terribly expensive. Also, virtually all synthetics are of some type of nylon composition so don't be fooled into thinking that you are getting a better string when you opt for a synthetic gut instead of a nylon. It is a matter of how much and what type of nylon that determines a string's quality. Solid core string holds tension better. If you are particular about your tension use this type. Multifilaments have more advantages but almost always cost more. They have greater resilience, absorb ball shock better, tend to last a little longer for a given gauge and give a little more power due to their resiliency.

Finally a word about cost. Stringers will usually charge a fee equal to double their cost for the string and a ten to fourteen dollar fee for service. It is up to you to determine if that suits your pocketbook. Your certified stringer can provide more answers in person.

Contact the USRSA to get the name of a certified stringer in your area.



# LETTERS

I don't play **BI RAK IT** out of desire, I play it out of need. Using the right arm is very therapeutic for me. I suffered a head injury September 11, 1990. My speech and right side were affected. Now I shave left handed, play racquetball left handed, and I'm writing this letter left handed. **BI RAK IT** has definitely helped me in my daily rehabilitation program. Thank you for your article.

C. Zabriskie  
Centerville, Utah

I recently purchased and read your recent "Instructional '94" issue. Thanks for the superb instructionals and great coverage of the events of the tour, etc.

I enjoyed all the articles and instructionals, but was thoroughly "blown" away (and loved) Coach Del Villanueva's instructional on "Using Mental Imagery In Racquetball, (Imagine That)". I have read many articles on the mental game and conditioning as it applies to racquetball, but never one that has captured/described so succinctly and eloquently the game's intensity, challenge, excitement, and flow.

Mostly, I feel I'll benefit from the exercise included in the article where the reader is instructed to recall past successful experiences/games so he can "program" himself to duplicate this more consistently in the future; a very logical and inspiring tool by which one can refine his/her physical game while simultaneously reinforcing his mental game.

I'm always excited when I see Del's work as I feel he's one of the most effective and inspiring writers the sport has ever seen. I would love to see more of his work in **KILLSHOT**! Good luck with your magazine!

M. Thurman  
San Bruno, California

Enclosed is my check for \$32.00 for my 2 year renewal. I read your disclaimer that my check must be received by Nov. 11.

Cut me some slack if it doesn't get there -- remember I'm in Europe and, oh yeah, I stuck with you when you were

going through your growing pains.  
Michael Sandoval  
APO AE

My \$.02 worth regarding what most recreational (and sometimes local tournament) racquetball players are looking for in a magazine...

Most RB players would want to subscribe to a magazine that has articles that are applicable and relevant to helping them improve their game. While the results of the pro tour are interesting to a point, several whole pages detailing the standings of guys wearing Reebok shoes, or Penn gloves, or playing left-handed, etc., etc., are a bit much. I mean who cares?

Look at golf, tennis, etc. magazines. Readers want instructional articles that help with their game.

But...PLEASE, PLEASE, no more articles that are aimed at someone that just walked onto a court for the first time in their lives. If you look at the vast majority of "instructional" articles (with the obligatory diagrams of ball travel on the court) they are aimed at the complete novice level! How many times is someone going to diagram the path of a "drive serve", a "z-serve", etc.? No one wants to read that. The best way for me to convey what I'm trying to say is that you should have the instructional articles aimed at players that have been playing for years and may be "C", "B", or "A" players. Think about articles written for them. It's not as easy as putting in some reworked beginner's instructional articles, but that's what would put your magazine into the hands of more readers.

Thanks for everything. Stick with it.  
P.S. Any idea what happened to Richcraft, or where I might still be able to find some "Pulsar" racquets?  
P. Furmonaucius  
Cheshire, Connecticut

Check out Lynne Balthazor's article on the new frames on page 41, this issue. We hear Richcraft is alive and well in Idaho.

Yo! Marvin  
Love the mag! Keep up the good work -- you must have a great staff!  
W. Charlton  
Hall Park, Oklahoma

Honest, this guy's not a relative.

Please take my name off your mailing list. Your magazine is not worth the \$16.94.  
P. Knutson  
Anoka, Minnesota

**This guy could be a relative.**

I am writing to express my feelings on what a great job you have done with **KILLSHOT** magazine. I once was ranked #2 in the state of N.C. in 1991. I also competed in many of the semi-pro events offered on the East Coast. I am now an inmate at a Federal Prison Camp in Goldsboro, N.C. I was found guilty of conspiracy to distribute cocaine.

The last two years have not been easy. I came to prison at the age of 21 and I remember of playing National Junior tournaments like it was yesterday. I turned my life over to God and since then prayers have been answered. I have had the opportunity to go into the community to speak to kids at schools. If I could prevent just one kid from having to go through what I had to it would almost be worth it. I will continue to do this once released, at tournaments as well.

I have been fortunate to be able to continue to play racquetball. It is outside and it is 3-walls. The sponsorships are not there any more but I love the game so much it does not matter. I try to teach as often as I can and even though there are not open players here to play it is still competitive. I am presently trying to get the Jaycees to buy a stringer for the prison. The advertisements in **KILLSHOT** have been helpful. We will probably invest in a table-top model because of the lower price which may or may not be affordable still.

Again, I thank you for your dedication and support for racquetball. It is very much appreciated. Although I made some mistakes I plan to go back to racquetball and be successful again. **KILLSHOT** magazine gives me the desire to do so.

(Name withheld by the Editors)  
Federal Prison Camp Seymour Johnson  
Goldsboro, North Carolina

Anyone wishing to help out the Federal Prison Camp with a Stringer can do so by contacting **KILLSHOT**. Seems like a good cause.



# The Survey Says...

Please circle the answer or answers that most apply to you.  
Photocopy the survey or tear it out and mail it directly to  
**KILLSHOT.**

Gender: M F

Age: 18 & under 19-25 26-30  
31-35 36-40 41-45  
46-50 50-59 60 & over

**Highest level of education:**

|                      |                        |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| Currently a student  | Some high school       |
| High school graduate | Some college           |
| College graduate     | Advanced college study |

**Individual annual income:**

|                      |                     |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| Under \$10,000       | \$11,000 - \$20,000 |
| \$20,001 - \$35,000  | \$35,001 - \$50,000 |
| \$50,001 - \$100,000 | \$Over \$100,000    |

**Where do you play racquetball?**

|               |                        |
|---------------|------------------------|
| Private club  | School facility        |
| YMCA          | Military facility      |
| JCC           | Community rec center   |
| In-home court | Outdoors/Park Facility |
| Other _____   |                        |

**How often do you play?**

|                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Less than once per month | Monthly                  |
| Every two weeks          | Weekly                   |
| Twice per week           | More than twice per week |

**How competitively do you play?**

|                   |                      |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| Just for exercise | Recreational/Social  |
| League/Tournament | Advanced Competition |

**Does your style rely more heavily on power or control ?**

**Where do you buy your equipment:**

|                      |                  |
|----------------------|------------------|
| Club Pro Shop        | Mail Order       |
| Sporting Goods Store | Department Store |
| Discount Store       | Other            |

**Which of these factors influence your equipment purchases?**

Price  
Quality  
Manufacturer's Reputation  
Teacher or Pro Recommendation  
Warranty  
Appearance  
Comfort  
Availability  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Have you attended an instructional camp?**

**Have you taken lessons from a club pro?**

**What kind(s) of cross training do you do?**

|                  |                |             |
|------------------|----------------|-------------|
| <b>BI RAK IT</b> | Free Weights   | Machines    |
| Stationary bike  | Treadmill      | Ski machine |
| Stair climber    | Rowing Machine | Running     |
| Swimming         | Aerobics class | Walking     |
| Other _____      |                |             |

**In which other sports do you participate ?**

|            |        |        |            |
|------------|--------|--------|------------|
| Golf       | Tennis | Squash | Softball   |
| Basketball | Soccer | Other  | Volleyball |

**Would you like to see more instructional materials available?**

**Would you like to have access to video tapes of pro matches?**

**Do you belong to a racquetball organization?**

**What other magazines do you read?**

**Additional Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: **KILLSHOT** Reader Survey PO Box 8036 Paducah, Kentucky 42002-8036



# Control through Preparation

By Woody Clouse

Webster's Dictionary defines control as: Power to regulate; direct or dominate. When playing racquetball against a worthy opponent, there is nothing better than having the feeling of being in control; having the power to dominate. While there are many facets of control, certainly the first step is proper preparation. Speaking in generalities, this preparation takes the form of practicing your shots, learning proper movement and court coverage as second nature, training to play at your highest physical potential, properly resting prior to competition to avoid fatigue, etc. On a more specific level, better preparing your racquet, your focus, and your body prior to hitting each shot will certainly afford greater control of each shot and translate into better control of the match.

## Racquet Preparation

One of the single biggest ways in which players of more advanced levels differ from others is with their improved racquet preparation. As a rule, better players consistently keep their racquets up (in position to shoot with cleaner, smoother form). Keeping your racquet up (around eye level) will help you to swing into shots you might have only pushed or punched at before. When your racquet stays up, you are automatically set in position when your body turns. With your racquet down, you would be forced to just push the ball defensively. Try doing shuffle drills, (facing sideways, travel by means of small shuffling steps up and back on the court) with your racquet in proper ready position. Do this for both forehand and backhand. If you have never given racquet preparation a second thought, you'd better check with a club pro or instructional camp to help acquaint you with proper stroke mechanics and the necessary racquet prep position.

## Focus on the Ball

Teaching yourself the habit of constantly concentrating on the movement of

the ball will contribute to improvement faster than any other single adjustment in the game. The first difference you will notice is the awareness of where the ball will end-up so you won't be wasting your movements. This will allow more time to prepare to hit each shot. The result will be more consistent, accurate and powerful shots. An intangible benefit is how much more of a "court presence" you will have. The increased pressure your opponent feels will create more errors and leave you with more set-ups.

## Body Preparation

Proper preparation will improve your body control and gain you at least a step in movement toward the ball. In order for your body to move your knees should be bent and your arms should be pumping at your side. This can't be done if you start from a flat-footed position. Stay on your toes, ready to react to the movement of the ball. You must hold a clear image in your mind of clean movement and swing technique to execute properly. At this point, a good video tape analysis of your movement and positioning will go a long way. While you may envision text book form, you may be surprised that your actual execution looks far more awkward and sloppy. Keeping that clear picture and working toward it will start bringing about improved control just as soon as the awkward aspects start to fall away.

Achieving total control is accomplished with day to day emphasis on proper preparation. As with any skill in sports, knowing these things in your head is of little value until you incorporate them into your regular game through practice. When you can control your racquet, your attention to the ball, and the movement of your own body, you'll probably find that your opponent can't control you. Think preparation as your first step toward gaining control!

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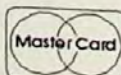
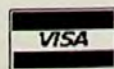
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# Cliff Swain's Traveling All Stars

Compiled from material submitted by Woody Clouse, Ralph Kusche, & Mark Henry

## New Orleans Elmwood Summer Cooler

• Swain: off and running in the new season  
• Doyle: best of the rest • Reiff: another near miss against Ray • Fowler breaks into another quarter • Gonzalez turns a feud into a day at the beach • Vicki Garrett & Co. put together another welcomed "Cooler" in the midst of the sweltering southern summer •

There was no streetcar named Desire at the New Orleans IRT stop this summer, just the runaway trolley named Swain that ran over the rest of the tour. New Orleans' "Summer Cooler" opened the first pro season in over a decade to begin with an undisputed champion and anticipated "king of the court". Sudsy Monchik's upset victory at the nationals following Cliff Swain's elimination at the hands of Drew Kachtik notwithstanding, Swain reigned supreme as the incumbent champion, and stood at the pinnacle of the IRT. With Andy Roberts absent from the draw while recovering from knee surgery, Jack

Newman officially retired, and John Ellis and Mike Ceresia representing their countries at the World Games, some great opportunities were at hand for other players to gain some professional ground.

Texas' Aaron Katz and Maryland's Dan Fowler took advantage of the situation with wins into the quarters. Mike Ray ventured into the quarters by pulling out a tight one in the breaker against Florida's Scott Reiff only to fall to Mike Guidry in the following round. Ruben Gonzalez' usual war with arch rival Drew Kachtik ended in an atypical three to the dismay of the heavy Kachtik contingent in the crowd. Last season's hot shot rookie Sudsy Monchik was denied of a repeat win following his upset at the nationals.

## Cliff Swain

11-3, 6-11, 11-7, 11-5

## Sudsy Monchik

## SEMIS

Swain d. Kachtik

11-8, 8-11, 8-11, 11-1, 11-7

Monchik d. Katz

11-5, 11-3, 8-11, 11-7

## QUARTERS

Swain d. Ellis

11-5, 9-11, 11-5, 11-4

Kachtik d. Guidry

11-3, 11-5, 2-11, 11-6

Katz d. Roberts

11-7, 12-10, 2-11, 7-11, 11-3

Monchik d. Doyle

4-11, 11-8, 8-11, 11-1, 11-6

## Stockton California

## Cliff Swain

11-1, 4-11, 11-4, 11-5

## Tim Doyle

## SEMIS

Swain d. Guidry

11-2, 11-6, 10-12, 11-7

Doyle d. Gonzalez

12-10, 6-11, 11-4, 11-1

## QUARTERS

Swain d. Katz

11-3, 11-3, 11-3

Guidry d. Ray

11-8, 8-11, 11-5, 11-6

Gonzalez d. Kachtik

11-4, 12-10, 11-6

Doyle d. Fowler

11-6, 11-0, 11-8

## New Orleans

## Stockton Coors Light Stockton Pro Am

• Swain does it again •  
Monchik proves Portland no fluke •  
Katz shows what he's made of • Kachtik takes first round in Texas rivalry • Ellis makes the best of a tough #8 seeding • Rob Ferrins and the crew at Westlane relive IRT tradition •

One of the three oldest continuously running tour stops (along with the Woodfield Classic in Chicago and the Campbell's Pro Am in Riverside), the Westlane Racquet Club's annual labor day tradition has become something of an early season proving ground for the IRT. With Swain's absolute domination of the pro tour, it may seem less than newsworthy to highlight yet another pro win. Despite what the appearance may be at the surface, Swain's performance has been nothing less than spectacular and is even more newsworthy since each of the top IRT pros has been playing brilliantly. In fact, Swain at a solid number one and Doyle jockeying between the number two and three positions have legitimately been the most improved players of the past season. Rarely in any sport do we see the best in the world improve faster than the rest of their even hungrier competition, or do we see one player so completely dominate when his opponents maintain such a high level of competition.

In addition to another fantastic performance by the master, last year's prodigy







Monchik and veteran Katz distinguished themselves nicely in the Stockton event. Relying on lightening reflexes and a pinpoint power backhand from somewhere in outer space, Monchik ripped through Ray, Doyle, and Katz for a berth in the final against Swain. A solid showing and second game win against Swain confirmed earlier indications that the flamboyant kid from New York is well on his way to the top. Katz, the master strategist, reached into the hat for an amazing upset of Gonzalez in three and a narrow upset of a newly returning Roberts in the breaker.

In the top half of the pro draw, the Swain - Ellis and Kachtik - Guidry pairings are stuff of which rivalries are made. Full of blood & guts, hustle & grit, these are two of the best match-ups in the game. However, now is the time to see them since the IRT Board is considering "flipping" the draw in future events to help avoid the "frozen" rankings which have become the norm. Smart money picks either of these matches as a great ticket option at any stop.

Swain's win in the final left him with an undefeated match record for the new season, and a place in the long-standing history of the Stockton event.

#### Arlington Crystal City Pro-Am

• Doyle seizes the upset • Swain's first loss in a final in 16 outings • Clouse & Ray find more frustration • Katz becomes the most underestimated player on the tour • Reiff's second disappointment in the breaker • Larry Boswell, Blair Desio, and The Skyline Club welcome back a fresh cast of characters for its return to the pro tour schedule

After several years of absence, the previously long-standing tradition of the Arlington Virginia pro stop returned to the IRT schedule with a big splash in 1994. While it has continued to be something of an eastern hotbed for racquetball, the historic city found that much of the principle cast of pros had changed since its last taste of the then "MPRA" in 1980's. Instead of Hogan, Yellen, Harnett, Inoue and (who?) Swain at the top, the '94 event found Doyle, Roberts, Kachtik, Guidry, and (really?) Swain at the top of a more professional, better organized, and more solid IRT. Aside from the tremendous talent of the athletes at the pro level since day one, it had become clear that just about everything

else about racquetball is better today and that we have emerged from the "dark ages" that marked 1980's racquetball.

Right from the start, the 1994 Crystal City Pro Am belonged to Doyle. Marked improvements in timing and court coverage have added another dimension to his already tough power game. His "off-duty" laid-back style giving way to intensity and attitude on the court, Doyle served his typical bullets for the big upset in the atypical Saturday night final. To his credit, he also turned in some of the best matches of the sixteens, quarters, and semis against Reiff, Ray, and Kachtik respectively. With two rounds of play on Saturday at the toughest part of the tournament, Doyle's recent heavy emphasis on fitness training may have just given him the necessary edge.

Good early pro career performances by Mike Glow and David Hamilton forecast some serious promise from the South Carolina "Wild Man" and the National Juniors runner-up. Woody Clouse, narrowly denied a quarters appearance after five intense games with Ray was forced to leave with yet another frustration in his bitter fight into the top eight. Quickly rising as the most underestimated player on the tour, Katz stormed into his second consec-

utive quarter to prove that his performance the previous week in Stockton had been no fluke.

As little as two years ago, winning two consecutive pro stops had been considered a major feat and bordered on domination. Today with Swain's complete stranglehold on the IRT, and wins in somewhere near 80% of pro stops for the past two years, many fans and indeed Swain himself regarded his second place to Doyle as "slipping". Oh, how quickly they forget!

#### Riverside Campbell's Healthy Request / V8 Splat Shot Pro Am

• Doyle grabs win number two for the season • Clouse topples the master • Roberts: back in form for the final • Good showings for Paraiso, Karp, Muller • Campbells and TheTournament House Team form an unbeatable combination •

Never missing a beat, Rich Wagner and the Campbells company have established the ultimate arena for pitting the old school against the new wave and welcomed the most eclectic mix of past stars, near-greats, wanna-bes, rising stars, and

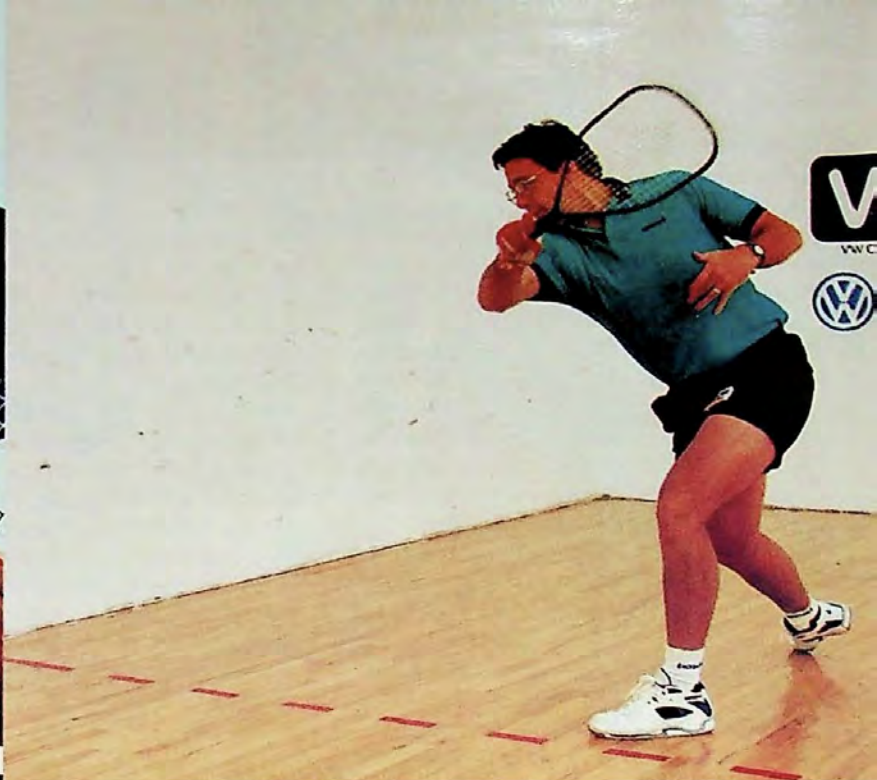
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**SEMIS**  
Swain d. Roberts  
3-11, 11-4, 11-4, 11-5  
Doyle d. Kachtik  
9-11, 11-6, 7-11, 12-10, 11-8

**Tim Doyle**  
9-11, 12-10, 11-6, 11-7  
**Cliff Swain**

**QUARTERS**  
Swain d. Ellis  
9-11, 11-4, 11-8, 10-12, 11-8  
Roberts d. Guidry  
11-13, 11-6, 11-4, 11-5  
Kachtik d. Katz  
11-5, 11-4, 11-4  
Doyle d. Ray  
6-11, 6-11, 11-7, 11-5, 11-3

**Arlington Virginia**

**SEMIS**  
Roberts d. Clouse  
11-5, 14-12, 11-3  
Doyle d. Gonzalez  
8-11, 11-1, 11-6, 10-12, 11-2

**Tim Doyle**  
11-8, 11-1, 8-11, 2-11, 11-8  
**Andy Roberts**

**QUARTERS**  
Clouse d. Swain  
11-9, 10-12, 11-7, 11-8  
Roberts d. Guidry  
11-2, 10-12, 11-6, 5-11, 11-4  
Gonzalez d. Kachtik  
11-8, 3-11, 11-1, 11-2  
Doyle d. Ray  
4-11, 11-7, 11-9, 11-9

**Riverside California**

everything in-between all along the way. The L.A.-Huntington Beach-Anaheim-Riverside "fertile crescent" is certainly the epicenter of the biggest racquetball state in the country.

Since much of the tour has become the Swain game, an upset of the master is destined for the headlines. While we always knew Clouse has the potential, and certainly no one knows Swain's game as well (with the possible exception of Ellis who has been stuck playing Swain for the last gazillion tournaments), his quarter final upset of the king came nearly as much of a surprise to Clouse himself as to the crowd and Swain. Bottom line - Clouse's serve was on like never before, preventing Swain from ever establishing control. Speculation regarding Swain's vulnerability and Clouse's audacity circulated the crowd, while Clouse left with one of his most important career wins to date.

And what of the early rounds? New IRT Satellite Tour Director Eric Muller posted a good win in three over California's Steve Lerner who always plays well in this event at his home club. Ellis quickly blasted past one of the game's favorite former champions, Dave Peck. Adam Karp continued to show solid potential in Riverside, if often a bit unorthodox. Another Californian that always fares very well at this event, Joey Paraiso, took a four-gamer from a tough Tony Jelso.

When it all came down to the Doyle - Roberts final, we were truly left with the knighting of the game's next hero to champion the cause of the underdog against Swain. As one of only two players to defeat Swain this season, the only other player to win an IRT stop, and certainly the best trained and prepared of the two for this event, Doyle certainly had reason for

confidence. Roberts, on the other hand, carried the secure knowledge that he had routinely held Doyle at bay for the past three seasons. In all honesty, it was a tribute to his incredible talent that Roberts could spring back to a five-gamer at this level at all after being sidelined for knee surgery. Whether Doyle's now-famous training made the difference or Roberts' prolonged time off, Doyle gained solid ground in both the ranking and confidence columns with a big win in the breaker.

#### Montreal VCI Challenge Cup Series

• Swain:back in the winner's circle •  
Clouse, Fowler, Jelso look good • Ceresia & Greenfield carry Canada's torch • Michel Gagnon and Nautilus Plus welcome the pros back to French Montreal •

Now after several seasons of regularly playing Canadian Pro Stops, the pros from the U.S. have become accustomed to the

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|                              |                              |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
|                              | <b>Cliff Swain</b>           |
|                              | 11-7, 8-11, 11-4, 9-11, 11-6 |
| <b>SEMIS</b>                 | <b>Tim Doyle</b>             |
| Swain d. Kachtik             |                              |
| 11-9, 8-11, 11-3, 11-9       |                              |
| Doyle d. Roberts             |                              |
| 11-6, 8-11, 9-11, 11-5, 11-1 |                              |
| <b>QUARTERS</b>              |                              |
| Swain d. Ellis               |                              |
| 11-9, 11-5, 9-11, 11-7       |                              |
| Kachtik d. Guidry            |                              |
| 11-7, 11-5, 3-11, 7-11, 11-8 |                              |
| Roberts d. Gonzalez          |                              |
| 11-1, 11-9, 2-11, 11-5       |                              |
| Doyle d. Katz                |                              |
| 3-11, 11-5, 11-6, 11-2       |                              |
| <b>Montreal</b>              |                              |

|                              |                     |
|------------------------------|---------------------|
|                              | <b>Cliff Swain</b>  |
|                              | 11-2, 11-1, 11-5    |
| <b>SEMIS</b>                 | <b>Andy Roberts</b> |
| Swain d. Guidry              |                     |
| 10-12, 15-13, 11-8, 11-7     |                     |
| Roberts d. Ray               |                     |
| 11-7, 11-6, 9-11, 7-11, 11-2 |                     |
| <b>QUARTERS</b>              |                     |
| Swain d. Ellis               |                     |
| 11-8, 11-7, 11-0             |                     |
| Guidry d. Kachtik            |                     |
| 11-6, 2-11, 12-10, 11-6      |                     |
| Roberts d. Gonzalez          |                     |
| 11-4, 11-6, 11-6             |                     |
| Ray d. Doyle                 |                     |
| 11-5, 12-10, 3-11, 11-6      |                     |
| <b>Chicago</b>               |                     |

differing gamestyles and customs of the host Canadians. Unfortunately for the Canadian players, since many of them do not play the tour in the U.S., their resulting seedings force them to play directly into the top of the IRT in the opening round. With valuable VCI Challenge Series standings at stake, the top IRT regulars were in no mood to pull any punches. Still, all in all, it was an impressive showing for some very talented players. Regularly in the International Tour lineup, Sherman Greenfeld and Mike Ceresia were the only Canadians to make it into the sixteens. Worthy of mention, however were solid efforts by Richard Larivee and Brian Valin against Clouse and Gonzalez respectively, coming out of the gates strong with good scores in the first games.

The spectre of upset loomed ominously over the sixteens with 50% of the match-

es stretching to five games. Clouse, Fowler, and Jelso earned international pats-on-the-back for near misses. Brian Rankin played brilliantly against Swain with two comeback games that tied the match, only to be slammed into the shutout wall in the breaker. The only underdog to close the deal for the upset in this round was Katz, who, after years of touring has now become a regular in the quarters.

In each of his matches in Montreal, Swain found something extra to completely rise above his opponent. For the third time in the early season's first four events, Doyle was unable to capitalize on an opportunity against Swain in the final.

#### Chicago Woodfield Halloween Classic

- The "Swain Train" back on track •
- Roberts with a shift in power? •
- Credit to Ellis •
- Kachtik & Guidry fight it out again •
- Another incredible tournament and weekend courtesy of the Negrete brothers •

Could the Chicago event on Halloween weekend have been a turning point for the IRT season? Swain had lost only one final in which he appeared in nearly two years (Crystal City Pro Am - Arlington, Virginia). Doyle had forced that singular loss and had pushed Swain already in finals in New Orleans and Montreal. Still tentative on his newly repaired knee, Roberts had missed the New Orleans season opener all together, fared only moderately well in Stockton, fell to Swain in four in the semis in Arlington, then suffered defeat at the hands of Doyle in Riverside and Montreal. While no player consistently threatened Swain's standing, Doyle clearly opened the season with the upper hand on the rest of the tour. Considering Roberts' consistent victories over Doyle in past seasons, the question remained as to the outcome of their matches upon Roberts' complete recovery.

Roberts' trek through the draw at the Woodfield Club to to face Swain in the final put a temporary end to the Swain - Doyle show, producing something of a seasonal turning point. Because of intervention from a smokin' Ray in the quarters, it gave no conclusive evidence of how Doyle

## Deliverin' the Doughnuts



Doyle 11, Fowler 0 New Orleans 16s  
Roberts 11, Karp 0 Riverside 16s

Swain 11, Rankin 0 Montreal 16s  
Swain 11, Ellis 0 Chicago Quarters

Roberts 11, Katz 0 Baltimore Quarters



## Cliff Swain

11-3, 11-6, 11-9

## Andy Roberts

## SEMIS

Swain d. Kachtik

11-, 11-2, 11-3

Roberts d. Doyle

4-11, 11-4, 11-7, 6-11, 11-8

## QUARTERS

Swain d. Ellis

11-7, 11-9, 3-11, 11-8

Kachtik d. Guidry

11-7, 13-15, 11-5, 8-11, 11-8

Roberts d. Katz

11-0, 11-1, 11-2

Doyle d. Ray

11-2, 11-7, 2-11, 11-9

## Baltimore

### Baltimore VCI Challenge Cup Series

• *Business as usual for Swain • Roberts in championship form - against everybody except #1 • Good showings for Rankin & Reiff • J. Swearin and JAM sports produce another great event •*

This year's VCI Challenge Cup series event in Baltimore presented Roberts

with a double edged sword. Underscoring his abilities at 100 % he claimed his first victory over Doyle for the season. In fact he made a substantial claim to the "best of the rest" crown, but good advice says don't use the phrase too freely in his presence.

The downside for Roberts was his second lack-luster and decidedly sub-standard performance against Swain in the

final. While Swain can make anybody look bad, the back-to-back finals against Roberts in Chicago and Baltimore certainly did little to convey the tremendous power and precision of Roberts or the fact that he is now one of only an elite handful of players capable of beating Swain.

The contest of the tourney was the Texas showdown between Kachtik and Guidry in the quarters. The two sidekicks turned their weapons on each other once again and proved that their complete knowledge of each other's game makes a bad match between them an impossibility. In the end, Kachtik's consistency overcame Guidry's mistakes for the win.

Ray coolly and systematically dispatched Monchik but wasn't nearly so effective against Doyle in the quarters. The dual glass corner evidently created some problems for Ray in tracking the ball. Doyle took advantage of the problem, but could find no such crack in Roberts' defenses in the five-gamer that followed in the semis.

Seven events into the season, Swain has picked up where he left off last year. With Roberts and Doyle hot on his heels though, the ride won't be easy.

and Roberts would square off against one another at that point in the season.

The Swain - Ellis and Kachtik - Guidry quarters proved just as exciting in Chi-town as they had previously on the tour. Big points to Ellis for heart, a lesser competitor would surely be completely insane from facing Swain at every outing. Guidry found revenge for his previous loss to Kachtik, and surprised Swain with an exaggerated aggressiveness that save Swain's smothering him with pressure would have toppled the king in the semis.

In a reassuring effort for Ray fans, the big southpaw from South Carolina revisited the championship form that kept him at the top of the IRT for several years and defeated Doyle in the best effort and best match of the tournament. In a devastating slump for far too long now, Ray certainly still has the finest forehands and overheads in the game. No fluke in the quarters, Ray held ground for a good five against Roberts in the semis.

Recent Olympic Festival Champion Derek Robinson posted a big victory against hot shot Monchik in the thirty-twos. Following his lead, several others of the tour's "core" players made solid showings in Chicago.

No diplomacy possible in describing the final, Swain delivered a vicious and thorough defeat in a quick five against Roberts' worst performance in history. Leaving the windy city for the first no-snow Halloween in several seasons, the stage was set for the coming Roberts - Doyle showdown. . . Wonder if Swain loses any sleep over the other pros' movement within the rankings?

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# VCI Spreadsheet

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## IRT

- |     |                                               |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------|
| 1.  | Cliff Swain (1)<br>Braintree, Massachusetts   |
| 2.  | Tim Doyle (2)<br>Huntington Beach, California |
| 3.  | Andy Roberts (3)<br>Memphis, Tennessee        |
| 4.  | Mike Guidry (5)<br>Dallas, Texas              |
| 5.  | Drew Kachlik (4)<br>Dallas, Texas             |
| 6.  | Mike Ray (6)<br>Hilton Head, South Carolina   |
| 7.  | Ruben Gonzalez (7)<br>Staten Island, New York |
| 8.  | John Ellis (9)<br>Stockton, California        |
| 9.  | Woody Clouse (10)<br>Jacksonville, Florida    |
| 10. | Aaron Katz (15)<br>Dallas, Texas              |
| 11. | Sudsy Monchik (11)<br>Staten Island, New York |
| 12. | Dan Fowler (16)<br>Silver Springs, Maryland   |
| 13. | Louis Vogel<br>Taos, New Mexico               |
| 14. | Roger Harripersad<br>Saskatoon, Saskatchewan  |
| 15. | Adam Karp<br>Los Angeles, California          |
| 16. | Brian Rankin<br>St. Louis, Missouri           |

## WPRA

- |      |                                                       |
|------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.   | Michelle Gould (1)<br>Boise, Idaho                    |
| 2.   | Robin Levine (3)<br>Sacramento, California            |
| 3.   | Marci Drexler (2)<br>San Diego, California            |
| 4.   | Cheryl Gudinas (4)<br>Lisle, Illinois                 |
| 5.   | Lynne Coburn (5)<br>Baltimore, Maryland               |
| 6.   | Caryn McKinney (11)<br>Atlanta, Georgia               |
| 7T.  | Laura Fenton (7)<br>Lincoln, Nebraska                 |
| 7T.  | Chris Evon (8)<br>San Diego, California               |
| 7T.  | Molly O'Brien (6)<br>Souderton, Pennsylvania          |
| 10.  | Robin Whitmire<br>Atlanta, Georgia                    |
| 11.  | Roz Olson (10)<br>New Paltz, New York                 |
| 12.  | Michelle Wiragh                                       |
| 13T. | Janet Myers (12)<br>Charlotte, North Carolina         |
| 13T. | Kim Machiran (15T)<br>Ballwin, Missouri               |
| 15.  | Dee Ferreira-Worth (15T)<br>Anaheim Hills, California |
| 16.  | Kim Russell<br>Atlanta, Georgia                       |

IRT rankings provided by World Racquet Sports Association



## VCI Challenge Cup Series

1. Cliff Swain
2. Tim Doyle
3. Andy Roberts
4. Drew Kachtik
5. Mike Guidry
6. Mike Ray
- 7T. Ruben Gonzalez
- 7T. John Ellis

## American Amateur Racquetball Association

25+

1. Dave Cardillo
  2. Tony Boscia
  - 3T. Jim Jeffers
  - 3T. John Negrete
  5. David McAfee
- 
1. Lorraine Galloway
  2. Kim Russell
  3. Josee Moore
  - 4T. B.J. Ehrigott
  - 4T. Kersten Hallander
  - 4T. Megan O'Malley
  - 4T. Allison Wohl

## Racquetball Canada

1. Sherman Greenfeld
  2. Simon Roy
  3. Mike Ceresia
  4. Haydn Jones
  5. Doug McQuarrie
- 
1. Carol McPetridge
  2. Sue McTaggart
  3. Josee Grandmaitre
  4. Vicki (Brown) Shanks
  5. Linda Ellerington

## Wheelchair Racquetball International Rankings

1. Chip Parmelly, US
2. Gary Baker, US
3. Mark Cormack, Canada
4. Jake Smellie, Canada
5. Ken Michaylenko, Canada
6. Carol Mulholland, Canada
7. Liesl Tesch, Australia
8. Steve Kuketz, US
9. Dennis May, Ireland
10. George Simons, Great Britain
11. Darren Cunningham, Australia
12. Rune Lorentsen, Norway
13. Colin Dawson, Australia
14. Ray Boudreau, Canada
- 15T. John Finn, Ireland
- 15T. Tom Hynes, Ireland
- 15T. Oscar Diaz, Argentina
18. Philip Smallman, Australia
19. Mark Fowler, Great Britain
- 20T. Anna Tavano, France
- 20T. Hector Zuniga, Argentina
22. Danny Aykroyd, Great Britain
- 23T. Karen Darke, Great Britain
- 23T. Gary Vaughan, Great Britain
25. Charles Heerey, Australia
26. Steve Jones, Great Britain



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# At the Tour's Core

Beyond the top ten of the IRT is a group of solid racquetball players who consistently keep pressure on those at the head of the pack

By Aaron Katz

## Dan Fowler

Dan Fowler has power, speed, and a very aggressive style but he has had trouble winning big tie breakers.



From the Baltimore area, Dan Fowler boasts and impressive track record against the best players of the Northeast as he goes after the pros. With power, speed, and a very aggressive style, he stormed all the way into two quarters last season. Even after regularly capturing game wins from most of the top pros, Fowler's Achilles' heel seems to be his inability to win the big tie breakers. A bit more experience on the IRT and some improved shot selection at the crucial points will take his natural pro gamestyle a long way.

## Scott Reiff

The number one shooter from the legendary Memphis State collegiate team for the past four years, Scott Reiff has already

begun chipping away at the IRT. Unquestionably talented and clearly driven, the tall native Floridian has been one of the most visible of the new breed that has threatened the IRT in the past couple of seasons. Unfortunately Reiff has found surprisingly too many opportunities to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory (OK, I'll say it—he choked). Most notably, in each of the last two New Orleans Pro stops he has let Mike Ray out of the trap while serving with a ten-to-six lead in a match game. The trick now is to see if Reiff can heal those scars and carry through to take his obvious pro-style game right to the top.

## Louis Vogel

An extremely hard hitter from the Southwest, Louis Vogel has played most of the IRT tournaments for several years. Bullet serves, smooth strokes, and a tremendous variety of shots are all hallmarks of his game. Visibly losing steam during the grueling two round Thursday (Both the round of 32 and round of 16 are played on Thursday at most IRT events.), Vogel has yet to break through into his first quarter raising serious questions about his overall fitness level. Several losses to Mike



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Former Canadian champ, Mike Ceresia has wavered on the brink of the top ten for several seasons.

Guidry in the sixteens may have chipped away at Vogel's confidence, making his advancement into the top spots even more difficult.

## Todd O'Neil

A native of Vermont, now transplanted to Texas, Todd O'Neil is one of the most difficult players to understand. Gifted with a world of talent, he possesses racquet skills second to none and an array of angles that make opponents' eyes cross. O'Neil's performance on the IRT has been sporadic at best, however, because of his reluctance to completely commit mentally and physically to the pro game. Some soul searching that might result in a renewed commitment to professional racquetball is vital in order for O'Neil's game and career to progress any further.

## Tony Jelso

Two years ago, Tony Jelso was considered to be one of the hottest prospects on the IRT. Big, quick, and strong, he came through the ranks of the Southwest with a natural power game. A bit too much "tinkering" with his game, however, has taken its toll on Jelso's confidence. At age 24, Jelso must shake off several rounds of 32 losses to regain the confidence to make use of the time he still has to break into the top eight. As he is realizing, confidence is a fleeting quality on the IRT.

## Adam Karp

Unquestionably one of the best up and coming

players in the game today, Southern California's Adam Karp appears to have the mental capabilities to survive on the tour. After several close calls with only a few outings against the pros, it seems some added size and strength might be all it would take to do some real damage. Karp presents a collection of lob serves as good as those of any pro on the tour. His style of sheer reckless abandon in rallies clearly invites injuries that could seriously hinder his progress.

**Solid strokes, good movement, and an excellent drive serve all make up the tools that could make Roger harripersad a top pro.**

## Mike Ceresia

While often upstaged by flashier and more dramatic players, Mike Ceresia has called upon tremendous guile and creativity to carve out a solid place on the IRT. He has wavered on the brink of the top eight or at least top ten for several seasons. A former Canadian National Champion, Ceresia has reached an age where development of new weapons is difficult, but may be required to further his progress. An atypical first round loss to junior nationals runner-up David Hamilton earlier this season notwithstanding, numerous seasons of playing every tour stop have added confidence to his unique arsenal that make him a key obstacle in the path of any ambitious tour rookie.

## Roger Harripersad

Solid strokes, good movement, and an excellent drive serve all make up the tools that could make Roger Harripersad a top pro. Problems with sponsorships and





the amateur association of his home Canada have kept him from touring as a pro as much as he would have liked. In his upper twenties, time is of the essence for this low key competitor. Wins over many top pros over the years have provided some confidence to use as a solid base for an attack on the top eight this year.

## Brian Rankin

A product of world intercollegiate champion teams first at Memphis State, then at South West Missouri State, Brian Rankin is a good solid player free of too much reliance on any specific weapons. Sound fundamentals and good shot selection have provided regular appearances in the second round of several recent pro stops. Rankin let a key upset slip away recently at the VCI event in Baltimore after serving nine - three in the breaker against Drew Kachtik. If he can continue to improve as he has over the past couple of years, Rankin should be in line to win a lot of matches.

**Sherman Greenfeld has turned quick thinking and a squash-like style into an arsenal that has dominated Canada for most of recent history.**

recent history. While he has beaten many of the top U.S. players in international amateur competition, he has yet to meet with anything like that kind of success on the IRT. His unique style is sure to cause confusion. Some adjustment to "clean up" his shot selection and court position are vital in order for Greenfeld to find real success on the tour. Still he's a delight to observe since nobody does what he does like he does!



## Derek Robinson

From the Pacific Northwest, Derek Robinson may be the most intriguing of the tour's "new lions". The tallest of all the IRT players, his 6'5"+ frame belies his incredible quickness and agility. While still lacking serious pro experience, this tough kid may just have the mental ability and drive to pay his dues on the tour and find himself among the top eight. A solid collegiate career with world champions S.M.S.U. and recent strong amateur showing at the Olympic Festival prove that Robinson has potential. His unorthodox style makes him very interesting to watch on the court.

## Sherman Greenfeld

The "Cliff Swain" of Canada, Sherman Greenfeld has turned quick thinking and a squash-like style into an arsenal that has dominated in Canada for most of

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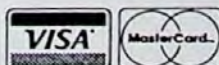
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- 3  
Mike Guidry
- 4  
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Dan Fowler
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- 8T  
Louis Vogel  
Roger Harripersad
- 10  
Scott Reiff
- 11T  
Eric Muller  
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- 2  
Mike Guidry
- 3  
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Dan Fowler
- 5  
Louis Vogel
- 6  
Brian Rankin
- 7T  
Scott Reiff
- 7T  
Todd O'Neil

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# 'tis the Season

By IRT Commissioner  
Hank Marcus

In the early season this year it occurred to me just what we have come together to build with the International Racquetball Tour. In the 1990's alone the tour has grown from six annual stops in diehard racquetball areas of the US to over twenty throughout the US, Canada and Mexico. Fans worldwide have begun to regularly see professional racquetball first on the Prime Sports Network and now on ESPN. And while it has taken several seasons to work out details, regular events in Europe and Japan are pending. The tour's own **KILLSHOT** Magazine reaches out to tens of thousands of readers each year, and the pros have captured attention in newsletters and amateur racquetball's Racquetball Magazine. Still, with so much work ahead in each of these areas, these things are not the real signs of the tour's success.

In the end, it is the relationship of the tour to its fans that screams overwhelmingly of its success. Unlike the NBA, NFL, or MLB, the link between pro and spectator in racquetball is an intimate bond. As the tour returns each fall to three of the oldest continuing pro stops (Stockton, Riverside, and Chicago), the fans welcome the pros as old friends and the pros in turn know many of the local players by first

name. In clubs more recently added to the tour roster such as New Orleans' Elmwood, Montreal's Nautilus +, and Baltimore's Merritt Club, the same bond has formed. After only a couple of seasons, both touring pros and local players have come to regard these events as important institutions. One of the biggest indicators of this is the tremendous success of the pro's return to the Skyline Club in Crystal City (Arlington), Virginia after a five year absence.

The past five years the tour has become more professional, better organized, and more cohesive than ever before.

With tremendous financial and popular growth, the tour has learned from past mistakes and maintained a win - win dynamic among players, sponsors, supporting clubs, event organizers, the media, and the fans. With real success in the nineties, the IRT has positioned itself for an unlimited future. Still the numbers on paper never tell the whole story. Only the faces rich with the expressions of genuine excitement and anticipation that abound each fall tell the real story. Maybe it's no surprise to see these expressions among the fans, but I was speaking of the expressions of the pros.

## VCI Hard Hitting Contest

VW Credit, Inc. in conjunction with the IRT will offer the VCI Hard Hitting Contest at all VCI Challenge Cup Series events this season. The contest is open to amateurs only and the top five hitters win prize money. Entry fees are donated to the IRT's official charity, Fibromyalgia Research.

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## INTERNATIONAL RACQUETBALL TOUR

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## IRT 1995 Satellite Tour Scheduled Events

# IRT 1995 Scheduled Events

|                     |                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| January 18-22       | Memphis             |
| January 25-28       | Birmingham          |
| <b>February 1-5</b> | <b>Atlanta*</b>     |
| February 8-12       | Miami               |
| February 15-19      | Pittsburgh          |
| March 8-12          | Houston             |
| March               | Phoenix             |
| April 5-9           | San Francisco       |
| April 19-23         | Saskatoon           |
| April 26-30         | Las Vegas           |
| <b>May 3-7</b>      | <b>Minneapolis*</b> |
| <b>May 10-14</b>    | <b>Columbus*</b>    |
| May                 | Seattle             |
| June 7-11           | Portland            |
| TBA                 | Mexico              |

**\*VCI Challenge Cup Series**

|                |                      |                          |                         |               |                |
|----------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| January 13-15  | Billings, MT         | Billings Pro-Am          | Billings Athletic Club  | Susie Eabes   | (406) 259-2626 |
| January 20-22  | Manchester, NH       | Parkland Open            | IKKA                    | Kelley Beane  | (603) 627-4552 |
| January 27-29  | Scarborough, ON      | Canadian Racq/reation    |                         | Adrian Webb   | (519) 748-5585 |
| February       | Winnipeg, MB         | Canadian Racq/reation    |                         | Adrian Webb   | (519) 748-5585 |
| February       | Rochester, NY        | Strong Children's Open   | Penfield Racquet Club   | Alan Hanford  | (716) 586-7777 |
| February 24-26 | Paducah, KY          | Mid-America Invitational | Nautilus Racquet & Swim | Sandy Trail   | (502) 443-7529 |
| March 17-19    | Auburn, MA           | Pro Doubles Satellite    | Auburn Club             | Bob Babine    | (508) 832-3236 |
| March 31-Apr 2 | Chatam, ON           | Canadian Racq/reation    |                         | Adrian Webb   | (519) 748-5585 |
| April 21-23    | Brampton, ON         | Canadian Racq/reation    |                         | Adrian Webb   | (519) 748-5585 |
| May 5-7        | Greenbrook/Warren NJ | US Open                  | NJ CourtSports          | Lisa Gaertner | (201) 444-0859 |
| June 9-11      | Los Altos, CA        | Courtesy Sports Elite 8  | Courtesy Sports         | Brian Mirich  | (800) 729-1771 |

Information about hosting an IRT Satellite Event can be obtained by contacting IRT Satellite Tour Director, Eric Muller, (913) 681-5219.



# TOP GUN

By Heidi Willes

In October of 1987 when Jerry Ellis, general manager of All American Fitness of Blue Springs, Missouri, told his tournament directors that the Top Gun racquetball tournament would become a huge annual event, they laughed at him. After all, only 66 entrants had played for the few hundred dollars in prize money offered at that first competition.

Today those directors aren't laughing. They are too busy working to ensure that the Top Gun tournament continues to live up to the reputation it has earned as one of the Midwest's premiere racquetball events. Sanctioned as an IRT satellite pro-stop for the first time, the recently played Top Gun VIII raised the level of excitement, and future expectations, yet another notch this year. Players from across the nation met in Blue Springs to compete for nearly \$4,000 in prize money.

Long-time Top Gun competitor Tim Sweeney of Missouri took home the men's Top Gun VIII title by beating Simon Roy of Canada in a rematch of last year's open final. Bruce Erickson of Missouri and Alan Engel of Florida split

the third prize purse, and Mark Isley of Missouri (the first Top Gun winner in 1987) won in consolation.

For the women, Laura Fenton of Massachusetts handled her USA teammate Lorraine Galloway of New York after both survived early round scares. Jen Yakota of Missouri took third, while Terri Straka of Minnesota won in consolation.

Competition in other divisions was equally fierce. Some of the results were:

Men 45+: Doug Dickman, Missouri (1); Ed Johnston, Illinois (2); Terry Albright, Missouri (con)

Men A: Brian Pointelin, Missouri (1); Jim Zalaudek, Missouri (2); Dave Guentart, Kansas (con)

Men B: Tony Williams, Kansas (1); Todd Hanson, Iowa (2); Eric Struckoff, Missouri (con)

Men C: Darryl Bell, Missouri (1); Wayne Brewer, Missouri (2); Kevin Yusman, Missouri (con)

Men D: Steve Terry, Missouri (1); Billy Connely, Missouri (2)

Men A Doubles: Jim Brane and Doug Dickman, Missouri (1); Brian Pointelin and Jim Zalaudek, Missouri (2); Jon Stretch and David Sims, Missouri (con)

Men B/C Doubles: Jeff Goss and Chad Peterson, Missouri (1); Scott Franklin and Jamie Lemke, Iowa (2); Mike Wedel, Kansas, and Tony Williams, Missouri (con)

Women A: Darcy Bunn, Kansas (1); Johny Dusresne, Kansas (2); Michelle Smith, Kansas (con)

## IRT Satellite Events



Jerry Ellis, Tim Sweeney, Simon Roy



Jerry Ellis, Jen Yakota, Laura Fenton, Lorraine Galloway

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# All That Glitters

## Gould Dominates Maryland Open

### Baltimore Maryland Open

A familiar facility for the Women's Professional Racquetball Association as the home of the annual National Championships, the Merritt Athletic Club

in Baltimore welcomed the nation's top female players for the first combined men's and women's pro stop in modern history as part of the VCI Baltimore Challenge Series event. Not since the glory days of the old Ektelon and D.P.

Robin Levine remains the player to watch as she storms the court with power, speed, and aggression. She knows no fear.



### SEMIS

Gould d. Levine  
11-3, 11-5, 11-10  
Gudinas d. Drexler  
11-5, 11-9, 11-5

### Michelle Gould

11-0, 11-1, 11-3

### Cheryl Gudinas

### QUARTERS

Gould d. Fenton  
11-1, 11-10, 11-4  
Levine d. Coburn  
11-4, 11-0, 11-4  
Gudinas d. O'Brien  
11-2, 11-4, 11-5  
Drexler d. Evon  
11-3, 3-11, 11-0, 11-6

### SIXTEENS

Gould d. Pfahler  
11-0, 11-0, 11-4  
Fenton d. Lynch  
11-5, 11-3, 9-11, 2-11, 11-9  
Coburn d. Bailey  
11-10, 11-3, 7-11, 11-10  
Levine d. Kilbane  
11-7, 11-5, 11-6  
Gudinas d. Wiragh  
11-2, 11-2, 11-0  
O'Brien d. Machiran  
11-8, 11-6, 11-9  
Evon d. Stoffregen  
11-3, 2-11, 11-9, 11-4  
Drexler d. Gray  
11-1, 11-0, 11-1

### Baltimore



Leach Nationals have the male and female pros shared center stage at the same event. The mixed event drew mixed reviews from the Baltimore crowd, but saw some good performances by some newcomers to the women's tour.

Collegiate veterans Jen Yokota of Southwest Missouri and Carrie Healey of Memphis joined 19 and under national doubles champs Amy Kilbane and Kerri Stoffregen as WPA rookies for the season opener. Also new to the women's tour, Ohio's Elaine Hooghe fought for a near miss in the first round against Laura Fenton in an extremely close five that show as much promise for Hooghe as a pro as she has seen in amateur play.

The Merritt Club's own Lynn Coburn eliminated a returning Malia Bailey in a close four in the sixteens. Still the best

match of the round came with Fenton's five game sparring session against Marcy Lynch. Robin Levine fought up through the semis with her usual arsenal of gravi-

**Robin Levine fought up through the semis with her usual arsenal of dives and blasts that has made her easily the most exciting player on the women's tour.**

ty-defying dives and powerful blasts that has made her easily the most exciting play-

er on the women's professional tour today.

While Michelle Gould continued her domination of the women's tour by winning for the gazillionth time without dropping a single game, Chicago's Cheryl Gudinas was the real story of this tournament and possibly the most improved player on the tour. Using better court coverage than we have seen from her in seasons past, Gudinas found her way into her first professional final. With a mixed bag of lob serves and hard Z's, she kept an always aggressive Marci Drexler well off balance in the semis and turned in the best pro tournament of her career. Still, in the final against Gould, the difference was staggering.

Smart money says that unless you find her up against Cliff Swain, don't bet against Gould at any odds!



It looks like another season of tour domination for Michelle Gould. With decisive victories in each match of the Maryland Open at Baltimore's Merritt Athletic Club she is well ahead of any challengers.

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# Like Fine Wine

## Improving with Age

By Aaron Katz

There's no denying it, our society stays obsessed with aging. Statements such as: "You're too old to do that" or "he's not old enough to act that way" are prime examples of our culture's outlook on aging. Unfortunately nowhere is the obsession more prevalent than in sports. Even more unfortunately, no amount of obsessing can interrupt the aging process.

Bjorn Borg retired from professional tennis at age 26. Jennifer Capriati may have terminally burned out by age 17. Thank goodness we have Jimmy Connors and Ruben Gonzalez to help keep things in perspective.

I suspect that many of us aspire to play well regardless of any of this aging stuff. Since many racquetball players pick up the game in their twenties, rather than during childhood as other sports, the age of thirty seems to be some sort of threshold that separates the time for learning and improvement from the time for settling into a style and ability that will remain stagnant or deteriorate throughout one's playing career. Breaking through this sort of mental barrier may allow you to progress further and faster as a player and reach levels that you may have considered beyond your reach. Realizing this is your first step. The most important aspect of improving your game after the age of thirty is attitude.

Before we can proceed to some of the factors that can rejuvenate your game, make sure that you are not falling into the trap of negative programming. Do an honest assessment. If, at some deep level, you have lost the drive and belief that commits you to improvement, your road ahead will

be wrought with frustration. There's no need for excessive programming to return to the road to improvement, just give up the idea that you can't. In the end, the tools you will need to improve are basically the same as those you needed years ago.

Realistically, the only probable differences in your play today from several years ago are in speed, maneuverability and resiliency, each of which may have

---

**Most importantly, set high goals for yourself. Don't fall into the trap of lowering your expectations just because you are not supposed to play as well as when you were younger.**

---

enabled you to overlook certain necessary areas for improvement. Now, with those attributes less consistent, you are forced onto the road to real improvement.

Most importantly, set high goals for yourself. Don't fall into the trap of lowering your expectations just because you are not supposed to play as well as when you were younger. There is no reason not to improve as you get older if you take care of yourself and are always working on the weaker points of your game.

Over the last five to seven years I have had the privilege of working out with Joe Lambert, the 65+ national champ (Joe is now 67) and I can assure you that every aspect of Joe's game is better now than when he was 60. Joe is a student of the game and is constantly working to improve himself both physically and mentally. So don't succumb to the propaganda that racquetball is for kids. Get out on the court and show the kids what it is like to be a winner at thirty-something, or forty-something, or fifty-something, or in Joe's case, sixty-something.

### Shot Selection

As you get older you have to play smarter; make fewer errors and make better decisions. Not only do we become less capable of outrunning our mistakes but having to play several matches over a two to three day period makes it critical that each match be as easy as possible.

Run the lines a little bit more often. By hitting the ball down the line and cross court more you will force your opponent to hit the ball on the move and allow yourself to control center court. Use your pinch shots more judiciously and wait until you have worked the rally to the point that your opponent is in the trap and you have time to set your feet and accurately execute.

### Serve Strategy

Mix up your serves more frequently. Serving strategy is one part of racquetball



that really utilizes the mental game. The older we get the more important it becomes that we force our opponent to make more errors. Using a variety of serves is an ideal way to keep your opponent guessing. Having four serves from three different spots gives you twelve different serves. That should keep your opponent sufficiently off balance.

### Court Positioning

Play deeper in the court. Use the five foot line as your guide for the furthest forward you should ever position yourself in center court. Force your opponent to kill the ball in order to win a rally. This will dramatically cut down the number of free points you give up. By playing deeper in center court, you are taking the attitude that if your opponent hits a great shot you will lose the point, but if your opponent leaves the ball up you will be in position for the re-kill.

### Mental Preparation

This is crucial to success at any age but particularly important as we get older. Spend some time prior to a match relaxing and concentrating on just playing your game. Don't try to be superman any longer, approach each match with the confidence that if you just relax and play your game you will emerge the victor. Obsessing with winning and losing and trying to force shots will cause you to fatigue very quickly.

Most importantly, realize your advantages. As a more mature player, you are entitled to the confidence that comes with years of practice in shot execution, with experience against unusual gamestyles, and with a clear picture of your own strengths and weaknesses. You can play more fundamentally sound, and no longer have to wear yourself out to overcompensate for weaknesses. Let your younger opponent do that, and beat the youthful daylights out of him!

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Photo by John Foust



# RACQUET SCIENCE

It doesn't take Einstein to figure out that the new frames are lighter, lighter, lighter.

By Lynne Balthazor

Racquetball racquet manufacturers have seen the light. And the lighter, lighter, lightest. Following the trend to overall lighter racquets with more weight in the head, every manufacturer offers at least one racquet in the 200-215 gram range. Lighter racquets produce less fatigue. Players using the "light" racquets are less likely to be "handcuffed" by the racquet when the ball comes right into their body. The racquets are balanced with a greater proportion of the weight in the head to cause the racquet to follow through and provide a strong, smooth stroke with less effort.

If your current racquet is causing you problems with fatigue, some of the new light racquets could make a noticeable difference in your game. To determine if fatigue is currently a problem for you, take note of your back swing (racquet preparation), particularly on your backhand. If in the first and second game you have good preparation, getting the racquet well back and up before the stroke, but by the tie-breaker you are "punching" at the ball from waist high, you would definitely benefit from checking out the lighter racquets. The following is an overview of each company and their current offerings, given in alphabetical order.

## E-Force

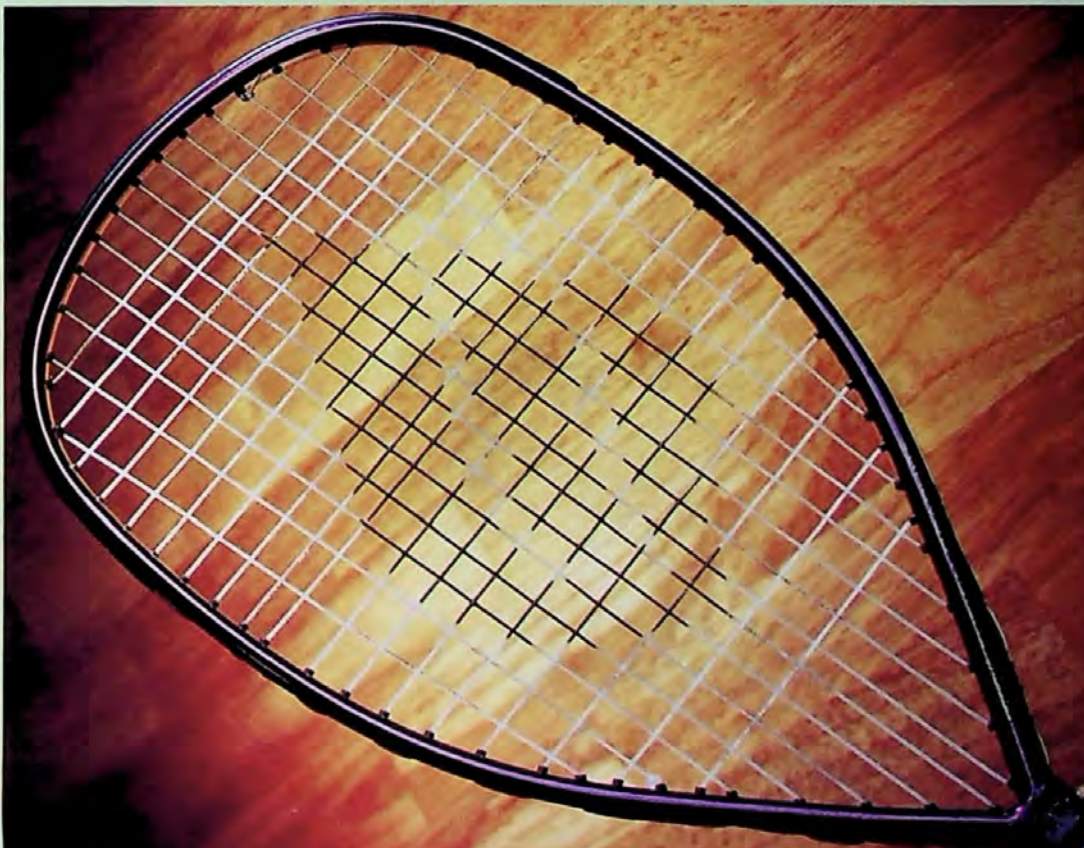
Management and/or ownership change. Not available for comment.

## Ektelon

There is big news from Ektelon this year, not only in the racquet line, but also in location and personnel. Ektelon is part of Benetton Sports System which includes Prince tennis racquets, Nordica ski boots, Rollerblade in-line skates, Kastle skis and bikes, and Killer Loop eyewear. Ektelon has moved to New Jersey to consolidate operations with the Prince Sports

Group. The move also induced several changes in management with Dave Peck managing Sports Promotions, Rob Ahrendorf as Director of Marketing and Scott Winters as Product Manager. Ektelon's new frames are available in your local sporting goods stores and pro shops.

In 1994, Ektelon covers all bases with a wide range of offerings including light weight, standard weight, midsize, oversize and club players oversize. At the top end





| Name              | Head Size<br>(sq. inches) | Weight<br>(grams) | Length<br>(inches) | String<br>Tension | Retail<br>Price |
|-------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Ektelon</b>    |                           |                   |                    |                   |                 |
| Fusion            | 98                        | 240               | 21                 | 40 lbs            | \$250.00        |
| Cyber             | 98                        | 245               | 21                 | 45 lbs            | \$175.00        |
| Helix             | 97                        | 245               | 21                 | 45 lbs            | \$100.00        |
| Rage              | 98                        | 215               | 21                 | 35 lbs            | \$200.00        |
| Xcess             | 98                        | 215               | 21                 | 35 lbs            | \$150.00        |
| Neuro             | 94                        | 215               | 20.5               | 35 lbs            | \$ 85.00        |
| Luxor             | 85                        | 245               | 19.75              | 40 lbs            | \$ 75.00        |
| Accura            | 85                        | 245               | 19.75              | 40 lbs            | \$ 50.00        |
| Compra            | 90                        | 245               | 20.5               | 45 lbs            | \$ 25.00        |
| <b>Estusa</b>     |                           |                   |                    |                   |                 |
| Axe               | 110                       | 210-225           | 21                 | 30-38 lbs         | \$ 90.00        |
| Scud              | 108                       | 210-225           | 21                 | 34-40 lbs         | \$ 75.00        |
| <b>Head</b>       |                           |                   |                    |                   |                 |
| 175 G             | 103                       | 175               | 21                 | 29-33 lbs         | \$199.95        |
| 190 G             | 103                       | 90                | 21                 | 29-33 lbs         | \$149.95        |
| 205 G             | 103                       | 205               | 21                 | 29-33 lbs         | \$ 99.95        |
| 220 G             | 103                       | 220               | 21                 | 29-33 lbs         | \$ 79.95        |
| LaserSpeed 6000   | 108                       | 200               | 21                 | 36-40 lbs         | \$179.95        |
| LaserSpeed 4000   | 108                       | 245               | 21                 | 36-40 lbs         | \$129.95        |
| LaserSpeed 1000   | 108                       | 245               | 21                 | 36-40 lbs         | \$ 69.95        |
| LaserSpeed 500    | 108                       | 245               | 21                 | 36-40 lbs         | \$ 29.95        |
| <b>Pro Kennex</b> |                           |                   |                    |                   |                 |
| Asymmetric 110    | 110                       | 205-215           | 21                 | 30-38 lbs         | \$169.99        |
| Asymmetric 95     | 95                        | 205-215           | 21                 | 28-36 lbs         | \$139.99        |
| nnerbeam ULX      | 95                        | 205-215           | 21                 | 30-38 lbs         | \$ 99.99        |
| Innovator ULX     | 95                        | 205-215           | 21                 | 28-36 lbs         | \$ 59.99        |
| Power Fused 31    | 100                       | 220-230           | 21                 | 28-36 lbs         | \$ 49.99        |
| Vision            | 100                       | 215-235           | 21                 | 28-36 lbs         | \$ 39.99        |
| Vanguard          | 100                       | 220-230           | 21                 | 28-36 lbs         | \$ 29.99        |





### Richcraft

|           |     |     |    |           |          |
|-----------|-----|-----|----|-----------|----------|
| Rebel     | 104 | 240 | 21 | 30-40 lbs | \$250.00 |
| Raider    | 104 | 230 | 21 | 30-40 lbs | \$225.00 |
| Epic T.E. | 104 | 225 | 21 | 30-40 lbs | \$200.00 |
| Pulsar    | 95  | 220 | 21 | 30-40 lbs | \$180.00 |
| Pirate XL | 104 | 245 | 21 | 30-40 lbs | \$180.00 |
| Vision    | 95  | 220 | 21 | 30-40 lbs | \$130.00 |

### Spalding

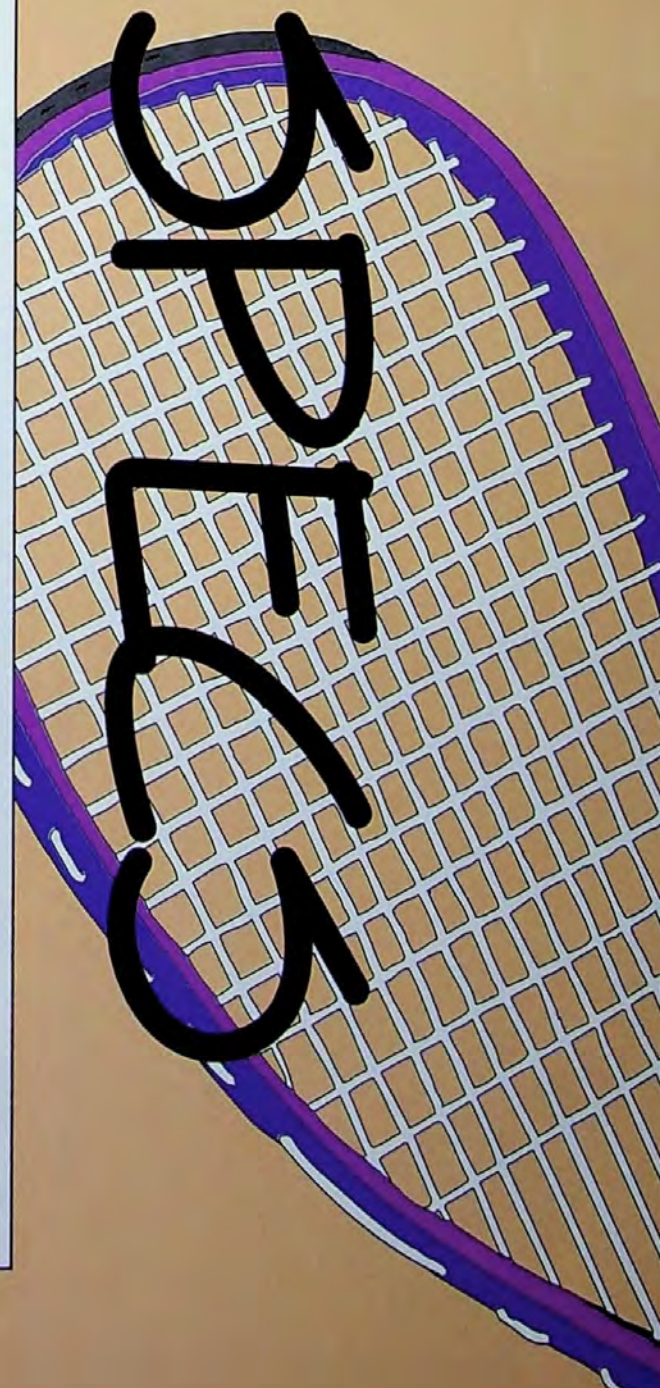
|                  |     |     |    |           |          |
|------------------|-----|-----|----|-----------|----------|
| Assault Light    | 103 | 225 | 21 | 30-34 lbs | \$210.00 |
| Assault Graphite | 103 | 240 | 21 | 32-36 lbs | \$190.00 |
| Thunder Heat     | 107 | 225 | 21 | 33-43 lbs | \$170.00 |
| Rival            | 98  | 210 | 21 | 26-36 lbs | \$109.00 |
| KillShot         | 102 | 230 | 21 | 24-32 lbs | \$ 59.00 |
| Power Assault    | 103 | 250 | 21 | 32-36 lbs | \$ 40.00 |
| Pursuit          | 100 | 240 | 21 | 30-35 lbs | \$ 30.00 |

### Transition Racquet Sports

|                     |     |     |    |         |          |
|---------------------|-----|-----|----|---------|----------|
| Bad Influence       | 102 | 205 | 21 | 27 lbs. | \$239.00 |
| Phase II            | 103 | 205 | 21 | 27 lbs. | \$204.00 |
| Ice                 | 102 | 210 | 21 | 27 lbs. | \$199.00 |
| Phase I             | 100 | 210 | 21 | 28 lbs. | \$179.00 |
| Phase I Ultra Light | 100 | 195 | 21 | 28 lbs. | \$179.00 |
| Contender           | 100 | 230 | 21 | 30 lbs. | \$ 40.00 |

### Wilson

|               |     |     |    |         |           |
|---------------|-----|-----|----|---------|-----------|
| Verdict       | 103 | 240 | 21 | 40 lbs. | \$240.00  |
| Sledge Hammer | 100 | 200 | 21 | 40 lbs. | \$200.00  |
| Disciple      | 103 | 240 | 21 | 45 lbs. | \$ 125.00 |
| Hammer 3.6    | 100 | 215 | 21 | 40 lbs. | \$100.00  |
| Stiletto      | 104 | 245 | 21 | 40 lbs. | \$ 60.00  |
| Tsunami       | 100 | 245 | 21 | 40 lbs. | \$ 50.00  |
| Vyper         | 105 | 240 | 21 | 40 lbs. | \$ 30.00  |
| Cobra         | 100 | 245 | 21 | 40 lbs. | \$ 20.00  |







of the Ektelon standard weight offering is the *Fusion*. It appears to be an *Eminence* with an attitude. It is similar to the *Eminence* in shape, weight and power rating, but with its purple and chartreuse coloring the *Fusion* is definitely an original. The *Fusion* utilizes the Arc2 technology which involves thickening the throat, which normally provides a more controlled feel, and widening the head, creating a stiffer, more powerful frame. Both changes are formed by arcs, therefore the name Arc2. Ektelon offers five racquets in the standard weight offerings for expert and advanced players, the *Fusion*, *Cyber*, *Helix*, *Sycor*, and *Tronic*.

The *Litening* series is Ektelon's offering of current lightweight frames, enhanced by the Arc2 technology. It includes three frames, each at 215 grams, designed for advanced to expert players. The top of the *Litening* series is the *Rage*, which has gotten great reviews. Also in the series are the *Xcess* and *Neuro*.

Ektelon is the only company offering a range of midsize or mid-plus racquets with four racquets, the *Luxor*, *Accura*, *Centar* and *Corrado*. The mid-plus racquets are all 19 3/4 inches in length and offer 80 to 85 square inches of string area. They are all standard weight frames at 245 grams, with offerings for advanced, intermediate and recreational players.

New for 1994 is a series of oversize racquets designed for the intermediate or club player that Ektelon has named the *Z Oversize* series. It includes two injection molded frames and one aluminum frame.

As usual, one of the best guides to the sport of racquetball is available for free from Ektelon, a publication called *Total Racquetball*. Along with product descriptions, the publication contains information on racquet selection, shape and composition, proper nutrition, thumb nail sketches of some of Ektelon's pros, and rules for amateur play. The 1994 version includes playing tips on diving, hitting pinch shots, proper court positioning, improving your serve, the right way to practice, shot selection and more.

#### Estusa

Estusa has changed hands and changed management. The new management has substantially reduced the product line, concentrating on tennis. The good news is that Estusa continues to offer racquetball racquets and has made a serious commitment to making high performance, graphite frames available to players on a budget. In addition, Estusa offers four squash and two badminton frames.

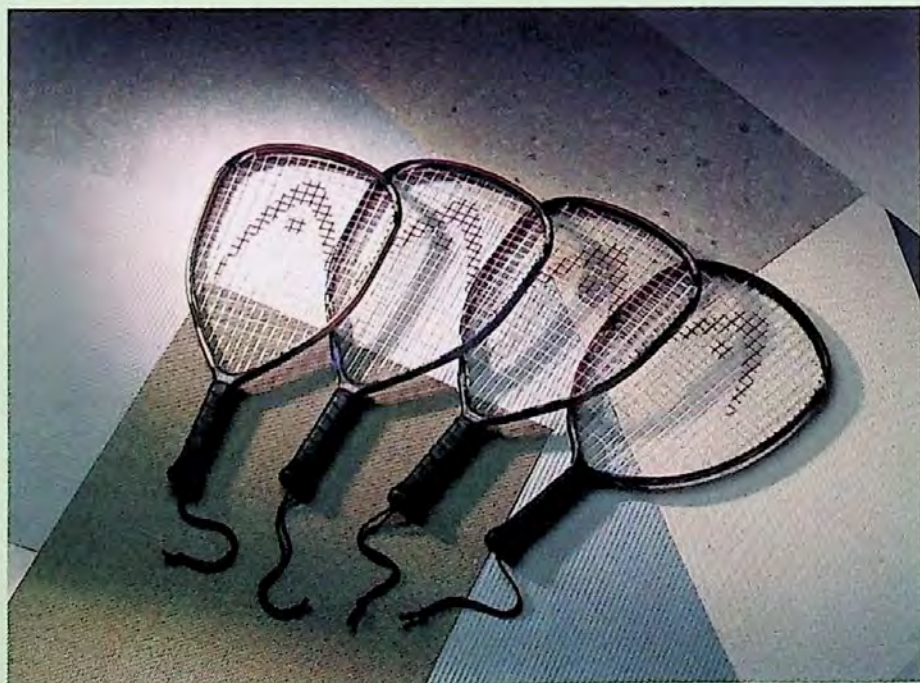
Estusa's top racquetball offering is the *Axe*, which uses the round body concept that has been successful in tennis and squash. If you haven't seen a round body, give them a close look. In the throat area of the racquet, the cross section of the racquet is round. Round is a very stable shape. Making the frame round in the throat area makes the racquet feel very solid and stable, and gives a feeling of incredible control. At the head, the cross section is normal, for less wind resistance and higher head speed. The *Axe* is 110 square inches and 210 to 225 grams. It looks different, but the concept is interesting. With a suggested retail price of only \$90., the *Axe* is an exceptional value.

The only other racquetball offering in the line is the *Scud*, a 108 square inch, graphite composite frame. It is a standard profile wide body, in the light weight, head heavy design. The *Scud*'s strung weight is between 210-225 grams. At the suggested retail price of \$75., the *Scud* is a great choice for players on a tight budget.

One other note, while the new owners purchased the name Estusa and the rights to the frame designs, they are not under any obligation to warranty broken frames from the original Estusa. However, they have been very cooperative in helping players who had defective racquets.

#### Head

After testing the waters last year with





a single light frame, the *LaserSpeed 6000 Lite*. Head this year has really jumped on the light racquet band wagon by announcing a racquet with the absolutely incredible weight of 175 grams, the lightest of any offering to date. The Head series also includes racquets for advanced through recreational players at 190 grams, 205 grams, and 220 grams. Pretty amazing! Unlike their predecessors, the super over-size *Colossus* and *LaserSpeed*, the new *G* series racquets have a more tapered throat with a slightly smaller string surface (103 square inches) which will appeal to a larger audience.

The *G* series has a custom balancing system, as the racquets get lighter, more weight is shifted to the head for maximum power. Head has also retained the *LaserSpeed 6000 Lite* (200 grams) and the traditionally weighted *LaserSpeed 4000*, *1000*, and *Comp.* as well as the aluminum *LaserSpeed 500*. The wide range of this offering should provide something interesting to every taste and level of play. With prices ranging from \$30 to \$200, Head seems to have all bases covered.

#### Pro Kennex

Pro Kennex is offering four separate lines targeted at different player needs and skill levels, encompassing Asymmetric, Ultralight, Hybrid, and Aluminum technologies.

Asymmetric technology is designed for top-level players from professional to club "A" players. First introduced in 1990 with the *ASM 31*, the asymmetric design features opposite tapers on the opposite sides of the frame (see diagram). The purpose of the asymmetric design is to stabilize the racquet upon ball contact, as each arc of the frame responds at a frequency that cancels out its opposite, preventing the racquet from twisting in your grip and giving it a very solid feel. The asymmetric technology line includes the super over-size *ASM 110* and the standard over-size *ASM 95*. If you have not looked closely at an asymmetric racquet, check one out soon.

In the *ULX* series (UltraLight eXtra), Pro Kennex offers the *Innerbeam ULX* and *Innovator ULX*, both 210 grams. The extra in the ultralights is Kevlar, to dampen vibration and increase stability. The *ULX* racquets appeal to the widest range of players, from professional to club "B" players.

Pro Kennex also has two lines designed for recreational players featuring

aluminum technology and also a new hybrid technology which combines an aluminum infrastructure with graphite composite overlays to provide greater stability and performance. The hybrids combine the durability of aluminum with the feel and power of graphite. At 225 grams, the Pro Kennex hybrid offerings are very light compared to traditional aluminum frames. Hybrid technology racquets include the *Power Fused 31* and *Vision*. Aluminum racquets, offering inexpensive durability for beginners, include the *Vanguard*, *Pro Saber*, and *Blaster*.



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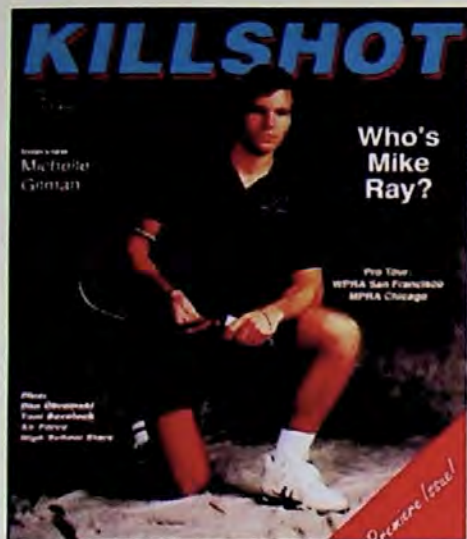
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| Head - Transition                        |               |
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|-------------------------------|---------|
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*Rebel, Raider, Epic T.E., and Pirate XL* with 104 square inch hitting surfaces. The *Pulsar* and *Vision* at 95 square inches and 220 grams are popular among those who like the feel and control of a smaller frame.

Richcraft also offers an injection molded composition racquet for the recreational player. Called the *MS Laser*, it comes in purple, black, or yellow and sells for around \$35.

### Spalding

The *Assault Light*, a lightweight, head heavy graphite frame leads Spalding's line. Using the popularity of the *Assault* as a guide, the frame was lightened and stiffened and the string pattern changed to provide top performance utilizing the new technology. The *Assault Light* is an unquestioned success. For all of you who really love the feel of the original *Assault*, the *Assault Graphite* remains in-line, although it has conformed to the 21 inch length. Both *Assaults* got improved, flashier paint and graphics in 1993 and

now look as good as they hit.

The *Thunder Heat*, originally released last year, did not achieve the instant success of the *Assault*, and has been repriced this year, from a suggested \$230 to \$170 to appeal to a wider audience. As a lightweight, super oversize wide body which

was designed by IRT touring pro Mike Ray, this racquet is an interesting choice for Club "A" to tournament players. The price change makes it worth searching out the *Thunder Heat* for a try out.

New for 1994 is the *Rival*, a superlight racquet at 210 grams. At 95 square inches, the *Rival* offers controlled power. Spalding refers to the frame as a Mid Plus, which seems to indicate more the feel provided by the very firm construction with a throat bridge, than to the physical attributes of the racquet, which is 21 inches long. Players looking for the feel and control of a mid-size, or those tired of the physical stress of using a super oversize, should check out the *Rival*.

In designs for recreational players, Spalding offers an aluminum alloy - graphite composite called the *KillShot*. This relatively new technology offers a melding of the durability of aluminum and the improved feel and power of graphite. Spalding also offers five aluminum frames designed to provide a durable beginner's racquet at a reasonable price. The first of these is the *Power Assault*, which has been popular for several years. It offers top performance for an aluminum frame, and at a suggested







\$40. price, is a good choice for a wide range of players. The aluminum *Pursuit* offers a grip size choice of XXS or XS, which is normally difficult for aluminum frames, which must structure a handle around the wide beam of the aluminum. The *Ace* and *Rebel Pro* both come prepackaged in color choices, the *Ace* in blue and green and the *Rebel Pro* in blue, red and black to give consumers a choice of the look they want.

#### Transition Racquet Sports

Ice, Ice, Baby. Transition has titillated the industry by announcing the visually intriguing *Ice* racquet. The *Ice* will have a clear coating over the graphite, that will be tinted a deep navy blue at the head (the better to hide scrapes and nicks) to an icy white, to a clear lacquer at the throat. *Ice* is tear-drop shaped, with 102 square inches of string surface and weighs only 207 grams and includes built in shock reduction systems.

In addition to the exciting new *Ice*, TRS' line includes the very popular *Bad Influence* and *Phase II* both at 205 grams. The *Phase II* has a great looking new paint job and an insulated racquet cover (which, like the *Bad Influence*, holds up to five rac-

quets) with shoulder strap and wet pocket. The new amenities, along with the initial popularity of the frame deserve at least a look. The aluminum *Contender* is a very strong offering for beginner players, giving TRS players a wide range of choices priced from \$30 to \$239.

#### Wilson

With the release of the *Hammer* series in 1992, Wilson had well engineered, high performance racquetball frames. However, Wilson did not have management, marketing or sales staff dedicated to racquetball. Sales were neglected for the bigger tennis market, and Wilson lacked guidance in sponsorships and warranty of racquetball frames.

In 1994 Wilson has corrected all of these flaws in a big way by forming a new company called Wilson Racquetball that is specifically dedicated to the development, production, marketing and sales of Wilson racquetball products. The new company is headed by the former Ektelon management team including Norm Peck, General Manager, Jay McGregor, Sales and Marketing Manager, Terri Graham, Player Program Director, Kerry Lynch, Product Manager, and Tom Odishoo, Marketing

Communication Manager. Wilson Racquetball has already announced a new line, and promises further product announcements in the fall.

Leading the high performance line are two light weight, head heavy frames, the *Sledge Hammer* (200 grams) and *Hammer 3.6* (215 grams). The *Sledge Hammer* is similar in shape to the great performing *Hammer 2.7* and *4.0*, but the frame's make-up has been changed to increase stiffness, and therefore power, at the head. It is also a little wider and deeper in the throat, and the string pattern is more "star burst."

The *Sledge Hammer* is the stiffest frame in the Wilson line. Stiffer frames are designed for higher level players and will generate the most power. The *Hammer 3.6* has slightly more flex, which makes it more forgiving for off center hits. While most tournament players want the raw power of the stiffest frame available, some prefer the feel of a softer racquet, which allows the ball to stay on the strings longer. The *Hammer 3.6* is also a good choice for club players who want a good performing racquet that doesn't demand as much precision from each hit.

Two more new additions to Wilson's line are the *Verdict* and *Disciple*, both featuring Wilson's exclusive *Strike Zone* technology. Larger than the conventional sweet spot, the *Strike Zone* energizes the top third of the racquet where nearly 70% of shots are hit.

The Wilson line also includes a traditional weight (245 grams) graphite composite frame called the *Stiletto*. For the club player, Wilson has the *Tsunami*, an aluminum/graphite composite which offers a more solid feel than aluminum alone. The *Vyper 3* and *Cobra* are both aluminum frames which offer extremely easy on the budget prices for beginners and club players.



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