

RACQUETBALL

ILLUSTRATED

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a Rocky Mountain high
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**John
Denver**

**The man who
invented
racquetball...
and why he didn't
cash in**

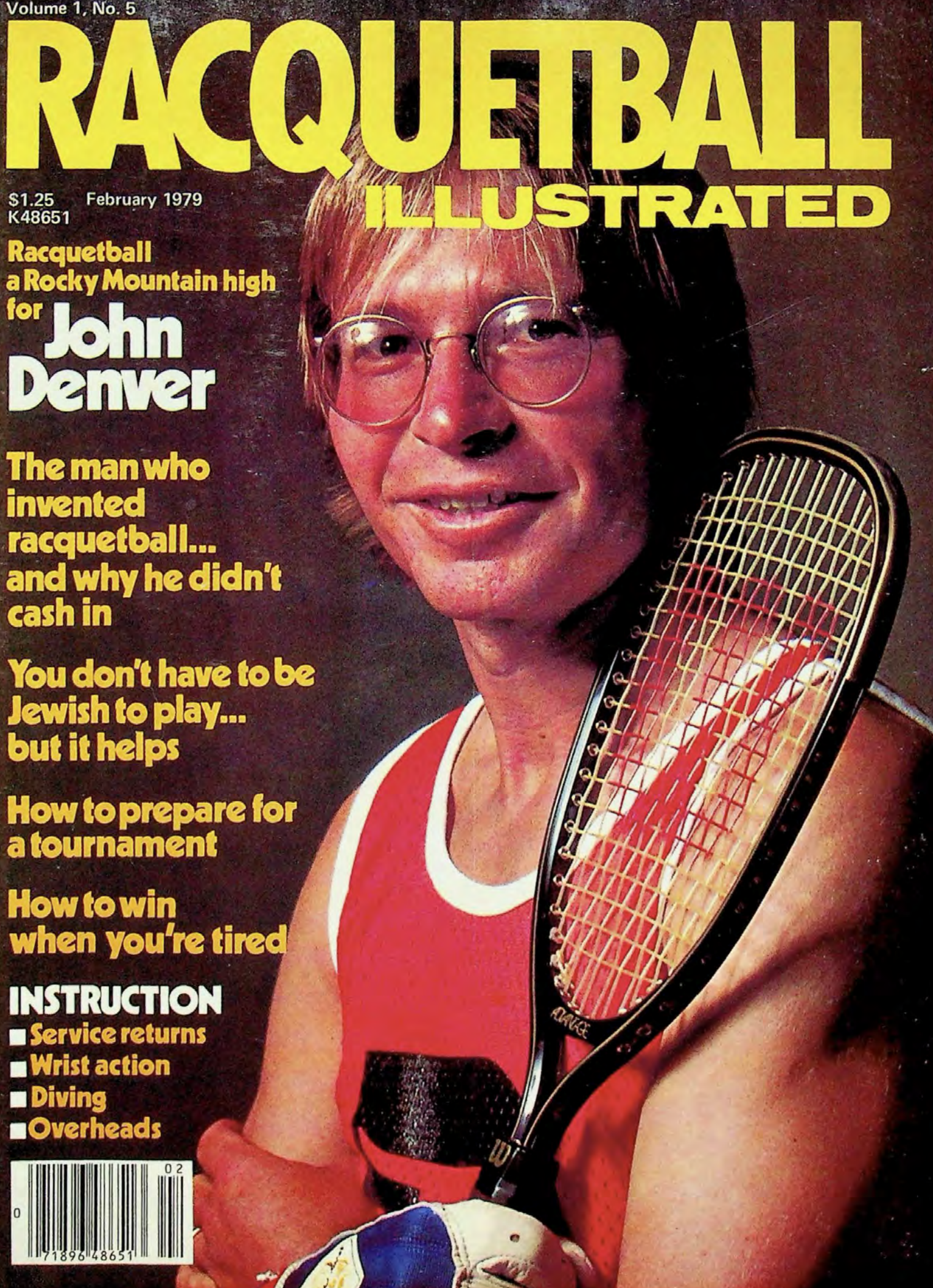
**You don't have to be
Jewish to play...
but it helps**

**How to prepare for
a tournament**

**How to win
when you're tired**

INSTRUCTION

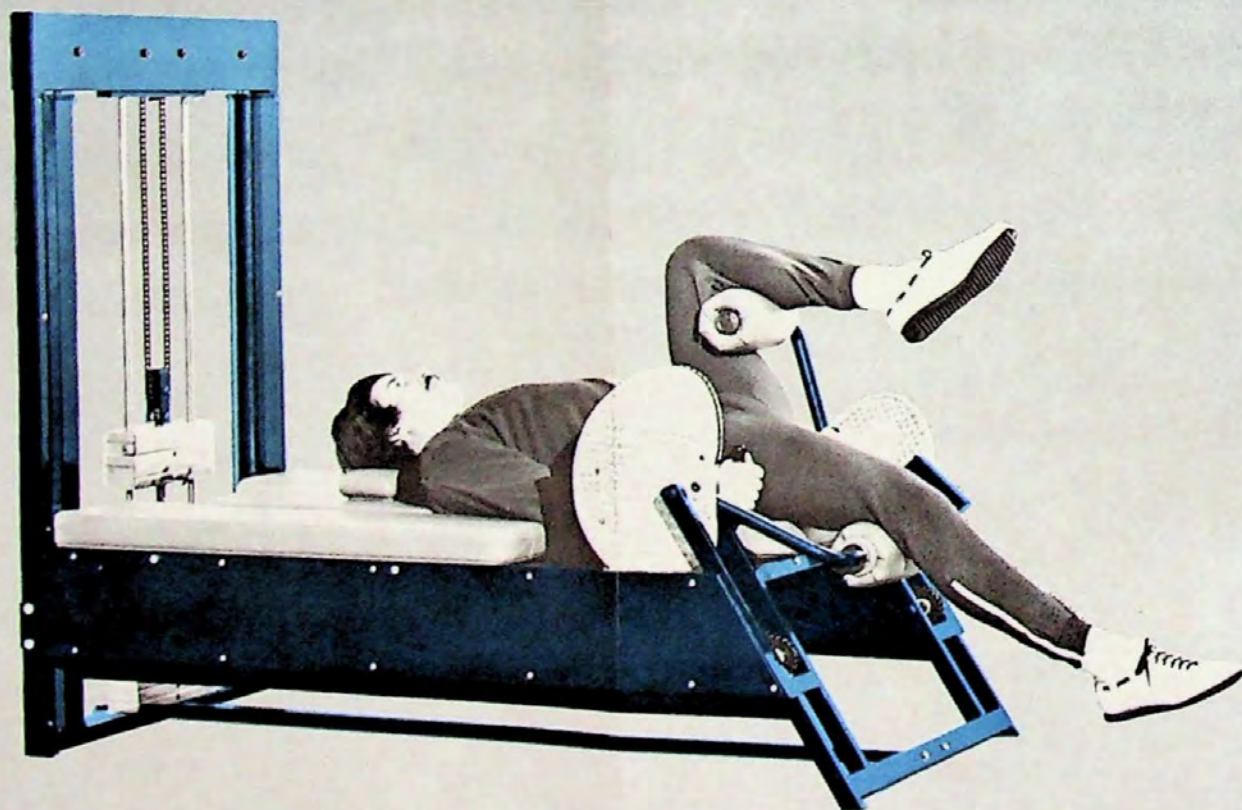
- Service returns
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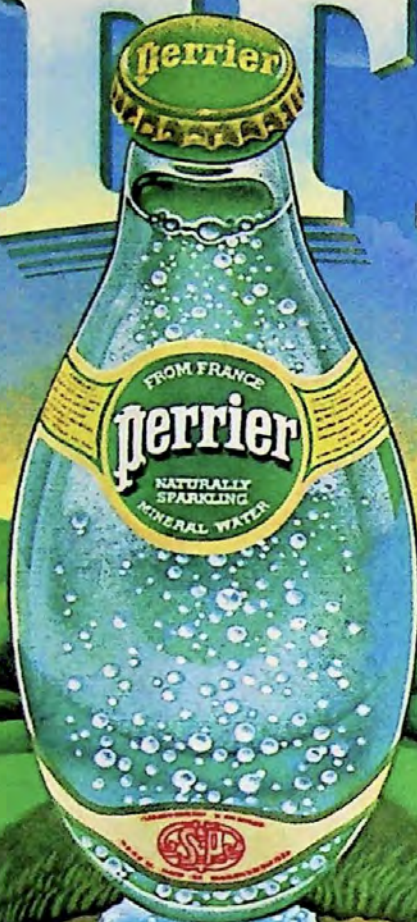
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RACQUETBALL

ILLUSTRATED

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1979

Vol. 1, No. 5

FEATURES

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The Man Who Invented Racquetball■Connecticut's Joe Sobek gets the glory but not the money.

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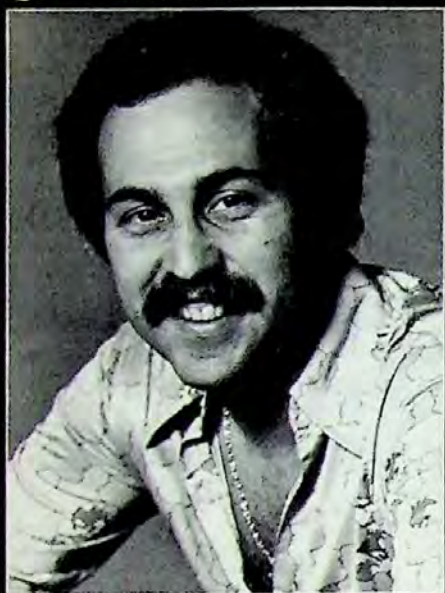
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Changes

When changes are made within a publication, people usually get the idea that somebody was not satisfied with the product, much like a general manager is not satisfied with his head coach, and in order to get things on the right road, a change of command became necessary.

Despite the fact that an editorial change has been made, the basic concept of RACQUETBALL ILLUSTRATED will remain the same. We are a publication for the masses. We appeal to beginning, intermediate and advanced players. We are not controlled by advertisers, nor will we ever become so. We are not controlled by various racquetball companies, nor will we ever let them dictate what does or does not go into our magazine.

If some outside interests other than the publisher and editor pull the strings of a magazine, you'll usually find a magazine that lacks professionalism.

But with every editorial change, there has to come a slight change in editorial direction. You will notice some of those changes beginning with this issue.

Each editor has his or her own idiosyncrasies, and I have instituted mine into this publication.

Most of the stories you see from now on will be in-depth. Very rarely will you find a feature article limited to 800 to 1,000 words. My writers will be asked to present about 2,000 words per story. A good topic should not be glossed over. If

a person is interested enough to read an article, we want that topic to be covered completely, not superficially.

Story selection will also be modified. We will still carry celebrity oriented features, but they will not make up the entire magazine.

Feature articles will be of interest to the masses, including people who only have a passing interest in racquetball.

Instruction will increase in two phases. We will offer more practical tips from the pros and we will offer psychological and self improvement features also.

We have also added a few new departments beginning with this issue. One new section is called "Players" and is devoted to interesting people and celebrities who play racquetball.

Another section we are calling "Off The Wall" and as the phrase connotes, it will be a selection of out-of-the-ordinary, somewhat off-beat happenings in racquetball.

We also will have a court club section, which will announce the openings of new clubs around the world. We are dropping the new products section but if some product is unique enough to warrant a news story, we will include it in our tournament/news section. Our letters column will now be called "Side Out", which as most tournament competitors know, is a term used to signify the other person's TURN to serve.

My background has been a mixture of journalism and sports. I am a graduate of the University of Oregon and a former sportswriter for the Honolulu Advertiser. I previously have edited another national sports magazine and have had articles published in such publications as the New York Times, Sport Magazine and the current best-seller, People's Almanac.

In this issue we have a variety of articles appealing to everybody from the active participant to the weekend hacker to the casual observer.

One feature is on Joe Sobek, the man who invented the sport of racquetball but hardly made a dime off the sport. Now he is a tennis and squash pro at a place that, ironically and somewhat sadly, does not even have a racquetball court on its premises.

Another feature in the magazine deals with the Jewish Community Center Association in St. Louis, which will go down in the history books as one of the places which had a lot of influence on

the development of racquetball. The JCCA was the racquetball birthplace of pros Marty Hogan, Jerry Hilecher and Steve Serot.

We have celebrity stories on singer John Denver, whose father sometimes gets asked for playing and strategy tips by the pros, and of pro basketball player Derek Dickey, who some say is good enough to play on the pro racquetball tour if he would ever give up basketball.

We also have an interesting story on an all-women's club in Huntington Beach, Calif. This is not a club that appeals only to models, actresses, stewardesses and the beautiful people. This is a story about average, everyday people who have their reasons for preferring a club in which men are not welcome.

Our instruction section features tips on return of serve, overhead and fly kill, wrist action and diving. We also have a story on how to prepare for a tournament and how to win when you're feeling tired.

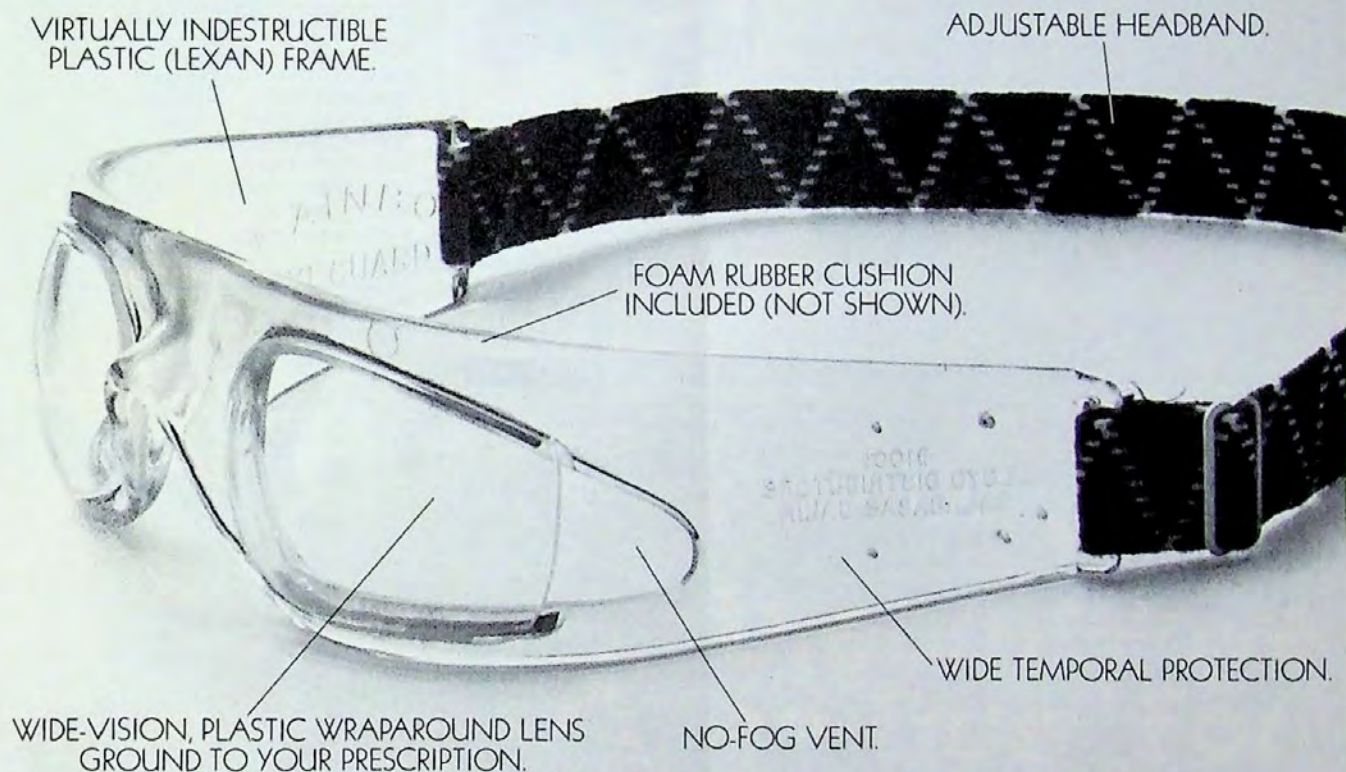
In the future we plan other topics that could be entertaining or they could be explosive. We will investigate stories. We will get controversial at times. We will be informative all the time. In short, we will be real.

Ben Kalb

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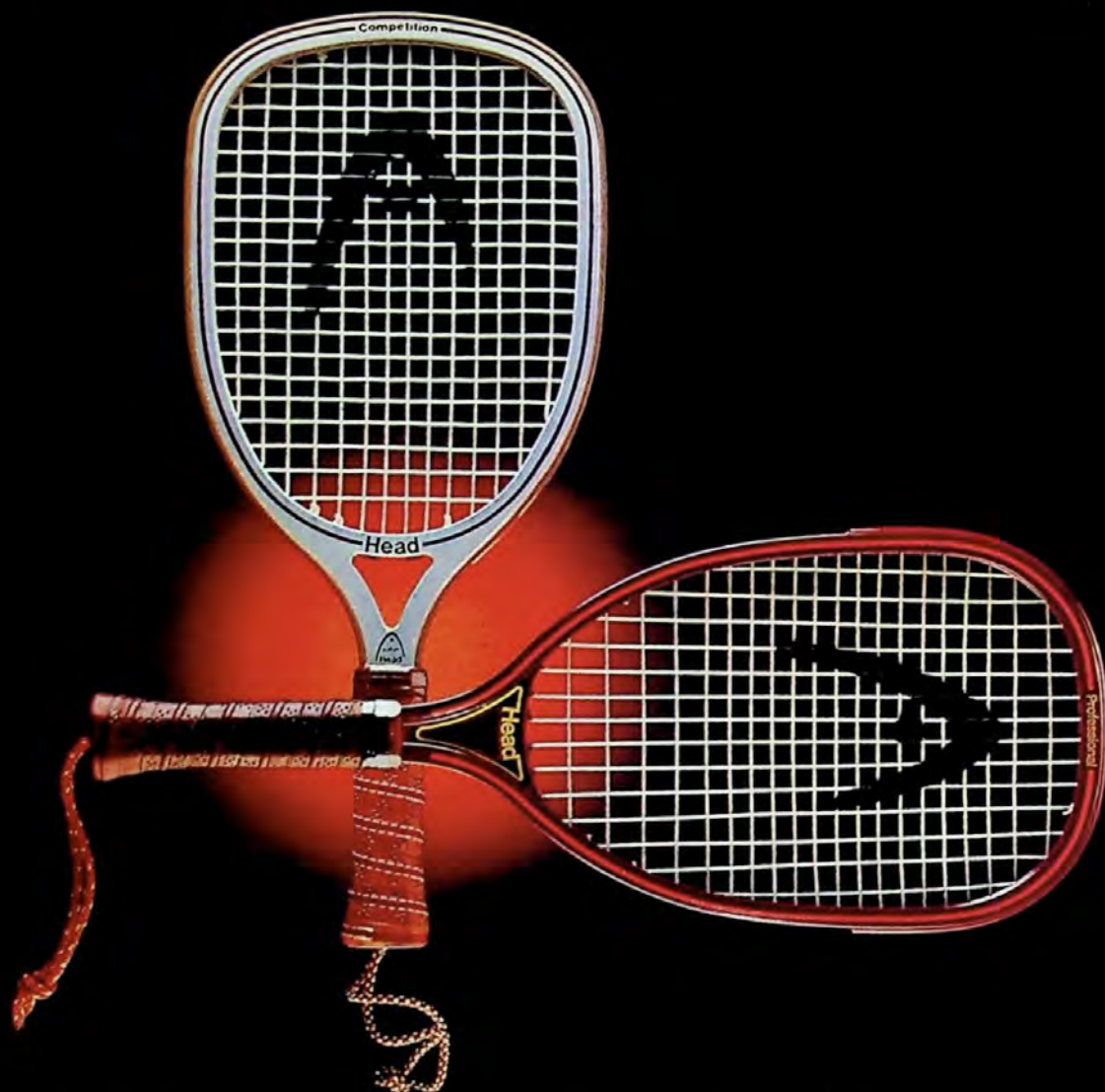




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EX-JOGGER

I would like to see an article on the number of racquetball players who have taken up the sport as an alternative to jogging.

I know racquetball has converted a lot of tennis players, but I bet a lot of joggers have also converted.

Jogging to me is boring. You are not chasing anything. I would much rather play racquetball. It gives me a better workout and is more enjoyable.

Tom Israel
Miami, Fla.

GUILTY OF SEXISM

A thump on your sexist head for the cartoon on page 54 of your August issue depicting a scantily clad woman playing racquetball with the caption, "She's got a magnificent roll-out shot."

In another issue you talk of the growing number of women taking up racquetball and their reasons for doing it. But not once do you talk of out-of-shape or overweight men playing.

Women play for the same interest as men—increased conditioning combined with the fun of the game.

None of your cartoons show women making comments of male players such as "He's got a great roll-out shot" with something ready to explode out of his pants. So why do it to women?

Sexism is on the decline. But some of your articles and cartoons refuse to recognize this.

Catriona McKenzie
San Francisco, Calif.

ILLINOIS FAN

Your October issue was thoroughly enjoyable. Being from Illinois, I especially liked the article on Governor Jim Thompson and his enthusiasm for racquetball.

Also, in your coverage of the NRC Nationals, I noticed a picture of Tom Street, president of the Illinois Racquetball Association. Tom has contributed a considerable amount of time and effort to the sport and deserves recognition. At the Illinois State Racquetball Championship in May he was awarded the outstanding racquetball person of the year.

Sharon L. Brown
Schaumburg, Ill.

INSTRUCTION

I would like to see more articles in your magazine about instruction.

But I want to know things about strategy. I hope you get away from this beginners stuff — forehand, backhand, serve, etc.

I think most players already know the basics.

Walt Winters
Tacoma, Wash.

Editor's note: RBI's new policy is to include more instruction for beginners, intermediates and advanced players.

TOURNEY PREPARATION

I just got finished playing a tournament in which I lost in the first round. I was constantly worrying about what to do prior to a tournament and what I shouldn't do.

Perhaps you can give us an article on the subject of tourney preparation. It may be an inspiration to a weekend hacker like myself.

Alex King
Atlanta, GA

Editor's note: See article elsewhere in this issue.

MORE STORIES ON PROS

When I first glanced at your magazine I thought it was about time we had a magazine by racquetball players for racquetball players.

So why do I keep reading about football players, tennis players and actors playing racquetball? Granted, they play the game also but couldn't we see more stories on the pros.

Your October issue featured stories on a rock musician, politician and an actor. C'mon folks we don't need another *People* magazine.

Charles Wheeler
Salt Lake City, Utah

MORE CELEBRITIES

Please keep up the stories on those celebrity players. I enjoy reading about them.

The average racquetball enthusiast is only a beginner. Consequently he can

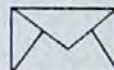
most identify with other beginning players.

I know I would much rather read about what a famous singer or actor is doing than some pro player's views on which ball bounces better.

Frank Randolph
St. Paul, Minn.

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Racquetball Goes Prime Time

An upcoming segment of the Lou Grant Show (CBS) will feature a racquetball match between Ed Asner (Lou Grant) and Tom Atkins (not shown) who plays the role of Frank, a fire inspector.

One scene shows Asner having a hard time scoring points on Atkins.

ATKINS: "Great game for working out the frustrations of the job."

ASNER: "Frank, I go to my job to work out the frustrations of learning how to play this game."

Prior to each take, Asner was sprayed with water by makeup man Webster Phillips to give him that "sweaty look."

The filming took place at Valley Courts in North Hollywood, Calif. According to Asner, it was his first time on a racquetball court.

"I'd like to take up the game when I get the time," says Asner.

Wrist Watch

Kevin Dobson, who played in the television series "Kojak," looks at fancy wrist band of opponent during day of playing at the Steve Garvey Celebrity Tournament at Warner Center Racquet Club in Woodland Hills, Calif.





By George

Jean Racy, who played the part of George in the now disbanded "Nancy Drew" television series, goes after shot in match at Valley Courts in North Hollywood, Calif.

Jean usually plays about three times a week, mostly with Nancy Drew series star Pamela Sue Martin.

"I've become addicted to racquetball," says Jean. "When I first played it, I had tennis on my mind. I've played tennis for years and I was thinking of hitting the racquetball in terms of tennis."

"When I first got out there I kept missing a lot of shots. Then I would do this little dance. I guess that was part ballerina coming out of me. You should see me murder it now."

And about that tennis game? "Because of the smog in Los Angeles, I don't play tennis much any more. I like sports in a controlled environment. It's not worth it to my system to inhale all that smog."

Jean can be seen soon in a made-for-television movie called "Heart To Heart" with Robert Wagner and Stephanie Powers.



A DY-NO-MITE PLAYER

Comedian-actor Jimmy Walker, who plays J.J. in the television series "Good Times," takes regular lessons from pro Brian Cloud at the Racquet Center in Universal City, California.

Observers say that Walker plays a pretty mean game. He tries to play at least three times a week, which he says "is still not as much as I'd like to play."



All Heart

A check for \$6,000 was presented to actor John Wayne in behalf of the American Heart Association by Ektelon and Natural Light.

The check came as a result of the Ektelon/Natural Light Racquetball Championships, which were held in 30 cities across the country.

An estimated 6,000 amateur players took part in the various tournaments.

"The money is deeply appreciated and will be put to good use," said Wayne, the honorary Heart Association Chairman.

Wayne was presented the check by Ron Grimes of Ektelon and Kevin Forth of Anheuser Busch.



**You Don't Have
to be JEWISH
to Play Racquetball...
But it Helps**



by Ben Kalb

The man walking down the hallway is sweating. He does not look tired, but there is sweat dripping off his forehead onto the floor. Around him there are racquetball courts. The odor is not exactly one Faberge plans to market. It's more like Midnight In The Locker Room. There are courts to the right of him and courts to the left of him. There is no valley of death here, however, because racquetball sustains life.

The man is in his 50s, an old-timer by racquetball standards, but just one of the bunch at the St. Louis Jewish Community Center Association (JCCA). Phil Smith, the JCCA's physical education director, sees the man walking toward him, and stops him for the benefit of a reporter. "Do you remember playing Hogan?" asks Smith. "Sure, I used to beat him all the time." He pauses and laughs. "Of course, he was only seven at the time."

There are not too many people who remember Marty Hogan at seven years old. Only in St. Louis can you find Hogan memorabilia. The same goes for Steve

Serot, Ben Koltun, Jerry Hilecher and Jerry Zuckerman. All five of them were born, raised and racquetball-trained in St. Louis. The training ground was the JCCA, known by its members simply as the "J."

The "J" sits on 125 acres of land in the West section of St. Louis, about 25 minutes from downtown. The present facilities were completed in 1961, replacing the original less-elaborate facilities which were closer to town.

"St. Louis is unique in a way," says Smith. "The Jews live in a fairly well defined area and the 'J' is the Jewish center of St. Louis. Los Angeles, for example, which probably has 10 Jews to every one of ours, does not have the facilities we have. They are so spread out. They have all these little centers spread out that don't help anyone."

When Smith talks about facilities, it takes him several minutes to discuss and elaborate on what the "J" has to offer. The main building, completed in 1963 with an addition in 1967, houses a gym, complete health spa, indoor pool, locker room, weight room, administrative offices, art gallery, four squash courts and eight racquetball courts. In addition there are

A panoramic view of the St. Louis Jewish Community Centers Association, the birthplace of racquetball for several of the top pros.

Photos by David M. Henschel



Top: Entrance to the main building. Middle: Women in exercise class in main gym. Bottom: The JCCA's exhibition racquetball court.

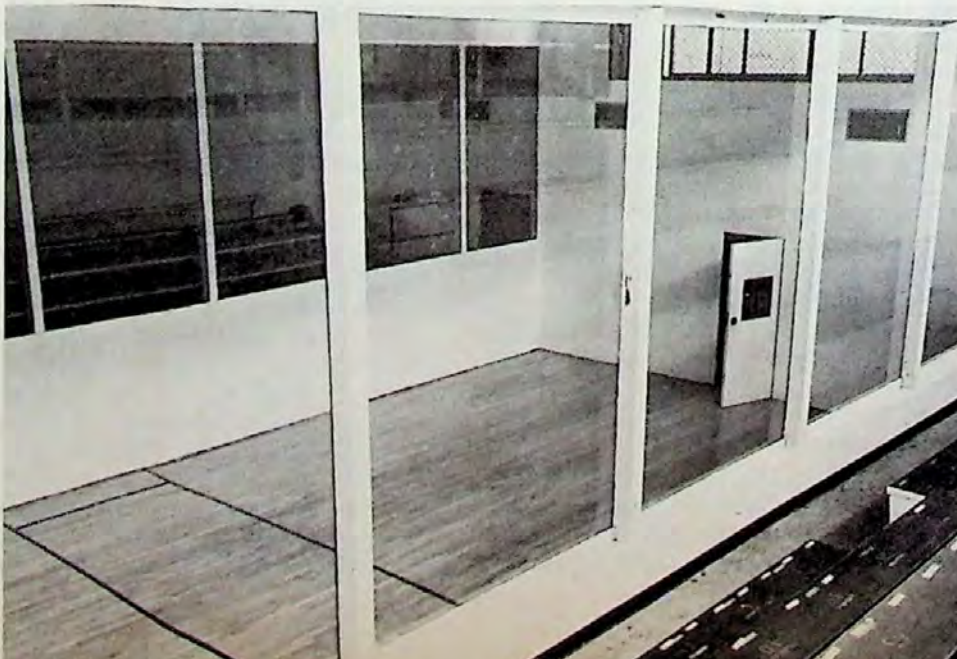
tennis courts, campgrounds, day care center, outdoor Olympic-size pool, baseball diamond, football field, 300-yard outdoor track, bowling center, senior citizen housing development, and six three-wall racquetball courts. Other things are in the developing stage, including more racquetball courts and a Holocaust Memorial.

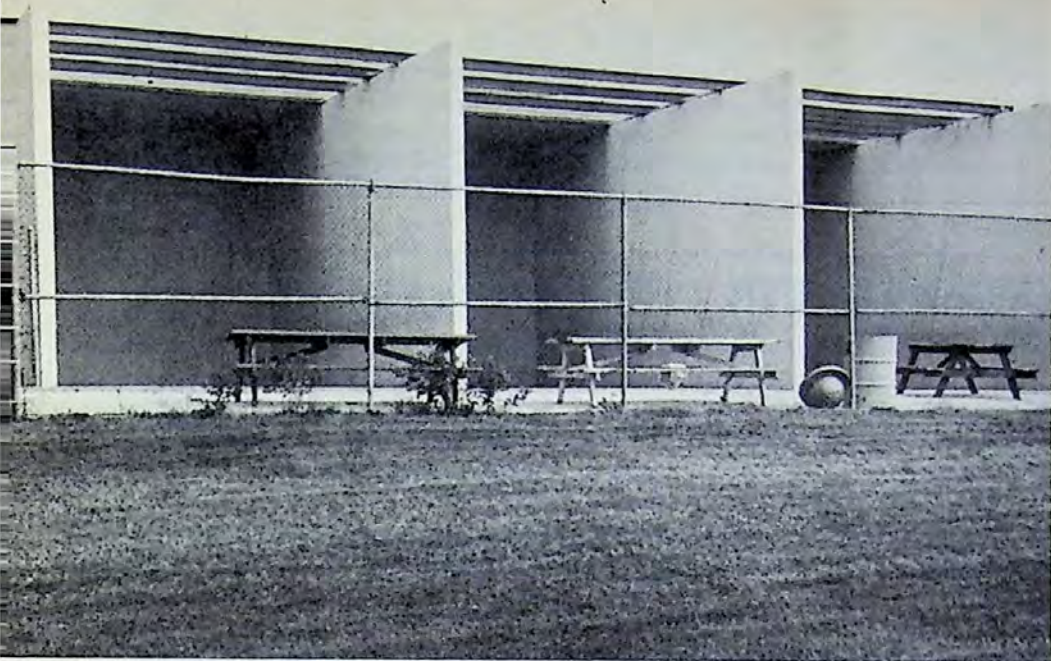
Most of the land was donated by I.E. Millstone, one of the biggest developers in Missouri, and many of the facilities are named in his honor.

But what makes the "J" so unique in racquetball history is its influence into pro competition. Whether Hogan, Serot, Hilecher, Koltun and Zuckerman would have found racquetball anyway is a matter of conjecture. That they did find it with the help of the "J" is a matter of fact.

The "J" was there. It made itself available at a time when the sport was not around to the public as it is today. While others in Los Angeles, San Diego and who knows where were waiting 63 minutes to get on a tennis court, the St. Louis Five were spending all their available spare time playing racquetball.

"Why the 'J' was so great came back to me this summer when I returned for a visit," says Jerry Hilecher. "Before I didn't have the answers. I always thought it was the programs geared toward juniors. But it really wasn't the programs. It was the atmosphere and having free courts available. All the kids would come out to the 'J' for the whole day and sit out by the pool and watch girls. Then someone would want to play and we would go to the courts. The courts were about 110





Outdoor three-wall courts at the "J" that will soon be converted to indoor courts.

degrees in the summer. Too hot for any adult, but not for fools like the kids."

"If it weren't for the 'J' I wouldn't have gone this far," says Steve Serot. "If the 'J' weren't around when I was younger, there is no way I would become this involved."

Serot and Hilecher and the rest do not give anyone credit for their instructional development. There was no formal coaching as there is today all over the country. There were outstanding players at the JCCA to learn from (Steve Schneider, Joe Zelson, former women's national champ Fran Cohen, etc.) by playing or watching, but there was never any schedule of lessons. Accessibility is the key word. The courts were readily available to anyone for free.

"Our policy was that the kids could play whenever there was a court available," recalls Smith. "The kids used to stay around for hours waiting to get a court."

"Up until 1975 there were only about 15 four-wall courts in the St. Louis area and eight of those were at the JCCA."

"Most of the coaching was done from the balconies. By watching and then playing. No one person really influenced Marty Hogan's development or Steve Serot's development or Jerry Hilecher's development. Every member played a part. It was the attitudes of the people here."

The St. Louis JCCA was ahead of its time. While schools were emphasizing team sports and country clubs were emphasizing tennis and golf, the "J" was a mecca for racquetball.

"We're not really highly competitive at



"The kids used to stay around for hours waiting for a court," said director Phil Smith.

team sports here," says Smith. "We have a maudlin kind of baseball program. Most of the kids who play are castoffs from Little League. Our accent is on skills. We emphasize the individual sports here. We try to make kids reach their maximum ability."

Smith deserves part of the credit for the development of the St. Louis Five. He did not do anything directly to improve the skills of the players, but he set up the policies allowing the younger players access to the courts.

Smith, 56, started with the JCCA in 1932 at its old location, working part-time doing odd jobs. He left St. Louis to attend college and swim for the University of Texas, but after World War II, he went to Washington University (St. Louis) to get his degree. He returned to the "J" and took over as head swim coach in 1961,

and handball/racquetball instructor in 1963.

Smith co-authored a Sports Illustrated book on handball in the late 60s and in 1974 he became the physical education and health club director for the JCCA. He swims a mile every morning, plays handball at least four times a week and once in a while plays racquetball, or gives a clinic.

Although Smith played a role in the player's development and the JCCA itself played a role, the players really give most of the credit to their families.

"My father played baseball for the St. Louis Cardinals and when he retired he was active at the 'J' in handball," recalls Serot. "When I was seven I asked him if I could learn to play. The ball was very hard and when you're young your hands are very tender, so he bought me an old wooden paddle to hit with."

Serot hurt his right arm playing baseball when he was 17, so he started playing racquetball lefthanded. At 22, he still plays lefthanded. "I'm only a C player with my right hand," he says.

Hilecher's entry into racquetball also came via his father. "My dad wanted to do something with the kids, so he got me and my brother out there. I was a brat back then, a hot head. Not until I was 14 did I love to play the game. I saw myself at loving all sports, but never really being good at any of them. I loved baseball and swimming, but I wasn't really right there. I hated to do something unless I could do it well. Racquetball was something I just got good at."

Hogan owes a lot to his mother. The "J" gave Goldie Hogan a job, and in turn,

a place for her kids to play. "Goldie was a pretty good athlete herself," says Smith.

Hogan's rise to fame and fortune was not imminent despite what he may have told the world. "We had some doubts about Marty becoming a pro," recalls Smith. "You have to give Serot the lion's share of credit for Marty's development. One summer Serot must have played Marty every day and destroyed him every day. Marty used to get so disgusted he would walk off the court. We were afraid he would give up the sport. We felt there were times that summer where he had it in his mind to quit. But Serot coaxed him and helped him. The development came from playing Steve because Steve had tremendous insight into what was needed to be good."

Hogan does not give anybody credit but himself for turning into the game's top player. When asked if he felt he would become so good without the help of Serot and the others he played at the "J", Marty candidly says, "Yeah."

But when questioned further, Hogan admits the "J" helped play a role in his development. "A lot of my improvement came from practicing by myself a lot," he says. "It didn't matter who I played. In order to be good you have to play people

of every style and game."

Serot, three years older than Hogan, looks back on his growing-up years and points to Hilecher as his biggest rival. People kid him about his influence into Hogan's career and he takes it in stride. "It was a bad move, wasn't it?" laughs Serot, referring to the hours he spent with Hogan.

"I used to give Marty 18 points and blow him out," recalls Serot. "The rivalry was with Hilecher. We started a grudge when we were 12 and it hasn't changed since. There is no real animosity. But there is no real friendship. We both began playing at about the same time and we both needed attention. We both needed positive reinforcement from the people watching us. Now we have outgrown the positives and we get reinforcement by money."

Smith recalls Serot's match against Charlie Brumfield in the Nationals a few years ago. "Steve was ahead of his time. He beat Brumfield so bad in the first game. We thought he was going to become champion. Then Brumfield called him a 'flailer' between games and Steve lost the next two games because he stopped flailing and played Brumfield's control game."

One JCCA veteran says the reason for the success of Hogan, Serot and Hilecher was the intensity of the competition and the comradery that went with it when it was over. "The intensity was unbelievable," he says. "Everybody was interested in watching certain matches. The tournaments were very competitive. But when it was over, the players helped each other. There was no money involved so there was no bitterness."

Evidently the comradery is still alive today at the St. Louis JCCA. Koltun, Zuckerman and Serot still play there and even spend time with the younger players, giving pointers, or clinics. Hogan and Hilecher, although residing in San Diego, return to St. Louis every so often to play and/or practice with the younger players.

The people at the "J" say that even when the St. Louis Five are past their peaks, there will be others to take up the JCCA banner, so to speak. The one to watch, according to Smith and the pros, is 16-year-old Doug Cohen. But he is not the only potential pro.

"There are a dozen kids coming up now," says Smith. "These kids play for hours at a time. It seems like all they do is play racquetball."

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How to win when

This is the second in a series of articles by Victor I. Spear, M.D. from the book "How To Win At Racquetball" published by Camelot Towers, Rockford, Ill.



By Victor I. Spear, M.D.

I know that some of you readers out there are in my shoes—over 40, legs starting to give out (to say nothing of the lungs), endurance on the wane, speed no more than a distant memory. What is worse, we are frequently playing against an opponent fifteen years younger, faster, more durable, and invariably heartless and insulting, as he stays on the court to play another hour with someone else, while we stagger off to the intensive care unit, clutching a picture of George Blanda to our hearts.

Now it's one thing to sit down and plan a perfect racquetball strategy to guide us under normal conditions. The above, however, could hardly qualify as "normal". So it behooves us to develop a sub-strategy within the strategy, a "Plan-B" of sorts, to be unveiled when we can no longer execute according to theoretical guidelines. Perhaps you have your own set of warning signals, such as when your nailbeds begin turning blue, or when you stop sweating on one side of your body, or when you've just had to call time out with the score three to two, or when your wife leaves the gallery to call your insurance man, or when you begin to see palm trees and watery oases in front court.

All is not lost. With the application of a few minor adjustments, it is still possible to pull through.

1. This above all—**get your head together**. Guard against the common mental errors that you would never commit at any other time, such as fading or drifting after a serve, failing to move toward the ball after hitting a cross-court passing shot, etc. We generally think of fatigue as something that affects our shooting and running game. I think it is potentially more devastating to our **thinking game**. It is infinitely more difficult to concentrate when you are hang dog tired, but concentration becomes even more critical at such times. If you can't think straight, you might as well give up.

2. Be more careful not to serve up any pumpkins. Remember, it is not critical that you make a great serve, but you must avoid hitting poor ones.

3. Hit a kill shot serve return every good opportunity you get. You must change your usual percentages in this situation. Obviously, it is to your advantage to keep

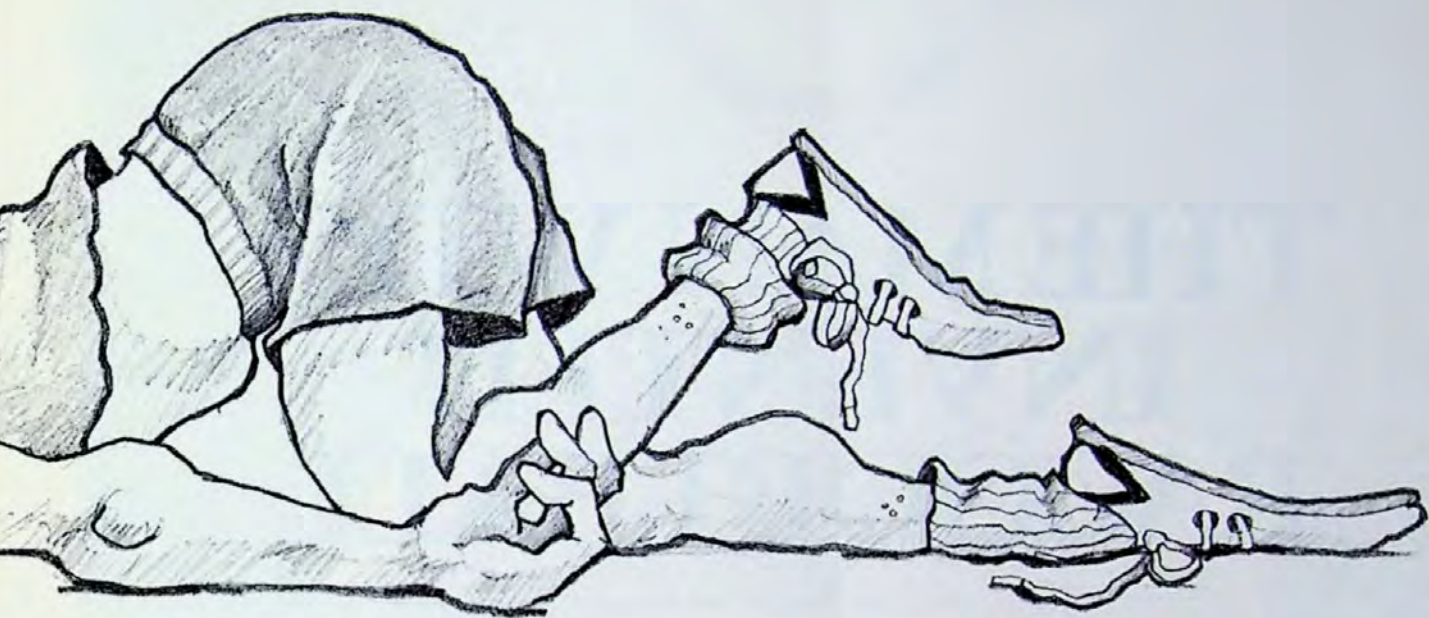
the rally as short as possible. What is more important is this: Your execution of shots will have a quality inversely proportional to your fatigue level. The very beginning of each point is the time when you have the most energy. So why not set yourself up and go for a winner as often as you can. The longer the rally goes on, the more likely you are to make an error.

4. Hit your forehand ceiling shots with an overspin stroke, similar to the way a tennis serve is hit, with a quarter-turned face. This will allow you to get the ball into the back court without swinging so hard. You may hit this shot with overspin normally, but if you don't, now is the time to do it.

5. Play an aggressive game. Don't make the mistake of trying to "pace yourself", so as to save something for the later stages. You'll never see the later stages. Go for every point. Try to make the game as short as possible, and you have a chance.

6. Don't cut corners on energy consumption by failing to set your feet prop-

you're tired



erly before hitting a shot. One of the major flaws of a tired player is that he begins to hit backhand shots from a flat-foot position facing the front wall. You won't get away with this short-cut. Always make your full turn, facing the side wall, and stride into your backhand strokes.

7. Take the full ten seconds allotted to you by the rules between every point. It is stupid for a tired player to walk up and serve the ball immediately after winning a long rally. Stand there and take a few deep breaths. And **think**. Then serve.

After re-reading the previous segment for the first time, it occurred to me that I have always examined the issue from only one side, because I was always the tired player. But it's only fair to analyze the question from the point of view of the other player as well, painful though it may be. After all, you should get some reward for all the strenuous and boring hours of conditioning you have gone through to attain a higher level of endurance than your opponent. If this difference becomes more exaggerated as the match goes on, consider the following:

1. Serve the low drive, wide-angled serves to both corners, almost exclusive-

ly, with a few short-corner ace tries mixed in. He has much less time to react to a "no-wall" serve than to a Z-serve which hits three or four walls, or a lob serve which takes too long to get there.

2. On serve return, watch for the server to make the common error of fading back to $\frac{3}{4}$ court depth. A tired player is much more likely to commit this mental mistake. When he does, he must be punished with a kill shot to the near corner. Don't take the risk of trying to hit bottom board in this situation. It isn't necessary. Hit a higher percentage, one-foot-high shot, and you will still win the point. He'll never get there, if he is moving backwards.

If he doesn't make this mistake, don't hit kill shot returns.

3. Hit passing shots during the early part of a rally then be ready to shift gears and hit a kill shot, because he will fade back further and further as the rally goes on.

4. Move the ball around as much as possible. Standing in one spot trading ceiling shots with an exhausted player absolutely throws away all the built-in advantages you have.

5. Be ready to execute the ceiling shot alternatives (see page 40). The tired player is most vulnerable to lapses in con-

centration, and may not move back up into the correct position after every ceiling shot.

6. Dig extra hard on the long rallies to keep them going as long as possible. Every shot you can add to the exchange makes it more likely that your opponent will make an error on the next one.

7. Try an occasional hard, low drive directly at your opponent. This shot challenges a player more than it might appear at first glance. It requires a quick change of feet and body positions combined with quick thinking to choose the appropriate response. He is a sitting duck for this type of challenge.

8. Play good solid racquetball, above all. Don't be tempted to throw away all your well-disciplined principles of strategy just because your opponent is tired. You can't just pop the ball around and expect him to miss everything. Some players can reach a point of such exhaustion that they can barely move around, and still summon up enough desire to punish you for your sins. So don't lose your total perspective. The above suggestions are merely adjuncts to the fundamental theories of racquetball strategy which should never be abandoned.

THE MAN WHO INVENTED RACQUETBALL

by Joe Pisani

Someday Joe Sobek, the father of racquetball, may share a place with other immortal inventors of sports such as baseball's Abner Doubleday and basketball's James Naismith.

If not, he should.

In a short 28 years since Sobek developed the rules and designed the equipment, racquetball has hit the sports world with more momentum and force than a 140 mph power serve.

But the evolution of the game, which attracts millions all over the globe, was a tremendous labor of love for a man who persisted despite obstacles. His dedication produced a success far greater than he imagined possible.

What began as a small town curiosity, played by a group of friends in a Greenwich, Conn. YMCA, turned into a national craze, caroming across the country and then, the world.

"I would never have believed it," Sobek says today. "Here is a multi-million dollar sport with an international reputation, and it started in the little town of Greenwich on a YMCA handball court. What we did, we did for ourselves, and we never dreamed it would go anywhere other than our own association."

The genesis of the game—originally called "paddle rackets"—was a demanding task for Sobek, and in the early days,

countless difficulties arose—from perfecting equipment design to answering an avalanche of questions about rules, which were grafted from handball and squash.

"I started racquetball for purely selfish reasons," says Sobek. "All day long during the winter I was sitting at a desk not getting any exercise. There was nobody around who could play squash well enough for me, and in the winter I couldn't play tennis."

For some years, paddleball provided him with an indoor substitute, but the game lacked vitality, and in 1950 he decided to try using a strung racquet instead of a wooden paddle to add more zip.

Shortly afterward, Sobek formulated the design for the first racquet, a sturdy, egg-shaped model, not nearly a sawed-off tennis racquet, as many reports erroneously maintain. He took his plans to the N.J. Magnan Racket Corp. in North Attleboro, Mass., but various problems kept cropping up during production.

"The president at Magnan had trouble getting a mold to form the racquet," Sobek recalls. "He tried one that was used to bend badminton frames into shape, but it wouldn't work because the bow of the paddle racket was considerably heavier."

As a result, the badminton forms kept

breaking until they were finally reinforced with steel.

A coterie of early racquetball enthusiasts at the Greenwich Y promptly purchased the first order of 25 wooden racquets, strung with high grade nylon. Metal and fiberglass versions weren't introduced until the early '60s, Sobek says.

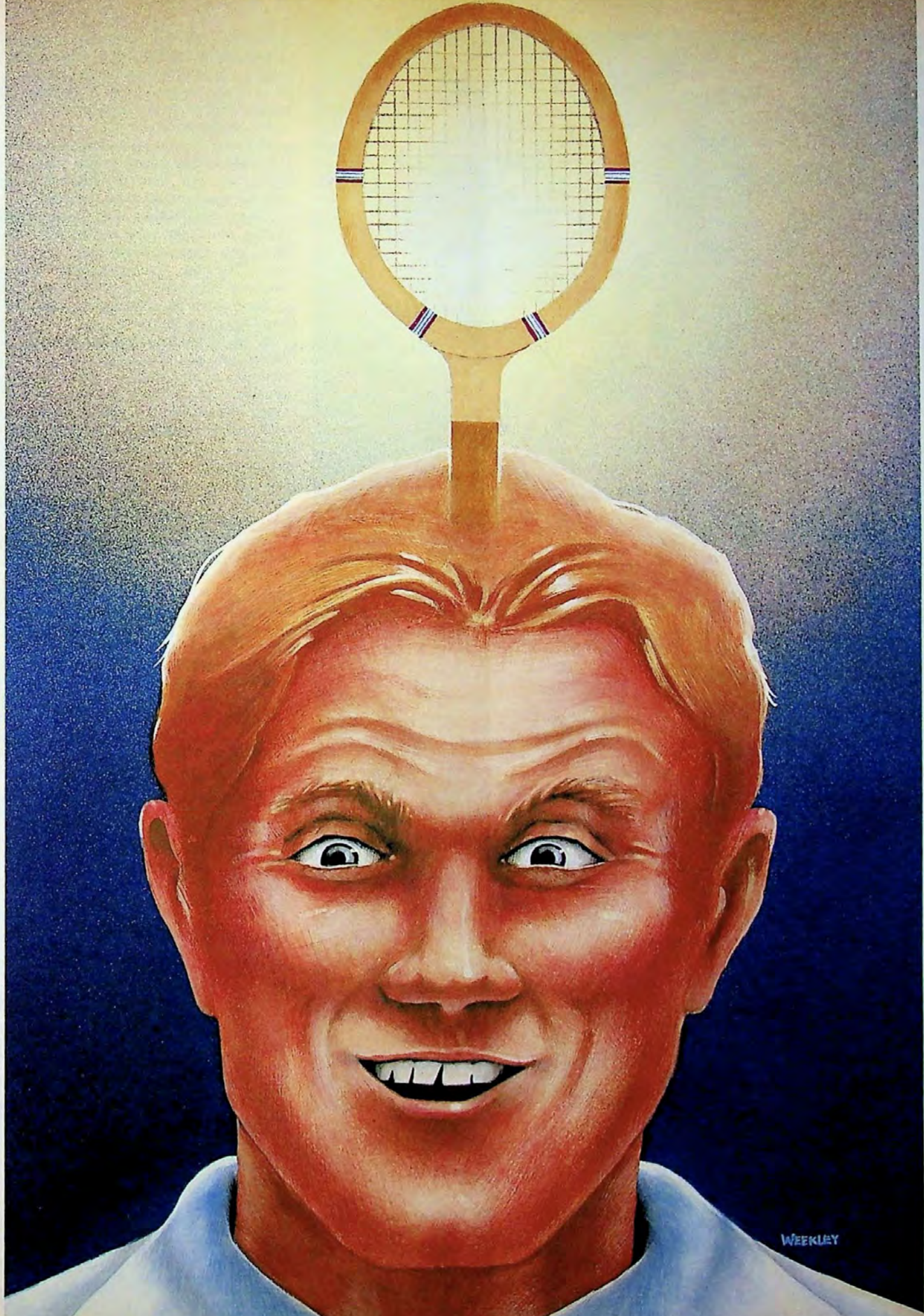
Sobek was not quite as successful in his search for a ball. He hit more than his share of snags as he tried one alternative and then another. Countless varieties failed: large and small handballs traveled too fast; the insides of tennis balls painted black didn't work either. Finally, Sobek found some boxes of Spalding red and blue playballs, stashed away on the shelves in a five-and-dime store.

"They suited the game perfectly because they could be hit hard and wouldn't fly out of the court," he said.

With this fortunate discovery, racquetball's evolution progressed another step, and the Greenwich group played for a few more years until the supply of balls was exhausted. There were no playballs

Portrait by Jeff Weekley

An artist's rendition of Joe Sobek's bright idea 28 years ago.



WEEKLEY



left to buy. After consulting the company, Sobek learned the model had been made before World War II and was now out of production. Nevertheless, the molds still existed and could be used for a minimum order of 150 dozen balls.

The new version was completely blue, but when Sobek received the order and tried them out, they proved too lively. The entire order had to be shelved.

"The original balls had been made during the '30s," he explained, "and they lost their compression over the years. The newer models just didn't work because they were too resilient. We had to store them for a good two years before they could be used."

In the meantime, he continued his search for an alternative. Because he worked in the rubber manufacturing business, he could obtain samples from every company in the United States. But nothing worked to his satisfaction.

Then, in an attempt to duplicate the original model, a research chemist Sobek knew began experimenting in the laboratory, and after 10 sample runs, hit upon a ball close to the necessary specifications. The eventual result was a seamless blue version used for years by pioneer racquetball players.

Today, finding a suitable ball is hardly a problem: An estimated 228,000 were sold in 1970 and that figure bounced to a staggering 14 million last year.

Sobek's personal campaign to spread the sport is largely responsible for racquetball's international success. Although there was very little publicity, enthusiasm carried the young game from Greenwich to Memphis and later San Diego.

"Word of mouth helped spread rac-



Sobek (above) with original racquet made by Magnan and first seamless ball; opposite page—Sobek on racquetball court with wife Nancy.

quetball," Sobek says. "First of all, I obtained a list of all the YMCAs in America, and then I sent out brochures, saying I would gladly send four racquets, a couple of balls and a copy of the rules under no obligation to buy anything.

"If they found the sport enjoyable, I told them that they could purchase the equipment. I contacted hundreds of associations, and only two returned the racquets—one because their Y burned down and the other because the administration was changing, and no one wanted to take the responsibility for introducing a new sport."

This was how Sobek introduced the game all over the country, although he did give early clinics around Connecticut, at Fort Dix in New Jersey and at the Pentagon.

After Greenwich, the first place racquetball took root was Memphis, Tenn., where a friend of Sobek had moved.

Discovering there was no comparable sport at the local Y, the friend wrote to Sobek for some equipment, and the game soon grew in Memphis.

The path of the sport widened when other Greenwich players traveled on business, taking racquetball with them wherever they went.

"One person would spark-plug it, and from Memphis it went to St. Louis and later to a city in Texas and then San Diego. After that, it began moving up the coast. From Greenwich, it moved south and west to Ohio. Cleveland went crazy over it," Sobek says.

Oddly enough, racquetball was being played in Mexico more actively than in America at one time. The fervor for the sport was so intense, Sobek had to mail



equipment to El Paso, Tex., where it was shuttled south to Chihuahua. Soon the military latched on and in time it was being played in Germany, Italy and Hawaii.

"Any sport is slow to start," Sobek explains. "It took a good 10 years before I began to hear reports of the game being played overseas. People would return from trips around the world and tell me, 'Gee, I saw your game being played here or there.'"

Despite the trail racquetball made across the nation, many problems persisted which have only recently been solved.

Although the game originated at a YMCA and has been actively played on Y courts since the '50s, the national board of the organization has never officially sanctioned racquetball, Sobek says.

"In spite of all my correspondence, they would always reply that they were observing the sport, watching its growth and would consider its status at a future date. As far as I know, the board is still observing racquetball," Sobek says.

On one occasion, Sobek was called by an area YMCA committee to offer a clinic explaining racquetball. Although he was

gracious enough to accept the invitation, he realized as soon as he arrived that the physical director of the organization wanted no part of the game.

"The moment we walked in there," Sobek recalls, "I knew he didn't want anything to do with racquetball. Nevertheless, I answered all their questions to everyone's satisfaction except the director. Finally, he scoffed, 'Well, you can have your game, but I can beat anybody with paddleball.'"

Sobek tactfully ignored the intimidation.

"My friend nudged me, but I didn't do anything. Then, the director said again, 'Nobody can beat me with my paddle. I don't care what they use, whether it's a racquet or not!' With that, my buddy poked me again, but I did nothing.

"Then, one of the committee members suggested, 'Why don't you take him up on it?'"

Hesitating, Sobek explained he didn't have his equipment, that he wasn't prepared, but immediate offers were made to accommodate him.

"But it isn't fair," he told the director. "I'll have this racquet, and you'll only have that wooden paddle."

The man jeered and persisted in his boast: "I can beat anyone with this paddle."

The entire committee filed into the court to watch the match between the two men.

"I knew it would be a losing proposition," Sobek recalled. "If I let him win, there would be no racquetball, and if I beat him, there certainly would be no racquetball—so I beat him."

Until he left the job as physical director a number of years later, racquetball was not played at that YMCA even though the sport had grown up in the surrounding area.

As the sport proliferated, Sobek found that he was in the business of selling the equipment and the game itself. Eventually, it reached a point where he was up all hours of the night, packing materials, corresponding, answering questions and mailing out copies of the rules. Since he sold all the equipment at cost, there was no profit.

"I almost decided to forget the entire thing, until I went into the mail order business and put a small mark-up on the items," he said.

Love for the game has become contagious, and Sobek attributes this to the sport's fundamental virtues.

"Racquetball is easy to learn and play. It has become extremely popular with people who are looking for a good workout—from executives to housewives—but who aren't necessarily outstanding athletes.

Today, Sobek is the tennis and squash coach at the Fairview Country Club in Greenwich, Conn. Ironically, there is no racquetball played there.

Very often, curious racquetball players ask him about the fortune he's probably made from inventing the sport. But he candidly replies that his monetary profits amount to practically nothing.

"Over the years there were many people who wanted to get in on the act and take credit, but I always felt as long as the world realized I started the sport, it was enough satisfaction. I may not have made the money but I got the recognition.

"I'm obviously pleased that it has grown and become successful. Some of those I had difficulty with when promoting the sport eventually got on the bandwagon. Frankly, I don't resent their success. I would have liked to make a million dollars, but on the other hand, my satisfaction now comes from knowing I started a game that is known all over the world." ●



Sobek: "I may not have made the money but I got the recognition."

NO MEN ALLOWED!

By Carole Charfauros

Dinner is still being thrown together when hubby calls to say he's staying late at the office again. Meanwhile the kids are asking endless questions in between mother's phone call and the Avon lady's monthly stop. And of course the washing machine decides it's time to overflow. After a long day at work Janice just isn't in the mood for all these hassles.

"Sometimes I just wish I could *GET AWAY!*" she cries in despair.

Ironically it took a man to answer Janice's prayers. But this is no ordinary, chauvinistic male. In fact, Jon Gonzales has spent most of the past 18 years talking to women such as Janice everyday as the owner of several haircutting salons in Southern California. Gonzales understands fashion, beauty, the latest trends in hairstyles and most importantly, he understands women and their tastes and desires.

"Women today suffer from low self-esteem," explained Gonzales. "They get very depressed. They have stress piled on top of stress on top of stress—and they have no way to release it. How many

women go have a beer or play golf when they want to relax like men do?"

With this in mind, Jon and his wife, Barbara, began planning the first health, beauty, and racquetball club exclusively for women. This was over two years ago, but with Jon's creativity and Barbara's business mind they saw their idea grow from the ground level up.

"We've been here since this shopping center was nothing more than plans on a piece of paper," said Barbara. "We supervised all of the construction and interior designing. This club took two years, but the next one will be quick and easy. We may even franchise our idea, but for now we're concentrating on our first club."

The Huntington Beach, Calif. club opened its doors to 200 charter members in October, 1978. It was officially christened "The Getaway" for obvious reasons. Membership rose to 250 in just a few weeks, but that still isn't enough to support the club.

"I'm not worried about getting members," boasted Gonzales. "In a few months they'll be begging me to let them join, but we've decided to limit the mem-

bership to 800 to keep it small and private. For now I depend on the boutique, pro shop, and beauty salon, all of which are open to the public, to bring in the revenue.

"Almost everyone who has come in has joined, so we have a high rate of sales, but we haven't even begun advertising yet. Our grand opening won't be until the holidays when the rest of the shopping center is completed. It's like I've always told my cutters: I don't care if we give only one haircut a day. If we do good work, she'll be back and she'll bring ten more with her. I believe that word of mouth and satisfied customers are worth more than any advertisement."

Even though The Getaway is bordered by five of the largest racquetball clubs in Orange County it seems to be its uniqueness that draws its customers away from the other clubs. The staff at The Getaway includes specialists in every field of health and beauty.

"You really feel pampered at The Getaway," said one of the charter members. "The staff makes you feel like you're someone special. I'm trying all kinds of new things like yoga and racquetball just

because someone said, 'Have you tried this yet? I think you'll really enjoy it.' No other club offers that kind of personalized service."

Gonzales was eager to expand the idea. "We're surrounded by so many enormous racquetball clubs. I always say if we make it here we can make it anywhere. In a way, however, I think they help us more than they hurt us. Sure, the young athletic girls with the nice figures aren't embarrassed to join the co-ed clubs, but we're appealing to the other ninety-percent of the women. They would love to learn to play racquetball, to feel healthy and beautiful, but they wouldn't dare do it with a bunch of macho, studly men around."

Men are not allowed in The Getaway even as guests except during tournaments and special occasions. Said one member, "My husband has been a member of an athletic club since we've been married. I always felt that that was his private place to go to work out and relax. Now I have mine."

The men don't seem to mind their exclusion from The Getaway. It stands to reason that if a woman feels better about herself she'll be more enjoyable to be with. The time away from her family only helps enrich the time she spends with them. One husband whose wife recently joined The Getaway put it this way: "I think it's great that my wife finally has someplace to get away and work out. For the first time she's excited to come down to do her exercises. She says it's fun to see other girls enjoying themselves when they work out. It's just a healthy environment for any women interested in taking care of herself."

A wide range of women are finding their place at The Getaway, including some celebrities. Their ages vary between 14 and 66 so far with the average being about 35 years old. Most are married, working women from the upper middle class. Barbara Gonzales explained, "A career woman is out in the public so she cares more about her health and appearance. Also she's more apt to have her own resources without having to ask her husband for money."

Cost would probably not be a factor either for or against joining The Getaway rather than a co-ed club. Their prices are quite comparable to other clubs in the area. For full use of the facility it costs \$150 for initiation and \$30 per month for dues. For everything except the racquetball courts the price drops to \$125 for initiation and \$25 for monthly dues.

Even though the facility is smaller than its competitors, it is more complete and very plushly decorated. The downstairs includes the boutique, beauty salon, pro shop and reception desk, all of which are open to everybody.

At the Getaway all-women's club in Huntington Beach, Calif., women often play a strenuous game of racquetball and follow with a strenuous workout of exercises.

Photos by Carole Charlauros and Norton Photography



There are only three racquetball courts, two of which can be viewed from the upstairs restaurant. With a limit of 400 racquetball members the Gonzales' feel that each member will actually have the opportunity for more court time than at another club which has 2,000 members, most of them men.

Upstairs there is a locker room, dance studio, exercise equipment room, and reading room. The idea is to create an atmosphere that would make a woman

want to spend all day there. Or she could get a quick work-out or have her nails done during her lunch break.

Besides Jon Gonzales, the owner, and his wife, Barbara, the manager, there are 16 employees at the club. All but two are female. The two men work downstairs in the beauty salon.

The racquetball instruction is taught by twenty-one-year old Hugette Zahn, who plays tournaments on three-wall (outdoor) and four-wall (indoor) courts. Hugette



Also at the club is a boutique (top), classes in such things as jazznastics (middle) and a hair salon operated by club owner Jon Gonzales (at right.)

says she belongs to another club simply because she can't get the competition she needs at The Getaway.

"Most of the women here are absolute beginners," commented Hugette. "They play racquetball for fun and exercise, not for competition. The girls I play in tournaments belong to co-ed clubs so they can get a harder work-out with the guys."

"The women like it here because they don't have to be embarrassed. They're all equally inexperienced. Being a member of a small club makes it easier for the ladies to pick up a game because they all know each other."

One of Hugette's students said that she joined another racquetball club with her family but she was too self-conscious to try to learn because everyone could watch her. The gym was also co-ed and usually monopolized by weight lifters. Eventually she dropped her membership until she heard about The Getaway. Now she and her teenage daughter play racquetball at least twice a week at their new club. The men in the family play at the other.

The Gonzales' decided to feature racquetball rather than tennis because the courts take less area and because of racquetball's booming popularity.

"Racquetball is ideal for our club," says Barbara, an avid player herself. "It's easy to learn right away so you don't get frustrated. It is a conditioning activity that provides cardiovascular endurance training, as well as burning 700 calories an hour, so you can get a better work-out in less time."

Racquetball is also a sport that doesn't require expensive equipment. Women and children are enjoying the game in ever-increasing numbers because it doesn't require a lot of brute strength either.

"The best thing about racquetball," said Barbara, "is the way the women feel afterwards. It reduces the tensions that we build up during the work day. It sure beats the shrink!"

Marti West, the fitness coordinator, greatly emphasizes dance and stretching. She teaches yoga, disco, aerobic dancing, ballet, jazz, and exercise with weights.

"Today women not only want to look good," said Marti, "but they want to feel good, too. Some women are afraid the strenuous exercise will result in bulky build-up, but our hormones prevent us from developing bulging muscles like men do. Instead of increasing in size, the women are discovering that weights help them work toward total physical and cardiovascular fitness. That means better overall muscle tone and the slimming of normal fatty tissue."

Along with exercise, Marti consults the women on diet and nutrition. The club offers a computer analysis of each member's diet for nutritional soundness. The

names of all the "losers" of five pounds or more are posted in the locker room.

Once the women have achieved their slim and healthy figures they are ready for help from Linda Ferre, the fashion and beauty coordinator. Linda understands that just because a style is "in" does not necessarily mean that it will be right for everyone. That's why she offers individual consultation as well as group fashion shows and lectures.

"How many women get a chance to have a professional analyze their appearance from clothing to make-up?" asked Linda. "I answer the questions that most women are unable to answer for themselves. 'What are my physical pluses and minuses? How do I minimize the faults and play up the assets? What colors do I look best in? How do I choose the perfect accessories?' I help them get that 'Total Look.'"

Linda's first show, "Color—Key to the Prettier You" got a welcome response from the ladies. Linda's ideas for future lectures include skin care, developing poise, putting your personality into your fashion, stretching your looks with accessories, and selecting the right haircutting style.

The beauty salon is headed by Jon Gonzales. Jon has studied all over the world. He proudly says that he has one of the finest teams of professional hair-cutters.

"The women are under no obligation to use our salon. It is only for their convenience. We get lots of business from the outside because we have such a good reputation. After being in the hair-cutting business for 18 years I not only know how to give a good haircut. I also know women. Here at The Getaway we do everything to make the women feel better about themselves. I've seen women with terrific figures who thought they were fat. What good is being beautiful outside if they feel lousy inside?"

"I think our club makes them feel beautiful inside and out. We understand them. We want to talk to them. We're not a big corporation. It's just my wife and myself. We give them the old Mom and Pop type service. That's something a big club can't do."

"I realize that this club is a big gamble. But I think racquetball clubs are getting too saturated. I don't know how they all make it. We're going after a different market, an untapped market. I think we're doing the right thing and I think it's going to succeed. If it does, it will revolutionize the fashion business. A total beauty club like this has never been tried before. I always wanted to be an innovator, not a follower."

And what's next on the agenda for Jon and Barbara Gonzales?

A beauty, health, and racquetball club exclusively for men, of course!

A Country Game for a Country Boy

Photos by Dave Scorcisi



By Dave Scorcisi

Just as would be expected of country boy John Denver, he had been camping and fly-fishing somewhere in the Rockies when he and his father took two days off to come into town to play racquetball.

Most recording artists, Emmy winners, motion picture stars would be ill at ease or lost in this sort of environment that John calls home. But the aspen covered, river laden slopes of the Rocky Mountains is very much home to John Denver.

Denver has been writing and singing of the beauty of nature as a country boy reflecting on the joys of rural living since he was 13 years old.

He has become a major television star through a series of highly acclaimed variety specials. In addition to winning an Emmy award (outstanding musical-variety program 1974-75), his "Rocky Mountain Christmas" was one of the highest rated specials in the history of ABC television. He has also appeared as guest host of the Tonight Show as well as playing in dramatic roles on several television series. Most recently John played a "Moses type" characterization in the movie "Oh, God," co-starring with George Burns.

Skiing and fly-fishing are Denver's most popular pastimes and now he has

added racquetball, which he plays with his father "Dutch."

"He always beats me. He starts me at 13 points and each time we play I get another point better," says John. "He's kind of easy," Dutch laughs. "He's the kind of guy that, you know, picks this kind of stuff up just while we're playing. You teach him while you're playing him."

During one game for the benefit of a writer John was practicing a low serve that his father previously had shown him. He scored a couple of points, and after the game Dutch said, "That brat. He catches on too easy. He almost beat me."

"I enjoy the sport," says John. "It is something I can do and do easily. When I'm on the road traveling it's easy to get into a club and play. It helps me when I'm on a concert tour or something like that. It's great exercise. But my dad, golly, this guy is out there at 8,000 feet, and he is just running my fanny off, and it's wonderful."

Dutch, retired from the Air Force, is a celebrity in his own right. He holds three world records in the B-58 Hustler bomber jet that still stand in military records. These records entail, "2,000 hours of going fast, reeeeeeal fast," says Dutch. And the funny part about it is, it might never be broken because there are airplanes that can fly faster than that but





John Denver in the precarious position of reaching for backhand shots in match against his more experienced father, Dutch.



they can't turn around. They can't stand a closed course."

The Deutschendorf's, Denver's given name, are a close family. Annie, John's wife, and their two children, Anna and Zachary, and John senior spend much of their time together enjoying the outdoors of Colorado. John says he will be teaching Annie racquetball as soon as he gets better at it himself. The family, including Dutch, have a membership at the International Athletic Club in Denver, and often times get into games with Denver Bronco players.

"I guess the first time I played was about 12 years ago," says John. "But it's hard for me to play regularly with my schedule. Dad and some friends started playing at the Sporting House in Denver and were really getting hot and talking about it, so I played with them last summer and this one. I guess I've played quite a bit the past couple of years."

Dutch feels it has helped considerably in keeping him in shape. "It gives me exercise. I can play an hour of racquetball and burn up oodles and goodles of calories. And I need to exercise to keep from ballooning and getting fat. You know, you're playing hard and getting the heart pumping real good."

John then mocks himself. "I unfortunately have not noticed any evidence of any improvement in anything to do with racquetball, yet."

"I would expect that my hand-eye coordination and some of those things would sharpen up a bit, but they don't seem to have. But wind wise, it is good for singing and general health. "I really like to be in good shape and feel like I'm in good shape and I think racquetball is really supportive of that. It's a real healthy sport," says John. "For me there is so much in life from really being healthy to taking care of yourself and being in touch with people. So often it seems that people who attain success in a field of endeavor get to be a narrowing influence. They get more and more limited and focused on whatever it is they're successful at and they stay with that and don't do other things. There are many



people that I know who are capable people, that seem to be limited in the way they live now and I refuse to allow that to happen to me. I absolutely refuse.

"Just because I'm making movies now or doing a television show, I still take time to ski. When I was making "Oh, God" they didn't want to let me go skiing. I said to them 'I'll see you on Monday, and I'd come home on the weekends and go skiing.'

"This past year we had 57 concerts in 54 cities in 60 days. The week before that I spent time up in the Caribous skiing deep powder out of a helicopter and the week before that was our John

Denver Pro-Am Ski Tournament in Aspen, and I ran downhill and all those people at ABC and RCA were just 'ahooten.'

Flying is next on the agenda for Denver. "I want to learn how to fly the Lear Jet. I want to be as good a pilot as my dad here. I want to be able to go out in the mountains whenever I want to, to take my little 210 and fly up to Alaska. I also want to learn how to sail. There's so much I want to do. I want to be able to go scuba diving and I don't want my life to be restricted only to the things I enjoy the most. I mean, I love to sing for people. That simply is the most enjoy-

Denver: "Dad always beats me. He starts me at 13 points and each time I get a point better."



John Denver on his way home after a satisfying workout on the racquetball court.

able thing in the world to me."

John says he will teach his wife how to play racquetball. "Annie wants to learn how to play and I think that's very exciting. I really enjoy the things that we can do together. She's not into fishing yet, but she goes scuba diving, and skiing and backing, and camping. I think racquetball is a wonderful family sport and that's one of the things that I appreciate about it the most."

But Dutch is still the racquetball king of the family. In fact, he has been known to travel to a tournament pro stop here and there and be asked by the pros to give strategy pointers. Dutch is considered a pretty good student of the game.

Dutch says that John will get better as soon as he is exposed to various types of shots.

"He hasn't been through the mental processes yet," says Dutch. "Like when the ball comes to the back wall. He sometimes tries to go through the wall to the other side to try and get it when all he has to do is stand still and let it come back to him."

"John is real agile, though. He runs like a deer or an antelope. But there are times when he has concrete feet."

"I get in there and my mind starts going faster than my body is working and I stumble over my feet and generally I don't do that. It's funny to me when it happens but sometimes I get totally twisted out there," says Denver, who considers himself an advance novice.

"The hardest part is anticipation. Most of the time I can anticipate where the shots are going, at least with the guys who are on my level of play. But with better players I haven't seen those type of shots. There have been several times when the ball is coming right at me and I have no way of knowing how to get out of the way to hit it."

He also notices that he's not an "aggressive player."

"I have a tendency to hold back a little bit. It's not worth it to me to go bouncing into a wall or bashing my thumbs," he says.

But Denver still had the right attitude for playing. "My feeling is that whatever I do, I want to do it as well as I can, especially the things I love the most." ●

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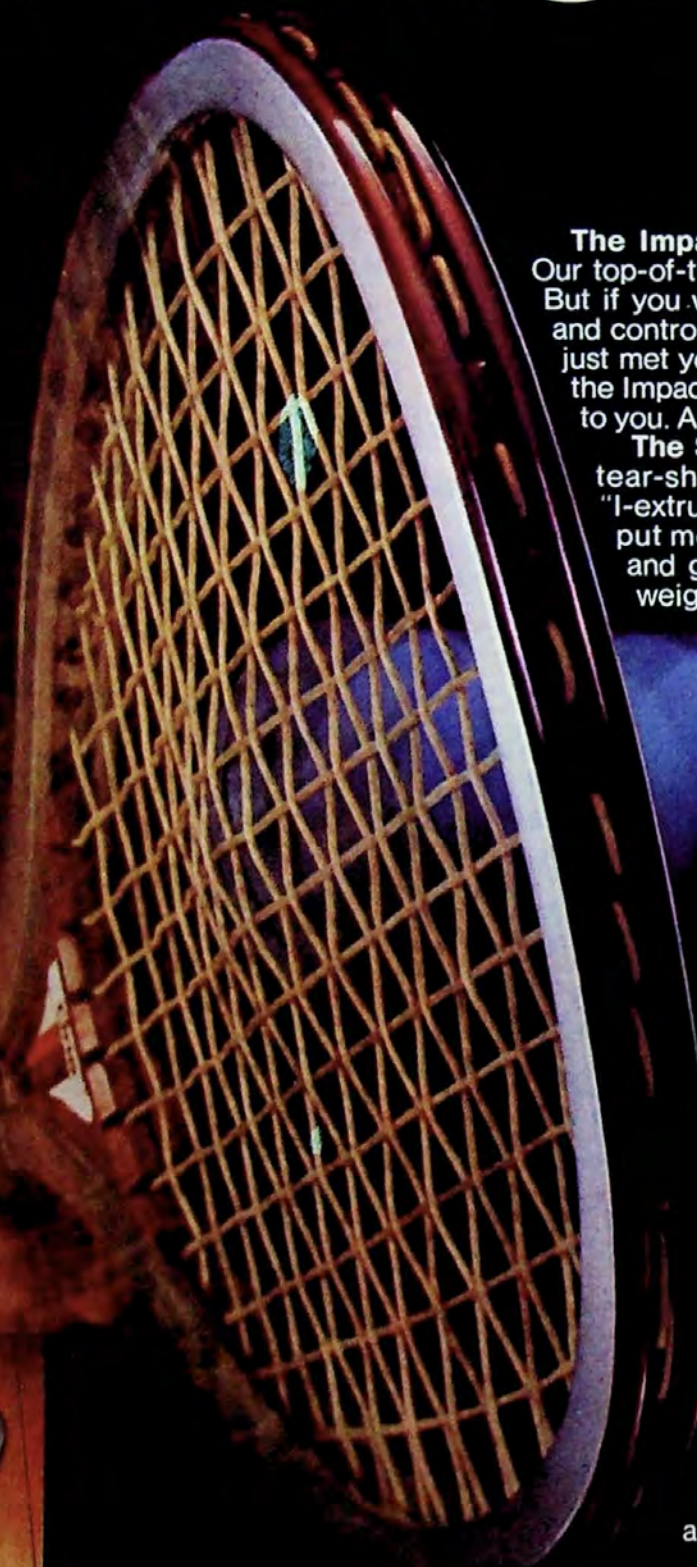
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A Lot of Spirit in St. Louis

by Ben Kalb

With a hapless football team, a hapless baseball team, a basketball team that moved to Atlanta and became hapless, St. Louis sports fans needed something—anything—to get their juices rolling again. Although not as major as the above mentioned sports, it looked as if racquetball would be just the sport to satisfy their cravings for success, especially with local product Marty Hogan around. But, alas, Hogan and the others fell by the wayside. St. Louis is still blue.

Officially this first pro tournament of the season was called The Jack In The Box Racquetball Classic Under The Auspices Of Colgate With A Push From Seamco, Leach And A Sponsorship From The National Racquetball Clinic. Unofficially, you can refer to it as the pro stop in St. Louis. Or The Week Steve Strandemo Played Out Of His Mind.

With six players from St. Louis entered in the 32-man draw, including four of the world's best, odds were pretty fair that the eventual champion would be a hometown hero. But Jerry Zuckerman, Doug Cohen and Steve Serot fell in the first round, and Hogan and Ben Koltun fell in the second round.

All that hometown pride and glory was left to Jerry Hilecher, and from the way he had been playing combined with a vocal rooting section led by his father, it looked as if he would win one for old St. Louis.

But Strandemo, who had upset Hogan earlier in the week, defeated Hilecher, 21-7, 12-21, 11-8 to take home and deposit the winner's check of \$4,500. Hilecher had to settle for \$2,500.

Jenifer Harding of Portland won the women's division by defeating top-seeded Shannon Wright of Las Vegas in the semifinals and ageless wonder Peggy Steding of Texas in the finals, 21-6, 21-

Marty Hogan returns backhand shot down the wall in second round match against Steve Strandemo, which Strandemo won. It was the first time Hogan had failed to reach the finals on a pro stop.

Photos by Ivan Fuldauer and Mark Sanderbeck



Strandemo and Jerry Hilecher played an exciting three-game match in season's first pro stop. Strandemo won tiebreaker, 11-8.

Things go bump in the night as shown here with Strandemo and Wagner bumping into each other in semifinal match.



14. In an obvious display of chauvinism, the winner's check presented to Harding was written out for only \$1,300. Steding earned \$800.

The unseeded Strandemo won his first match 19-21, 21-5, 11-4 against Dave Peck before facing Hogan that same evening. "I played Marty a week and a half before the tournament in practice," recalled Strandemo. "It gave me a good chance to feel him out."

Strandemo took an early lead in the first game against Hogan, before Marty came back to win 21-17. "I was in good control the first game. I just let it slip away," said Strandemo.

Nothing slipped away in the second game and Strandemo won 21-13. In the tiebreaker, Strandemo took a 5-0 lead before a pushing technical by Hogan made it 5 to minus one. Hogan cut the lead to 9-8 before Strandemo scored the final two points.

"As I got into the match, I realized my legs were pretty strong and I could get to all the balls," said Strandemo. "I knew that no matter how hard he hit he wouldn't overpower me. So I kind of relaxed."

"Once I beat Hogan, it was definitely a boost. But I couldn't say I had it won. [Craig] McCoy, [Rich] Wagner and Hilecher are tougher than the devil."

For Hogan it was the first time in a regular pro tour stop he had failed to reach the finals. Even as he was watching the Strandemo-Hilecher finale, he said, "It feels funny sitting up here."

Hogan had praise for Strandemo's performance, not only against him but in the entire tournament. "He hasn't been play-

ing over his head," said Hogan. "But he has been playing better than anyone. He works harder than anyone to keep in shape. I think he'll move into the top four if he plays the way he has been playing."

Hogan said he did not feel any pressure playing before his friends and relatives. "If there was pressure, I didn't make myself aware of it," said Hogan. "I thought I was going to beat him. Even when he had me 20-12 in the second game, I thought I would win it. I've played him before and he's had me 15-2 and I've beaten him 21-17."

"I think I'm invincible. I think I am going to win regardless of who I play. Evidently I wasn't in the best shape. I hadn't been practicing as much as I should. I've been taking too many hours in school. I may have to cut back."

After defeating Hogan, Strandemo beat McCoy, 19-21, 21-18, 11-4, in the quarters and Wagner, 21-14, 21-13, in the semis. Strandemo ran off a streak of eight points in the first game against Wagner and 10 points in the second. The victory over Wagner was the only one of the tourney for Strandemo that did not go into a tiebreaker.

To reach the finals, Hilecher defeated Jeff Larson, 21-7, 21-13; Steve Keeley, 21-9, 21-3; Mike Yellen, 21-11, 21-14 and Davey Bledsoe, 21-5, 21-8.

Bledsoe had reached the semis by defeating second seeded Charlie Brumfield, 21-19, 21-19. Brumfield came back from an 11-1 deficit in the second game to take an 18-11 lead, but Bledsoe won 10 of the last 11 points to eliminate The Professor.

Against Hilecher, however, it was a different story. Scoring with ace after ace after ace, Hilecher never let Davey into the match. He drove out to a 10-2 lead in the first game and coasted in. Bledsoe cut Hilecher's lead in the second game to 10-7, but it soon became 15-7 and then 21-8.

Even the crowd couldn't believe what it

Jennifer Harding needed to upset top-seeded Shannon Wright (left) to earn the right to play Peggy Steding (below) in women's finals. Harding won.





Strandemo in a quiet thought to himself immediately after winning the championship.

Photo by Mark Sanderbeck

was seeing. "Who is that guy out there?" said one spectator, referring to Hilecher's surprising performance. "He is explosive."

Hilecher, however, had an answer. "I've been practicing all summer on my weak points and I thought I was coming along all right, but when I got here I played a practice game with Koltun and I was hitting so much better than I have in a long, long time. It was really a surprise. I don't know if it was that summer of practice or just being here in St. Louis. I know my concentration was better and it was gratifying beating Davey. We both had a slow season last year and we both have something to prove this year. We both wanted a strong start."

The fact that the first tournament of the season was being held in St. Louis seemed to help Hilecher. "I've got a lot of old friends that have never seen me play racquetball and I've got something to prove to them," said Hilecher. "If I lose here, all those words I said when I was younger would have been meaningless."

Hilecher did not win the top prize, but not even his friends would make him eat his words. He played well and the final could have gone either way.

Strandemo won the first game handily. He had a 7-0 lead before Hilecher had a chance to serve. From there it became 13-6 and 21-7. "I felt strong," said Strandemo. "My serve was going good into the left corner wall and when he went to pass it or shoot it, it was usually right back to me in the middle."

But things turned around in the second game. Hilecher's 6-1 lead was cut to 7-6, but from that point it became one-sided. Hilecher scored seven of the next eight points and coasted in from there.

"He played the first part of the second game real well," said Strandemo. "I needed to get the ball within two feet of the left wall, but I was moving it out on the other 18 feet."

"If I could have won the first four or five points I would have had him. But he got ahead and when he's ahead he's tough."

Strandemo took a 4-0 lead in the tiebreaker, including the shot of the match, a diving return off a passing shot down the right wall that turned into a rollout. "The ball had passed me, but I thought I could still get it," said Strandemo.

Hilecher recovered from that shot and took an 8-6 advantage, but Strandemo won 11-8 on his second match point. "We both played the tiebreaker too defensively," said Strandemo. "When he

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had me 8-6 I knew I couldn't shoot any more of his serves. I had to make sure I kept position on him."

The \$4,500 was three times the biggest check Strandemo had ever won in a tournament. "I felt this was probably the best tournament I've had as far as staying physically fit," he said. "I felt even on the last shot, I hit with good velocity."

As for Hilecher, if nothing else he learned never to pay attention to fortune tellers. It seems one of those soothsayers had told him that October would be a great month for him. His match with Strandemo took place on October 1.

Although Hilecher's October wasn't what he had hoped for, it was more than Jennifer Harding could ask for. After defeating Jan Pasternak, 21-20, 21-17 and Martha McDonald, 21-11, 21-7, Harding ran up against top-seeded Wright.

Wright didn't seem to play as aggressively as she has in the past and her serve was off. Harding, on the other hand, played with more confidence than in previous meetings against Shannon.

Harding did not take the lead until 14-13, but shortly thereafter Wright regained advantage, 18-17. Harding then ran off the last four points to win the first game.

Wright led 10-7 in the second game, but Harding scored eight points in a row for a 15-10 lead. Wright cut the lead to

17-16 but that was as close as she got.

It was Harding's first victory over Wright. "I was anxious to play her because I was so close the last few times," said Harding. "I was more aggressive and my backhand has improved tremendously."

Harding credits her backhand improvement to two things—a three-month pre-tour training session with Jean Sauser and a new racquet designed for her by Ektelon. Harding used to play with a lighter racquet, but then switched to a heavier racquet and now is back to a lighter model.

"I could never hit my backhand in front of me, but my new racquet had made a world of difference. It's lighter and has a tiny grip," says Harding. "Everybody knew that the way to beat Jennifer was by hitting to her backhand, but not any more."

The final against Steding wasn't as difficult as the match with Wright, but it was in fact Jennifer's first lifetime win over Peggy.

To reach the finals, Steding defeated Sauser, 21-17, 21-11, Sarah Green, 21-20, 21-12 and in the semis, Karin Walton, 21-16, 21-9.

"I was pretty confident against Peggy," said Harding. "She has beat me the last few times but always in the third game and I had never felt I was playing as well as I could."

Harding drove out to a 15-0 lead in the second game and upped it to 17-5 before Steding made a last-ditch run. Peggy cut the lead to 18-13 but that was as close as she came.

"I couldn't get going and I couldn't get my serves in," said Steding. "And she couldn't miss."

Harding credits the improvement on her backhand and her serve as the main reasons for her outstanding showing.

"It was one of the best weeks I've had," said Jennifer, who supplements her training diet with pounds of popcorn. "I'm concentrating more and I've begun to serve much harder, which I learned from Shannon. I'm more excited about the game and I'm making a more conscious effort on each point. I used to get ahead and have this terrible habit of letting up. That's why I never let up in the match with Peggy. She's drilled me 21-2 before. She's enough of a champion to know you can't let up because all the women players are getting too close now."

It was Harding's second pro tour win and Steding's first loss ever in St. Louis after having previously won the Nationals there.

But Steding should have realized what she had going against her. Harding is from Portland, which is known as the Rose City, and even in St. Louis roses are never blue. ●

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ST. LOUIS RESULTS

MEN'S ROUND OF 32

Marty Hogan (St. Louis) d. Bobby Bolan (Tempe, Ariz.), 21-10, 21-10; Steve Strandemo (San Diego) d. David Peck (El Paso), 19-21, 21-5, 11-4; Mike Zeitman (Memphis) d. Lindsey Myers (Vancouver, B.C.), 13-21, 21-16, 11-8; Craig McCoy (Riverside, Cal.) d. Joe Wirkus (Madison, Wis.), 21-6, 21-12; Richard Wagner (Paterson, N.J.) d. Rick Dern (Chicago), 21-4, 21-5; David Fleetwood (Memphis) d. Beaver Wickham (Oceanside, Cal.), 21-8, 21-11; Dennis McDowell (Bloomington, Ill.) d. Jerry Zuckerman (St. Louis), 21-15, 21-11; Steve Chase (Phoenix) d. Steve Serot (St. Louis), 21-8, 21-16; Ben Koltun (St. Louis) d. Jeff Bowman (San Diego), 21-21, 21-12, 11-9; Mike Yellen (Southfield, Mich.) d. Doug Cohen (St. Louis), 21-15, 21-8; Steve Keeley (Lansing, Mich.) d. Bill Schmidtke (Minneapolis), 21-10, 21-12; Jerry Hilecher (St. Louis) d. Jeff Larson (Vancouver, Wash.), 21-7, 21-13; Davey Bledsoe (Kingsport, Tenn.) d. Pete Wright (Dallas), 21-18, 21-18; Mark Morrow (Los Angeles) d. Larry Meyers (Oceanside, Cal.), 17-21, 21-8, 11-1; Don Thomas (Phoenix) d. Larry Fox (Cincinnati), 20-21, 21-8, 11-2; Charlie Brumfield (San Diego) d. Gary Stephens (Memphis), 21-15, 21-13.

WOMEN'S QUALIFYING

Alicia Moore (Soquel, Cal.) d. Sally Murphy (Denver), 10-21, 21-15, 11-8; Jan Matthews (La Costa, Cal.) d. Jean Oeschger (Sunnyvale, Cal.), 17-21, 21-10, 11-8; Pat Schmidt (Milwaukee) d. Linda Prefontaine (Eugene, Ore.), 21-14, 21-19; Marci Greer (San Diego) d. Hope Weisbach (Tempe, Ariz.), 21-18, 21-10.

MEN'S ROUND OF 16

Strandemo d. Hogan, 17-21, 21-13, 11-8; McCoy d. Zeitman, 17-21, 21-8, 11-4; Wagner d. Fleetwood, 21-13, 21-19; McDowell d. Chase, 10-21, 21-14, 11-5; Yellen d. Koltun, 21-15, 10-21, 11-6; Hilecher d. Keeley, 21-9, 21-3; Bledsoe d. Morrow, 21-7, 21-15; Brumfield d. Thomas, 21-9, 21-9.

WOMEN'S ROUND OF 16

Shannon Wright (Las Vegas) d. Rita Hoff (St. Louis), 21-12, 21-7; Kathy Williams (Denver) d. Moore, 21-10, 21-8; Martha McDonald (Gainesville, Fla.) d. Schmidt, 21-20, 14-21, 11-6; Jennifer Harding (Portland, Ore.) d. Jan Pasternak (Houston), 21-20, 21-17; Peggy Steding (Odessa, Tex.) d. Jean Sauser

(Chicago), 21-17, 21-11; Sarah Green (Memphis) d. Matthews, 21-20, 21-12; Karin Walton (San Clemente, Cal.) d. Greer, 21-13, 8-21, 11-6; Janell Marriott (Salt Lake City) d. Sue Carow (Chicago), 18-21, 21-2, 11-0.

WOMEN'S QUARTERFINALS

Shannon Wright (Las Vegas) d. Kathy Williams (Denver), 21-13, 21-13; Jennifer Harding (Portland, Ore.) d. Martha McDonald (Gainesville, Fla.), 21-11, 21-7; Peggy Steding (Odessa, Tex.) d. Sarah Green (Memphis), 21-4, 20-21, 11-7; Karin Walton (San Clemente, Cal.) d. Janell Marriott (Salt Lake City), 18-21, 21-12, 11-6.

MEN'S QUARTERFINALS

Rich Wagner (Paterson, N.J.) d. Dennis McDowell (Bloomington, Ill.), 21-8, 21-8; Jerry Hilecher (St. Louis) d. Mike Yellen (Southfield, Mich.), 21-11, 21-14; Davey Bledsoe (Kingsport, Tenn.) d. Charlie Brumfield (San Diego), 21-19, 21-19; Steve Strandemo (San Diego) d. Craig McCoy (Riverside, Cal.), 19-21, 21-18, 11-4.

WOMEN'S SEMIFINALS

Jennifer Harding (Portland, Ore.) d. Shannon Wright (Las Vegas), 21-18, 21-16; Peggy Steding (Odessa, Tex.) d. Karin Walton (San Clemente, Cal.), 21-16, 21-9.

MEN'S SEMIFINALS

Steve Strandemo (San Diego) d. Rich Wagner (Paterson, N.J.), 21-14, 21-13; Jerry Hilecher (St. Louis) d. Davey Bledsoe (Kingsport, Tenn.), 21-5, 21-8.

WOMEN'S FINALS

Harding d. Steding, 21-6, 21-14.

MEN'S FINALS

Strandemo d. Hilecher, 21-7, 12-21, 11-8.

MEN'S AMATEUR—Rick Dern (Chicago), d. Doug Cohen (St. Louis), 21-15, 21-17.

MEN'S SENIOR—Bill Schmidtke (Minneapolis), d. Al Ferrari (St. Louis), 21-11, 21-7.

WOMEN'S AMATEUR—Susie Dugan (Dallas), d. Hope Weisbach (Tempe, Ariz.), 21-5, 21-9.

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Charlie Brumfield (San Diego)	\$700
Mike Yellen (Southfield, MI)	\$700
Dennis McDowell (Bloomington, IL)	\$700
Craig McCoy (Riverside, CA)	\$700
Marty Hogan (St. Louis)	\$300
Mike Zeitman (Memphis)	\$300
David Fleetwood (Memphis)	\$300
Steve Chase (Phoenix)	\$300
Ben Koltun (St. Louis)	\$300
Steve Keeley (Lansing, MI)	\$300
Mark Morrow (Los Angeles)	\$300
Don Thomas (Phoenix)	\$300

WOMEN

Jennifer Harding (Portland, OR)	\$1,300
Peggy Steding (Odessa, TX)	\$800
Karin Walton (San Clemente, CA)	\$450
Shannon Wright (Las Vegas)	\$450
Janell Marriott (Salt Lake City)	\$250
Sarah Green (Memphis)	\$250
Martha McDonald (Gainesville, FL)	\$250
Kathy Williams (Denver)	\$250
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Derek Dickey



An Athlete with Options

By Mark Wheeler

Let's set the scene: Your name is Derek Dickey, and you're a professional basketball player who keeps in shape during the off-season by playing racquetball. You're delighted when you find your ability in your "casual" sport is good enough to have qualified you as one of eight finalists in the \$50,000 Coor's Beer All-Pro Racquetball Tournament this January in Las Vegas.

But even as things are going well in racquetball, your basketball career has run into a snag. Waived by the Golden State Warriors after five years because you were injured, you finished out last season with the Chicago Bulls, then tried out as a free agent with the Los Angeles Lakers this past fall. And even though you felt you were performing well in training

Dickey on his way to a 21-11, 21-5 win over Buffalo Sabres hockey player Jim Schoenfeld in Coors tourney.

camp. Coach Jerry West tells you you've been cut.

So, disappointed and a little bitter, you return to your home in Oakland, biding your time and staying in shape by playing racquetball, while your attorney hunts for another basketball team that might be interested in you.

But as you work out, in the back of your mind is a conversation you had with your friend Charlie Brumfield, who told you that with some concentrated work, you could make it on the professional racquetball circuit. And though you're not yet ready to forget basketball, you have the confidence to think that it just could work out...

"It almost frightens me to think of my potential (in racquetball)," says Dickey. "I know that with some work I could be very good at it."

There are few athletes these days who can play more than one professional sport. One that does come to mind is Golden State Warrior guard John Lucas, who also plays World Team Tennis. But Dickey is keeping his options open.

Dickey is a soft-spoken, quiet gentleman who simply has self assurance. It's too bad he can't devote more time to racquetball.

"I can only play racquetball on a regular basis three months a year," says Dickey. "When you're under contract, you don't have the time, and coaches don't like you to play other sports. Besides, during the season I'm totally dedicated to basketball."

Dickey has never taken a racquetball lesson, yet he was singled out by various touring racquetball pros as a man with potential to make it on the pro circuit.

"Racquetball is something I would have to completely dedicate myself to," says Dickey. "But the more I play the game, the more I realize there's so much to learn." Dickey breezed through his qualifying segment of the Coors' tournament. Open only to professional athletes who had earned a minimum of \$15,000 in their respective sport, the competition was broken into different sports divisions. Dickey played in a combined basketball/hockey section, easily winning his bracket. In four matches he scored 168 points and gave up only 33. He won two games by scores of 21-0, 21-0.

"I was a little surprised at how easily I won my section," says Dickey. "I guess not that many professional athletes are playing racquetball yet. My toughest match was the last one against Jim Scho-





enfeld of the Buffalo Sabers (21-11, 21-5), but I think he lost his concentration in the second game."

Having collected the \$4,000 purse, Dickey's sights are pointed toward the January tournament, where each of the eight division winners will play in a round-robin format, competing for the \$14,000 first-place prize money. Dickey says he's working hard for it, but he's not really worried about the competition. "I'm going to win it," he says. "I play Gail Goodrich in the first round, but I've been told Al Oliver and Randy Vataha will be the toughest."

With all this confidence, will it be long before Dickey turns pro?

"It's something I'm considering, although right now basketball is still my first choice," says Dickey. "But it would take me at least a year of solid lessons, probably with Brumfield, before I would feel confident enough to try the pro tour." But for now it's basketball and Dickey says that racquetball actually helps him in that regard.

"Racquetball helps your quickness, and both sports require good reflexes and hand-eye coordination," says Dickey. "There's less running in racquetball, and of course less jumping, but both sports

Dickey accepts \$4,000 check from Coors vice president Lee Shelton for his victory in basketball/hockey portion of the All-Pro tournament.

are played on hardwood floors so it helps keep your legs in shape.

"I find I'm using a different set of muscles in racquetball, with a lot more use of my arms and shoulders. I'll need to develop that part of my body if I decide to turn pro."

But Dickey also realizes he won't be able to breeze onto the pro circuit as easily as he went through a bunch of hockey players. "I think I have a lot of natural ability for racquetball, but I've a long way to go. I still have friends who can run me off the court."

The friend he plays most often is Ron "Fritz" Williams, a former Golden State forward, and the man who introduced Dickey to the game when Dickey first came to California as the Warrior's second round draft choice in 1973 out of the University of Cincinnati.

"I've never even won an amateur tournament," says Dickey, "I came close once, but the guy beat me when I just ran out of

gas from being out of shape. I was really embarrassed to be a professional athlete and lose 'cause I ran out of wind. I'm determined never to let that happen again."

Dickey plays in various clubs throughout the Bay Area, and finds the level of competition very high. "I think that may have helped me in the Coors tournament." Dickey became involved with the tournament when he saw a general invitation that was sent to all the professional teams.

"Most of the players ignored it because they don't play racquetball yet, or they're just getting into it, or they don't have time. But I saw it and figured, 'why not?'"

If Dickey does hook on with another team it could conflict with his participation in the Coors finals in January.

"Basketball is still my profession, and my life's work. For the first time in many seasons, I'm completely healthy and ready to play. If I sign with someone, I'll just have to try to work it out so I can play in the racquetball tournament," says Dickey.

While at Golden State, Dickey averaged about 7 points a game while playing between 18 and 24 minutes. He was the



Derek Dickey: "It almost frightens me to think of my potential in racquetball."

third forward behind Rick Barry and Jamaal Wilkes (who are now with Houston and Los Angeles, respectively).

But Dickey is not satisfied with his career in pro basketball, and places part of the blame on "politics" in the NBA.

"There are guys on different teams who are starting and making more money based on their notoriety in the league or their college reputations, and their statistics don't bear them out.

"I just don't feel I've been given the same opportunities or confidence. I feel I am a good, solid, all-around forward who is capable of starting. It's just a matter of finding the right coach or team that needs what I can offer."

Recurring injuries have not helped his career either. Dickey believes he was waived by the Warriors because he was hurt at a time they desperately needed a healthy forward. But he was especially disappointed when he was cut by the Lakers, since it was one of the few times he went into a training camp completely healthy.

"I always seemed to have something

wrong in previous camps. Once it was torn ligaments in my ankle, other times it's been pulled muscles. But at the Laker camp I felt good and thought I was performing well."

Dickey feels the reason he was cut was due to the particular situation that existed in L.A. "Being cut made me more aware of the world of basketball," says Dickey. "Jerry West told me ten of his players had no-cut contracts, so it simply became a question of economics, and of what they needed at the time.

"It took a lot out of me, but I've had to accept it as one of the phases of life you go through. I'm not going to let it affect me. If anything, it's helped to make me a stronger person by showing me what my weaknesses are."

In the meantime Dickey's attorney is negotiating with four or five different teams that have expressed interest in him. Dickey is staying busy by running two miles a day and shooting baskets at a local gym in the afternoon.

"I still have the incentive to play basketball. This is the time of year when you start to get the "bug" about playing again. So right now I'm pretty anxious."

But he's not forgetting about the all pro tournament either, and is playing a minimum of ten racquetball games a day in preparation.

Dickey was raised in Cincinnati, and played college ball from 1969 through 1973, where he was the University of Cincinnati's leading scorer, averaging 17 points and 12 rebounds a game. After being drafted by Golden State, Dickey settled in Oakland where he lives with Barbara, his wife of nine years, and their three children, the oldest of which is eight. "He's a soccer player."

His wife co-owns and operates a beauty salon in Burlingame, a Bay area suburb. To relax, Dickey stays at home and spends as much time as he can with his kids.

"I spend so much time on the road traveling with basketball, that I'm afraid the kids sometimes forget who I am. I want them to know they have a father," says Dickey.

The two cliches used when describing athletes and entertainers these days are "superstars," and "multi-talented." No one is just a star, or just talented. You may not be able to describe Dickey in either of those terms, and it might even be stretching the truth to label him a star. But Dickey is a professional athlete, something most children only dream about, and a man who just might turn up one day to challenge the likes of Marty Hogan or Davey Bledsoe. It must be nice, in this era of specialties, to have that option. ●

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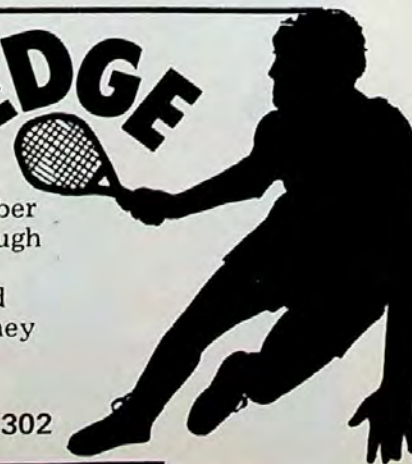
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How to Prepare for a Tournament

By Steve Strandemo

EDITOR'S NOTE: As racquetball's popularity increases, the popularity of tournament competition increases also, which means the average weekend player now gives serious thought on how to prepare for it. With that in mind, RACQUETBALL ILLUSTRATED asked Steve Strandemo, a veteran of the pro racquetball tour, to analyze his own day-by-day preparation for a tournament. We asked him to talk about everything from practice sessions to eating habits to dealing with anxiety to socializing (or the lack of it) during the week of a tournament. His analysis generally is based on a week in September in St. Louis, at an NRC tournament he won.

MONDAY

The first days of the week of a tournament tend to differ only slightly from any other Sunday and Monday. The main difference is simply that you know an event is coming up and so you begin to think about it, in terms of getting ready.

I keep my schedule very flexible on these days, so I can get some good practice matches in at the drop of the other guy's invitation. I don't want to lose some valuable practice time against a good player because I am already committed to go sightseeing with my best friend's brother's aunt. Hopefully, I'll get a couple of good matches each day. I play hard, working on shots and technique.

I make sure I get enough rest, to ease mind and body. I don't want to find myself worrying on Thursday about the sleep I lost on Monday and Tuesday. And I know, if I miss sleep during the week, that it'll catch up with me at tournament time.

On the other hand, I don't think I have to go into hibernation early in the week. The idea merely is to get enough. Then,

on Tuesday when I reach the city where the tournament is to be played, I'm neither ahead nor behind on sleep. Therefore, I have one less thing to worry about and I am that much more at ease and in a positive frame of mind. I have eaten normally, slept normally and practiced normally, so I feel comfortable when I take off for the tournament.

TUESDAY

If I am flying from my home in San Diego back to the Midwest or East, I usually will take a morning flight. And usually there are a couple other San Diego pros on the same flight.

After arriving and checking in at the hotel, I usually go over to the club where the tournament is to be played. I do this for a couple of reasons. For one, you can sense the excitement beginning to build, and it's like a tonic. There's nothing else like tournament competition. It's a little different from a pick-up game on the weekend.

For another, there are always other good players around, and you can play two or three hard games to get your circulation going again after the plane trip. It does take the jet lag out of you. Travel can make you feel sluggish, and I always find that that first good workout after arriving refreshes me, energizes me.

Some players prefer to make this first workout after arrival a light one. They'll go out and hit for awhile, break a good sweat, but nothing more. I like to play harder, against a good opponent, because I missed my regular morning workout while I was traveling.

I know how I want to feel Tuesday night. I don't want to sit around, but I don't want to play strenuously, either, with a tournament right around the corner. I want to be rested, but also loose. I am building toward a peak of performance.

I'll play two or three games, probably against another guy in the tournament. I've worked up a good sweat and I am

pleasantly tired. It's the comfortable sort of state of mind that, after a good meal and some conversation, leads you back to your hotel room and into bed, where sleep comes easily, spontaneously.

WEDNESDAY

I see no reason to ask the hotel operator for an early wake-up call Wednesday morning, because this is more of a day for relaxation before the tournament begins Thursday morning.

Then again, I don't want to oversleep. I would not, for example, sleep until noon. That's going overboard, breaking routine. It requires too much of an adjustment of the body's systems. Racquetball asks a lot of your body, and I don't think you should go pulling surprises on it.

So I'll be up by about 9 A.M. and go down and have breakfast—a good breakfast. No secret formulas. Just eggs and bacon or whatever. I think a balanced diet is sufficient to provide you with all the vitamins and minerals and energy you need to play competitive racquetball. I know that vitamin supplements are popular, and a lot of guys on the tour take them. I have nothing against that. I just don't like to have to remember to bring the bottles.

After breakfast I'll loosen up and stretch a bit. It's important, I think, to follow a regular daily stretching routine, even on a day of rest. If you play hard early in the week, your muscles are going to be tight. If you wait until 30 minutes before your first match on Thursday to try to loosen up, you may find yourself in a literal bind. Daily stretching keeps you loose.

I want this day to be a relaxing one, mentally and physically. I don't want to go running around, hither and thither, but neither is it good just to sit around the hotel all day doing nothing. You can get sluggish that way.

I might jog a little bit in the morning, to keep the juices moving and check my legs, see if they feel springy and ready.

Then I might go to the club and hit awhile; nothing strenuous, just a court to myself and a little hitting, breaking a sweat.

After lunch, I like to find some diversion, something to get my mind off things. I'll read the paper, or a couple of magazines. In St. Louis, I took a stroll down to a shopping center several blocks away, just to look around and relax. I don't think it's good to worry about preparation all week long. Pretty soon, you'll start worrying about getting enough relaxation, and who can relax when they're worried? I think it's better to get your mind off of it altogether. Read; go sightseeing or windowshopping; watch soap operas if you do normally.

Later in the afternoon I'll go to the club and watch the qualifying rounds. I don't stay too long, but I like to watch players I haven't seen before.

I see no reason to play a hard match on Wednesday. I've had quite a bit of practice already in the week, and at this point I need rest more than play. If I don't have all my shots down by now, there's not much I could do about it today. I'm better off staying off the court.

Dinner on Wednesday is "normal," again, which means of course well-balanced: A steak, say, with baked potato, vegetable, salad, milk, and dessert. Other people prefer some version of a specialized diet, and there's nothing wrong with that. I just happen to be geared to a plain old decent meal.

I like to eat very well just before a tournament. When you get into these tough matches, you don't want your weight to drop below your normal playing level. If you get too light, you get weaker, and your stamina drops.

I don't want to overeat, to the point I'm stuffing myself, but I do want a little calorie surplus. I like to come into a tournament a couple of pounds over my playing weight. The key, I think, is to step on the scales at the end of the tournament and find yourself at your regular playing weight. That takes proper maintenance of diet.

It's impossible to tell another person how to achieve that level of maintenance, because we all respond differently. Personally, I eat rather heartily, because my rate of basal metabolism is high. On Wednesday, for example, I may eat three regular meals, plus a good snack in the evening. The only definite diet advice I might give is, don't change your particular routine.

Many people like a beer or wine with dinner, or just to relax. I do too, but I tend to drink milk, mostly, during a tournament week. If your body is in condition, a few beers aren't going to hurt. Many of the pros on the tour like a nightcap, and it certainly doesn't cramp their style the

next day. Of course, nobody over does it.

A nightcap might help people relax, when the pre-tournament jitters begin to set in. On Wednesday evening, it is easy to be nervous. Different people deal with it in different ways. I don't want to dwell on the tournament, but I don't want to push it completely from my mind, either. There's a balance that needs to be struck between anxiety and composure. The anxiety needs to be there to keep the adrenalin ready to flow, because the quality of tournament competition is such that some guy you never heard of will knock you off if you're not ready.

But you don't want to get so tense that you feel drained, because if you do, then you are. You don't want to play the tournament in your mind. If that happens, you usually sweat yourself into the finals, and then as you're about to take home the championship trophy, you skid back to reality, feeling deflated. And you are.

THURSDAY

The first day of the tournament. Usually, I'll have to play twice; once in the early afternoon, again in the late evening.

I get up early—about 8 A.M.—and have a good breakfast—eggs, bacon, toast, milk—and then do a little stretching. Later, at about 11 P.M. I'll have a little sandwich, and some fruit and milk, so I won't feel too hungry by the 1 P.M. match.

I don't want to feel "full," or overweight when I play, but I don't want to feel hungry. I want the sensation of an energy reserve, in case the match goes to a third game or tiebreaker. I guess I play a little hungry, but not so hungry that your stomach is growling at you.

Again, it's a matter of metabolism. What you eat, and how much, and when, depends entirely on what makes you feel comfortable and ready. Some people eat as much as four hours before a match and get along nicely. Others will grab a candy bar between games. It all depends on the individual.

While I have nothing against the "health food" kick, I do think it can present a logistical problem at tournament time. You may have trouble finding a health food restaurant near the tournament site, and that is just another source of anxiety, unless you bring all your food with you. And even that presents one more thing to think about. I like the security of knowing that most clubs have a snack bar and that I can grab my 11 A.M. sandwich without much fuss.

I'll rest for a couple of hours after the first match, then eat again about 6 P.M., if I am to play at 9 P.M. I get as much rest as I can, but still do the stretching exercises periodically.

In St. Louis, I played a very tough match Thursday night, against Marty Hogan. I am very conscious of my opponent, once I know who it's going to be, and of his particular skills. I try to be ready to play no matter who it is, but because Marty hits with such power, I know I have to be even more ready. I know that I've got to be ready to move, my body is going to have to respond instantly. If it doesn't, I'm going to get overpowered and it will be a long night. I guess I was ready in St. Louis; I beat Marty in an 11-8 tiebreaker.

Theoretically, a player should be able to play one point at a time. In reality, you play series of points, in trends or stages. You get the feel of how your opponent is hitting the ball, and then you make adjustments. You begin gathering information on your opponent's strengths and weaknesses and strategies as soon as the match begins. As soon as you can, you want to pick out an area or two of his game that you feel you can exploit.

I don't have anything special to say to an opponent as we're warming up. It's just banter, superficial talk. You can throw in a little psychological comment or two, I guess, but it's not really going to make much difference. Eventually, it'll boil down to who hits the shots. Anything you might say before the match will have been forgotten by the time play starts. A lot is made of "psych jobs" in this sport, but if you have all your shots down and are rested and ready to play, you're immune to psychology.

Getting enough rest is important once the tournament begins, especially to your legs. You should stay off your feet for the most part when you aren't playing. I don't mean you have to be lying down or asleep all the time, but you can put your feet up and read a magazine. It is not a good time to go sightseeing.

Usually I get to the club about an hour before my match. There is no magic formula for activities prior to a match. Whatever you like to do is fine. Some play backgammon, others keep to themselves, others watch a match in progress. Some come early to watch an opponent play. I don't feel that's necessary for me, because by now I am pretty familiar with the skills and styles of the guys I might be playing.

After a late-evening match, I'll get something to eat. It's not a huge meal, but something to keep me from feeling hungry during the night. I've just expended a lot of calories, especially against a guy like Hogan, and they need to be replaced or I'll start to feel really empty.

Some players get together after the first day's matches and go out, have a drink, go dancing, go to a party. Whatever relaxes them. It does take a couple of hours to unwind after a hard match,

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and I never get to sleep before 1 a.m. or so. But I don't think I could adjust to coming in at 4 a.m., get four or five hours' sleep, and be ready to play on Friday.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY

One of my little unwinding exercises after Thursday night's match is mental. I know who I am going to play on Friday, and I know how I played Thursday night. I like to just go back and evaluate my game, what I did to win the match, what shots I scored on. Then I compare that to my next opponent's strong and weak points.

I don't play the match in my head; it's just a little rolling around of possibilities as I'm getting ready for sleep.

Early in the day, on Friday, I'll have put together a tentative game plan, but again I don't want to spend the whole day thinking about it or I'll be drained by the time the actual match is to be played. I want to save both my physical and mental quickness for the court.

In St. Louis I knew I wouldn't be playing until late in the evening on Friday against Craig McCoy.

The rest of the day is more or less a carbon of the day before. If there were an important match being played, I would probably watch it. I know most tennis players never watch other matches, but racquetball players like to see fellow players in tournament action.

Again, I try to keep that anxiety-composure balance. I don't want to "over-worry" the match coming up. Hopefully I've got enough things lined up to do to keep me quietly busy. No sense worrying; you just have to go in and do what you do best. Don't spend the day thinking about racquetball. You've had plenty of practice, know what you want to do, and there's no need to rethink it all now. Read a magazine.

I beat Craig that night, in a long tie-breaker. It was a good day. So was Saturday, when I beat Rich Wagner in a tough semi final match.

After the match, I got something to eat, same as Friday night. I think it was a steak and baked potato. I wanted to get to bed as soon as I could, because I had to be up earlier on Sunday than any of the previous days. I thought a little bit about my match with Wagner, and about Jerry Hilecher, whom I would meet in the finals Sunday. I think he went to a casual party with some of his hometown St. Louis friends after his match Saturday. Whatever is relaxing. And in our own ways, we were both relaxing.

You need to get up and get going Sunday morning, because the finals usually are played at 1 p.m. I was up by 8 a.m. and down to breakfast, and after that I

stretched a little. Then I propped my feet up in my room and read the morning paper, and a couple of magazines.

I had another bite to eat just before going to the club. I didn't need to hit, or take any extra warmups; I had just played the night before.

The last few minutes of preparation never vary. I get to the locker room, get into my playing clothes, stretch thoroughly, and test the game balls.

And then it's 0-0; play ball.

I beat Jerry, 21-9, 12-21, 11-8.

* * *

I realize my schedule is tailored to the pro tour's schedule, which always begins on Thursday, while most amateur events at the local level begin on a Friday. But if you see any merit in my

scheme of preparations, it is adaptable readily enough to a Friday start. Just rest on Thursday, and don't overdo earlier in the week. I know many recreational players don't play every day like the pros do, but you shouldn't try to make up for that in the days prior to the event. You probably aren't in condition to play twice a day for five straight days prior to the tournament's start. If I could, I would schedule a good match on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, then rest Thursday. Don't do anything more than hit awhile on Thursday. It's better to build up your tournament intensity, work toward a peak. Your systems will sense that a big event is coming up, and your body will get itself ready without any superficial hyping. Have fun, do what you do best, and don't worry about it all day.

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Adrienne Barbeau Plans to Stay With This Game

By Isobel Silden

She really seemed the girl least likely to succeed at racquetball, but Adrienne Barbeau, who was a semi-regular on the "Maude" TV series these last few years, has become a pretty fair player.

Barbeau was one of the "company of five" on Maude. There was this unwritten, but inflexible rule that prevails in many situation comedies: Surround the star with five satellites to bounce lines off, and you've got a hit. It generally works.

Our heroine played Carol, Maude's divorced daughter who came back home to live with her young son, seldom seen because of budget and scholastic restrictions. With rare exceptions, her lines were limited to such gems as "Oh,

Maude," or "Really, Mother," and an occasional big scene such as a two- or three-line dialogue with Bill Macy, who played star Bea Arthur's husband, Walter.

The lady was wasted. So were her talents.

But that's all behind her now. Her career is zooming, and interestingly enough, Adrienne credits racquetball as playing an important part in her new lifestyle.

"It's funny, too," she muses, sitting back with a cup of tea. "Growing up in California, you have to learn to play tennis in order to graduate from high school. But I didn't like it." She wrinkles a good straight French-Armenian nose in distaste. "I really wasn't very athletic."

"She makes it sound as though she's talking about someone else. In a way she

is. Today's Adrienne Barbeau has changed considerably from the Sacramento-born, San Jose-educated youngster.

Maturation, of course, had something to do with it. She's worked hard to attain her current degree of stardom, which includes four important movies-for-TV, "Charlie and The Great Balloon Race" with Jack Albertson, "Crash," and "Sweepstakes." She is finally getting to play drama, her life's dream. Not soon-to-be forgotten, either, is her stunning portrayal of a rape victim with Jack Klugman on his "Quincy" series last year, an episode which generated more favorable and supportive mail than any the show has ever received.

This current lifestyle was preceded by a lengthy training period, which com-





Touring pro Jerry Hilecher gives pointers to Adrienne Barbeau and "Happy Days" Donny Most prior to Challenge of the Sexes match won by Most. Afterwards, Hilecher shows Barbeau proper grip technique.



menced at age 3, when Adrienne started studying ballet. Vocal lessons followed a few years later. She was active in both San Jose high school and community theatre. She was in the company when the San Jose Light Opera toured the Pacific area, entertaining U.S. servicemen.

Then came New York and appearances in "West Side Story," "Carnival," "The King and I," "The Boy Friend" and "Threepenny Opera." Her Broadway debut earned a Tony nomination for her performance in "Grease" on Broadway, and a Theatre World Award as "most promising actress in a musical."

And then there was "Maude," to quote that series' theme song. And concurrent with the end of its long run, racquetball came into Adrienne's life.

"About the only athletic thing I'd done before was riding a bike from 10th Street in Greenwich Village to the theatre on 45th Street, when I was in 'Fiddler' and 'Grease.' And I always like to swim.

"When I moved back here from New York, I took the obligatory tennis lessons, but I found the game too 'political.' I also had to find someone to play with me who wasn't too good. Then it was hard to find a court. A year ago this past July, an actress friend Garn (cq) Stephens, who played Harriet Hastings, the secretary on 'Phyllis', suggested I try racquetball. I agreed, figuring as always, I'd do it for a short while.

"But not this time," she shakes her mane of dark hair in self-amusement, laughing. "By Christmas, I was hooked. I was playing two hours a day, five days a week.

"It's much more strenuous and faster than tennis, but it doesn't require as much expertise. You can have a good time the first time you play. To me, it's like playing chess: It's all mathematical. It's much more unpredictable than tennis. You've got the four walls and ceiling to play off. It can do a thousand things. You can really get your frustrations out, slamming at that ball if you want to," she grins. Her even white teeth are an orthodontist's fantasy. Her even suntan is shown off in her gray sundress. She's the ideal California girl.

Adrienne flies all over the country to

Barbeau shows off production model of Jennifer Harding racquet manufactured by Ektelon at company's national sales meeting.

play racquetball. She takes lessons wherever she goes, although her first instructor was Bruce Radford in Van Nuys. She has played in Nashville, New York, Fresno, San Francisco and other places. In fact, she recalls, one time in the Kansas City airport when a man recognized her by saying "Don't forget your racquet."

Not likely.

A friend in Nashville to whom she introduced the game, credits it with saving his life. Adrienne says she is constantly being told how much weight she's lost.

"I actually haven't," she says. "I've just moved the weight all around. I have a whole new body and it's marvelous. I feel so good about my body and my strength. The other day when I was floating in my pool, I was conscious of the strength I feel, and how taut I am. It's very much like dancing, and a marvelous expenditure of energy. I can play on three hours' sleep and feel great afterwards."

Recently hospitalized for three days for minor surgery, she missed her daily game and despite her doctor's warning that she was "grounded" for six weeks, she was back playing a week later.

"I had to play because my body really missed it. It's improved my circulation too. I used to keep my pool at 82 degrees, but I like it much cooler now. It's a great way to release energy and aggression," she repeats. "And it also helped my back trouble by getting rid of the tension."

She will not go so far as to say it's almost a religious experience, but it has definitely changed her life.

"Now." She has saved the best for last, with true dramatic emphasis. "This is how playing racquetball has affected my career."

After time out for a second cup of tea, she explains:

"By studying how I play racquetball, I learned about my business. The realization came that I'm a slow starter. I was aware of it last time I was in New York to play '\$20,000 Pyramid.' I'm a slow starter in both racquetball and my career. I realized the opposition gets seven points on me, until I hit my stride. On 'Pyramid,' it wasn't until Wednesday of that week that I got going and won. I understood my strategy and serve, and



"By studying racquetball," says Barbeau, "I learned about my business. The realization came to me that I was a slow starter."

now I am aware that I'm hitting my peak.

"I used to go out and try to do too much. Now I'm relaxed. I don't chastise myself. I don't try to correct the mistake. I play the game. I gave up control and my game improved. So did my life and career."

The current man in her life is director-screenwriter John Carpenter, who does not play racquetball. They plan to get married early in 1979.

"I play primarily with men who are tall and long-armed," says Barbeau. "I'm 5' 2½" and short-armed. It just means I have to move a bit more."

Adrienne does not rule out the possibility of one day doing another TV series. But with one added amenity.

"If my series were a hit, I would not demand more money, a dressing room with a window, or any of those things," says Barbeau. "I would simply request my own racquetball court and shower, and an hour and 10 minutes for lunch. That way I could play for an hour, and have 10 minutes to shower."

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Captain Jim Tait and his all-women crew have not built a racquetball court on his yacht yet, but the crew still parade around the deck in racquetball fashions by KORI in preparation for docking and an all out charge to the nearest club. KORI has begun to make waves in fashion circles and their women's outfits are some of the most fashionable around. The KORI crew consists of Laura McCrite, Lona Miller, Stacy Rossman, Alexis Schreiner and Michele Somers.

Stacy Rossman (sky blue) and Laura McCrite (chocolate brown) get ready for a jog around the deck in warm-up suits by KORI of California. Top has a sport stripe on left sleeve; pants has elastic waist, with ribbed cuff and designer pocket. Suggested retail price: \$16 for top; \$24 for pants.



Alexis Schreiner (center) is wearing a snow white with baby blue trim two-piece outfit. Fashion stripe down side is made of Satinit. The outfit features a V-neck sleeveless top with wide V-neck trim of matching Satinit. Michele Somers (bottom) is wearing a black one-piece scoop neck design with decorator zipper. The outfit has two-inch fashion trim along the side. Matching Satinit along the scoop neck. Suggested retail price for each: \$28.

CLUB NEWS

MIAMI

Racquetball International Corporation (RIC) has purchased 5.2 acres of land at the intersection of the Palmetto Expressway and W. 44th Place, across from Westland Mall in Hialeah, according to RIC president Ed Torkelson, and plans to construct a 14-court, \$1.5 million racquetball club and fitness center called the Sportrooms of Hialeah.

RIC currently operates the Sportrooms of Sabal Chase in South Dade County and is presently converting the historic Coral Gables Coliseum into a 25-court facility, the Sportrooms of Coral Gables, which is expected to begin operation sometime in November.

RIC, which is building a nationwide chain of racquetball clubs, also has facilities open or under construction throughout South Florida, Alabama and Georgia.

The Sportrooms of Hialeah will contain 14 fully air conditioned courts, suitable for racquetball and handball. Two of the courts will have glass walls and adjacent spectator seating for exhibitions and tournaments.

The Sportrooms of Hialeah will also contain complete fitness centers for men and women with elaborate spas, including executive aerobic fitness programs, outdoor lap pool, Nautilus exercise equipment and a variety of other programs designed to improve the physical condition of members in all age groups.

For relaxation, the Sportrooms will contain a large lounge area with a seven-foot television screen, game room, health food bar, nursery and fully stocked pro shop.

Five-time national handball champion Fred Lewis is the resident pro for the Sportrooms, and five-time national racquetball champion Charlie Brumfield is the touring pro. Brumfield visits each of the Sportrooms throughout the year, holding clinics for members.

NEW ORLEANS

Racquetball One is New Orleans latest racquetball facility.

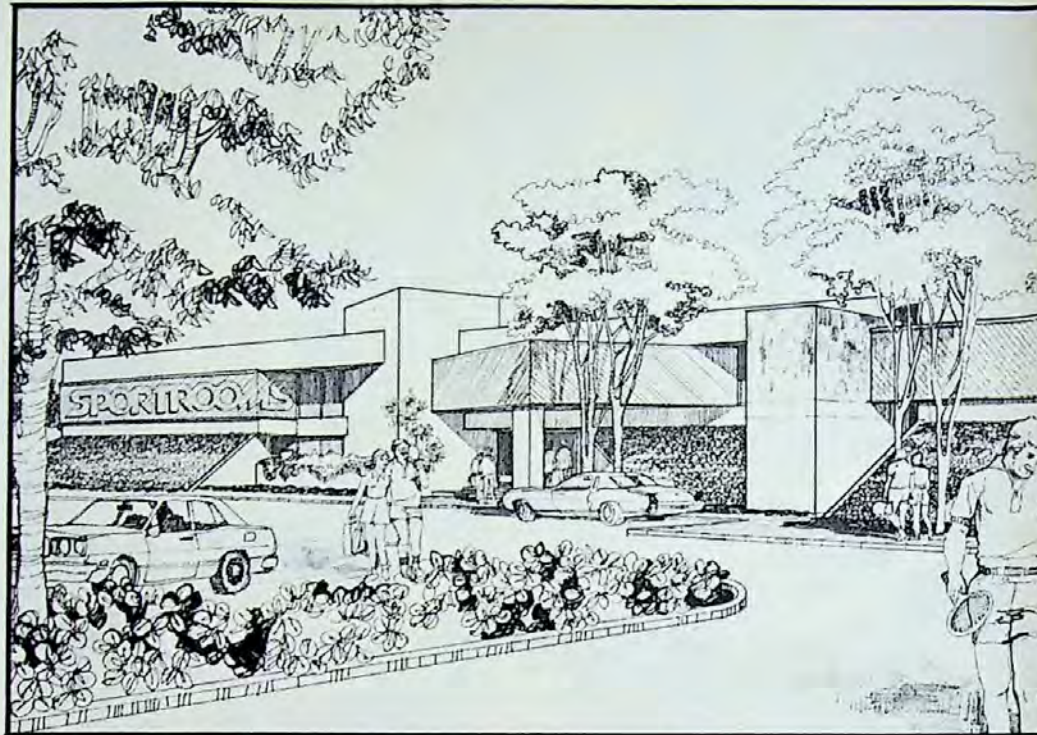
Located on the 13th floor (who's superstitious?) in the One Shell Square, this facility will have six racquetball courts (with planned expansion to 10), some with glass backwalls, a complete pro shop, locker rooms, exercise equipment, saunas, health bar and players lounge.

One highlight will be men's and women's whirlpool baths with a panoramic view of the city.

The facility was designed by Ronald E. Kilcrease Assoc. It will be open from early morning until late evening.

INDIANAPOLIS

Construction has begun at East Washington Street (U.S. 40) and Mitthoefer Rd., adjacent to Washington Square Mall in Indianapolis, Indiana, on the "21st Point Racquetball Club."



The \$1.1 million facility, to be completed in September of 1979, is the brainchild of Edward J. DeBartolo, Jr., owner of the San Francisco 49ers and executive vice president of the Edward J. DeBartolo Corporation of Youngstown, Ohio.

Earlier this year DeBartolo formed a new corporation, 21st Point, Inc., to develop the chain of clubs—all to be known as 21st Point Racquetball Club."

Each of the 32 projected clubs will be located on property that is part of, or near the vast network of DeBartolo regional shopping malls.

Designed by K. Anthony Hayek and Associates of Youngstown, Ohio, each club—contemporary in design—will house 15 championship courts, a fully equipped exercise room, steam, sauna and whirlpool baths, a supervised child care center, health food bar, and a complete pro-shop stocked with the latest racquetball-handball equipment, and designer apparel.

An impressive feature is the inclusion of an exhibition glass-walled tournament court with a 250 seat spectator gallery, equipped to handle televised matches.

The exterior of the bi-level building is fashioned of vertical panels in warm gray porcelain, accented with a dramatic entrance of deep reddish brown brick and finished by a reddish brown brick and Indian red rope roof. Earth surrounding the club, bermed upward four feet from ground level, provides an unusual base for abundant landscaping.

The clubs will also include wood beam ceil-

Artist's drawing of new Sportrooms racquetball club in Miami.

ings with solar bronze insulated skylights, hand-rubbed walnut handrails enclosing various levels, and abstract art works.

TULSA

Martial Arts instructor D.W. Kang has announced the grand opening of a \$1.1 million racquetball-martial arts facility at 6202 S. Sheridan Rd. in Tulsa.

The facility has over 20,000 square feet with eight racquetball courts, indoor swimming pool, indoor jogging track, whirlpool and sauna, over \$100,000 in Nautilus fitness equipment and 5,000 square feet of training area for the martial arts.

LUBBOCK, TEX.

Lubbock, Tex. the home of Texas Tech University, has opened a new racquetball facility at 5507 Brownfield Highway.

The complex, known as Supreme Court, will have 10 racquetball courts, spa facilities, pro shop and plenty of parking, and health food bar.

One rule, which is becoming increasingly popular among clubs, is that smoking is prohibited on the club premises at any time.

The club is being designed for energy conservation. Some portion of the structures are built underground and the building is capable of adapting to solar energy in the future.

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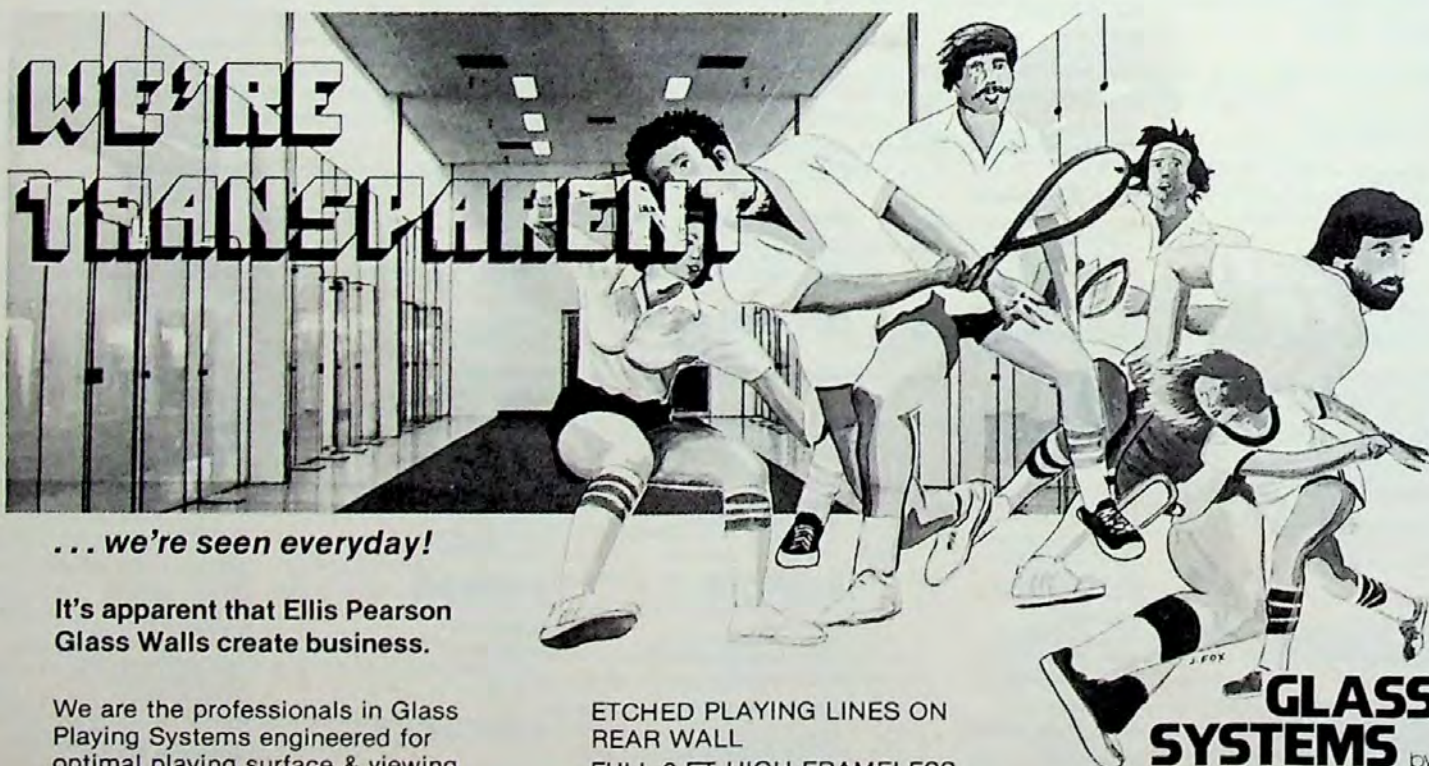
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Return of SERVE

by Davey Bledsoe

Ideally, we would like to return every serve with a rollout kill shot, but realistically that can't happen. Although very satisfying, it just isn't possible to consistently kill the ball off every serve.

Novice players should not be content with simply returning the ball. One needs to accomplish something in returning the serve to counteract the advantage the server has. You cannot afford to make any mistakes. A mistake usually means an easy shot for the opponent.

The return of serve should negate the server's advantage. It should force the server out of center court and into a defensive situation.

The first thing that needs to be mastered is the ready position. In the ready position, the knees and elbows are bent and the back is comfortably arched. The feet should be shoulder width and pointed toward the front wall. Weight is distributed equally.

The depth of the crouch is determined by the amount of flexion at the knees, not by bending at the waist. This is designed to facilitate quick lateral movement.

The racquet should be held in front of

your body. This position allows rapid movement into either the forehand or backhand positions. I usually assume a backhand grip position because most of the serves are directed to this side.

The next phase of the serve return process is the pivot and step over. The instant you recognize the direction of the serve, pivot with the lead foot and push off with the trailing foot.

One common mistake that novices make is to take a few short steps to get into position. One big crossover step takes less time and covers more ground.

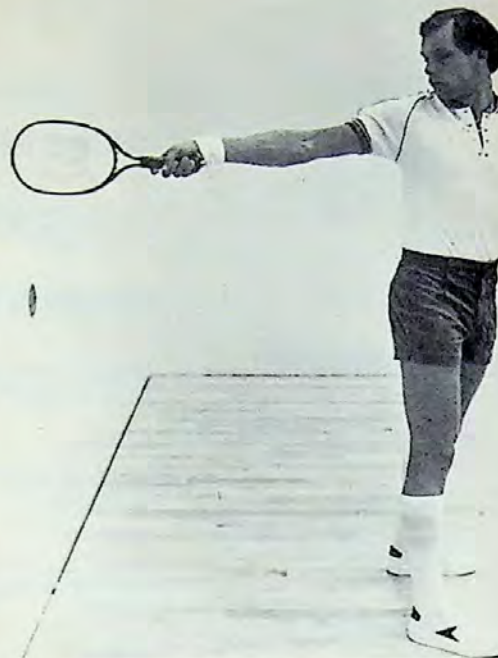
The movement should include a redistribution of weight to move into the shot. It is also important to get up on your toes. You want to turn the upper body into the back corner to insure the upper body rotation. The pivot and crossover insures proper rotation and this is necessary for maximum power.

Novice players usually fail to distribute their weight on the back foot and transfer it into the ball. The result is usually a lunge at the ball instead of a solid hit.

One way to tell if you are in a proper hitting position is by noticing where your upper body is facing. If it is facing the front wall you have probably moved out with the wrong foot. If you crossover, you are automatically facing the side wall.

In the ready position you should take in the entire scene visually. Your eye contact should be on the ball as it rebounds from the front wall, not the server.

Your return shot selection is basically one of five shots—ceiling ball, cross



The proper position for returning a serve is basically an arm's length plus a racquet from the back wall.

Davey Bledsoe shows the proper way to return a serve on the backhand side. Photo 1 shows the proper ready position with the knees bent and the racquet held in front of the body. Photo 2 is the pivot and crossover step. Photo three shows that the upper body should be facing the back corner in order to insure maximum rotation. At contact, the body weight should be transferred to the front with the ball hit off the front foot. Photo five shows the follow through to insure maximum power.



These three photos show the wrong way to return a serve. At right, Bledsoe shows how not to step into the ball. You can cover more ground by crossing your right foot over instead of stepping out with your left. Neither should you take a few short steps to get into position as shown below left. Body weight should be transferred into the ball. Step into the shot. Your upper body should be facing the side wall, not the front wall as shown bottom left.



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court pass, kill shot, Z-ball (or around the world shot) or a drive down the wall.

Players have problems figuring out when to use each type of return. The biggest difference between a good and bad player is the ability to "play smart."

The advanced player has learned how to play percentages. The number of options will be determined by the type of serve, the service execution and the server's court position.

For the most part, ceiling shots are safe against all types of serves, especially lobs and drive serves. The cross court pass is most effective against Z-serves and garbage serves to the forehand. The kill shot is done by instinct. It has a rare percentage of success, but is appropriate

to use when you feel right about using it. The drive down the wall is most effective off a backhand serve.

The ceiling shot is comparable to strategy play in basketball. A team works the ball underneath or in deep where you have an advantage in terms of coverage and accuracy. Don't force the shot. If you can't shoot the ball, go back to the key (the ceiling) and work up a new play.

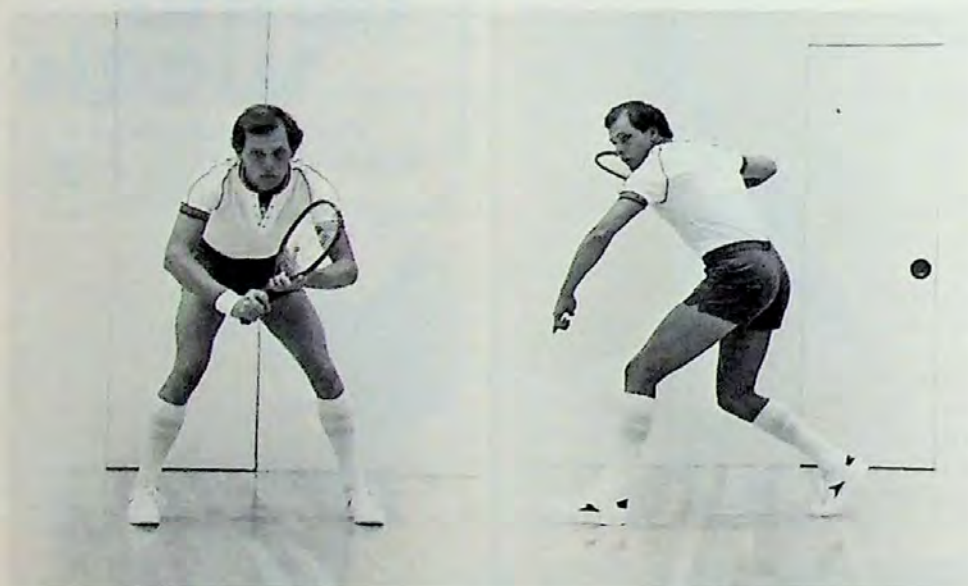
After a service return you should probably flow back in the direction of center court, but obviously the situation dictates the position. A common mistake of novice players is to occupy center court after every return. In that case, in the event of a ceiling ball rally, you would get pretty

tired always running back to the back wall.

It is important to try and anticipate the opponent's shot. Exercise a little patience and don't expend unnecessary energy.

Concentrate. If you allow your mind to wander, you will probably keep making the same mistakes.

In summary, to make a successful service return, force your opponent out of center court, change his play from offense to defense, play the percentages, execute simple techniques and remain flexible to the game situation. The more experience you get the more it will all come together.



Using basically the same philosophy as with the backhand, Bledsoe shows the proper way to return a serve on the forehand side: The ready position—with knees bent; the pivot and crossover step; the upper body rotating around; the redistribution of weight toward the front and the follow through. Remember to stay on your toes. Face the side wall at contact. And learn how to play the percentage shots.



The Proper Way to DIVE

by Steve Serot

You will not be judged by degree of difficulty on these dives. No one is going to be sitting on the side with cards screaming out 8.5 or 7.5 as in a swimming/diving meet.

But points do count in racquetball and diving is one way to save points or even get points.

Usually I dive when a ball is unreachable. But you can use it as an offensive weapon as well.

The dive is a crucial part of the game. If your opponent hits a good shot and your diving shot is a kill, it will probably take something from him psychologically. It may cause him to think about that shot or your dive or whatever and his next shot may not be as good.

My game is a very aggressive one. I shoot from all parts of the court. A dive is part of my game. Without it I might lose four or five points a match.

It used to be that I would dive when the score was 0-0, but that caused many injuries that were not necessary. Now I just dive when the game is very close or in all necessary points in the third game.

A good diver can make up for other parts of the game. My serve is not as powerful as some, but my diving ability makes up for some things I'm weaker at.

I've heard people say that divers are slow, and the only reason they dive is because of a lack of speed. But I don't think so. A lot of players dive simply because the shots are unreachable, and the only possible way to reach them is by diving.

To learn how to dive is also to learn how to avoid pain. Once people get over the pain factor, there will be no problem. First few years of my play I took a lot of punishment on the hips, elbows and knees.

It's just a matter of learning how to dive properly. You can't think about it. You have to do it. If you try and practice diving, you'll probably get frustrated and hurt. Just say to yourself you are going to dive on the third point or something and do it.

I have it down to the point now where, in effect, I do a one-handed push-up and then I pop up. My knees and hips never touch the ground. The only time the knee touches the ground is if the ball is hit so

hard and it gets too far in front of you or past you.

I've refined the diving technique to a certain extent. The beginning diver will usually get down and slide, hitting his chest or knees first. When swinging, the beginner will usually put weight on his hips. That could cause injury.

I usually take one step and lean, that is if the ball is three or four feet away. The further the ball, the more steps or more time in the air. You lunge for the ball.

The hand opposite the hitting hand is used as a brace, almost like you are in push-up position.

The swing is a stab. There is no time for a backswing.

In diving for a would-be unreachable shot, Steve Serot takes one step and leans forward (top photo). His knees or hips or chest do not touch the ground. In effect, he is doing a one-handed push up. The hand opposite the hitting hand is used as a brace. Then he takes a lunge at the ball.



When to Use the OVERHEAD & FLYKILL

by Peggy Steding

It may be a gamble at times to use a fly kill and overhead, but you have to gamble to win. If you go in there and play without ever taking a chance, you're going to get beat.

The fly kill is a good shot to catch an opponent off guard. An opponent usually expects you to let it bounce or let it go to the back wall, but if you are standing close by and the ball is coming hard, you can surprise your opponent by hitting it.

Most players will let it go to the back wall, so they figure you are going to let it go also. They turn around to see where the ball will be going, and you surprise them by hitting it. It's too tough for them to react.

A lot of times I would probably be better off to let it go to the back wall, but I never developed a big back wall game. I can shoot the ball better out of the air.

It is good to use a fly kill in the front or middle of the court. You can use it deeper, but there is less chance of hitting a winning shot.

With my style of game, I don't use it as a defensive shot. The fly kill is part of my

game. Maybe it stems from my tennis game, which is all serve and volley.

The main thing to get down is timing. Your hand-eye coordination is important. It is a more advanced shot, but like anything else, the more a person works at it, the better it can be handled.

A lot of times you hit it facing the front, or halfway facing the front and side wall. Contact should be out in front of the body.

I have a very short swing, so don't let that mislead you. It takes a normal swing.

Wrist action is still important, but you have to be a little quicker. A lot of times you don't have time to step into it.

You are really not taking a big step into it, anyway. You are more or less stepping into the same spot. But your weight should be moving into it. You are shifting your weight from your back foot to your front foot.

A lot of times you don't need to use it, but you'd be surprised how many times you can catch an opponent off-balance. It is hard for an opponent to react to it, if he's expecting you to let it go.

OVERHEAD

An overhead in racquetball to me is similar to an overhead in tennis.

It's basically the same as judging a ceilinging shot. You back up to where you think it's going to drop, then get into position to see where it starts to drop. Then step into it and hit it.

There are different places to hit it. You can shoot it straight, or you can hit it side wall-front wall. The side wall-front wall shot is a better percentage shot, especially if your opponent is hanging back.

The arm action is really like a serve in tennis. Your arm comes over your shoulder and your racquet comes over your head.

Your body weight is on the back foot and as you hit the ball, it shifts to the front foot.

The best time to hit an overhead is off a ceiling game. Or even when your opponent is hanging back. I hit most of my overheads back into the corner.

You want to contact the ball at the top of the racquet, ideally in front of you. But there will be times the ball will be slightly behind you and you have already made up your mind to use an overhead. Then you have to arch back and hit it.

In tennis you are always taught to point to the ball while its coming down, sort of like eyeing a target. I never do it in racquetball. You probably don't have the time. It just takes time to get your timing down.

You can sometimes mix up your overhead with an overhead drive. You are facing more toward the side with a regular overhead and more toward the front with an overhead drive.

With a drive you lead more with your wrist and with a regular overhead you lead more with your racquet.



Peggy Steding shows that the proper place to contact the ball on an overhead is at the top of the racquet, when the ball is slightly in front of you. She compares it to a serve in tennis. The arm comes over the shoulder and the racquet over the head. The body weight shifts from the back foot to the front foot.



The fly kill is a good shot to catch an opponent off guard. It is basically a volley in tennis. You do not let the ball bounce as your opponent would expect. Instead you hit it on the fly. Contact should be made out in front of the body. You don't take a big step into the ball. You more or less stay in the same spot, only your weight moves into the ball.

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WRIST Action

by Steve Serot

If your shoulder or upper arm muscles seem strained or hurt, chances are you are using too much arm and not enough wrist in your game.

Wrist action is probably the most important part of the game. Forget your tennis play here. Don't keep a stiff wrist at contact as tennis pros tell you.

The first thing is to get your wrist cocked. Pretend you are in the army and salute. Salute parallel to the back wall.

With your wrist naturally cocked, extend your arm. Of course, your arm is not fully extended. Your elbow is slightly bent and slightly tucked into the body.

The wrist should be broken at the point your racquet makes contact with the ball. You should hear a swish of the racquet.

When your arm is fully extended, that is when you break your wrist. The extension point should be off your front foot.

So there are three basic segments—salute, extension and swish. The extension is basically your swing, which obviously widens as you approach the ball.

Practice it and be conscious of your wrist. Try hitting straight arm and then try breaking the wrist.

The difference in power will be like the difference between night and day.

To insure proper wrist action, your wrist must be cocked (1), as if you are in the Army and saluting parallel to the back wall. Next, extend your arm (2). The elbow is slightly bent. The racquet should be parallel to the back wall (3). When the arm is fully extended, that is the point at which you break your wrist. The extension should be off the front foot (4). If breaking the wrist properly, you will hear the racquet swish (5).



R_x FOR WINNING



A Good DIET Means a Good Performance

By Dr. Robert Scott

Dr. Dennis Burkitt, A relatively obscure physician working in East Africa solved a riddle that pretty much had baffled many other physicians.

Burkitt was studying causes of disease. And while many people were

coming down with everything from heart disease to cancer to diabetes to tooth decay in large populated areas, very few cases of these and other problems were recorded in East Africa.

The answer was in a person's diet.

The food that people in a civilized society eat is vastly different from, a rural, hunting and gathering society.

In East Africa at that time there were no processed foods, no refrigeration or freezing, no canning, no preservatives, no homogenizing, emulsifying, stabilizing, coloring, flavoring or any other artificial methods developed for us by food technologists.

The food the Africans were eating was natural. The food was consumed pretty much as found. Their living area gave them grains, fruit and vegetables, berries, nuts and some meats, if caught.

At some point Dr. Burkitt realized the African diet was high in natural fiber and that this might be the critical factor in causing a difference in health. The more he became convinced that, indeed, it was the extremely high natural fiber diet that was making the difference. The Africans were getting large amounts of fiber in unprocessed grains, fruits, vegetables, seeds, nuts and rice when it was available. The Westerners were receiving very tiny amounts of these fibers in their diets simply because most of the fiber had been removed in processing. It was that simple.

So what does this mean to racquetball players?

That it is essential that all of us who want to be in top condition for winning racquetball, as well as to guarantee top fitness and good health, just start paying attention to Dr. Burkitt's recommendations.

One may continue to eat the regular diet that you enjoy and what you may think is doing good things to your body. However, I strongly suggest that all of us listen to what Dr. Burkitt is trying to tell us.

From now on, your diet must include liberal amounts of the following foods:

BRAN: You've heard about this many times in the past, starting with your mother when she tried to get you to eat cold cereal with your breakfast. Bran has the highest fiber content of the most easily available foods. It's cheap, tasty, and combines easily with fresh dried fruits and milk for a very delicious starter in the morning after you've had your workout.

You only need 5 to 10 teaspoons of it daily and you're well on your way to getting enough fiber in your diet. Bran can be mixed in with anything that is baked, as well as into sauces, stews, and puddings, without altering their taste significantly. There are many breakfast cereals which will give you liberal amounts of bran. Some of them are 40% Bran, All Bran, Bran Chex, Raisin Bran, miniature and full sized Shredded Wheat.

BREAD: No more good old white bread. It's essentially tasteless and has no body of its own. It's really nothing but mush, and when one of the more clever bakers adds fiber in the form of wood (cellulose), it can really become disgusting. So it's back to whole wheat, whole rye, cracked wheat bread from the market, or whole grain breads made at home, and you (or your baker), can add bran flakes to the whole mess before it's shaped into rolls or bread and popped into the oven.

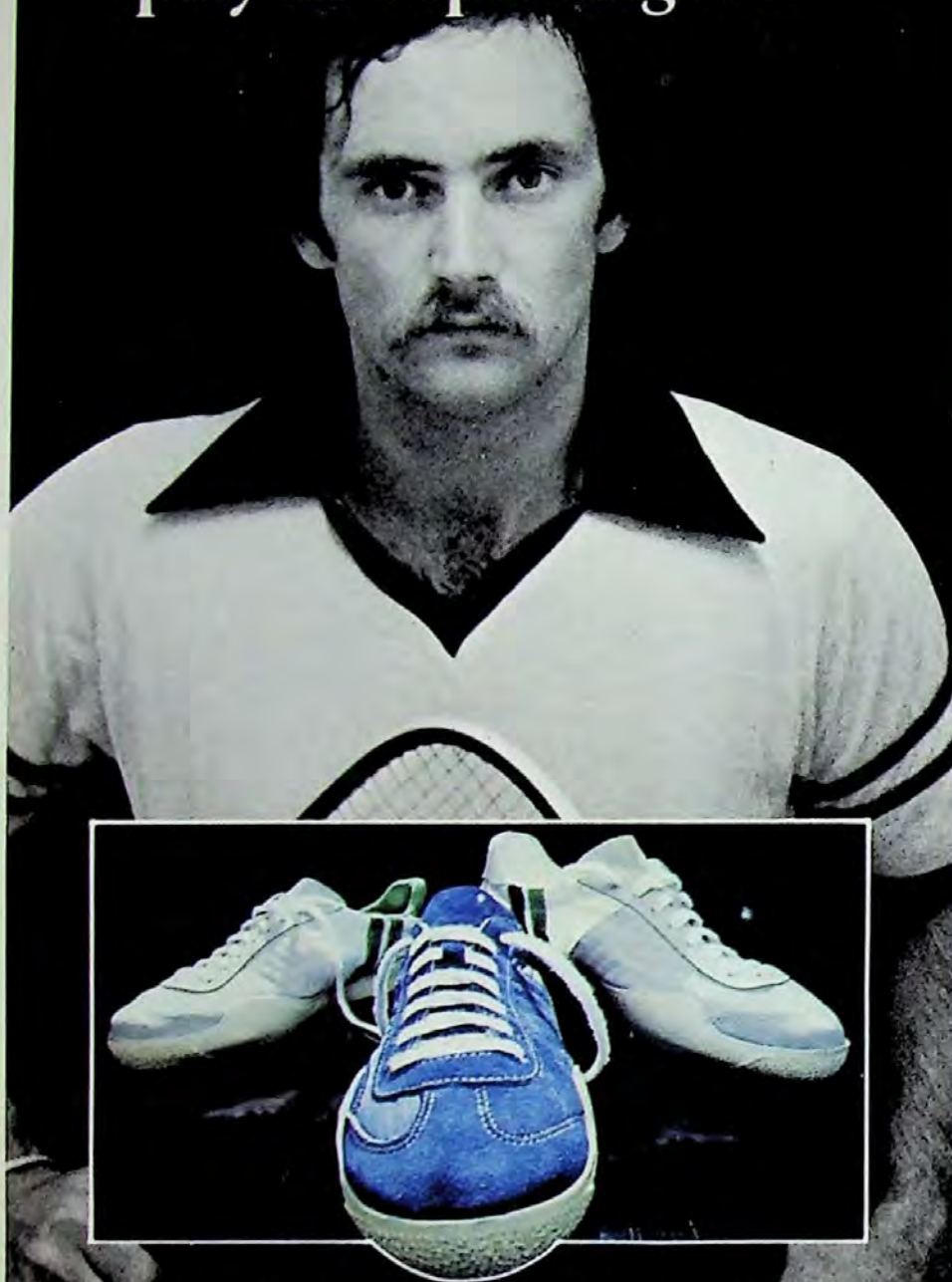
FRUITS are high on the list too. They can be eaten fresh at this time of the year and are a terrific snack between meals, during breaks from racquetball or as desserts. Even stewed or canned fruits are acceptable and as everyone on a diet knows, they can do wonders for cottage cheese. Get in the habit of keeping lots of cold, fresh fruit in the refrigerator and you'll soon stop thinking about candy bars and soft drinks which you know instinctively are not good for you. You can add bran flakes to the stewed fruits too. Eat the skins as well. They're rich in vitamins.

NUTS. Nowadays you can get them year around in the produce section of your market, so make a habit of including nuts in your daily diet. And I don't mean the canned, oiled, and salted nuts. I mean plain, bagged nuts with or without the shells. If you need to keep busy while you're watching TV, shelling nuts is a lot better than handling cigarettes and dipping into bowls of junk foods. Do a little work.

Vegetables are low in fiber but still have plenty of it. Eat them raw whenever possible, steamed, lightly cooked in a small amount of water or very fast in and out of the pressure cooker with very little water.

Don't forget potatoes. They're one of the best and are extremely high in Vitamin C. Don't throw away the skins. They're delicious and essential to a good diet. It just takes a little getting used to, but if potatoes are "tubbed and scrubbed"

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Oh yes, one other thing. The Copenhagen is now a family of shoes. Different colors and a high top make this line everything that you could possibly want.

Of course, all I want is a shoe that will help me win. That's Patrick.



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there's no reason the skin can't be eaten right along with the rest of the potato. How long has it been since you've really enjoyed eating a potato without being troubled by feelings of guilt and worrying about gaining weight? That's really a useless form of self-torture. Potatoes are simply another good form of carbohydrate, and we need plenty of carbohydrates in our diet to give us energy for racquetball. The potato has been unfairly maligned as something that makes us fat. It does not. It's a normal part of our everyday diet and should not be left out. If you are physically active, and you must be if you read this magazine, then you are burning up lots of calories every day and you need replacement. You can include a modest serving of potatoes in your diet every day and you are not going to put on weight.

RICE. Don't forget this food. Just try to get the unmilled type or if you cannot, then add bran flakes to your white rice and enjoy it with the rest of your food.

So now where does that leave us? If you jump into this changed diet with great enthusiasm, you are going to be in for a surprise. First of all, you may wind up with a stomach ache because of the unusual amount of bulk and fiber you'll be taking in. And since this is not what I had in mind in recommending an increase in dietary fiber, let me caution you to make this change gradually.

The end result of all of this is going to be an increase in time spent in the bathroom. And I don't mean brushing your teeth. This kind of diet is going to result in a great increase in the bulk going through your intestinal tract and that's the whole idea.

If we're to do something about all these diseases of civilization that I've been talking about in this article, we must increase bulk and we will be going to the bathroom more often. The faster transit time through the body and the ease of elimination are something we're trying to do. It's the slow transit time, the sluggishness, the increased abdominal pressures and the constipation that we're trying to eliminate. And this is just the diet to do it for you.

Think about it and if what I've said makes sense, then start to change your diet. I think you are going to notice a big difference quite quickly, and it's going to be for the better. Throw away your laxatives, grab a handful of fruit and head for the racquetball courts. I'll see you there.

TOURNAMENTS/NEWS

MOTOR CITY CLASSIC

by Bill Zavestoski

The reigning king and queen of racquetball showed that their failure to reach the finals in the season's first stop on the Colgate Pro Tour may have been just a fluke.

Rebounding from their setbacks in St. Louis, Marty Hogan and Shannon Wright, national champions in 1978, retained their top-seeded positions by winning their respective titles at the \$30,000 Leach Motor City Racquetball Classic.

But the tournament, held at the Southfield Racquetime Center in suburban Detroit, still had its share of surprises.

One of the biggest was an opening round victory by Rick Dern over sixth-seeded Steve Strandemo, who took the \$4,500 top prize at the Jack-In-The-Box Classic in St. Louis. Dern, of Chicago, eliminated the San Diegan in the round of 32, 14-21, 21-11, 11-5.

In women's play, it may have surprised some people that Marci Greer of San Diego advanced to the finals to face Wright, but more surprisingly, none of the top eight seeds other than Wright even made it to the semi-finals.

Hogan and Wright went through the entire tournament without losing a single game. In fact, Wright never allowed more than 12 points in any game.

Advancing to the quarterfinals with wins over Eric Campbell of Dallas (21-9, 21-16) and Gary Stephens of Memphis (21-9, 21-11), Hogan took on fifth-seeded Craig McCoy of Riverside, Cal., and registered a 21-19, 21-6 victory. After a close first game, Hogan scored the first 16 points of the second to decide matters quickly.

Hometown favorite Mike Yellen of Southfield matched Hogan's string of 16 straight points in his 21-16, 21-15 quarterfinal win over fourth-seeded Ben Koltun of St. Louis. Down 5-15 in the second game, Yellen, seeded eighth, reeled off the match's last 16 points.

"When I fell so far behind in the second game, I had to gamble," said Yellen. "I started shooting more and took lower percentage shots, but they gave me the chance to catch up quickly when I got them in."

Davey Bledsoe and Jerry Hilecher put on the most exciting match of the tournament in their quarterfinal showdown. After Bledsoe won the first game 21-3, stringing together 14 points to open the match then seven more following Hilecher's three, the pair played nearly even the rest of the way.

Bledsoe came from a five-point deficit to tie the second game at 20-all before Hilecher finally won it on his fifth game point. Hilecher, seeded third, built 4-1 and 10-6 leads in the tiebreaker, but couldn't come up with the 11th point which would have moved him into the semifinals.

Bledsoe fought off three match points by Hilecher in his spirited comeback and on his own second match point pulled out the victory,



Rich Wagner (left) reaches for shot against Marty Hogan in finals of tourney pro stop in Detroit. Hogan won.

Photos by Bill McNeece

Shannon Wright rolls out a shot against Marci Greer in women's finale of Detroit tourney. Wright won.



The workers who put asbestos on this ship may be in danger

During World War II, one of the materials workers used to build this ship was asbestos. Nobody knew it then, but breathing asbestos dust can cause serious lung diseases, including cancer. Sometimes it takes 30 years or more for asbestos-related diseases to show. Millions of workers in construction, mining, and parts of the auto industry involved in brake and clutch installation and repair may have been exposed, too:

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setting up a semifinal meeting with second-seeded Rich Wagner of Paterson, N.J.

Bledsoe stopped Wagner, 21-16 in the first game, but Wagner scored 25 of 27 points in a stretch extending from 2-2 in the second game to 6-0 in the tiebreaker, and went on to a 16-21, 21-4, 11-5 victory.

In the Hogan-Yellen semi, Hogan raced to an 11-1 lead in game number one, and Yellen could get no closer than eight before a Hogan ace ended the game at 21-9. Hogan again built a 10-point lead in the second game (14-4) before Yellen scored six straight to make it 14-10. Hogan countered with four more to lead 18-10, and although Yellen managed to get within three at 19-16, Hogan picked up two more to put him in the final against Wagner.

Three aces helped Hogan gain a 10-1 lead in the opener, and when Wagner narrowed the gap to 16-12, Hogan scored five straight (the final two on aces) for the win. Marty had seven aces in all.

There were eight ties and seven lead changes in the second game. Neither player held more than a three point lead until Hogan ran five in a row for a 17-12 advantage. Wagner scored seven of the next nine points for a 19-19 tie, but Hogan then picked up the final two points for victory and the \$4,500 check that went with it.

"Any time you get that big a lead like I had in the first game, it's hard for the other player to catch up, so I was able to cruise in," said Hogan. "The second game was really close, but I hit two pretty good shots when I had to to win."

"He was just those two shots better than me in that game," said Wagner, who took home \$2,500 for his second-place finish.

Charlie Brumfield sat this one out with a tonsillitis attack. Greer showed early that she might be around for awhile when she upset second seeded Jennifer Harding of Portland, Ore., 21-15, 20-21, 11-5 in the women's round of 16. Harding had won the title in St. Louis.

Three other seeds were eliminated in the opening round when Jan Matthews topped fifth-seeded Karin Walton, 21-16, 21-11; Sarah Green downed seventh-ranked Kathy Williams, 21-19, 21-16; and Jean Sausser beat eighth-seeded Rita Hoff, 21-12, 21-9.

The remaining players who were seeded through eighth were bumped in the quarterfinals as Wright stopped sixth-seeded Martha McDonald, 21-12, 21-10; Sausser tripped fourth-seeded Peggy Steding, 21-17, 21-9, and Green knocked out third-ranked Janell Marriott, 21-10, 21-6.

In the semifinals, Wright easily trimmed Sausser, 21-5, 21-7, while Greer had a little tougher time handling Green, 13-21, 21-11, 11-4. Greer scored the final five points in the second game and 10 of the first 12 in the tiebreaker. In the championship match, Wright saw her 7-1 lead diminish to 7-6 before taking nine of the next 11 points for a safe 16-8 margin on the way to a 21-12 win. Ten straight

points gave Wright a 12-2 lead in the second game, and Greer could get no closer than eight on two occasions as Wright finished off the 21-8 title clincher.

"I concentrated well like I had planned to do, and when I got loosened up I was able to hit some really smooth shots," said Wright. For her victory, Wright earned \$1,300, while Greer picked up the \$800 second place check.

MOTOR CITY CLASSIC RESULTS

MEN (Round of 32)—Marty Hogan (St. Louis) d. Eric Campbell (Dallas) 21-9, 21-16; Gary Stephens (Memphis) d. Mark Morrow (Los Angeles) 21-19, 21-19; Larry Meyers (Oceanside, Cal.) d. Jerry Zuckerman (St. Louis) 21-18, 21-11; Craig McCoy (Riverside, Cal.) d. Dave Peck (El Paso) 21-17, 14-21, 11-0; Mike Yellen (Southfield, Mich.) d. Randy Stafford (Memphis) 21-2, 18-21, 11-10; Steve Mondry (San Diego) d. Steve Keeley (Haslett, Mich.) 21-10, 21-19; Paul Ikier (Minneapolis) d. Don Thomas (Phoenix) by forfeit; Ben Koltun (St. Louis) d. Dennis McDowell (Bloomington, Ill.) 21-10, 18-21, 11-3; Jerry Hilecher (St. Louis) d. Gill Schmidtke (Minneapolis) 21-12, 21-7, Jim Wiskus (Fon du Lac, Wis.) d. Jay Jones (Los Angeles) by forfeit; Davey Bledsoe (Kingsport, Tenn.) d. Lindsey Myers (Vancouver, B.C.) 21-16, 21-19; Mike Zeitman (Memphis) d. Steve Serot (St. Louis) 21-19, 18-21, 11-6; Rick Dern (Chicago) d. Steve Strandemo (San Diego) 16-21, 21-14, 11-8; Rich Wagner (Paterson, N.J.) d. Charlie Rish (Chicago) 19-21, 21-18, 11-1.

WOMEN (Qualifying)—Fran Davis (Philadelphia) d. Jan Pasternak (Houston) 21-9, 21-16; Jan Matthews (San Diego) d. Jean Oeschger (Sunnyvale, Cal.) 21-12, 14-21, 11-10; Judy Thompson (Davenport, Ia.) d. Judy Huhta (Detroit) 21-5, 21-

13; Susie Duggan (Dallas) d. Pat Schmidt (Milwaukee) 21-12, 13-21, 11-10.

MEN (Round of 16)—Mike Yellen (Southfield, Mich.) d. Steve Mondry (San Diego) 20-21, 21-2, 11-6; Ben Koltun (St. Louis) d. Paul Ikier (Minneapolis) 15-21, 21-13, 11-0; Jerry Hilecher (St. Louis) d. Jim Wiskus (Fon du Lac, Wis.) 21-10, 21-9; Davey Bledsoe (Kingsport, Tenn.) d. Mike Zeitman (Memphis) 21-15, 21-17, David Fleetwood (Memphis) d. Rick Dern (Chicago) 21-8, 21-14; Rich Wagner (Paterson, N.J.) d. Steve Chase (Phoenix) 21-6, 21-14; Marty Hogan (St. Louis) d. Gary Stephens (Memphis) 21-9, 21-11; Craig McCoy (Riverside, Cal.) d. Larry Meyers (Oceanside, Cal.) 21-7, 21-9.

WOMEN (Round of 16)—Jean Sausser (Chicago) d. Rita Hoff (St. Louis) 21-12, 21-9; Peggy Steding (Odessa, Tex.) d. Susie Duggan (Dallas) 21-12, 21-13; Janell Marriott (Salt Lake City) d. Fran Davis (Philadelphia) 21-12, 21-16; Sarah Green (Memphis) d. Kathy Williams (Denver) 21-19, 21-16; Jan Matthews (San Diego) d. Karin Walton (San Clemente, Cal.) 21-16, 21-11; Marci Greer (San Diego) d. Jennifer Harding (Portland, Ore.) 21-15, 20-21, 11-5; Shannon Wright (Las Vegas) d. Judy Thompson (Davenport, Ia.) 21-6, 21-10; Martha McDonald (Gainesville, Fla.) d. Sue Carow (Glenview, Ill.) 21-20, 21-4.

QUARTERFINALS

WOMEN—Shannon Wright (Las Vegas) d. Martha McDonald (Gainesville, Fla.) 21-12, 21-10; Jean Sausser (Chicago) d. Peggy Steding (Odessa, Tex.) 21-17, 21-9; Sarah Green (Memphis) d. Janell Marriott (Salt Lake City) 21-10, 21-6; Marci Greer (San Diego) d. Jan Matthews (San Diego) 21-10, 21-13.

MEN—Mike Yellen (Southfield, Mich.) d. Ben Koltun (St. Louis) 21-16, 21-15; Davey Bledsoe (Kingsport, Tenn.) d. Jerry Hilecher (St. Louis) 21-3, 20-21, 11-10; Rich Wagner (Paterson, N.J.) d. David Fleetwood (Memphis) 21-15, 21-9; Marty Hogan (St. Louis) d. Craig McCoy (Riverside, Cal.) 21-19, 21-6.

MEN'S SEMIFINALS—Richard Wagner (Paterson, N.J.) d.

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Davey Bledsoe (Kingsport, Tenn.) 16-21, 21-4, 11-5; Marty Hogan (St. Louis) d. Mike Yellen (Southfield, Mich.) 21-9, 21-16.

WOMEN'S SEMIFINALS—Shannon Wright (Las Vegas) d. Jean Sauser (Chicago) 21-5, 21-7; Marci Greer (San Diego) d. Sarah Green (Memphis) 13-21, 21-11, 11-4.

MEN'S FINAL—Marty Hogan (St. Louis) d. Rich Wagner (Paterson, N.J.) 21-12, 21-19. Hogan wins \$4,500, Wagner wins \$2,500.

WOMEN'S FINAL—Shannon Wright (Las Vegas) d. Marci Greer (San Diego) 21-12, 21-8. Wright wins \$1,300, Greer wins \$800.

IRA NATIONAL DOUBLES

A pair of Texans came home with top honors from the International Racquetball Association's National Doubles Championships in Washington, D.C.

Jeff Kwartler teamed with Dave Peck to defeat Randy Stafford and Gary Stephens of Tennessee, 21-4, 21-20 in the round robin finals.

Other results:

GOLDEN MASTERS—Cal Murphy-Stan Berney def. Irv Zeitman-Ike Gumer, 21-17, 10-21, 15-9.

WOMEN'S OPEN—Francine Davis-Elaine Lee def. Andrea Katz-Carol Frenck, 10-21, 21-1, 15-8.

JUNIOR BOYS—Ken Kaihlanen-Scott Hawkins def. Mitch Bucklet-Chris Matthewson.

MEN'S B—Fernando Avalos-Mark Maffei def. Brian Kimball-Neel Voss, 21-7, 21-17.

MEN'S SENIORS—Jim Austin-Charlie Garfinkel def. Mark Wayne-Bob Klass, 16-21, 21-7, 15-7.

MASTERS DOUBLES—Gene Grapes-Al Shattner def. Charlie Jackson-Al Ross, 21-14, 18-21, 15-1.

NATIONAL AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIPS

Southern California racquetball players took five out of six first place honors at the National Amateur Racquetball Championships finals, in Chicago, Illinois. The sixth winner was from Arizona.

Co-sponsored by Wilson Sporting Goods Company and the National Court Clubs Association (NCCA), the tournament began in May with qualifying rounds drawing some 3,500 players to more than 80 racquetball clubs across the country. Men and women competed on A, B and C levels.

Winners in men's A, B and C divisions, respectively, were Larry Meyers of Oceanside, California; Gary Kelley of Toway, California; and Mike Smith of Valley Center, California. First places in women's A, B and C divisions went to Hope Weisbach of Tempe, Arizona; Carole Charfauros of Chula Vista, California; and Chris McGirr of El Cajon, California.

"This was the largest national tournament held in the history of racquetball," said Cathy Austin, Executive Director of the NCCA. "That's quite an accomplishment for the first year of a major tournament. We expect to have more than 10,000 players participate next year."

Winners received their choice of prizes

valued at \$24,000 including vacation trips to the Bahamas, television sets, microwave ovens, refrigerators, air conditioners, dishwashers and tape recorders.

Runners up in men's A, B and C divisions were Rick Dern of Arlington Heights, Illinois; John Richardson of Livonia, Michigan; and Roy Leggat of Ontario, Canada. Women's runners up were Francine Davis of King of Prussia, Pennsylvania; Linda Nastasi of Montvale, New Jersey; and Lydia Coatar of Chicago, Illinois.

Third place winners in men's divisions were Doug Clark, Marlton, New Jersey; Tom Essa, Greensboro, North Carolina; and Ted Louie, Bronx, New York. Taking third place in women's competition were Beth Mowery, Lexington, Kentucky; Debbie Erhart, West Bloomfield, Michigan; and Pam Perrotty, Mountain Lakes, N.J.

SHORT SHOTS

Steve Strandemo defeated Scott Hawkins and Karin Walton defeated Diane Helms in the AMF Voit/Perrier Classic at the San Francisco Bay Club. More than 3,500 people attended and \$10,000 in prizes were given.

Other division winners were Jerry Henderson (Men's B), Carolyn Lefford (Women's B), Steve Hamilton (Men's C), Marti Barr (Women's C), and Bill Dunn (Men's Masters).

Clay McCaskey of Richmond, VA defeated Tony Giordano of Charlotte, N.C., 16-21, 21-7, 11-6 to win the open singles division of the Mid-South Men's Open in Greensboro, N.C. Giordano teamed with Paul Saperstein to defeat Steve Agner and Bill Leonard, 21-17, 21-13 in the open doubles finals.

Other results: Sonny Harmon def. Ted Freshwater, 21-14, 21-2 in senior singles; Keith Sellers def. Myron Wyman, 21-5, 21-17 in B singles; Roger Compton def. Ronald Thompson, 21-8, 21-12 in C singles; Richard Lane def. Myron Wyman, 21-17, 19-21, 11-6 in Masters singles; Lane-Jack Hogan def. Norman DeRossett-Jim Buchholz, 21-2, 21-9 in senior doubles.

Courtsports of San Diego won the first California Racquetball Club Championships tournament at the Vista Courthouse in Vista, CA, about 40 miles from San Diego.

Courtsports scored 355 points with the host club second with 350. Racquet Time of San Marcos was third, followed by King's Court of Westminster and Santana Courts of Santa Ana.

The tourney drew about 40 clubs from throughout the state. Winners of each division would get 30 points, finalists 20 points, semifinalists received 10 points and quarterfinalists picked up five points each.

Larry Meyers of Racquet Time won the men's open, defeating Lindsey Myers of Courtsports in the finals. Laura Martino of Courtsports won the women's open with a victory over Darlene Charleston of Racquetball World (Fountain Valley).

Lynn Hahn, a chemist in his late 40s, de-

feated Renard Valenciano, a stock broker, to win the Sports Illustrated Court Clubs 1978 ladder tournament at Lemontree in Belleville, Mich. Yvonne Hackenberg defeated Fran Manula for the women's open division.

B winners were Kevin McCulley and Sheri Hohenstein. C champs were Don Hogan and Connie Weisel. A total of \$75,000 in prizes were awarded.

A winners received home entertainment centers. B winners received motorcycles and C winners received stereo systems.

■ Much like the famed Boston Massacre, we now have the Ektelon Conflagration.

The infamous Boston Massacre took the lives of only four persons but by the time word spread to Virginia, because of people's tendency to exaggerate, it sounded as if thousands had died.

By the same token, there was a fire in the handle shop at Ektelon's plant in San Diego, which was duly reported in a short story in the San Diego papers. But by the time word had spread out of San Diego, it seemed as though the entire plant had burned down.

In actuality, several racquets were destroyed but Ektelon employees were on hand almost immediately to salvage most of the equipment. Damage was minimal and everything was insured.

"It never even halted production," says a company spokesman.

Ektelon is moving into new, modern facilities in the early part of 1979.

■ Omega Sports, founded in 1976, has been acquired by Carlson Companies, Inc., headquartered in Minneapolis. The manufacturing facility, employing 36 persons, will continue to operate out of St. Louis.

■ The National Convention of the National Court Clubs Association (NCCA) will be held January 26th—30th at the Anaheim Convention Center in Anaheim, California.

NCCA is the not-for-profit association of court club owners and currently has 200 member clubs located in 35 states and Canada.

The four day convention program will be divided into two segments. The initial program will be designed exclusively for owners of existing racquetball facilities and will be closed to anyone who does not actually own or operate a club.

There will also be a separate program for anyone interested in developing a court club. The Racquetball and Tennis Market Place, the industry's largest trade show, will be held in conjunction with the NCCA National Convention. The three day trade show is expected to have more than 300 exhibition booths.

The topics to be covered during the owners program include: Energy conservation, structuring league play, programming for wo-

men, the best use of promotional dollars, how to maximize pro shop profitability, club maintenance, and personnel.

The developer's seminars are designed to provide an indepth appraisal of the court club business. Topics to be included are demographics and site selection, design and construction, financing, and how to obtain professional advice in putting the whole package together.

In addition, NCCA directors and officers will be available during the developer's sessions to answer specific questions about building and operating court clubs. This will enable prospective club owners to learn from those who already have succeeded.

A distinguished group of speakers will participate in both sessions, including Dr. W. Clay Hamner from the Duke University Graduate School of Business; Stanley Campbell, an expert on energy conservation, and C. Carson Conrad, executive director of the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sport.

Highlight of the program will be the Sunday night banquet with guest speaker George Plimpton, the "Professional amateur" and nationally recognized author of *Paper Lion*. The banquet is open to all convention

participants and visitors to the trade show.

The Anaheim Hyatt House, will serve as convention headquarters. For further information contact Cathy Austin, Executive Director, National Court Clubs Association, 423 Central Ave., Northfield, Illinois 60093. Telephone (312) 446-5502.

LATE NEWS HOGAN WINS AGAIN

Marty Hogan defeated Jerry Hilecher, 21-13, 21-17 in the finals of the Seamco Classic at the Olympic Court Club in Port Washington, N.Y.

Hilecher led 6-1 in the first game before Hogan ran off nine straight to take the lead for good. Hilecher led 14-12 in the second game before Hogan again ran off nine in a row for the win.

"Jerry played my game," said Hogan. "He wasn't willing to force the play."

Shannon Wright won the women's division with a 21-13, 21-17 win over Marci Greer. The two were tied 17-17 in the second game before Wright put it away with four straight points.

Complete results in next issue.

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OFF THE WALL

\$12,000 FOR MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY

by Mike Hogan

San Diego's Mike Maddocks logged 101 hours, 48 minutes and 30 seconds in his marathon adventure!

Maddocks raised \$12,600 in pledges for Muscular Dystrophy during his play at San Diego's Racquet Time to become the highest single grosser of funds for the Jerry Lewis Telethon in San Diego County.

"After about the fiftieth hour," says Mike, "you really start to lose control of your senses. Before that, there was a lot of pain but, after, it was like playing in a dream. People I knew would come on the court and I wouldn't recognize them."

Maddocks lost 10 pounds during the marathon and his size 10½ feet swelled to size 13½.

"The kids I met are what really kept me going," he recalls. "In the advanced stages of the disease, all they can really do is lie around."

"I have a talent that I know they would like to have and I know that, if they had a chance to play, they would."

"So I played for them."

A former club pro at Racquet Time, Mike is now part of the Ektelon Player Advisory Staff and plans to pursue a pro career in the sport.

Maddocks, 20, trained for six weeks prior to the marathon by running up and down bleachers, weight lifting, jogging and playing racquetball.

"It was really a learning experience," he recalls. "It was a lot of pain but you really learn a lot about yourself and your abilities."

"Of course, I would never do it again."

ANEW MARATHON RECORD SET

With racquetball marathon record attempts becoming almost as popular as swallowing

goldfish was in its day or streaking was in its day, it seems every other person and his brother are trying to break the existing record.

The latest record holder, at least until someone else better it probably sometime soon, is Phil Ciarco, who totaled 102 hours, 58 minutes, 30 seconds at Courttime Meadowlands Racquetball Club in Lyndhurst, N.J.

Ciarco played 126 opponents and 286 games. Of those he won 243 and lost 43. Ciarco ended up playing 8,410 points. His heartbeat was recorded at 55-59 prior to the marathon and it never exceeded 64 during the record-setting performance.

Luckily, Ciarco didn't have too many problems. He developed a severe rash under the left armpit after about 16 hours, but a powder helped relieve any discomfort.

After 46 hours, there was another minor problem. "I made a ridiculous attempt at a get that was obviously past me and felt a twinge in my left hamstring and a pain in the left knee," said Ciarco. "But it was taped up at the next two-minute break. I favored it a while then finally put it out of my mind and started shooting again."

After 64 hours, Ciarco's blood pressure changed radically. It turned out he forgot to take the high protein fluid and he forgot to eat. So he grabbed a couple of bananas and went back to the prescribed diet. His blood pressure returned to normal.

After 96 hours—four complete days—Ciarco said he felt "terribly depressed." His feet were hurting. His body was hurting.

According to Ciarco, at 99 hours the crowd started getting excited. "I felt slow and sloppy on the court. I asked Don Ludwick to play a tough game to get me pumping again," says Ciarco. "The crowd stopped worrying about my condition and began enjoying a good match. I pinched two shots from the back corner and won 21-19. It took my mind off things."

Ciarco played the last match against Cour-

time pro Art Diemar. "Art got me playing eight months ago and has given me instruction on a regular basis," said Ciarco, who is 34-years-old.

The marathon record was set up for the benefit of Muscular Dystrophy and over \$4,000 was taken in for the charity.

Ciarco's actual playing time was 100 hours, 54 minutes, but he added two hours, four minutes and 30 seconds (under Guinness World Record rules) by subtracting total rest time (380 minutes) from total rest time accumulated (504 minutes, 30 seconds). A player is allowed a two minute break between games and five minutes every hour. The five-minute breaks can be accumulated.

A STORY, HARD TO SWALLOW... OR HOW DO YOU SPELL RELIEF?

University of Florida linebacker Scot Brantley swallowed a frog while playing racquetball on a 3-wall court in his hometown of Ocala, Fla.

Brantley, a junior, was playing with a friend, Russell Yancy, when a baby frog jumped on the court. The two stopped playing and Yancy said, "If you eat that frog, Florida will have a winning season."

Brantley did... whole.

"I'm kind of superstitious anyway," said Brantley. "It was a spontaneous thing. I washed it down later."

Evidently there were no ill effects from his mid-match snack since he went on to win the next two games. "I had a little indigestion but nothing Roloids wouldn't cure."

Brantley, who hopes to play pro ball if he gets drafted, says he plays racquetball, not because of the cuisine it offers but because of the exercise he gets.

"The coaches like us to play racquetball because it keeps us in shape," said the 6-1, 220-pounder. "As a linebacker it helps me move laterally."



Mike Maddocks



Phil Ciarco



Scot Brantley



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