

1980 NATIONALS ISSUE

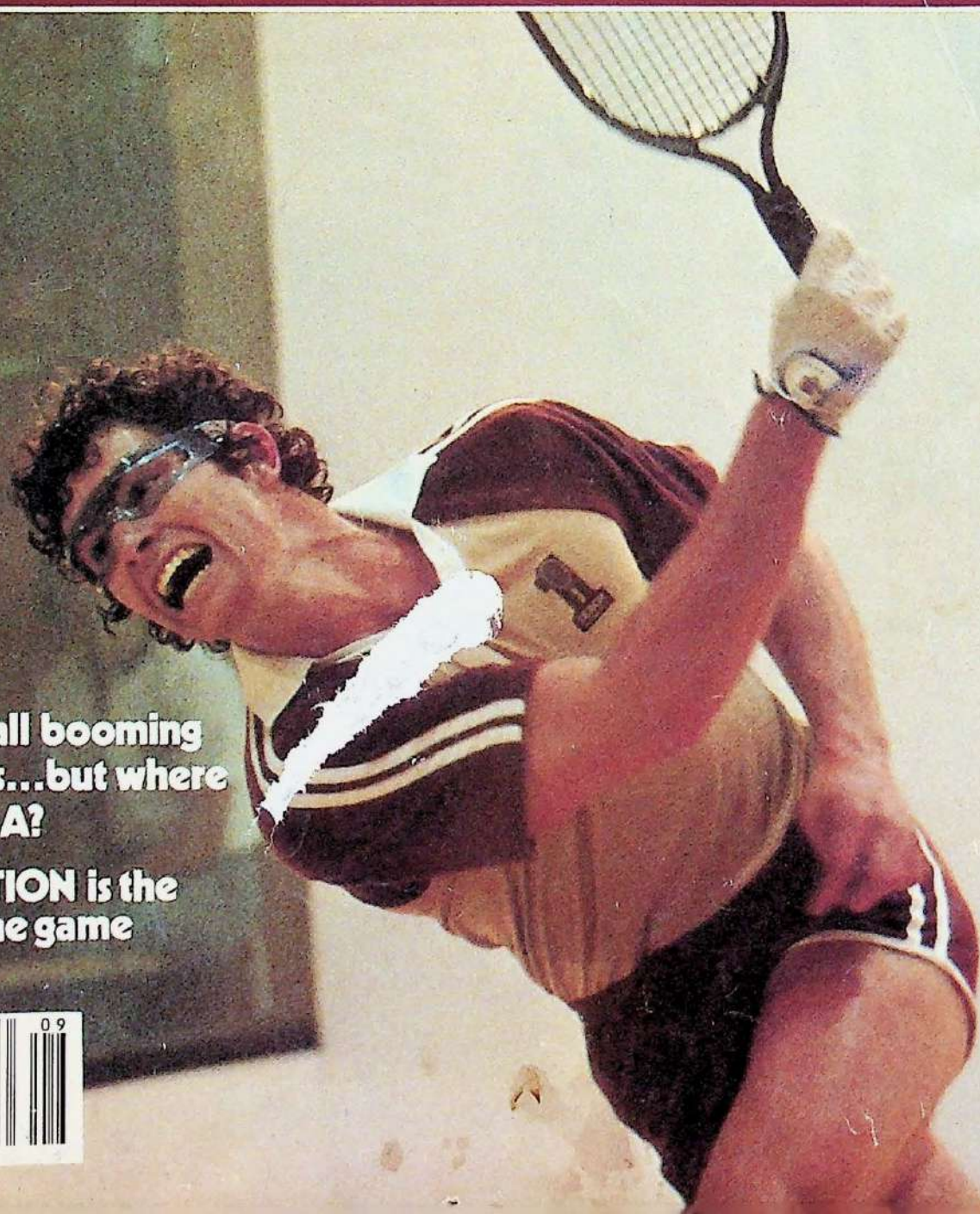
# RACQUETBALL

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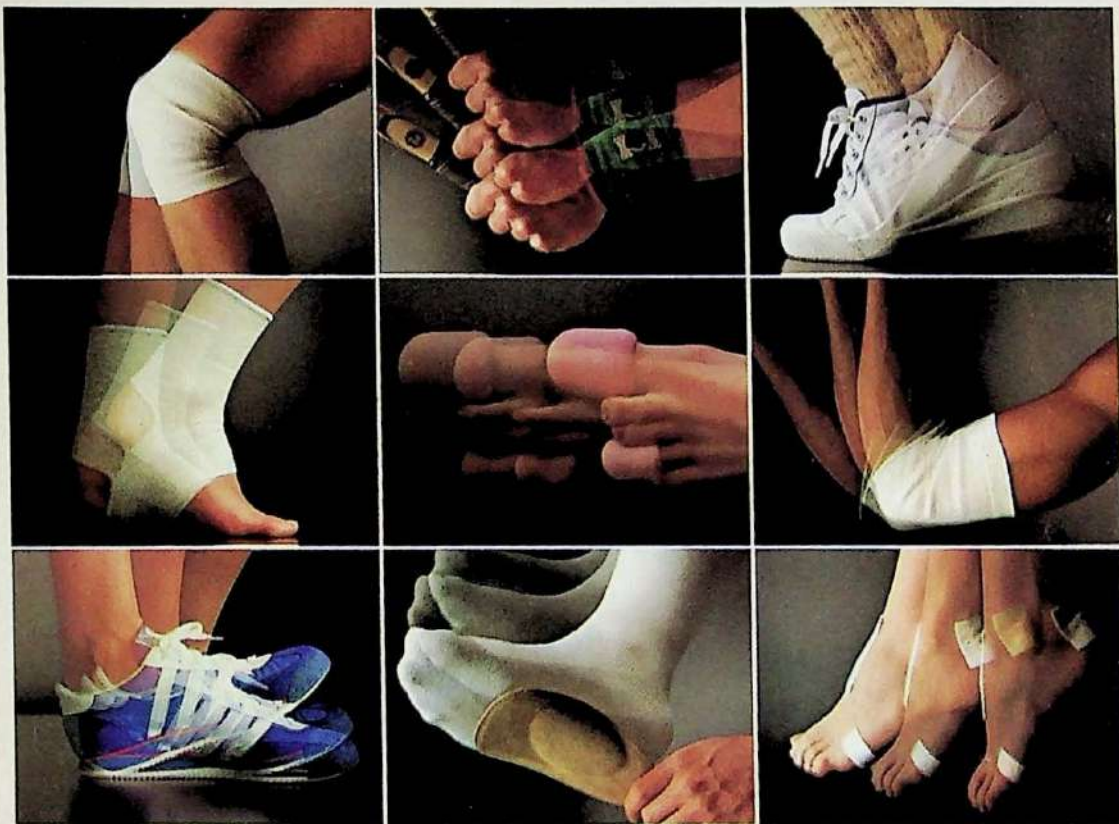
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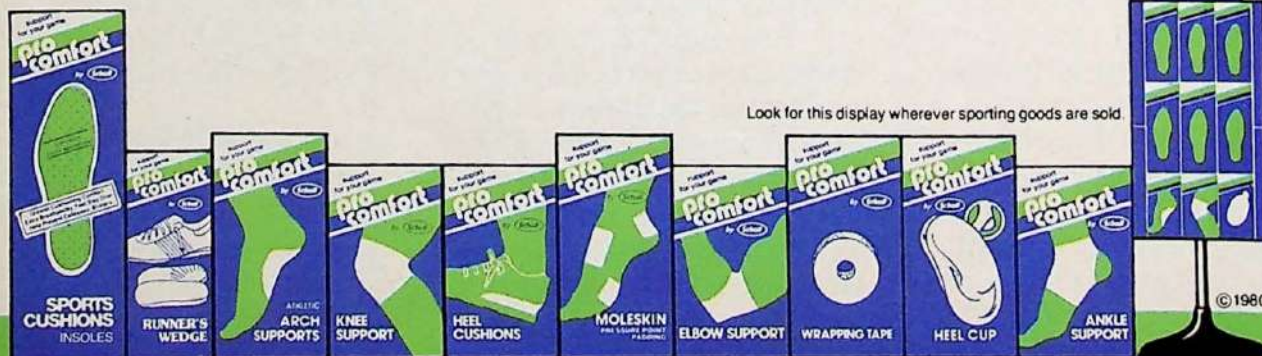
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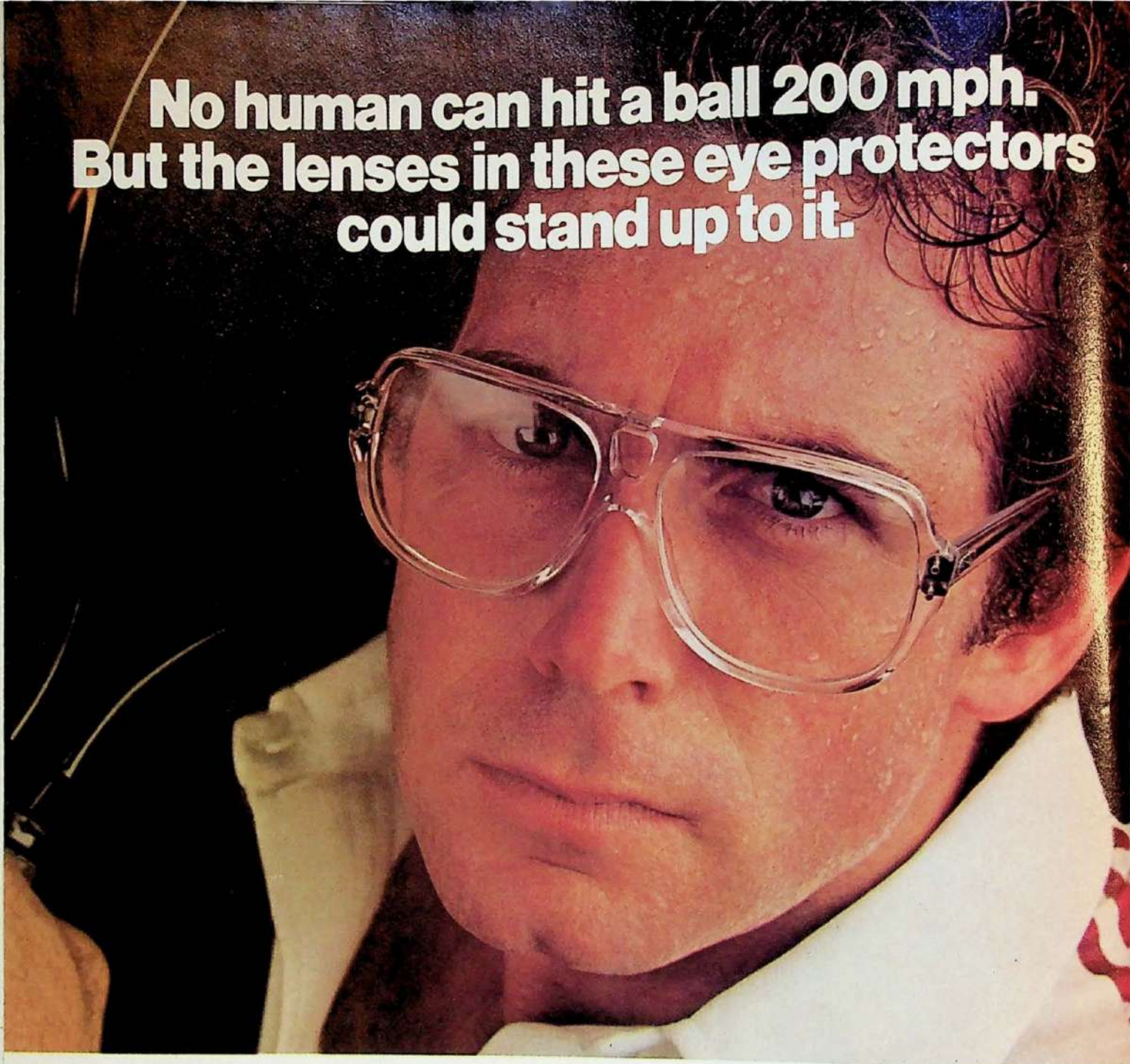
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# RACQUETBALL

## ILLUSTRATED

September 1980 Vol. 3, No. 9

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Cover Photo by David M. King

## UP FRONT

# IT'S TIME TO GET CLASSY



The one overriding topic at the 1980 Nationals in Las Vegas was the needed advancement of pro racquetball a notch or two into recognition as a semi-major sport.

This topic had nothing to do with the NRC implementation of the Leach-Seamco tour or the facilities (Las Vegas Sporting House) used for the event. It has to do with making racquetball professional, not in terms of money but in terms of class.

The financial end of the pro tour has taken great strides and the organizers/sponsors can take a bow for this. But there is more money to be made as soon as the sport becomes one the average sports fan pays attention to instead of the local players' relatives.

The first thing that needs to be done is to get the major tournaments out of the clubs. Putting a National Championship in a racquetball club is like putting the Super Bowl in a high school stadium. It doesn't matter how nice the club looks or how many seats it has. It's a question of professionalism.

Tournaments should be put in small arenas, or even theatre houses or Las Vegas showrooms.

Granted, a portable court has not been produced yet that will do the job but there are companies working on them, and that is a step in the right direction.

There also has to be an awakening to the general public. Racquetball has its personalities—a couple—but no event, not even The Nationals, has captivated the public's ear.

Tennis took a giant step when Bobby Riggs faced Billie Jean King in the Houston Astrodome and ice hockey was rejuvenated when the U.S. Olympic team won the Gold Medal at Lake Placid.

Racquetball needs such a spark and Racquetball Illustrated is proposing one possibility.

We would like to see an Ektelon vs. Leach Challenge. This would work in a "Best of Nine" fashion, featuring, let's say, six men's matches and three women's matches.

Leach would pick its top six male players (Hogan, Brumfield, Thomas, Koltun, Wagner,

McCoy, for example) and its top three women players (Walton, McKay and a player to be named later) and they would face off with Ektelon's roster (Yellen, Peck, Hilecher, Fleetwood, Hawkins and either Egerman or Bowman for the men and Greer, Harding and Hoff for the women).

All matches would be one game to 21 and each win is worth one point for his or her team. Perhaps, a doubles match could be included instead of one of the singles matches.

The challenge has great possibilities. It would certainly create interest in the racquetball community, and that enthusiasm could be generated into the sporting community with the right amount of promotion (not hype right out of pro wrestling but good, honest promotion).

Sponsors will come up with incentive money with the winning team getting twice as large a chunk as the losers.

Leach and Ektelon are rivals—one might even say bitter rivals—so the challenge is a natural. The teams are even, so audience interest is heightened. And let's face it, it would give one company a hell of a lot of gloating rights for the next year.

Rumor has it that the parent companies of Ektelon and Leach (Browning and The Liggett Group) are going to deemphasize pro sponsorship and not renew some of their players' contracts. Let's hope this does not become fact. Racquetball needs its rivalries and Ektelon vs. Leach is about the only one the sport has now.

This issue has some interesting features on "controversial" Sarah Green, racquetball on the college campus (minus NCAA recognition), and racquetball in Pittsburgh, home of the world champion Steelers and Pirates, and the famed "racquetball pit" on the University of Pittsburgh campus.

Our instruction section offers yoga exercises, ever-important tips on anticipation and stories on backhand passing and backhand pinch shots.

And, of course, this is the issue we report on the 1980 Nationals won by Marty Hogan for the third straight year. Hogan is our first non-entertainment cover. But we feel he has earned the honor and he deserves it.

*Ben Kalb*

Ben Kalb

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## SIDE OUT

### Racquet Guide

Outstanding section on racquets. I enjoyed the stories on "How Small Racquet Companies Survive" and especially the one on "Is An Expensive Racquet Worth The Money?"

Owen Sampson  
Metairie, La.

### Test Racquets

Enjoyed your stories on racquets but I wish you would have taken it one step further. I would like to see a panel of experts test certain racquets. I'll bet some of those so-called expensive racquets aren't any better than those cheap foreign imports.

Barbara Bell  
Cranston, R.I.

### Disagreement

The article by Laurence Korwin on "Don't Let The Racquetball Industry Commit Suicide" was informative and interesting. Some of his recommendations should be listened to. But there is one you should not pay any attention to.

He says that warm-up exercises are not required. I think any doctor will disagree with him.

Paul Phelps  
Seattle, Wash.

### San Diego

I read the article on "Is The San Diego Racquetball Empire Crumbling?" and I wish the author would tell me which places are going under, so I can go there and give them my business.

I still can't find a court during prime time. I have been to some clubs in the city, and, yes, they were poorly managed. But, overall, I think there is a fine selection of clubs here.

M. Salton  
San Diego, Calif.

### Poor Management

Nice article on San Diego in your July issue. I think the story should serve as a warning to all cities about overbuilding.

But the real warning concerns management. The clubs that will remain in business are the ones who are properly managed and give the members what they want. The people in it for a fast buck are going to be the ones who will fold or who will have to sell out.

Bert Worthington  
Denver, Colo.

### Pinball Sexism

It came with great interest that I read the letter in your July issue from a representative of Bally Manufacturing Corp., the makers of those pinball machines.

The lady who wrote the letter admonished your magazine for printing a sexist advertisement.

Please, tell me. Is this the same Bally com-

pany that gives us all those sexist pinball machines with the Playboy bunnies on it?

Donald Chambers  
Santa Barbara, Calif.

### Women Players

I would like to congratulate you on two fine issues—the June and July. The article on the WPRA in your June issue was one that interested me. It told me a story I couldn't find in the other racquetball magazines.

I also enjoyed reading the feature on Janell Marriott. She had some interesting things to say about how the new organization has affected her playing career.

I'm glad to see a real racquetball magazine out. The other magazine devotes a special section each issue to women players, as if to imply that the women are different than the men, and must be set apart from the regular articles in the magazine.

Sally Victor  
Forest Hills, N.Y.

### WPRA Tour

Your June editorial, "Unequal By Racquetball Law," and Len Ziehm's article entitled "Enter the WPRA," were, in a word, superb!

The women are to be congratulated for having the foresight to recognize their unequal status on the pro tour and the vision in organizing the Women's Professional Racquetball Association.

As a footnote to your articles, it would appear that the women have acted astutely. This past season (the first on their own) they have participated in nine major events with prize money of over \$73,000 (an increase over last year), and had their first WPRA Women's Amateur and Professional National Championships.

Next season promises to be even better, with a 10 to 15-stop tour in the making. Sponsors and host clubs are now coming to the WPRA for the right to participate.

As in golf and tennis, women in racquetball are beginning to achieve the status they so rightly deserve. And much of the credit must go to such enlightened magazines as *Racquetball Illustrated*.

Dan M. Seaton,  
Commissioner, WPRA  
Las Vegas, Nev.

### Diff'rent Strokes

I enjoyed the story and photo coverage of the Diff'rent Strokes cast in your July issue. As you may not know, Gary Coleman is from this area, and it was here he made such a hit in commercials before making it big with a television show.

I think your cover was cute and, if nothing else, it should attract children to take up the game.

Mrs. C. Jackson  
Chicago, Ill.

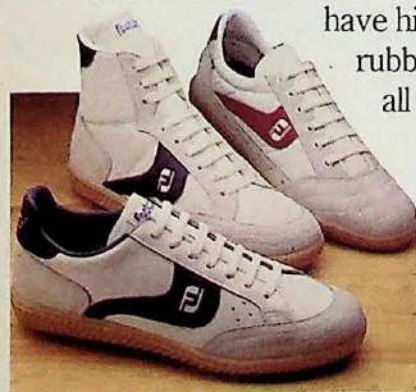
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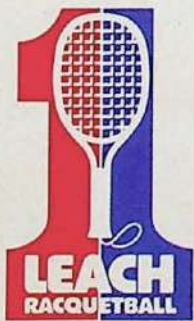
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# PLAYERS

Willie Buchanan, San Diego Chargers defensive back, and Dave Brown, defensive back for the Seattle Seahawks, advanced to the finals of the Natural Light/NFL Players Association Racquetball Championships in the Western Regionals at King's Court in Westminster, Calif.

The Western Regional included three-man teams from the Chargers, Seahawks, San Francisco 49ers, Los Angeles Rams and Oakland Raiders.

Buchanan defeated Rams linebacker Carl Ekern, 21-20, 21-5 and Brown defeated teammate Sam McCullum, 21-16, 21-5, in the bracket finals. Buchanan and Brown each won \$2,000 and Ekern and McCullum each took home \$500.

In the consolation finals, 49ers running back Bobby Ferrell defeated 49ers linebacker Gordon Ceresino, 11-21, 21-12, 11-3. The win was worth \$150 to Ferrell and Ceresino collected \$100.

Buchanan and Brown advanced to the national finals in St. Louis where they will compete against the other regional winners—Rafael Septien (Cowboys), Curley Culp (Oilers), Buddy Hardeman (Redskins), Tim Mazzetti (Falcons), Stu Voight (Vikings), Matt Blair (Vikings), Joe DeLamilleure (Bills) and Randy Dean (Giants).



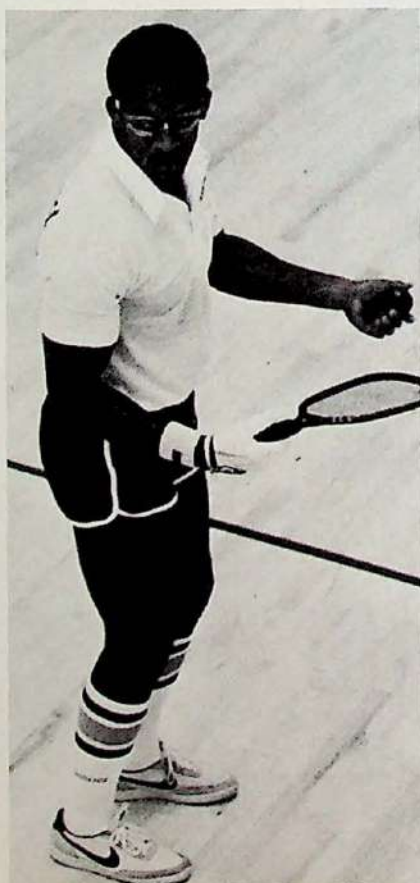
Mike Davis (Raiders)



Charlie DeJurnett (Chargers)



Carl Ekern (Rams)

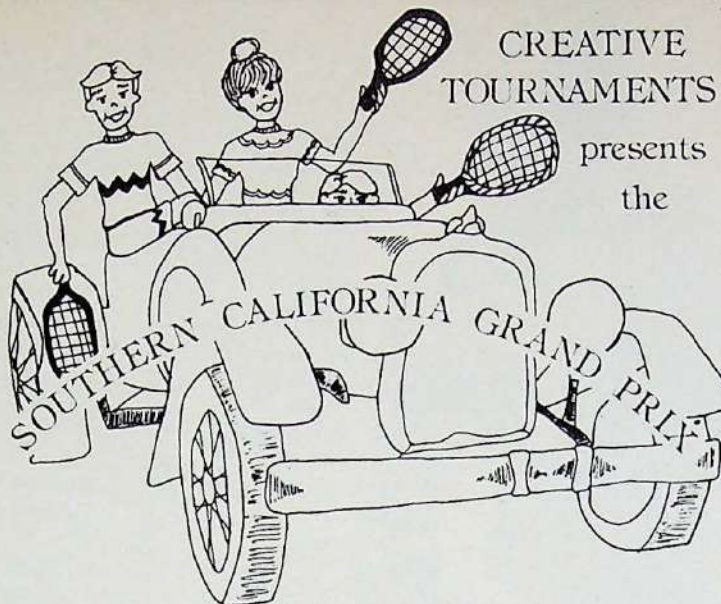


Dave Brown (Seahawks)



Sam McCullum (Seahawks)

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Will million dollar contract be the only thing that can defeat him?

### By Ben Kalb

Any year now, Marty Hogan will be sitting in his living room counting his millions, completely forgetting that he should have been in Bakersfield or somewhere winning his seventh or eighth (who's counting) consecutive Nationals. The other pro racquetball players will be eagerly awaiting this to happen. By now they realize it won't be one of them who dethrones him. The only thing that will beat Hogan is greed.

Top-seeded Hogan proved once again he is a half-level above the rest of the pack by winning his third straight Nationals title, a 21-16, 21-12 decision over second-seeded Mike Yellen, in the \$70,000 championships held at the Las Vegas Sporting House.

Coinciding with this victory came the announcement that Hogan had signed a four-year \$1 million contract with Catalina, replacing one of smaller proportions with Adidas (he will continue, however, to wear Adidas shoes), and that he had also signed a three-year contract with Leach Industries for \$500,000. Hogan also has a contract with Vitalis and said he is close to signing "another million dollar

**Marty Hogan on his way to defeating Mike Yellen in 1980 Nationals finals in Las Vegas. The victory was worth \$30,000 to Hogan.**

Photos by David M. King

# NATIONALS

deal" with another company. What all this adds up to, besides tax shelters, is life on easy street and when life on easy street takes over, determination to maintain that high level of play drops. That is what Hogan has to watch out for.

"The Nationals is the most important thing to me," said Hogan. "I don't even think about the money."

Hogan probably does think about the money, more so than he wants the public to realize. But it's not the \$30,000 he took home for winning the Nationals. It's the other money that comes from being proclaimed the best in the world.

What Hogan has to watch out for in the future, and what could be his undoing unless he consciously guards against it, is a possible complacency once those riches start coming in on a fairly steady flow. Many a successful tennis player has concentrated on the business end of a career and lost that competitive edge. Same with baseball players once they became millionaires after free agency.

So, the tests for Hogan will come next season and the season after and so on until either he laughs at us all the way to the bank or we laugh at him as he sits down in the bleachers watching two other players battle it out for the Nationals championship.

But that is the future. For right now, nobody does it better than Hogan. And in convincing fashion.

Hogan did not lose a game the entire tournament, although it must be noted that he didn't exactly have a tough draw. He defeated Kirk Williams, 21-9, 21-5; Jeff Bowman, 21-11, 21-11; Ben Koltun, 21-6, 21-13; Jerry Hilecher, 21-7, 21-20, and Yellen.

There were few surprises in the round of 32, the most notable being former national champion Charlie Brumfield's defeat at the hands of Bruce Christensen.

If the tournament wasn't made for Hogan, it certainly was made for Christensen, an 18-year-old rookie out of New Hampshire. The court at the Las Vegas Sporting House had a glass front wall and one side wall of glass. The front-wall glass combined with a background of spectators makes it tough to see the ball. "You almost have to guess where the ball is going," said one player. "You'll notice all the players watch when the opponent hits the ball. You have to anticipate where the ball will be bouncing off that wall. If you lose it for a split second, it's too late."

The front-wall glass is geared for a player with a fast serve and Christensen has one of the fastest in the game. "He's faster than Hogan," says one player.

Christensen's serve got him past Brumfield, 21-6, 14-21, 11-8, in the first round, and then past Lindsey Myers, 21-12, 21-11, in the second round. That put him up against Yellen in the quarters. The two players were tied in the first game at 15 and 18 before Yellen took a 20-19 advantage. Christensen served a Z ace that had faked Yellen into the popcorn machine and then scored the last point on a

passing shot. Yellen easily won the second game, 21-6, setting up the tiebreaker. Christensen led 6-2 before Yellen knotted things at 6-6. The two players were also tied at 7 and 8 before Yellen scored the last three points, ending the biggest surprise in racquet sports since John McEnroe went to the semifinals in Wimbledon in 1977 after having to qualify to get into the main draw.

Christensen's game has improved tremendously. The last time he faced Yellen, in Atlanta, he lost 21-4, 21-2.

"I'm here to stay," said Christensen. "The front-wall glass wasn't the only reason I got this far. My serving has been good all year and the rest of my game has come along also."

"Bruce's serve is tougher than Marty's in one respect," said Yellen. "He goes through a

walking motion as he serves and he hides the ball as he is walking right up until the point he strokes the ball. Marty is more set in a single position when he starts.

"When I beat him in Atlanta, he never really got much of a chance to serve, and that is the best part of his game. But I knew he'd be tough after he beat Myers and Brumfield."

Besides Hogan and Yellen, also advancing to the semis was Jerry Hilecher with a 19-21, 21-18, 11-8 victory over Steve Strandemo in a match that took two hours, 50 minutes, and was one of the better played ones during the week.

Fourth-seeded Hilecher has a 4-0 lead in the tiebreaker and Strandemo closed it to 8-7 and 9-8 before Hilecher put it away.

The other quarterfinal match found third-



Marty Hogan hits an off-balance shot off the wall (top) and then plays peek-a-boo with Mike Yellen in 1980 Nationals finals held at Las Vegas Sporting House.





I've had trouble keeping my confidence at times. It's tough for me to play 100 per cent all the time the way I play.

"My concentration broke at 15-7. The score should have been 21-7, 21-7. Lucky I got out of there with my life. He had the setup. I was ready to play the tiebreaker."

That set the stage for the second consecutive Nationals finals matchup between Hogan and Yellen. Hogan had won the 1979 battle rather handily, and although Marty had the favorite's role in this one, Yellen was more confident of victory. There would be no championship jitters this time.

Yellen had beaten Hogan twice in a row in tournaments directly prior to the Nationals, and Hogan admitted there was more pressure on him to shoot for three straight titles. But Hogan was not lacking in confidence. He never does.

"Yellen won't be able to handle me," Hogan said on the eve of the finale. "There's no way I'm going to lose my confidence."

Had Hogan lost some of his confidence, the final may have given the spectators a little more drama.

The racquetball was of prime-time quality but there was no real excitement to the match.

Hogan drove out to a 5-1 lead, mainly on three aces, and then moved out to leads of 10-3, 12-4 and 16-7. Yellen then cut the lead to 16-12 but Hogan scored the next two points for an 18-12 advantage. Yellen cut it to 18-16 on two straight Hogan skips but Hogan regained his touch and scored the final three points.

Yellen led 6-2 in the second game and 9-5 but from there he went into slow motion. Hogan tied it at 9 and then went out to a 19-9 lead, thereby outscoring Yellen, 14-0, in that stretch.

Yellen managed to make things respectable by scoring three more points but Hogan put it away on his second match point.

The game ended on an appeal, which was fitting since there were almost as many appeals during the match as commercials on Monday Night Football. If appeals are the wave of the future, you can forget about network television.

Overall, referee Dan Bertolucci did a fine job officiating the finale with one notable exception. At 8-5 in the second game, Bertolucci called a hinder on Yellen on what seemingly was a sure point after Hogan couldn't chase down a passing shot. Even Hogan was somewhat surprised at the call. Yellen scored one more point, then went into his 14-point sleep.

The night prior to the finals, Hogan had predicted he would roll over Yellen if his serve was on, and that if it wasn't working, the match would be close. He was wrong. His serve wasn't working but he did score a relatively easy victory.

"My serve was half as good as I thought it would be," said Hogan. "Even though there were times I ran off four or five points, it wasn't from the power of my serves, it was from my strength in the rallies."

"Mike wasn't aggressive on his serves. I guess he figured he's beaten me all year with that lob stuff."

"It was my design to put the pressure on

Mike right away in the second game. If he was going to win it, he would have to work for it. If he could score the points off me, then he deserved it. If not, I was going to be standing right there."

"When I caught him at nine all (in the second game), and then went up by a few, I knew that was the critical point of the game. He didn't change. He didn't do anything at that point to alter the pace of the game. I just continued to get a point or two. I held him three or four times at nine. After you've been on one point three or four times, it really wears on you that you haven't scored."

And for a change, Hogan said he had no concentration lapses. "I concentrated the best I have this whole year," said Hogan. "Mentally I felt very good. Nothing distracted me."

Not even the million dollar contract with Catalina.

Yellen had nothing to be ashamed of. He is the number two player in the world, and he lost to the number one.

Yellen plays a control game, often times letting the opponents make the errors. He's much like a counterpuncher in boxing in that he needs an opening before he can go in for the kill. If no opening is there, he can't take

advantage of anything. That's the way it was in the finals. Hogan didn't give him many openings.

"I played pretty well," said Yellen. "He just played really strong. He took advantage of a lot of offensive opportunities. I was on the defensive a lot, just trying to retrieve his strong offensive shots."

Yellen picked up a check for \$12,000, his biggest career payday.

In the men's amateur championships, Brett Harnett of Las Vegas, who plays daily at the Las Vegas Sporting House, defeated top-seeded Ed Andrews of Spring Valley, Calif., 21-3, 21-8. Andrews, who had defeated Harnett in the USRA Western Regionals in a tiebreaker, was never in it. In addition to the title, Harnett was given a 1980 Mazda by his manager Gary Naseef.

To reach the finals, Harnett, 16, defeated Jim Wirkus, 21-11, 21-13, and Andrews topped Steve Trent, 21-16, 2-21, 11-5.

In the women's amateur finals, Susie Dugan of Dallas defeated Peggy Gardner of Southern California, 21-8, 21-15. Dugan defeated Laura Martino, 21-6; 11-21, 11-2, and Gardner defeated teenager Stacy Fletcher, 20-21, 21-3, 11-3, in the semifinals.

#### Other results:

##### MEN

30+ Pete Wright def. Joe Wirkus, 21-8, 21-18.

35+ Jay Jones def. Bill Condrtaw, 21-7, 21-7.

40+ Charlie Garfinkel def. Bob Peterson, 21-12, 21-15.

45+ Bud Muehleisen def. Pat Colombo, 19-21, 21-9, 11-1.

50+ Bill Tanner def. Bill Dabney, 21-11, 17-21, 11-0.

55+ Kal Gladstone def. Floyd Svenson, 21-18, 21-19.

60+ Fred Vetter def. Ed Lowrance, 21-11, 21-19.

Open doubles Garrigus-Fleming def. Trent-Wright, 21-16, 21-19.

30+ doubles Romano-Lusk def. Wright-Taylor, 21-9, 21-10.

35+ doubles Olsen-Beckman def. Conine-Fearing, 21-14, 21-15.

50+ doubles Muehleisen-Karp def. Mooney-Langdon, 11-21, 21-20, 11-10.

55+ doubles Morrow-Skelton def. Deeds-Loveday (round robin).

##### WOMEN

30+ Camile McCarthy def. Trish Morphew, 14-21, 21-4, 11-3.

30-40+ Sue Carow def. Bette Weed, 21-7, 21-3.

Open doubles Gardner-Pool def. Fletcher-Ackerman, 21-6, 21-4.

#### Pro Results

\$70,000 LEACH NATIONAL PRO-AM  
(at Las Vegas Sporting House)  
ROUND OF 32

Hogan def. Williams, 21-9, 21-5; Bowman def. Wagner, 14-21, 21-14, 11-5; Meyers def. Serot, 21-17, 21-8; Koltun def. Harvey, 21-14, 21-10; Strandemo def. Harnett, 21-12, 21-5; Hawkins def. Morrow, 21-11, 21-6; Bledsoe def. Egerman, 21-4, 21-11; Hilecher def. Chase, 21-5, 21-5; Peck def. Keeley, 21-2, 21-9; Fleetwood def. Levine, 21-20, 21-13; Cohen def. Mondry, 19-21, 21-1, 11-6; Thomas def. Stephens, 21-6, 20-21, 11-3; Christensen def. Brumfield, 21-6, 14-21, 11-8; Myers def. Berberet, 21-6, 16-21, 11-1; McCoy def. Zuckerman, 21-16, 21-20; Yellen def. Bolan, 21-6, 21-8.

ROUND OF 16 (losers receive \$1,000)

Hogan def. Bowman, 21-11, 21-11; Koltun def. Meyers, 21-4, 10-21, 11-8; Strandemo def. Hawkins, 21-5, 21-16; Hilecher def. Bledsoe, 21-14, 11-21, 11-4; Peck def. Fleetwood, 21-12, 21-6; Thomas def. Cohen, 21-5, 21-18; Christensen def. Myers, 21-12, 21-11; Yellen def. McCoy, 20-21, 21-11, 11-7.

QUARTERFINALS (losers receive \$2,500)

Hogan def. Koltun, 21-6, 21-13; Hilecher def. Strandemo, 10-21, 21-18, 11-8; Peck def. Thomas, 21-14, 21-17; Yellen def. Christensen, 20-21, 21-6, 11-8.

SEMIFINALS (losers receive \$5,000)

Hogan def. Hilecher, 21-7, 21-20; Yellen def. Peck, 21-13, 20-21, 11-minus one.

#### FINALS

Hogan (\$30,000) def. Yellen (\$12,000), 21-16, 21-12.



# Sarah Green Marches to the Beat of a Different Drummer

She has been ranked first in women's racquetball and first in controversy this season.

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**By Jack Sheehan and  
Richard Wade**

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There is no instant formula for becoming a champion. You don't just add racquet and, presto, the National SupremeSuperDuperExtraordinary Championship is yours. It takes different things in different people. What may make a champion in one person may not do much to enhance the career of the next person.

Take the case of 23-year-old Sarah Green, who this past season attained the ranking of number one for most of the year and also enraged a few people by creating a controversy with Women's Professional Racquetball Association.

"Sarah is deceiving," says her boyfriend and coach, Mike Zeitman. "Her exterior does not display her inner emotions. Some people think she displays no emotion; that there is ice water in her veins. But she runs the gamut of feelings. I see her cry, laugh, smile and get disturbed. Some of the things that bother her may not bother me and some of the things that

**Sarah Green had her best year in the pro ranks in 1980 but here she loses to Heather McKay in semifinals of Ektelon-Perrier tourney in North Hollywood, Calif.**

Photos by David M. King



# Sarah Green

bother me may not bother her. I guess you can say she steps to the beat of a different drummer. That is what makes her a great racquetball player and, at the same time, it holds her back from being the absolute best."

Zeitman often does the talking for Green, or if not him, it's her manager Gary Naseef who speaks for her. That stems from Green's shyness as well as her faith in the decisions/answers made by Zeitman and Naseef.

Green first met Zeitman about five years ago while she was going to high school in Memphis. Zeitman had helped her get into college at University of Kentucky ("I pulled my only string," he says) but as it turned out, Sarah couldn't wait to return home to Memphis State University.

"When I was at Kentucky there was nothing for me to do but go to class," recalls Green. "They had a few racquetball courts but nobody for me to play with. At that time I had placed second or third in the amateur nationals."

So, Green enrolled at Memphis State, but not with the intention of becoming a pro racquetball player.

"When I came back, Sue Carow beat me in a tournament, 21-3, 21-5," said Green. "I couldn't believe it. Then Mike said he would work with me if I promised to work hard. He said he would make me national champion by the end of the year. I thought, 'no way'."

But it happened. Green won the IRA and USRA amateur nationals in 1976.

"She really made herself the better player," said Zeitman. "I would work with her for an hour and she would go on a court and work for two or three hours and work on what she just learned. A coach can talk to someone till you are blue in the face but if somebody doesn't want it, it won't happen."

The next step was the pro tour. "Mike had said to me I would not play in a pro tournament until I had won the amateur nationals," said Green. "So when I won, the pro tour was a logical progression."

"At that time Sarah's character was such that she couldn't suffer defeat without suffering a lack of confidence. So in order to build confidence I wanted her to participate in amateur events," said Zeitman.

Since 1976, Green has become one of the top five women players in the country. "She's 10 times as good as she was in 1976 and four times as good as she was just a year ago," said Zeitman.

Following graduation from Memphis State in 1979, Green moved to Las Vegas, where Zeitman had taken up residence. "When I did poorly in school, I did well in racquetball," said Green, whose statement was then followed up by Zeitman's addendum.

"You have to take that in perspective," he said. "She placed high in pro tournaments while maintaining a 3.4 grade average. Her last semester she had a perfect 4.0."

This season usually found Green in at least the semifinals. Things finally came together in

her home town of Memphis when she won the NRC stop, one of the last tournaments before the WPRA split with the NRC.

It was as a result of the split that the "Sarah Green Controversy" came to light. In a nutshell, the WPRA wanted each player to give 15 per cent of her winnings to help run the organization. Green did not want to pay and for a time was declared a "member not in good standing."

There are three central characters in the scenario: Green, Naseef, her 35-year-old manager who promotes rock concerts, and Dan Seaton, the Las Vegas attorney who became WPRA Commissioner in 1979.

"Dan Seaton had a harder time than he thought putting together tournaments after we split from the NRC," said Green, "and it got to running him a lot of money. He felt like we owed him money in return to keep him going. He didn't look at it like a business expense, which was the way I saw it."

"He came in and offered to set up this tour for us. If he makes money, then he makes money. If he loses money, well, that's business. It's like the guy who bought the Las Vegas Sporting House. If he loses money, he doesn't come back to the members and start asking us to pay him money to keep it open. So when Seaton couldn't get his money back, he decided... well, the women decided... that they would pay him 15 percent of all their winnings. But when the vote was taken, most of the top players were not there to vote."

"I decided that I was willing to pay a percentage of the tournament winnings that Seaton and the association had put together but not for those tournaments the WPRA had absolutely nothing to do with. That's where the big problem came in."

The back pay amounted to about \$600, which Green and Naseef admit was less than they paid in attorney's fees.

Prior to the WPRA's tourney in Rockville Center, New York, Naseef obtained a temporary restraining order, allowing Green to play in New York. Her 15 percent, however, was withheld pending the court case.

Then Green was not invited to the Ektelon-Perrier tournament in Los Angeles, causing some behind-the-scenes name-calling incidents between Seaton and Naseef.

That led to an out-of-court settlement, which more or less let Sarah off the hook for past tournaments under the agreement she would be bound to pay the 15 percent for all future tournaments. She was then invited to the Los Angeles tourney.

Seaton did not want to comment on the matter. He says he has a different version of the reason for the out-of-court settlement but declines to go into it. "It is not healthy for the commissioner of the association to be battling with one of the top players," says Seaton. "Sarah and I have settled our differences. I can deal with her but will not deal with her manager."

One thing, however, is for certain. The par-

ties have agreed not to discuss the controversy any longer. "It's over," says Seaton. "There's nothing more to argue about," says Zeitman.

Whatever the result of the controversy, it doesn't seem to have hurt Green's play. That probably stems from having Zeitman and Naseef handle her affairs, thereby letting her concentrate on racquetball.

Naseef now pays Green's air expenses and entry fees. She was formerly sponsored by Ektelon, then Leach. Now she is not associated with any racquet manufacturer and will consider all offers. Naseef gets a percentage of her winnings. "I hope to get something someday. There could be a lot of money in racquetball," he says. "And Sarah is so marketable." Naseef also handles Las Vegas teenager Brett Harnett, winner of the 1980 National Amateur Championships.

At this time, women's racquetball is not at the stage where the players can support themselves. Sarah helps support herself by dealing blackjack at the Fremont Hotel in downtown Las Vegas. "Got to make ends meet," she says.

"Ideally, I'd like to be able to support myself with racquetball. But even if the tour goes full-time I may still deal cards part time to get my mind away from the game when I need to."

Dealing blackjack brings one back to Green's emotions. "You should see her deal. A guy could put down a dollar and she would react the same way as if he put down one thousand," says Zeitman, who also works at the Fremont.

Zeitman says that "attitude" is the only thing holding Green back from becoming the best woman player in the game.

"Overall, gamewise she has the best technical knowledge in the game. She has the best backhand in the game," said Zeitman. "But she doesn't possess that killer instinct. She won't go out and drub somebody who is her friend. She doesn't think her game is superior to everybody else's game. Sarah worries about some players but the players she worries about are two skill levels below her and the players she beats easily are the ones she should normally struggle with."

Sarah says that lack of killer instinct comes from her relationship with her twin sister, who is now into marketing research in Memphis. "I never wanted to be better than her," said Sarah. "I always wanted to be even but not better."

But she may be getting over that psychological barrier now. At one time Sarah's sister was a much better racquetball player than she. Not anymore. Her sister couldn't touch her in a game. Then again, not many women players can touch her in a game.





# PITTSBURGH:

## One of Racquetball's Early Breeding Grounds



The Pirates and Steelers play and a few remember Pitt's famous racquetball pit.

**By Evan Pattak**

Ah, Pittsburgh, home of the famous Golden Triangle. The Steel City. City of the Super Bowl and World Series champions. And would you believe, one of racquetball's early breeding grounds.

Everyone knows that racquetball, like surfing, hot tubs, and California women, was popularized on the West Coast. But through an inexplicable quirk in history, a handful of Pittsburghers was introduced to the sport even before most areas around the country had ever heard of it, including some parts of California.

The year was 1968, the Dark Ages of racquetball, when the game was so new that it was being played in only a few pockets of America. Suffice it to say that Pittsburgh was one of those pockets, and the hotbed of racquetball in town was the University of Pittsburgh.

At Pitt, physical education credits were still required of all students, so the school offered courses in, among other sports, wrestling, volleyball, weight training, and this new game that was played in a handball court with a sawed-off tennis racquet.

Although the game was a hit with students, it failed to take off for a number of reasons. For one thing, there was little in the way of racquet-

Photo by Joseph A. Rosen  
Two of Pittsburgh's better racquetball players are Al Plummer (left) and Ken Goldberg.



# PITTSBURGH

ball equipment available. Eyeguards and flexible-frame racquets were several years down the road. And the tennis craze was in full bloom, making it hard to get the status seekers and the fashion-conscious to forsake the tennis courts for the musty, sweaty indoors.

Perhaps even more significant was the condition of the courts at Pitt. Located in the then-new facility called Trees Hall, the 11 courts featured floors of pure concrete, which resulted in painful shin splints and other leg and foot ailments. The lights, if you could find a court with bulbs intact, were so dim that they created blind spots. Often the only way to locate a ceiling shot was to pick it up off the back wall. If it never reached the back wall, well, scratch one point.

Worst of all, the courts were sunken. A player could enter and exit only by means of a rope-pulled ladder which, when play was in progress, was tied and suspended above the court. Rope balls and ladder balls were played as hindes.

One less-than-intrepid student looked at the court, at the ladder swaying perilously, and began to put two and two together. "How," he asked his instructor, "do we get out if we break a leg down there?"

"You don't get out," the instructor said, pointing to a nearby shovel. "We just take that and fill in the pit."

Small wonder, then, that when racquetball took off in the '70s, Pittsburgh's head start did not put it in the vanguard of the movement. Today, however, the sport is doing quite nicely in the City of Champions, although many entrepreneurs think there is still room for expansion.

There are better than 200 courts in the city and its environs, most situated within the more affluent suburbs of Pittsburgh. In fact, only about 25 of those courts are within the city,

which may help explain why the game has yet to take off among the town's blue collar workers and in its black neighborhoods. There are no industrial leagues to speak of, as there are in such established sports as softball and bowling. For travelers, several clubs are located within a few miles of Greater Pittsburgh International Airport.

For the most part, the clubs are standard in appearance—most offer some glass-walled courts, comfortable lounges and juice bars, somewhat cramped locker rooms and the usual nursery services. Perhaps the plushest courts around are those at the Racquet Club in the eastern suburb of Monroeville, one of the few local facilities with sufficient seating capacity to host a major tournament.

Certainly the oddest courts in town, now that the University of Pittsburgh's have been refurbished, are those at the Jewish Community Center, across the street from Pitt's towering Cathedral of Learning. The half-dozen courts there are really squash courts, pressed into service by the demand for racquetball. The smaller dimensions make for a unique game of racquetball. There is no such thing as a passing shot, and all ceiling shots result in set-ups. Yet the courts are among the most popular in the city, and the screwy dimensions don't seem to damage the players' games.

All of the courts jump during the pre-work and evening hours. In fact, trying to buy an evening hour during the height of the season is sometimes impossible. At Racquet Time, the club owned by trucking company executive Bob Eazor, court time is at such a premium that members can reserve it only two days in advance. At Pitt, the only free courts left in town, the wait can be as long as three hours. But court time in the late mornings and after-

noons is much slower, so slow that such dead time poses a serious problem for newer establishments.

As befitting a city that has been playing racquetball for so long, the caliber of play is quite high, the circuit of tournaments constant. The top-rated players, Al Plummer (No. 1) and Ken Goldberg (No. 2), are also the area's premier doubles team. Also ranked highly is Ron Galbraith, head basketball coach at Westminster College.

None of Pittsburgh's top players has ever become a touring pro, although Goldberg perhaps came closest. Now 22, Goldberg conquered a bad temper and erratic play—plus the oddities of the courts at the JCC where he learned the game—and became so expert that he considered the tour. Ultimately he settled for a contract with Leach and a job as manager of Racquetball One, Jimmy Rosenbloom's new club in Pittsburgh's East End.

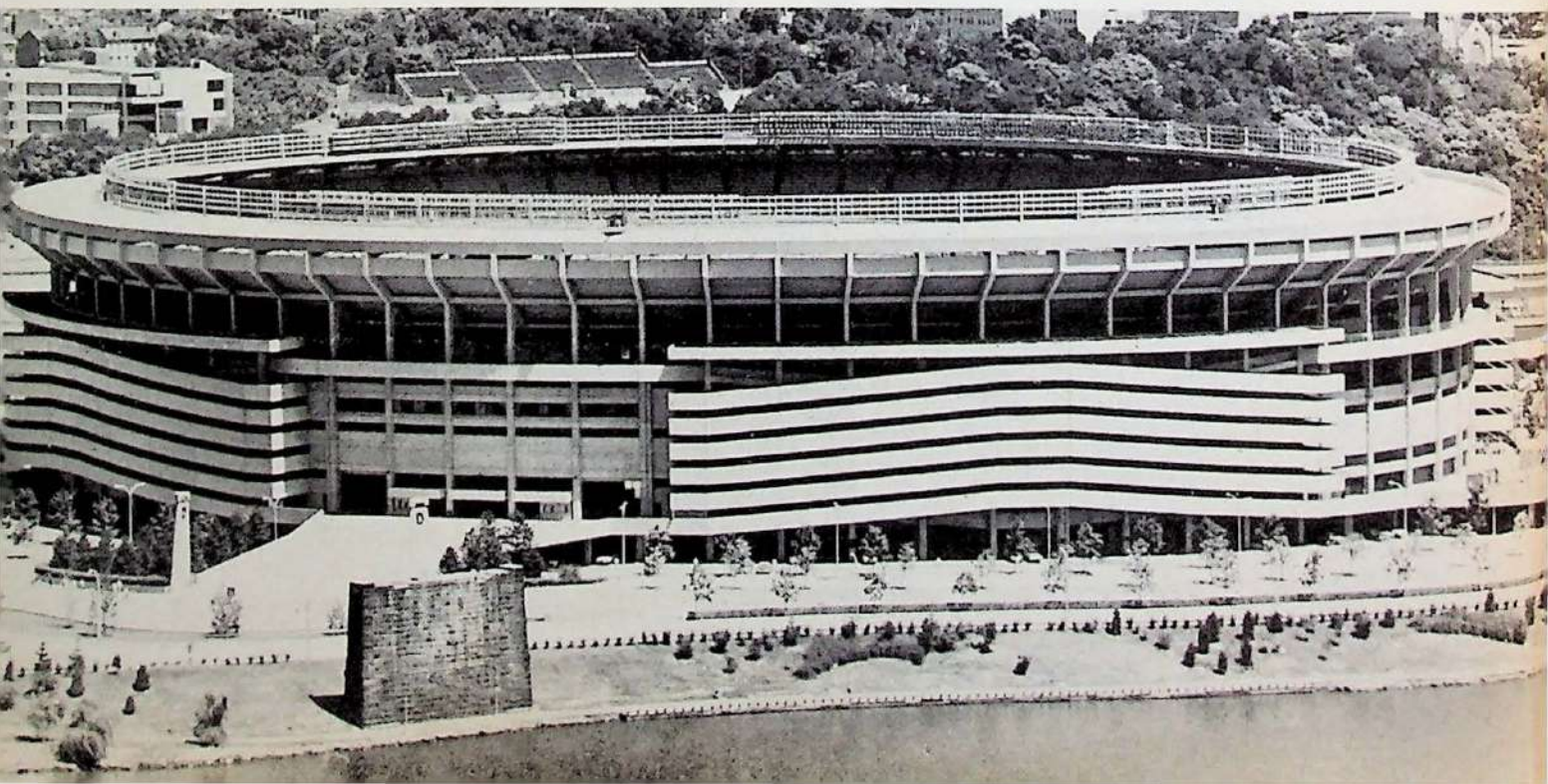
"I've had the opportunities," Goldberg says, "but the tour just didn't seem like a reliable way to make a living. You have to bust your buns, and if you get hurt, you have nothing to fall back on."

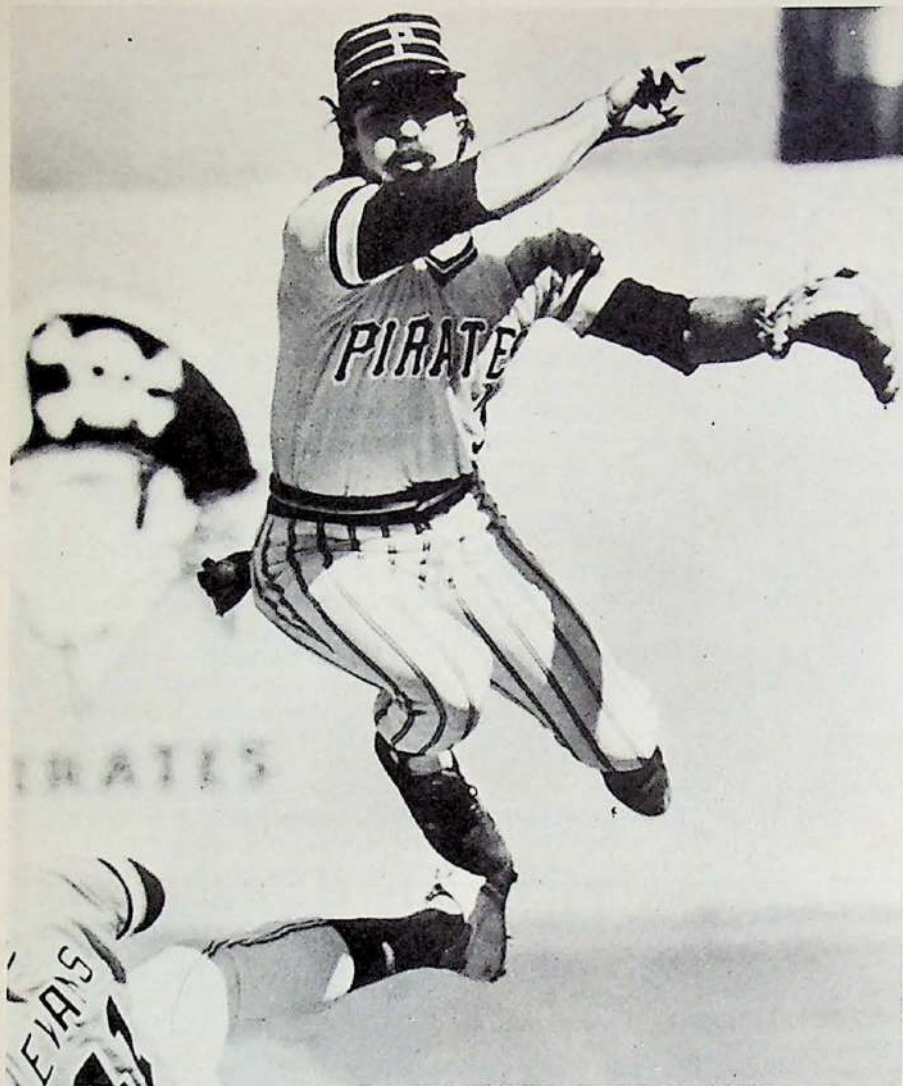
Goldberg has even played and lost to Marty Hogan. In fact, one of Hogan's shots caught Goldberg flush in the back of the leg with such force that Goldberg claims to have been bruised for six months. "I've been hit harder," he told Hogan.

Also among the most prominent players in the area are the ageless Dr. Allen Schattner and Gene Grapes, the only pair ever to capture a national Masters doubles title in consecutive years. The two began playing together in 1971 and reached the national semifinals four times, in addition to their two titles.

Over the last couple of years, Grapes has

**Pittsburgh's Three-Rivers Stadium, home of the world champion Steelers and Pirates.**





**Pittsburgh Pirate second baseman Phil Garner is an avid racquetball player and a court club owner.**

been stepping up to the Golden Masters division. Still, the success of their partnership has helped make doubles unusually popular in Pittsburgh.

"We probably have as many 'A' players here as anywhere in the country," Goldberg says. "But as far as the top quality goes, we're a little behind."

One thing that Pittsburgh has in abundance is stars in other sports who are deeply involved in racquetball. Among the World Champion Pirates, for instance, second baseman Phil Garner is more than just a racquetball player or fan. Along with a partner, he recently established a club called Wallbangers, located just across the Allegheny River from the legendary Oakmont Country Club. Since it opened last February, the club has been doing a great business.

"We have 12 courts now," Garner says, "but we've been doing so well we're thinking

about expansion. The Regional Industrial Development Corporation park is just down the road, and we've been getting a lot of those executives in the mornings. I don't really think of it so much as an investment or something to make money. I play racquetball to stay in shape, and this gives me my own place to stay.

"Everything I've read indicates to me that the sport is still growing. We're seeing quite a few women play. It used to be that sweating was not considered very ladylike. But now there's an emphasis on physical fitness, and women as they get older feel they should do something about it."

Ironically, the pressure of getting Wallbangers off the ground was so great that Garner was able to play only once in the entire off-season.

There are probably a dozen Pirates who play at least semi-regularly. According to Goldberg, shortstop Tim Foli is the best of the bunch. Also in the group are Dave Parker, Dale Berra, Bill Madlock and Bill Robinson. Even Willie Stargell has hit it around. It was two baseball players, both then Pirates, who were involved in perhaps the most dangerous, least

graceful racquetball game ever played in town. The scene was the infamous University of Pittsburgh courts. The players—pitcher Jerry Reuss, now a Dodger, and pitcher George "Doc" Medich, now with the Texas Rangers. Reuss is 6-foot-5. Medich is 6-foot-5, and the court hasn't been the same since. When all the wild swinging had ended and both men were still able to climb the ladder and leave the court, it had to be considered a moral victory for both sides.

Among the World Champion Steelers, linebacker Jack Ham, as quick on the courts as he is on the field, is perhaps the best player. Also a serious player, though not as experienced, is tight end Randy Grossman, who recently performed capably in a Tournament of Eights at Racquetball One.

University of Pittsburgh football coach Jackie Sherrill has also taken up racquetball and his wife Daryl is learning the game under Goldberg's direction.

So racquetball in Pittsburgh has more than its share of celebrities. But if the sport is to continue to expand, it must look to the town's inner city areas and blue collar work force to fill the dead hours. The failure to tap those markets leads some to believe that new clubs will not survive.

"I'm not sure Pittsburgh can handle any more clubs," Goldberg warns. "We may have reached the saturation point."

Others, such as Schattner, are more optimistic.

"I don't think it's peaked," he says of the racquetball boom generally. "Look at the ads on TV. You see a man going from the racquetball courts to the drugstore to buy his favorite aftershave. Or one sportscaster telling another that he'll play him in racquetball. Those are indications of the unusual interest in this."

Some entrepreneurs are taking more aggressive steps to fill their off-peak hours. Cheryl Walton, manager of Manor Courts in the suburban South Hills, adopted the unusual measure of going door to door at a nearby office complex to recruit new players.

"I've hit four or five floors in one building," Walton says. "There are 14 or 15 floors overall. We're also doing things like adding more 'early bird' tournaments and more round robin tournaments. People get more involved if the activities are structured."

There has also been some movement towards development of the downtown, virtually a pristine market. One prospective development reportedly attracted a huge chunk of money from an athlete prominent in Pittsburgh. When progress on the project was slowed, the athlete withdrew his investment. Now there is talk of converting the Gateway Theatre into a racquetball club. That would be a critical step for the growth of the sport, since the Gateway is at the heart of the business and entertainment district, only a few blocks from the new convention center set to open this winter.

Thus, there seems at least better-than-average potential for growth of the sport in Pittsburgh, the not-quite cradle of racquet-

# YOGA EXERCISES FOR RACQUETBALL

By Barbara McDermott

A five-minute yoga warm-up before your game could turn a losing script into a winning one. Yoga exercises, by nature, are slow stretches that help prepare your body for more vigorous exercise. These warm-ups can be done in the locker room, exercise room or on the court, and the five minutes you invest in them should pay off handsomely in the way you feel during and after your games. The same set of warm-ups can be done after playing, to cool down and to ease any tightness.

According to Nancy McClure, who trained in yoga at the Himalayan Institute in Glenview, Ill., "Hatha (physical) yoga is a system of postures or exercises that are both isometric (tensing) and isotonic (stretching). These postures are used to increase physical fitness, grace, and mental alertness." McClure tells her yoga students at the Buehler YMCA in Palatine, Ill. that modern acrobatics, calisthenics and dance have all borrowed heavily from yogic methods.

The yoga philosophy states that the mind and body are so closely intertwined that you can't separate one from the other. Mind and body must be healthy for you to look and feel your best. People know what tension can do to one's racquetball game, so it is to one's advantage to eliminate that tension before a game. "Just learning how to breathe properly can help to dispel nervousness," says McClure. "The fresh supply of oxygen to the brain helps clear your mind and bring back your concentration."

One may not get the full benefit of yoga from only five or 10 minutes, but five or 10 minutes now may be 20 or 30 minutes tomorrow.

"The average racquetball player plays two to three times a week," says Patty Korsgard, instructor at the Arlington Racquet Club in Arlington Heights, Ill. "Therefore, it's especially important to stay limbered up between games. Yoga stretches serve just this purpose."

A set of warm-ups has been designed to stretch those parts of the body used most in racquetball. The overhead stretch works on "waking up" many of the muscles in the body. The standing twist, as well as shoulder and arm exercises, limber the spine and shoulders. The skier's exercise works on the ankles, and the dancer's pose affects the back and legs. Lunges strengthen the legs, and the forward bend is a total stretch which also calms the

mind. The neck roll dispels tension in the neck, and diaphragmatic breathing is a crash-course in how to breathe properly to lessen tension.

"I see more and more players doing warm-ups before their games, but many of them don't know exactly which exercises to do. Some of the warm-ups are so quick and jerky that they're as hard on the body as launching right into play. That's what I like about the yoga postures. 'They're so slow and gentle,'" says Korsgard.

"Racquetball is hard on your body because there's so much stopping and starting in such a confined place. You heat up very quickly, and if you haven't readied your body for it, you're asking a lot from your muscles to perform beautifully with no preparation.

"The most common injuries are pulled thigh

muscles and shoulder injuries. The lunges in this yoga routine are great thigh strengtheners, and the shoulder and arm exercises really work on the shoulders to get them loosened up."

### YOGA WARM-UPS

**1. Diaphragmatic breathing.** Place hands over upper abdominal area (above waist). As you inhale, expand that area, feeling pressure against your hands. The chest should not move. As you exhale, pull that area in tightly, contracting it. (Push gently with your hands to aid you at first). This squeezes the very last bit of carbon dioxide, stale air and other impurities from the lungs. It can be done to calm yourself down if you're feeling nervous before or during a game.

**2. Overhead Stretch.** Stand erect, feet together, heels and big toes touching. Inhale, stretch arms overhead, palms together. Press heels down and stretch the whole body upward as much as possible, extending all the way to the fingertips. Exhale, relax and bring arms down. Repeat three times. This stretch works on your posture, which affects your entire physical, mental and emotional health.



**3. Standing Twist.** Stand tall, with your feet about two feet apart. Wrap left arm around back, palm facing outward. Extend right arm, stretched to fingertips. Twist to left, drawing left shoulder over right heel, bringing right arm next to right ear. Return to front and repeat on opposite side. This posture limbers the spine and the shoulders, and stretches the arms and pectorals.



**5. Skier's Exercise.** Standing, roll onto right outer edges of feet, bending knees to right. Repeat on left 5-10 times each. Helps to improve weak ankles, preventing twists and sprains. Good for swollen ankles, because it improves circulation. Improves flexibility of entire lower extremities as it trims.



**6. Dancer's Pose.** Standing, bend right leg back; grasp ankle with right hand. Inhaling, pull foot up and back, extending left arm forward. Hold, stretching for 30 seconds. Repeat, standing on right foot. This is a good back stretch, promoting flexibility in all vertebral joints.



**4. Shoulder and Arm Exercise.** Standing, stretch arms out to side, shoulder level. Exhale and swing arms forward, pulling shoulders together, expanding back. Inhale and throw shoulders back, expanding chest, bend-

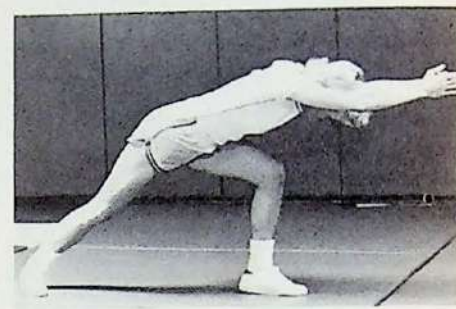
ing elbows, bringing hands to chest. Exhale and repeat forward movement; inhale and swing arms out and back. Repeat three times; relax. Repeat with palms facing up, in, and out to work joints completely.



## INSTRUCTION



**7. Lunges.** Stand with feet four feet apart, arms stretched out to the fingertips at shoulder height. Turn left foot out at 45-degree angle, right heel extended slightly. Draw arms up, palms up; draw palms together overhead. Lock thumbs, elbows as close together as possible. Rotate body to left. Bend left knee until it comes over heel. Extend forward over bent knee, upper body parallel to floor. Raise up, twist to front, lower arms. Repeat to the right. Lunges limber and strengthen the leg muscles, especially the hamstrings. They also work on the spine and the knees.



**8. Rolling Forward Bend.** Stand tall, feet together, pelvis tilted back. Raise arms overhead as if about to dive into a pool. Tuck chin to chest, and roll down from upper back. Let arms and upper body hang down for a moment, but not long enough to cause dizziness.

Curl back up by rounding the lower back first. Leave arms hanging until body is standing straight again. This is a wonderful posture for easing back tension and can be used any time back feels stiff.



**9. Neck Roll.** Drop chin to chest and very SLOWLY begin to rotate head to right. Inhale as head comes up and back; exhale when it comes forward and down. Reverse and proceed in opposite direction. Concentrate on relaxing muscles COMPLETELY. Repeat three times to right and three to left. Noises you may hear are calcium deposits in the neck being rubbed. Continued practice will break these up and allow the body to expel them. The neck is a very delicate part of the body and a center of tension, subject to stiffness, pain and cramping. Fast-moving exercises do little to relieve this tension and may even worsen the condition. Slowness is the key to neck exercises.



ease them out just as gradually, with the same set of postures.

While you might have thought of yoga and racquetball as the "odd couple," it shouldn't take long before you see how they complement each other. Yoga provides the stretching and limbering and racquetball provides the aerobics.

After having done these warm-ups, your body as well as your mind should be ready to play high-caliber racquetball. The anxiety that brought your court has been set aside

by the breathing and calming exercises. Your muscles are stretched and ready to launch into strenuous exercise, because you've eased them into it gradually. After playing, you can

# OVERHEAD SHOTS

## By Jerry Hilecher

Conventional wisdom says that you never hit down on a racquetball. The ideal racquetball shot is made with the ball between knee and waist height and with a smooth, level stroke that sends it in a straight line parallel to the floor.

Hitting down on a ball from above your waist is a low percentage shot because it angles the ball toward the floor and, in fact, that's where the ball often ends up.

As a rule, it is best to play the percentages and choose a ceiling shot for high lobs or maneuver so that the ball falls below your waist.

But there are also times when you can break the rules and bring a high ball down with an overhead pass or kill shot. This form differs radically from the conventional stroke. In fact, it most resembles a tennis serve.

An overhead shot is a difficult one to make and I wouldn't recommend frequent use of it by beginners. But it does have its advantages, especially in tournament play.

It is most useful as an alternative to a ceiling shot on those "in between" gets as when a

high arching ball falls just short of the back wall. In this situation, you have little room for a good kill or pass shot and should usually resort to the defensive ceiling shot.

But, with some practice and the proper execution, you can turn these defensive situations into offensive opportunities, much to the surprise of your opponent.

While an overhead shot can be a pass or kill shot, it should always be a forehand stroke. It is generally used to break a ceiling rally or in response to a poorly hit ceiling shot.

In this sense, an overhead is a good complement to your ceiling game and here, as in your offensive game, it is important to have variety in your shot repertoire in order to keep your opponent guessing.

Begin an overhead in the same way you would a ceiling shot. The ball is approaching you above chest or shoulder height. Get your racquet up immediately and assume a position much like a quarterback about to throw a pass or a tennis player about to serve.

In the normal racquetball forehand stroke, you will be facing the side wall. But, in the overhead (as in the ceiling shot) you are turned slightly forward on a diagonal with the front

corner (left or right corner depending on which hand you hold your racquet).

You should not be simply standing there, of course, but maneuvering so that the approaching ball will reach you above your shoulder.

Your weight will be on your back foot and, as you swing the racquet, shift to your front foot.

As complicated as this sounds, you will find that it all comes naturally.

The most important point to remember, as in all racquetball strokes, is to be fluid. Concentrate on placing the ball where you want it instead of smacking it. Power is generated through the snap of your wrist.

Now comes the tricky part. In an overhead kill shot, the ball is going to have a tendency to dig itself into the floorboards before reaching the front wall because of the angle at which it travels.

Assuming it does reach the front wall, it is then going to have a tendency to rebound high instead of rolling out as with a kill shot hit below the waist.

The solution to both these problems is to take advantage of the side walls to slow the ball down and change the angle at which it hits the front wall. That is, to make it die off the front wall.

Hit a front wall-side wall pinch to the opposite corner from your racquet hand or a side wall-front wall kill when hitting to the corner on the same side as your racquet hand. The latter shot is hit a little farther along the side wall than the pinch shot.

On an overhead passing or drive shot, though, you will want to avoid the side walls at all cost. The overhead pass or drive is aimed about two feet up on the front wall and, should the ball contact one of the side walls, it will end up somewhere in mid-court as a very easy plum for your opponent.

The overhead pass is especially useful if your opponent is off to one side of the court near the short line and out of position. He may get lazy and think you will return his ceiling shot with another ceiling shot, thereby giving him time to get into position. Wrong. That is the time to use the pass.

On the other hand, if he is hanging back on his heels in the back court, use the overhead kill.

As I said, both are difficult shots which will not be expected. That is why a successful execution of either can have a most startling effect, not only winning the point but giving you a psychological advantage.

The secret is to have practiced the overhead shot enough to feel comfortable with it.

# BACKHAND PINCH SHOTS

By Don Thomas

I use the backhand pinch shot probably more than anybody else on the pro tour. Although it's not the highest percentage shot to take, it is a shot I have developed from any spot on the court and it reacts off the front wall in such a way that it keeps my opponent off balance.

Most players don't expect a pinch shot. They are expecting down-the-line shots but my pinch shot is so effective because I get the ball down almost every time and I put a lot of power into the shot—more so than one might expect from that type of shot.

I'm not choosy, either. I pinch from all over the place. I can pinch from backcourt, from center court, or I can reverse pinch. But a lot of it has to do with strategy.

Pinch shots are made for strategy players. You can pinch and pinch and pinch and then when your opponent comes up expecting you to pinch, you come back with a down-the-line shot. Then when he moves back, you start pinching again. You keep him guessing.

The power from my pinch shot comes from backswing and total usage of the body. This differs from a normal shot in which power comes mainly from the wrist.

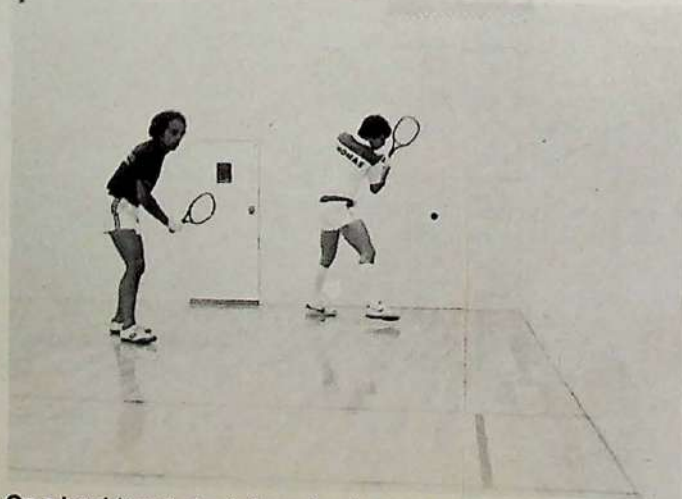
I utilize every movement of my body when I pinch. Not only the arm but everything.

And if it is working right, it is the hardest pinch in the game today. You can ask some of my opponents. They don't know what it is

of the time the ball is right on you.

I just get down and more or less explode. That's where my grip really makes the difference. The ball comes off my racquet and I can pull it or push it. I come up over the ball

of the time he sees in a game and go out and practice them. My proficiency with the backhand pinch shot did not come without a lot of practice.



On a backhand pinch from back court, notice how Thomas puts more of his body into the shot. He is actually facing the backwall with most of his body, then driving himself



around to develop more torque. Also note the complete follow-through.



On a pinch shot from center court, Thomas comes over the ball more. From this position you seldom have time to set up. It's more of a reaction. The best time to use this shot is when your opponent is behind you.

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# BACKHAND PASSING SHOTS



**By Marci Greer**

You've all heard this rather old racquetball adage: If you can control center court, you can control the game. Old it may be, but true it is, too. And one of the ways to control that center court is with the backhand pass.

Good passing shots in general—those that fly by your opponent on either side like a reckless rocket—are one of the game's most effective offensive weapons. A pass can be hit from any height, any velocity, and from anywhere on the court.

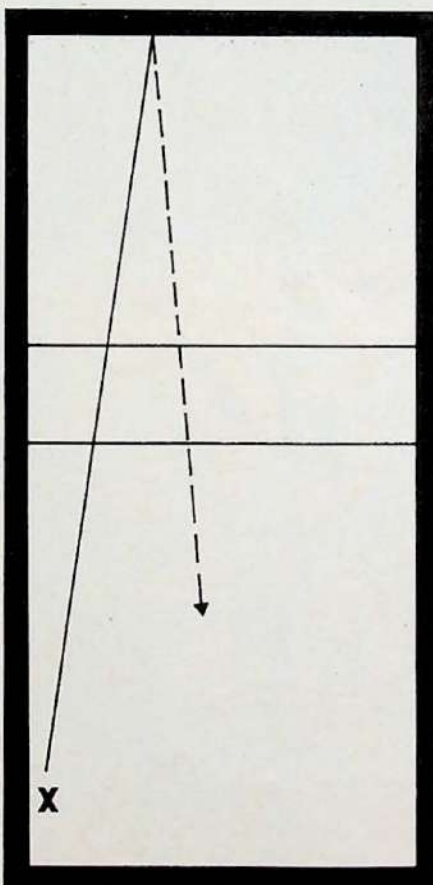
By going down the line with the backhand or cross court, you can take your opponent away from center court. You can play "King of the

Hill" and more often than not, come home with the crown.

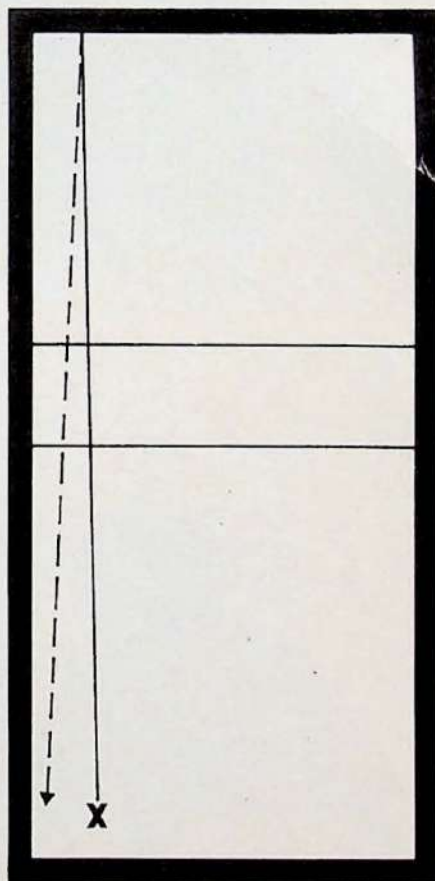
The backhand pass usually arises out of a serious situation, by racquetball standards: A hard drive or soft lob deep to the backhand corner.

Not too many players can kill out of that spot; and others, like myself, find it just too defensive to go to the ceiling.

That leaves you with two alternatives: down-the-line pass or cross-court pass, either of which are effective because unlike a kill shot, with a backhand pass there's no danger of skipping the ball into the floor on the way to the front wall.



A backhand shot hit from back court that hits the front wall at a spot left of center will rebound toward the middle of the court, a position your opponent will probably be covering.



A backhand shot down the line will be much harder to reach.

And again, it's important to remember, good passing shots, whether hit on purpose or just a missed kill attempt, will determine solid center court play, the so-called center of this instructional.

To hit a good backhand pass, the angle of the body makes all the difference. To go down the line, the body is facing the side wall. Since I'm right handed, I face the left wall, my feet perpendicular to the side wall. That's the way you want to make contact—off the front foot, striding into the front wall, hitting up and down the left wall without the ball hitting the side.

One thing to remember—actually two—is to keep the ball down low (waist high or lower) so it doesn't rebound off the back wall and also, wait away. Hit the ball as hard as you can, careful to keep the first bounce near mid-court so the second comes from the back wall.

When going cross-court with the backhand pass, the right foot pulls back so that tips of toes would point to the center of the front wall. The real objective is to drive the ball as hard as you can, deep into the right hand corner. Again, keep the ball low and watch the angle of your stroke.

There is one problem, however, with this shot: If you don't hit the angle just right, the ball will rebound off the back or side wall and flop

into center court. And you know how much we were trying to avoid that disaster.

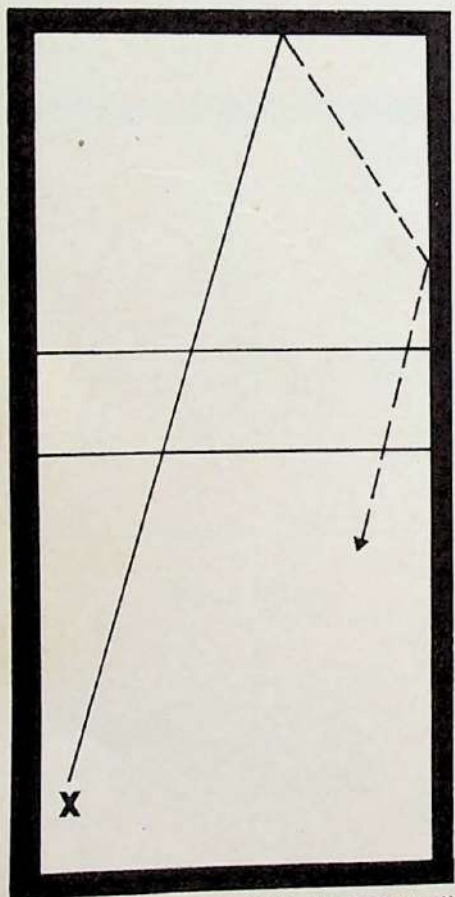
So do your geometry homework. If you want the ball to travel down the left line, go a couple of feet right of the left corner. If you hit just right of center, the ball will rebound off the right side wall into the back court. And if you hit dead center, the ball will high-tail it to the back right corner—where it really belongs.

My Ektelon teammate, Rita Hoffman, and I have had a few "conversations" over whether to use the cross-court backhand pass or not. Rita is dead set against it. "Pops out into the middle for a plum," she says.

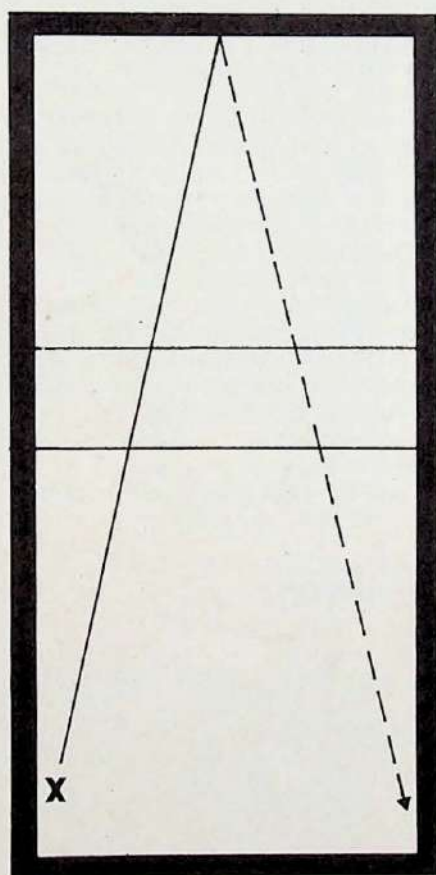
I say it can be terrific in some circumstances, especially when your opponent is backing up to his left in anticipation of your shot. Ripping it across court will catch them leaning the wrong way.

Either can, as mentioned, be effectively used as a service return and to keep your opponent off guard and out of the middle. But when you do gain center-court advantage, don't get caught hitting passing shots from the front court. It's pretty easy to get trapped up there.

Whatever, analyze the situation and hit the ball where your opponent isn't. It makes for a very simple game.



A backhand shot that hits the front wall at a point right of center will probably hit the side wall and rebound to the back of the court.



If the ball hits directly in the center of the front wall, the ball will probably aim for the right corner. Since your opponent is probably covering the center, this shot will be hard to handle.



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# ANTICIPATION IS THE NAME OF THE GAME

By Janell Marriott

Do you ever watch the pros play and wonder in amazement how they can get to so many shots? Why weren't you blessed with their quickness and reactions? Some shots look impossible to return but the pros always seem to be there. Well, maybe there is more to it than just quickness.

Actually some of the pros really aren't that quick. But they have learned the art of anticipating where their opponent's shot will go. By anticipating the next shot you are able to start moving to the ball sooner and therefore ready to hit the ball before it even arrives. You seem quick and unbeatable, and your opponent is left standing with his mouth open in amazement.

So what are the secrets of anticipating the ball? There are several key factors that help you learn to read your opponents' shots. As with every other racquetball skill, it takes practice, concentration, and experience. With a little patience you can become as accurate as the pros at anticipating your opponents' shots.

The better the player, the harder it will be to anticipate his shots. A good player will be able to make adjustments in his swing to compensate for poor body position, for hitting the ball on the run, or for any strange bounces. The average player isn't able to do this as well and that's why he telegraphs his shots.

The first step to anticipating the next shot is to **watch the ball**. Sounds simple and your local pro has probably told you this numerous times but most people still do not watch the ball as closely as they should. Watch the ball. Follow it wherever it goes and watch your op-



**One clue is learning how to anticipate an opponent's shot is to watch his or her stance. Here, Janell shows a relatively open stance, in which the body is facing more toward the front wall. Chances are this will be a cross court shot.**

ponent set up for the next shot. You should see the ball leave his racquet and then move immediately to where it has been hit.

The player who doesn't watch does not know where the ball is going until after his opponent's shot is rebounding off the front wall. This just doesn't give the player time enough to get to the ball no matter how quick he is. The split second it takes for the ball to leave your opponent's racquet and strike the front wall is the extra time needed to get into position to hit a good return. A perceptive player can actually learn to read his opponent's shot before the opponent actually hits the ball, giving him even more time to get into position.

There are subtle clues in your opponent's swing that allow you to tell where he is hitting

the ball before he even strikes it. The first is the position of his feet and body. How the player sets up to hit the ball is one of the most noticeable signs as to where he'll hit it.

If the player has setup facing the side wall with his body parallel to it, the ball should travel a straight line parallel to the wall. The natural swing of a player is across his body causing the ball to travel a line parallel to the shoulders as it is hit. If the player is in an open stance, the body angled towards the front wall, then the swing will go across the body causing the ball to go cross-court. If your opponent is in a closed stance, the body angled towards the backwall, the ball will hit the nearest side wall, resulting in a pinch shot.

The second clue is the **point of contact** with the ball. If the player hits the ball square with his body, it will travel straight to the front wall (down the line shot). If the player has to reach ahead of his body for the ball, he will pull



**This is a normal stance in which the body is facing the side wall. Chances are the shot will go down the line.**

|                                                                                                                      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                      |
|                                                                                                                      |
| <b>FRONT COURT</b><br>Offensive area - kills, pinches.                                                               |
| <b>MID COURT</b><br>Mixed area - on set ups - kills<br>offensive: any other shots -<br>defensive - drives, ceilings. |
| <b>BACK COURT</b><br>Defensive area - ceiling, passes.                                                               |

it cross court. If the ball has passed his body and he must hit the ball from behind, he will drive it into the side wall for a pinch shot.

A third indicator is the **height** of the ball. It is easy to hit a high ball high and a low ball low. Most players will always take the easiest shot. A high ball returned to the ceiling is very easy to spot. But a player trying to hit an overhead drive has got to put more power behind the shot and will have to use his body more than on a ceiling ball thus giving you the clue to his next shot. A ball that is hit waist high will probably stay about that high, resulting in a pass shot. Depending on the position of your opponent you will be able to distinguish whether it will be a cross court or down-the-line pass. The killshot is usually only hit from low balls (below the knees). So if you have given your opponent a low shot that he can return then move in to cover the kill.

The fourth sign is the **court position** of your opponent. From deep back court your opponent has to be more defensive. He will hit ceiling balls and pass shots. If he has a setup he may try to go for a killshot. The mid court area gives your opponent more choices of shots. Here you will have to rely on some of the other signs to help you anticipate his shots. On any setup he will probably go for the kill. Any ball that comes in higher or at an odd angle, will be more of a defensive shot. From the front court expect nothing but kills—straight in or pinch kills. The only other shot you might watch for is the drive. You may be able to force your opponent to hit a ceiling shot by the way you set up to cover the return. You

can drift up into front court, enough to let your opponent see you coming. This will force him to try a drive shot, so you then fade back as he hits it. Or do the reverse. Hang back as if you are waiting for a drive but all the while anticipating the kill, then move forward to cover it as your opponent hits the ball.

Another sign is the **angle** of the ball coming off the wall. A ball traveling straight back along the sidewall will usually be returned straight back to the front wall. A ball hitting off the sidewall will probably be hit back into the sidewall for a pinch shot. A ball coming off the sidewall straight into the opponent is sometimes harder to hit than a straight shot. The opponent may have to slice the ball or jam his swing, forcing a weak return.

A player who has time to set up and hit the ball will be more difficult to read than a player hitting the ball on the run. Someone who barely gets to the ball must dive to get the ball has no choice of shots. He simply reacts to the ball hitting it however he can. The player who is set up and has time to consider his choices can delay his shot longer, giving you less time to move for his shot. Or he simply may try to disguise his shot. He may set up to hit the ball one way and use a little extra wrist in his swing and direct it the other way.

But the majority of players will not be able to disguise their swings every time they hit the ball. You will be able to pick up on one of the above clues and determine where he is hitting the ball. You may determine your opponent's shot with one sign or he may be good enough so that you will have to use all of the clues. The

more you play and begin to watch for these signs the better you will be at reading their shots.

The other thing you may watch for is the habits or favorite shots of your opponent. Many players have a tendency to hit certain shots when they get the chance. You can spot them in the first few points of the game. Some players are strictly defensive, some strictly offensive, one may love to pinch the right front corner, another always goes cross court. You have to be aware of these shots, so you can position yourself for the return.

If by chance all of the above clues fail and you have no idea where your opponent is hitting the ball, then be daring, take a guess and move into position. You may surprise yourself and your opponent and guess right.

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# PROFILES IN COURAGE

## PART I

Curt Nance Back Home Again In Indiana After Marathon Almost Killed Him



By Steve Phillips

Curt Nance wanted to show how racquetball players can be active in the community, but playing 120 consecutive hours of racquetball almost cost him his life.

Nance, 26, manager of North Parks Racquets Racquetball Club in Evansville, Ind., wanted to raise money for the Muscular Dystrophy Association by partaking in a racquetball marathon.

"The thing about playing for charity is that it is good publicity and it would promote racquetball," said Nance. "I had talked to a guy in California who played for 101 hours, so I could get some training ideas from him."

Nance said he thought he was in good enough shape physically to undertake a marathon. "Two months before the marathon I started taking vitamins and reading books about mind control." He also trained by running around a racquetball court 45 minutes a day.

So, Nance was off on his folly. But there was scepticism on the part of his friends.

"I didn't think he could do it," said Mike Gadis, an employee at the club. "And in the long run it really wasn't worth it."

But Mike's wife, Cheryl, also an employee, had confidence. "I knew that he could do it," she said. "He had made up his mind he was going to do it."

The first thing Nance had to do was get sponsors, so Ektelon and Seamco were contacted. It took two months to arrange things.

Ektelon and Seamco and local sponsors each gave equipment or merchandise in exchange for donating to Muscular Dystrophy. And club owner Bob Rothschild also came up with an idea.

"We had a floor problem on the court next

to the one that Curt was to play in, so we put a poster down on the court telling people to donate money by just pitching it over the side," said Rothschild. "We raised 70 per cent of the total off the floor."

Then there was the publicity push. "Some people had no doubt in their minds that I could do it," said Nance. "The newspapers made me sound like I was cocky and some thought that I was crazy, but I was doing it for charity and some people wanted me to do it just for that reason."

Then came marathon day.

"When I started to play, I was ready but I had forgotten about one thing," said Nance. "When I was in high school I broke two vertebrae in my back while participating in the long jump in track, so in the first 24 hours of the marathon my back was killing me. I thought I was going to die."

Nance took mega-vitamins and B-vitamins in large quantities and other vitamins which are used for mental patients to prevent hallucinations.

While he was playing, a friend would lower a vitamin drink to him in a squeeze bottle over the side of the court, so that he could drink it while his opponent was serving or when a time out was called.

"I took the vitamins every half hour," said Nance. "But at the 56-hour point I felt like I slightly went through hell."

Nance ended up playing a total of 430 games and he won 86 per cent of them.

"A group of six guys took care of me during the marathon," said Nance. "They would carry me to the restroom, give me a skin loop, put me in the whirlpool and wake me up at the proper times."

It was at the 80-hour mark that tragedy struck.

"I started getting blood clots in my left leg. My shoe size went from 9½ to 15," said Nance. "But I was so mentally high that I had no thought of quitting until I got to 120 hours. I could have gone 140 hours, but I made a deal to stop at 120."

"Curt could have called it quits at 110 hours, but he wanted to go longer. I told him that he was going to quit at 120 hours exactly or I was going to turn the lights out," said Rothschild. "He was totally exhausted and mentally he was not rational at 120 hours."

At 9 a.m. on September 3, 1979, Curt Nance finished playing racquetball and the marathon was over. The aftershock, however, was just beginning.

"They took me to the emergency room at



Photos by Steve Phillips

"I started getting blood clots in my leg," said Nance. "But I was so mentally high I never thought about quitting."

St. Mary's Hospital (in Evansville) and took a look at my left leg and decided to keep me there for observation because of fatigue," recalled Nance.

Tests showed that his left leg had blood clots—three of them.

"My veins had collapsed, so they gave me Heparin," said Curt. "On the fifth day I thought that I could go home, but I was given Coumadin, which is supposed to thin out the clots, but it made me even sicker and I had to stay in the hospital longer.

"Four or five days later, I was given Coumadin again but it caused me to get worse. Then I began to have a bad outlook on life," said Nance.

"Before he started the marathon, I told him it was quite a task he was undertaking," said Curt's mother, Mary Nance. "When he was in the hospital we were unsure of what was going to happen.

"I didn't have time to think about how it was going to turn out. We were just living from one day to the next."

Nance was then flown to the Ohio State University Hospital in Columbus where doctors put in a "clip" that prevents the clot(s) from going to the heart.

"Exactly one month later from the time I entered the hospital, I was released to go home," said Nance. "I was aware that I could have lost my left leg."

But his friends and the people of Evansville never lost faith.

"While I was in the hospital, I got thousands of cards and calls and even a telegram from Jerry Lewis," said Nance. "When friends do that it makes you feel good. I wouldn't trade that friendship for anything."

But as far as the racquetball marathon, it may have all been for nothing. His 120 hours broke the old marathon mark but there seems to be some controversy about how it was done, and it probably won't be accepted as a record.

"The guy who had the old record would go 48 hours and take a four hour rest," said Nance. "I would go 56 hours and take a one hour, forty-five minute rest."

According to official rules, the club had to keep record books of all the matches and have someone score the games and a witness at all times, and that wasn't done. But according to Nance, the record isn't all that important.

"We did this to show that racquetball is a good sport," said Nance. "I would beat my brains out and it didn't make any difference. People were here 24 hours a day and it took all the people working together to make it happen.

"It was good for racquetball. It was good for me and for those who helped participate. We were doing something for a good cause and that was raising money. Everytime I would look up from the court, I could see that people were here, and that is what was important."

In all, Nance raised nearly \$7,000 for Muscular Dystrophy. He is not completely healed. He still has a few problems with his legs. But he is improving. These things take time. At least he is back on the court playing racquetball and teaching. For a while, many people thought he wouldn't even be able to do that.



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# PROFILES IN COURAGE

## PART II

One step from death's door, Mike Lawrence won't let MS beat him.

By Don Burke

Don't try and tell Mike Lawrence that racquetball is only a game. To him, it's more than that—much more. For Lawrence, racquetball has meant the difference between life and death—his.

Lawrence, a 33-year-old Denver native, lives with multiple sclerosis (MS), a disease of the brain or spinal cord characterized by partial or complete paralysis or muscular twitching. It's an affliction that is with Lawrence day-in and day-out, but he shrugs it off, saying, "I'm not going to let it get me."

But it almost did.

It started off innocently enough with an inflammation of the optic nerve in his left eye that caused periodic loss of vision. Then, in the fall of 1975, Mike began to lose feeling, first in his legs then in his fingers. Doctors ordered him into the hospital believing that the numbness in his extremities might be caused by some problem in his back—perhaps a ruptured disc. The tests found his back to be fine, but Lawrence was told by doctors he may have multiple scler-

osis. Doctors said his condition would be monitored over the next few months.

Unfortunately for Lawrence, that confirmation came a few months later in January, 1976.

"That was the crushing blow," remembers Lawrence. "Up until then it had been kind of a game with me. It just didn't seem real."

But real it was. A protein sample taken from his body confirmed that it was MS.

Lawrence recalled vividly receiving that definitive diagnosis. "The doctor just leveled me," he said. "He brings out all these medical journals and charts and pulls all these books down from the shelves. He opens this one, that one. Everything he showed me indicated that at the age of 36 all the graphs end (Lawrence was then 27). I'm not going to make it. I'm dying."

To get the full impact of this death sentence, which is what Lawrence saw it as, one must be aware that several months prior to receiving the diagnosis, Lawrence had gone through a divorce. His ex-wife received custody of their only child, a son, and their home in a Denver suburb. Lawrence had also just sold his business and was virtually left with no income.

"In a relatively short span of time, I had lost everything a man my age could lose—wife, child, house, job, and now I'm told indirectly

that I'm dying. The doctor never came to me and said, 'You have this much time left.' He showed me the charts and the graphs and the books, but all I heard was, 'You are dying.' His presentation, the finality of it, his manner, all were far more devastating than his actual words."

In addition, Lawrence found himself with no health insurance. That went with the business and he'd not yet taken out an individual policy. Social security and a small disability check each month kept him going, barely, but he had nothing or no one, as he saw it, to live for. The woman he was planning to marry left him three weeks after the disease was diagnosed.

Convinced that there was no hope, that he was dying, Lawrence withdrew, hermiting himself off from his friends. He admits today that he was not the most pleasant person in Denver to be around. "I didn't even like myself. I'd really gotten down on who I was. Some people didn't want to be around me because I had MS. They thought it might be contagious. Others because I was on heavy medication and wasn't always totally coherent. But I didn't care, I was dying. If someone didn't like what I said or did, so what?"

He shut everyone out and locked himself in his one bedroom "death palace," an apartment he had rented with the sole intention of dying there. His entire existence revolved around getting as many drugs as he could to relieve the pain. Drugs became, if not a reason for living, a way to make the death wait bearable. Doctors were all too willing to help him with prescriptions and Lawrence played the game well, often getting medication from several different sources simultaneously. All he was interested in was "flying, cruising at 47,000 feet." And friendly skies they must have been. At the height of his addiction, Lawrence was taking massive doses of codeine and percodan each day and two or more quaaludes a night to go to sleep. Today, Lawrence acknowledges that those drugs taken in the quantities he did should have killed him, with or without MS.

Lawrence became preoccupied with death. As far as he was concerned the nails were already in the coffin. He was just waiting to be lowered into the ground. He considered taking his own life rather than waiting for death to overtake him. He bought a gun on the open market and actually held it to his head several times.

"I wanted to blow my brains out," Lawrence said. "Why should I live? Why don't we just call it quits and back out of this gracefully and everyone will think I was a swell guy? I don't know why I didn't pull the trigger. Well, I do know why. I didn't know how to kill myself. I was such a vegetable. Do I put it in my mouth? To the side of my head? I didn't know what to do. I just wanted out. Tell me how to do it and I'll do it."

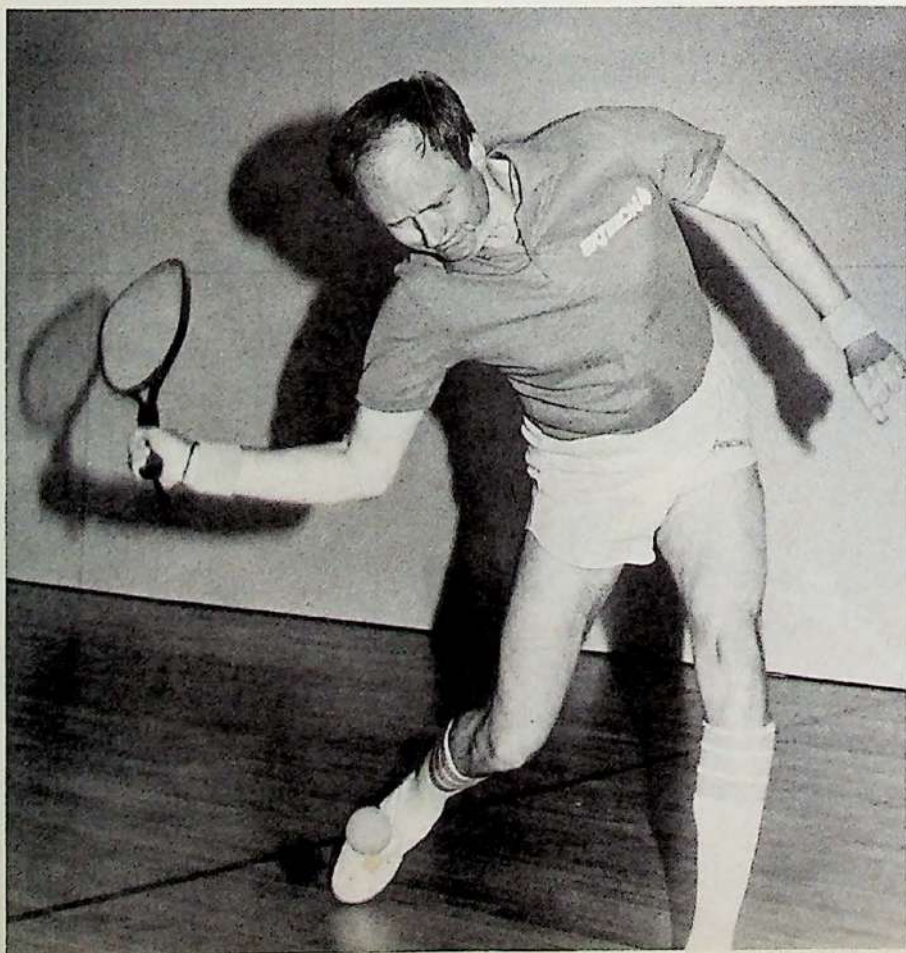


Photo by Oliver Ask

While death held him hostage in his apartment, the few friends he had left were trying to find a way to bring him back to "life." They "dragged" Mike to an EST meeting at which he says he learned a little bit about taking responsibility for his own life. Prior to this, Lawrence, though certain he was dying, said he had a little friend, a ghost, who went everywhere with him. That ghost had MS. Mike didn't. It was the ghost who had no feeling in his arms or legs, not Mike. Gradually Lawrence learned to face the fact that he was the one with MS and he realized that no one else could help him but himself.

Being able to accept responsibility had a great effect on Lawrence and he began to look at the condition his body was in and he didn't like what he saw. He had shriveled from 180 to 119 pounds, stretched tightly over his 5-foot-7 frame. Friends brought him to a local racquet club where he began to exercise lightly and was introduced to racquetball. He liked it, which was something of a miracle in itself. There wasn't much of anything Mike Lawrence liked in early 1977.

"Racquetball has been the greatest medicine I've ever had," remarked Lawrence. "It saved my life. At that time, I really still did not want to live. But I got into racquetball and enjoyed it. I had fun. It was the rehabilitation, the positive mental aspect of it.

"Another reason for me to get out and play racquetball was that it gave me the opportunity to see and be around people. If I hadn't done that I would've continued existing in that little one bedroom apartment. There I definitely would have reached a point of blowing my brains out."

"Participation therapy" is what Lawrence calls it. It's his new found religion and he preaches it with the fervor of a fire-and-brimstone minister. It's a message which he hopes to get across to everyone who has something troubling them or which has taken control of their lives as MS did his.

As Lawrence defines it, participation therapy is applicable beyond the four walls of the racquetball court. It means going out, seeing people, getting involved, becoming more active. "If you go out there and interact with people, you will give and you will also get back. Then you can eliminate the 'I don't feel well today' mentality, or the 'poor me' syndrome. It doesn't matter what. It can be anything in your life that's going on. If you function and get active, you want to do more. That's the opportunity racquetball has opened up for me."

While racquetball provided Lawrence with the impetus to get himself together, it hasn't been all perfectly placed kill shots and aces. There was still the drug problem. After many attempts, false starts and broken promises, it wasn't until last year that he was able to kick them completely. Here again Lawrence thanks racquetball. "If you exercise every day you can't get loaded on the medication. At least I can't because then I can't beat somebody. That's my vehicle for not getting hooked again."

Since January 1977, surgery has been performed on Lawrence's back and left knee, the knee for the fifth and sixth times. His scarred

skin looks more like an Amtrak railroad yard than a portion of someone's leg. After his back surgery, doctors said the only exercise he might be able to engage in would be swimming—maybe. That didn't phase the physically born-again Lawrence. After his fourth knee surgery he was told he'd be lucky to walk without the aid of a crutch or a cane. But the doctors were wrong. Lawrence jogs 45 miles a week in addition to working out with weights and playing racquetball.

That's not to say that the knee and back don't bother him. A few months ago just prior to a tournament match, the knee swelled to three times its normal size. Ice was applied for an hour and a half before the match to reduce the swelling. Then Lawrence slipped on a rubber sleeve to keep the knee warm and went out and won his match, landing him in the semifinals of the "A" division.

Doctor Brent Lovejoy, a Denver family practitioner, has known and treated Lawrence throughout his ordeal with MS and although there were "some very rough times," Lovejoy expresses nothing but admiration for the way Mike has pulled himself up off the floor. "A person can think himself into anything he wants," believes Lovejoy. "He can say, 'I've got MS and I'm going to live until it kills me.' Some people give in. Not Mike, he's going to live until he dies.

"There's no medical proof, but if there is a mental ability to wish something away, Mike has it."

Despite Lawrence's physically fit appearance, there is no doubt that he still has the disease. "It's not something that goes away," said Lovejoy. "Once you have it, you have it. Mike has had several exacerbations (flare-ups). Yet he's gotten over each one and come out stronger than before."

Lawrence agrees. "I have MS right now and it's not going to get in my way. It doesn't go away. It might go into remissive states. I might be in a tremendous remission right now. I don't think so. But it's up to me to make that choice whether it is or it isn't (in remission).

"If I don't exercise, if I don't keep that head up here," he said, tapping his forehead, "and think of competing, of winning, it's very easy for it to go back to as bad as it once was."

Rich Schleibe is the president of Denver's International Athletic Club, Lawrence's home away from home. "He's here every morning," noted Schleibe. "He's tremendously popular with everyone at the club. I'm proud to be associated with him and to have him associated with the club. The change in him has been unbelievable. And a lot of that has to do with a lady who's very good to him, his wife, Kate."

Mention his wife of two years and Lawrence's eyes begin to dance. In this era of the ERA no longer does a woman stand behind every man. She stands right alongside him. Kate Lawrence, it seems, stands just slightly behind her husband, the better to kick his tail when he gets even the least bit lazy. She knows how important activity is to Mike.

"The racquetball, the exercise was the key," said Lawrence, "but Kate is what has kept me going. There were days when I didn't want to go to the club. She'd say, 'Get down there, get down there.' I'd get down there and

feel better for it. Her support has been tremendous."

Another person who pushes Lawrence harder than he sometimes seems willing to go is professional racquetball player, Davey Bledsoe, now head professional at Denver's IAC. Bledsoe has worked very closely with Lawrence since arriving at the club in January.

"He's a good learner," said Bledsoe. "He works very hard and applies what I tell him better than most students. I think that's due to the tremendous discipline he's developed. I'd say in the Rocky Mountain area, he's a solid "B" player."

"Davey pushes me pretty hard," said Lawrence. "I think he's pushing me more because he's worked so closely with me and knows what it means to me. He knows how much he can get out of me."

Bledsoe admits he does push Lawrence harder than most because he feels that's what Mike wants and believes that's the way to get the best results from him.

Understandably, Denver's Lawrence is on a Rocky Mountain high with his new lease on life. "Being alive is so much better than being six-feet under. Even though I wasn't physically six-feet under, I was in every other possible way. I had a chance to die for five years and I decided I didn't like it."

What Lawrence is doing is providing an example, a positive example, for others suffering from MS, and for others who are just plain suffering, no matter the cause. "What's important is the content and the context. The content, MS, isn't going to change, but the context—how people deal with the content, the participation therapy, the trying, that's what's important to me. That's where I hope to come in. I want to show that there is hope, that it can be beaten."

And to a great extent, he has beaten it. He has to deal with periodic blindness and numbness in his legs. He has totally lost the feeling in his feet, something he must contend with on the racquetball court, but he has adjusted.

"I stumble sometimes when playing," he confessed. "It's hard and I really have to concentrate, not only on the game, but that I keep on my toes. If I get flat-footed, I have a tendency to trip over myself."

The numbness may slow him down, but it hasn't dulled his enthusiasm for the game.

"I play hard. When you've lost everything and you can't see and you've had to crawl to answer the door, you bet I go for it."

One look at him bears that last statement out. He has had 62 stitches across his forehead, the result of his aggressive style of play. He has broken his right thumb eight times, running into walls or being hit with errant racquets.

But he said he also plays for fun. "If I can't play and be a gentleman, then I'd better not play. Winning isn't everything, giving 110 percent is."

Lawrence believes he is the best at anything he does and listening to him one can see he believes it. "That doesn't mean I have to win at something," he said. "I can be the best as long as I give that 110 percent. I'm the only competition I have. It's not who I'm playing against. I'm the toughest opponent I have. I've got to beat myself."

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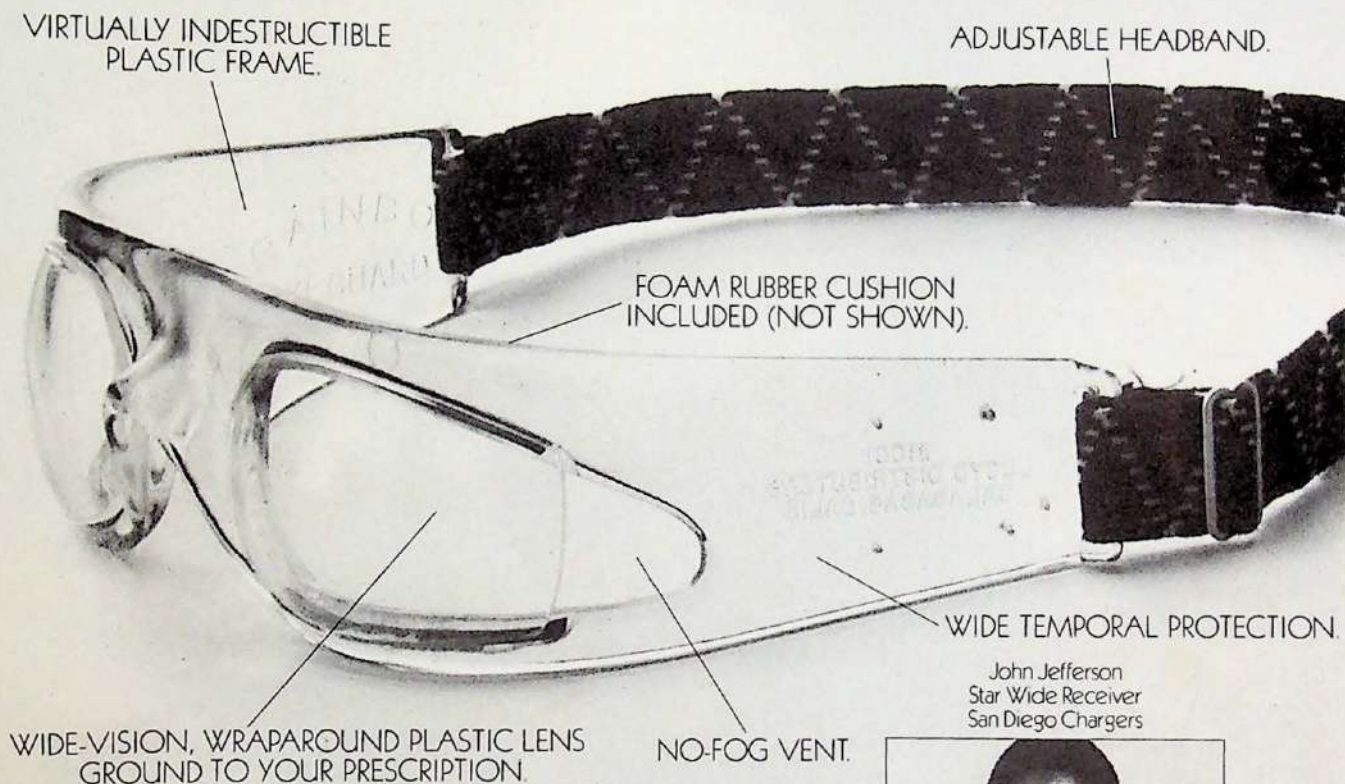
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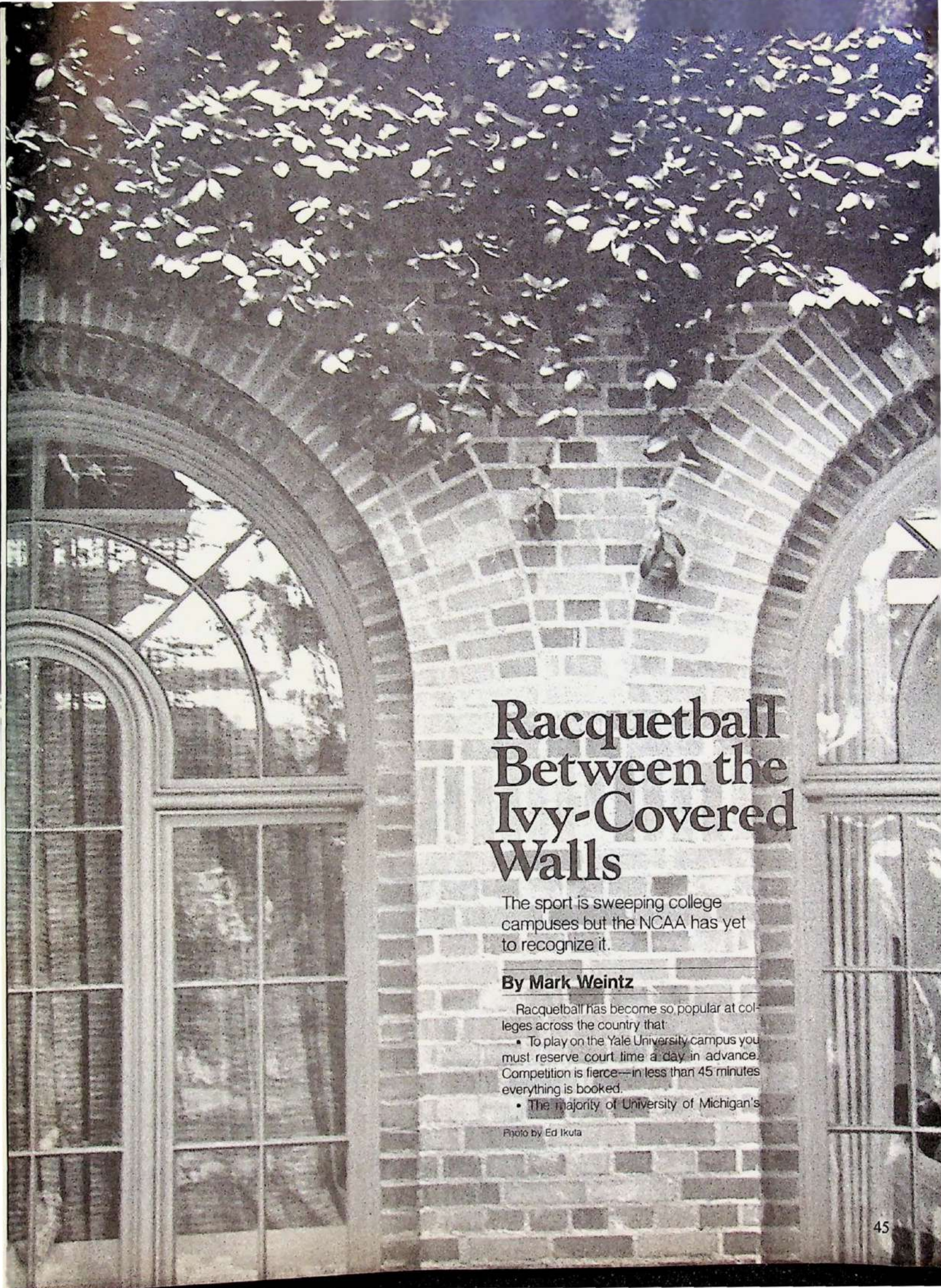
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# Racquetball Between the Ivy-Covered Walls

The sport is sweeping college campuses but the NCAA has yet to recognize it.

**By Mark Weintz**

Racquetball has become so popular at colleges across the country that

- To play on the Yale University campus you must reserve court time a day in advance. Competition is fierce—in less than 45 minutes everything is booked.

- The majority of University of Michigan's

Photo by Ed Ikuta

# Between the Ivy-Covered Walls

32 racquetball courts require reservations and they, too, fill rapidly. Students go into a frenzy calling the reservation center. One student, in fact, logged 161 consecutive busy signals. A spokesman says Michigan could easily fill another 32 courts.

- A college professor at Ohio State pays students \$2 to wait in line and sign him up for a court.

- At many colleges across the country, students sign up for an available racquetball course just to insure a weekly court time.

Despite the runaway popularity among collegians, the NCAA does not sanction racquetball which means intercollegiate competition is loosely structured and involves only a minority of universities.

And the chances of NCAA recognition are slim at this point, mainly due to economics.

"NCAA recognition is not encouraging because many of our member institutions at the present time are dropping intercollegiate sports they have sponsored at the varsity level for many years," says Tom Jernstedt, assistant executive director of the NCAA. "The combination of economics and Title IX (the law that states a relatively equal sum must be spent on women's athletics) makes it unlikely for additional championships to be added in the foreseeable future."

Jernstedt, who plays racquetball himself, admits, however, that the NCAA does not have an accurate pulse on racquetball. "We do not sponsor a championship in that sport," he says, "so we just have no feel for the popularity."

Despite the NCAA's lack of optimism, ever-rising interest in the game at the college level makes sanctioning at some time in the distant future almost inevitable. If the NCAA hasn't noticed, racquetball companies sure have.

In terms of sheer numbers, racquetball at the college level has become a powerful and synergistic force. It reminds one of the early days of collegiate football.

In the late 19th century, university administrators looked on incredulously as students took an inflated animal bladder to vacant lots and commenced throwing and kicking it—and each other—up and down the field. Interest in football, a derivative of several games, seemed to come out of the woodwork. But as interest mushroomed, universities made provisions for playing fields, competition and organization. Slowly football became a recognized sport. Racquetball, albeit growing much faster, is still in the unrecognized phase, or at least it is to many university officials who are witnessing the burgeoning of a sport obscure to them, somewhat neglected by the media.

"We started seeing people running around here with sawed-off-crazy-looking tennis racquets about 1974," recalls Bruce Maurer, Ohio State University assistant director of recreation and intramural sports. At that time, says Maurer, there were six handball courts and a few people used them for racquetball.

But interest boomed and in less than three years officials had erected 20 regulation courts. "We could use at least 20 more courts right now," says Maurer, "but no more are coming in the foreseeable future. It is a shame because we have hundreds and hundreds of people who want to play and cannot."

"We are in the process of studies to determine what part of the student body and faculty participate in racquetball. Intramural participation has skyrocketed during the last three years. And I would say we have had more pressure on our courts this past winter than ever before. I say it is still on the upswing. Say Student A lives with Student B. After A learns to play, he teaches B. Boy friends teach girl friends. It is one of our top co-rec activities. It is amazing. You go down past the courts and you'll find half of them being used by men playing women."

William F. Canning is University of Michigan's associate director of recreation. He claims his campus is the birthplace of paddleball. But a statistical survey rates racquetball three times more popular than paddleball there. In listing participation sports, the UM student body rated racquetball behind only jogging and swimming in terms of sports activities they have tried. No other racquet sport made the top five, not even tennis.

Michigan's 32 racquetball courts are open about 15 hours every day. Individuals can try and get a court one of three ways. Most courts are geared for reservations, but there are also a few open for challenge games (winner stays on), and six "open courts" on a first-come basis. "The open was to provide for those who get closed out of reservations and don't have the skill, maybe, to go on the challenge court," explains Canning. But a good deal of court time is taken up by the recreation department's racquetball competitions. There are

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**"NCAA recognition is not encouraging because many institutions are dropping sports."**

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nine team divisions, including some for fraternities, sororities and faculty.

Although Michigan has already graduated some players into open-level status, Canning says racquetball will "never" be an intercollegiate sport. "Never because here there is a freeze on intercollegiate activities for both men and women. Also the Big 10 has some

very strict rules on the number of teams that have to be involved before it can be an intercollegiate event. And I don't see all ten schools getting together on racquetball or any other sport because only about two or three of the athletic departments are making money. It is very definitely an economic thing."

Canning, however, does foresee professional racquetball expanding because of the interest spawned at the college level. Ohio State's Maurer agrees, but adds that it is difficult now for professional-minded players to get enough court time to train. He says many college players join private racquetball clubs to get court time.

University of Illinois is another midwest school big on racquetball. It has 23 courts. Donald Webb, treasurer of the school's racquetball club, says the university offers four racquetball instruction classes and has had to add one a year. Webb, an associate professor and also coach of the women's intercollegiate team, says the racquetball program offers in-house tournaments and the chance to compete with other university teams.

"We are hoping that as courts become more available on university campuses that more and more universities will participate in intercollegiate racquetball," says Webb. "Whether it will ever be a varsity sport is a matter of economics. Most universities that compete here do it on a club sport, or sports club basis. They represent the college but basically the organization for the team comes out of the sports clubs. The universities themselves do not have an intercollegiate program."

Webb, who volunteers his coaching expertise, foresees racquetball expanding. "There are a number of attempts with the United States Racquetball Association (USRA) and the American Amateur Racquetball Association (AARA) to try to get regional play at the intercollegiate level, and to get things going within the Big 10 Conference. A lot of it depends on how many universities start adding courts and get it into the sports structure of the universities. Within the next ten years I see a heavy emphasis on intercollegiate racquetball."

At Notre Dame, in neighboring Indiana, there are only eight racquetball courts. Joe Sassano, assistant director of the campus sports complex, says no more courts are planned for the immediate future. But racquetball remains one of the more popular activities on campus. Sassano says the football team plays, and the physical education courses are always filled to the limit. And although there is an intramural challenge and a faculty competition, Notre Dame has no club or competition with other universities.

While the Midwest universities have a penchant for racquetball, Ohio State's Maurer says, "There is a dividing line between here and Penn State University. Penn State and the eastern schools are into tremendous amounts of squash."

But at one eastern school, Yale in New Haven, Conn., it is difficult to get court time. "Racquetball is probably the single most popular participatory sport, aside from jogging, on campus," says Ed Mochus, assistant director of intramural sports. "I consider it part of a new trend in athletics. Personal athletics. People would much rather be out on their own. I don't think the team concept has really kindled that much in the last few years and people are more interested in going out and grabbing one or two people and working out rather than trying to get a team up for softball or baseball."

Mochus says that Yale's 12 residential colleges are each able to muster up a racquetball team to play in the winter round-robin tournament. Yale also has an ongoing racquetball ladder and Mochus reports that court reservations and racquetball classes (basic, intermediate, and advanced) fill quickly.

At Boston's Northeastern University there are only four courts and they, too, are always filled, according to Mark Schaefer, director of intramural sports. Schaefer says there is a proposal for a new recreation building which would add another six or eight courts, "but the proposal hasn't been approved yet."

"I think the popularity has been mostly through word of mouth," says Schaefer. "I was previously involved in a program at the University of Virginia and racquetball was extremely popular for probably the full five or six years I was there. Basically one person started playing and he would get his friends to play. I was a senior student and intramural manager there and we started off with four regulation courts and a few smaller ones. Last year they built a new building for recreational use that has an additional eight racquetball courts and four squash courts."

At Northeastern, a racquetball club formed this year. "The problem is," Schaefer says, "too many people, not enough court time. And unless this new facility goes through it is going to be that way for some time yet."

While eastern schools seem to be just tuning into racquetball, southern campuses are proving fertile turf for racquetball devotees. Memphis State University is considered the top collegiate school in racquetball. And other schools also have a lot of interest in the sport. At the University of Florida, a student recreation spokesman says racquetball is the number one pastime, if you don't count panty raids.

"This is my fifth year here and we have won the college nationals every year but one. We finished second my first year," says Larry Liles, who has the twin title of physical education instructor and racquetball coach at Memphis State. In the AARA competition, Liles says, Memphis State won the Nationals three years in a row without losing any event.

But there is no dancing in the street and no campus victory rallies when Memphis State brings home its titles. The reason: Racquetball is a club sport, not a major sport sanctioned by the NCAA. And Liles says publicity does little

to generate excitement. "If it is in the newspaper it is in the last section, just before you get to the death notices. And on TV it is just a short blurb, 'Memphis State wins the racquetball nationals,' and then on from there. Publicity is a tough thing for us. The local TV and newspaper are major sports people."

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## **"Racquetball is the most popular participatory sport besides jogging."**

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Despite the media indifference toward Liles' championship teams, student interest continues to grow at Memphis State. Memphis State has 15 courts and as many instruction classes and they are, says Liles, "probably the first class to fill during registration." Liles takes his team to 15 or 20 tournaments a year. In fact, Liles also runs several tournaments which helps fund the team's travels. While Memphis State gets some university funding, Liles says his team members must do most of the fundraising. He also seeks sponsors and ways to cut corners on travel expenses. "I'm trying to help as many teams from other universities get their programs going," says Liles.

"Some of the universities are now starting to see that racquetball is becoming a fairly major sport. That is one thing we are really pushing hard for now—to be recognized. Most of the schools are not under the athletic department at all. They are more or less like an intramural department from campus recreation. We cannot go under athletics until racquetball is sanctioned by the NCAA. The way racquetball is going, it is going to surpass tennis. It is coming."

But until that day comes, it is rough on people such as Liles who, although one of the few on-staff collegiate racquetball coaches, must use his time doing many things besides coaching. But the efforts seem to be paying off and maybe someday the team won't have to travel across states in student cars to play in tournaments.

At the University of Florida there is no team, but there are several leagues. There are 10 four-wall courts at Florida and about 25 outdoor three-wallers. According to Victor Cohen, student director of programming and recreational sports, "We are going to make some additions on the four walls because it is getting to be pretty popular now."

"The city of Gainesville is kind of small and

there are so many racquetball clubs going up that there are a lot of places to play so we don't know if we will add on to the three-walls."

"The courts are usually crowded until the lights go out, so some people play (three-wall) by the street lights."

Out west, racquetball is also booming.

Although there are only five courts on the UCLA campus, Rich Pineda, intramural sports supervisor, says racquetball is very popular and the courts are always full. "People who play teach others, so there is no formal instruction and probably won't be any. There is no club, but there are tournaments which garner tremendous participation."

"I think racquetball will continue to grow and will stay big for quite a while. I don't see any real tapering off," says Pineda, nothing that a new recreation center will house additional racquetball facilities. Several UCLA students are also members of private clubs.

There are 16 indoor courts at the University of Oregon in Eugene and they are used for courses until about 2 p.m. After that it is first come, first served.

"I think racquetball is growing. More women are playing. It is taking over people's interest from handball and other games," says Karla Rice, Oregon's intramural director. "We used to have a game here called Oregon Handball. It used to be part of the intramural program but it just died. I think racquetball was a factor in its death."

Michigan and Ohio State spokesmen think tennis is on its "last legs" as a popular participatory sport because of the degree of skill it takes to get gratification. In fact, administrators at those schools are afraid racquetball's popularity will nosedive "just like tennis" because of the reluctance to fund more facilities.

"We could always use more racquetball courts. There is no doubt about that, but I don't see any funding for such facilities," says Rice, noting that Oregon holds a couple of tournaments a year and also has a popular racquetball club and constant league play.

So the key to collegiate racquetball may be economics, not interest or necessity. Notre Dame's Sassano, perhaps, summed it up best:

"There could be teams representing various schools. But when you do that you start to create expense for an institution which is also looking for a way to offset that expense with income. Something would have to be developed so you could bring spectators in."

The paradox everyone hints at is that the game is exceedingly popular but it doesn't lend itself to sales of seats, at least not without building special facilities. As soon as some of those difficulties are eliminated, many things should come together: NCAA sanctioning, improved funding, structured intercollegiate competition, and more court time. If that happens, the sport could very well become the college student's favorite sport. But then again, maybe it already is.

# HOW TO AVOID BACK PROBLEMS

By Robert "Skip" George

Editor's Note: The author is a licensed chiropractor in San Diego specializing in athletic injuries.

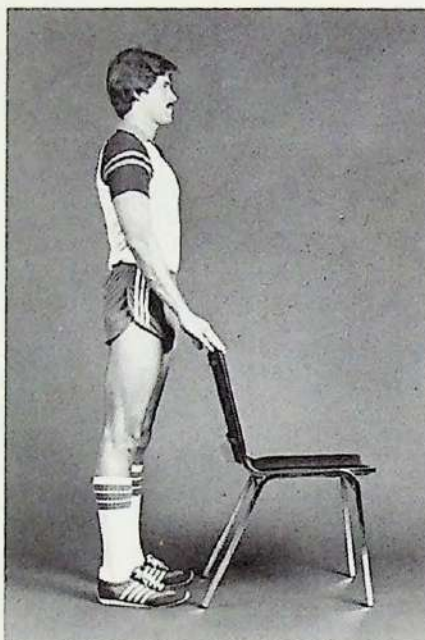
Low back pain is one of the most common musculo-skeletal problems affecting racquetball players.

Since racquetball is a combination of quick, synchronized movements, the spine is subject to a full range of motions. Warming up and stretching will prevent many injuries, yet too many of us start a game with barely any warmup. Adequate warmup and stretching is crucial for all muscles and joints, especially the spine.

The spinal column is actually a structure of 26 movable segments in the adult (33 in the child) stacked one upon the other. A complex system of muscles and ligaments act to support and balance the spine. The spinal column is divided into regions that include seven cervical segments, 12 thoracic, five lumbar, five sacral (fused into one), and four coccyx (fused into one). Thru this column runs the spinal cord and along the way, 31 pairs of spinal nerves exit to various muscles and structures. Added to this are 24 discs that fit in between the vertebrae. Is it any wonder that the spine, especially the lower back because of its greater weight bearing responsibility, is a target for potential problems?

All of us at one time or another have played a little too long and hard or have made a certain movement that didn't agree with our structure. A strain refers to a muscular injury and means that a muscle or muscle group has been irritated. A simple muscle strain may get well overnight because of its rich blood supply and elastic properties. If pain persists, working out an already strained muscle can make it worse. A strain will occur where soft tissue is present, especially the sides of the back.

Ligamental sprains take longer to heal because of their poor blood supply. A ligament over-stretched stays like that longer and stability may not be regained for a time. A sprain can be very serious because the pain may go away after a time, but the instability remains and re-injury can occur. A greater inflammatory reaction is required to repair strained ligaments. Greater inflammation means more pain and greater loss of motion. Sprain occurs at joints because what holds them together are ligaments. The spine, ankle, knee and wrist are all potential trouble areas for sprain in racquetball.



Here is one outstanding exercise for the back. Stand erect while holding onto a chair. Squat down with the back slightly bent, straighten up again, relax and repeat the exercise.



Sit on a hard chair with your arms folded loosely in front of you. Let your body drop until your head is down between your knees. Pull your body back up into a sitting position while tightening your abdominal muscles. Relax and repeat.

Another complication of lower back sprain or strain may be a facet joint subluxation. This term is used to describe a misalignment or slight dislocation of a joint or vertebra. The spinal column is a series of joints and numerous subluxations may occur which can cause discomfort. Subluxation is a mechanical problem and occurs with or without sprain or strain. Specific adjustment or manipulation will alleviate misalignment of this kind.

The discs act as shock absorbers and simultaneously aid in holding the vertebrae together while spacing them apart. Even a slight bulging of the disc may illicit an acute episode of low back pain which may radiate down the back side of the thigh and all the way to the foot. Numbness and tingling may be present. "Sciatic pain" is experienced in many cases because of involvement with the sciatic nerve root as it exits from the spinal column in the lumbar-sacral region. Professional help is needed when these symptoms arise.

Healing is related to the severity of injury and the type of tissue or structure involved. Injury prevention is provided by proper warmup and stretching. Good racquetball performance demands speed, power and endurance. Flexibility through stretching cannot be neglected. One must understand that flexibility increase may not be noticed until after a few weeks. Even on days when you are not playing racquetball, stretching is important. Because of natural muscle contraction, muscles tend to shorten on their own. Stretching of the spine along with the extremities is crucial.

The safest stretching exercise is the static or slow stretch. Dancers, gymnasts, and yogis utilize this method. Jerking and bouncing to increase flexibility must be avoided. Slow and gentle exercise is recommended and pain should not be felt while stretching.

Start stretching before you get on the court. This way you won't feel rushed to get started without warming up. The short term benefit of stretching is to avoid muscle soreness. The long term effect is to prevent more serious injury and to improve your game through greater flexibility.

Treatment of an injury also varies with severity and type of structure involved. If you feel pain during your game (pain threshold varies with each individual), then simply stop playing. One half hour lost on the court may save you hours of discomfort.

If swelling and/or pain develops, apply ice to the affected area. Using heat right away can make it worse. If the pain persists, call your chiropractor or physician. An examination will determine what is wrong, and what kind of treatment is needed.

For chronic low-back pain, simple exercises can strengthen the low-back muscles.

The key to prevention of all sports injuries is adequate warmup, stretching, and basic physical fitness. Spend your time on the court instead of nursing an injury that could have been avoided.



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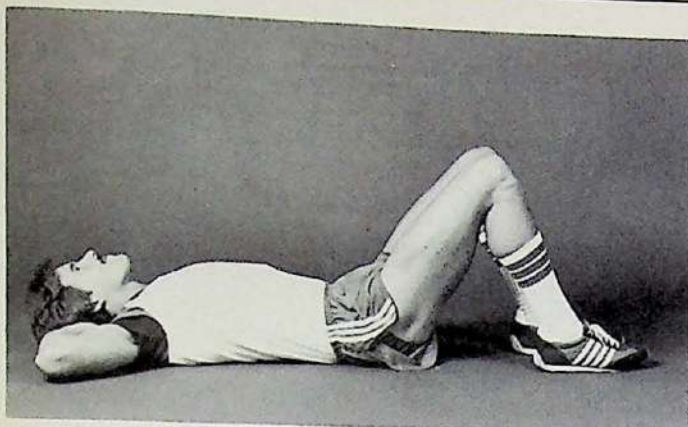
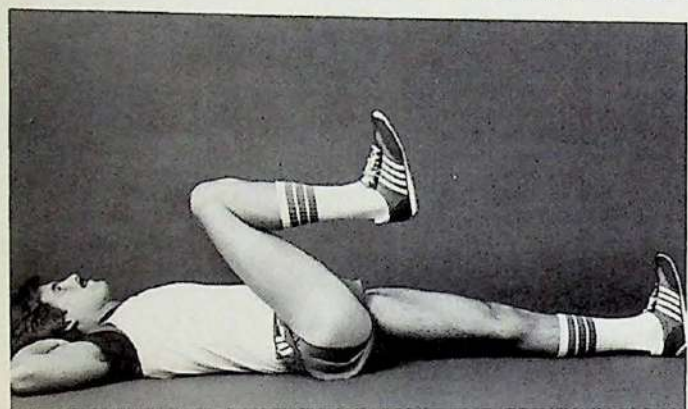
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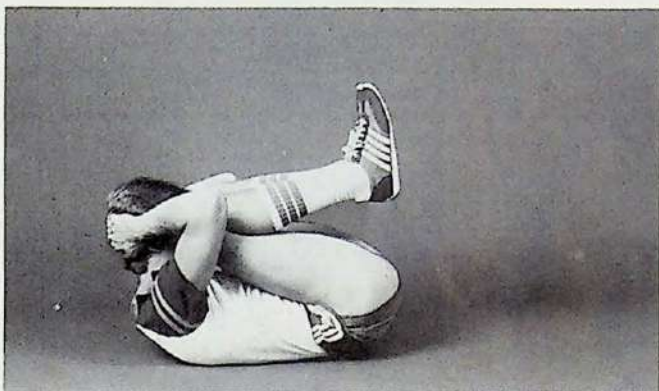
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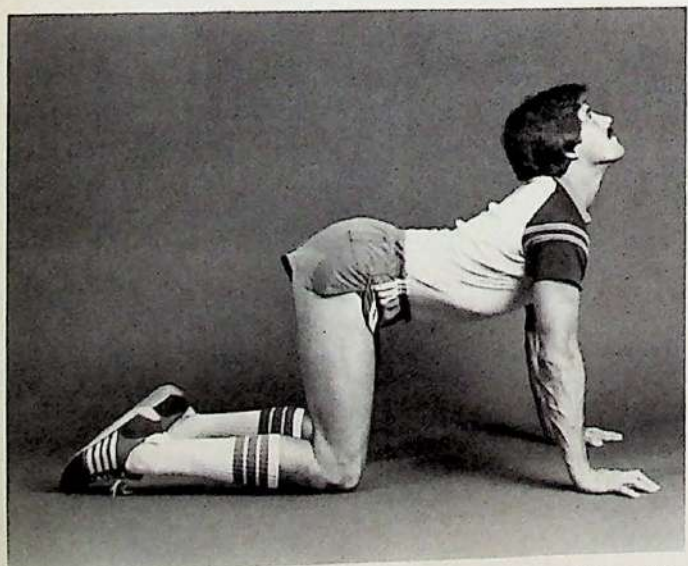




Lie on a your back with your knees bent. Move one knee as far as you can toward your chest and at the same time straighten out the other leg. Return to the original position with both knees bent and repeat the movements, switching legs.



Lie on your back. Bring your knees up to your chest, and with your hands clasped, pull your knees toward your chest. Hold for a count of 10, keeping your knees together and your shoulders flat on the mat. Repeat the pulling holding movement three times.



Start on all fours. Your head is up with back flexed towards floor. Breathe in and hold for a second. Then arch back towards ceiling, exhale and hold for a second. Repeat.



# TOURNAMENTS

Photo by Janell Mariott



Heather McKay bends low for shot against Shannon Wright in finals of WPRA tournament in Fishkill, N.Y. McKay defeated Wright, 21-10, 21-7.

## WPRA

Heather McKay of Toronto scored a decisive victory over Shannon Wright of Las Vegas, Nev., 21-10, 21-7, in the finals of the Women's Professional Racquetball Association tournament held at All Sport Fitness and Racquetball Club in Fishkill, N.Y.

McKay used a combination of pinch shots, forehand drives, and backhand kill shots in order to keep Wright off balance. Wright tried to play her usual power game, hitting a number of excellent drive shots, but McKay was able to return them. McKay's squash experience was evident, as she appeared to rely as much on placement as on power or speed.

McKay picked up \$2,500 in prize money, Wright received \$1,500 for second. In the consolation finals, Marci Greer of San Diego defeated Bonnie Stoll of Stamford, Ct., 7-2, 7-2, 7-4, 7-2 (scoring based on an experimental pro-set system). Greer received \$900 for third place and Stoll was awarded \$600 for fourth.

Wright made it to the finals with a 21-13, 21-7 decision over Greer, and McKay defeated Stoll, 21-4, 21-6.

Top-seeded Sarah Green lost in the second round to unseeded Elaine Lee, 21-4, 21-11, and Lee was beaten in the quarters by Stoll, who had earlier defeated Peggy Steding.

Other upsets included Fran Davis over Linda Prefontaine in the first round, Hope Weisbach over Jean Sauser in the first round and Martha McDonald over Jennifer Harding in the second round.

One of the more exciting matches found Janell Mariott defeating Karin Walton in the quarters, 15-21, 21-17, 11-4, in a rematch of last year's Nationals.

In the amateur division, 16 year-old Stacey Fletcher of Warren, Mich., scored an upset by winning the Women's Open. She defeated Melanie Taylor of Montclair, N.J., 17-21, 21-13, 11-7. Fletcher defeated top seed Francine Davis of Montclair, N.J., 21-13, 15-21, 11-10 in the semi-finals. The Men's Amateur Open

was won by top seed Charles Horton, Jr. of Port Chester, N.Y., who defeated Robert McKinney of Danbury, Conn., 11-21, 21-9, 11-4. Seventeen year-old Horton is a junior at Port Chester High School.

## Canadian Nationals

### By Heather Kirkwood

Heather McKay and Lindsay Myers easily dominated the 1980 Canadian National Closed Racquetball Championships at Montreal's Club 230 Dorval.

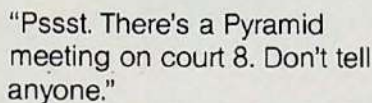
McKay, 38, did not allow any of her competitors more than eight points in any game, and finished the tournament by overwhelming defending champion Linda Forcade in the finals, 21-4, 21-5. Myers, 21, defeated top seeded Ross Harvey, 21-9, 21-4, to win his fourth consecutive national title.

McKay, world squash champion for 11 straight years, took up racquetball 19 months

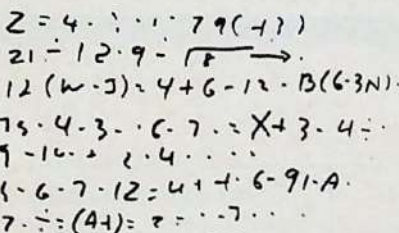
The record number of entries caught tournament organizers by surprise. Expecting a maximum field of 350, they received over 600 applications. Lack of space and time limited the draw to 465 competitors, divided into 18 categories. This tremendous response means 1980 will probably be the last year of "open" Canadian championships. The CRA is considering making players qualify at regional and provincial tournaments to be eligible for future Canadian Nationals.

Carol Frenck of Virginia captured the Women's Open by defeating Cindy Baxter of Pennsylvania 21-15, 21-10, and secured her second championship crown by defeating Linda Siau of Arizona in the 30+ division, 21-11, 21-2.

65+ - Ike Gumer def. Allen Shepard,  
21-12, 21-16.



Cartoon by Tom Giulivo



"Oh, for heaven's sake! Just go and try the Z-shot!"

Cartoon by Tony Saltzman

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## CLUB NEWS

### Plainview, Tex.

Soon to be opening is The Court Place Racquetball Club located in the Southwest section of Plainview.

The 10,000 square foot building will house six racquetball courts, each with an observation deck above them.

There will be saunas in both locker rooms, nursery service, a huge whirlpool and lounge complete with color television set.

The club interior will incorporate an artistic use of graphics, plants and two spiral staircases.

Owner-managers are Johnny Hodel and Jay Lundgren.

### Matawan, N.J.

The Racquet Place opened its doors on Route 34 with 12 courts, including two with glass back walls.

The club also has a fully equipped Nautilus gym, separate health facilities for men and women, two lounges, game room, massage room and nursery.

Co-managers are Harold Schein and Nancy Kogos.

### Canoga Park, Calif.

The newly finished Racquetball World is one of the most complete clubs in Southern California.

It will feature 25 racquetball courts, including three with glass walls, a 25-meter indoor swimming pool, 1/5 mile roofside jogging track, exercise room, snack bar, pro shop, jacuzzi and saunas.

The club will also feature an extensive Iron Company conditioning center with 40 individual stationed training machines. The club is planning to offer exercise testing and a training laboratory for pre-programming and rehabilitation.

### Etc.

Dave Glander, former athletic director at the Aspen Athletic Club in Aspen, Colo. has joined the new \$11 million Honolulu Club, located at Ward and King Streets near Blaisdell Center.

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# FASHION RAC



Kathy, Cheri and Sherie do their playing in Darlyn's racquetball tops and shorts made of fleeced backed stretch terry (50 per cent cotton, 50 per cent polyester) with Interlock (50 per cent polyester, 50 per cent cotton). Kathy chooses a navy blue and white top with marine trim. Her marine-colored shorts also have white trim. Cheri looks good in her powder blue and white top with red trim. Shorts are red with white trim. Sherie goes for the more simple navy blue and white design with navy blue shorts and white trim. Tops retail for \$13.90. Shorts retail for \$13.00.

A doubles match was scheduled in Newport Beach, Calif. but the models wanted to exercise and relax before playing a tough match.

A charter boat captain came to the rescue and offered to take them across the bay, so they could use the club facilities and health spa at the Newport Bayview Yacht Club.

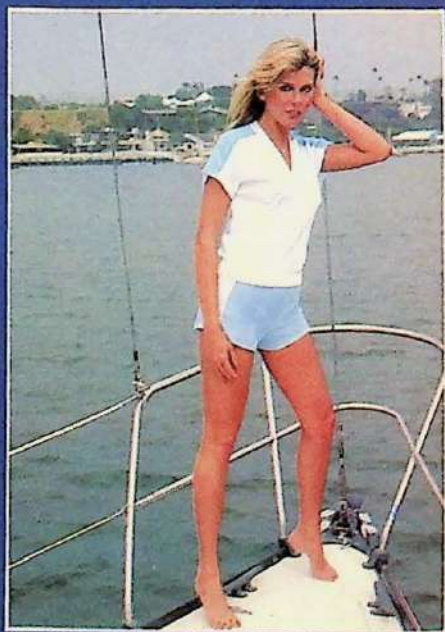
Wearing the newest line from DARLYN DESIGNS of Long Beach, Calif., models Kathy Swan, Cheri Mitchell, Sherie Young and Gianni Standaart went cruising prior to their match.

**Photography by David M. King.**

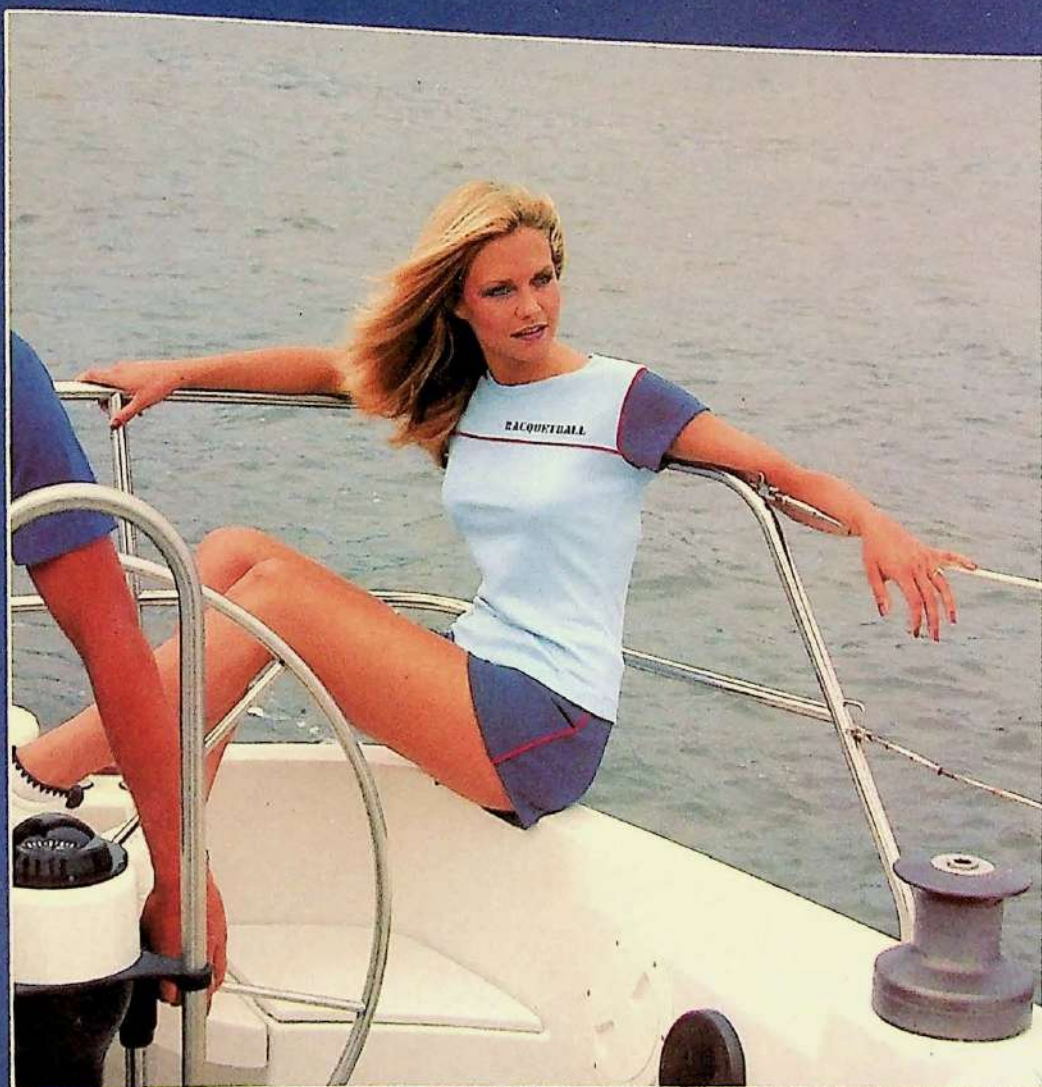
**Fashion coordinated and directed by David Chow.**

**Makeup and Hairstyle by Nancy LaFlamme.**

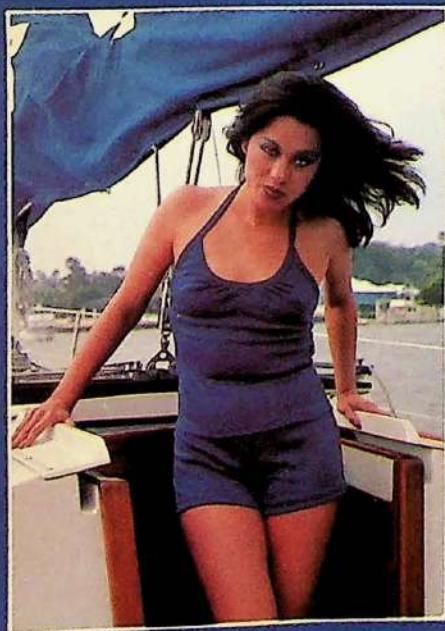
**Location and boat courtesy of Newport Bayview Yacht Club (Newport Beach, Calif.).**



Cheri can change into her white top (v-neck) with powder blue trim, \$15.90 and contrasting powder blue shorts with white trim, \$14.50.



Kathy's alternate racquetball outfit is powder blue with navy blue sleeves and red piping, \$13.90. Her navy shorts with red piping retails for \$11.90. Both are a poly-cotton interlock.



Gianni sails through her game in a poly-cotton navy blue halter top, \$15. Matching shorts, \$13.



When things get cold, Sherie puts on her V-neck powder blue pullover warmup top, also a poly-cotton make, \$20.50. Matching straight-legged bottoms, \$26.50.

DARLYN  
DESIGNS

# Short Shots

## Travel and Play



Airline pilot and racquetball enthusiast Ed Kirkpatrick of Kansas City, Mo. has come up with a unique idea he calls the Traveling Players Association.

The idea was originally designed for pilots, crews and flight attendants who had layovers in various cities but it has grown to include all travelers.

Kirkpatrick has arranged with a network

of private racquetball clubs to admit travelers who show up with a TPA membership card and a guest fee.

"Many people travel on business these days and have to spend boring, unproductive hours around bars," says Kirkpatrick. "This way people can shape up during that time."

Kirkpatrick says he has clubs in 75 cities.

For \$65 (two-year membership), Kirkpatrick will send you the TPA Directory, which includes lists of all membership clubs, playing hours, activities, location and the easiest way to get there from the airport.

For information write Kirkpatrick at 812 N.E. 100 Terrace, Kansas City, Mo. 64155.

## Jai Alai Rookies

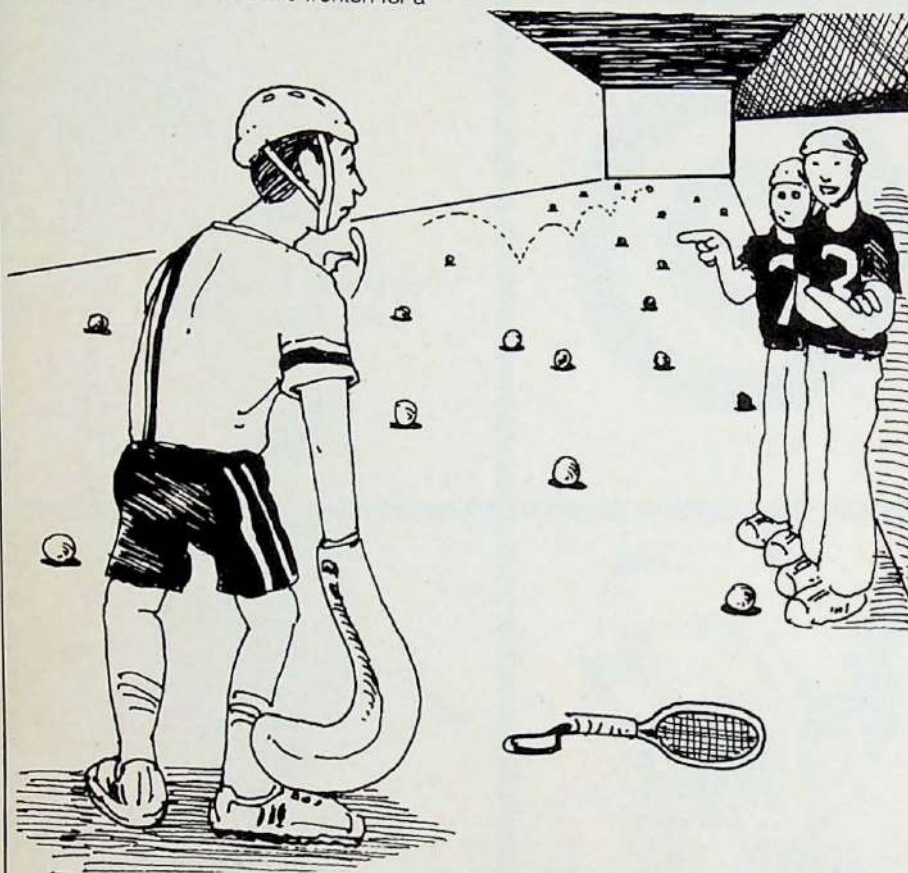
While at the 1980 Nationals in Las Vegas, four racquetball players from Southern California decided to try their hand at jai alai.

Receiving permission from Juan Carlos Lupi, chief judge for the jai alai matches at the MGM Grand Hotel, and receiving instruction from highly ranked amateur player Jeff Jackson (a security guard at the Aladdin Hotel), racquetball players Dave Palmer, Ric Moore, Larry Peoples and Dennis Anderson took to the fronton for a

couple of jai alai lessons.

Naturally, it took some time to get adjusted, mainly considering a racquetball court is 40 feet long and a jai alai court is 117 feet long.

"Invariably, you try and use your wrist like in racquetball and you end up throwing it into the ground," says Palmer, a sales rep for Seamco. "You have to think as if you are throwing a ball from deep centerfield into home plate."



## Names In The News



Remember **Scott Brantley**, the linebacker from the University of Florida who swallowed a live frog (see *Racquetball Illustrated*, Feb., 1979) which had jumped on an outdoor court in Ocala, Fla. while Brantley was playing? Well, he will now be doing his football playing, racquetball playing, and frog eating in nearby Tampa. He was drafted in the third round by the NFL Tampa Bay Bucs . . .

San Diego Chargers running back **Mike Thomas** injured his knee playing racquetball and had to undergo surgery . . .

Former NFL star **O. J. Simpson** has sold his interest in two California Way racquetball clubs . . .

Actress **Tatum O'Neil** sprained an ankle playing racquetball and was sidelined in cast.

## Medical Report

Racquetball pro Mike Zeitman rewrote medical history recently when he went in to a hospital to have simultaneous operations on (not necessarily in order of their appearance) a trapped nerve in his stomach, a hernia, and a broken thumb.

The hernia has been with him on and off for 12 years. He ruptured the radial tendon and ligaments and tore the joint capsule in his thumb from playing basketball and, according to the doctors, his trapped nerve came from racquetball.

"The doctor thought the nerve came from the sharp staccato-like movements in racquetball," says Zeitman. "He had never seen anyone have a trapped nerve and a hernia at the same time."

Actually, Zeitman feels lucky he got

away with just those three operations. For a time there, he thought things were really going to be serious. In a period of a few days, doctors told him he had stomach cancer, a heart murmur (improbable considering his pulse rate is about 40), a leaky valve in his heart and a few other things designed to scare anybody who came in to get his thumb fixed.

"Cancer is a word with six letters until it's told to you," says Zeitman. "Then, all of a sudden, it's a loudspeaker in your brain, reverberating like an echo in a canyon."

But the cancer turned out to be gastritis, instead. "Remember the movie *The Hospital* with George C. Scott and Diana Rigg," says Zeitman. "I believe it now."

## Presidential Award

The Presidential Sports Award is a part of the Presidents Council On Physical Fitness and Sports and racquetball players can receive the award by playing a minimum of 150 games. The only rule is that no more than four games in any one day may be credited to the total.

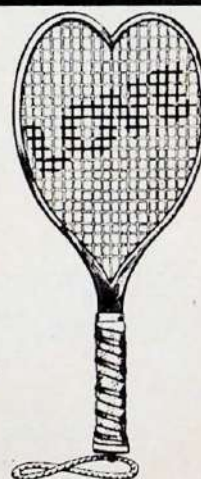
To receive the award, send a signed log and \$5 to Presidential Sports Award, P.O. Box 9800, Englewood, N.J. 07631. You will receive a certificate of achievement, blazer patch, lapel pin, decal, and membership card.

The log should include all information, including date, place, game scores, opponent, etc.

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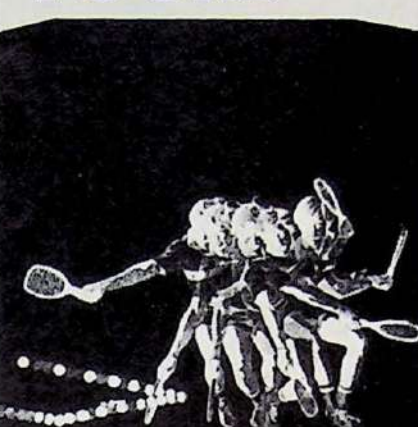
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(314) 567-6873

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Supreme Courts  
Racquetball Club  
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Court of Appeals  
200 Grand Ave.  
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Yogi Berra's Hall of Fame  
Racquetball Club  
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(614) 865-BALL

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Dayton Circuit Courts Assoc.  
1497 Shoup Mill Road  
(513) 276-9999

**Dayton**  
Dayton Circuit Courts East  
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(513) 429-2819

**Holland**  
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(419) 866-1101

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Court Management Co., Inc.  
1240 Ridgeview Ave.  
(513) 294-5830

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8229 Camargo Road  
271-3388

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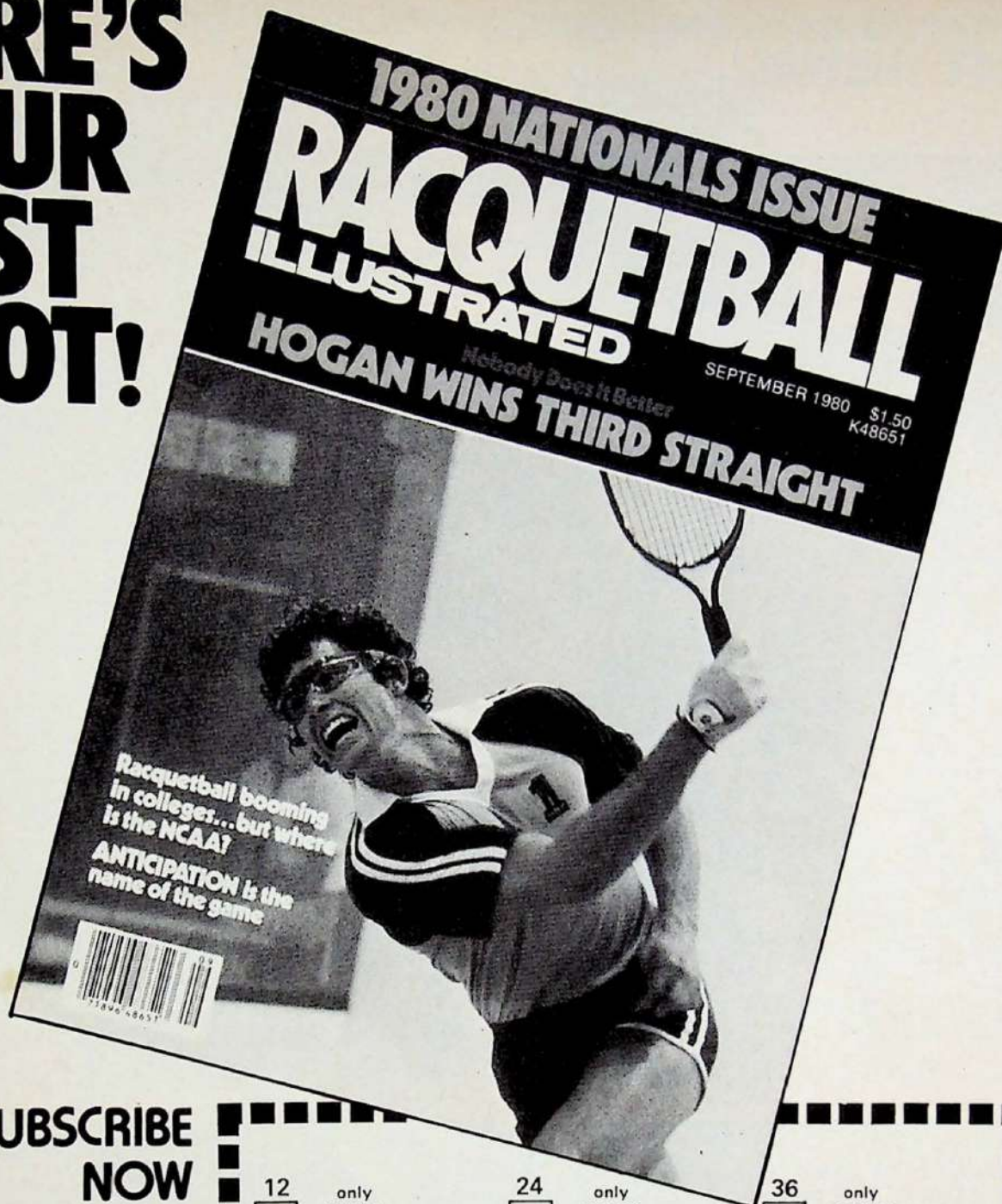
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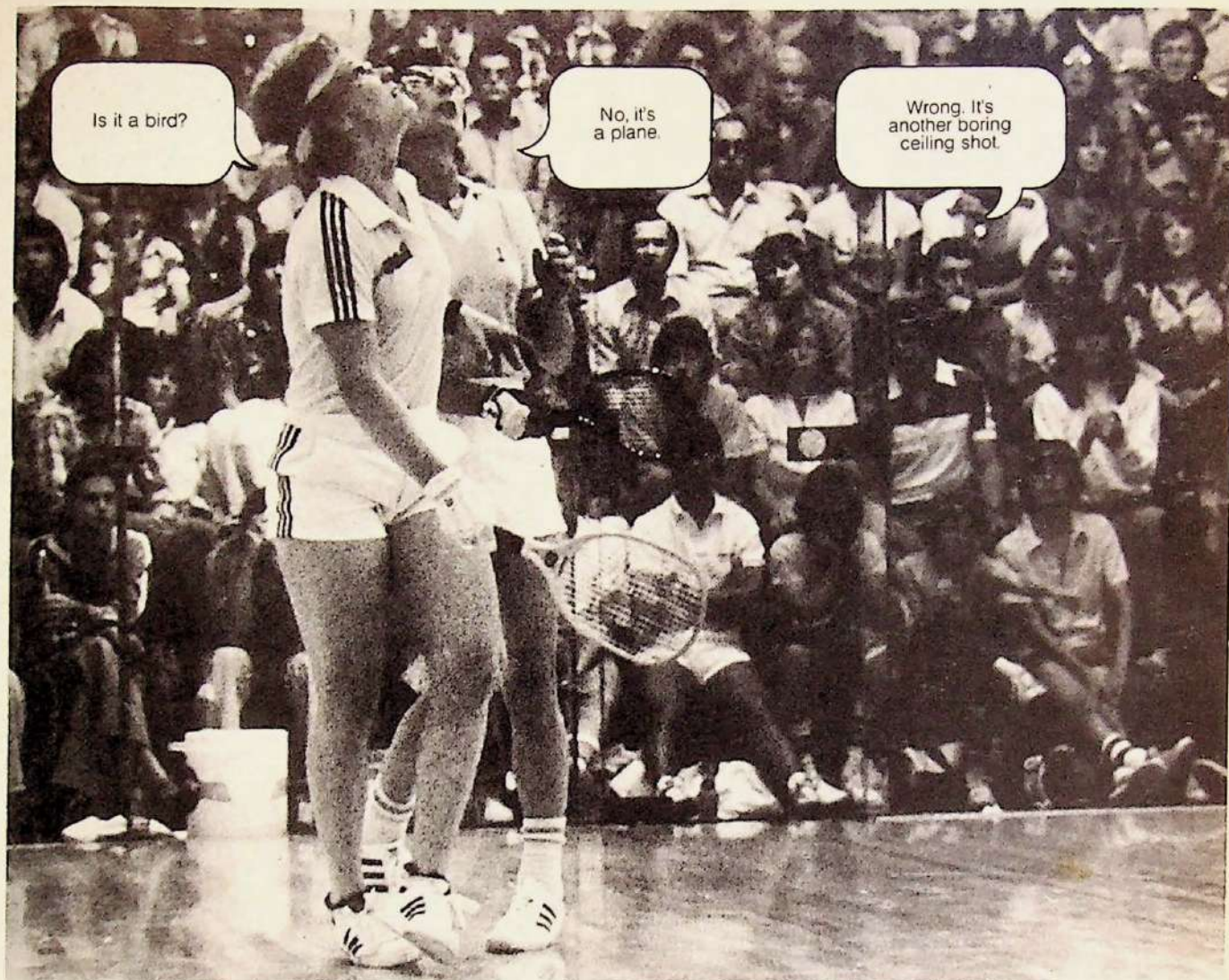
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This time we rate the balls top to bottom.

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Why do players play better with certain balls?

### WPRA NATIONALS

Wright and McKay are favorites in Chicago.

### INSIDE LOOKING OUT

How to play against glass walls.

### FOR COUPLES ONLY

Exercises designed for you and your mixed doubles partner.

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