

KILLSHOT

September, 1991

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In the Gallery:

Ruben Gonzalez

**Complete Tournament
Coverage and updates**

Interview:

Andy Roberts

Plus:
Marcy Lynch
Toni Bevelock
Steve Strandemo
Fran Davis & Stu Hastings
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They say lightning never strikes twice in the same place, right? Well, keep in mind you're dealing with magazines and Kentuckians, so throw out all the old rules (and whatever common sense you've accumulated) and we'll let you know what's going on.

First of all, it's true. This September Nationals issue is being sent FREE, just as the August issue was. For some, you will be seeing **KILLSHOT** for the first time and we wanted you to hold it in your hand and make a decision on whether or not you want to subscribe. For others who subscribed from the first issue your subscription will not begin until the October issue. For those of you who got the first one free and just haven't subscribed yet--What's the problem?

See, it's real easy. You just find the card bound into the magazine, fill out the name and address information, drop it in an envelope with a check, and just sit back and wait for the exciting, colorful world of racquetball to be delivered to your home monthly.

But this is it. After this issue, the only way to receive **KILLSHOT** will be by subscribing. The only way to keep on top of the game with the latest in tournament coverage, interviews, profiles, instruction and information is by subscribing. So, what are you waiting for?

Oh, and one more thing. We would appreciate it if you would keep this free issue stuff to yourself. We promised the bank that after the first issue we would never do this again.

FREE

Oh yeah, sure. Nothing is free. No such thing as a free lunch. Well, you're lookin' at it, bub. At this very moment you are holding your very own (unless of course you swiped this from an unsuspecting friend or the club desk) free copy of **KILLSHOT**. This issue is being provided free to racquetball enthusiasts from the U.S. and Canada. No obligations. No strings attached. Makes you wonder doesn't it?

Why?

We thought the best way for you to see what we had in mind for a new racquetball magazine was to give you the chance to hold it in your hand, with no obligation or expense to you. We think you've been promised enough and delivered very little. We are also confident you'll like what you see well enough to want more. And, the only way you can get more is by subscribing.

Are we crazy?

Absolutely

Can we afford to do this?

Absolutely not. So please send in those subscription cards today.

KILLSHOT

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It's a Hit!

In September 1990 when we first began gathering our ideas for a new racquetball publication, we had some very definite ideas for the way it should take shape. As these ideas matured over the coming months, we realized that we were developing something very special. Judging from the response to the first issue, a lot of people feel the same way. We felt a need for a quality publication that would be objective and significant. In short, we wanted a device which would bring to the millions of racquetball enthusiasts across the U.S. information and instruction in a form that was not only complete and accurate, but appealing and exciting.

I think we accomplished something very near what we set out to do. In hundreds of letters and phone calls, I DID NOT RECEIVE ONE SINGLE NEGATIVE RESPONSE! The only issue raised even with our policies had to do with the advertisements by "pro-shop" companies.

It is in response to this adversity to these advertisers that I began taking a look at the business surrounding our game. The issue raised was that these companies could sell products with less overhead than club pro shops, and thus sell at lower prices. In order to protect club pro shop trade, KILLSHOT has been asked not to accept advertising from these companies. I cannot agree with this for a number of reasons.

While I would be the first to advocate policies which would be in the best interest of clubs, I do not see this as a contradiction. Club pro shops operate as a convenience to club members. It is because of this convenience that they are able to stay in business. Customers for pro shops typically do not want to bother with mail order. It is the customer that is willing to sacrifice the convenience of on-the-spot, hands-on buying that chooses to shop by mail order. In a free enterprise system, there is nearly always someone that is willing to sell a product for less. I believe that there is as well always someone willing to pay a fair price for the convenience of walking out of the store with the product.

I understand that in many clubs the pro shop is a large and successful business and relies on equipment sales quite heavily. My intention is certainly not to hurt this type of business. Please understand also that KILLSHOT relies on advertisers in much the same way and could not survive without them.

Far more often is the case, however, (especially in certain areas) that clubs have little or no pro shops and actually promote the pro shop companies as good for their business. This is where we raise the question of long term benefit. The increased participation gained from players' ability to purchase high end equipment at reasonable prices is undeniable. After all, isn't increased participation the greatest possible gain for us all?

Long term benefit is a concept that has finally begun to appear throughout racquetball. Realistic expectations, optimism, and an eye toward long term benefit are the concepts which have brought the sport to the prominence it now enjoys.

It has been my experience that in racquetball there have traditionally been two schools of thought. There were the altruists who worked tirelessly for the "good of the game", and there were the hustlers who used the game for their own gain. Most often the second group went about disguising themselves as the first group. As a result, it became very difficult to determine just who could be trusted.

Because of this, the only way to see who was truly altruistic was to examine the long term benefits of their actions. The reality is that sport in America is a business. To refuse to acknowledge this is to keep your head



firmly in the sand. The true proponents of the game are the ones who bear in mind what will benefit growth the most over the long term.

As you look through this issue, pay particular attention at the way the business surrounding the sport is shaping in such a way to really promote long term growth. The changes discussed in the MPRA and WPRA columns, and the aspects of business discussed in the Andy Roberts interview are just a few examples. It is the business sense and the eye toward long term benefit of individuals such as men's tour sponsor John Delaney, Women's tour organizer Molly O'Brien, and AARA Executive Director Luke St. Onge which have brought about recent growth.

In conversation Mike Ray made a comment about an individual involved in a particular promotion that was "in it for the money". I assumed that this was a negative designation and immediately mentally admonished this individual as I had been taught to do over the course of several years of initiation into the world of racquetball. I had unconsciously bought into a myth which had been perpetuated by the very people taking advantage of the racquetball public.

Mike explained that in a free enterprise system, it is probably the best possible combination when someone has the best interests of the sport in mind, and could make a living doing it.

Mike was right. There is no crime in seeing racquetball as a business, PROVIDED THE BEST INTEREST IN THE GROWTH OF THE SPORT IS OBSERVED. We must all "make a living", and what could be better than having competent, dedicated individuals working full time making their living promoting the sport. The key is that there is a crime in accepting short term gain at the expense of long term growth.

This is not in reference to players who do or do not accept prize money, but those people in the industry surrounding them. The club business, the sporting goods business and even the magazine business depend entirely upon the playing population. When short term gain is sought at the expense of this playing population, we all lose.

It is by these standards then that KILLSHOT tries to abide. I feel that acknowledging principles of responsible journalism, and that being conscious of the detriments to the long term growth of racquetball will insure that KILLSHOT takes part as well in the growth of the sport.

One instance when I have been guilty of poor professional judgement occurred just recently. In a quarter final match at Portland's Tournament of Champions, Dan Obremski was playing Drew Kachtik. To say this was an intense match would have been an incredible understatement. Both players played with amazing fury for the first three games. In the fourth game Kachtik was down 9-5 when he took a time out. Having a difficult time getting back any momentum and totally exhausted after the previous games, Kachtik looked at me and just shook his head. "I've got to get it back from somewhere, but I don't know Where it's going to come from." My next comment was something mildly encouraging which got little response

from Kachtik. I then said to him, "You win this game and I'll put you on the next open cover".

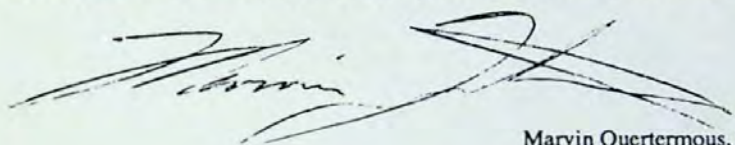
Kachtik looked at me with a new twinkle in his eye. My words had given him the incentive for which he had been searching. I was really excited that I could say something that helped him regain his enthusiasm. Honestly I think I could have said, "You win and I'll buy the Gatorade" and it would have had the same effect. He just needed something to focus upon to get back his will to win. We've all been there.

Unfortunately that was not what I said. I realized that as a professional I could not make such a promise even though we both knew how I intended it. To make matters worse, both players were playing all-out and both superb athletes were good friends of mine. Kachtik returned to the match like a man possessed and took the game 11-10.

Now I don't for one minute believe that I had anything to do with the outcome of that game, but I was in a lousy position none the less. If I put Drew Kachtik on the cover, I was breaking a commitment to the public to follow standards of professional journalism. If I did not, I was breaking a promise to a friend and to a member of one of the organizations KILLSHOT represents. Even though he knew how I intended the remark and didn't seem too worried, I was worried enough for both of us.

So, to ease my conscience, and to give him the coverage that he really does deserve, here is a photo from that very match. I feel certain that You will be seeing Drew on the cover of KILLSHOT in the near future, but you will know that it is because of his tremendous talent and not because I sometimes speak before I think. All this should by no means eclipse the accomplishments of Mr. Obremski who not only went on to win that match but the entire tournament.

I hope that if I am in a similar position in any other respect, I can soon recognize it. That, I believe is in the long term good of the game. In addition, I hold great admiration for those who can see and work toward this long term good in any aspect of racquetball. I encourage you to look for these qualities and work to help those individuals who hold these values.



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Wanna Lose Weight?

Then Eat MORE.

By Marcy Lynch
Nutrition Editor

Allow me to introduce myself and explain my purpose as nutrition editor for **KILLSHOT**. My goal is to share information with you on topics of nutrition as they relate to sports. My word is not "gospel", merely a synthesis of what I've read, what I've studied, and personal experience. I will choose topics that I feel are interesting and useful. I welcome questions and will do my best to research a reply and/or give my opinion.

I'm not sure what initially spawned my interest in nutrition but it is closely related to very much liking to eat, and growing up in a household where good, nutritious meals were served. The older I became and the more responsibility I had for providing my own meals, the more curious I became about how food works and the effect it could have on my physique and my performance. The hardest lesson for me to learn was that in order to be slim and fit, I had to *eat*! We have been so conditioned to *restrict* food intake in order to control weight, that it is a difficult mindset to overcome. Body builders and wrestlers actually starve themselves to look "cut" or "make

weight". The long term effect of deprivation, however, is reduced muscle mass and the start of a vicious cycle of yo-yo weight control. People that complain about eating very little and still gaining weight may be telling the truth. Conversely, how often have you seen thin people who seem to be able to eat whatever they want?

Eating actually stimulates metabolism. The metabolism is like a fire. When you eat, you stoke the fire. When you don't eat, you allow it to go out. It is much easier to keep a fire going than to let it burn out and try to restart it. The type of fuel you use is also important. Carbohydrates are like kindling; they burn quickly and you need to keep adding them to the fire. Fat is like green wood. It will burn eventually, after it smokes and smolders and slows down the fire.

The logical conclusion, then, is to eat more carbohydrates more often and reduce fat intake. You might say, "If I eat more, I'm hungry all the time." Well, that's the idea. The fire burns and demands to be fed. Keep it stoked and you'll burn what you eat. You might again argue that you know you can drop five to ten pounds if you just don't eat or skip meals for a couple of days. What actually happens when you don't eat is your brain's survival mechanism sends a signal to the body to slow down and conserve energy. Your body becomes more efficient with less fuel/calories.

After a prolonged period with no food, the body will actually begin to feed on itself. This can start in only six to eight hours. Where does the body feed? It feeds on nutritious muscle tissue, not fat. When you lose that five pounds, you lose a combination of muscle

and fat. When you gain it back (if you go back to the habits you had before you stopped eating, you *will* gain it back) it will be in the form of fat. Over time, you will have more fat than muscle and this is how the negative cycle starts.

Muscle is the furnace that contains the fire. The less muscle you have, the less ability to burn calories. The best example of how insidious this cycle becomes is with the opti-fast and medi-fast diet programs. What you get with several months of food deprivation is great weight loss at the price of a slowed metabolism and massive muscle loss. When food is re-introduced to a system that is "shut down", the body's natural reaction is to stockpile or store what it can't burn in the form of fat. The result is, more often than not, regaining the weight.

So, how do you stimulate your metabolism? You can't just start eating a lot. You must first start eating more often (at least every four to five hours) and small amounts. If you don't eat three meals a day, start there. If you are not hungry, eat anyway, just make it a small meal or a snack. Eventually, a pattern of eating and appetite will establish itself if you strive for it. Reduce fat intake and increase carbohydrates. Also, do some weight lifting to build muscle. Since muscle is what burns calories, the more you have, the more you can burn. It is possible to actually gain weight and be thinner since muscle weighs more than fat but takes up less space.

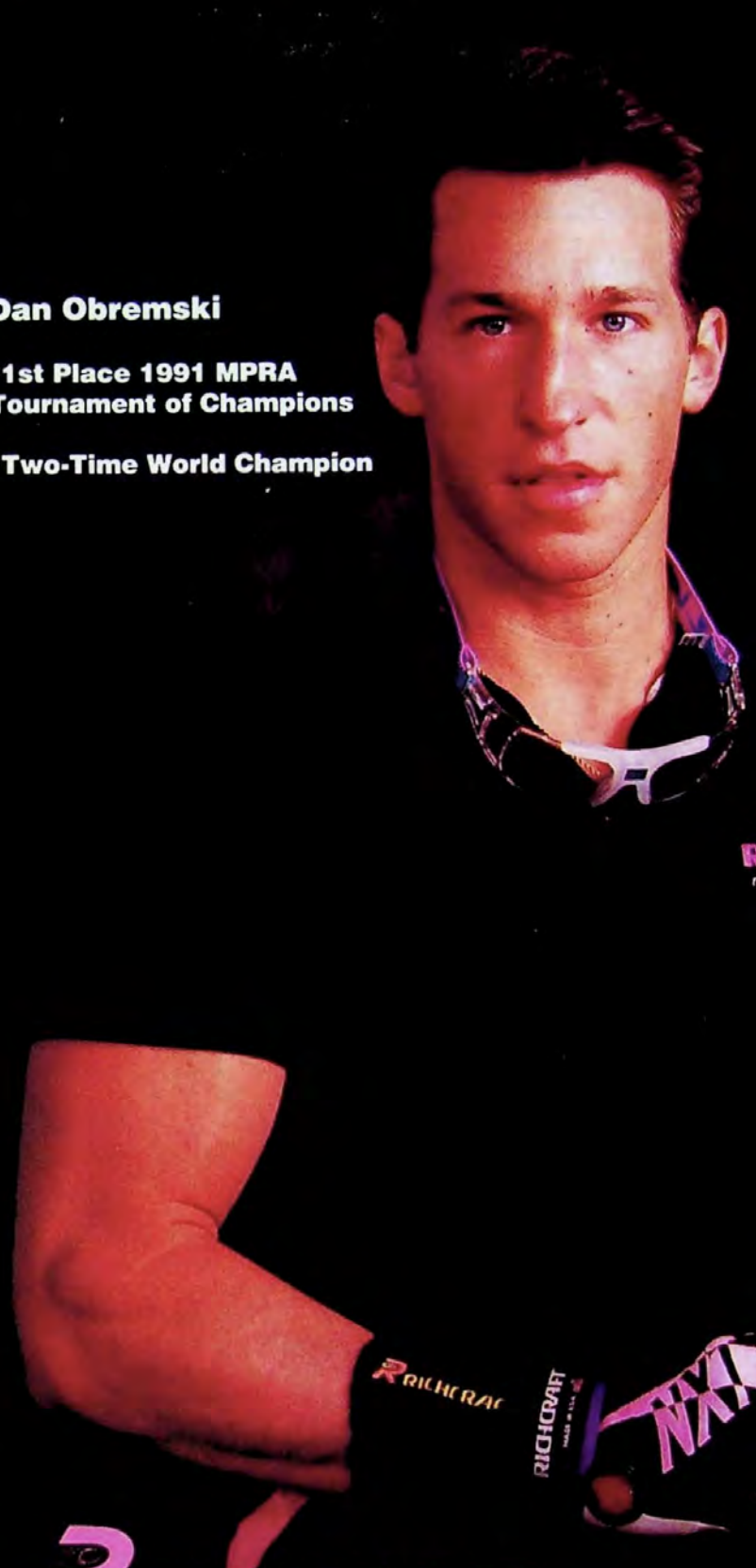
In order to maintain high energy levels and control weight, you must eat often. To start the process:

1. Establish at least three times a day to eat. If you are not hungry, don't skip a meal, eat a small one.
2. Increase carbohydrates and reduce fat in your choice of foods
3. Add weight lifting to your workout program.

Stick with it! The slower your metabolism, the longer it will take to reverse it. Over time, however, you too will be able to eat more, have more stamina, and stay trim.



Charlie Palek



Dan Obremski

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L E T T E R S

I am inquiring about the premiere issue of **KILLSHOT** I received recently. It did not follow the format I was used to from *National Racquetball*, (instructions, gear evaluations, etc.). Will it in the future? Are you picking up where they left off, (subscribers with subscription time remaining honored)? I would appreciate hearing from you soon.

P. Pisano
Murray, PA

You are right, our format is considerably different from *National Racquetball*. We have no connection with that publication so we will not be honoring its commitments. You will note instruction in this issue from three schools of thought.

WOW! Start my subscription to **KILLSHOT** Magazine immediately with your premiere issue. Thank you, Thank you, Thank you.

C.B. Winston
Rosemead, CA

Thank you for the free issue of **KILLSHOT**. Please find enclosed my subscription. Obviously our sport needs a good racquetball magazine, and I have taken the liberty of leaving your magazine out at my local club and have copied your subscription page and encouraged everyone who will listen to subscribe and support your magazine. ...I have a few comments about your magazine I would like to address. ...I love it. Nice pictures, informal writing style. Lots of white space. Very modern look.... nice variety. Keep Strandemo. His perspective and experience of the game adds a sense of tradition and continuity to your magazine. I would like to see a regular feature from Hogan, as he used to do "in the old days." I feel he [is] still the game's first and only

"Superstar", and listening to his words (good or bad) holds the same fascination as the tennis world has with John McEnroe. ...I would like to see equipment reviewed (shoes, racquets, goggles (how about a shoot-out on socks?) gloves, etc.). Not the usual listing of retail prices and head size diameters (boring) but how well equipment meets players needs. Could we please have a top 50 listing of pros?... I want to know who is on the way up, who is on the way down, and the statistics on computer rankings, point totals, etc., I want to know if there are 5 players who could reach number 1, or if it is a two-man race. ...In closing, let me say that I hope your magazine is at the vanguard of a resurgence in racquetball in America. If you can achieve honesty in reporting, add some humor and keep in touch

with what "we", the playing public want to read, I think you can have a successful magazine and you and your staff can become fabulously wealthy by riding this wave of racquetball popularity to it's zenith.

D. St. Clair
Belpre, OH

Thanks for the nice comments and suggestions. Would you go over the part about becoming fabulously wealthy one more time?

Well it looks like **KILLSHOT** magazine will fill a need in this week long player's off time. Your profile on Mike Ray was just the ticket for me to make the move to subscribe. I finally know some history about the #1 player, and it's about time. Hope we both grow in the game.

B. Glenn. Miami, OK

All I can say is, "IT IS ABOUT TIME !!!" The **KILLSHOT** Magazine is fantastic, marvelous, wonderful, informative, unbiased, plentiful, and just plain exciting!!!! "Who is Mike Ray?" He is very friendly, funny, warm, and exciting to watch perform. If I am correct, the picture on page 33 is Mike Ray. I read **KILLSHOT** cover to cover the day it arrived. I immediately sent in my subscription!!!! I thought the writing was exceptional, from the standpoint of knowledge, general information, professional, selection, recognition, diversity, and humor. Hank Marcus, what can you say? When it comes to the Pro Stop, he keeps it all together and running smoothly. If there are problems, you never hear about them until it is all over!!!! I have been a Racquetball fan since forever. I have always enjoyed reading everything and anything regarding racquetball. In the past I have had the chance to see a few of the "GREATS." I had a subscription to *National Racquetball* Magazine until they folded or went bankrupt. I was able to receive bits and pieces from our local players when they went to area tournaments or to Nationals. Most of the information came from our own Dan Obremski !!!! I am a little prejudiced! I had the opportunity to work with our local Racquet Club of Pittsburgh, for the past two years on the Pro Stop. I can't remember the last time I worked on a project that was as stimulating and exciting.

Continued on page 57

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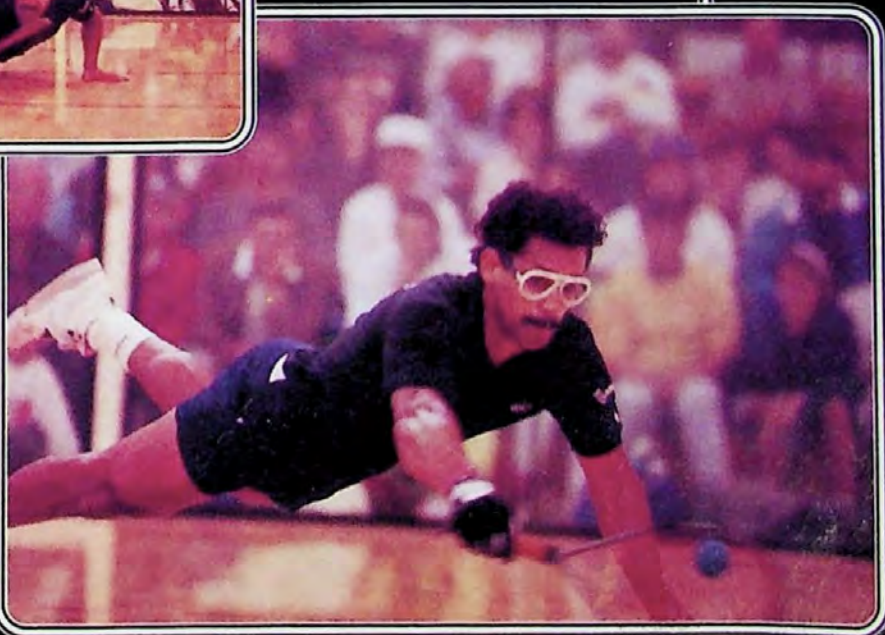
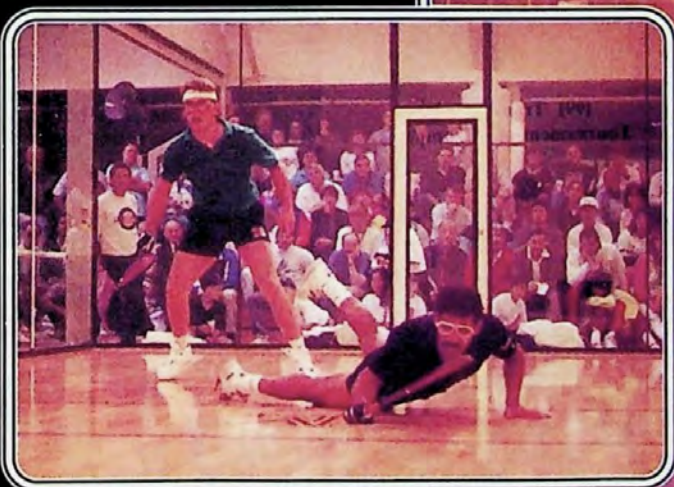
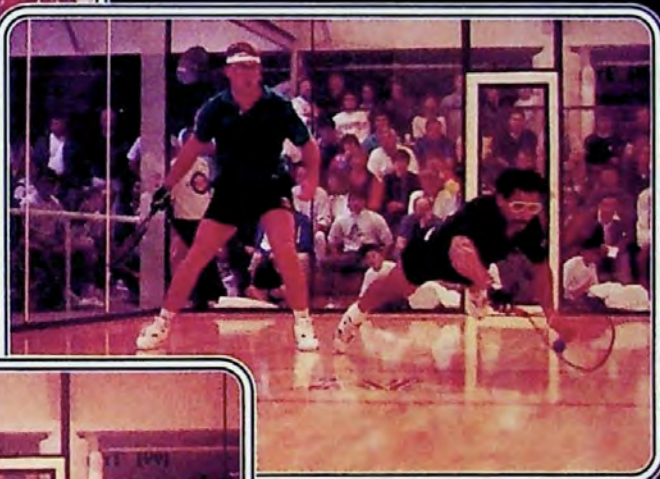
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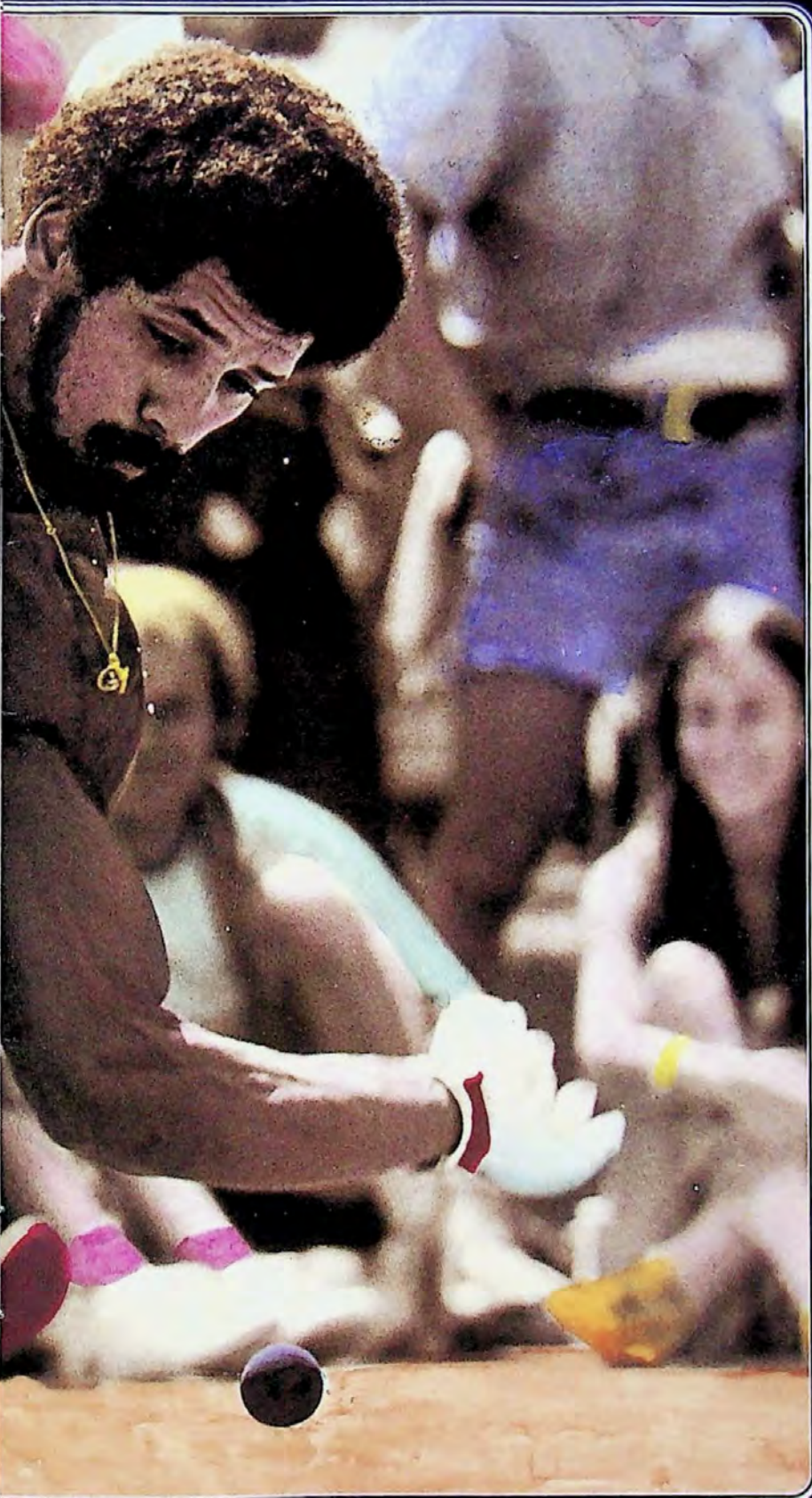
K I L L S H O T

GALLERY

Ruben
Gonzalez







GALLERY

Ruben Gonzalez

Ruben Gonzalez grew up in the streets of New York. His world was one of gang warfare and street violence. Through his athletic ability and interest in handball and, later, racquetball, Ruben was able to turn his life around and is a living example of the metamorphosis possible through sports. He is proof that you can escape.

Gonzalez became an accomplished handball player in the parks around the area and playing street handball. In 1975, Ruben began playing organized handball in AAU and USHA tournaments. In 1976, he won the National AAU One-Wall Tournament and New York's Pink Ball Tournament in West Greenwich Village. He played tournament handball for another year, making the transition to racquetball. In 1982 and '83, Gonzalez won the Ektelon Nationals. He captured the Pro Nationals in Seattle in 1988 and teamed with Mike Ray in 1990 to win the MPRA National Doubles title. He was ranked #1 in the World in 1988-89. He was voted MPRA Most Improved in 1988-89 as well as Most Outstanding Player, and Most Valuable Player. He won the Sportsmanship award in 1985-86, 1986-87, and 1987-88 and was voted National Racquetball Player of the Year in 1987-88.

What is the secret to Ruben Gonzalez' drive and desire on the court? "Because," says Ruben, "when I'm on the court, I'm still protecting my turf."



A N D Y Roberts

A major force in amateur racquetball for the past eight years, Andy Roberts captured his first National professional title in 1991. His optimism for the sport has endured because he has never lost sight of the realities of professional sports.

new directions

On a recent sunny afternoon in his hometown of Memphis, Andy discussed the future of racquetball, new directions in mental fitness and the business of professional sports.

By Marvin Quertermous
Photographs by Charlie Palek

Q: Andy, you won the MPRA national championship this year.

AR: Right.

Q: What do you see coming up for you this season on the pro tour?

AR: I see a good year for me personally. I have to be honest, I was amazed at the way I've played in the last three or four months. It's the most consistent racquetball I've ever played. It's a level that I knew I could play, but was just wondering when that was going to come. I think I now understand the formula that it takes to play at that level consistently so I have no pressure on me. At first I wondered if the national would be considered a fluke, but I've maintained that level and it's good enough to beat everybody on a consistent basis.

Q: How is the formula different from what you were doing in the past?

AR: It's a lot more mental stuff. I'm using hypnosis on a regular basis. The guy that I use is experienced, he works with a lot of athletes, a lot of golfers. His name is Dr. Howard Jacobson. He is local here in Memphis and he has just done tremendous things with my game. I don't think you can be a great athlete in any sport and not, at one time, consult people like that. He's great and I'll continue to use him.

Q: How do you see the difference in what he's done when you actually walk on the court?

AR: My ability to use momentum, and my thought processes during the match are better. The major thing in any sport is relaxation. The ability to relax in crucial point situations and be able to get the most out of athletic performance are things I've been working on. My nerves don't bother me any more, I don't get nervous, my reaction time is better and more consistent. I had all the shots, I had all the ability, except I was inconsistent in major parts of my game. Now I'm a consistent player. That's the difference in winning and losing at the level that I play. It just opened up my game, made me a lot more diverse. My game used to be one dimensional... power. If my power game was working that day and if I was really consistent, I had a good opportunity to win. Now I can win with a slow game,

I can win with lob serves, and I can still win with power. I'm much more dimensional. I can adjust throughout a match. That's the key in racquetball at the professional level today. The person who adjusts first in a positive direction will win the match. Of all the tapes I've seen, the person who makes the first adjustment usually wins.

Q: You're saying that at the professional level, there are more mental differences among players than physical differences?

AR: Oh, I think so. I'll tell you, I've said this before... that the men's tour right now has the best racquetball players that have ever played the game. If you look from the person who's ranked #1 all the way to the person who's ranked #16, I feel personally, any person who's in that ranking can win the tournament. No question about it.

Q: I think that was proved this year.

AR: It's going to be proved a lot more. You know what your game is like and you have to develop something else to make yourself better than the rest of them. The aspect, I think, in racquetball that hasn't really been developed is the mental edge. You know they always say there's one person, Brumfield, that had that ability to use the mental part. That's what I'm exploring now. I've become a more mental player and I'm going to use that to my advantage. Dr. Jacobson is helping me with that.

Q: You mentioned Charlie Brumfield. I think everybody considers Brumfield a master and an innovator within the sport. You've been called the best-schooled player within the sport. That is, you've had the benefit of some of the best teachers and coaches. Tell me about your background, and are you something of an innovator?

AR: I've been on the US team for eight years, I've been playing professional racquetball for awhile, but, I still consider myself at a young age in my game. I'm only 26 years old. I've been a late developer in all the sports I've played, so I figure my prime is going to be 28 or 29. That's when I'll be playing my best racquetball. I don't think I'm any kind of innovator, not right now. I have been fortunate in that I've had excellent teachers. I never had any bad habits as a young kid. I was taught by two players here locally, Gary Stevens and Randy Stafford. They were pros. They taught me the strokes, they taught me how to win, they taught me how to beat people that I shouldn't beat at that level. Then I moved up to the college ranks. My brother and my dad helped me a lot. People who were good racquetball players, who

knew racquetball always gave me advice. I was always the type of person, that if I didn't know, I would ask. That's the problem that I think a lot of young people are having in racquetball. Either they don't have anybody to ask or they don't take themselves to a different level by asking. I was always that type of person, if I did something, I was going to do it well, or I didn't do it. That's just my personality. I think that's why I progressed so rapidly in racquetball. Fortunately my parents were in a position to expose me to a lot of things. I did a lot of traveling. They made sure I got to the tournaments and things like that. I was very fortunate, no question about it. Even when I accept an award or something, I always credit my parents with my success. You have to attend tournaments to be a good player, that's a must. My parents had the ability and they sent me to those tournaments. I got the exposure that I needed. I certainly got the tournament experience. A lot of things happened to me and I still use those things today.

Q: You're still playing in the amateur events, you played really well this summer in the Olympic Festival and the Penn Pacific Rim games. Do you see yourself continuing with the national team for awhile?

AR: I'm really thinking about it. I'll play one more year, I can say that. Tim Doyle and I are playing doubles in Phoenix. That's going to be a first year team, so I'm looking forward to that match-up. I feel like, in our practice matches, we certainly play good racquetball together and I've never really played doubles per se on a US team. I think I would like to do that. I'm in my eighth year with the AARA. I don't know what can be expected of a person, how many years, they can put into it...it's a lot of time. I'm married now, possibly starting a family, so you know there's a lot of commitments for me and my major goal is professional racquetball right now. I guess to answer your question, I'll have to play it by ear. I don't really exactly know what avenue I'm going to take. To be honest with you, I'm probably looking at the goal of retirement from amateur racquetball. I think its going to be a good retirement. I think its going to be a healthy retirement. I've given a lot back to the sport and I'm looking forward to bigger and better things.

Q: In order to keep your amateur status right now, your professional winnings are held in the trust with the AARA?

AR: Well, mine's a little different [than most players]. My agreement with the AARA is, I have not accepted or I have not used any money I've won on the pro tour in over two years. That money goes into a retirement account with Merrill Lynch. I use it in money market funds and buying stocks and things like that. I'm in a situation where I don't need that money to exist. My statements from Merrill Lynch are sent to the AARA. They are monitors of my accounts over there. I cannot withdraw any money from either account. If I do, I lose my amateur status. Merrill Lynch mails them [the AARA] monthly and quarterly accounts of my income and contributions to that account. So, it gets back to the question, if I'm going to be some kind of innovator. I think I will be the first racquetball player, other than those who have their own companies, who truly has a retirement account from my earnings in racquetball. I'm contributing \$2000 a year to that IRA and I started when I was 24. I'm 26 now and when I retire at 59 and 1/2 years old, I'll have \$1,400,000 in that account if I continue to put in \$2000 per year. I hope I'll be able to do that because that will say something for racquetball. You can truly make an income from racquetball and it will give you something when it's all said and done. One day you'll be able to write about that. I think that's important that people understand that you can make money from this game, you can be successful and can have a comfortable life-style.

Q: I think that's really confusing for a lot of people right now.

AR: Endorsements are big. Endorsements are tremendous amounts of income, it's probably 30% of my income.

Q: Endorsement money is actually take home salary for you, right?

AR: Right. I'm probably one of the better paid racquetball players on the tour. I've diversified myself. In my market, (Tennessee, Arkansas and that region), I feel I control a good portion of the market as far as racquet sales go. That's what a company is concerned with.

Q: You're definitely visible.

AR: Yeah, I try to be visible. I try to make a lot of tournaments, make a lot of appearances, do exhibitions and things like that. It's important in racquetball. The US team has certainly helped me with my visibility. I'm now moving into securing outside sponsors. Cellular One has been a major sponsor of mine. We're working in the second year of my sponsorship. We've just renewed it. They feel comfortable with me as a person and what I've done for the company. I'm working on another sponsorship currently and probably by the time this magazine is out, I hope to be able to say that I did secure that sponsorship... It's a major corporation. The people that I've gotten leads through are racquetball players. Racquetball is an interesting market. Most of those who play racquetball are middle-upper income people. If you have a product that caters to that level of marketing, you have to convince that company that you can expose that product to those people. For example, cellular phones are certainly a middle

Interview

KILLSHOT

A N D Y

to upper income product. A lot of racquetball players that I know have cellular phones. It became a "hand in hand" deal. Sometimes it's tough to convince good marketing people to gamble on [marketing with] racquetball. A lot of that comes down to the type of person you are. If you can convince them that they can use you in other ways as well as with racquetball and that you are important enough... I think what helps me is, in Memphis, a lot of people know me. When I endorse a product or they use me in the newspaper or on TV or something, then they know who I am, and that helps.

Q: You seem to get a lot of recognition around Memphis.

AR: Tremendous, tremendous.



Q: You're probably one of the few players, that do.

AR: Well, yeah, I mean, its hard work. You have to understand that you have to tell the newspapers what's going on, to write about, and you have to call them. I mean, you have to have somebody as a publicist, to personally send the new items to the TV, to the radio, to make sure these things get covered. They're not going to come out of the sky tomorrow and knock on your door. Early on, my family and I did that together. Now I have someone that does that for me. If you're going to play racquetball to make a living, you have to see everything you do as a business deal—a possibility to turn a dollar. Everything I do, I look at as a business deal. I hope some of my fellow players continue to learn how to do that.

Q: Does that take any of the fun out of it?

AR: Not really. Racquetball is always fun to me. Once the fun leaves, I'm gone. The reason I work out such a hard core business

deal is I have to support people. I'm married now and I have to support my family. That's the only thing I know how to do right now. I do have a college degree, I went to Memphis State on a scholarship and I graduated with a criminal justice degree. I'm going back to graduate school, September 9th. I'm getting a master's degree, also in criminal justice.

Q: What can you tell me about some of the other players? Who do you like to play the least and for what reason? Who's the toughest?

AR: The person I like to play the least is the person I don't know. There are so many good racquetball players across this country. [Take] for example, Houston. I think the scary part about the Houston nationals is you can possibly get beat by someone you don't even know.

Q: And nobody else knows?

AR: Nobody else knows. There are always a couple of guys every year that come out of the woodwork that play excellent racquetball at that tournament. I think that's what scares a lot of players. The possibility of them getting beat by an amateur who no one really knows. That, to me, is scary. I've never been

afraid to lose, I know you have to lose to be a winner. You can't always be a winner. I really feel confident in my game right now, because I have the ability to adjust to every player on tour, that I know of. Unless there's someone out there that I don't know that will play the tour next year. Right now, [I have] the ability to adjust to everybody that is out there, that I potentially have to play. If someone has a better power game than me, I can adjust and do some things to offset their game. When all is said and done and I retire from racquetball I want to be known as a complete player. I don't want to be known as a one-faceted type player, someone who is just strong in one area, I want to be a complete player. To me that's the ultimate in sports, to be known as a complete player.

Q: What do you see as the future of racquetball?

AR: I served on the board for the AARA for a couple of years and then I was the athlete's advisory council member to the USOC. I think the AARA has a lot of resources that they don't use. There are a lot of people that play racquetball that could help on the board of directors that they don't tap. The AARA is an organization that is dynamic, very dy-



3A



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▶ 4A



5

namic. The people who run the organization are extremely dynamic and I love working with them. Luke [St.Onge] has done tremendous things for racquetball, I mean more than you can talk about. But, I think to get to this next plateau, they have to attract new markets, outside sponsors, and they're not doing it.

Q: Are they trying to do that, working toward that end?

AR: I think they've got to spend some money. I'm not sure what they have to do, but they have to spend some money and I'm not so sure that they are willing to do that, to go out there and be captive in the market.

Q: And the pro tour?

AR: Some of the players are a little bit more active in the marketplace than others. My contention is that they have to go out and they have to work their own contracts, to work in their own marketplace. Just being a good player in racquetball does not get you the contracts anymore. If you win this tournament, this tournament, and this tournament, it doesn't mean you're going to get a contract. You have to really be effective in that marketplace, and some of our guys aren't. They

don't have the names, they don't have the national notoriety that it takes to get those contracts. Let's face it, Marty [Hogan] is the best filmed racquetball player in the world, and that's because he properly markets himself. A lot of the other players don't have the money to market themselves like that, a lot of the companies don't support the players to market themselves like that, but that's why Marty is in the situation he's in.

Q: Marty had the skills to do that, to market himself, as well as consistent wins, and what we've seen lately is that a lot of the players who've had those skills and really were good at marketing, didn't have a consistent string of wins that they could sell.

AR: Right, but I'm a true believer that you can market talent too. I mean, there's a lot of people out there in other sports who are extremely talented and don't do squat in their sport, but they're still marketed. It just comes down to how much the company that you're playing for is willing to put out to invest in them. I think that's another problem in our men's tour, some of our players sign for nothing! Or next to nothing! And they shouldn't! Our association should publish what players' contracts are. That way if you

Interview **KILLSHOT** A N D Y

are ranked number 5 and you know what the number 4 and the number 6 player makes, you know about where you should be in the contract situation. You know the ballpark.

Q: You and I both know, that the contract dollars do not correspond with the ranking positions.

AR: And I don't think they should really. This sport requires that you be more than just the fifth ranked player in the world. You have to do something else besides that to attract major sponsor dollars. If a player did not sign [a good contract] I wish that the MPRA could support that player throughout the year, until a company was in a serious enough mood to sign this player. It's a shame that some of these players have the type of contracts that they have. But it all goes back to the players taking control of their own destinies. I still someone who is young, aggressive, and has good marketing skills, can make a lot of money in racquetball.





AARA OUT



*Hawkes burns the competition in this
"Fun in the Sun" (and rain) three-
wall Florida battle*

Photos by Charlie Palek

Opposite top: Jason Waggoner appears to be balancing on one hand as he's caught in mid-dive during the men's doubles finals.

Opposite bottom: Greg McDonald crashes during a break in competition as doubles partner Ed Feild towels off and AARA Assistant Director Jim Hiser watches.

Right: Brian Hawkes serves on the University of Florida's short walled outdoor courts.

Below: U. of F. student Rachel Smith drew considerable attention from local media and the Prime Ticket Network during the tournament.



DOOR

Nationals

Brian Hawkes displayed his versatility as an all around racquetball player by capturing the first AARA sanctioned U.S. Outdoor National Racquetball Championships in Gainesville, Florida. Already well known as an outdoor champion in California as well as a force to be dealt with on the pro tour, Hawkes and his ever present cooler caught the attention of the players and spectators in this small but action-packed tourney. Gainesville's Martha McDonald successfully defended her home turf by defeating Jacksonville's Mary Lyons in two straight on the University of Florida's outdoor short-wall court complex to claim the gold medal in women's open competition.

In doubles competition, Hawkes and partner Greg Freeze, also of California, took a straight game win from Tim Hansen and

Jason Waggoner, both of Florida. In the women's doubles action, an all-Floridian contest saw Lauren Sheprow and Robin McBride emerge victorious over Susan Morgan-Pfahler and Mary Lyons.

Weather threatened to put an early end to the outdoor competition as the Florida skies opened up with a downpour that dampened everything but the players' spirits. The rains, beginning at mid-day Saturday, continued into the evening halting play and forcing extra rounds to be packed into Sunday.



OUT DOOR

The scorching heat and drenching humidity created an atmosphere more like a beach volleyball contest than a racquetball tournament as shirtless male competitors and crop-topped females pounded the ball against the short, three-wall front court. But it was the lack of sunshine, rather than the abundance of it that set the tone for this tournament. Friday night was plagued with lightning and a promising Saturday turned into a near-torrential downpour that lasted into the evening and prompted tournament officials to con-

sider finishing the tournament on conventional indoor courts. Luckily that plan did not have to be implemented. Choosing an outdoor court just would not have carried the same credibility. Sunday brought a sizzling sun and a field of players ready for action and pumped for the task of multiple matches, many back to back, in the 90+ degree heat and 90+% humidity.

In the men's open final, Hawkes and Hansen see-sawed the first two games (Hansen 15-14, Hawkes 15-12) but outdoor experience and superb physical conditioning pushed

Hawkes to the top as he steamrolled Hansen in the tie breaker 11-0. In the men's open doubles final Hawkes/Freeze took the match in straight games from Hansen/Waggoner 15-10, 15-14.

In women's action, outdoor veteran McDonald secured first place with an impressive win over Lyons 15-1, 15-8. The women's open doubles was an action-filled contest that ended with Sheprow/McBride over Lyons/Morgan-Pfahler in an 11-7 tie breaker.

Prime Network taped the men's and women's doubles finals with a three-camera



set-up for broadcast in August. Viewing audiences won't be disappointed in the abundance of action that both doubles contests provided. The televised matches benefited from good crowd participation on the sidelines. The audience, made up mostly of other players, was extremely vocal and completely clear on which players were favored. Before the men's doubles finals Hawkes held an impromptu vote to determine where he should launch a racquetball--either through a dormitory window in one direction or into the football stadium seats in the other. The stadium won out and Hawkes blasted the ball high over the top of the stadium about 100 yards away. Nice shot, Brian.

The women's doubles match was the first of the tournament to be televised and after a lengthy delay the four combatants provided an entertaining look at a hard fought match. They set the tone for the men's match held later that afternoon and the television coverage seemed to be an incentive for all-out play.

The hard surfaced courts, originally designed for AAU Handball competition, didn't lend themselves well to wall-crashing, floor-diving gets but that didn't stop some of the more adventurous players from doing just that. Throughout the tournament bodies could be seen flying through the air only to land and scrape hard on the concrete courts. Jason Waggoner seemed to be especially immune to the unyielding surface as he dug shot after shot that appeared to be just beyond his reach.

The pace of the doubles matches was quick with extended rallies and better court coverage than the singles matches. The short wall extensions and the large courts made returning serve difficult and rallies less lengthy in singles. Many players, unused to the larger court dimensions, appeared frustrated at the apparent advantage of the server to easily angle the serve wide just beyond the wall extensions and keep the defender running cross-court from serve to serve.

The sidelines of the court were also difficult to police and countless discussions involving the legitimacy of the call (and sometimes the legitimacy of the caller) halted play. The tournament catch-phrase, coined by Californian Hawkes, was "A Florida bounce," referring to a shot hitting near either sideline being called in or out, always against a Californian. By the end of the tournament even Floridians could be heard muttering that they had been beaten by a bad call on a Florida bounce.

One fact that stood out during the tour-



Opposite: Californian Brian Hawkes is no stranger to outdoor racquetball. Multi-time Outdoor Nationals Champion Hawkes took the first AARA sanctioned outdoor title and teamed up with fellow Californian Greg Freeze to take the doubles medal.

Top: Also no stranger to the open courts is Gainesville's Martha McDonald. The heat and humidity didn't seem to phase her on her way to capture the women's open medal. Here she reaches for a shot against Atlanta resident and former Kentuckian Kim Russell.

Above left: AARA director Luke St. Onge gets in on the action under the Florida sun.

Above right: Allan Engel of Bradenton, Florida took first place in the 19/25+ age bracket.

namment was the professional way in which the entire affair was executed. Even with the rain

delays and the oppressive heat/humidity factor details were handled in a calm, authoritative

Continued on page 23



Top left: The women's doubles finals offered lots of action. Susan Morgan-Pfahler reaches for a shot as partner Mary Lyons remains ready. Lauren Sheprow and Robin McBride took the gold medal.

Bottom left: Sheprow and McBride pose for pre-match shots to be used in the televised doubles finals.

Above right: Jason Waggoner isn't afraid of hard surface outdoor courts. The top two shots catch him pre-dive. Somehow in the bottom shot he managed to dive, return the shot and end up balanced on his hands before he skidded on the surface. Waggoner and doubles partner Tim Hansen took second place.

Opposite page: Tim Hansen of West Palm Beach finished second in doubles and second in singles, losing to Hawkes in the tie breaker.



OUT DOOR

tive fashion. The courts, built to drain effectively, were dried more completely with blowers following the hours of rain. Tournament officials made sure that plenty of *Gatorade*™ and water flowed continuously and meals were provided in a tented, shaded area close to the courts. Above all, no one seemed to be excessively concerned with the weather, they were content to wait out nature's wrath. The tented tournament desk and an overhang between courts became shelters from the del-

uge as players used the opportunity to cool off and talk racquetball. Local media was properly attentive to the event with coverage of the tournament in the Gainesville newspaper on Saturday and Sunday.

Player cooperation was a lifesaver to this tournament considering the weather delays and the need to play so many matches on the final day of the event. The size of the tournament probably contributed to the friendly atmosphere as did the open expanse of the area, an element not available in the close confines of most racquetball facilities.

Results

MEN'S

Brian Hawkes d. Tim Hansen
14-15, 15-12, 11-0

Jay Rand d. Stephen Arizmendi
15-8, 15-3

Joseph Mijares d. Roger Mathews
5-15, 15-13, 11-5

Allan Engel d. Stephen Arizmendi
15-6, 15-6

30+

John Scargle d. Vinney Ganley
15-10, 7-15, 11-3

50+

Earl Black d. Roger Wehrle
15-7, 9-15, 11-9

OPEN

A

B

19/25+

WOMEN'S

Martha McDonald d. Mary Lyons
15-1, 15-8

Linda Mojer (unchallenged)

Linda Mojer d. Kim Yedinak
15-7, 9-15, 11-9

Kim Russell d. Laurie Czarnetzky
15-6, 15-6

OPEN DOUBLES

Men's

Hawkes/Freeze
d.
Hansen/Waggoner

Women's

Sheprow/McBride
d.
Lyons/Morgan-Pfahler

Mixed

Martha McDonald/Jason Waggoner
d.
Robin McBride/Bob Fleetwood

DOUBLES DIVISIONS

Men's A: J. Mijares/D. Wayne d. P. Victor/M. Davis
Men's B: N. Bickman/O. Scarned d. L. Brasovan/G. Morrell
Men's 19/25+: G. Detschaschell/B. Sloan d. R. Gordon/C. Turner
Men's 30+: K. Arrowsmith/D. Segal d. G. Maisel/M. Schweiger
Men's 35+: R. Field/E. Field d. B. Collins/G. Harrell
Men's 40+: V. Dubolsky/L. St. Onge d. G. Shaak/J. Hiser
Men's 45+: G. Shaak/R. Wehrle d. T. Conti/D. Woodington
Men's 50+: E. Black/D. Woodington d. L. Anterio/M. Sadowsky

Baltimore



Baltimore
Convention &
Visitors Association
Roger Miller photo

WPRA

Photos by
Charlie Palek

National Gilman

Baltimore becomes yet another battlefield
in the Gilman-Adams war

Isn't it getting a little old seeing Michelle Gilman and Lynn Adams in the finals of a WPR National? Absolutely not! Not only has this become one of the best rivalries in sports, but Baltimore fans may have rioted if the WPR Nationals had come down to anything less! Gilman hits serves surpassing 150 M.P.H., and her rallies are flawless. Adams has been at the head of the pack since the end of the 1970's and has the ability to pull out something extra for a win when it seems hopeless. Seeing these two play is seeing history in the making.

Before we get ahead of ourselves, let's take a look at the unfolding of the 1991 WPR Nationals from the beginning. After the success of last year's national championships, Diet Pepsi has signed on as the major corporate sponsor for the event through 1993. Baltimore's Merritt Athletic Club has also agreed to host the Nationals for that same length of time. Industry sponsors, Penn and Ektelon, and the newly retained firm of O'Brien Sports Marketing put together the winning formula for the '91 Nationals.

Players arrived in Baltimore with their work cut out for them. Not only would a national champion be crowned at this event, but it was also the money round for the Diet Pepsi Bonus and the Penn Professional Series. The season end number one spot was at stake, and everyone wanted a clear victor for the tied number three spot. In addition, because of cable television coverage, an upset win from anywhere in the field would mean added exposure and more bargaining power for sponsorship dollars from racquet manufacturers.

In the round of 32, the only upset was Pennsylvania's Dottie Fischl, eliminating WPR President Chris Evon in four games. Fischl was unable to continue with a win in

the next round against #5 seed Jackie Paraiso. In a disappointing season for both Fischl and Evon, neither could make it past the round of 16 at any pro stop. After the showing each made on the 1989-90 tour, it is likely both will return with a vengeance for '91-'92.

In the 16's, undoubtedly the best match of the round (and one of the best of the season) was between #8 seed Marci Drexler and #9 seed Lynne Coburn. These two have made the most movement within the WPR rankings this year, and have developed a very intense rivalry. With the top seven players firmly entrenched in their positions, it's clear that either Drexler or Coburn must link together a series of superior finishes to shake the other from her heels. While it appeared that Drexler was on her way to doing just that, Coburn's five game victory here stopped those efforts until next year. After losing in four games their only other meeting of the year, Coburn would not be denied in Baltimore. Drexler's intensity and phenomenal speed make her one very dangerous southpaw. Coburn's constant technical improvement and ever vocal cheering section make her seem invincible at times. Watch these two next season!

In the Quarters, however, Coburn was no match for Adams. Adams quickly dispatched her hopes of continued upsets in three brief games. Likewise, Gilman handed a similar fate to a very frustrated Kaye Kuhfeld. The McKinney-Paraiso match-up was a different story.

In five grueling games, the two battled

their way to the semi's. Both players gaped in disbelief as the other routinely made near impossible gets. Paraiso's spinning lunges consistently kept McKinney's passing attempts in play. McKinney's diving gets were unbelievable. In the end, McKinney would prevail by means of a near blowout fifth game victory. Hopes of a 1989 National title repeat



Michelle Gilman serves.

were written all over her face.

The Malia Bailey-Toni Bevelock semi-final was like an exhibition in strategic racquetball. These successful doubles partners knew each other's style so perfectly, the entire match proved to be a contest in who could keep the other the most off balance. Having switched ranking positions over the course of

Nationals



Above left: Marci Drexler and Lynne Coburn battle it out in one of the most exciting matches of the tournament. Coburn took the match in five games.

Above right: Lynn Adams goes for a shot down the line. Adams took second in the tourney in a tough loss to Gilman in five games.

Right: Dee Ferreira-Worth and Kim Macharin courtside during a break in tournament action.

Opposite top: Caryn McKinney vaults to dodge a shot.

Opposite center: Malia Bailey and Toni Bevelock in close quarters. Their quarterfinal match see-sawed with Bailey taking the victory in five games.

Opposite bottom: Kaye Kuhfeld returns. Kuhfeld was bulldozed by Gilman in the quarters, 11-0, 11-2, 11-2.



the '90-'91 season, each player wanted a clear victory here to end the season. In the end, Bailey would continue the trend she had forged all season. It was Bailey's win, 11-8 in the tie breaker.

Dispatching the tied #3 seeds in the semi's with little hesitation, Adams and Gilman blasted their way to the finals. With each falling in three straight, there would be no resolution of the third place tie between McKinney and Bailey, and no second National title for McKinney.

Now for the next page in history. Gilman has youth and reach. Adams has experience

and hustle. Gilman trains with ferocious intensity on a daily basis. Because of arthritis and a degenerative spinal disease, Adams doesn't train. She doesn't even do racquetball drills! Gilman is motivation raised to the highest degree with an absolute hunger for improvement and personal best. Adams thrives on competition and plays better as her opponent plays better. Who could call it?

A play by play could never do justice to

these two stars. Gilman entered the court with a cold stare that signalled it was time to go to work. Adams circled Gilman and talked to herself. She then answered herself. No one was surprised. The ball seemed to stick like glue to whatever surface it was near, the side wall during passes, the floor during kills, and the ceiling during lobs. Gilman took the win, the title, and the number one ranking 11-8 in the fifth game.



WPRO TOURNEY

Michelle Gilman

11-7, 11-8, 9-11, 6-11, 11-8

Lynn Adams

SEMIS

Adams d. McKinney

11-10, 11-9, 11-4

Gilman d. Bailey

11-4, 11-1, 11-4

QUARTERS

Adams d. Coburn

11-5, 11-4, 11-6

McKinney d. Paraiso

11-8, 6-11, 11-5, 9-11, 11-1

Bailey d. Bevelock

11-9, 9-11, 11-9, 4-11, 11-8

Gilman d. Kuhfeld

11-0, 11-2, 11-2

SIXTEENS

Adams d. Risch

11-1, 11-8, 11-1

Coburn d. Drexler

10-11, 11-2, 10-11, 11-3, 11-5

Paraiso d. Fischl

5-11, 11-10, 11-3, 11-2

McKinney d. O'Brien

11-5, 9-11, 11-4, 11-3

Bailey d. Marriott

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

Bevelock d. Robson

11-7, 9-11, 11-4, 11-7

Kuhfeld d. Lynch

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

Gilman d. Gudinas

11-3, 11-2, 11-3

DOUBLES

Gilman/Paraiso

11-1, 11-3, 11-8

SEMIS

Morgan-Pfahler/Lyons

Gilman/Paraiso d. Drexler/Robson

11-7, 11-9, 11-7

Morgan-Pfahler/Lyons d.

Bailey/Bevelock

11-5, 2-11, 11-1, 2-11, 11-8

QUARTERS

Gilman/Paraiso d. Gudinas/Russell

11-6, 10-11, 11-5, 11-1

Drexler/Robson d. Evon/Coburn

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

Morgan-Pfahler/Lyons d. Kuhfeld/Lynch

11-3, 11-9, 7-11, 4-11, 11-6

Bailey/Bevelock d. Marriott/Dee-Jolly

11-3, 6-11, 11-4, 6-11, 12-10

Michelle Gilman and Jackie Paraiso walked through the field to take the National Doubles title. Susan Morgan-Pfahler and Mary Lyons semifinal upset of Malia Bailey and Toni Bevelock was an exciting display of well schooled and well practiced doubles racquetball.

Roberts crushes Ray as the beautiful
Northwest plays host to MPRA's
TransCoastal Grand Nationals

Charlie Palek



Seattle

MPRA
TOURNEY

Nationals

In a season of surprises in the MPRA, it comes as no surprise that Andy Roberts would one day capture the National Championship. After years of amateur wins including an AARA National Singles Championship, three intercollegiate championships and numerous international wins, 1991 would be Roberts' year for the MPRA crown. A Pro Stop victory in his hometown of Memphis had helped keep Roberts in the top eight of the rankings for most of the season. Meteoric climbs in the rankings this season for Tim Doyle and Drew Kachtik, however, have kept Roberts out of the limelight.

Because of the number of upsets this season, any of the round of 32 gathered for the TransCoastal Mortgage Grand Nationals was capable of pulling out a surprise victory. Surprises in the opening draw included the season's only appearance of former tour superstar Dave Peck, and the absence of tour rookie sensation Drew Kachtik. Peck had the dubious honor of facing Roberts in the 32's and became his first victim on the road to the title.

First round upsets included

#21 ranked Todd O'Neil in his second victory this season over #12 ranked Woody Clouse. After a promising start, Clouse ended the season with play that was disappointing at best. Aaron Katz (#19) not only pulled an upset this round with a victory over #14 Doug Ganim, but advanced in the 16's

with a victory over #3 seed Egan Inoue.

Katz was unable to keep the momentum in the quarters, however, as he faced Roberts. Roberts continued his progress with a win in four games. Katz should start next season with a mental edge after such a fine showing in Seattle.



Holly Ray

TransCoastal CEO John Delaney presents the trophy to Grand Nationals winner Andy Roberts. Mike Ray took second.



Left: Dan Obremski dives in his semifinal loss to Mike Ray.

Below: Marty Hogan sets up for a backhand off the back-wall.

Bill Murray

The Tim Doyle-Mike Yellen match-up was a contrast in styles as Yellen found a way to return Doyle's serves and keep changing the pace to take the match to five games. In the end, however, Doyle (favored by many to claim the title) prevailed with an 11-0 blowout in the fifth game.

The Mike Ray-Marty Hogan match was their first clash since Hogan eliminated Ray in Memphis. Neither one a stranger to National Pro titles, Hogan and Ray played a five game see-saw match that delighted a very vocal Seattle crowd. In the fifth game, Ray stood his ground with an 11-4 victory.

The Dan Obremski-Ruben Gonzalez quarter was easily the best contest of the tournament. The explosive style of both players gave the packed house it's proverbial money's worth and more. After all the near perfect shots and unbelievable gets, it was Obremski's win, 12-10 in the Super Tie Breaker.

A brilliant rainbow arched above the Harbor Square Athletic Club as the sun set on the waterfront outside Seattle. The Saturday evening crowd gathering for the

semi-finals were considerably less tranquil. Ready to do any thing short of storming the courts, these hungry fans were as intense as the pros they came to see. With thunderous rounds of applause and roaring cheers for the favorites, the crowd seemed evenly split.

First on the agenda, Roberts and Doyle treated fans to a five game extravaganza. Not afraid to break a few balls and a few strings, both former National AARA

champs pulled all stops. It was Roberts' forehand splat that became the deciding factor and sent him into the finals.

Next Obremski tried to mount an offensive against current National champ and #1 seed Mike Ray. Ray's calm and consistency intact, Obremski had little success. Ray, victorious in four looked forward confidently to the finals.

Nashville's Ray and Memphis' Roberts prepared for the nation's first all-Tennessee Grand Championship final. Regardless of the outcome, Ray would maintain the #1 ranking for the season. With two Nationals already tucked away over the last two seasons and consistent wins over Roberts in recent meetings, Ray faced finals with extreme confidence. Roberts, hungry for the victory over Ray as





well as the National title, had other plans. Ray never even got in the match. Roberts rolled-out shot after shot to take the match in an easy three games. Amidst shouts of "No three-peat!", and "You're the man, Andy!", the crowd backed the underdog Roberts so decidedly that it was clear that racquetball

fans savored a season of surprises and relished the current trend of upsets.

Above: Andy Roberts in the back corner.

Above right: Marty Hogan and Mike Ray at center court.

Below: Aaron Katz cranks a forehand in his loss to Roberts.

Bill Murray



Andy Roberts

11-8, 11-0, 11-4

Mike Ray

SEMIS

Roberts d. Doyle

7-11, 11-10, 8-11, 11-6, 11-8

Ray d. Obremski

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

QUARTERS

Roberts d. Katz

11-9, 6-11, 11-7, 11-3

Doyle d. Yellen

11-1, 6-11, 9-11, 11-5, 11-0

Ray d. Hogan

11-3, 4-11, 4-11, 11-7, 11-4

Obremski d. Gonzalez

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

SIXTEENS

Roberts d. Hawkes

11-10, 11-10, 9-11, 11-8

Katz d. Inoue

1-11, 11-4, 9-11, 11-10, 11-9

Doyle d. Evans

11-3, 6-11, 9-11, 11-5, 11-0

Yellen d. Newman

11-6, 11-4, 11-8

Ray d. Sable

11-8, 11-3, 7-11, 11-2

Hogan d. Johnson

8-11, 11-8, 11-4, 11-5

Obremski d. Ceresia

11-5, 11-9, 11-7

Gonzalez d. O'Neil

11-2, 11-7, 11-4

SHORT SERVES

Charlie Paiek



Hawkes signs with Ektelon

Southern Californian Brian Hawkes has signed with Ektelon for this season. His first tournament with the new sponsor was the AARA Outdoor Nationals in Gainesville.

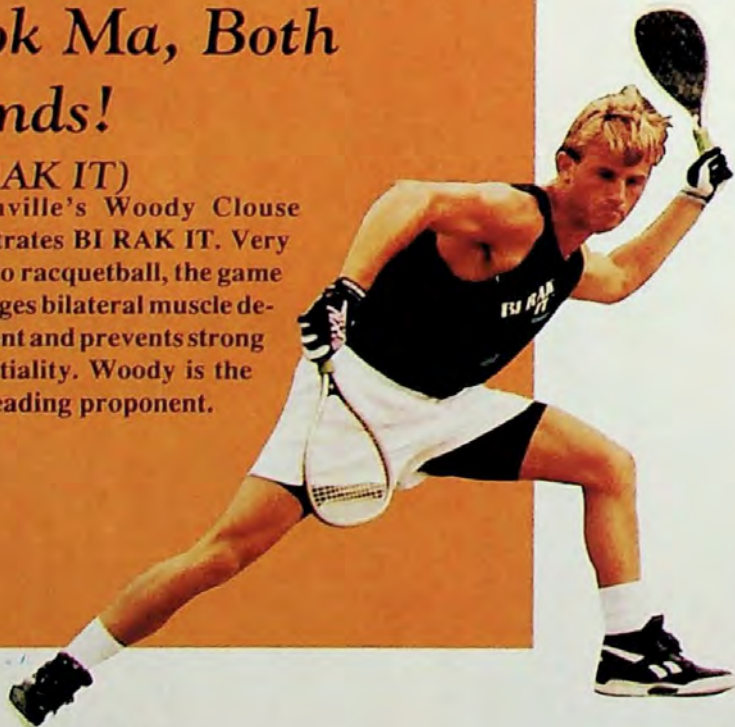
Junior Team Announced

Congratulations to Junior Team coaches Stu Hastings and Hart Johnson and the members of the first ever junior U.S. National Racquetball Team. They will represent the U.S. in international competition and participate in goodwill tours abroad. Members are: Brett Beugen, John Ellis, Allan Engel, Sudsy Monchik, James Mulcock, Eric Muller, Craig Rappaport, Andrea Beugen, Heather Dunn, Shannon Feaster, Rachel Gellman, Elkova Icenogle, Rusti Icenogle, and Dawn Peterson.

Look Ma, Both Hands!

(BI RAK IT)

Jacksonville's Woody Clouse demonstrates BI RAK IT. Very similar to racquetball, the game encourages bilateral muscle development and prevents strong side partiality. Woody is the game's leading proponent.



Charlie Paiek

Had Enough?

Okay, all you wise guys. So you thought last month's question about who was pressed against the wall was too easy, huh? For those who didn't figure it out it was none other than #1 ranked Mike Ray. But put on your thinking caps. This month we want to know which player on the pro tour is called "The Ice Princess" and why. Drop us a line with your answers. We will give you the real answer next month (maybe).



Breakfast of Champions

(Bite Racquet)

When Mike Ray told us he was going to try a new high fibre diet we never dreamed...

Far from the Madding Crowd

Toni Bevelock and Egan Inoue find a few quiet moments between matches amidst the confusion of the Houston Nationals.



...and returns

"Come on, play ball!"

-Marty Hogan to Marty Hogan

"And I thought Vantrese was intense."

-Andy Roberts

"She was serving pretty well, wasn't she?"

-Heather Stupp after an ace-filled match with Michelle Gilman

"No sir, I guess it wasn't such a good place to be doing push-ups."

-Mike Ceresia to a Seattle area security officer.

Steve Lerner



All Pressed Up And No Place To Go II

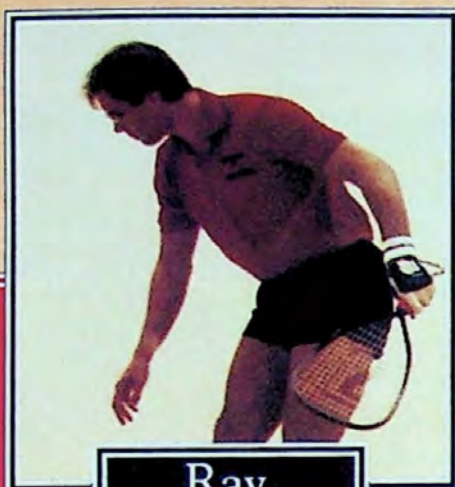
(or Best of 3 Falls)

Andy Roberts demonstrates his new strategy to defend against Egan Inoue's shotgun return. Do you suppose this would be considered a hinder?

Jim Warner



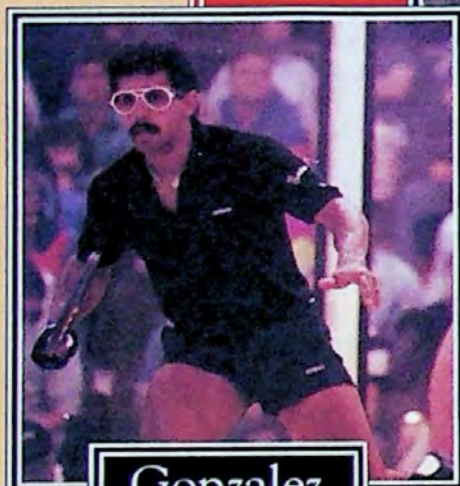
Hogan



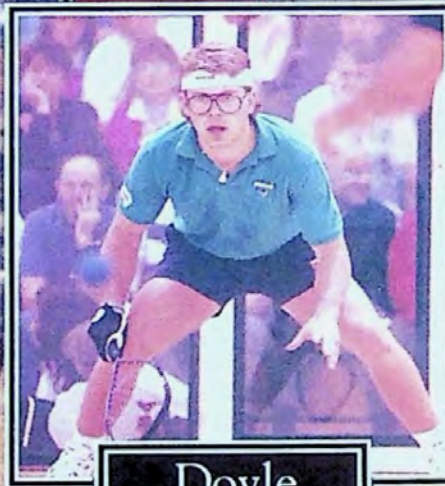
Ray



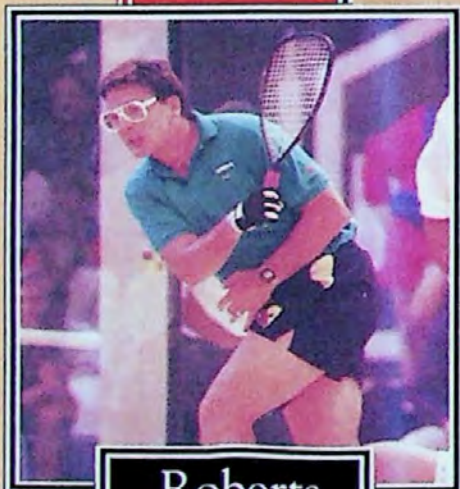
Yellen



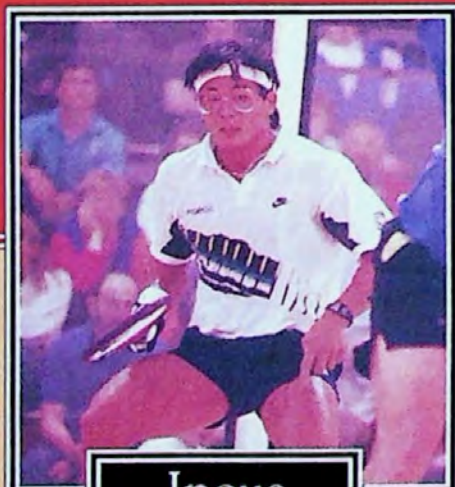
Gonzalez



Doyle



Roberts



Inoue



Kachtik

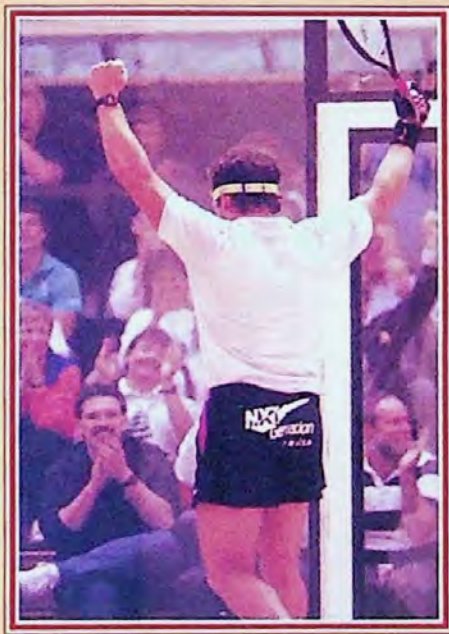
TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS

By Mark Henry
Photos by Jim Warner

Not long ago, few cities would even acknowledge racquetball tournaments as important events of any public interest. Indeed, most cities paid little attention to steadily growing numbers of players and the steadily growing industry within the sport. Portland, Oregon, however, has always been one of the exceptions. Portland has not only supported the growth and exposure of racquetball within its planning, but has made the Pro-Am "Tournament of Champions" a central element of its city celebration known as the "Rose Festival". The 1991 event involved even more hoopla as the host Multnomah Athletic Club (MAC) celebrated 100 years of continuous athletic competition.

It was in this setting that MPRA star Dan Obremski would capture his first professional tournament win. On the tour for five years, Obremski had risen to the top four by means of consistent quarterfinal and semifinal finishes. Having beaten nearly every touring pro at one time or another Obremski was never able to quite reach that carrot of victory which had so long dangled before him. Making reference to the MAC's centennial celebration, Obremski (following a grueling five game victory over Ruben Gonzalez) was heard saying that it felt like almost that long.

Over 700 players from throughout the United States and Canada tried to enter the competition and all 1,200 spectator seats available for the pro matches were sold out before the first ball hit the wall. Amateur players hit the courts starting Wednesday and battled through draws as large as 64 to capture a set of commemorative wine glasses presented to this year's champions. The 20th annual 1991 Rose Festival Racquetball Championships is one of the longest running events in the sport of racquetball and its reputation throughout the sport is equal to any event held. This year's event was to be no exception. In conjunction with the club's



Centennial celebration it was decided to put together an event never before seen in racquetball. So, the TransCostal Tournament of Champions was created -- a season ending elite professional event featuring the top nine ranked players from the MPRA. This format was a first for racquetball and an opportunity for the great Northwest racquetball fans to see only the best battle for the title and the cash.

To say this was an exciting tournament would be a massive understatement. With the spectacle of the Rose Festival, the club's 100th birthday and the MPRA's best nine pumped-up to battle for a very prestigious victory, players and spectators alike had to be turned away. Local television and newspapers gave players the attention usually reserved for pro tennis, basketball or baseball stars. The Oregon fans and media couldn't get enough of #1 seed Mike Ray and his likeness was visible in local news throughout the week. Cable coverage of the finals assured those who couldn't get a seat an opportunity to see

the finals. At a pre-match autograph party, tour stars exchanged verbal killshots and riotous laughter, but on entering the courts, it was serious business and scorching intensity.

A unique feature to the TransCoastal Tournament of Champions was that despite the fact that nine pros earned a spot in the draw the event began in the round of 16. The top seven ranked players in Oregon were invited to fill out the draw and compete against the pros in the first round. This created some great spectator interest as a sold-out crowd rooted on all their favorites. Most of the pros used this as a kind of advanced warm-up round getting used to the courts, etc. But a couple of the locals made this a night to remember as they pushed some of the top ranked players to the limit. The excitement began when Darin Campbell of Portland's Lloyd Center Courts took on Obremski. Obremski cruised through the first two games but Campbell relaxed and adjusted to the speed of the ball in taking the third game. As the crowd cheered every rally, Obremski regained his concentration for a 11-5, 11-6, 8-11, 11-2 victory. The next match featured MAC's Vince Kelley against Andy Roberts, the third seed. Kelley, who teaches junior racquetball at the MAC played the last three MPRA tour stops this season and was psyched up for Roberts. Kelley came out with his blasting style hitting serves at 180 M.P.H. and killing every ball in site. As Kelley rolled a forehand to take the first game, the entire crowd gave him a standing ovation. The two battled point for point in game two as Roberts forced some mistakes at the end of the game and tied the match. Game three was the highlight of the first night of play with diving gets, ace serves, unbelievable kills, and even some flukes off the edge of Kelley's racquet. The crowd was in a frenzy as the game headed towards the forty minute mark with the score tied at 10. After both players served at least



Each match was played as if it were the championship final. Left: Doyle dives. Right: Obremski hits the hardwood. Center: Inoue makes contact with ball and floor.

Quarterfinals

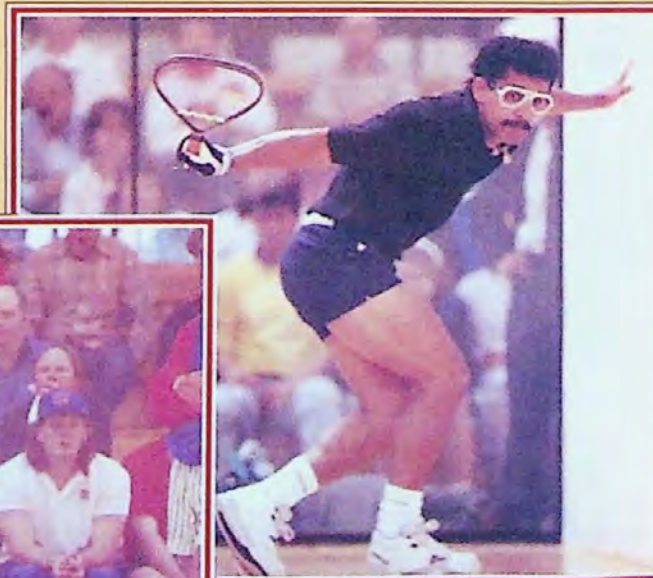
five times for the game, Kelley rolled a backhand splat to take the game and the lead in the match. But this is where you see the experience of the pro. Kelley had everything going at this point including a crowd chanting his name as he entered the court. Roberts, who had struggled throughout the first three games, took control quickly and never let Kelley back in the match. He took a brutal two and one half hour victory, 8-11, 11-8, 10-11, 11-4, 11-1. Watch out for Kelley, as all the pros know he is ready to really break through on the tour at any time. Thursday night's matches were concluded with a battle of legends when #8 Mike Yellen took on #9 Marty Hogan. The crowd could not believe this was a first round match. These two hold twelve National Championships between them and have been responsible for shaping today's pro game. At this event, they've played a series of challenge matches over a three year period with Yellen winning twice. The trend continued as Yellen, who got stronger as the year progressed, beat Hogan 11-9, 5-11, 11-8, 11-4.

Friday's quarterfinals began and ended with matches that had the crowd on the seat edges. The first was Obremski against Kachtik who had both finished their best pro seasons to date. Obremski was coming off a semi-final appearance in the Pro Nationals and a season which saw him take the finals in Memphis and Riverside only to be denied a title. Kachtik, from Dallas, was the story of the tour, winning in Stockton and Pittsburgh and capturing the #1 position for three months of the season after only a 1-3 record the previous season. Kachtik ended the season on a strange note. He missed the Pro Nationals due to an infection picked up during a tournament in Santiago, Chile. Both players are known for their tremendous conditioning. The question was whether Kachtik was in shape after a two month layoff. Obremski took game one easily, using his backhand splat whenever Kachtik got caught in the back of the court. However, Kachtik is known on the tour as a fighter and pushed himself back into the match winning Game 2 with determination and some great diving saves. Obremski started hitting a drive serve that gave him several easy kills and captured game three. With the game score 2-1 (Obremski) the match looked to be over. Kachtik fell behind 5-9 in Game 4. A grin from Drew had the crowd sensing comeback and they came alive, riding the momentum. He fought

his way all the way back to 10-10. Three rallies with both players on the floor showed how important this point was and Kachtik got it with a diving forehand kill to tie the match. Game 5 was all Obremski as his serve-and-shoot style was on target. Kachtik appeared to fade towards the end. Obremski earned a spot in the semi's with a 11-6, 7-11, 11-5, 10-11, 11-4 win.

Hard as it is to believe, Andy Roberts had a much tougher time in his match against Kelley than against Egan Inoue. Inoue finished the most disappointing year of his professional career with a lackluster performance against Roberts who has been hot for a month. Inoue, one of the most popular players on the tour with his bullet serves and power game, was off all season and seemed ready for the summer a few tournaments early. He had struggled in the Pro Nationals and now could not get his game back together as Roberts took an 11-6, 11-4, 11-8 win. It should be exciting as Egan returns next season hungry for revenge.

Gonzalez against Doyle was one of the





TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS

Opposite bottom: left: Tim Doyle slams one of his patented high-velocity serves; center: Andy Roberts shoots a backhand down the line from the back corner; right: Ruben Gonzalez prepares to stop his momentum against the wall after a backhand.

Left: Obremski and Texan Drew Kachtik slug it out in quarterfinals action.

most anticipated quarterfinal matches. Doyle's power style, and win at the Salem Pro Stop, made him a formidable force. Gonzalez, always a crowd favorite, counted on his speed and diving gets. Doyle, the youngest player on the tour at 22 jumped from #14 to #2 this season. Gonzalez, the oldest player on the tour at 39, had a below par season. But Gonzalez played his best match of the year as he took everything Doyle could throw at him. Doyle's monster serve was no match for Gonzalez's quickness. Ruben dominated front court when Doyle repeatedly left the ball up. The result was an 11-8, 11-2, 11-7 surprise for Gonzalez, as he improved on a down year and Doyle finished a great year.

"Who is Mike Ray and how can he be #1 if I haven't heard of him?" is an all too common question on the MPRA tour. But it did not exist in Portland following a two day media sweep that had Ray on every television and radio station and on the cover of the *Oregonian* Sports section. Yellen, on the other hand, never has this type of identity problem and is a hero throughout the Northwest. That was the backdrop as the two generations of control players began their match. Ray quickly began controlling the rallies with ceiling balls and finishing them with forehand kills in winning Game 1. But Yellen is a slow starter and in Games 2 and 3 he showed the style and shot-making that have earned him five National Championships. Using an effective drive and lob serve and pinpoint backhand passes, Yellen had Ray off balance in taking a two games to one lead. Yellen appeared to be in command and the Tournament of Champions seemed primed to lose the top two seeds on Friday until Ray fought back to take Game 4. The Tie Breaker was a racquetball classic with both players using the same style. It came down to who would execute in the clutch as they battled to 8-8. Ray went to his forehand pinch (which is virtually automatic) and hit three winners to end a great match 11-

2, 10-11, 6-11, 11-3, 11-8.

Semi-finals

With the semi-finals set, the Court 10 stands were packed ready to see two great matches, and they would not be disappointed. Roberts came into the match as the hottest player on the tour with a forehand and drive serve that seemed unstoppable along with an unbeatable confidence. Gonzalez, on the other hand, had come off the '89-90 tour with wins in Stockton and Chicago and a 22-5 record flying high. But at the first stop this season, Gonzalez lost a 1-0 lead in the fifth game of the semi-finals to Kachtik and really didn't seem to recover the whole season. Gonzalez's game is built around desire and court coverage. When he is at his best, his quick wrist snap can kill any ball he gets. He rolled over Roberts in Games 1 and 2. Just as Roberts had done in the first round, he got himself together and kept plugging away. In the course of one rally, Gonzalez made a lunge to the forehand corner to dig out a low ball, breaking the frame of his racquet at the base. Refusing to sacrifice any intensity or momentum by leaving the court, Gonzalez played the remainder of the game with the broken racquet and made several perfect flat-roll kills for side-outs.

Roberts squeaked out a tight win in Game 3 and seemed in control. Game 4 was a classic with both players at top form. Roberts was blasting serves and forehands. Gonzalez was diving in every rally and killing the ball in frontcourt. At 8-8, a scary moment occurred when Roberts ripped a forehand from the

backcourt which hit Gonzalez on the ear. Gonzalez was down and in obvious pain but after an injury time-out, the match continued. At 10-10 there were three controversial calls which had both players pleading with the referee and line judges. Gonzalez finally won serve and drew a standing ovation as he pinched a forehand for an 11-2, 11-8, 9-11, 11-10 victory. Following the match, Gonzalez was taken to a hospital where he was diagnosed as having sustained a punctured eardrum.

Control against power, guile against athleticism, #1 against #4, this match was a spectator's delight. Obremski had never beaten

Dan Obremski

11-6, 7-11, 8-11, 11-0, 11-2

Ruben Gonzalez

SEMIS

Obremski d. Ray

9-11, 11-6, 11-4, 11-4

Gonzalez d. Roberts

11-2, 11-8, 9-11, 11-10

QUARTERS

Ray d. Yellen

11-2, 10-11, 6-11, 11-3, 11-8

Obremski d. Kachtik

11-6, 7-11, 11-5, 10-11, 11-4

Roberts d. Inoue

11-6, 11-4, 11-8

Gonzalez d. Doyle

11-8, 11-2, 11-7

SIXTEENS

Ray d. Hamon

11-5, 11-3, 11-2

Yellen d. Hogan

11-9, 5-11, 11-8, 11-4

Kachtik d. Mercante

11-4, 11-7, 11-7

Obremski d. Campbell

11-5, 11-6, 8-11, 11-2

Roberts d. Kelly

8-11, 11-8, 10-11, 11-4, 11-1

Inoue d. Cherry

11-9, 11-3, 11-2

Gonzalez d. Wetherbee

11-2, 11-4, 11-7

Doyle d. Evans

11-4, 11-7, 11-1



Ray. In fact, Ray embarrassed Obremski in Riverside by winning in three straight games that took only 28 minutes! Obremski had to kill the ball when given a chance. Ray, the master of frontcourt, will destroy any player that leaves the ball up. The first game went

stop him. Ace serves, forehand kills, and backhand splats from 39 feet looked easy as he took Games 2 & 3 easily. But Ray is known and respected on the tour as a player who can shut down another player's momentum with his precise style. It never happened this time

pretty much according to form. Ray controlled the pace and made fewer mistakes pulling out the win. It was 4-4 in Game 2 when something clicked for Obremski.. Suddenly, he was hot and nothing could

as Obremski stayed hot. Ray could do nothing about it. Obremski took the match and his first win over Ray 9-11, 11-6, 11-4, 11-4.

Finals

On today's tour the players are so good that on any given day anyone can win. This event was proof as Obremski continued a great year. A revenge win over Ray and Gonzalez proved that despite a rocky year, Obremski can beat anyone. The questions heading into the finals revolved mostly around the fact that the players had little time to recover from the semi-finals. In a rare occurrence for the pro tour, the semi's and finals were played on the same day. Gonzalez had a punctured eardrum and Obremski had a pulled tendon in his right wrist. Ruben's injury was especially worrisome since the sound of the ball plays such an important role in every level of play. Despite the injuries, once the match started it was full blast all the way. Obremski/Gonzalez matches are some of the best to see in the sport. Both players make incredible diving gets in every rally. Gonzalez had captured the crowd throughout the weekend, but it was Obremski who continued to serve and shoot at top form, taking Game 1.

Gonzalez seemed to be trying to adjust



"The undertaking is a rather large one....But they have the right spirit and undoubtedly will succeed." This statement was made by Portland's newspaper *The Oregonian* in 1891 about the newly founded Multnomah Athletic Club. And succeed they have, to undreamed of proportions! One hundred years later, the "MAC" as it is more commonly known boasts over 19,000 members and is the third oldest continually operating athletic club in the country.

Also the largest club in the United States, this city-within-a-city requires over 600,000 square feet of floor space. Within its confines are facilities for tennis, racquetball, handball, squash, badminton, swimming, gymnastics, boxing, martial arts, dance, running, basketball, volleyball, baseball, football, soccer, track & field, and just about any other sport. It includes three separate body building gyms and an almost endless schedule of aerobics classes.

Not your typical neighborhood sports center, the MAC must be experienced to be believed. In addition to state of the art athletic equipment and every type of activity under the sun, The MAC also



Opposite: In a disappointing showing, Inoue lost to Roberts in three.

TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS

Left: Gonzalez uncorks a serve in his win over Doyle. Below: Obremski unleashes a serve to Kachtik.

to his hearing problem and came out in Game 2, diving after every ball. It worked as Gonzalez, leading the crowd with clenched fists after each great rally, took Games 2 & 3 and appeared to be in control. Obremski seemed to catch fire, just as he had done a round before against Ray. Serves, splats, overhands, reverse pinches, every shot that can be hit rolled for Obremski. There was nothing Gonzalez could do to stop the onslaught. He tried time-outs, different serves, and stalling. Nothing worked. Obremski posted an unbelievable 11-6, 7-11, 8-11, 11-0, 11-2 victory in capturing the first TransCoastal Tournament of Champions.



Home to the TransCoastal Tournament of Champions, Portland's Multnomah Athletic Club celebrates 100 years of athletic grandeur.

Photos Courtesy Multnomah Athletic Club

houses such aristocratic standards as a ballroom, billiard room, coat room, card room, and reading lounge. Rich woods and thick carpeting set the tone for a social and dining area which opens to a breathtaking view of all the action in Portland Civic Stadium. Four other dining establishments within the club serve cuisine worthy of the area's finest dining spots.

Clubs like the MAC began appearing all over the United States toward the end of the 19th century to provide bases for amateur athletics. In the days before widespread collegiate athletics and specific sport organizations, small clubs prepared athletes for national and international competition. The MAC's honor role includes Olympic high jumpers, swimmers, and pole vaulters. Many national and regional level stars have risen from the ranks of the MAC, as well. Multnomah Club teams competed successfully with collegiate teams for many years.

This year alone, the MAC will present the Panasonic Tour of Champions Gymnastics Exhibition, Freestyle Wrestling Competition with the Soviet Union, Volleyball with Japan, and Basketball with the Soviet Union. It seems only fitting, then, that nine of the worlds best racquetball superstars meet here for the 1991 MPRA TransCostal Tournament of Champions.



.....
STRANDEMO
ON RACQUETBALL
.....

Building the Base

by Steve
Strandemo

This article is the first in a series directed to the hundreds of racquetball players across the country who are frustrated with their current level of play and want to upgrade their game. They love racquetball for the sport and they love the competition. They want to play up to their potential but are having trouble moving up to the next level of play. Let me make it understood that this group is very talented. This group has a lot of potential and is extremely enthusiastic. But, this group is seriously misinformed in certain aspects of the game and, therefore, seriously under-skilled in those same aspects.

Because of this lack of knowledge, virtually every player that I have seen has structured a limited game plan. Within this limited plan is often a game based on trying to flat-kill the ball and also attempting to cover and dig-up an opponent's kill attempts. This structure takes them to a certain level, but its limitations will hold them back from any genuine growth in respect to their potential. Once they plateau, most players will struggle a while and then seek professional instruction, hoping for that one tip or shot that will solve their problems. My professional opinion: it won't! It won't even come close. A quick one-shot or one-point lesson is nothing more than a bandage. Players will not genuinely progress off of that plateau or rise to the next level of play until they understand the "complete" game of racquetball and start to

incorporate this information into their game. Understanding the "complete" game is actually quite easy, incorporating the information is very difficult and time-consuming. But, once the player has spent their time, paid their "learning dues", and has genuinely upgraded their game one-half to full level, the sense of satisfaction is overwhelming.

My goal over the course of the coming months is to convey this complete information as simply and as straightforward as I can via the written word. I will provide information that will take you out of your comfort zone and ask you to do things which you would not normally do. I encourage you to read and re-read the information, to practice the drills that I will provide in each article and, most important, proceed and practice with an open mind. Stay with it and I promise your game will improve based on a solid foundation and sound fundamental strategies that will always be with racquetball.

If you're ready, let's go!

The offensive goal of this game is to get your shot to bounce twice before your opponent can get to the ball. That doesn't mean that you have to kill every ball in front of your opponent. Believing that you must kill every ball to win is one of the biggest misconceptions in the game of racquetball. Realistically, no one can kill every ball. Of 100 offensive shots taken, 65-70% are going to be left up, about 15% are going to be skips, and about 15-20% are going to be winning shots that take two bounces before you can get to the ball. Those percentages will hold true in even level play because the pressure placed on you by an even opponent will cause you to leave the ball up. Unfortunately, most players believe that with more drop-and-hit practice they can become more consistent and raise their game percentage of kills to 40, 50, or even 60%. This is an unrealistic conclusion. But, it is a conclusion held by the majority of racquetball players including, unfortunately, many instructors. Once you understand and accept that the majority of shots are not killed, you can begin to understand the philosophy of racquetball and start to put the pieces together.

Another major concept of winning racquetball is to base your defensive game on your anticipation and coverage of your opponent's left-up shots, not on trying to dig up and cover their winners. Left-up shots are those 65-70% of failed scoring attempts that funnel back to the back half of the court (the Action Zone). The idea of trying to stay back in Zone 3 and cover left-up shots is the hardest concept to convey and instill at our instructional camps. The reason for this problem is players have a strong fear that their opponents are going to kill every shot they give them.

Action Zone

After the serve and return, the back 20' of the court is where virtually all of the action occurs. A very high percentage of that action occurs behind the dotted 25' line (Zone 3 and deeper).



They draw this false conclusion by basing their opponent's "game scoring" skills on how well they drop-and-hit in the pregame warm-ups.

Now, for all the players and instructors who diligently practice their drop-and-hit kill shot because they believe that with more practice they can raise their percentage of flat-kill match winners, I offer you your first two homework assignments.

Assignment #1

Chart-A-Match

Chart several racquetball games between two evenly matched players of any level. Charting a match means to record the location from which each player hits the ball. Draw a court and every time one of the players hits an offensive shot in the rally (after the serve and return) put a dot on that location on your court. You will soon see that the Action Zone (the back one-half of the court) becomes congested with dots. I repeat; of 100 offensive shots, 65-70% are going to be left-up shots. You will start to believe that the game of racquetball is a series of left-up shots, not a game of winners. You must draw the conclusion that the most productive defensive location for you to position yourself during offensive rallies, is in the Action Zone, approximately four to eight feet behind the service line.

Assignment #2

Chart Winners

Again, chart several evenly matched players and record the location on the court where all the winners (two-bounce rally ending shots) occur. The conclusions you should begin to draw are:

1. Most of the winners occur a lot deeper on the court and
2. There are not a lot of winners in the front fifteen feet of the court

It is very important for all serious racquetball players to know their front wall scoring range. Your front wall scoring range is the area on the front wall that you can hit a full velocity down-the-line or cross-court pass and have your ball take two bounces before the back wall. Many players can hit three feet or below depending on the velocity they can generate. Stronger players will hit two feet or below. It is incredibly important that you recognize and know your own scoring range. Remember, that one of the most important goals of this game is to keep your offensive shots from coming off of the back wall. This brings us to homework assignment #3.

Assignment #3

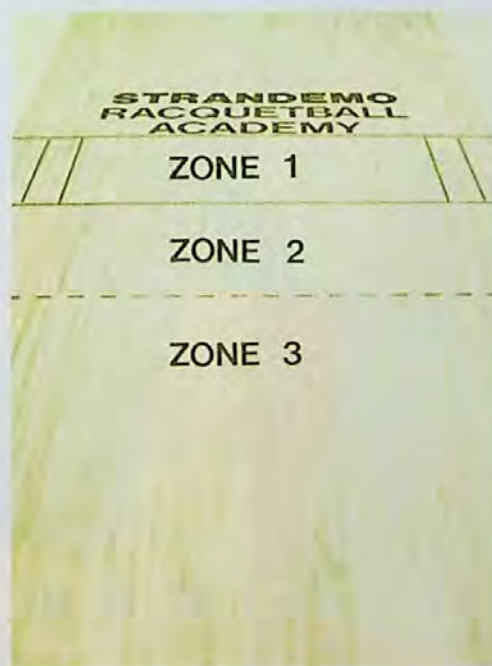
Offensive Low Zone

Go to the court with a friend. Position yourself approximately five to ten feet off the

back wall and drop and hit down-the-line and cross-court shots at full velocity. Have your friend mark on the front wall (office supply dots work great) the height of all balls that bounce twice before the back wall. You will soon see a zone develop on the front wall that you must hit below in order for the ball to take two bounces.

In the course of a rally, whenever the ball is hit to you, think offensive and play aggressive. If you feel you can hit an offensive winner (down-the-line, cross-court, pinch or splat), go for the offensive shot. If you don't feel that you can hit within your offensive zone on the front wall or your shot would generate an easy left-up for your opponent, then pop the ball to the ceiling and wait for a better scoring opportunity. Now, some players would immediately interpret this as a passing game. Absolutely not! Every time there is an opportunity for you to hit in your offensive low zone on the front wall, you should take it. Aim as low as you can without skipping the ball. But, if you miss your offensive shot, miss up. Hopefully, you will miss within your offensive low zone area so that the ball takes two bounces before the back wall. Do not miss low and skip the ball. This is a very offensive approach to racquetball and the reason that each player must know his or her offensive low zone area on the front wall.

As you become familiar with your front wall zones, it is also important for you to become knowledgeable with the three coverage zones on the court. Zone 1 is the service box area. Zone 2 is the area between the short line and the dotted line and Zone 3 is an area five feet behind the dotted line. Understanding the location of these three zones will be important as we start to talk about



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court positioning, relocation, and shot options. As you learn to play off of your opponent's left-up shots, the back portion of Zone 2 and all of Zone 3 will become areas of the court that you will want to excel in.

The last homework assignment is one that I never want you to stop. From the first day at our camps players are given this assignment -- THE 30-SECOND DRILL. This drill is one of the hardest to accomplish at any level of play. It will teach you ball control and readies your mind for the left-up shots. Without ball control you have nothing to base your game on, nothing to fall back on, and nothing to put pressure on your opponent to generate his left-up shot. This drill will humble many players and instructors.

Assignment #4

30-Second Drill

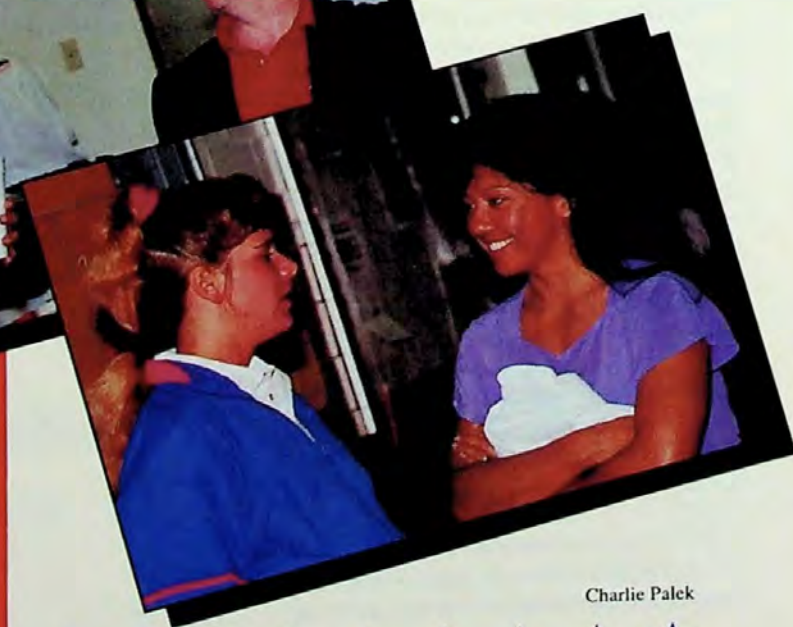
Position yourself in the back ten feet of the court. The object of the drill is to rally back and forth with yourself. Get the ball to come back to you on one or two bounces and keep hitting the ball. Your front wall target should be two to five feet up on the wall. Try to keep the ball from going to the back wall and try to cut everything off. If the ball gets by you, take it off of the back wall, don't start over. Initially, hit the ball with approximately 70% velocity, so you can start to control it. Eventually, you will hit at 80-100% velocity, a pace resembling the velocity you hit at in a game. As you cut the balls off, you will be hitting, many times, from an open stance, and or, off balance. You will not have time to step into a lot of these shots. Learn to rally! Do as many of these as you can and then do some more!

Defining the terms and zones may seem bland or boring, but trust me. To gain the most from these articles please be open minded when reading and conscientious with the assignments. I promise you that before this series of articles is through, I will challenge you with strategies and shots that will test out any player who enjoys the sport.

Zones

It is important for all players to become familiar with the three zones on the court. When serving, players serve in Zone 1, relocate through Zone 2, and attempt to get to Zone 3. During offensive rallies, Zone 3 will be your main coverage zone to play off of your opponent's left-up shots.

Houston



Charlie Palek





Gilman and Sweeney claim top honors in the traditional shoot-out (clap, clap, clap, clap) deep in the heart of Texas



Steve Lerner

Opposite:

Top: The Downtown YMCA is dwarfed by a portion of Houston's skyline.

Upper left: Michelle Gilman chats with the crowd prior to one of her matches.

Center: Spalding's Mark Wentura discusses the finer points of the game.

Left: Singles winner, Tim Sweeney and Tim Doyle talk with Mike Ray who is holding a National Team poster in a quest for autographs.

Right: Cindy Doyle and Malia Bailey grab a few idle moments to catch up.

Left: Egan Inoue and Tim Sweeney in finals action.

Below: Michelle Gilman readies a backhand in her road to Nationals victory.

AARA Nationals



Charlie Palek

Houston



Charlie Palek

Toni Bevelock winds up for a backhand. She gave Michelle Gilman tough fight in the first game of their finals match but could not keep up with Gilman's power in game two.

Nestled among the giant hulking forms that constitute Houston's ultra modern skyline is the downtown YMCA. The multi level yellow brick structure is a throwback to another era. But what it lacks in high tech design is more than compensated in practicality. The three levels that comprise the racquetball part of the facility seem to have a court in every spot large enough to accommodate one. Courts cluster above, below, and around two full sized basketball/volleyball courts, still leaving ample room for grandstands, aerobics rooms, dance rooms, vending tables, tournament desks, and congregating space.

This stately old structure houses, and in essence is, the amateur national singles competition. This is the AARA Ektelon U.S. Nationals Singles Racquetball Championships. But, to everyone involved its simply Houston. You hear it all year long - "Are you going to be in Houston?", "See ya in Houston.", "We'll take care of it in Houston.", " Lets meet in Houston."

It's the carnival atmosphere that's most noticeable to the uninitiated at this huge tournament. Everyone seems to be having not just a good time, but a great time. But the underlying current just below the surface, is that some no nonsense business is also being conducted.

As complicated as the tournament must be it seems to come off without a hitch. Pat Gerity and Van Dubolsky, manning the tournament desk with experienced skill, keep the play going at a steady clip. John Boudman and family keep a rhythmic line of racquets moving through their booth. They can restring and talk racquetball without ever missing a

beat. It can immediately be sensed that this is an important event and the action on the courts is unsurpassed.

Michelle Gilman, in her quest to win everything this season but the Irish Sweepstakes, took top honors in the women's open division. Only the second (and youngest) woman to win three consecutive National Amateur racquetball titles (Peggy Steding is the other) Gilman defeated Toni Bevelock of Santa Ana, California, 15-10, 15-5. Bevelock, Gilman, and other semifinals contestants Jackie Paraiso and Malia Bailey each won berths on the U.S. National Racquetball Team.

Bevelock took off to a quick start with Gilman down 7-0. But in a terrific come-from-behind effort, Michelle turned the tables to come out on top. In the second game of the match, Gilman, on track with her powerful serves, never really felt a threat from Bevelock in the 15-5 win.

In the men's open competition, World Champion Egan Inoue fell victim to Chicago's Tim Sweeney. Having already captured the Men's Intercollegiate title earlier this year, SMSU's Sweeney entered the tournament with the momentum on his side. The finals match was a meeting of two powerful servers, each capable of meteoric returns. In a surprising, almost one-sided win, Sweeney put Inoue away 15-4, 15-5. Inoue seemed to be off balance and was never able to cut the scoring deficit to less than ten points.

Sweeney, Andy Roberts, Brian Hawkes, and Tim Doyle each took a spot on the U.S. National Team. (Inoue is currently under suspension from the team and can't requalify until February, 1992.)





1991 Ektelon U.S. National Singles Championship Results

Open

Men Tim Sweeney
15-4, 15-5
Egan Inoue

Women Michelle Gilman
15-10, 15-5
Toni Bevelock

A

Men Brett Zimmerman
15-5, 15-12
Grant Giles

Women Roz Petronelli
15-3, 15-11
Mary Lakatos

19+

Men Charlie Garrido
15-13, 15-10
Brian Rankin

Women Cheryl Gudinas
10-15, 15-4, 11-5
Dana Sibell

25+

Men Sam Wasko
15-12, 15-12
Joe Cline

Women Lauren Sheprow
14-15, 15-11, 11-5
Dee Ferriera-Worth

30+

Men Bill Sell
10-15, 15-11, 11-9
Dave Peck

Women Mary Lyons
15-8, 13-15, 11-4
Robin Whitmire

35+

Men Craig Kunkel
Jim Young

Women Mary Dee Jolly
10-15, 15-7, 11-1
Janell Marriott

40+

Men Davey Bledsoe
15-11, 15-11
Jim Bailey

Women Carole Dattisman
15-9, 15-3
Agatha Falso

45+

Men Herb Grigg
15-8, 15-14
Dick Melhart

Women Gerri Stoffregen
15-3, 9-15, 11-10
Agatha Falso

50+

Men Ron Galbreath
15-13, 15-3
Jack Ross

Women Sharon Hastings Welty
15-10, 15-9
Mildred Gwinn

55+

Men Paul Banales
15-12, 12-15, 11-1
Hal Lackey

Women Kathy Mueller
15-13, 15-9
Jo Kenyon

60+

Men Harvey Clar
8-15, 15-11, 11-2
Barney Friesth

Women Joann Jones
15-10, 15-3
Claire Gautreau

65+

Men Mal Roberts
15-11, 12-15, 11-7
Victor Sacco

Women Claire Gautreau
15-11, 15-4
Joann Jones

70+

Men Luzell Wilde
15-5, 15-4
Allen Shepherd

75+

Men Allen Shepherd
15-3, 15-7
John Pearce

80+

Men John Pearce
(unchallenged)

Tim Doyle coiled to skrike.
Doyle won in both '89 and
'90 and was expected by
many to repeat this year.



Charlie Palek

CATCH

Intercollegiate April, 1991

Southwest Missouri State University won its first team title with across the board victories. Memphis State has had a stronghold on first place for the previous sixteen years. Tim Sweeney, having an unbelievable year took the men's singles top honors and Elaine Hooghe of Franklin University grabbed the women's singles victory.



Brian Rankin of S.M.S.U. hits the deck.
Below right: Memphis State's Dave Larry with a diving get.
Below left: Elaine Hooghe of Franklin University.

MEN'S

- #1 Position** Tim Sweeney (SMSU)
15-8, 15-8
Jimmy Floyd (Ferris State)
15-13, 7-15, 11-9
- #2 Position** Fabion Balmori (MSU)
Derrick Robinson (SMSU)
- #3 Position** Sameer Hadid (UC Sac)
6-15, 15-9, 11-9
Brian Rankin (SMSU)
- #4 Position** Bruce Erikson (SMSU)
15-9, 15-12
Rick Mordachini (MSU)
- #5 Position** Dave Larry (MSU)
15-10, 8-15, 11-10
John Kleinschmidt (SMSU)
- #6 Position** Buzz Sawyer (SMSU)
15-13, 15-5
Jeff Linsk (MSU)

WOMEN'S

- #1 Position** Elaine Hooghe (Franklin U)
15-6, 15-7
Cindy Doyle (U of Buffalo)
- #2 Position** Jen Yokota (MSU)
15-1, 15-3
Chris Nordin (Providence)
- #3 Position** Michelle Giannini (UC Sac)
15-9, 15-1
Sharon Miller (Providence)
- #4 Position** Noel DeBarruel (UC Sac)
15-3, 15-9
Laura Lynch (MSU)
- #5 Position** Kate Clancy (Bryant)
15-8, 15-9
Jeannette Hartman (BYU)
- #6 Position** Danielle Cramsey (SMSU)
(forfeit)
Nylene Willis (BYU)

TEAM STANDINGS

Men	Women	Overall
Southwest Missouri State	Southwest Missouri State	Southwest Missouri State
Memphis State	U. of Cal. Sacramento	U. of Cal. Sacramento
U. of Cal. Sacramento	Providence College	Memphis State
Ferris State	Franklin U.	Ferris State
U. of Arizona	Memphis State	Providence College
Arizona State	U. of Buffalo	U. of Arizona



Steve Lerner



-UP

High School March 1991

At the High School Nationals competition, Sudsy Monchik of Staten Island, New York took the boys singles title and Elkova Icenogle of Auburn, California captured the girls singles crown.

BOYS

Sudsy Monchik (Tottenville H.S.)
15-14, 15-9
Allan Engel (Manatee H.S.)

GIRLS

Elkova Icenogle (Placer H.S.)
15-7, 15-5
Britt Engel (Manatee H.S.)

TEAM STANDINGS

Boys

Lafayette, St. Louis
Parkway West, St. Louis
Placer, Auburn, CA
Nerinx Hall, St. Louis

Girls

St. Josephs, St. Louis
Parkway West, St. Louis
Manatee, Bradenton, FL
Placer, Auburn, CA

Overall

Lafayette, St. Louis
Parkway West, St. Louis
Manatee, Bradenton, FL
Placer, Auburn, CA

BOYS/MIXED DOUBLES

Allan Engel/Britt Engel(Manatee H.S.)
15-6, 15-8
Brett Parker/Matt Hickenbotham
(Lafayette H.S.)

GIRLS DOUBLES

Jodie Eggebrecht/Jeanne Eggebrecht
(Parkway West H.S.)
15-3, 15-2
Mano Buddhiraju/Angela Spitzmiller
(Mehlville H.S.)

Sudsy Monchik of New York.



Charlie Palek

Charlie Palek



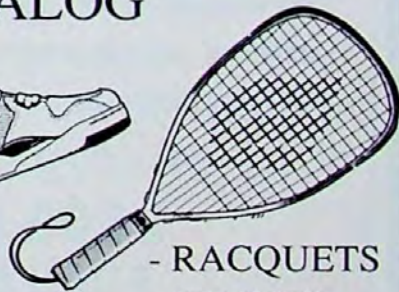
Californian Elkova Icenogle and Leticia Bussel of Idaho at the High School Nationals in St. Louis.

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OLYMPICS

Burnsville, Minnesota was the site for the 1991 Junior Olympic Racquetball Championships. Elkova Icenogle of Auburn, California, defended her title to once again take home the gold medal in the 18 and under bracket for girls. John Ellis of Stockton, California took the gold in the boy's 18 and under division. As a result of their victories, each qualified for a spot at the U.S. Olympic Festival.



Left: Texan Amber Frisch, winner of the girl's 16 and under division. Right: New York's Jason Mannino, winner of boy's 16 and under division.

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Singles Results

18 & Under
Boys: John Ellis
15-6, 13-15, 11-3
Sameer Hadid
Girls: Elkova Icenogle
15-4, 15-8
Jenny Spangenberg

16 & Under
Boys: Jason Mannino
15-11, 15-10
James Mulcock
Girls: Amber Frisch
15-12, 15-12
Britt Engel

14 & Under
Boys: Shane Wood
15-6, 15-14
Jaron Icenogle
Girls: Shannon Feaster
15-13, 15-4
Sadie Gross

12 & Under
Boys: Hal Spangenberg
15-12, 15-2
Tyler Siggins
Girls: Vanessa Tulao
15-9, 15-7
Dawn Gates

10 & Under
Boys: Gabriel Gose
15-4, 15-9
Kane Waselenchak
Girls: Sara Borland
8-15, 15-5, 11-9
Lynn Hansen

8 & Under
Boys: Jack Hucsek
15-8, 15-5
Jimmy Rodberg
Girls: Karina Odegard
15-0, 15-1
Molly Law

8 & Under Multi-Bounce
Boys: Jimmy Rodberg
11-6, 11-5
Jack Hucsek
Girls: Karina Odegard
15-6, 15-5
Molly Law

PACIFIC RIM

By Mike Ceresia

Honolulu, Hawaii hosted the 1991 Pacific Rim Games. This year marked the first appearance of racquetball in the event which also includes Judo and Windsurfing. The island setting was the perfect stage for this adventure in paradise. The opening night ceremony included some international hula dancing with a particularly weak and embarrassing performance by Tim Sweeney.

In women's singles, the top four seeds advanced to the semis. Michelle Gilman edged an inspired Carol McFetridge 15-12, 15-9. Heather Stupp once again beat Toni Bevelock in a 15-7 tie breaker. Gilman was pumped-up to play Stupp, having had ten months to think about getting revenge for Heather's victory at the '90 World Championships. The match was never close as Gilman kept the pressure on by drive serving both serves. She won 15-10, 15-4. McFetridge upset Bevelock for third place.

In men's singles, the top four seeds also advanced to the semis. Andy Roberts, coming off a fantastic season, kept to his game plan of ending the rallies quickly and defeated Sherman Greenfeld 15-9, 15-9. Tim Sweeney overpowered Simon Roy 15-7, 15-10 in a battle of Southwest Missouri State Teammates. The final was a classic two and one half hour struggle with Roberts taking the match from Sweeney in a 15-9 tie breaker.

Doubles

The U.S. and Canada met again in the doubles finals of both the men's and the women's competition. In the men's match, Tim Hansen and Jimmy Floyd defeated Ross Harvey and Mike Ceresia. Both teams had been taunting each other all week and both teams predicted victories in the television interviews. The Canadians called for a two straight game victory 15-10, 15-10. But the U.S. duo won, 15-13, 15-12 in a match that saw both teams spot their opponents big leads. The difference was some clutch shots by the Americans and two three-wall crack rollouts from the back of the court by Tim Hansen.

Malia Bailey and Jackie Paraiso defeated Josee Grandmaitre and Vicki Brown in the women's doubles final. This was the tightest

match of the tournament and both teams came back from huge deficits to capture the first and second games. The U.S. prevailed with a 15-14 tie break squeaker.

The heat and proximity of Waikiki Beach seemed to have an affect on both players and coaches during the tournament. The Hawaiian hospitality was outstanding as was the work of the many volunteers who had just finished the Aloha State Games. Hopefully with this successful showing, racquetball will become a permanent fixture in the Pacific Rim Games.

Teams Competing

United States
Canada
Mexico
Japan
Costa Rica
South Korea
Bolivia
Holland
Chile

Results

Penn Pacific Rim Racquetball Championships

Singles

Men's Open

(USA) Andy Roberts
15-12, 9-15, 15-9
(USA) Tim Sweeney

Women's Open

(USA) Michelle Gilman
15-10, 15-4
(Canada) Heather Stupp

Doubles

Women's Open

(USA) Jackie Paraiso/Malia Bailey
14-15, 15-3, 15-14
(Canada) Josee Grandmaitre/Vicky Brown

Men's Open

(USA) Tim Hansen/Jim Floyd
5-15, 15-10, 15-3
(Canada) Ross Harvey/Mike Ceresia

Team Finishes

U.S.. (3 gold, 2 silver, 1 bronze)
Canada (2 silver, 1 bronze)
Japan (1 bronze)
Mexico (1 bronze)

🍁 1991 🍁

Senior National Racquetball Championship
Championnats Nationaux Seniors

Beaut of a tourney, eh?



Ron Paparanski



Racquetball
Canada

Sherman Greenfeld and Mike
Ceresia in semifinals action.

Results/Resultats



Men's/Hommes "A"

1. Sherman Greenfeld, Winnipeg, MAN
 2. Simon Roy, Quebec City, QC
 3. Roger Harripersad, Calgary, AB
- Consolation: Lindsay Myers, Vancouver, BC

Men's/Hommes "B"

1. Marc Biron, Montreal, QC
 2. Kelly Kerr, Saskatoon, SK
 3. Barry Huggins, Winnipeg, MAN
- Consolation: Mike McPhee, Edmonton, AB

Men's/Hommes "C"

1. Mike Clayton, Thornhill, ON
 2. Francois Viens, Rock Forest, QC
 3. Richard Gagne, Burnaby, BC
- Consolation: Stephen Hawco, St. John's NFLD

Men's/Hommes "D"

1. Steve Muehling, St. Eustache, QC
 2. Patrick Scott, Point Claire, QC
 3. Ken Haskins, Saskatoon, SK
- Consolation: Wayne Getty, Calgary, AB

Wheelchair "A"

1. Earl McArthur, Winnipeg, MAN
2. John Breen, Winnipeg, MAN
3. Mark Wherrett, Winnipeg, MAN

Wheelchair "B/C"

1. Scott Heron, Victoria, BC
 2. Terry Pratt, Winnipeg, MAN
 3. Ralph Holt, Vancouver, BC
- Consolation: Bob Scharien, Montreal, QC

Men's/Hommes Veteran

1. Rick Gartel, Burnaby, BC
 2. David Dubyk, Prince Albert, SK
 3. John Leckman, Burnaby, AB
- Consolation: Dave Tremblay, Regina, SK

Men's/Hommes Senior "A"

1. Dale Marshall, Edmonton, AB
 2. Dave Stewart, Prince George, BC
 3. Cliff Hendrickson, Calgary, AB
- Consolation: Joe Morin, Edmonton, AB

Women's/Femmes "A"

1. Heather Stupp, Montreal, QC
 2. Carol McFetridge, Don Mills, ON
 3. Josee Grandmaitre, Montreal, QC
- Consolation: Sue MacTaggart, Ottawa, ON

Women's/Femmes "B"

1. Julie Dechene, Scarborough, ON
 2. Jenifer Buehner, Hamilton, ON
 3. Lori Jane Powell, Prince Albert, SK
- Consolation: Donna Manning, St. John's NFLD

Women's/Femmes "C"

1. Dianne Kerr, Windsor, ON
 2. Christie VanHees, Kelowna, BC
 3. Karen Bultitude, Regina, SK
- Consolation: Jackie Hughes, Burnaby, BC

Women's/Femmes "D"

1. Tracy McQueen, Regina, SK
 2. Bonnie Loewen, Winnipeg, MAN
 3. Helen Bencze, Prince Albert, SK
- Consolation: Sharon Wilson, Richmond, BC

Women's/Femmes Veteran/Senior

1. Leona Chong, North Vancouver, BC
 2. Maria Fatkin, Clearbrook, BC
 3. Lynne Timms, Vancouver, BC
- Consolation: Bonnie Kullman, Regina, SK

Women's Veteran Senior/Master/Veteranmaster Femmes Veteran Senior/Maitre/Veteranmaster

1. Yvonne Drexler, Vancouver, BC
 2. Linda Kitz, Vernon, BC
 3. Myrna Orr, Prince Albert, SK
- Consolation: Joan Harripersad, Calgary, AB

Men's/Hommes Senior "C"

1. Bob Buckham, Clearbrook, BC
 2. Lanny Jackson, Richmond, BC
 3. Rob Dixon, Delta, BC
- Consolation: Phil Swartz, Vancouver, BC

Men's/Hommes Veteran Senior

1. Tim Terr, Abbotsford, BC
 2. Rick Mattson, North Vancouver, BC
 3. Less Gee, Vancouver, BC
- Consolation: David Hinton, Gloucester, ON

Men's Master/Hommes Maitre

1. Harry Harripersad, Calgary, AB
 2. Pierre Emond, Lasalle, QC
 3. Rodrigue Belanger, Drummondville, QC
- Consolation: Bruce Stocks, Burlington, ON

Men's Veteran Master/Hommes Veteran Maitre

1. Bill Lassiter, Abbotsford, BC
 2. Allan Holley, North Vancouver, BC
 3. Harold Stupp, Montreal, QC
- Consolation: Ron Ciccone, Prince Rupert, BC

Men's Golden Master/Hommes Maitre D'or

1. George Morfitt, Victoria, BC
 2. Kevin Mulhern, Vancouver, BC
 3. Walt Goodwin, Edmonton, AB
- Consolation: Tom Marshall, Winnipeg, MAN

Men's Senior Golden Master/ Hommes Maitre D'or

1. Fred Briscoe, Calgary, MAN
2. Jack Pillar, Toronto, ON
3. Ben McConnell, Vancouver, BC



Roger Harripersad moves in close for the kill.

Below: Carol McFetridge finished second behind Heather Stupp.

While Heather Stupp and Sherman Greenfeld commanded everyone's attention while on the court, they could both be spotted throughout the tournament cheering for other players as well. Almost national treasures due to their accomplishments on the hardwood, both of these two had clearly developed some close bonds with many other players over the years of national and international play.

Familiar to international audiences because of their professional and intercollegiate play were: Lindsay Meyers, Mike Ceresia, Roger Harripersad, Simon Roy, Sue McTaggart and Carol McFetridge. Other Canadian national team stars on hand were: Josee Grandmaitre and Ross Harvey.

In the Men's "A" division Sherman Greenfeld took his fourth Canadian Singles title with Simon Roy second and Roger Harripersad finishing third.

In the Women's "A" division, reigning champ Heather Stupp surprised no one by capturing her sixth Canadian Women's title. Carol McFetridge finished second and Josee Grandmaitre took third place.

Three racquet clubs in Burnaby, British Columbia combined to host the 20th anniversary Canadian Racquetball National Championships for 1991. The Brentwood, Olympic, and Bonser athletic clubs saw a truly inspired group of Canada's best gather for five days of intense competition. Held at the same time as the AARA Nationals in Houston, this year's event boasted some incredible play as well as some serious celebration for the end of the group's second decade.

Drawing from a playing population much smaller than the U.S., this tournament drew a field of players that are among the world's finest. They are also among the world's friendliest. Within two days of arrival at Burnaby, everyone was on a first name basis with almost everyone else. This was due to both the spirit of the competition and the attitudes of the participants.

Most participants were on hand from the early morning hours each day until late each night. The intensity level of the spectators often rivalled that of the players. Even lower skill divisions drew their share of excited spectators.



Canadian Athlete Information Bureau





This was, however, not just an "A" division (referred to as "open" in the U.S.) tournament. As much emphasis was placed on other skill levels as well as seniors and masters divisions and handicapped divisions. In short, it didn't matter what match was being played, each was treated exactly the same by players, fans and officials. In fact, third place and consolation matches were played with as much intensity as semifinals and finals play. From every contest, it was clear that this was the National Championship Tournament for a nation with a lot of talent of which to be proud.

Simon Roy sets up for a backhand.



Ron Paparanski



America's Most Wanted Racquetball Camps 1991-92

Jack Newman

Ruben Gonzalez

Doug Ganim

Dave Negrete

Andy Roberts

Location	Date	Instructors	Location	Date	Instructors
Laurel, MD			Wheaton, IL		
Laurel Racquet & Health	Sept. 14 - 15	*Newman/Gonzalez	Wheaton Sports Center	Nov. 23 - 24	Newman/Negrete
Portland, OR			Orange Park, FL		
Sunset Athletic Club	Sept. 21 - 22	*Newman/Gonzalez	Park Avenue Health	Dec. 7 - 8	Newman/Clouse
Nashville, TN					
Aerob-A-Fit Sports Center	Sept. 28 - 29	Newman/Roberts			
Memphis, TN					
Memphis Supreme Courts	Oct. 5 - 6	Newman/Roberts			
Woodside, NY					
BQE Racquetball & Fitness	Oct. 12 - 13	*Newman/Gonzalez			
Columbus, OH					
Sawmill Athletic Club	Nov. 9 - 10	Newman/Ganim			

Upcoming 1992 Cities: January - April

Memphis, TN Peoria, IL
Cincinnati, OH West Allis, WI
Indianapolis, IN Rhode Island
Denver, CO Atlanta, GA

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From the President...

by Chris Evon

For years, all facets of the WPRA have been run by the players. Although this has proven to be successful, we knew our future depended on the opportunity to hire someone who was knowledgeable about the tour and dedicated to its purpose. This year, we have hired O'Brien Sports Marketing to take over responsibilities that will help bring the WPRA to a new level. Molly O'Brien and her staff will focus their efforts toward coordinating tour sponsors. They will also work with individual tournament sites to help them run elite professional events. Molly will be working with the media to assure top exposure for sponsors, and she will continue to run events such as the Diet Pepsi Grand Slam in Philadelphia, and the very successful Diet Pepsi WPRA National Championships in Baltimore. O'Brien's new title will be Tour Executive Director.

The WPRA is very confident that the hiring of an Executive Director for the tour will mean a step forward for women's professional racquetball. It is time for some major changes, and it is time for the WPRA to take



some chances and move ahead. The future of the sport is still in the hands of the players who will dedicate their time to make a difference but, hopefully, the future will also allow players to concentrate more on playing and entertaining audiences and less on administrative duties.

Chris

New Tour Executive Director Molly O'Brien is an experienced touring pro, WPRA Board member, and President of O'Brien Sports Marketing. As a player she has been ranked consistently in the top ten and was awarded the Stebbing Cup in 1990. Inquiries about the Women's Tour or about hosting a pro stop can be directed to Molly O'Brien in care of **KILLSHOT**.



Penn Pro Series

Pizza Hut Challenge
Atlanta

Olive Garden Pro-Am
St. Louis

Silver Racquet Pro-Am
Anchorage

Philadelphia Grand Slam
Philadelphia

Diet Pepsi National Championships
Baltimore

Winner:	Michell Gilman	9150
Runner-up:	Lynn Adams	8500
Finalists:	Malia Bailey	5800
	Caryn McKinney	5350
	Kaye Kuhfeld	4150
	Toni Bevelock	3750
	Jackie Paraiso	3400

Diet Pepsi Bonus Series Triple Crown

Pizza Hut Challenge
Atlanta

Philadelphia Grand Slam
Philadelphia

Diet Pepsi National Championships
Baltimore

Winner:	Lynn Adams	5300
Runner-up:	Michelle Gilman	4950
Finalists:	Malia Bailey	3500
	Caryn McKinney	3050
	Kaye Kuhfeld	2650
	Jackie Paraiso	2650
	Marcie Drexler	2300
	Toni Bevelock	2250

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Fran Davis & Stu Hastings

Many new players begin playing racquetball with such enthusiasm that they are ravenous for any information which will bring them more success against more experienced opponents. As soon as the feel of the racquet becomes comfortable and the movement of

the ball becomes familiar, most players make the change from experimenter to competitor. It is at this point that the most basic rule of competition presents itself. Hit the ball where your opponent isn't. Many players then go on to learn a great deal about how to compete

without learning much about how to play. That is, these people, though seeking to learn fundamentals, may have bypassed the most fundamental aspect of the entire game. Learning placement and positioning may seem like the most fundamental part, but even more basic is just how to hit the ball. It is for this reason that all of our students begin by learning how to swing a racquet. We have a very basic and simple philosophy of the game. We build games from the ground up, similar to the construction of a building. It is a methodical step by step process of teaching. We start with the strokes (the building's foundation), then build to strategy and court position (the building's frame), then add the serves and returns (the roof), then finish with mental and physical conditioning (the doors and windows). Each step must be completed before moving on to the next step. The publishers of

KILLSHOT have asked that we share our wisdom with the playing public in upcoming issues. It is our goal that through a better understanding of stroke mechanics as we will present in following issues, more and more players will strengthen the foundation necessary for a solid game structure. Our challenge to you, then, is to follow these lessons (beginning in the October issue) and watch your game improve as you would watch a building rise from the ground up!

Both Fran Davis and Stu Hastings have served as U.S. National Team coaches and Olympic festival team coaches. They coached the 1990 World Champion U.S. team and numerous U.S. Olympic training camps. Both are featured instructors on the AARA/RMA instructional video "Championship Racquetball...Learn Your Lesson's Part I" and members of Head Racquetball's sports advisory board. Davis is a retired touring pro and 3 time national champion. She is a certifier and East Coast director for PARI organization of teaching professionals. She is also a Writer for U.S.A. Racquetball newsletter. Hastings is the first U.S. Junior National Team Coach. He is a 6 time national champion and 14 time state champion. He is a 3 time Michigan player of the year and member of the Michigan Hall of Fame. He is also a nominee for the AARA Hall of Fame.

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LETTERS

Continued from page 8

mail order equipment suppliers appearing in our pages. Drop us a line and let us know what you think.

I would like to congratulate you on the premier issue of **KILLSHOT** magazine. The articles are great and the quality appearance is very attractive. I sent my subscription card in the same day I received the magazine. I'm writing with a suggestion to all equipment and clothing manufacturers. Make more of your product available through mail order and be more aggressive in selling your product. Today many clubs carry little or no selection of clothing. I've talked with some manufacturers' reps who show little interest in helping me obtain clothing or equipment. They usually say go to a club or store, then a club or store shows less interest. I'm left handed and I COULD NOT FIND ONE MEDIUM SIZE GLOVE on the south side of Chicago. Lawler Court products (a mail order company) was able to help me, I bought a dozen at that time. Good luck in the future with your magazine. I hope to see the pro tour in Chicago again. Dave Negrete — get the glass court front wall fixed, it looks terrible. J. Podraza
Oak Forest, IL

I have enclosed a money order in the amount of \$18.94, for 12 issues of **KILLSHOT**. Good Luck! Do I get my money back? If you don't get off the ground?
D. McFaden
Stone Harbor, NJ

If you can find us.

I was thrilled to see your magazine on the desk of our club and to see the excellent work and quality in it. To see this new magazine out on the market gives me a renewed hope and enthusiasm for great things to come in the future of racquetball. Congratulations on a great first issue. Keep up the good work. (Oh yeah, the person in the picture on page 33 has to be Mike Ray.) What exactly are the "Nationals" in Men's Professional racquetball today? At one time there were the big DP and Ektelon Nationals, but now there are no such tournaments. Are the Nationals now considered the last stop of the season? To become National Champion, do you have to end the season as the #1 player or do you have to win a certain tournament or does that title no

longer exist? What did Hogan and Yellen do to earn the title "National Champion" so many times? With all of the emphasis on hitting the ball so fast these days, I was wondering if there was a way to get all of the top players together at a pro stop each year with a radar gun. They could clock just how fast they really do hit the ball and find out who really are the hardest hitters. Some type of bonus could be given to the player that records the fastest forehand, backhand, and drive serve. It seems that there is a lot of interest in knowing the precise speed of ball these days. Egan Inoue has been stating a speed of 191 m.p.h. on his drive serve while Tim Sweeney states that he has never even had his serve timed. Do the points that a pro stop is worth increase as the season progresses or are they all worth the same amount of points?

K. Herman
Kirkwood, MO

The Mens professional Nationals is the TransCoastal Grand Nationals Tournament held in Seattle. The winner of this prestigious tournament is the National Champion. This year's winner was Andy Roberts.

The Premiere issue of **KILLSHOT** arrived Monday, and upon returning from a dinner engagement, I read it cover to cover. It was exciting to catch up on my favorite sport at the pro level and to read about some of the pro players I have met over the past few years; the update on Elkova Icenogle and Roger Harpersad with whom I became acquainted during my residence in California; and especially, the article by Steve Strandemo on racquetball instruction. I would enjoy an update on Gregg Peck! On another note, it would appear that on page 26, the September, October, and November, 1991 listing on the map should indicate the year 1991!?? Thanks again for your impressive and informative magazine; I am looking forward to the next issue. Enclosed you will find my two-year subscription together with a check.
J. Chastain
Chair
Racquetball Association of Michigan
Grand Ledge, MI

OOPS! You are absolutely correct. The dates on the tournaments held in the fall months should have been 1990.

When I first met some of the guys I was quite intimidated. As I talked with the players I found them to be just "nice guys" and nothing more. Very unpretentious. How very refreshing to know that the ego is kept intact, especially with all the bad press about other athletes. I'll close for now. I just had to tell you that the **KILLSHOT** Magazine is just wonderful. I hope it becomes a success and helps to turn racquetball around so more people will again become interested in the sport.... Looking forward to your September issue.
P. Grieco
Pittsburgh, PA

I first want to congratulate you on an awesome publication! It's colorful, exciting, slick, and best of all, interesting! I think **KILLSHOT** will prove much more appealing to all levels of players, a pitfall of many past publications. As the newsletter editor/writer for the N.C.A.A.R.A. and as a racquetball teaching pro, pro shop owner, club manager, and this year's featured racquetball speaker at the Annual IRSA Convention in San Francisco (along with Francine Davis), I have had a chance to speak with club owners, Directors, Managers, and players across the country concerning the industry, the sport, programming and publications. There is a general consensus among clubs with pro shops that promoting a publication which includes ads for mail order equipment (i.e., Frontier, Hightower, etc.) hurts racquet sales, and really undermines a retail operation. MetroSport Athletic Club has one of the most active and successful racquetball programs in the country. As excited as I am about your publication, I cannot promote it as long as these advertisements remain. As I previously mentioned, this is a common sentiment across the U.S. I hope you will consider eliminating these types of ad's. I think you will find it greatly increases subscriptions.
B. Book
Durham, NC

Thanks for the kind remarks. We appreciate your candid opinion on the issue of mail order equipment sales, even though it doesn't agree with ours. We would like to hear from other readers on this question of

Summer of Change

by Hank Marcus



There are a number of old sayings that claim change is necessary, constant, and often times, good. Well, this saying definitely applies to the Men's Pro Tour. After last season's remarkable year of upsets and hometown winners the summer has been even more active and full of change. I have been told that change is good as long as it is used to build on current success and used to improve what you already have accomplished. With that theory in mind, the MPRA has made some major changes leading into the 1991-92 tour season which, I feel, has given professional racquetball a solid base to make tremendous strides forward.

The changes seem extensive and hopefully will be the first of many steps we take in moving professional racquetball to a new level of exposure and success. The competitors who play professional racquetball in the '90's are phenomenal athletes who deserve the rewards and respect of the "big time" sports. It is with that goal in mind that the following changes will be in effect for next season.

The most exciting change for next season is the tour corporate sponsorship of TransCoastal Mortgage Corporation. The TransCoastal Grand Prix marks the first time in a decade that the tour will have major corporate backing. In conjunction with TransCoastal CEO John Delaney, (who has been the major supporter of the pro game over the last five years), this allows the athletes to concentrate on playing and the tour administration to devote time to increase exposure, tourna-

ments, and sponsorship. With the TransCoastal Grand Prix in place and a schedule of events that will take the MPRA pros throughout the United States, Canada, and South America, it seemed the appropriate time to change the association name to International Racquetball Tour. The MPRA will continue, but as the players' own organization. Another exciting addition to next year's tour is the International Racquetball Tour

Grand Slam which will be made up of the four most prestigious events in the sport in terms of prize money and titles. Any player winning all four of the Grand Slam events will receive a car as a bonus. As scheduled now the four Grand Slam events will be:

Halloween Classic
Woodfield Racquet Club
Chicago



Memphis Pro-Am
Racquet Club of Memphis
Memphis

TransCoastal Grand Nationals
Seattle

TransCoastal Tournament of Champions
Multnomah Athletic Club
Portland

The next change has been a rumor for about a year when we began to seriously look at how to increase television coverage and improve it. Doyle, Inoue, Obremski, are only a few of

the names on the tour now who hit the ball at speeds over 180 M.P.H. and there seems no end in sight as the younger players keep turning up the power. So, how do you see a ball on television moving at those speeds? Change the walls, floors, players? Do, you change the color of the ball! Blue is one of the most difficult colors for the human eye to pick up in any situation, let alone a Brian Hawkes forehand. So, you will see the official ball of the International Racquetball Tour next season a fluorescent green, orange, or red. We feel along with the ball manufacturers that this color change will not only be an improvement for television but in general play and live viewing.

All of these changes were in direct response to players, spectators, and tournament directors ideas and needs to continue the growth of professional racquetball. To this end the only area where there will be no changes is the pro rules. Due to overwhelming response from players and fans, both the Super Tie Breaker and One-Serve Rule will be in effect for all sanctioned events.

Everyone involved with the tour is looking forward to the best season ever! With the tremendous talent of the top players in addition to all the young stars of the future pushing to break through, professional racquetball is poised for a great future. Below is the first half of the International Racquetball schedule:

Stockton Pro-Am
Westlane Racquet Club
August 30-September 2
Stockton, California

Spalding Toronto Pro-Am
Airport Racquetball Club
October 16-20
Toronto, Ontario

Head Halloween Classic
*Grand Slam Event
Woodfield Racquet Club
October 31-November 4
Chicago, Illinois

Wagner Splat Shot Pro-Am
The Tournament House
November 13-17
Riverside, California

Racquet Power
December 4-8
Jacksonville, Florida

If you would like additional information on the International Racquetball Tour or want to be added to our mailing list please contact Hank Marcus at (503) 639-3410.

Hank Marcus

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Racquetball

The team of instructors for "America's Most Wanted Racquetball" offers a unique perspective in teaching today's power game. Comprised of some of the most visible players in the game, our team would like to share some of the insights and techniques that have helped us reach this level of play. As with any sports instructional, the concepts which seem obvious to one player may cut through the fog for another. Sometimes the most basic ideas are overlooked until pointed out in print. So, these articles will further emphasize the lessons learned "hands on" at our camps. There is no substitute for practice! Practice is of no value though, unless done correctly. Hopefully, our techniques will allow you the most benefit from your practice. (A word to the wise: those points we make which seem the simplest often contain the most wisdom!) Our approach is to fix what is broken. We take the things which have hindered each of us and present the remedies we have learned. We are especially conscious of typical trouble spots which we

observe in our camps. We will also address those questions you present to us through the publishers of this magazine. Specific questions posed to a specific player on our team will be answered by that player as space permits. We will begin with what is undoubtedly the most difficult in the beginning...

Playing Off The Back Wall

Important Points:

- 1) Returning a ball off the back wall is often the most difficult shot for beginners.
- 2) Any shot hit high and/or hard on the front wall that is likely to rebound close to the back wall on the bounce or on the fly should be played off the back wall.
- 3) Instead of swinging above waist level in the back court, wait to make a level swing as the ball comes off the backwall.
- 4) The closer the ball bounces to the backwall, the further it rebounds toward the front wall.
- 5) The higher the ball hits the back wall, the further it rebounds toward the front wall.
- 6) The harder the ball hits the back wall, the further it rebounds toward the front wall.
- 7) Use your feet to follow the ball, do not wait for the ball to follow you.
- 8) Watch the ball!
- 9) To hit a backwall shot you must: A) judge how far the ball is going to rebound B) get your racquet back early with wrist cocked C) pivot (right or left for forehand or backhand) D) move forward or backward depending on where the ball is in relation to your body E) plant your feet F) start your stroke while ball is at chest level G) Step into the ball and snap your wrist through the ball H) Hit the ball at about waist level.
- 10) The most common error that beginners make is failing to plant their feet close enough to the back wall to allow a full step into the ball. Often the ball is hit off the rear foot with a scooping motion that allows no wrist break.

Practice:

Drill 1: Begin with forehand then switch and repeat for backhand. Position yourself five feet from the backwall. Toss the ball to the backwall about five feet up. After the ball makes one floor bounce, return it to the frontwall without it touching the sidewall.

Drill 2: Same as drill 1 except toss the ball to the floor near the backwall.

Drill 3: Again begin with forehand then repeat with backhand. Position yourself behind the short service line 3 feet from the side wall. Hit the ball high and hard enough to the front wall to rebound moderately hard off the backwall. Return the ball to the frontwall without it touching the sidewall.

Drill 4: Repeat drill 3 with the ball coming off the backwall much more softly.

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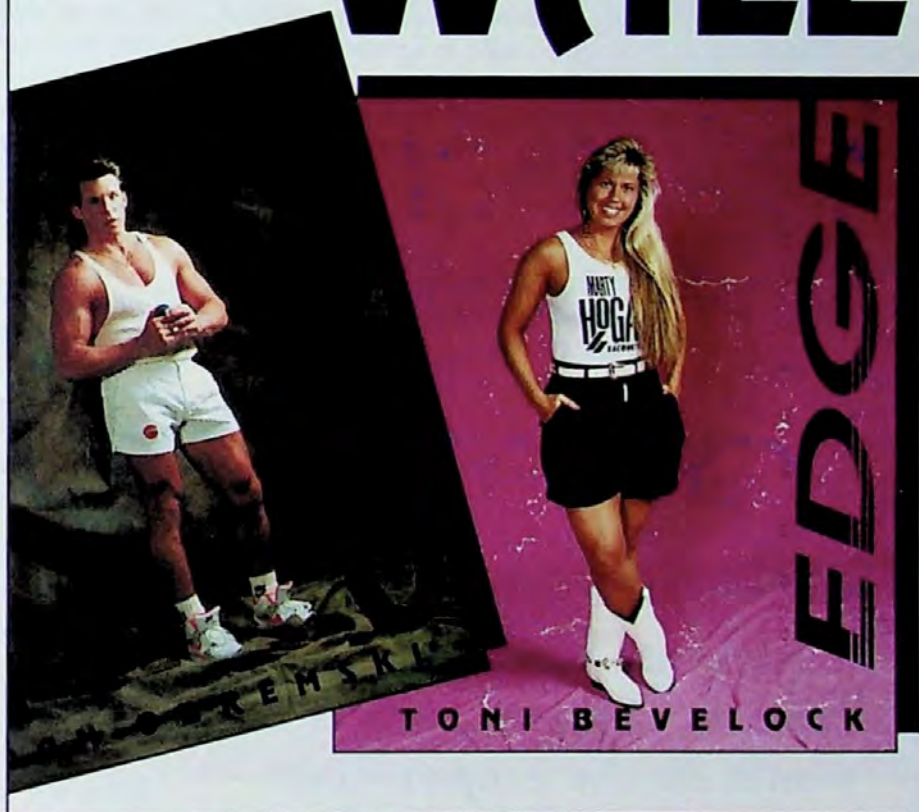
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Toni Berelock's c o m p e t i t i v e **EDGE**

The mind is more powerful than most people realize. Once you learn to unleash the power of your mind, there is no telling how great you can become. Think about this for a minute. Your brain has the storage capacity of a computer that would fill the Empire State Building. Using your mind as a positive tool can have a tremendous effect on your performance. One of the easiest ways to increase performance is through visualization. There are many books on the topic but most will tell you to visualize without telling you how. Hopefully, I will be able to give you some quick, to-the-point, answers in this article.

Focusing the Mind

Create positive experiences in your mind so you just react and do not have to think about where you are on the court. Free your mind of all distractions and focus all your energy on a certain task (serve, return, etc.). Always focus on a good shot and what it takes to hit it. Never focus on an error. Correct the mistake in your mind and see yourself hitting the shot again perfectly.

Your brain has the storage capacity of a computer that would fill the Empire State Building.

Association & Disassociation

In order to develop a strong mind-body fusion, you must first learn how to associate to what you are visualizing. Most athletes engage in disassociation. An athlete who disassociates while visualizing is one who is watching himself from someone else's eyes. It is as if he is watching a movie of himself. The athlete who associates does just the opposite. For him/her, every

picture or movie is an event, an experience in which he/she is an integral part. He experiences every part, he is totally focused on what he is doing.

Learning to associate and disassociate is as easy as paying attention. Paying attention takes understanding of what to look for.

In order to focus your energy into a positive outcome, it stands to reason that you would need an understanding of what is involved to make a good shot (bend your knees, swing through the ball, etc.) Once you have an understanding of the fundamentals this process will enhance your play. The first technique is to write down one of your best matches. Go back in your mind and experience every detail of the game from the time of day to every ball mark on the walls. As you go back and experience this game, pay attention to the visual kinesthetic and auditory stimulus. For example, visually you would look to see if the picture is moving or still frame; if it is color or black and white; where the picture is located (up or down, close or far) and the level of intensity. For kinesthetic you might look for tension in certain places of your body, how you were breathing (high in the chest or low), whether you feel heavy or light, smooth or rough. For auditory you will notice whether the sounds are loud or soft, whether you are saying something to yourself, the area from which the sound comes (above, beside, behind); whether the sound is rhythmic or in spurts. These are a few things to observe.

The second technique is to visualize through these modes each time you see yourself hit that perfect shot. Put yourself back in that moment; see, hear, and feel the same as you did. Continue to visualize a variety of different shots. Allow your senses to become totally absorbed in your picture. You can spend two to five seconds after each shot. The idea is to envision every possible situation before it happens so you can let your body react in a relaxed manner. After all, you have hit that shot a hundred times (if only in your mind). Remember, mentally rehearsing a situation is as important as doing it physically. Good luck. Practice hard!



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